

1972 Buckeye Conference...

Elyria Picked On Mat

Elyria will be a top-heavy favorite to win its 10th Buckeye Conference wrestling championship when the Pioneers defend the crown on their home mats tomorrow.

The tourney will be staged for the 11th time. The only other school to bag a team championship has been Sandusky. The Blue Streaks took the crown in 1969.

The battle for second place tomorrow is expected to take place between Fremont Ross, Sandusky and Lorain Admiral King.

Ross is expected to go with the same lineup that clobbered Clyde (63-6) in a dual meet Tuesday. Ken Young will be the 98-pounder and will be followed by Eric Wolfe (105), Dave Alejandro (112), Kevin Haynes (119), Paul Branco (126), Rob Stierwalt (132), Ed Farson (138), Jim Billow (145), Terry Hinkle (155), Dave Skergan (165), Dale Reiter (175), Dave Mierke (185) and Jack Rhodes (heavyweight).

Several of the Little Giants are familiar to conference competition. Reiter lost in last year's finals at Ross to Gary VanDyke of Lorain Admiral King.

Mierke captured a third place in the 155-pound class of last year's competition while Alejandro and Farson lost in the consolation finals via referee's decision.

In last year's meet, Elyria had seven individual champions and 106 team points. The Pioneers were followed by Mansfield (80), Sandusky (77), Lorain (52), Fremont (47), Admiral King (28), Findlay (20) and Marion (13).

There will be three defending champs in the competition — Findlay's Roger Sheldon (135), Elyria's Tim Sweigert (175) and Sandusky's Jeff Ward (155). Sheldon competed at 127 last winter while Sweigert was at 167.

First round matches will begin at noon with the finals scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Adult tickets for each session are \$1.25 while student admission is \$1.

Medals will be presented to the top four finishers in each weight class.

Little Giants Second In Buckeye Tourney

Farson Wins Championship At 138

By MARK CARLSON
News-Messenger Sports Editor

ELYRIA—Ross had a champion and three second places, but it was a third place that had Little Giant followers ecstatic in the Buckeye Conference wrestling championships.

The third place finish by 138-pounder Dave Mierke broke a tie between Ross and Sandusky and provided Ross with a second place finish in the team race Saturday. It was the highest finish for the Purple and White since the first tournament in 1962 when four teams participated.

"This is what we were shooting for," Ross' acting head coach Dave Long said. "We knew it would probably be impossible for anyone to beat Elyria."

Elyria, as expected, won the championship with 117½ points. The Pioneers had six champions, one less than they had in winning the title at Fremont last winter.

Ross finished with 79½. Only three points back was Sandusky (76½). The Blue Streaks, who are the only team to have won a title in the 11-year history of the Buckeye championships besides Elyria, were followed by Lorain Admiral King (66½), Mansfield (57), Findlay (37), Lorain (29) and Marion (6½).

The only champion for Ross was junior Ed Farson at 138, who nicked Elyria's Mike Sittinger (104) for the championship.

Three other Little Giants — Eric Wolfe (106), Jim Billow (145) and Dale Reiter (175) — were beaten in the championship finals.

Besides Mierke, Ross also got a third from 167-pounder Dave Skergan, Dave Alejandro (106), Paul Branco (126) and Terry Hinkle (155) lost in the consolation finals.

Elyria had the meet wrapped up after the first two rounds in the championship bracket and initial consolation matches. The Pioneers started the evening session with 91½ points.

But there was a clear struggle for second place. Ross had the edge with 62½ points but was being challenged by Sandusky (57½) and Admiral King (56½).

Ross had its problems in the early evening matches and fell behind both Elyria and Admiral King. But when Skergan decisioned Elyria's Doug VanDyke, the Little Giants moved into a tie with Sandusky with 67½ points.

The Little Giants had two wrestlers still waiting to take the mat while Sandusky was finished. Ross didn't get any points when Reiter lost to Elyria's Tim Sweigard, 11-2.

That left it up to Mierke who weighed in at only 173. He only needed a win to knock Sandusky out of the race. But when he pinned Elyria's Terry Waugh in 3:54 it also knocked Admiral King from the race for runnerup laurels.

Farson, who's only a junior, advanced to the championship

round by pinning Mansfield's Bill Frontz in the preliminaries and douring Lorain's Dave Ward, 9-5, in the semifinals.

In the championship match, Farson jumped ahead 7-1 after two minutes. Farson got the initial takedown and added a near fall to go ahead, 5-0. After Sittinger escaped, Farson got another takedown.

Sittinger got another escape and Farson came back with a takedown to start the second period. Sittinger got a reversal and predicament to cut Farson's lead to 6-7, however. Farson escaped in the last two minutes before Sittinger came up with a takedown. There was no riding time and Farson had a 10-9 victory.

Wolfe was pinned by Admiral King's Mike Cameron with seven seconds remaining in the second period. Cameron had a 7-0 bulge at the time of the fall.

Wolfe advanced to the finals with a pair of pins. He decked Sandusky's Alex Calderon in the first match and came back with a fall against Mansfield's Jim Higgins in the semifinals.

Elyria's Bob Balby blanked Billow, 4-0. Balby took Billow down in the first period and was awarded a penalty point when Billow was charged with stalling in the second round. The final point came for riding time.

Balby reached the finals by pinning Sandusky's Steve Brannan and whitewashing Mansfield's Pete Drye, 14-0.

Sweigard beat Reiter for the second time this season. In their earlier match, Sweigard, who's undefeated, had pinned Reiter. Sweigard had Reiter on his back for most of the final period but the Little Giant senior refused to allow the Pioneer to put the second shoulder on the mat.

Reiter recorded one of the quickest pins of the day when he decked Sandusky's Doug Coe in 27 seconds of the preliminary round. Reiter reached the finals with a 10-5 decision win over Findlay's Tod Freeman.

Alejandro lost his battle for third place to Gene Madison of Elyria, 4-0. Rick Motter of Findlay came-from-behind to dump Branco, 12-4. Hinkle was pinned by Elyria's Jim Waldo in 2:30.

Elyria champions included Ken Redd (98), Mickey Currier (119), Rick Lewis (128), Balby, Sweigard and Les Miles (heavyweight).

Other champions included Sandusky's Dave Braesung (112), Greg King (135) and Jeff Ward (155). Three other Blue Streaks — Ernie Ferguson (118), Tim Whittaker (125) and Ken Taylor (167) — lost in the championship round.

Admiral King's Wayne Jackson notched the 167-pound title.

Ward and Sweigard were the only repeat champions. Findlay's Roger Sheldon and VanDyke won titles in 1971 but weren't able to successfully defend their crowns.



A VACANT SEAT — The chair normally used by Ross' head wrestling coach during tournament competition was vacant Saturday during the Buckeye Conference tournament at Elyria. Acting head coach

Dave Long (left) and his wrestlers avoided sitting in the chair which would have been occupied by former head coach Mal Mackey, who died last month.

Chair For Coach Remained Vacant

ELYRIA—The memory of Mal Mackey was with the Ross wrestling team.

The Little Giant grapplers, who lost their head coach when he died of a heart attack Jan. 24, paused with the other Buckeye Conference teams before the championship matches to offer a moment of silent prayer for their departed mentor.

But the Little Giants had a special observance of their own.

The head coach's chair next to the mat where the Little Giants competed all day was left vacant. Instead, acting head coach Dave Long and Ross athletic director Dick Sherman would stand behind the chair or kneel beside it throughout the long program.

"We wanted the team to know that the memory of Coach Mackey was still in the head coach's chair," Long explained.

"I'm sure the kids were wrestling for Mal today," Long said. "They wanted to do their best because they knew that was the way Mal would have wanted it."

Several conference coaches didn't know of the Ross observance and attempted to sit in the chair while Little Giant grapplers were on the mat. They thought that Long was busy on another mat with another wrestler and wanted to help out.

"We just asked them to leave," Sherman explained. "They would say that no one was sitting in the chair and I told them our coach was there. After it happened once or twice, the other coaches realized what we were doing and waited until we draped the warmup jacket of our wrestlers over the chair before they went to their corner."

Long and Sherman were elated with the Ross second place finish — the highest for the Little Giants since they were runners-up in the first conference tournament held in 1962.

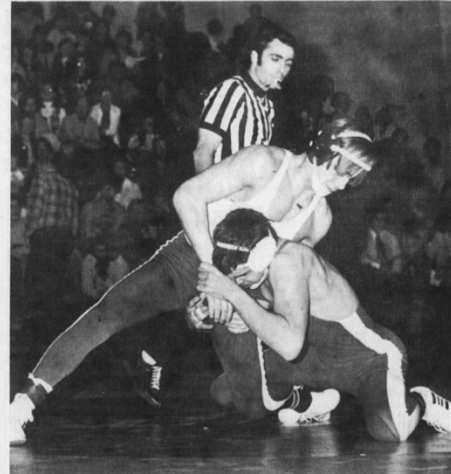
"We knew it would be almost impossible to win this thing," Long explained. "We were shooting for second."

Ross had one champion — Ed Farson at 138—with three second place finishers—Eric Wolfe (106), Jim Billow (138) and Dale Reiter (175).

"Farson has come on real strong in the last few weeks," Long said. "It didn't surprise me that he did so well. He probably has as much ability as anyone on our team."

Long credited a rope-climbing program for Wolfe's success.

"When we wrestled here in the Elyria tournament Eric talked to the other wrestlers and asked them about their



JIM BILLOW OF ROSS WORKS FOR ESCAPE
Bob Balby Of Elyria Has Control

American Hockey Team Stuns Czechoslovakia

Buckeye Summary

CHAMPIONSHIP

98 — Ken Redd (Elyria) dec. Dan Brumbach (Admiral King), 5-1.

105 — Mike Cameron (Admiral King) pinned Eric Wolfe (Ross), 3:53.

112 — Dave Braeunig (Sandusky) pinned Jim Noble (Admiral King), 1:39.

119 — Mickey Currier (Elyria) dec. Ernie Ferguson (Sandusky), 3-0.

125 — Rickey Lewis (Elyria) dec. Tim Whittaker (Sandusky), 9-7.

132 — Greg King (Sandusky) dec. Kent Thomas (Admiral King), 7-3.

138 — Ed Farson (Ross) dec. Mike Sittinger (Elyria), 10-9.

145 — Bob Balby (Elyria) dec. Jim Billow (Fremont), 10-9.

155 — Jeff Ward (Sandusky) dec. Marty Lamie (Mansfield), 10-2.

167 — Wayne Jackson (Admiral King) pinned Ken Taylor (Sandusky), 5:24.

175 — Tim Sweigard (Elyria) dec. Dale Reiter (Ross), 11-2.

185 — Mike Bigrig (Lorain) dec. Gary Bishop (Findlay), 3-0.

HVY — Les Miles (Elyria) dec. John Hafford (Mansfield), 5-2.

THIRD PLACE

98 — Dave Lambert (Marion) dec. Tim Shiltz (Mansfield), 10-1.

105 — Harvey Barbee (Elyria) pinned Jim Higgins (Mansfield), 2:44.

112 — Gene Madison (Elyria) dec. Dave Alegandro (Ross), 4-0.

118 — Parnell Cameron (Mansfield) dec. Ted Ernst (Lorain), 4-0.

126 — Rick Motter (Findlay) dec. Paul Branco (Ross), 12-9.

132 — Roger Sheldon (Findlay) pinned Brian Gallagher (Elyria), 3:39.

145 — Lou Repko (Lorain) dec. Pete Drye (Mansfield), 16-9.

155 — Jim Waldo (Elyria) pinned Terry Hinkle (Ross), 2:20.

167 — Dave Skergan (Ross) dec. Doug VanDyke (Elyria), 6-1.

175 — Todd Freeman (Findlay) dec. Paul Johnson (Mansfield), 7-2.

185 — Dave Mierke (Ross) pinned Terry Waugh (Elyria), 3:54.

HVY — Tom Myers (Findlay) pinned Ed Cieslak (Admiral King), 2:49.

WANT