

Some Notes from the High School Wrestling State Championships  
Saturday, February 7th, 2009 @ Augusta Civic Center

Talked to several parents about the anxieties that set in when you have a kid wrestling in this tournament. Told them that I could finally relax and enjoy the day as my son graduated last year. Well, the relaxation lasted about an hour. What an up-and-down emotional roller coaster. I was totally exhausted driving home.

My heart goes out to Josh Palmer, who became the first wrestler in Maine history to come away with his fourth 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish. Josh is one of the nicest kids you'll meet and always wrestled in a tough weight class to "take one for the team". As a freshman he lost a 10-6 decision to Billy Greene of Dexter, a two-time State Champion. As a sophomore he lost a controversial overtime decision to Josh Harvey of Dexter, a two-time State Champion. Last year, as a junior, he lost a 7-3 decision to Jerod Rideout of Foxcroft, a four-time State Champion. This year he lost a tough 4-2 decision to Steven Klenowski of Bucksport, a two-time State Champion. Josh Palmer is all heart and is one of the best wrestlers I've ever seen to not win a State Championship.

Dalton Groeger of Bonny Eagle is another one of the best wrestlers I've seen in recent years. Dalton was a wrestler without a weight class in 2009. At 119 he had Matt DelGallo of Gardiner who will probably end up as a four-time champion. At 125 you have Ryan Toussaint who is one of the best wrestlers in Maine regardless of weight class. And at 130 you have freshman phenom Jake Bagley of Noble. Dalton was gracious in defeat and my hat is off to him.

Tyler Russell, a definite OW candidate pulled off the impossible with a 6-5 decision over Steve Martin. Steve is on a very short list of best wrestlers in the state and showed true sportsmanship in defeat.

How about Joey Eon's OT win over Mark Richardson to capture his 4<sup>th</sup> State title. Unbelievable match. And how about the Hurtado/Worthley 17-15 match in B 112 consolation finals. Hope Gary Theriault, Mt Blue, is doing okay. The #1 seed from the East was injured his 1<sup>st</sup> match and done for the day. Glad you have another year, good luck in 2010.

Don't know if my heart can take much more of this.

Patrick Chute is one of the hardest working and nicest kids in Maine wrestling. He fell shy in his bid for the Championship, 6-3 to another great wrestler, Dillon White of Skowhegan. In the consolation finals of the same weight class, Spencer Chipman of Morse won a close 6-4 decision over Derek Cloutier. Any one of these kids could have been Champion. The weight class was that even. Congratulations to Dillon for pulling it off.

Cody Guzman, Monmouth. What a class act. A great wrestler stuck in probably the toughest weight class in Class C lost a heartbreaker in the consolation semi-finals to finish out of the medals. No tantrums, no whining, a total class act all the way. The same can be said for Chad Oakes who, I believe, should have had a two point takedown to put him in the medals. A great kid who gets another chance next year.

Noble pulled it off. I don't know what kind of practices they had during the week or what kind of pep talk Kip gave them at the meet, but it worked. They came out on fire. Massabesic almost pulled off one of the greatest comebacks in Maine sports history. Two great teams in another great battle, as they've been doing all year.

Good to see Cam Bubar get his gold, great kid, great family. Roller Coaster emotions. Burgess vs Daly part IV (or V?). AJ Carrier in the finals and almost over the top. Fields/Robbins. Botting/Thornton. Oakes/McManus. Fredette/Thornton. Gauthier/Powers. Hellum/Duka. Wood/Tibbetts. Heathcote/Sawin. Brackett/Gilman. Badger/Norwald. Lundquist/Gallant. Leeman/L'Heureux. Tripp/Sylvain. Cornell/O'Connor. Doughty/Dunbar. Rowley/Malo. Heanssler/McNamara. Hines/Jordan. Carrier/Schofield .... and so many more great matches.

Could go on but will rap it up with the thought that, because of the archaic rules set in place by the MPA, wrestlers like Dalton Groeger, Steve Martin, DJ Brackett, Ken Hagen, Mark Richardson, TJ Vallee, Clyde Tibbetts ... will not be representing the Great State of Maine at the New Englands.

I encourage all who placed to attend the All-Star tournament on February 21<sup>st</sup>. For those attending the New Englands, you will not find a better tune-up. For other qualifiers, help make this a great tournament. Maine Wrestling needs you.

A chance to avenge a loss, move up in the rankings, wrestle with no pressure (less pressure).

Congrats to Travis Spencer and Joey Eon on each winning their 4<sup>th</sup> State Championship, and to all those who picked up their 100<sup>th</sup> win at this tournament.