Web Story: http://bit.ly/2nEoYWF

FIGHTING ILLINI WRESTLING

Isaiah Martinez Places Runner-Up at NCAA Championships

Martinez drops title bout to Vincenzo Joseph (PSU)

ST. LOUIS – Fighting Illini redshirt junior Isaiah Martinez concluded the 2017 wrestling season as national runner-up on Saturday evening. Martinez was pinned with 1:35 remaining in the third period against No. 3 seed Vincenzo Joseph of Penn State in the 165-pound title match at Scottrade Center. Just the second loss of his career, Martinez finishes as the national runner-up with a 31-1 record on the season.

"Tough match for Isaiah," said Head Coach Jim Heffernan. "He got caught on his back in a good hold and got pinned. He is still a two-time NCAA champion, and will use this experience to get better."

As a team, the Illinois finished 11th with 43.5 points, as Zac Brunson (6th/174) and Zane Richards (7th/133) also earned All-America honors. Penn State won the team title with 146.5 points. It's the second straight year that Coach Heffernan has had three All-Americans after Martinez, Richards and Steven Rodriguez each earned a spot on the podium in 2016.

A back-and-forth match throughout, Martinez took an early 2-0 lead against Joseph with a takedown in the opening minute. After a Joseph escape, the Penn State redshirt freshman earned his first takedown of the match to take the lead. Martinez again tied the match, escaping before the end of the first period.

Starting the second period down, Martinez earned an escape to retake the lead, 4-3, but Joseph took Martinez to the mat again for a second takedown. By the time Martinez escaped to the tie the match yet again, 5-5, Joseph had racked up 1:05 in riding time to hold the advantage.

Beginning the third period on top, Martinez allowed Joseph an escape, and a takedown would be necessary to offset the 6-5 lead and riding time that Joseph held. With under 1:30 left in the period, Martinez went for the takedown but Joseph reversed momentum to take Martinez to the mat. Joseph got Martinez in a hold that he couldn't escape, pinning Martinez with 1:25 left on the clock.

Now a three-time All-American, Martinez is 98-2 in his career at Illinois and is the active leader in career win-percentage (.980). Martinez's 98 wins is tied with Carl Perry for 25th in Illini history.

With just 30 wins separating Martinez and Illinois all-time wins leader Alex Tirapelle (128), Martinez will enter his senior season with a chance to graduate as the most decorated wrestler in Illinois history.

For complete coverage of Fighting Illini wrestling, go to FIGHTINILLINI.com and follow @IlliniWrestling on Twitter and Instagram.

Illini Championships Notes

Illini Championships Notes

- Isaiah Martinez earned his third All-America honor, placing second after winning NCAA titles the previous two seasons.
- Martinez's .980 (98-2) career win percentage currently ranks as the best in Illinois history. The 98 wins is tied with Carl Perry for 25th on Illinois' all-time list.
- Three Illini earned All-America honors for the second straight year, as Zane Richards and Zac Brunson joined Martinez on the podium.

Team Scores:

1.Penn State – 146.5
2.Ohio State – 110
3.Oklahoma State – 103
4.Iowa – 97
5.Missouri – 86.5
6.Virginia Tech – 63.5
7.Minnesota – 62.5
8.Cornell – 60.5
9.Nebraska – 59.5
10.Michigan – 47.5
11. ILLINOIS – 43.5

165 // No. 1 Isaiah Martinez // Redshirt Junior // 4-1 – *Martinez Places 2nd*

Round	Opponent	Results	Record
1st	Shaun'Qae McMurtry (Northern Illinois)	W, 14-4	1-0
2nd	(16) Nick Wanzek (Minnesota)	W, 8-5	2-0
Quarterfinals	(9) Chandler Rogers (Oklahoma State)	W, 9-5	3-0
Semifinals	(4) Isaac Jordan (Wisconsin)	W, 2-1	4-0
1st Place Match	(3) Vincenzo Joseph (Penn State)	L, Pin (5:25)	4-1

174 // No. 10 Zac Brunson // Redshirt Senior // 4-3 – *Brunson Places 6th*

Round	Opponent	Results	Record
1st	Jacob Morrissey (Purdue)	W, 12-1	1-0
2nd	Jake Residori (SIUE)	W, 6-2	2-0
Quarterfinals	(2) Brian Realbuto (Cornell)	L, Pin (1:12)	2-1
Cons. Rd.3	Jadaen Bernstein (Navy)	W, 12-2	3-1
Cons. Rd. 4	(7) Kyle Crutchmer (Oklahoma State)	W, 8-5	4-1
Cons. Semifinal	(1) Zahid Valencia (Arizona State)	L, Pin (1:35)	4-2
5th Place Match	(2) Brian Realbuto (Cornell)	L, Pin (1:24)	4-3

133 // No. 8 Zane Richards // Redshirt Senior // 4-2 – *Richards Places 7th*

Round	Opponent	Results	Record
1st	Alex Madrigal (Old Dominion)	W, Forfeit	1-0
2nd	(9) Scotty Parker (Lehigh)	W, 7-6 (SV-1)	2-0
Quarterfinals	(1) Nathan Tomasello (Ohio State)	L, 1-3	2-1
Cons. Rd. 3	(14) Mitch McKee (Minnesota)	W, 14-6	3-1

Cons. Rd. 3	(14) Mitch McKee (Minnesota)	W, 14-6	3-1
Cons. Rd. 4	(5) Stevan Micic (Michigan)	L, 5-6	3-2
7th Place Match	(9) Scotty Parker (Lehigh)	W, 14-4	4-2

125 // Travis Piotrowski // Freshman // 1-2 – *Eliminated*

Round	Opponent	Results	Record
1st	(10) Jack Mueller (Virginia)	L, 1-16 (6:54)	0-1
Cons. Rd. 1	Ibrahim Bunduka (George Mason)	W, 6-0	1-1
Cons. Rd. 2	(9) Joshua Rodriguez (NDSU)	L, 2-5	1-2

149 // Eric Barone // Redshirt Freshman // 0-2 - *Eliminated*

Round	Opponent	Results	Record
1st	(9) Justin Oliver (Central Michigan)	L, Pin (4:47)	0-1
Cons. Rd. 1	(8) Patricio Lugo (Edinboro)	L, 3-7	0-2

157 // Kyle Langenderfer // Redshirt Junior // 2-2 - *Eliminated*

Round	Opponent	Results	Record
1st	(13) John Van Brill (Rutgers)	W, 10-4	1-0
2nd	(4) Tyler Berger (Nebraska)	L, 7-11	1-1
Cons. Rd. 2	Casey Sparkman (Kent State)	W, 9-1	2-1
Cons. Rd. 3	May Bethea (Penn)	L, 3-4	2-2

184 // No. 11 Emery Parker // Redshirt Sophomore // 2-2 - *Eliminated*

Round	Opponent	Results	Record
1st	Hunter Gamble (Gardner-Webb)	W, 6-2	1-0
2nd	(6) Myles Martin (Ohio State)	W, 14-9	2-0
Quarterfinals	(3) Sammy Brooks (Iowa)	L, Pin (6:01)	2-1
Cons. Rd. 3	(9) Nate Jackson (Indiana)	L, 1-3 (SV-1)	2-2

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