

Freshman Lehmann paces Irondequoit

By GREG BOECK
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All week long he practiced with the Irondequoit high school wrestling team in the afternoon, and then ran three miles alone at night. He stayed away from bread and his favorite summer haunt — Burger King.

Bob Lehmann, just a freshman but not just another wrestler, had gotten on the scales Monday, and found out he had to lose four pounds in six days, or sit out the biggest match of the season. He lost the pounds — “but just barely” — then went out and won the match that started Irondequoit to a 35-17 victory over East Rochester last night. The victory — Irondequoit is now 4-0 overall and 2-0 in the league and ER is 1-1 and 1-1 — clearly stamped the Indians as the class of the Monroe County East.

Lehmann pinned eight-grader Tim Quinn at 4:59 in the lead-off 98-pound match, then celebrated what would be Irondequoit's only pin by turning to the ER bench, and snarling at the visitors who won this dual meet last season.

“Last year,” said Lehmann, “I remember they were kinda cocky. I was just excited. It was the first match, I won and I loved it. It was just a little snarl, anyway.”

But it was a big victory for Irondequoit. “I didn't figure us to win that match.” ER Coach Don Quinn said later. “But I didn't figure on a pin.”

An eighth-grader, Chris Cotroneo, followed at 105 and earned a draw in his varsity debut with Tom Pagano, then the brothers of the two underclassmen — Tony Cotroneo and Tim Lehmann, scored decisions at 112 and 119, respec-

tively, and Irondequoit was on its way.

Before it ended, Jim Brault at 138, Paul Salamone at 145, Scott Simpson at 155, George Morgan at 167 and Tim Oliver at 215 had won by decision or default. The lone ER breakthroughs were Mike Kuhn at 126, Romeo Battazzi at 132 and Bill Condon, who pinned Dallhart Payne at 3:43 in the 177-pound match.

“ER has a heckuva team,” said Irondequoit Coach Art Connorton. “Everything just fit together for us tonight.”

The biggest pieces to the puzzle were perhaps the young Lehmann, and the even younger Cotroneo. “I don't think ER expected us to have them tonight,” said Connorton. “Lehmann didn't make weight last week, and Cotroneo had never wrestled at the varsity level. But he was ready. I think those two gave us a psychological advantage. They set the tone. Let's face it. Those are two talented kids.”

Cotroneo admitted he was a “little nervous.” But afterwards, even though he attends Dake Middle School, there he was, looking like he belonged and telling anybody who would listen that “We're the best team, without a doubt.”

And there was Lehmann, breathing easy at last. “It was a tough week,” he said. “But it paid off. I just made it, and that was almost as hard as the match. I was worried.”

So worried, in fact, that he even ran just before weigh-in. “The team told me Monday they needed me,” said Lehmann, all-county as an eighth-grader last season. “I didn't want to let them down.”