

# SPORTS

## Wrestlers win on emotional night in Brookfield

BY JASON TUREK  
Sports Reporter

Rapice the decision. "Matt almost pulled off the upset," said Levine. "Stratford's wrestler placed in states last year. I was proud of his performance."

Friday night's match against Stratford wasn't just any ordinary meet for the Brookfield wrestlers or even the fans watching in the stands.

Friday will be remembered by many, as the heavy-hearted Bobcats came from behind to upend the Red Devils, 35-28 to improve to 9-5 on the season.

Before the match, there was a moment of silence for those who passed away the past week. Coach Josh Levine lost his father to cancer, senior Joe Milone lost both his grandmother and aunt, and senior Doug Sutherland unexpectedly lost his father Fred. Many of the Brookfield coaches attended the match to give their support.

The meet began at the 215-pound weight class. Stratford dominated the beginning of the meet with three consecutive pins to race out to an 18-0 lead. Matt Volpe (112), who hasn't lost this season, came through in a tough match over Pete Janiski, 2-1, to put the Bobcats on the scoreboard.

Kevin Mooney (119) took control of his match with Brandon Perez in the second period and won by technical fall, 19-4. Dave Hall (125) was tied 6-6 with Jessie Inmann in the middle of the second period before outscoring him 12-5 the rest of the way to inch Brookfield closer to 18-10.

At 130 pounds, Stratford's Rich Rapice and Brookfield's Matt Kozak had a great match as both scored on escapes to end regulation tied at 1-1. After wrestling to a draw in the first overtime, Kozak was on the mat for the second overtime. On a few occasions, Kozak almost got out of Rapice's hold to win a point, but was unable to do so. Because Kozak couldn't score a point being on the mat for the final overtime, a point is awarded to the opposing team, giving

Kyle Bonn (135) controlled his match against Steve Bilodeau and picked up Brookfield's first pin of the match. After Stratford's Steve Falthers won a major decision over Scott Sullivan at 140 pounds, Joe Milone wrestled Mike Baldino.

Milone showed a lot of guts and determination to get points for his team. He held a 3-1 lead at one point, but Baldino came back to force overtime with two escapes.

In the first overtime, Baldino had Milone in a takedown position, but did it out-of-bounds. He went down headfirst into the padding and was given an injury timeout. After, the timeout, he got up and forced another extra session.

Milone was on the mat and nearly got out of Baldino's hold for an escape and a victory. Baldino, though, kept his grip on Milone on two occasions to win the match.

It was the second time Brookfield lost a decision in overtime, but that wasn't going to deter them.

"Both of the overtime matches were well wrestled," said Levine. "It was a little discouraging, but other wrestlers step up when others are down."

And that's exactly what Brookfield did. With four matches to go, Brian Conner (152) made quick work of Carlos Martinez, and Alex Stewart (160) won by forfeit to tie the match at 28. Ben Hadden (171) pulled out a 7-2 decision over Jordan Belle to give the Bobcats their first lead at 31-28 with one match to go.

At 189 pounds, it was up to Doug Sutherland to secure the win for Brookfield. As his name was announced, the crowd gave



Brookfield's Matt Volpe, top, takes down Stratford's Peter Janiski Friday night in Brookfield. Volpe won by decision 2-1. Photographs by Laurie Gabor

him a standing ovation.

Sutherland faced a tough opponent in Ralph Brunks, but looked dominant in his return to the mat. He nearly pinned Brunks on a few occasions, and when Brunks tried to gain momentum, he was denied.

In the end, Sutherland picked up the 9-0 major decision and sealed the win for Brookfield.

At the end of the match, Sutherland embraced his brother Jason, and the other members of the wrestling team came to the center of the mat to celebrate and share in the moment while the crowd gave a standing ovation that lasted more than one minute.

"We gave a group hug and a tear," said Levine. "They were tears of togetherness."

While Levine said he didn't expect Sutherland to wrestle, he knew he would because his team needed him.

"When Doug came to practice the day before, he knew we needed him for today," he said. "Today he helped us win and showed us what heart is, as well."

Sutherland said his match was the best of his life.

"This match was better than any match I've wrestled in my career," said an emotional Sutherland. "There's no better way to honor my father's memory than to wrestle and win. I also wrestled for the team."

"I knew it was going to be in a close meet and I had to get back into the wrestling mode," he added.

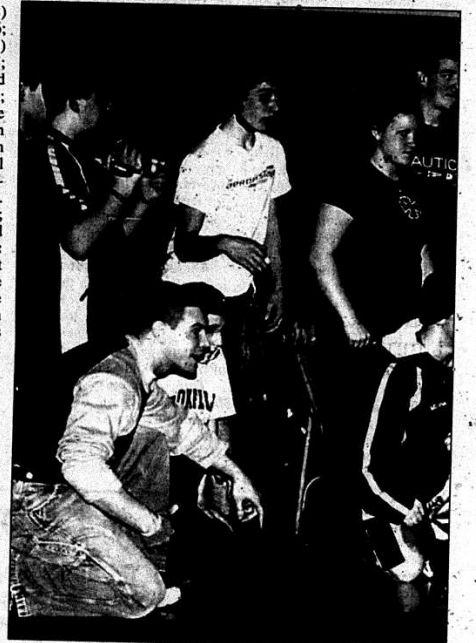
On Saturday, the wrestlers traveled to Darien high school and swept the meet by defeating Putnam Valley 63-14, Wilton 56-18, and Darien 55-15 to improve its record to 12-5.

Matt Volpe, Ben Hadden, Nick Fiore, Dave Hall, Matt Kozak, Kyle Bonn, Joe Milone, and Brian Conner all picked up three victories while Kevin Mooney, Doug Sutherland and Max Beaudry had two wins apiece.

- Brookfield 35 Stratford 28
- 215: Steve Figueroa (S) pinned Max Beaudry (B), 2:46;
  - 275: Chris Mucherino (S) pinned Nick Fiore (B), 3:35;
  - 103: Anthony Ricco (S) pinned Sarit Ofer-Moran (B), 1:33;
  - 112: Matt Volpe (B) dec. Pete Janiski (S), 2-1;
  - 119: Kevin Mooney (B) tech. fall Brandon Perez (S), 19-4;
  - 125: Dave Hall (B) dec. Jesse Inmann (S), 18-11;
  - 130: Rich Rapice (S) dec. Matt Kozak (B), 2-1 (2OT);
  - 135: Kyle Bonn (B) pinned Steve Bilodeau (S), 3:07;
  - 140: Steve Falthers (S) dec. Scott Sullivan (B), 16-8;
  - 145: Mike Baldino (S) dec. Joe Milone (B), 4-3 (2OT);
  - 152: Brian Conner (B) pinned Carlos Martinez (S), 1:00;
  - 160: Alex Stewart (B) won by forfeit;
  - 171: Ben Hadden (B) dec. Jordan Belle (S), 7-2;
  - 189: Doug Sutherland (B) maj. dec. Ralph Brunks (S), 9-0.

- Jan. 29 results
- Brookfield 63 Putnam Valley 14
- 171: Hadden (B) pinned Tim O'Reilly (P), 1:59;
  - 189: Sutherland (B) pinned Andrew Piener (P), 1:47;
  - 215: Beaudry (B) pinned Nick Shute (P), 1:47;
  - 275: Fiore (B) pinned Evan Voliun (P), 0:24;
  - 103: Ofer-Moran (B) won by forfeit;
  - 112: Volpe (B) dec. Alex Patora (P), 4-2;
  - 119: Anthony Fugis (P) tech. dec. Dan Handley (B), 19-2;
  - 125: Hall (B) pinned Cody Sharp (P), 1:32;
  - 130: Kozak (B) pinned John Rios (P), 1:17;
  - 135: Bonn (B) won by forfeit;
  - 140: Milone (B) won by forfeit;
  - 145: Anthony Whittaker (P) dec. Sullivan (B), 7-3;
  - 152: Conner (B) pinned Nick Volpe (P), 3:03;
  - 160: Matt Fiehler (P) pinned Chip Reagan (B), 2:38.

- Brookfield 56 Wilton 18
- 171: Hadden (B) dec. Alex Kohl-Gardner (W), 3-0;
  - 189: Sutherland (B) pinned Eric Knoff (W), 3:12;
  - 215: Nick Drummond (W) pinned Dan Koehm (B), 2:38;
  - 275: Fiore (B) won by forfeit;
  - 103: Jack Beakerman (W) pinned Ofer-Moran (B), 1:12;
  - 112: Volpe (B)



The Brookfield sideline cheers on one of its wrestlers during the meet against Stratford. Photographs by Laurie Gabor

- 119: Mooney (B) dec. John Langsley (W), 8-7;
- 125: Hall (B) pinned Jordan Bioandi (W), 2:35;
- 130: Kozak (B) pinned Gordon Brown (W), 0:37;
- 135: Bonn (B) maj. dec. Bryant Briggs (W), 9-0;
- 140: Milone (B) pinned George Santiago (W), 2:39;
- 145: Sullivan (B) maj. dec. Preston Bard (W), 17-7;
- 152: Conner (B) pinned Sean Clancy (W), 1:20;
- 160: Jesse Korpinski (W) pinned Reagan (B), 1:52.
- Brookfield 55 Darien 15
- 171: Hadden (B) dec. Boothe Givens (D), 4-1;
- 189: Sutherland (B) won by forfeit;
- 275: Fiore (B) pinned Andrew Smith (D), 3:16;
- 103: Joey Testa (D) dec. Ofer-Moran (B), 5-2;
- 112: Volpe (B) won by forfeit;
- 119: Mooney (B) dec. Meaghan Foley (D), 5-1;
- 125: Hall (B) won by forfeit;
- 130: Kozak (B) dec. Anowia Yamaguchi (D), 7-1;
- 135: Bonn (B) maj. dec. Trevor Buchmayer (D), 13-2;
- 140: Milone (B) won by forfeit;
- 145: John Berry (D) pinned Sullivan (B), 4:34;
- 152: Conner (B) pinned Todd Yarish (D), 2:18;
- 160: Stewart (B)



Brookfield's Kyle Bonn pins Steve Bilodeau in the 135-pound eight class in 3:07. It was the first pin of the match for the Bobcats as they rallied to defeat the Red Devils 35-28.