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## **WR: Snyder Named Big Ten Jesse Owens Male Athlete of the Year**

*Olympic, NCAA and Big Ten champion is fifth Buckeye to earn honor*

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**COLUMBUS, Ohio** – Following a 12-month period that saw him win a gold medal at the Summer Olympic Games in Rio along with Big Ten and NCAA wrestling crowns for the Buckeyes, **Kyle Snyder** now has to make more room in his trophy case. Today, he was announced as the Big Ten Jesse Owens Male Athlete of the Year, marking the second time in three years that a Buckeye wrestler has won the prestigious award.

“I’m honored to win this incredible award, especially because of what Jesse Owens means to the Big Ten and specifically Ohio State,” said Snyder. “To be in the company of the many exceptional student-athletes who have earned this award in the past is humbling. I could not have achieved any of my success without the constant help and encouragement of my family, coaches, teammates and friends. I love competing for Ohio State and representing my country.”

Last summer, Snyder etched his name amongst wrestling’s all-time greats when he won a gold medal at the 2016 Summer Games. In the process, he became the youngest United States wrestling champion (20 years old), first active Ohio State student-athlete to win Olympic gold in 66 years and first Buckeye wrestler to win an Olympic medal in 92 years.

After the Olympics, Snyder returned to Ohio State and went 17-0 during the 2016-17 campaign for the Buckeyes, culminating in a Big Ten and NCAA title at heavyweight. Thanks to Snyder – and three other conference champions – Ohio State won its second Big Ten crown in the last three years. It was the national runner-up at the NCAA Championships with a program-record six All-Americans.

Snyder’s NCAA schedule was abbreviated this year, as he traveled overseas to compete in three major international events. In December, he was in Ukraine for the Club Cup Championships and then traveled to Russia for a week at the end of January and won a gold medal at the Ivan Yarygin Grand Prix, considered the toughest open tournament in the world. In February, just weeks before the Big Ten Championships, he represented Team USA at the Freestyle World Cup in Iran.

Snyder is just the fifth Buckeye to win the Big Ten's Male Athlete of the Year award and joins elite company that includes Eddie George (football, 1996), Blaine Wilson (gymnastics, 1997), Evan Turner (basketball, 2010) and teammate Logan Stieber (2015). In the 35 years that it's been awarded by the conference, wrestlers have claimed the honor 10 times.

In three seasons for the Scarlet and Gray, Snyder is 58-4 with 28 consecutive victories, two Big Ten titles, two NCAA championships and three All-America honors. This season, 13 of his 17 wins were via bonus points and he went 9-0 against ranked opponents. Both his Big Ten and NCAA finals victories came against second-ranked Connor Medbery of Wisconsin. During the regular season, he defeated the No. 3 and No. 4-ranked opponents by an aggregate score of 39-17 and won by matches via major decision. At the Big Ten Championships, he averaged 16.0 points/match and upped his output to 17.0 points/match in five wins at the NCAA Championships.

As impressive as Snyder's on-mat accomplishments were, his success was equaled in the classroom. An OSU Scholar-Athlete and Academic All-Big Ten honoree, Snyder – a sport industry major – also claimed CoSIDA Academic All-District and All-America honors. Earlier this month, he was named Ohio State's Male Athlete of the Year for the second consecutive year.

Most recently, Snyder earned a spot on the United States Senior World Team two weeks ago in Lincoln, Neb. and will compete in the World Championships for Team USA Aug. 21-26 in Paris, France. At the last World Championships, in 2015, he became the youngest American to win gold (19 years old) with his victory over Russia's Abdusalam Gadisov.

**#GoBucks#**

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