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Pine-Richland's Joey Schneck earned a fifth-place finish at the 2023 PIAA championships.

## Pine-Richland pair claim medals at PIAA wrestling championships

By Andrew John March 19, 2023



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The [Pine-Richland](#) wrestling program never sent more than two wrestlers to the PIAA championships. This year, the Rams made history by sending three wrestlers, and they didn't come home empty handed.

Senior Anthony Ferraro finished third in the 133-pound weight class, and senior Joey Schneck finished fifth at heavyweight at the PIAA Class 3A championships March 9-11, at the Giant Center in Hershey.

Sophomore Vaughn Spencer entered the PIAA tournament undefeated at 27-0. The 189-pounder started the state tournament strong with a 7-1 win over Chambersburg's Aiden Hight in the first round. However, Spencer sustained a knee injury in his quarterfinal matchup against Owen J. Roberts' Dean Bechtold that didn't allow him to finish the match and forced him to withdraw from the tournament.



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Ferraro (41-5) finished third after a 3-2 decision over [Hempfield's](#) Ethan Lebin.

"I was very happy. It was the first time I placed at states in my life. In elementary school and middle school, I never placed at states. It meant a lot with how hard I worked," Ferraro said.

Ferraro, an Edinboro recruit, was on the doorstep of wrestling in the championship match but lost to Central Mountain's Luke Simcox by a 2-0 decision.

After the loss in the semifinals, Ferraro was sent to the consolation bracket where he got a third-period escape to give him a 1-0 decision over Wallenpaupack's Gunnar Myers to earn a spot in the third-place match.

"Anthony had to grind," Kolb said. "He wrestled like a college wrestler from WPIALs on. He wrestled tough. He wore people down. He outwrestled them. He scored the points he needed to and wrestled smart."

Ferraro earned a spot in the state tournament after finishing third at the WPIAL tournament. Ferraro beat [Connellsville's](#) Gabriel Ruggieri by a 5-1 decision.

Schneck (42-7), a third-place finisher at WPIALs, finished fifth after beating [Trinity's](#) Ty Banco by a 2-1 decision.

"It's just something I'm always going to remember," Schneck said. "I finished my career with a win especially after putting in so much time and effort with wrestling for the last four years of my high school career."

Schneck's journey to the podium started with a pin of Garnet [Valley's](#) Dylan Bledsoe at 2:32 in the preliminary round.

After losing to Carlisle's Layton Schmick, 6-3, in the first round, Schneck was sent to the consolation bracket. He won three straight matches by pinfall to earn a rematch against Schmick.

Schneck held a 3-1 lead with under a minute remaining in the match. However, Schmick was rewarded a point for Schneck stalling and then Schmick earned two points for a reversal with 16 seconds left to take the lead as a third-place finish slipped out of Schneck's grasp.



“Yo this for the rest of their lives,” Kolb said. “To finish on a win is so much more exciting and fruitful. You can be at peace because it won’t haunt you for years to come.”

The future for the Rams looks bright as Spencer will return, along with freshman Mac Miller, who finished fifth at WPIALs in the 152-pound weight class, and sophomore Dominic Ferraro, who finished eighth at WPIALs at 127.

“We’re a program on the rise. This is my fifth year. We’re slowly improving,” Kolb said. “It’s about building the culture and getting everybody in the [Pine-Richland](#) community involved.”

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