Indiana High School Athletic Association

9150 North Meridian Street, Box 40650, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240-0650 Phone: 317-846-6601�� Fax: 317-575-4244� & Website: www.ihsaa.org Blake Ress, Commissioner

MEDIA

ADVISORY

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FOUR-MIDABLE! TSIRTSIS AND MAURER WIN CROWNS

Four-time state champions don to come around too often, but to have two in the same year in this sport? Well that sexactly what fans of Indiana high school wrestling were treated to on Saturday evening in the finals of the 66th Annual IHSAA Individual Wrestling State Tournament at Conseco Fieldhouse.

Griffithes Alex Tsirtsis and Evansville Mater Deies Blake Maurer, from extreme opposite ends of the state, Tsirtsis from northwest Indiana and Maurer from southwest Indiana, began their high school careers on top as freshmen and thates exactly where they both ended as seniors.

Tsirtsis defeated Wesley English of Merrillville for the fifth time this season, 10-5, in the 145 finale, while Maurer (183-2 career and 45-0 this season) took a 9-5 decision from Franklines Jesse Hasseman at 171 pounds in the paires third meeting of the season.

They become the fifth and sixth individuals to win four times joining Estil Ritter of Bloomington (1924-27), Willard Duffy of Muncie Central (1930-33), Howard Fisher of South Bend Central (1949-52) and; Lance Ellis of Indianapolis Cathedral (1986-89).

Additionally, Tsirtsis became just the second Indiana wrestler to go his entire career unbeaten finishing at 236-0 (55-0 this year), also a national high school record for consecutive victories. He led a parade of four Griffith wrestlers to the awards stand as all four took home state titles. Merrillville had three individuals in the finals, while Evansville Mater Dei and Floyd Central had two each.

Teammate Jose Escobedo got it started capping his senior campaign with his first state championship, a 3-2 decision over previously unbeaten Brad Spine of Floyd Central (39-1) in the 119 pound final.

Jose first cousin, Angel, continued to write his place into Indiana wrestling history, capturing his third consecutive state championship in as many years. The junior, with a 52-1 record this season, took a 14-6 decision from Erik Johnson of Yorktown for the 130 pound crown. Angel reigned at 125 last year and at 112 as freshman in 2002.

The final Panther, Andrae Hernandez, also a first cousin of the Escobedos, followed suit by winning his second consecutive state title pinning Eric Oria of Merrillville at 4:42 for the win at 135. Hernandez was the winner at 130 in 2003.

Lawrence North junior Reece Humphrey also won the second championship of his career, a 7-2 decision over Matt Irwin of Bellmont, in the final at 125. Humphrey, last year s 112 pound king, will take a 52-0 record into his team s appearance in the state finals competition at Center Grove High School next Saturday.

Joining Maurer on the podium s top spot was his teammate Matt Coughlin (45-0). After knocking on the door the last two years as a runner-up at 130 and 119, the junior finally broke through by winning the 152 pound class with an 8-2 triumph over Kyle Samuels of Floyd Central. The pair hope to keep the Mater Dei streak of nine consecutive state team championships alive next weekend as well.

While Humphrey, Coughlin and Maurer will take their undefeated records into next week, five others capped unbeaten campaigns as champs in their respective weight classes: Christopher Miller of Elkhart Memorial (44-0) at 112; Adam O Neil of South Bend Clay (45-0) at 160; Heath VanDeventer of Bloomington North (48-0) at 189; Christopher Kasten of Winamac (48-0) at 215 and; Chad Ruggeri of Mt. Vernon (37-0) at 275 pounds.

Also, Jon Lloyd of Warren Central started the evening with a 4-2 win over previously undefeated Munster freshman, Eric McGill in the 103 showdown. And Darren Elkins of Portage held on for a 10-9 decision over Charlie Pingleton of Greencastle in the 140 matchup. Elkins placed third in the 140 class a year ago, while Pingleton ended as the 140 runner-up for the second straight year.

State Championship Match Results

- 103 I Jon Lloyd (45-2), Warren Central (11) def. Eric McGill (46-1), Munster (9), Decision, 4-2.
- 112 📀 Christopher Miller (44-0), Elkhart Memorial (12) def. Aaron Sessa (40-2), Lake Central (10), Decision, 15-10.
- 119 🕏 Jose Escobedo (53-1), Griffith (12) def. Brad Spine (39-1), Floyd Central (12), Decision, 3-2.
- 125 Reece Humphrey (52-0), Lawrence North (11) def. Matt Irwin (42-5), Bellmont (10), Decision, 7-2.
- 130 Angel Escobedo (52-1), Griffith (11) def. Erik Johnson (43-4), Yorktown (12), Decision, 14-6.
- 135 � Andrae Hernandez (53-1), Griffith (12) def. Eric Oria (49-7), Merrillville (11), Fall, 4:42.
- 140 Oparren Elkins (46-1), Portage (12) def. Charlie Pingleton (54-1), Greencastle (12), Decision, 10-9.
- 145 Alex Tsirtsis (55-0), Griffith (12) def. Wesley English (41-7), Merrillville (10), Decision, 10-5.
- 152 Matt Coughlin (45-0), Evansville Mater Dei (11) def. Kyle Samuels (35-6), Floyd Central (12), Decision, 8-2.
- 160 Adam O Neil (45-0), South Bend Clay (12) def. Chaz Ervin (40-3), Lawrence Central (12), Decision, 6-0.
- 171 😔 Blake Maurer (45-0), Evansville Mater Dei (12) def. Jesse Hasseman (44-3), Franklin (12), Decision, 9-5.
- 189 🗞 Heath VanDeventer (48-0), Bloomington North (12) def. Orrin Kleinhenz (37-8), Columbus North (11), Decision, 5-1.
- 215 � Christopher Kasten (48-0), Winamac (11) def. Arik Wolf (42-1), East Central (12), Decision, 7-2.
- 275 � Chad Ruggeri (37-0), Mount Vernon (12) def. Dexter Larimore (49-3), Merrillville (10), Fall, 1:10.

Blake Maurer Wins Ward E. Brown Mental Attitude Award

Blake Maurer of Evansville Mater Dei High School was named winner of the Ward E. Brown Mental Attitude Award for Individual Wrestling in 2004. Ward E. Brown was the fourth IHSAA commissioner, serving from 1976 until 1983. He also was an assistant commissioner from 1969 until 1976 and, while principal of Crawfordsville High School, he served as a member of the IHSAA Board of Control in 1967-68.

At the conclusion of the Individual Wrestling State Finals, the IHSAA Executive Committee presents the award to the outstanding senior in the state finals competition, who is nominated by his principal and coach. He must excel in mental attitude, scholarship, leadership and athletic ability in the sport of wrestling.

With his victory over Jesse Hasseman of Franklin Community High School, Blake joins Estil Ritter of Bloomington High School (1924-27), Willard Duffy of Muncie Central (1930-33), Howard Fisher of South Bend Central (1949-52), Lance Ellis of Indianapolis Cathedral (1986-89) and Alex Tsirtsis of Griffith High School (2001-04) as the state so only four-time IHSAA state champions.

He owns a four-year school record of 183-2, including a mark of 45-0 during the 2003-04 season. He was 45-0 as a freshman; 47-1 as a sophomore; and 46-1 as a junior.

Blake has also helped his school to nine consecutive state titles in IHSAA Team Wrestling and will look continue that string during the team state finals next Saturday.

Athletically, Blake was a four-year member of the Wildcats football team. He was team captain and a finalist for Mr. Football as a senior.

Academically, Blake has compiled a 3.4 GPA. He will graduate with an academic honors diploma and will attend Ohio State University on a four-year scholarship, majoring in Business and Marketing, with career interests in math, education and coaching.

This school year, Blake was selected to participate in the Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation program, in partnership with the IHSAA. As a member of the panel, he was able to extend his influence beyond the Mater Dei feeder schools and help create an exhibit which traveled to middle schools throughout the state.

Blake is the son of Amy and Kelly Maurer of Evansville.

Farm Bureau Insurance, the IHSAA corporate sponsor, presented a \$1,000.00 scholarship to Evansville Mater Dei High School in the name of Blake Maurer.

New IHSAA Book, Play On, Recaps 100 Years Of High School Sports in Indiana

The exciting new book, <u>Play On</u>, celebrating 100 years of high school sports in Indiana, is perfect for that sports fan or the history buff you know. Filled with 150 pages of engaging photographs, captivating stories and a walk down memory lane, it is now on sale through the Indiana High School Athletic Association. It is not available in book stores, so contact the IHSAA at 317-846-6601 or click on the link above to learn more about this special tribute to 100 years of Indiana high school athletics.

Team Posters And Individual Action Photographs Available

Visit 20-20 Photographic, the IHSAA s photographer and the Midwest s Leader in Sports Action Photography, for images captured during Saturday s state championship matches and consolation finals! Action photos, individual medalist photos as well as 20-20 s Ultimate Sports Poster will be available for purchase later in the week following the state finals.

IHSAA State Championship Merchandise

For t-shirts and other merchandise commemorating this year stournament or for any of our events, visit our friends at Morris. Inc.

State Finals Programs Available

Couldnet be there for the state championships? To commemorate the event, you can still purchase a copy of the official state finals program while supplies last! Programs are \$3.00 if you purchase in person at the IHSAA Office (9150 N. Meridian Street in Indianapolis) or \$5.00 by mail (postage included). To order, send a check for \$5.00 made payable to the IHSAA, a note including your return address and brief description of your request and mail to: IHSAA Programs, PO Box 40650, Indianapolis, IN 46240-0650. Sorry, no credit cards.