

Standing Switch

By Dave Conifer

Now, I was up. I had deliberately avoided thinking about my opponent, Dave Charter. I did know that he was a senior, and had won most of his matches this year. He was very big for the weight class. When I went for the handshake during introductions I noted that he was several inches taller than me. Like so many of my opponents of late, it seemed that he had dropped a lot of weight to make 171.

We circled each other warily as the match started, each knowing that the out-

come was important to our own team. I shot first, with bad results. I grabbed a leg, but he sprawled, kicking his legs backwards and landing most of his weight on my back. With my face exposed, he slammed me with a vicious cross-face. I thought it was flagrant, but the referee did not, so I continued to struggle. I was still holding onto his leg, but he was still cross facing hard and was slowly leveraging his body behind me. My nose hurt badly from the blow I'd received but I tried to block that out. After 20 more seconds, I couldn't

hold him back any longer. He whipped behind me and earned 2 points for a take-down.

At that point I became aware that my nose, which had born the brunt of the cross face, had begun dripping blood. I looked up at the referee to show him, and he immediately called for injury time. I had only wrestled a minute, but I was already out of breath as I walked back towards the bench.

The trainer checked to make sure my nose wasn't broken, and tried to stop the