

Goffstown News

News and Information for the Town of Goffstown

Athlete of the Month - 'A purpose to win'

BY [MATT SCHOOLEY](#)

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During a pause in Nick Wheelock's Division II semifinal match, it wasn't his 7-0 lead the senior was thinking about.

The Goffstown wrestler's mind was on his mother, Nancy, who died unexpectedly on New Year's Eve.

"The one thing she wanted was to see me wrestle at state championships," Wheelock said. "I just stopped, caught a breath of air, and almost started tearing up."

It is Wheelock's combination of determination and wrestling skill that earned him the **Indian Head Athletics** Athlete of the Month for February.

Goffstown head coach Robert Cathcart said he was impressed by the maturity Wheelock showed in staying strong during the most difficult of times.

"It isn't easy no matter what your age," said Cathcart. "Being a senior in high school, it's even more of a tough time. Working and trying to overcome that has been huge."

Wheelock said wrestling helped him cope with the loss.

"The day after she passed away, I was in the practice room," said Wheelock. "That's all I wanted to do. It was the one thing I really love to do, and it kept my mind off it."

Wheelock is resilient, according to classmate Tom Foote, a two-time state wrestling champion who'll join Wheelock at the Meet of Champions on Saturday, Feb. 28, at Londonderry High.

"He is really intense. He pushes everyone who drills with him and wants to drill with people who are better than him," said Foote. "We've really developed like a brotherhood."

It means a lot to know that we're going to have those (state championship) banners up there, and our names are going to be next to one another up on that (gymnasium) wall."

Goffstown came in second during the Division II state finals on Saturday, Feb. 21, and Wheelock took home the 140-pound individual title with a 5-4 win against Souhegan's Michael Peret.

Dealing with the death of his mother was not an easy process, and Wheelock's most emotional meet of the wrestling season came on senior night vs. Hollis-Brookline.

Each Goffstown senior had his name called, and the mother of each team member came out to receive a rose from her son.

Wheelock placed a photograph of his mother in the front row, and when his name was called, he walked over to place his rose with the picture.

"That was the hardest moment of the year. It was my last home match, and she would have been there," said Wheelock, who pinned his opponent that evening.

"Every other kid had a parent to give it to. I wrestled that night for her, and I thought I wrestled pretty well. It was tougher than most matches."

Helping lead his team to a state runner-up finish was meaningful for Wheelock, but his thoughts were elsewhere. "I was excited because I had won it for my mom," said Wheelock. "I had a purpose to win."

*(Editor's note: The Athlete of the Month receives a \$50 gift certificate courtesy of **Indian Head Athletics.**)*

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