

# 2003 Dapper Dan Tournament

## Team USA Best Team Ever to Wrestle at the Dapper Dan

By Skip Parker

**T**his event, in its 29th year, pitted the finest senior wrestlers from around the nation with the finest seniors in Pennsylvania in one half of the competition. In the other half, the Western Pennsylvania All Stars (WPIAL) wrestled team Virginia. This particular competition was historical in many ways. It was the first time Team USA had put 13 wrestlers on the floor with 44 state championships among them, the most ever. They also had the largest number of individual bout victories at 2,196 with only 107 losses.

This was the first time since 1986 that a Virginia seniors team was assembled to wrestle the Western Pennsylvania All Stars. WPIAL won that encounter, 30-22. In a few weight classes, team Virginia did not have their best representatives in this year's competition, because some of those best wrestlers were underclassmen, who were not eligible to compete. All the competitors have to be seniors. However, Team Virginia had some superb wrestlers with impressive credentials. Heading that list was 2x state champion, Brandon Hardy, top ranked senior in the USA in several polls.

Virginia had three 3x state champions in Christian Smith, Donnie Ooton, and Ajay Foreman. Matt Lantz, David Metzler, and Scott Fisher are all 1x champions in Virginia. WPIAL was led by 2002 PA state AAA champion, Drew Headlee (Waynesburg PA). Kirk Main was a state

finalist. Mike Corcetti was a state 3rd place finisher. The other WPIAL wrestlers were well chosen for their skills on the mat. The format for this match was two periods of 2:30 each with wrestlers starting from neutral in both periods. There were 13 weight classes.

The first bout started at 112. Mike Goslicky (Thomas Jefferson, PA) hit an underhook that took Matt Lantz (Cox, VA) to his back and netted 3 nearfall points in the 1st period. That proved to provide the match winning points as Goslicky got WPIAL out to a 3-0 lead by winning a 7-1 decision. At 119, one of the best match-ups of the meet occurred between Drew Headlee and Christian Smith. Headlee scored 1st on a takedown. Smith reversed him. In the 2nd period, Smith got in on a double-leg shot, but Headlee countered and scored the takedown. Smith escaped with 54 seconds to close to 4-3. However, an illegal head-scissors put the match out of reach for him as Headlee won it, 5-3. Brandon Hardy started Team VA's rally running up a 7-1 lead on Valley's Dan Ensico before hitting a lateral drop and pinning him in 3:33. Sam Alveranga continued the assault by breaking a final period 3-3 tie by taking J.J. Zanetta down, straight to his back and getting the pin in 4:32. Donnie Ooton gave team VA its largest lead of the match scoring 2 takedowns and an escape to defeat Eric Svec, 5-4. WPIAL, however, still had a lot of life. Burrell's Jared Shields broke the string of VA victo-

ries with an 11-6 decision over Stonewall Jackson's Patrick Bowman. Kirk Main and Alber Miles scored back-to-back falls over David Metzler and Scott Fisher respectively to give Team PA its second 6-point lead. However, Team Virginia's Ajay Foreman got an escape 21 seconds into the 2nd overtime period to defeat Shady Side Academy's Damian Johnson, 9-8, at 160 and cut the WPIAL lead to 3 points. Mike Corcetti and Eric Cassidy scored back-to-back major decisions over Mike Belew and Robbie Valentine to give WPIAL its largest lead, 29-18, with 2 bouts left. Brandon Raedy and Joe Morrison scored victories at 215 and 275 for team Virginia, but the margins of victory were not enough to overcome the WPIAL lead. WPIAL won it 29-24.

### WPIAL 29 - Virginia 24

- 112. Mike Goslicky (Thomas Jefferson, PA) dec. Matt Lantz (Cox, VA) 7-1
- 119. Drew Headlee (Waynesburg, PA) dec. Christian Smith (Western Branch, VA) 5-3
- 125. Brandon Hardy (Western Branch, VA) pin Dan Ensico (Valley View, PA) 3:33
- 130. Sam Alveranga (Edison, VA) pin J.J. Zanetta (Keystone Oaks, PA) 4:32
- 135. Donnie Ooton (Great Bridge, VA) dec. Eric Svec (Greensburg Salem, PA) 5-4
- 140. Jared Shields (Burrell, PA) dec. Patrick Bowman (Stonewall Jackson, VA) 11-6
- 145. Kirk Main (McGuffey, PA) pin David Metzler (Turner Ashby, VA) 2:01
- 152. Albert Miles (Canon McMillan, PA) pin Scott Fisher (Colonial Forge, VA) 1:14
- 160. Ajay Foreman (Great Bridge, VA) dec. Damian Johnson (Shady Side Academy, PA) 9-8 2OT
- 171. Mike Corcetti (Kiski Area, PA) maj. dec. Mike Belew (Great Bridge, VA) 14-4
- 189. Eric Cassidy (North Allegheny, PA) maj. dec. Rob Valentine (Mt. Vernon, VA) 13-1
- 215. Brandon Raedy (Centreville, VA) dec. Nic SanDoval (Pittsburgh Central Catholic, PA) 2-0
- 275. Joe Morrison (Cox, VA) dec. Tim Frank (Fox Chapel, PA) 0-0 rideout, 2OT



As superb as the Team USA wrestlers were, none were more awesome than 4x Michigan State Champion Roger Kish, Lapeer-West, current USA high school record holder for the most number of bout wins, 252. Kish ran up a 17-5 score on 2x PA state champion. Roger Kish center with team mates, C.P. Schlatte, St. Paris Graham, Ohio, and Mack Reiter, Don Bosco, Iowa.

This victory gave WPIAL a 22-7 record in this event since its inception. They clearly are a very tough group of competitors and this year was certainly no exception.

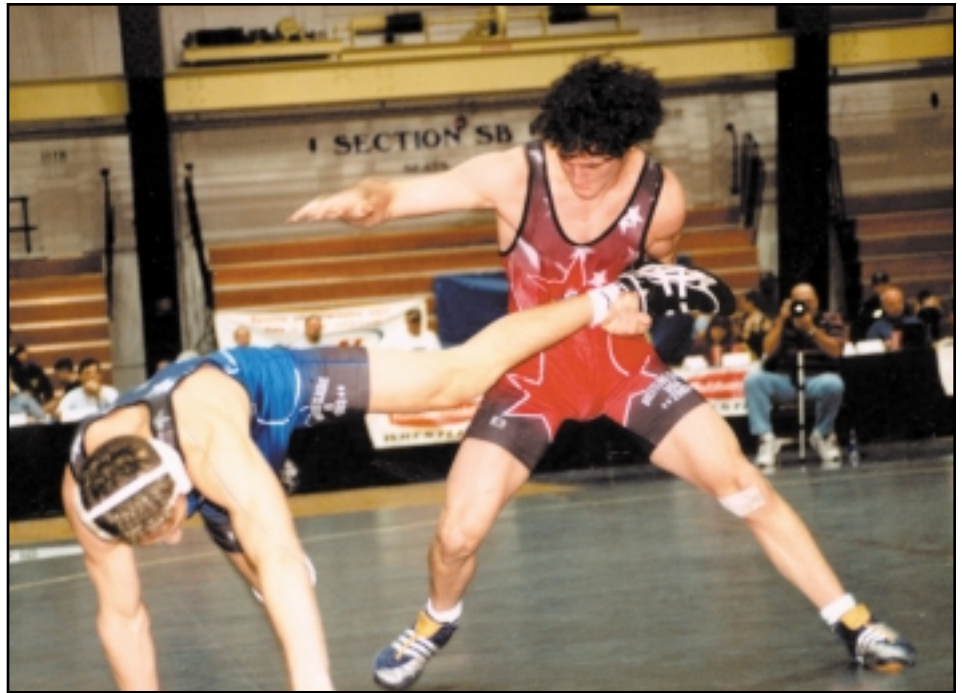
In the next competition, Team USA brought a line-up of heavy-hitters that rivals some of the best teams ever to wrestle at the Dapper Dan. Team USA had 6 wrestlers with 4x state championships and one that was a 5x state champ. None of the Team USA wrestlers had more than 17 losses, while Team Pennsylvania had but 1 wrestler (Mark McKnight) with fewer than 17 losses.

Collectively, Team PA had 13 individual state championships among them. Historically, Team Pennsylvania has gotten the better of Team USA, leading the 28 match series 16-11-1 before this match began. However, this day, it was Team USA that had the irresistible force up and down the order and won it, 48-7, the largest margin of victory by either team in this series.

Brandon Tucker (Broken Arrow, OK), 4x Oklahoma state champion, got things rolling for Team USA. He rolled up a 12-1 lead before pinning PA's Kyle Kemmerer in 3:12. Team Pennsylvania struck back quickly in the persona of PA state champion, Mark McKnight. Mark executed a takedown-and-cut strategy to defeat Eric Sanders, 5x Minnesota State Champion, 14-6. For this performance, McKnight received the Team PA outstanding wrestler award. Joe Markara, 2x state champion from Burrell PA continued the PA assault. His 1st period takedown of 4x Iowa state champ, Mack Reiter, was the difference in this one as Markara won it, 3-1.

At 130, Daniel Frishkorn, 4x Virginia State Champion from Great Bridge and holder of the state's record for most number of victories, turned things around for Team USA. He used combination of takedowns and tilts to score a 16-6 major decision over Dana Gingerich of Delone Catholic. Ryan Lang, 4x Ohio State Champion, got in a hole early on Scott Heckman (Bangor, PA). Heckman ran up a 10-3 lead at end of the 2nd period. Lang, however, reversed Heckman and turned him to his back in the process pinning him 22 seconds into the 3rd period. Team PA never recovered. For that dramatic turnaround, Lang was awarded the "Turning Point of the Match" award.

Blair's Ryan Davis continued Team USA's streak. Davis is a multiple time state champion and multiple time national prep champion. His 4 takedowns coupled with an escape were enough to score a 9-1 major



decision over Matt Kocher (State College, PA). At 145, C.P. Schlatter, 4x Ohio state champion and Jeff Ecklof, 2x PA state champ were locked in a defensive dual. With the score tied 0-0, Ecklof chose to cut Schlatter at the beginning of the 3rd period. However, neither wrestler was able to score and Schlatter won it, 1-0. At 152, Taylor Letters (Shaler Area, PA) executed a fireman's carry on 3x Michigan state champion Eric Tannenbaum, got the takedown in the 1st period, but shortly afterward banged his head on the mat and wasn't able to continue. Tannenbaum won it by injury default. The match at 160 between Blair's Mark Perry (National Prep Champion from Blair) and Zac Fryling (PA state champion from North Penn) was a rematch of the 2002 Beast of the East finals. Perry won that one 10-1. He won this one 9-1 on the strength of his takedowns. Brent Parkey (3x OK state champ) went ahead on a takedown in the 2nd period off an ankle pick and never trailed again as he won a close one over Josh Weitzel (Oxford, PA) 3-2.

As superb as the Team USA wrestlers were, none were more awesome than 4x Michigan State Champion Roger Kish (Lapeer-West, MI), current USA high school record holder for most number of bout wins (252). Kish ran up a 17-5 score on 2x PA state champion, Jake Herbert (North Allegheny), before executing a lift that he used to take Herbert to his back that got him the fall in 5:47.

For this performance, Kish received the Team USA outstanding wrestler award. At 215, Jared Villars (2x Ohio State Champ) continued the Team USA dominance with a 7-3 decision over Josh Kirsch (Mount Union, PA). In the final bout, 2x Illinois

State Champion and 2x Greco-Roman National Champion, Grant Miller (Honnonegah, IL) trailed PA state champion, Tyler Rees 1-0 going into the final period. Miller scored 2 takedowns and an escape in the final period to seal the victory, 5-2.

#### Team USA 48 - Team Pennsylvania 7

- 112. Brandon Tucker (Broken Arrow, OK) pin Kyle Kemmerer (Brandywine Heights, PA) 3:12
- 119. Mark McKnight (Chartiers Valley, PA) maj dec. Eric Sanders (Kellogg, MN) 14-6
- 125. Joe Makara (Burrell, PA) dec. Mack Reiter (Don Bosco, IA) 3-1
- 130. Daniel Frishkorn (Great Bridge, VA) maj. Dec. Dana Gingerich (Delone Catholic, PA) 16-6
- 135. Ryan Lang (St. Edward, OH) pin Scott Heckman (Bangor, PA) 4:22
- 140. Ryan Davis (Blair Academy, NJ) maj. Dec. Matt Kocher (State College, PA) 9-1
- 145. C.P. Schlatter (St. Paris Graham, OH) dec. Jeff Ecklof (Northampton, PA) 1-0
- 152. Eric Tannenbaum (Naperville North, IL) Injury Default Taylor Letters (Shaler Area, PA)
- 160. Mark Perry (Blair Academy, NJ) maj. Dec. Zac Fryling (North Penn, PA) 9-1
- 171. Brent Parkey (Madill, OK) dec. Josh Weitzel (Oxford, PA) 3-2
- 189. Roger Kish (Lapeer-West, MI) pin Jake Herbert (Mount Union, PA) 5:47
- 215. Jared Villars (St. Vincents-St. Mary, OH) dec. Josh Kirsch (Mount Union, PA) 7-3
- 275. Grant Miller (Honnonegah, IL) dec. Tyler Rees (Northern, PA) 5-2

The margin of victory broke the record set by Team PA over Team USA in 1990, 39-9. Team USA's largest margin of victory was 26 points set in 1996, when they defeated team PA 38-12. This was a talent-laden match. Congratulations are in order for Frank Vulcano and the folks who pulled together this event. 🏆