

LEXINGTON — Two of the state's **wrestling** giants squared off in the Class AAAA State Championship at White Knoll High School on Wednesday night, and it went down to the final seconds of the final match.

Rock Hill's Devon Faile scored a clutch takedown in the final seconds of his 106-pound match with Summerville's James Saas.

That decision gave the Bearcats a 28-23 victory and their first state title since 2009.

"We had a chance and we let it slip away," said Summerville head coach Darryl Tucker. "I like to think we've got a bunch of guys who can come back next year and contribute for us," he said, "but I'm more disappointed for our seniors, because it was there for us to win it and we let it slip away. It's gonna hurt for a while."

It was Rock Hill's 16th state championship, one that Bearcats head coach Cain Beard said would be remembered by the final match.

"I told Devon last night that I've stood behind him for four years, because his finest hour is yet to happen," Beard said. "He wrote his own history book tonight, and he will be forever remembered in **Rock Hill wrestling.**"

Summerville, which has 11 state titles to its name, fell behind 15-0 by the 132 classification match. Robert English's 9-3 victory over Babe Rigby in the 138 class and Daniel Smith's 17-2 win over Christian Moore at 145 cut the lead to 15-8 and sparked a rally.

The Green Wave took a 23-18 lead following Corey Alumbaugh's victory over Stephen Chesney in the 195 classification. The Bearcats rallied as Cameron Bell won 13-3 over Eric Henderson in the 220 class and Travis Strait won the heavyweight class matchup 4-2 over Julian Gibbs, who wrestled up from his 220 weight class. Those decisions set up the deciding match.

Saas, a junior and the top-ranked wrestler in the state at 106 pounds, and Faile battled to a scoreless tie after one round. A Faile escape early in the second and a Saas escape later in the period kept the match even. Faile's takedown and headlock in the center of the mat electrified the **Rock Hill** crowd and clinched the victory for the Bearcats.

Summerville's last appearance in the state title match, in 2008, came against **Rock Hill**. The Green Wave won that duel.

"For it to come down to those two kids (Saas and Faile), they've been battling their whole career," Beard said. "For the fans of South Carolina **wrestling**, it couldn't get any better. That's another storybook ending for this program, and to do it against our old-time rivals was just huge."