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4 area matmen survive district



photos by RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Harrison's Dave Dickson (left) will wrestle in the state Class A regional tournament Saturday. Dickson finished second in the 155-pound class at the district tournament.

By Tom Baer
staff writer

The season is over for the majority of the Farmington-area high school wrestlers who were eliminated in the state Class A district tournament Saturday at Ann Arbor Huron High.

But for four survivors of that district competition, it's still practice after school and the late bus home.

Those four — North Farmington's Terry Donovan and Eric Collier, Farmington's Lenny Pitel and Farmington Harrison's Dave Dickson — wrestled well enough in the district to qualify for the regional round of the Michigan high school wrestling tournament.

All four advance to the Class A regional at Trenton High School Saturday morning.

Collier, a 135-pound senior, placed second in the Pioneer district (the top four in each weight class advance), pushing his season record to 33-8.

Collier, who holds the school record for pins with 26, won three matches before failing to Plymouth Salem's John Beaudoin on a fall in 3:52.

"Eric's tough," said North coach Jim O'Leary. "He's beaten some good people. He really tore up this Kurt Campbell from Thurston in our (Northwest Suburban League) meet. I really think Eric has a chance to place at state."

Collier started the district with a 5-3 decision over Belleville's Mike Cook. Then came pins of Ann Arbor Pioneer's Steve Stout (3:40) and Milford's Buddy David (2:16).

DONOVAN, a sophomore, finished third in the 98-pound division, winning two and losing two to bring his season record to 27-10-1.

Donovan started on a losing note, falling to Gary Ginter of Pioneer on a

10-7 decision. The Halder came back to beat Livonia Bentley's Al Yaffai, 6-1, before losing to Salem's Rick Vershove, 7-6.

Donovan earned the third by pinning Belleville's Ray Sebastian in 3:26. "Donovan? It's really hard to tell," O'Leary said. "It's a tough kid. He's lost some matches. . . . It's hard to tell what he'll do in the tournament."

Farmington's Pitel, the only senior on the Falcon squad, was the runner-up in the 119-pound class. His 3-1 district showing brought his season record to 25-6.

Pitel, who runs cross country in the fall, opened by pinning Dan Jenkins of Livonia Stevenson in 1:04. Then came

decisions over Milford-Lakeland's Tim Townsend (13-1) and Livonia Bentley's Abe Yaffai (16-7).

In the 115-pound final, Pitel was pinned by Walled Lake Central's Regan Goins in 2:41.

"Lenny's a very intense and physical kid," said Farmington coach Barry Walsh, "and he's in great shape. We're hoping he goes a long way in the tournament."

HARRISON'S DICKSON, a senior, won three matches before losing in the 155-pound final for a second place. Dickson owns a 24-9 record.

Dickson needed 2:18 to pin Mark Bernas of Huron in his opening round.

He then decisioned Northville's Ernie Bock (4-1) and Walled Lake Western's Matt Bock (6-2) to make the weight-class finals.

Salem's John Woodchuck pinned Dickson in 4:26 in the championship bout. North Farmington finished 12th with 37½ points in the 19-team district field. Farmington landed 14th with 29½ points, and Harrison took 15th with 26.

Salem won the district championship with 130 points, and Milford was a distant second with 107. Milford-Lakeland (92), Walled Lake Western (91) and Walled Lake Central (76½) made up the rest of the top five.

Meet results — See page 6



North Farmington's Terry Donovan, a survivor of the state wrestling district, has his hands full during a recent practice.



Marty
Budner

Hypnotist helps teams achieve self-confidence

Second of a two-part series.

Ane Mihailovich will never forget it. The Detroit Express soccer player really believes his team was hypnotized by Jerry Cassell into winning the American Soccer League championship last season.

"It was a regular-season game against Georgia (June 27 at the Pontiac Silverdome) — a very important game for us so that we could stay in first place," recalled Mihailovich, a native Yugoslavian who lives in Canton Township.

"I met him (Cassell) at my brother's night club. So, I talked to the coach and the other players, so we invited him (to talk to the team before the Georgia Generals game). He came over with all of his equipment. He had all of us — except for a couple players who didn't believe in it — in a room and sat us down.

"He (talks) well and it was really fun with all of his knowledge. He uses tapes like a waterfall, the ocean waves and sounds of the birds. And while he played the tapes in the background he talked to us — kind of put you to sleep and make you think very hard. Actually, what he really did was calm your nerves down and make you forget about the game.

"HE MADE YOU think that you are capable of doing it (winning the game) . . . that you are not a loser. I felt it right away. I felt great after he talked, and I felt like I had a lot more energy. His whole talk lasted about 15-20 minutes before the game and most of the players really felt great.

"As a professional I'd always get a little shaky before a big game, and I couldn't sleep the night before," said Mihailovich. "But, after he talked to us and before the (Georgia Generals) game started I was calm and cool, and

'As a professional, I'd always get a little shaky before a big game and I couldn't sleep the night before. But, after he (hypnotist Jerry Cassell) talked to us and before the (Georgia Generals) game started I was calm and cool and I didn't have the shakiness I had before.'

— Ane Mihailovich
Express soccer player

I didn't have the shakiness I had before."

For the record, the Express won that game 4-2.

The Express went on to win 13 of their next 17 regular-season games (with two ties) and finished in first place in the ASL with a 19-5-4 record. Detroit started the playoffs Sept. 7 against that same Georgia Generals team. The Express won the two-of-three match-up including a 1-0 victory in the deciding game as Mihailovich scored the game-winning goal with just eight seconds left in the game.

"I thought about the way (Cassell) was talking to us earlier and it gave me a lot of self-confidence," said Mihailovich. "He relaxed me and it was just super for me."

In the championship series against Oklahoma City, the Express won the

ASL title by taking the best-of-three series. They defeated Oklahoma City, 4-1, before a record Silverdome crowd of 33,762.

CASSELL, 41 YEARS OLD, is a hypnotist specializing these days in sports therapy. His basic objective is to allow athletes to reach their maximum potential through intense concentration and relaxation.

Cassell works on the premise that all athletes have an x-amount of fundamental ability. He says athletes do not always reach their potential because they simply have a poor concentration level.

Once he has "programmed" an athlete or a group of athletes, they are able to recall that state of concentration at most any time during their careers. This is what he calls a state of self-hypnosis.

A former Farmington High School state-champion wrestler, Cassell recalled his brief association with the Express last summer.

"Most of the Express players were very enthusiastic about (being hypnotized)," said Cassell. "I went down to the Silverdome into the Lions locker room — that was the only place (the players) had to sit and I worked under very adverse conditions.

"The athletes sat at their lockers while the trainers were walking in and out. The team (Georgia) next door was knocking on the wall because they could hear me speaking and they knew what was going on. They were trying to disturb and distract us.

"The soccer players still responded very, very well," Cassell said. "I hypnotized them to relax — that they became machines and machines never get tired. Their endurance increased. I

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