

**SCORESE TOPS COLDER, MURRAY HANDLES HOY; BUSCH, 'DiGIO', CAPPELLO PIN IN 1ST****Cougars' Super Match-Ups Ground GL Matmen, 46-15**

By DAVID B. CORBIN

*Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times*

Two highly anticipated match-ups were not avoided and the Cranford High School wrestling team came out on top in both in a 46-15 victory over Governor Livingston in Cranford on January 29. In fact, the 10-2 Cougars seemed to match-up quite well with the 8-8 Highlanders throughout the lineup.

The first anticipated match-up came in the seventh bout of the evening, 120-lbs, when Cougar Chris Scorese faced John Colder, who had placed second in the Union County Tournament (UCT). Scorese recorded a double-leg lift takedown and added a three-point spread eagle nearfall in the first period then both controlled each other from the top position to result in a 5-0 decision.

"Right off the whistle, I've been hitting a lot of dart singles, so I shot in and got the leg. I didn't want to try to sit him down, so I lifted him up instead. It was kind of like a ball-and-chain with a leg in then when he fell back it was like a spread eagle but you have the arm in with the leg," Scorese said.

The second key match-up came at 138-lbs when Cougar Gavin Murray, the UCT champion, faced Ryan Hoy, whom he defeated 13-3 for the title to avenge a 9-8 setback to him in last year's 132-lb UCT finals. Murray slipped around Hoy with a side single takedown and added an escape and a single-leg, back-trip takedown to take a 5-1 lead into the third period. Hoy escaped and

applied the pressure, but Murray used his snaky leg defense to ward him off in a 5-2 victory.

wanted to wrestle me because of our last match. I got the front headlock, spun behind and got

The Highlanders then took a 9-0 team lead when RJ Greeley received a forfeit at 195-lbs.

a reversal to seize a 16-3 majority decision over Nic Mele. At 113-lbs, Cougar Tom DiGiovanni was temporarily stunned when Chris Sergio took him to the mat within the first 10 seconds, but he quickly recovered to pin him in 25 seconds with a double-leg grapevine and head smother.

"He sure did! To come out like that and get taken down to your back is like jumping into a cold bath. Sometimes that brings the animal out in you," Cougar Head Coach Pat Gorman said.

After Scorese's bout, Cougar Dave Busch made the team score, 25-12, when he clamped Austin Senkarik with a cradle in 1:57 at 126-lbs. At 132-lbs, Cougar Brian McGovern recorded a pair of backdoor takedowns and an escape to defeat Turner Haddad, 5-2, then after Murray's bout, Cougar Andrew Tompkins took Dennis Sobol to his back with a double-leg takedown and pinned him in 3:08 at 145-lbs.

Cougar Corey Birch recorded a takedown on Mike Rhodes in the first period added a reversal in the second and another in the third to earn a 6-2 victory at 152-lbs. Birch kept working for the pin throughout their bout, but Rhodes refused to be turned.

At 160-lbs, Cougar Niko Cappello spent very little time on the mat and pinned Tom O'Sullivan in 48 seconds with an arm bar/half nelson. The final bout went to overtime, but Highlander Sam Burke got the takedown to record a 7-5 victory over Chris Kiame at 170-lbs.

"We have seven kids where it's their first year on varsity. It was awesome to see them come out and do really good and get a lot of team points," Murray said.

"The kids came to wrestle. They



*Cougar Gavin Murray  
GL's Ryan Hoy*

"It was a match we wanted, because he is one of the best guys in the state in the weight class, and wrestling the best guys you can only get better. We wanted to wrestle him. I think he

my two. Then I got his leg. He was fighting hard, but I got the back trip. It was a grind pretty much in the last period. He wanted it and I wanted it," Murray said.

The first bout of the evening at 182-lbs was also a tight one, but Highlander Andrew Lipnick recorded three takedowns and an escape to top Nick Ballas, 7-3.

Cougar Mike Pastor tightened the team score to 9-6 when he pinned Spencer Marke with a half nelson in 2:25 at 220-lbs. Next, Highlander heavyweight Sean Tomlinson escaped in the third overtime to sting Jon ElKhoury, 2-1.

Action was furious in the 106-lb bout, but Cougar Anthony Capece inflicted the vast majority of it with three takedowns, including a slick barrel roll, three tilts and

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