

SPORTS

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Drury denied OFSAA title repeat by one point

Moffat, Iwasa-Madge fuel E.C. with gold-medal efforts

By Herb Garbutt
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

The provincial high school wrestling championships turned into a waiting game for the E.C. Drury Spartans. It proved to be worth the wait for Alan Moffat and Kevin Iwasa-Madge, who briefly had the announcement of gold-medal victories held up by protests. For the team, some confusion in team scoring results delayed the results and when all was said and done, the Spartans were narrowly denied a second straight Ontario Federation of School Athletic Association (OFSAA) boys championship — and their seventh in eight years — by a single point at the Brampton Powerade Centre Friday. Still, Drury earned a 10th consecutive team medal by taking the silver.

Moffat won his second straight OFSAA gold despite moving up a weight class into the highly competitive 61 kg division. He defeated the class' reigning champ, Guelph Centennial's Cody Airdrie, in a close match.

Airdrie and Moffat, both members of the Ontario Under-18 team that competed at the Commonwealth Youth Wrestling Championships in Scotland last July, had squared off three times this season with Airdrie holding a 2-1 edge. Airdrie had lost just once all season — to Moffat in the final of the Ontario junior championship — and many considered him the best wrestler in any class.

"Moffat (winning) didn't surprise me, but it did most people in the building," said Drury coach Larry Jaroslowski. "A lot of people said (Moffat's win) was a fluke at junior, especially after Cody beat him in the Lourdes tournament a couple of weeks ago."

Moffat didn't wrestle Airdrie the way he intended to at OFSAA in their most recent match,

not wanting to tip his hand. It worked, as he continued to deliver in the big matches.

Moffat said patience is the key when wrestling Airdrie.

"All you can do is try to shut him out until the end and then score at the right moment," he said.

That's exactly what he did. When round one ended without a point, Airdrie won the coin toss, giving him the advantage for overtime, but Moffat held him off to take the opener. (Airdrie's corner contended their wrestler scored a point but later withdrew the protest after a clarification).

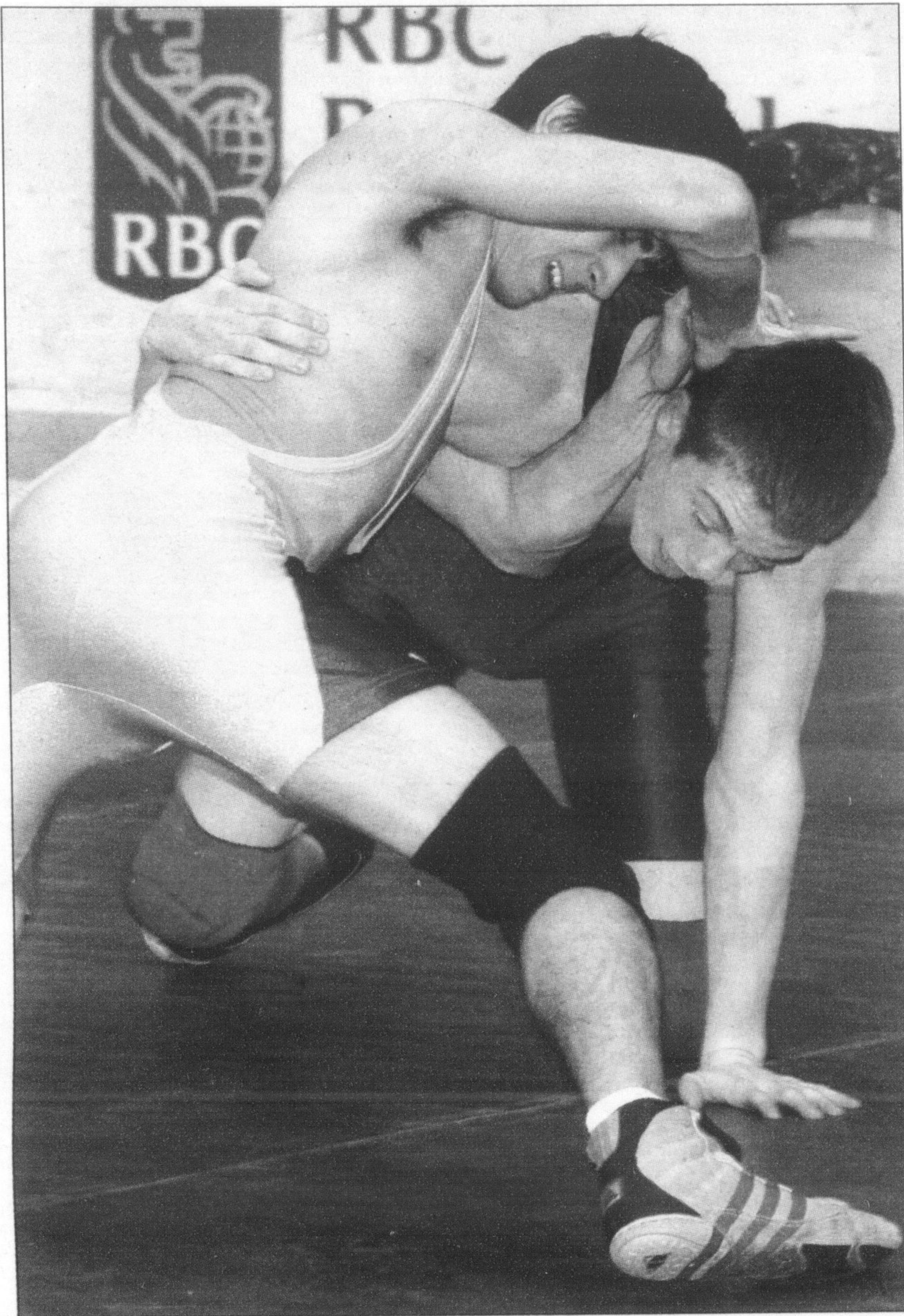
In the second round, Airdrie struck first, forcing Moffat out of bounds. But with time winding down, the grade 12 Drury student forced Airdrie out to tie the match and took the round for having scored the last point. It clinched his third straight OFSAA medal — having claimed bronze in 2005 before his back-to-back golds.

It was the fifth straight victory of the tournament for Moffat, although it was far from easy. In the second round, he needed a last-second point to win the opening round against Riverside's Justin Kinisch before taking the second round 3-0. In the semifinals he defeated another Commonwealth teammate, Ryan Lue of Central Elgin, 1-0 in overtime and then 1-0 on another last-second point.

Iwasa-Madge took a different route to OFSAA gold than Moffat. While Moffat faced his biggest challenges this year, Iwasa-Madge's obstacles were in the past. At last year's OFSAA tournament, he was a medal contender but lost in the quarterfinals to the eventual champion in a match Jaroslowski described as a war.

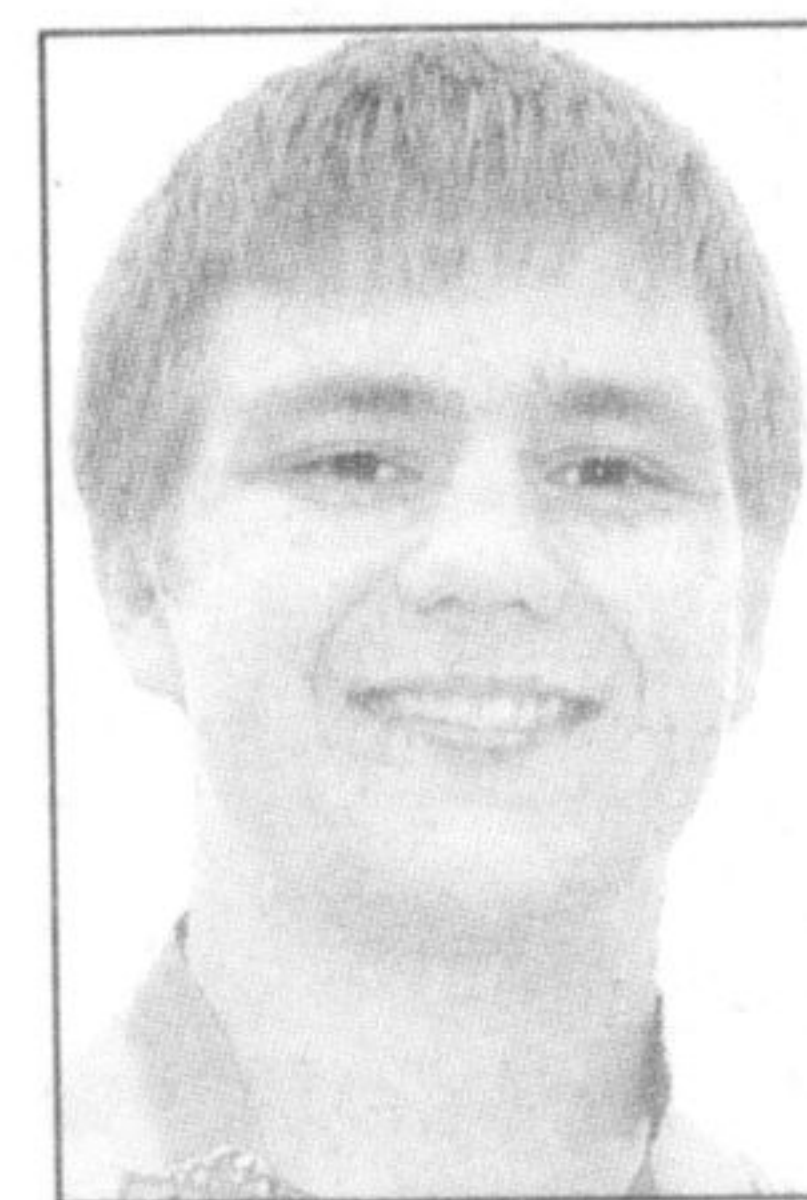
"Mentally, he didn't recover from that," Jaroslowski said. "He knew he was so close (to the gold medalist) but having to go around the long way, he got eliminated and didn't make finals."

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HERB GARBUTT / CANADIAN CHAMPION

BATTLING FOR GOLD: E.C. Drury's Kevin Iwasa-Madge (left) struggles against Nathan Lunn of St. Catharines on the way to OFSAA gold in Brampton Friday.



Alan Moffat


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