

Hop to it

Opponents find it difficult to pin a defeat on Canandaigua Academy wrestling coach

By TOM FITZGERALD
D&C Sportswriter

A Canandaigua Academy high school wrestling meet is something like a 2-ring circus. On the mat, a Canandaigua wrestler usually has the upper hand. Off the mat, Coach Weldon Canough is going wild.

"I'm just not a person to sit still very long," said Canough (pronounced ka-NOFF). "When I was wrestling, I couldn't sit still."

His exuberance often annoys opposing coaches and fans.

"They look at him jumping around and laugh," said 145-pounder Bill Hadsell, who has a 12-1 record since he was promoted from the junior varsity.

Canough's record is nothing to laugh at. His teams have won three consecutive Section 5 Class AA championships, and this year's squad will be looking for No. 4 tonight and tomorrow at the Community College of the Finger Lakes.

Canough's 12-year coaching record is 149-25-4, including nine straight Finger Lakes East titles.

This year's FL champion Braves' only loss in 14 overall meets was to Olean, the third-ranked team in the state.

Last week Canandaigua faced Newark in what was supposed to be a league showdown. As usual, the Canandaigua team huddled in a room with the lights out and rock music blaring. Then, sufficiently psyched, Canandaigua won, 57-6.

Canough schedules the roughest non-league competition he can find—his team beat Monroe County Locusts, East Rochester and Churchville-Chili in dual meets.

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Weldon Canough admits that he's 'not a person to sit still very long.'



D&C photos by Brad Bliss

Canough meets Mark King to offer congratulations after win.

CANANDAIGUA

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"My kids gotta know there are other kids who can beat them if they don't work hard," Canough said. "Our league isn't that strong. That hurt Newark. Their non-league competition is fairly weak."

Canough's Braves received a big lift this year when Mark and Matt King transferred from Honeoye. Mark, a junior, is 16-5 at 132 pounds. Matt, a freshman, has lost just three of 23 bouts at 112 pounds.

The biggest wrestling family in town, however, remains the Hadsells. Sophomores John and Bill are twins, even though John is a 91-pounder and Bill a 145-pounder. Five older brothers also wrestled for Canough. Three of them won sectional titles, and one of them, Bruce, was a state champion four years ago.

The secret to Canough's success has nothing to do with family traditions, though. He works on wrestling almost every day from November to August.

"The one Saturday I took off last year was Easter weekend," he said.

His mat-side frenzy during matches is one of the reasons why the 38-year-old Canough loses 15 to 20 pounds a season.

WRESTLING NOTEBOOK: Fairport, Hilton, Spencerport and McQuaid are among the top teams in Class AAA at Monroe Community College; Canandaigua and Churchville-Chili in AA at CCFL; East Rochester in A at East Rochester; York, Warsaw and Caledonia-Mumford in B at Geneseo State, and Kendall and Alfred-Almond in C at York .Y.

First-round matches in AAA, AA and B begin today at 5 p.m., with the pre-quarterfinals to follow. Classes A and C already have held their first two rounds. Tomorrow, the schedule for all classes is quarterfinals at 10 a.m., semifinals at 1 p.m. and finals at 7:30 . . . The top three in each class go to the state qualifier next Friday and Saturday at Fairport.

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