

Mendel captures wrestling crown

The Mendel High School Monarchs captured the Chicago Catholic League wrestling crown in the championship meet held Saturday, February 5th, at Mt. Carmel.

Two Mendel wrestlers, Victor Ford and Greg Smith, won individual championships. Ford brought the Monarchs their first individual championship in five years, defeating Anthony Lisa of Loyola for the 138 lb. division title. Smith followed suit later in the meet, clinching the crown for the Monarchs with his victory over Bob Holley of Gordon Tech in the heavyweight division.

The Monarchs added to their tally with four second place finishes, one third place, and one fourth place. Second place honors went to

Michael Clifton in the 119 lb. division, John McGruder, 145 lb., Jinks Riddle, 167 lb., and Leandrew Moore, 185 lb. Steve Fortenberry placed third in the 132 lb. class. and Howard Williams finished fourth in the 126 lb. class.

Winning a championship in the powerful Catholic League is an achievement for any school, but the Monarchs' accomplishment is even more remarkable, considering the obstacles they have had to overcome.

"In the past two years, our wrestling program has been rebuilt from scratch," commented veteran coach Don Ledin, who is in his ninth year at the helm of the wrestling Monarchs. "In the 74-75 season, at a time when many people thought we couldn't survive racial

change, we had only six men with wrestling experience, and two of them weren't good enough to make the team. We finished sixth in the League that year. Last year we placed fifth, and we won this year, even though we have the smallest enrollment of any of the nine teams that competed. Unlike some of the other teams, we don't have 'feeder schools' we can rely on to provide us with athletic prospects. Our men have not wrestled in park programs before they come to Mendel. We have to teach them everything."

The Monarchs' 16-4 dual meet record and their Catholic League title attest to the outstanding job done by Coach Ledin and his dedicated corps of wrestlers.

Mendel Wins 10 Opponents

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Mendel in the 1967-68 wrestling season has copped six dual meets, one quadrangular and last Saturday's 11-team invitational at Milwaukee. The Monarchs, city Catholic champs since 1964, are unbeaten as a team. Coach Lou Guida is at the left, top row. His stalwarts include, bottom row from left, Dave and Tom Bas-

ile, Dave LaRoche, Terry Nugent, John Wator and Tom DeBenedetti. Rear are Coach Guida, Dennis Bugajski, Bob Arliska, Bruce Bugajski, Mike Kubowicz, Jim Madel, Bill Windauer and manager Dennis Hartman.

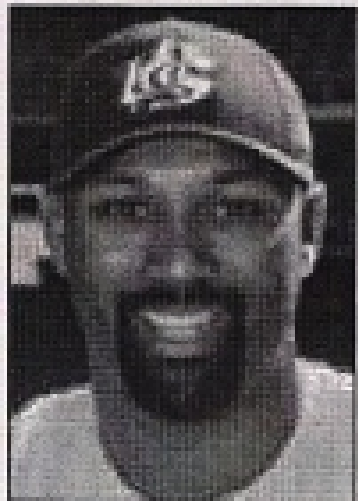
(Photos by Larry Clark)

Wrestling

Mendel wrestler star of Mexico national meet

Bruce Bugajski, former Mendel wrestler, won all four matches in the recently completed National Freestyle Wrestling tournament at Mexico City by defeating four opponents, including three by pins.

He also was voted the meet's outstanding sportsman in the tourney field of 325 wrestlers. His brother Dennis was beaten 3-0 in his opening match when he suffered some broken ribs.



Ernest Young, '87 - Mendel High School

Toughness, tenacity and determination are but a few words that describe Ernie Young. His promise in baseball was seen very early by his Mendel baseball coaches, Mike Manderino and Mike Curtin. In his senior year, Ernie was chosen to the All-Catholic and All-State baseball teams. He earned a scholarship to Lewis University where he is on several all-time lists including the all-time list for stolen bases, runs, runs batted in, at bats, triples, doubles, home runs and hits.

Ernie was selected 2nd team NCAA All-American in 1989 and 1st team NCAA All-American in 1990. His accomplishments have earned him a place in both the Mendel and Lewis University Halls of Fame. Ernie was drafted out of Lewis in 1990 by the Oakland Athletics. He won an Olympic Gold Medal for the United States in the 2000 Sydney Olympics. After 18 seasons in minor league and professional baseball, Ernie announced his retirement in 2008. He then became the hitting coach for the Chicago White Sox's rookie-level team - the Great Falls Voyagers. Ernie was named the manager of the Kannapolis Intimidators for the 2009 season. Following the 2009 season, he was named hitting coach for the Team USA World Cup Team which won a Gold Medal by defeating Cuba in Italy. He is currently in his second season as manager of the Intimidators.



**43- Rick
Stelmaszek,
Bullpen Coach**

Mendel ranked among top 10 high schools in nation

Mendel Catholic High School has been credited with being one of the top high schools in the country. Nate Thomas, of the Illinois Institute of Technology and director of funding for all minority engineering programs in the Big 10 Universities, commented recently that "of the 2300 high schools that I come into contact over the course of a year, I would rank Mendel as one of the top 10."

Thomas is the executive director of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation and the Midwest Program for Minorities in Engineering. Besides the Big 10 universities, Thomas also handles funding for minority engineering programs for a number of other universities, among them: the University of Detroit, the University of Michigan at Dearborn, Purdue University at Indianapolis, Wayne State University, and the University at Indianapolis, Wayne University, State University, and the University of Notre Dame. He is also a member of the National Committee on Mi-

norities in Engineering.

Thomas is a member of Shirley Chisholm's sub-committee on secondary education and is a member of the advisory council at Argonne National Laboratories. He is on the advisory board at Inland Steel and a co-chairman of Inroads Inc.

"The Mendel student that comes to IIT or any one of the Big 10 schools that I am affiliated with do not really start having a rough time until they get to the second or third semester," said Thomas. He went on to say that "I can name off the top of my head 10 schools in the country that would produce that type of student and I am talking about top to bottom. Many schools produce a very bright student who will do well, but you get to a certain level in the class and then you do not have that ability any more. At Mendel, however, you can go much farther down in the class, and sometimes, I think, at Mendel the entire class, and get students who are able to compete effectively. A bottom student at

Mendel is not like a bottom student at many other schools that I could name."

Much of the credit, according to Thomas, must go to the fine teaching staff at Mendel.

Mendel Matmen Reign as All-Chicago Champions

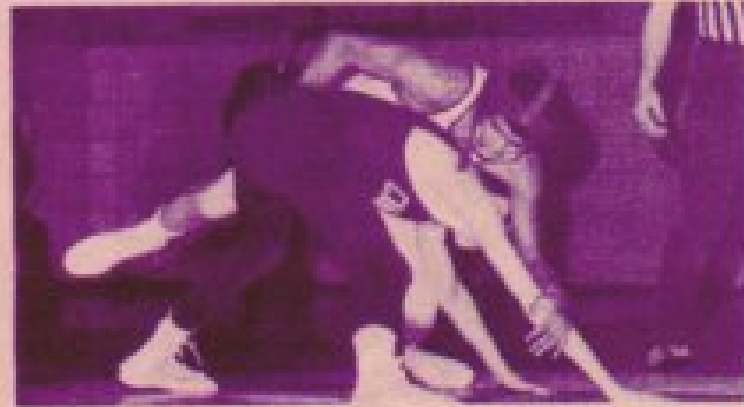
Coached by Mr. Donald Ledin and Mr. Harold Harrison, the Mendel wrestlers secured the city championship. The grapplers won the right to wrestle the Public league champs, Lane Tech, by defeating Gordon for Catholic championship. In the title game with only one bout left and Lane leading 20-18,

Heavyweight Mark O'Hare gave Mendel the required points for victory by defeating his opponent.

The Monarchs ended their season with 13-2 record. The team had two individual Catholic League champions, Steve Bonner and Edward Kress. Nine of the twelve starters will return for another year.



Coach Don Ledin, Marty Combes, Ed Kress, and Mark O'Hare hold city title trophy presented after the game.



Steve Bonner, (98-lb.) who accounted for a great number of pins, attempts to take over his Mt. Carmel grappler.



Front Row: Stephen Bonner, Brian Jobba, Randal Petterson, Keith Cavanaugh, Martin Combes. Back Row: Assistant Coach Hal Harrison, Mark O'Hare, Michael Sheehan, Ed

ward Kress, Richard Bocian, James Wator, Michael Hosty, Patrick Taff, Coach Don Ledin.