

Isaiah Martinez Earns Spot on U-23 World Team

U-23 World Championships in Bydgoszcz, Poland November 21-26

ROCHESTER, Minn. – Illinois redshirt senior wrestler Isaiah Martinez earned a spot on Team USA for Under-23 World Championships with an 8-2, 7-6 sweep of Chance Marsteller (Titan Mercury) in the 74kg (163 lbs) best-of-three series on Sunday afternoon. Team USA will compete at U-23 World Championships November 21-26 in Bydgoszcz, Poland.

With only two wrestlers entering at 74 kilograms, Martinez and Marsteller automatically advanced to the weight's best-of-three finals.

In bout one, Marsteller drew first blood, taking a 2-0 lead over the Illini senior. Midway through the period, Martinez leveled the score with a takedown to create a tie entering the second frame. Martinez broke the tie early in period two, notching two takedowns early. Leading 6-2, the two-time NCAA champion sealed the first bout with his fourth takedown to win 8-2.

The two 74kg grapplers again traded blows to open the second bout. Marsteller opened with the lead, 2-0, before Martinez notched back-to-back takedowns to take his first lead of the bout. Marsteller bounced back with two takedowns of his own to take a 6-5 advantage into the final period. Needing to score to keep Marsteller from forcing a winner-take-all third bout, Martinez scored a takedown with just over 30 seconds remaining to win the match.

The 74kg/163lbs division will begin competition at U-23 World Championships on Sunday, November 26 at 3 a.m. central (10 a.m. local time). The finals are scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. central (6 p.m. locally). For more information on the event, click [here](#).

Also competing at U.S. Team Trials on Sunday was Illini redshirt freshman Dylan Thurston in the 65kg division. Thurston finished competition with a 1-2 record, earning his victory by a 9-0 decision against Logan Smith (Mat Savvy Wrestling).

Head coach Jim Heffernan's squad begins the 2017-18 season on November 4 with an outdoor dual at Missouri, contested on the University of Missouri's softball field.

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