

**From:** Pat Donghia pad11@psu.edu  
**Subject:** WREST: Hall, Zain, Cael Sweep InterMat Awards  
**Date:** April 4, 2017 at 6:40 AM  
**To:** undisclosed-recipients;

PD

## ***WREST: Hall, Zain, Cael Sweep InterMat Awards***

Hall Freshman, Zain Wrestler, Cael Coach of the Year as Penn State sweeps InterMat Awards

**UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa.; April 4, 2017** – The Penn State Nittany Lion wrestling team swept InterMat’s season-ending awards for the 2017 campaign. True freshman Mark Hall (Apple Valley, Minn.) was named InterMat Freshman of the Year, junior Zain Retherford (Benton, Pa.) was named InterMat Wrestler of the Year and Cael Sanderson was named InterMat Coach of the Year.

For Retherford and Sanderson, the honors are repeats. For Hall, the honor is his first collegiate one as the Lion just out-distanced teammate Vincenzo Joseph (Pittsburgh, Pa.), who was runner-up for this year’s freshman award.

Hall, the 2017 NCAA National Champion at 174 pounds, became one of Penn State’s first-ever freshman national champions (along with Joseph) with a 5-2 win over Ohio State’s Bo Jordan. Hall’s win was the fourth of Penn State’s five straight individual title wins at the 2017 NCAA Championships in St. Louis on March 18. Hall closed out his first NCAA tourney run with a 5-0 mark, including a technical fall and a major. He ended his freshman season leading Penn State in wins with a 31-3 mark, including 12 pins, three techs and six majors. Hall was the third true freshman finalist in Penn State history, joining Cary Kolat (1993) and Nico Megaludis (2012).

Hall was first in the voting, Joseph second and true freshman Nick Suriano (Paramus, N.J.) was seventh. Hall is the third Nittany Lion to be honored as InterMat Freshman of the Year since the organization began its awards in 2006. Current teammate Jason Nolf (Yatesboro, Pa.) was the winner last year and all-time Lion great David Taylor won in 2011.

Retherford has been named InterMat Wrestler of the Year for the second consecutive season, having won the honor last year. Already the Hodge Trophy winner as the nation’s top collegiate wrestler, Retherford won his second straight NCAA title at 149 (and became a three-time All-American) with a dazzling 18-2 technical fall over Missouri’s Lavion Mayes in Penn State’s first of five NCAA title wins in St. Louis on March 18. Retherford, Penn State’s 26<sup>th</sup> three-time All-American and the seventh two-time NCAA Champion in school history. The Lion went 5-0 with four technical falls and a pin at the tournament and ended the season with a 28-0 mark including 17 pins, seven techs and a major. Retherford was named the 2017 NCAA Championships Outstanding Wrestler for his effort and was also honored for his season long dominance as the 2017 NCAA Most Dominant Wrestler.

Retherford won the honor over teammate Nolf, who was Runner-Up. Fellow national champion Bo Nickal (Allen, Texas) was fifth and red-shirt freshman Joseph was seventh. Retherford’s 2017 honor is the fourth for Penn State since 2006. Retherford has won twice (2017, 2016), Taylor won in 2014 and all-time Penn State great Ed Ruth won in 2012.

Sanderson ran away with InterMat Coach of the Year honors, completing the Penn State sweep of awards for InterMat. The Lion mentor repeated the honor, having won last season as well. This marks the fourth time Sanderson has been honored by InterMat since 2006, three times as Penn State head coach (2017, 2016, and 2012) and once as Iowa State’s head coach (2007).

Penn State won its sixth NCAA national championship in the last seven years in St. Louis earlier this month and Retherford played a huge role in that victory. The Nittany Lion junior was one of five Penn State individuals to win NCAA titles during the Championship Finals on Saturday night, March 18. Penn State also won the 2017 Big Ten Regular season crown and the NWCA Dual Championship Series title, going 14-0 overall with a 9-0 mark in conference action. Penn State returns nine of starters, eight of nine NCAA qualifiers and all six of its 2017 All-Americans for next the 2017-18 season.

Penn State Fans are encouraged to follow Penn State wrestling via twitter at @pennstateWREST, on Penn State Wrestling's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/pennstatewrestling](http://www.facebook.com/pennstatewrestling) and on Instagram at [www.instagram.com/pennstatewrest](http://www.instagram.com/pennstatewrest). The 2016-17 Penn State wrestling season is presented by The Family Clothesline. This is PENN STATE. WRESTLING lives here.

Patrick Donghia

Assistant Director, Strategic Communications

Penn State Athletics

Ph: 814 863 3164 – Cel: 814 777 8105 -- email: [pad11@psu.edu](mailto:pad11@psu.edu)