

# NJCAA

## Northwest College won its first National Division I Title

By Bob Brown

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Photos by John Johnson

It was a good year for the number ones in the National Junior College Athletic Association wrestling tournament.

The two teams that were ranked No. 1 all season long walked off with titles and seven of the 10 individuals that were ranked No. 1 heading into the tourney won championships as the two-day meet wound up Saturday night (Feb. 28) at Rochester Community and Technical College.

This was the sixth straight year the national meet was held in Rochester and it will be coming back for at least the next two years.

Northwest College (Powell, WY.) and Nassau (Garden City, NY) easily won the 2004 team championships. After cracking the top 10 for eight years in a row, Northwest won its first Division I title. Nassau captured Division III honors for the second year in a row.

When Northwest was ranked No. 1 in the preseason, coach Jim Ziegler said: "The only thing that really matters is to be on top at the end of the year."

He got his wish.

Northwest had wrestlers in the finals of five of the 10 weight classes and three came away with championships. Eric Sabot won at 141 pounds, Robert Raszkievicz won at 197 and Tyler Rhodes repeated as national champion at heavyweight. Sabot and Rhodes were ranked No. 1 going into the nationals and Raszkievicz was ranked No. 2. Sabot's title match was easily the most exciting of the night. He scored a takedown as the clock ticked to zero to beat Dustin May of Labette, Kan., 3-1.

Northwest's Seth Wright, at 125, and Pat Sharp, at 133, both finished second. Jacob Wright of Northwest was third at 157. Kade Caturia was fifth at 165 and Pete Julander was seventh at 184, giving Northwest eight All-Americans. Wrestlers who finish in the top eight in each weight class are designated All-Americans.

### 2004 NJCAA Team Standings

#### Division I

Northwest WY	155.5
Lassen	89.5
Iowa Central	87.5
North Idaho	82
Colby	78.5
Labette	74.5
Lincoln	53.5
Ellsworth	50
Neosho	48

#### Division III

Nassau	117.5
Ridgewater	62
WM Rainey Harper	55.5
Itasca	34.5
Thaddeus Stevens	34
Gloucester	33
Bergen	24
Middlesex	22.5
MN West	16.5
Rochester	8