

Recruiting is improved

Wrestling program reviving at OU

By MARTY BUDNER

Phase one of the Oakland University wrestling program is now complete. Phase two will begin this fall.

After three years of intense recruiting, coach Max Hasse believes he has finally built a solid wrestling foundation at Oakland.

In fact, Hasse is so confident of his wrestlers' overall talent that he recruited this year by weight class rather than general ability. The fourth-year coach sought two heavyweight wrestlers and one mid-weight, and as far as he's concerned, he got exactly what he wanted.

The Pioneer program is now at a pivotal point in its history. Hasse believes that starting this winter, with the help of this year's recruits, OU will be able to legitimately contend for the elusive Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) title.

"We've got the troops, and now we're going to march a little bit," said Hasse, who has a record of 17-2-1 through OU's brief wrestling history.

"We filled three loopholes this year. We wrestled most of last year without a heavyweight, and we ended up giving away six points almost every match. Six of our seven victories were won before the heavyweight competition last year.

This year, now that we have filled some of our positions, we're looking to improve," said Hasse. "We finished sixth, fifth and fourth in the conference (GLIAC) in the past three years, and this winter I'd like to be at least third."

HEADLINING The list of recruits at Oakland is heavyweight Ray "Bubba" Slizewski, and Warren Conference champion Paul Johns. Other wrestlers who will be performing at OU this winter include Carl Michayuk, Marty Stebbins and Bob Nicks. "Slizewski, a graduate of Troy Athens High School, is a transfer student from the University of Tennessee. The former Redhawk wrestler was recruited

by Oakland two years ago, but he opted for the Southern Athletic Conference school at the time.

Slizewski did not complete his second year of school at Tennessee, and he will have three more years of eligibility left at Oakland.

"His aspirations of competing at a big school did not satisfy his own needs like he had hoped," said Hasse. "And, we have always kept in touch with him. Last year during Christmas vacation he attended our workouts, and he decided to come with us."

Slizewski has plenty of credentials to back up his reputation as an outstanding heavyweight wrestler. He was a national junior Greco-Roman heavyweight champ, he placed in the junior Olympics in Poland and was the Oakland Athletic League (OAL) conference champion in high school. Slizewski is currently wrestling across the country with the Michigan Wrestling Club.

Like Slizewski, Johns, Michayuk and Nicks will fill in at important positions.

Michayuk is a 1978 graduate of Anchor Bay High School. He was the St. Clair area league champion for the past two seasons, and he compiled a 69-15 three-year record at Anchor Bay. His only dual-meet loss was in his first varsity match as a sophomore.

Last winter he finished fourth in the state (class B), pinning his way through the regionals and districts. He was honored as the most valuable wrestler at Anchor Bay.

Johns holds the Warren Cousino takedown record of 78 after amassing a 79-12-0 record during his high school career. During the 78 season he was the most valuable wrestler at Cousino, a regional champion and a tri-captain.

A Rochester High School graduate, Nicks was awarded his team's blue and white ribbon for team dedication loyalty. Nicks was a Greater Oakland Activities League (GOAL) champion, and finished third at the regionals to qualify for the state.

"He'll probably be wrestling at 132 pounds for us," said Hasse. "He's an

outstanding student athlete, and he was the premier wrestler for the Rochester team last year—he'll help us a lot this year."

Like Slizewski, Stebbins is an Athens High School graduate. He was a co-captain of his Redhawk team, and was voted as the most valuable wrestler.

FOR THE FIRST TIME in its history, Oakland scored (3½ points) at the NCAA championships last year. Nine

of Hasse's wrestlers—another school record—qualified for the finals.

The list of qualifiers included co-captains Dean Waldrup and Tim Chapel, and juniors John Whitfield (from Rochester Adams) and Kirk Shoemaker. The other qualifiers were Phil Liebling, Mike Eble, Ron Coleman, Mark Christainson and Fred Alexander.

Hasse is hoping that his list of qualifiers reaches at least double figures this winter.



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