

Jan. 7 Wrestling

Spartans are starting to live up to the high opinion Jankos has of them

By Ken Weingartner
Fish4Scores.com

Jan. 7: Success on the wrestling mats often begins in the practice room. That, no doubt, is the case at Steinert, but the turning point of the Spartans' season might have taken place in the classroom.

Steinert was 0-3 following a late December setback to Lacey Township. When the squad returned from the holiday break, coach Adam Jankos brought the varsity wrestlers together for a talk. Since the chat, the Spartans are 4-0 and coming off impressive wins today over Trenton and Bordentown.

"I try to emphasize every day in practice that this is one of the best teams ever at Steinert," Jankos said. "The guys have to know that. When we started at 0-3 I just didn't want them to shut down.

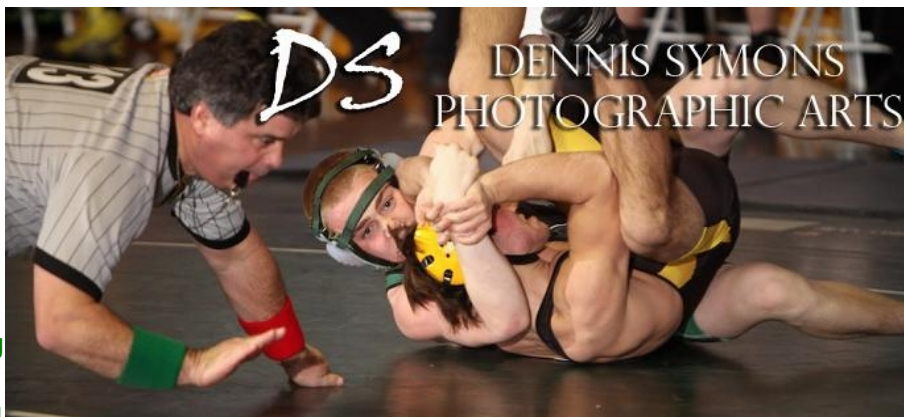
"We broke off in our own directions over the break and when we came back we got in the classroom, just the varsity, just me, and we had a heart-to-heart about what we wanted to do as a team. Do we want to move forward and be successful, or do we just want to be an average team in the CVC."

The answer can be discerned from Steinert's results. Since the start of the New Year, the Spartans have defeated Hightstown (37-30), Allentown (44-27), Trenton (66-11) and Bordentown (49-20). The first three triumphs were Colonial Valley Conference matches and the victory over Bordentown was over a non-league foe that just knocked off defending District 25 champion Northern Burlington.

"We started slowly, but we definitely picked it back up," junior Sean Augustyn said. "I think a lot of it has to do with our coaches just encouraging us, our parents encouraging us – everything. Everyone is encouraging us."

Augustyn was one of the many Steinert stars today. In the match against Bordentown, he defeated Drew Pedersen, 8-7, at 145 pounds for his third consecutive triumph and fifth overall. Pedersen entered the bout with a 7-2 record, with his two losses coming by a total of three points in a tournament.

The win by Augustyn followed Troy Flood's quick pin at 138 that ignited a seven-bout win streak for the Spartans. At the end of the seven victories – which included Brandon Bernstein's defensive pin, Matt



Troy Flood pins Bordentown's Dennis Baker in 26 seconds (above) and then celebrates his speedy victory at 138 pounds today (Photos by Dennis Symons Jr./purchase photos at www.dennisymons.com).

McDonald's win by DQ because of a slam, Sean McDonald's pin, River Ulrich's decision and John Bussi's pin – Steinert had an insurmountable 39-5 lead with five matches to go.

"Each win fires us up," Augustyn said. "Everyone just wants to wrestle his best; everyone is just in the zone. It makes you want to keep it going and not let your teammates down."

Also getting wins against Bordentown were Mike Remboski with a pin at heavyweight, Tyler Beers with a major decision at 113 and Joe Michel with a decision at 126. Michel won a hard-fought battle, 4-3, over Justin McTamney, who was 8-1 with eight pins. Michel is 9-1.

Earlier in the day, Steinert won 66-11 over Trenton, avenging a narrow loss to the Tornados a year ago. Getting pins were Nate Benitez (113), Beers, Michel, Augustyn, Matt McDonald, Sean McDonald, Bussi and Remboski (285). Ulrich and Luis Leon (220) won decisions while Owen Garton (106) and Joe Paragone (132) won by forfeits.

"When we have our pre-practice meetings, we just make sure everybody is on the same page and everybody is doing their job," Jankos said. "Our practices kind of remind me of a college practice. Some of the time when we're drilling, I take a step back and say this is what we need to be doing to get to where we want to go.

"We're definitely on our way to going there."

The victory over Bordentown might be a good gauge.

"I think it shows the team what we're capable of," Jankos said. "We've lost to Bordentown multiple times and we know they're a strong program and have a tough team every year. We just put guys out on the mat and they see we can hang with these guys. Then, it's 'Hey, we can beat these guys.' I think that's what started happening; they realized we can beat these teams."

A lesson started in the classroom, come to fruition in the real world.

Swamprats roll to three wins against South Jersey competition

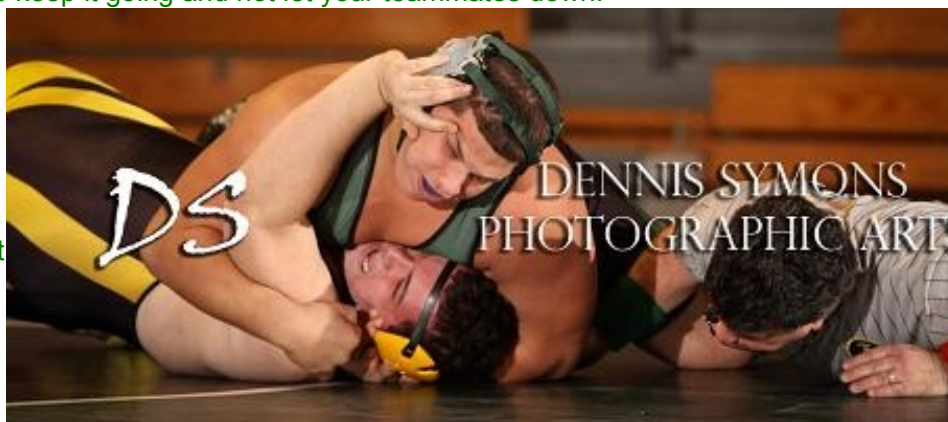
Nottingham upped its record to 9-2 with three wins today. The Swamprats beat Delran (36-24), Haddon Township (36-28) and Sterling (62-15).

Against Haddon, the Swamprats trailed 28-15, but got pins from Wroway Williams (195), Kevin Meneus (220) and Kevin Ronan (285) plus a 9-8 decision from Josh Magee (106) to pull out the victory. Justin Dempsey (132) and Sidibrima Massaquoi also had pins for Nottingham and Waleed Abouelela won a decision.

In the match against Delran, the squads split the 14 bouts, but Nottingham registered five pins while yielding only one. Hamzah Mohammed (113), Hector Davila (120), Abouelela, Jared Lavarra (182) and Williams all got pins for the Swamprats while Massaquoi and Jancel Nunez (170) won decisions.

There was no drama against Sterling as Nottingham had eight pins, with six coming in the first periods of bouts. Notching pins were Davila, Jacob Kouroume (126), Dempsey, Abouelela, Massaquoi, Kerven Simon (160), Lavarra and Hector Comulado (195). Magee won by technical fall and Meneus won a decision and Nunez won by forfeit for the Swamprats.

Nottingham is scheduled to host West Windsor-Plainsboro South Tuesday and Lawrence



Mike Remboski pins Bordentown's Joe Santos at heavyweight to help Steinert win its second match of the day and fourth straight overall (Photo by Dennis Symons Jr./purchase photos at www.dennissymons.com).

Wednesday.

Staub remains unbeaten but Hornets lose to Allentown and New Egypt

Hamilton West dropped matches against Allentown and New Egypt today despite seeing Jared Staub remain undefeated with two wins at 126 pounds. The Hornets fell 54-18 to Allentown and 45-21 to New Egypt.

Joining Staub in the win column against Allentown were Mark McKenzie (195) and Chris Bohorquez (106), who got pins, and Darius Miller (152), who won a 2-1 decision.

Against New Egypt, Staub won by technical fall. Anthony Kubish (145) pinned, Miller won a major decision and McKenzie won by forfeit. Staub is 8-0 this season.

Hamilton gave up forfeits at 113 and 120 in both matches. The Hornets, who are 2-3, host Hightstown Wednesday night.