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Bravo-Young and Schlegel Named Penn State's Athletes of the Year

Nittany Lions from women's soccer and wrestling programs honored for achievements in 2020-21

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. – Penn State Athletics announced its 2020-21 Female and Male Athletes of the Year, as women's soccer standout Ally Schlegel and wrestling national champion Roman Bravo-Young carry the mantle for another successful year. Bravo-Young and Schlegel will represent Penn State on the ballot for Big Ten Male and Female Athletes of the Year with honorees from the other 13 conference institutions.

Schlegel's win marks the seventh time a member of the women's soccer program has earned Female Athlete of the Year, joining two-time recipient Christie Welsh (2000-01 & 2001-02), Tiffany Weimer (2005-06), Maya Hayes (2011-12), Christine Nairn (2012-13) and Rachel Rodriguez (2015-16). Both Welsh (2001-02) and Weimer were named the Big Ten Female Athlete of the Year (2005-06). Bravo-Young joins a group of eight Nittany Lion wrestlers who have been named Penn State's Male Athlete of the Year a total of 10 times. David Taylor (2013-14) and Bo Nickal (2018-19) went on to win Big Ten Male Athlete of the Year. Penn State began awarding Athlete of the Year honors in 1991-92.

A Honda Sport Award finalist and MAC Hermann Trophy semifinalist, Schlegel led the Big Ten Conference in goals scored for the second-straight season. She posted the second-highest point total in the league with 28 points via 11 goals and six assists to help the Nittany Lions to their 20th Big Ten title and 26-straight NCAA Tournament appearance in 2020-21. Schlegel was selected as a 2020-21 United Soccer Coaches first-team All-American and Big Ten Forward of the Year. Schlegel, a redshirt junior from Parker, Colorado, garnered All-Big Ten first-team honors in each of her two seasons starting for the Nittany Lions. She was recognized as United Soccer Coaches Player of Distinction in 2020-21. She serves as the president of the Penn State Student-Athlete Advisory Board and is part of the Athletic Director Leadership Institute.

Bravo-Young won his first NCAA individual title at 133 and became a three-time All-American in the process at the 2021 NCAA Wrestling Championships in St. Louis, Missouri. He went 5-0 with a major and a tech fall. He took care of No. 3 Korbin Myers 5-3 in the semifinals and then beat No. 1 Daton Fix of Oklahoma State, 4-2 in sudden victory, in the NCAA title bout. Bravo-Young's win was the first of a perfect 4-0 run in the NCAA finals for Penn State.

From Tuscon, Arizona, Bravo-Young ended the 2020-21 year with a 14-0 record and was a Hodge Trophy finalist. His accolades over the course of last season included winning his first Big Ten title at 133 in the Bryce Jordan Center, All-America laurels by virtue of his national title and first-team All-Big Ten honors. He heads into his senior season with a 588-9 career record, including four pins, six technical falls and 17 majors

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Danae Rivers (women's cross country and track & field) and Lamar Stevens (men's basketball) were Penn State's 2019-20 honorees.

Penn State Ranked in Top 25 in Learfield Directors' Cup Midseason Standings

Following the fall and winter athletic seasons, Penn State Intercollegiate Athletics stands in the top 25 in the Learfield IMG College Directors' Cup Division I standings with a No. 22 ranking. Penn State was led by the fencing and wrestling programs which finished as the nation's second-ranked team.

Also adding points for the Nittany Lions were the men's gymnastics program who sent eight gymnasts to the NCAA Championships en route to a No. 7 ranking, the women's gymnastics program who boasted four individual NCAA Regional qualifiers and the men's swimming and diving program who had five athletes earn All-America honorable mention honors at the NCAA Championships.

The Directors' Cup awards points based on success at NCAA postseason events with a final Division I Learfield IMG College Directors' Cup standing update published following the conclusion of the College World Series.

Penn State is among only nine institutions nationwide to have finished in the Top 25 in all 26 Learfield Directors' Cup final standings.

Record-Breaking NCAA Graduation Success Rate

The Nittany Lions recorded a fourth consecutive record academic performance with a 92 percent graduation success rate, according to data reported by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

The NCAA's annual graduation rates report of Division I institutions across the nation revealed Penn State student-athletes at the University Park campus earned a Graduate Success Rate (GSR) of 92 percent to break the school's all-time record of 91, which was previously set in the 2019 NCAA report. Nittany Lion students posted a 92 percent graduation rate compared to the 88 percent average for all Division I institutions for students entering from 2010-11 through the 2013-14 academic year.

Penn State student-athletes have logged a GSR in the 88-92 percent range during each of the past 14 NCAA reports, improving from 88 percent in the 2015 report to a record-breaking 92 percent report in 2020.

Sixteen of the Nittany Lions' 27 teams (men's and women's track and field/cross country teams combined) earned a GSR at or above the Division I national GSR average for their respective sport. A total of 17 Penn State squads have a GSR of 90 percent or higher.

Penn State Among the Nation's Most Comprehensive and Successful Athletic Programs

Under the leadership of Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics Sandy Barbour, Penn State has one of the nation's most comprehensive and successful athletic

programs, featuring 800 student-athletes across 31 varsity programs (16 men's, 15 women's). The Nittany Lions' 31 programs are tied for the fourth-highest number of sports sponsored by a Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) institution.

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