

Jan. 27 Mercer County Wrestling Tournament

Steinert second in team standings; 12 township wrestlers reach semis

By Ken Weingartner

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Jan. 27: When Steinert High wrestling coach Adam Jankos heard the team standings following the completion of action on the opening night of the Mercer County Tournament, he was somewhat startled, in a pleasant kind of way. The Spartans were in second place in the 16-team event trailing only defending champion Hopewell Valley.

“I was really surprised at second,” Jankos said. “I didn’t think that was where we would be. With the two new teams (Lawrenceville Prep and Peddie) in there, there’s more teams pulling from the points to get. I think that’s kind of how we got there.

“We had a couple guys that had seeds to place and ended up losing; maybe they will get that place by the wrestlebacks. That’s what is good about the Mercer County Tournament; you have a tough match in the quarters, you can come back and take third. When you do that, you score a lot of points for your team.

“I feel like the weight classes have a lot of tough kids in them. I have tough kids, and my kids are seeded higher than these kids, but the kids that are seeded a little bit lower are really going after it. You’ve got to hand it to those guys; when you’re an underdog you go out there and do as much as can to win. It looked like there were a lot of dogs out there tonight with a lot of fight.”

Nottingham ended the night in eighth place, one spot ahead of Hamilton West. Wrestling resumes Saturday morning at 9 a.m. with consolation action. The semifinals are expected to begin at 10:30 and the championship finals are scheduled for 4:30.

Semifinal Match-Ups

Here is a look at township wrestlers in the semis:

106 – Nottingham’s Josh Magee, the No. 2 seed, faces Hopewell Valley’s Jackson Place, who is seeded third. Magee is 14-4 while Place is 18-5. Magee beat Hightstown’s Jeff Weingast, 14-0, in the quarters.

120 – Hamilton West’s Jared Staub is the No. 1 seed and will face Allentown’s Chris Weitz. Staub is 12-1 after pinning Lawrence’s Gavin Schenk in the quarters. Weitz, the fifth seed, is 12-7. Steinert’s Tyler Beers, the No. 2 seed, meets third-seeded Patrick McLaughlin from Lawrenceville Prep. Beers won 13-2 over West Windsor-Plainsboro South’s Ryan Moshman in the quarters to improve to 13-3. McLaughlin is 18-2.

126 – Steinert’s Joe Michel, the No. 1 seed, meets West’s Nick Cecala, the fourth seed, in the semis. Michel, who won the title at 112 last year, beat Nottingham’s Jacob Kouroume, 4-2, in the quarters to improve to 15-1. Cecala, who just return to action from a quad injury, is 7-2 and beat Peddie’s Patrick Creamer in the quarters.

145 – Nottingham’s Waleed Abouelela, the No. 2 seed, faces third-seeded Alex McLaughlin from Lawrenceville Prep in the semis. Abouelela, who is 16-4, pinned Allentown’s Andrew Shreck in the quarters. McLaughlin is 13-4.

152 – Steinert’s Brandon Bernstein, the No. 3 seed, meets Hopewell Valley’s Eric Barbera, the second seed. Bernstein won 9-3 over West’s Darius Miller in the quarters to improve to 11-3. Barbera, who won the title at 145 last year, is 19-5.

160 – Steinert’s Matt McDonald, the No. 1 seed, faces Allentown’s Mark Meloro. McDonald won 8-6 over Notre Dame’s Zach Hankinson in the quarters and is 13-1. Meloro, the fourth seed, is 14-8.

170 – Steinert’s Sean McDonald, the third seed, takes on Lawrenceville Prep’s Peter Griffith,

the No. 2 seed, in the semis. McDonald won by technical fall over West's Ryan Carson-Burch in the quarters and upped his record to 15-2. Griffith is 14-3.

182 – Nottingham's Jancel Nunez, the No. 3 seed, meets Hightstown's Joey DeCristofaro. Nunez, who is 17-3, won 16-6 over Hopewell Valley's Adam Ames in the quarters. DeCristofaro, who is seeded second, is 19-1.

195 – Nottingham's Wroway Williams, the top seed, faces Trenton's Jason Levy. Williams pinned Steinert's Kazier John in the quarters to improve to 16-2. Levy, the fourth seed, is 9-5.

285 – Steinert's Mike Remboski, the No. 4 seed, meets No. 1 Tyler Gildner of Robbinsville. Remboski pinned Hightstown's Tim Curry in the quarters and is 12-3. Gildner is 15-2.