



LaSalle's Zach Clemente, above, throws MacArthur's Brian Herold in the 145-pound final, and Shenendehowa's Austin Meys, right, tangles with Matt Loew of Wantagh at 189 pounds during the state wrestling championships Saturday night at the Times Union Center. Both repeated as state champions, Clemente with an 8-7 decision, and Meys with a first-period pin.

BARRY SLOAN/
GAZETTE PHOTOGRAPHER





STATE WRESTLING

Meys doesn't waste any time

Claims third championship

BY BILL PALMER
Gazette Sportswriter

ALBANY — Not even the clock could beat Austin Meys.

The senior from Shenendehowa closed his high school career by winning his third state title — second in a row — Saturday night at the state high school wrestling championships at the Times Union Center.

Meys pinned Matt Loew of Section VIII's Wantagh with one second left in the first period of their 189-pound final, joining Salem's Frank Fronhofer and Jon Cardi

of Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake as Section I's only three-time state champions.

"I heard the count going 5, 4, 3," said Meys, who needed even less time to roll through his first three pins to get to the final. "I almost expected to hear the buzzer before I got it."

Meys used his power three-quarter nelson to roll Loew to his back in the closing seconds of the match.

"I don't use it on everybody, but I can usually get it," Meys said of the move which has led to most of his pins.

Two of Meys' titles have been in this building. He won at 103 pounds as a sophomore, and has five top-five finishes in state tournament competition. His last seven matches

at this level have ended in pins.

"This is the third one, so it's very satisfying," said Meys, who locked up his second straight Division I Most Outstanding Wrestler Award with his 263rd win in 271 high school bouts. "It would have been disappointing not to get it."

LaSalle teammates Zach Clemente (140) and Ken Altarac (285) won their second straight state DI titles. Section II was shut out in the DII finals, as Schalmont junior Vinny Gallo (171), Jeremy Burns (189) of Hoosick Falls and Schuylerville 285 Dan Ladd all finished with silver medals.

Clemente was not completely satisfied with his 8-7 win over Section VIII champ Brian Herold, but he wasn't going to refuse his second straight title.

"I thought it was kind of a poor performance on my part," said the University of Virginia-bound senior. "I like to be a little flashier, get more takedowns. But he had a lot of heart."

"I gave up two takedowns, and I haven't done that all year. But that's wrestling. I'm glad I got the 'W.'" Clemente trailed in the second period until hitting a takedown with 40 seconds left, taking the lead for good.

Altarac avenged a loss when he decided J.D.Zitone of Port Jervis in his final. The Section IX champ won their meeting at the Eastern States Classic in a bout where Altarac injured his left knee.

"That cost me a couple of

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Meys: Third state wrestling crown

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weeks," said Altarac, who has been the nation's top-ranked 285 most of the winter. "It was good to win here. I had a lot of people rooting for me."

For the first time, an attempt was made to seed the tournament. Only seven of the Division I top seeds advanced to the final. Eight second seeds held up.

Gallo was the first finalist from his school since Jeremy Cuomo won the DI 103 title in 2006. He fell behind Greene's Tyler Beckwith, 3-0, eventually dropping a 7-0 decision.

"I was down, 3-0, and I needed two takedowns pretty quickly," Gallo said. "I tried a shot, he countered and caught me off-balance."

Gallo is hoping to return next year and improve on his showing.

"Winning the quarterfinal was important because that locked in my top-six finish," said Gallo. "I'm going to get home and do more lifting and more work, get ready for football and wrestling seasons."

Ladd was the first state finalist for the Black Horses. The Panthers hadn't had a wrestler get to the finals since Jake Gardner in 1993, when the tournament was one division.

Amsterdam's Giuseppe Lanzi (140) and Zeal McGrew (215) of Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake placed third in the Division I tournament. Scotia-Glenville's Dan Riggi (125) and Shenendehowa's John Belanger (119) took fourth; Luke Popolizio (112) of Shenendehowa and Guilderland's Matt Cubillos (130) finished fifth; and Amsterdam senior John Paris (160) took sixth.

Lanzi, who went over the 200-win mark as he finished his junior year, bounced back from a quarterfinal loss.

"I learned you've got to be prepared every match," Lanzi said of his first trip to the state tournament. "Everybody here is a tough wrestler."

"I just had to refocus and make my goal finishing as high as I could.

'It was good to win here. I had a lot of people rooting for me.'

KEN ALTARAC

LaSalle senior

Lane-I), 8-5; 135 — Stephen Dutton (Rocky Point-XI) dec. Andrew Lenzi (Fordham Prep-CHSAA), 10-1; 140 — Andy Rodriguez (Central Islip-XI) dec. Nick Terdick (Island Trees-XI), 3-2; 145 — Zach Clemente (LaSalle) dec. Brian Herold (MacArthur-VIII), 8-7; 152 — John Greisheimer (Wantagh-VIII) dec. Josh Veltre (Greece Olympia-V), 4-3; 160 — James Brundage (Ossining-I) dec. T.J. Neidhart (Shoreham Wading River-XI), 17-10; 171 — Jesse Villella (Chenango Forks-V) dec. Matt Parlier (Port Jervis-IX), 7-0; 189 — Austin Meys (Shenendehowa) pinned Matt Loew (Wantagh-VIII), 1:59; 215 — Ernest James (Longwood-XI) dec. Steven Butler (Port Jervis-IX), 4-0; 285 — Ken Altarac (LaSalle) dec. J.D. Zitone (Port Jervis-IX), 7-5.

Semifinal results

96 — Mi. Soria pinned Sam Speno (Fox Lane-I), 3:51; C.Rasheed pinned Joe Barabato (Wantagh-VIII), :54. 103 — Realbuto dec. Jimmy Morris (St. Anthony's-CHSAA), 10-3; McQueen dec. Malik Rasheed (Longwood-XI), 8-3. 112 — Greene pinned Bob Dierna (Wayne-5), :24; Rodrigues dec. Kenneth Collado (Hauppauge-XI), 5-3. 119 — Keith pinned John Belanger (Shenendehowa-II), 1:21; Fiamio dec. Taylor Larala (NFA-IX), 5-2. 125 — Franco dec. Dan Riggi (Scotia-Glenville-II), 1-0; Arujau dec. Casey LaNave (Chenango Forks-IV), 5-0. 130 — Grippi dec. Cody Ruggirello (Valley Central-IX), 9-8; Digravio dec. Jared Messina (Cheektowaga-VI), 15-10. 135 — Dutton dec. Jimmy Kloc (Iroquois-VI), 12-0; Lenzi dec. Udrit Thakur (Nyack-I), 14-3. 140 — Rodriguez dec. Mike Santalla (Warwick Valley-IX), 7-1; Terdick dec. Matt Eberlein (Island Trees-VIII), 5-1. 145 — Clemente dec. Anthony Volpe (Rocky Point-XI), 9-4; Herold dec. Ryan Tompkins (Beacon-I), 7-4. 152 — Veltre dec. Steven Ramos (Clarkstown North-I), 4-0; Greisheimer dec. Zach McCormick (Johnson City-IV), 6-5. 160 — Brundage pinned John Paris (Amsterdam-II), 5:51; Neidhart dec. John Velieri (Hilton-V), 3-1 (OT). 171 — Parlier dec. Clayton Neivert (Ossining-I), 11-3; Villella dec. Angelo Malvestuto (Niagara-Wheatfield-VI), 6-2. 189 — Meys pinned James Brain (Minisink Valley-IX), :52; Loew pinned Zach Bounaiuto (Miller Place-XI), 4:16. 215 — James dec. Paul Glover (Spencerport-V), 5-2; Butler dec. Zeal McGrew (Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake-II), 4-2 (OT). 285 — Zitone dec. Brendan Byrne (Minisink Valley-IX), 9-6; Altarac dec. Elijah Graham (Corcoran-III), 3-0.

Section II results

96 — Josh St. John, Queensbury (0-2), DNP. 103 — Nick Kelly, Shenendehowa (1-2) DNP; Jeff King, Averill Park (1-2) DNP; Zach Hamell, Queensbury (1-2) DNP. 112 — Luke Popolizio, Shenendehowa (4-2) fifth; Conor Sutton, LaSalle (2-2) DNP. 119 — John Belanger, Shenendehowa (3-2), fourth. 125 — Dan Riggi, Scotia-Glenville (3-2), fifth. 130 — Matt Cubillos, Guilderland (4-2) fifth. 135 — Nick Lashway, Glens Falls (1-1, disqualified) DNP; Brian Latham, Columbia (1-2) DNP. 140 — Giuseppe Lanzi, Amsterdam (5-1), fifth. 145 — Zach Clemente, LaSalle (4-0), Champion. 152 — Eliah Golding, Colonie (1-2) DNP. 160 — John Paris, Amsterdam (2-3) sixth. 171 — Dan McNamara, Amsterdam (2-2), DNP. 189 — Austin Meys, Shenendehowa (4-0), Champion. 215 — Zeal McGrew, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake (4-1), third; Devan VanAuken, Guilderland (1-2), DNP. A.J. Mon-

That meant wrestling back hard for third."

Riggi dropped a 1-0 semifinal to returning state champ Jamie Franco, pinned to get to the third-place bout, then lost to previous state placer Casey LaNave, 6-4, in his final high school bout.

"There was no way I was going to finish sixth," said Riggi. "I finished fourth in weight class with a bunch of state champions and place finishers. I placed higher than my [fifth] seed, and the coaches stressed to us that was a goal.

"I thought I wrestled all four of my matches. I wasn't going to leave anything out there."

Riggi finished with a school-record 177 wins, including a season-record 49. He also has the school record for pins in a career.

McGrew closed his season with a win, downing 2008 state champ Paul Glover, 6-5, in the third-place bout. He dropped a 4-2 OT decision to Section IX champ Steven Butler in the semis, an improvement from a 12-1 loss when they met in the Eastern States Classic.

Cubillos won four matches in the two days, winding up with a 7-1 win over Catholic schools champ Connor Hanafee in his scholastic finale, which was his school-record 168th win.

Paris lost all three of his bouts Saturday, starting with a pinfall loss in the semis.

Popolizio, second the last two years, eliminated LaSalle's Conor Sutton in the 112 wrestlebacks.

Duanesburg's Nick Gwiazdowski had a memorable final bout in his sophomore year, winning his third-place bout at 189 in DII in overtime. It was also his 100th varsity win.

"I had beaten him [2008 runner-up Dan Fruscella] before this season, and I felt I could take him down," said Gwiazdowski. "It's great to finish third, but you want to win states."

Gwiazdowski lost his semi to Hoosick Falls' Jeremy Burns, reversing the result of their bout in the Section II finals.

Johnstown's Mark Gillen followed last year's sixth-place finish with a third at 130, a result matched by Schuylerville eighth-grader Brandon Goldup at 96 pounds.

Whitehall freshman Zach Diekel placed fourth at 171, and his teammate, eighth-grader Ty White, was sixth at 103 in his second trip to the states.

Brian Walsh of Watervliet (135), Taylor Robichaud of Hoosick Falls

in, Colonie (1-2) DNP. 285 — Ken Altarac, LaSalle (4-0), Champion; Nate Brown, Averill Park (1-2) DNP.

DIVISION II

Team results

Championship finals

96 — Jacob Goddeau (Peru-VII) dec. Carlene Sluberski (Fredonia-VI), 7-2; 103 — Arik Robinson (Peru-VII) dec. Colton Dalberth (Marion-V), 4-0; 112 — Kyle McGregor (Tonawanda-VI) dec. Kyle Crisafulli (Phoenix-III), 2-0; 119 — Matt Peters (East Aurora-VI) dec. Quinton Murphy (Holley-V), 4-0; 125 — Nick Wilcox (Greene-IV) dec. Sean Walton (Palmyra-Macedon-V), 6-4; 130 — Derak Heyman (Tioga-IV) dec. Genta Murayama (Edgemont-I), 7-4; 135 — Alex Eckstrom (Palmyra-Macedon-V) dec. Ian Paddock (Warsaw-V), 4-3; 140 — Kyle Dake (Lansing-IV) dec. Mike Levinger (Letchworth-V), 2-1; 145 — Brian Sewalt (Waverly-IV) dec. Victor Coronado (BGA-A), 1-0; 152 — Kenny Betts (Fredonia-V) dec. Craig Scott (Frewsburg-VI), 6-4; 160 — Ryan LeBlanc (Morrisville-Eaton-III) dec. David Kohlbach (Windsor-IV), 4-2. 171 — Tyler Beckwith (Greene-IV) dec. Vinny Gallo (Schalmont-II), 7-0; — Chris Nocchi (Waverly-IV) dec. Jeremy Burns (Hoosick Falls-II), 13-6; 215 — Kyle Colling (Pioneer-VI) dec. Craig Amidon (Canisteo-VI), 9-4; 285 — R.J. Sharp (Red Creek-V) dec. Dan Ladd (Schuylerville-II), 2-1.

Semifinal results

96 — Sluberski dec. Tom Page (Eden-VI), 6-5; Goddeau dec. Corey Dake (Lansing-IV), 7-3. 103 — Dalberth dec. Ty White (Whitehall-II), 11-1; Robinson pinned Kevin Strong (Frewsburg), :47.112 — McGregor dec. Joe Smaldone (Geneva-5), 3-0; Crisafulli dec. Kyle Conrad (Bath-V), 5-2. 119 — Peters dec. Derrick Pfluger (Sandy Creek-III), 10-2; Murphy dec. Patrick Hogan (Peru-VII), 14-2. 125 — Wilcox pinned Dalton Scalf (Frewsburg-VI), 5:33; Walton dec. Sean Hanson (South Jefferson), 11-0. 130 — Heyman dec. Tim Banks (Holley-V), 11-1; Murayama dec. Devin Soper (Waverly-IV), 2-1. 135 — Paddock dec. Bucky Hendrickson (Letchworth-V), 9-8; Ekstrom dec. Brett Sewalt (Waverly-IV), 8-5.140 — Nevinger technical fall over Ben Freeman (Copenhagen-III); Dake dec. Kenneth Kampanich (Watertown IHC-III), 5-4. 145 — Sewalt dec. Owen Scott (Lyons-V), 5-4; Coronado (BGA-IV) dec. Mark Crisafulli (Phoenix-III), 6-3.152 — Scott dec. Jon Strong (Lyons-V), 6-4; Betts dec. Jason Fraser (Alfred-Almond), 8-2. 160 — Kohlbach pinned Brandon Mills (Canisteo-VI), 4:52; LeBlanc dec. Taylor Robichaud (Hoosick Falls), 12-2. 171 — Beckwith technical fall over Cody Hutcheson (Bath-V), 15-0; Gallo dec. Cody Reed (Walton-V), 5-2. 189 — Nocchi pinned Dan Fruscella (Holland Patent-II), 3:33; Burns dec. Nick Gwiazdowski (Duanesburg-II), 3-2 (2OT). 215 — Colling dec. Julius Anglikas (Southampton-XI), 6:22. Amidore dec. Tyler Leavine (Saranac-VII), 12-4. 285 — Ladd pinned Sean Mellow (Peru-VI), 1:32; Sharp dec. Michael Raplee (Dundee-V), 11-7.

Section II results

96 — Brandon Goldup, Schuylerville (5-1), third. John Delaney, Watervliet (0-2) DNP. 103 — Ty White, Whitehall (2-3), sixth; Noah Valastro, Hudson Falls (2-2) DNP. 112 — Joey Persico, Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk (0-2) DNP. 119 — Evan Borst, Duanesburg (2-2) DNP; Curt Thompson, Whitehall (1-2) DNP. 125 — Andy Lyman, Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk (3-3), sixth. 130 — Mark Gillen, Johnstown (5-1), third; Aaron Dudley, Hudson Falls (0-2) DNP. 135 — Brian Walsh, Watervliet (3-3), sixth. 140 — Jake Oswald, Tamarac (1-2) DNP. 145 — Joey Morrison, Johnstown (0-2) DNP. 152 — Jerry Clark, Voorheesville (1-2) DNP; David Adams, Salem (0-2) DNP. 160 — Taylor Robichaud, Hoosick Falls (2-3), sixth. 171 — Zach Diekel, Whitehall (4-2), fourth; Vinny Gallo, Schalmont (3-1), second (3-1), second. 189 — Nick Gwiazdowski, Duanesburg (4-1) third; Jeremy Burns, Hoosick Falls (3-1) second. 215 — Logan Rock, Warrensburg (2-2) DNP; Greg Molnow, Cohoes (1-2) DNP. 285 — Dan Ladd, Schuylerville. (3-1), second.

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(160) and Ravena's Andy Lyman (125) all placed sixth.

Section II finished second in the DI team race to Section XI after winning in 2008. Shenendehowa, which won the last two team titles, was fourth. The DII team took fifth.

DIVISION I

Championship finals

96 — Mike Soria (Kings Park-XI) dec. Corey Rasheed (Longwood-XI), 7-0; 103 — Brian Realbuto (Somers-I) dec. Damon McQueen (Huntington-XI), 9-8; 112 — Grant Greene (St. Anthony's-C) dec. Steven Rodrigues (Fox Lane-I), 11-7; 119 — Steven Keith (Shoreham Wading River-XI) dec. Justis Flamio (Fox Lane-I), 6-4 (OT); 125 — Nick Araujo (Syosset) dec. Jamie Franco (Monroe-Woodbury-IX), 4-0; 130 — Vinnie Digraio (Wayne-V) dec. Joe Grippi (Fox