

WREST: Perfect Finals Run for NCAA Champion Lions

Nittany Lions blaze to five straight wins in a 5-0 finals showing to tie NCAA record for national champions

ST. LOUIS, Mo.; March 18, 2017 – The Penn State Nittany Lion wrestling team left no doubt to its dominance, rolling to a perfect 5-0 record in the 2017 NCAA Championship finals. The stunning run capped off Penn State's team title performance in St. Louis' Scottrade Center. Penn State, under the guidance of head coach Cael Sanderson, claimed its sixth NCAA team title in the last seven years, its second straight and its seventh overall.

The Nittany Lions won the title with a school record 146.5 points, 36.5 points ahead of second place Ohio State. Oklahoma State was third with 103.0. Penn State won the title at Madison Square Garden last season and now owns seven NCAA team crowns (1953, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017). Penn State's seven team titles are fourth all-time in NCAA history. Sanderson now has six NCAA team titles as a head coach, tied for fifth all-time.

The NCAA began the finals at 197, with fans voting the 184-pound tilt as the night's last championship bout. Penn State had wrestlers in each of the final five bouts as it worked its way to the evening's team trophy presentation. All five Nittany Lions emerged victorious.

Junior Zain Retherford (Benton, Pa.), the No. 1 seed at 149, took on No. 3 Lavion Mayes of Missouri in the first of five straight NCAA finals match-ups to close out the championships. Mayes fought off a quick early shot by Retherford and then took a 2-0 lead with a fast double leg at the 2:33 mark. Retherford quickly escaped to a 2-1 score and took the lead with a low single to a takedown at the 1:40 mark. Retherford then controlled the action from the top position and carried a 3-2 lead with 1:15 in time into the second stanza. Retherford chose down to start the second period and quickly escaped to a 4-2 lead. He then stepped back from a slight Mayes shot, countered low, and finished off a takedown for a 6-2 lead at the :40 mark. He rode Mayes out once again and led 6-2 with 2:04 in time after two periods. Mayes chose down to start the third period. Retherford took advantage of the decision. The Lion senior turned Mayes three straight times, nearly getting the fall on the second, and posting a crushing 18-2 technical fall at the 6:42 mark to win his second straight NCAA title.

Retherford, Penn State's 26th three-time All-American, is now tied for 17th on Penn State's all-time NCAA wins list with 14 and heads into next year having won 63 straight bouts. He is 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 ends the season with a 28-0 mark with 17 pins, seven techs and a major. Retherford was named the 2017 NCAA Championships Outstanding Wrestler for his effort. The junior was also honored for his season long dominance as the 2017 NCAA Most Dominant Wrestler.

Sophomore Jason Nolf (Yatesboro, Pa.), the No. 1 seed at 157, took on No. 3 Joey Lavallee of Missouri. The duo battled evenly for two minutes before Nolf gained control of Lavallee's right foot, lifted it off the mat and finished off the takedown with just over 1:00 left in the period. He cut Lavallee loose with :40 on the clock and immediately went to work on offense. Lavallee fought off a late Nolf shot and killed the buzzer in the opening period. Nolf chose down to start the second period and quickly escaped to a 3-1 lead. He picked up a point on a second Lavallee stall and then used a swift low double for a takedown with just :12 left to lead 6-1 after two periods. Lavallee chose down to start the third and Nolf cut him loose. He finished off the tiger with four textbook takedowns to roll to a 14-6 major decision and win his first national title.

Nolf, now a two-time All-American, caps of the 2017 season with a 5-0 run in St. Louis, including a pin, two techs and a major. He ends the season with a 27-0 record, including 14 falls, eight tech falls and two majors.

Red-shirt freshman Vincenzo Joseph (Pittsburgh, Pa.), the No. 3 seed at 165, took on No. 1 Isaiah Martinez of Illinois. They worked the middle of the mat for nearly a minute before Martinez worked his way in on a shot that Joseph appeared to step back from. A takedown was called with an immediate Joseph escape. Penn State challenged the call but it was confirmed and Joseph trailed 2-1 at the 1:50 mark. Joseph countered a slight Martinez shot at the :40 mark, worked his way behind the Illini and took a 3-2 lead with a takedown. Martinez escaped before the period ended and the match moved to the second period tied 2-2. Martinez chose down to start the second and escaped to a 4-3 lead and Joseph quickly moved in for a takedown to lead 5-4. Martinez escaped to a 5-5 tie and Joseph had 1:05 in riding time. Joseph chose down to start the third period and quickly escaped to a 6-5 lead. He then moved in for the win. Joseph and Martinez locked up in the middle of the mat and the Nittany Lion picked the two-time defending NCAA Champion off the mat and turned him to his back as the Scottrade Center erupted. The Lion freshman spent seconds to get the stunning fall at the 5:25 mark and claim his first NCAA title as a red-shirt freshman.

Joseph closes out his St. Louis run with a 5-0 mark, including a pin in the finals and a major. He ends his red-shirt freshman campaign with a 22-4 record with two pins and four majors.

True freshman Mark Hall (Apple Valley, Minn.), the No. 5 seed at 174, met No. 3 Bo Jordan of Ohio State. Jordan got in on a low single at the 1:00 mark and Hall countered his way to nearly locking up a cradle. Jordan fought the turn off and then Hall fought off a final Jordan push to keep the bout scoreless after the opening stanza. Hall worked his way into a high single that Jordan nearly countered for a takedown. The Lion freshman continued to work the edge of the mat and got a takedown to lead 3-0 at the :41 mark. Ohio State challenged the call, saying that Jordan had a takedown. The call was confirmed and Jordan led 3-0. Jordan escaped as the period wound down and Hall led 3-1 after two periods. Jordan chose down to start the third period and escaped to a 3-2 lead at the 1:32 mark. The duo battled evenly for the next minute. As the clock wound its way down below :20, Hall worked his way into control of the Buckeye grappler and took him to the mat for a clinching takedown, rolling to the 5-2 decision to become a national champion as a true freshman.

Hall closes out his first NCAA tourney run with a 5-0 mark, including a technical fall and a major. He ends 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).

Both Joseph and Hall become Penn State's first ever freshmen NCAA National Champions.

Sophomore Bo Nickal (Allen, Texas), the No. 2 seed at 184, met No. 1 Gabe Dean of Cornell in the tournament's final title match-up. After a scoreless minute-plus, Dean used a fast low double leg to take a 2-1 lead with Nickal escaping quickly at the 1:23 mark. Nickal worked his way into control of Dean's ankle and tried to keep the Big Red wrestler on the mat for a takedown. Dean tried to work his way out of the circle and Nickal stepped over and got a takedown after an official review. Leading 3-2, Nickal rode Dean out to carry the 3-2 lead into the second period. Nickal chose down to start the second period and Dean cut him loose to a 4-2 Nickal lead. Nickal stepped back from a fast low Dean shot at the :50 mark to maintain his lead into the third period. Dean chose down to start the third period and quickly escaped to a 4-3 Nickal lead. Nickal nearly scored on a takedown at the :50 mark, Dean nearly countered by turning Nickal to his back but the Lion fought off the effort and action moved out of bounds. Dean pressured Nickal on the edge of the mat and the duo worked their way into a scramble as the clock wound down. Nickal maintained control of Dean's leg and the clock hit :00, giving the Nittany Lion sophomore a 4-3 win and his first NCAA title. His win capped off a stunning 5-0 run in the NCAA finals for Penn State.

Nickal, now a two-time All-American, caps off the 2017 campaign with a 5-0 run at NCAAs, including a tech fall and three pins. Nickal was named the 2017 NCAA Championships Gorriaran Award winner for the most falls in the least amount of time (three in 11:07). He closes out the season with a 26-1 mark, including 17 pins, a tech and three majors.

Penn State won the team title by getting crucial points out of all eight of its participants. Sophomore Nick Nevills (Clovis, Calif.) took fifth at 285, earning All-American laurels with a 5-2 mark. Senior Jimmy Gulibon (Latrobe, Pa.) went 3-2 at 141, falling just one win shy of earning his second All-America tag. He also added a tech fall and a major for critical bonus points. Junior Matt McCutcheon (Apollo, Pa.) went 2-2 at 197 and fell just one win shy of All-America honors in the 'round of 12'. McCutcheon nabbed key bonus points with Penn State's first pin of the tournament in the first round.

All six of Penn State's All-Americans from this year's championship run, including five NCAA Champions, return next year. So does three-time qualifier McCutcheon and true freshman Nick Suriano (Paramus, N.J.), the No. 3 seed at this year's tournament who had to withdraw due to injury before competition began.

Penn State went a perfect 5-0 in session five and picked up 4.5 bonus points off a major, a tech and a fall. Penn State posted a superb 35-6 overall record, picking up 32.5 bonus points off five majors, nine tech falls and seven pins. Sanderson has now coached 18 national champions, 16 at Penn State. His teams have garnered 58 All-America honors, 43 at Penn State. All of this in addition to leading the Nittany Lions to six national titles in the last seven years. The Nittany Lions, with six All-Americans this year, now have 206 all-time All-Americans, 43 of those have come under Sanderson's tutelage. Penn State's 146.5 team points in the tournament are the most in school history, breaking the record of 143.0 set in 2012. Sanderson has led Penn State to its top six all-time NCAA point totals (all title winning runs).

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 and on Instagram at www.instagram.com/pennstatewrest. The 2016-17 Penn State wrestling season is presented by The Family Clothesline. This is PENN STATE. WRESTLING lives here.

2017 NCAA Championships – Team Standings (top five) -- FINAL:

March 17, 2017 – Scottrade Center – St. Louis, Mo.

- 1: PENN STATE – 146.5
- 2: Ohio State – 110.0
- 3: Oklahoma State – 103.0
- 4: Iowa – 97.0
- 5: Missouri – 86.5

2017 NCAA Championship Finals:

197: #1 J'Den Cox, Missouri over #2 Brett Pfarr, Minnesota – 8-2 dec.
285: #1 Kyle Snyder, Ohio State over Connor Medbery, Wisconsin – 6-3 dec.
125: #4 Darian Cruz, Lehigh over Ethan Lizak, Minnesota – 6-3 dec.
133: #4 Cory Clark, Iowa over #2 Seth Gross, South Dakota St. – 4-3 dec.
141: #1 Dean Heil, Oklahoma State over #6 George DiCamillo, Virginia – 6-3 dec.
149: #1 ZAIN RETHERFORD, PENN STATE over #3 Lavion Mayes, Missouri – 18-2 (TF; 6:42)
157: #1 JASON NOLF, PENN STATE over #3 Joey Lavallee, Missouri – 14-6 maj. dec.
165: #3 VINCENZO JOSEPH, PENN STATE over #1 Isaiah Martinez, Illinois – WBF (5:25)
174: #5 MARK HALL, PENN STATE over #3 Bo Jordan, Ohio State – 5-2 dec.
184: #2 BO NICKAL, PENN STATE over #1 Gabe Dean, Cornell – 4-3 dec.
All session attendance: 111,454 (third all-time)

2017 NCAA Championship Outstanding Wrestler: ZAIN RETHERFORD, PENN STATE

2017 NCAA Most Dominant Award: ZAIN RETHERFORD, PENN STATE

2017 Gorriaran Award: BO NICKAL, PENN STATE

Weight-by-weight agate (rankings listed are official tournament seed)

125: #3 Nick Suriano, Fr. – Did not compete/withdrew

Penn State announced on Wednesday that true freshman Nick Suriano (Paramus, N.J.), the No. 3 seed at 125, would not be able to compete due to an injury (and does not record a loss). Suriano entered the tournament as an at-large bid after taking an injury forfeit at the Big Ten Championships. Suriano ends his season with a 16-3 record (the last two losses by injury default). He was ranked as high as No. 2 nationally before suffering an injury in Penn State's final dual meet of the season.

141: Jimmy Gulibon, Sr. – 'round of 12' -- DNP

Rd. 1: vs. #13 Javier Gasca, Michigan State – W, 18-3 (TF; 7:00)

Rd. 2: vs. #4 Matt Kolodzik, Princeton – L, 3-6 dec.

Con 2: vs. Timmy Box, Northern Colorado – W, 14-5 maj. dec.

Con 3: vs. #12 Luke Pletcher, Ohio State – W, 11-4 dec.

Con 4: vs. #2 Kevin Jack, North Carolina State – L, 4-6 dec.

Senior Jimmy Gulibon (Latrobe, Pa.), a 2015 All-American at 133 and unseeded this year at 141, took on No. 13 Javier Gasca of Michigan State in the opening round. Gulibon started quickly, taking Gasca down twice in the first period, picking up an escape on an injury restart to lead 5-0 with :58 riding time after the opening period. The Lion senior continued his dominance in the second stanza, adding a takedown and two near fall points to lead 9-0. Looking for bonus points, Gulibon tacked on four bonus points and, with 3:26 in riding time, notched a dominating 18-3 technical fall at the 7:00 mark.

Gulibon took on No. 4 Matt Kolodzik of Princeton. Kolodzik scored quickly, taking Gulibon down off the whistle for an early 2-0 lead. The Tiger countered a solid Gulibon shot for a second takedown and led 4-1 after the opening period. Kolodzik took down to start the second period and Gulibon maintained control for the entire period and trailed 4-1 after two periods. Gulibon chose down to start the third period and quickly escaped to a 4-2 deficit. The Lion worked for a tying takedown but Kolodzik connected late to ice the bout and take a hard-fought 6-3 decision.

Gulibon took on Timmy Box of Northern Colorado in consolation round two. Gulibon, who went 1-1 with a tech fall yesterday, once again proved his mettle, not just winning but picking up bonus points with a major. Gulibon opened up a fast 9-3 lead that he turned into 14-5 major with a late takedown in the third period. Gulibon's win kept him alive in this morning's consolation action where he took on No. 12 Luke Pletcher of Ohio State. The duo battled through a scoreless opening minute with action taking place in the center circle. Gulibon hit on a head outside single and took a 2-1 lead as the clock moved below 1:00. Leading 2-1, Gulibon broke it open in the second period. He escaped to start the stanza and then quickly took Pletcher down to up his lead to 5-1. The Lion senior finished the period on top and led 5-1 with 1:27 in riding time after two. He tacked on two takedowns, an escape and 2:05 in riding time to roll to an 11-5 win.

Gulibon took on No. 2 Kevin Jack of North Carolina State in the 'blood round,' needing one more win to become a two-time All-American. Jack got the bout's first takedown at the 1:47 mark, taking an early 2-0 lead. Gulibon escaped to a 2-1 score but Jack had built up 1:11 in riding time. Gulibon was steady, however, taking Jack down as the period ended to take a 3-2 lead into the second period. Jack chose down to start the second and quickly escaped to a 3-3 tie, the only scoring of the second period. Gulibon chose neutral to start the third period and Jack answered with a takedown to up his lead to 5-3 with 1:40 on the clock. Gulibon escaped to a 5-4 deficit at the 1:10 mark and Jack had 1:10 in riding time. The Lion was unable to break through Jack's late defense and dropped a hard-fought 6-4 decision. Gulibon picked up critical points for Penn State, going 3-2 with a technical fall and a major. The lone senior in Penn State's line-up, Gulibon ends his Lion career with a 75-47 record and was a 2015 All-American at 133 pounds.

149: #1 Zain Retherford, Jr. – 3X All-American – National Champion

Rd. 1: vs. Joshua Maruca, Arizona State – W, 18-2 (TF; 4:55)

Rd. 2: vs. No. 16 Jordan Laster, Princeton – W, 16-0 (TF; 5:43)

Qtrs: vs. Alex Kocer, South Dakota State – W, 18-2 (TF; 5:13)

Semis: Tonight vs. #5 Brandon Sorensen, Iowa – WBF (2:36)

Finals: vs. #3 Lavion Mayes, Missouri – W, 18-2 (TF; 6:42)

Junior Zain Retherford (Benton, Pa.), two-time All-American and last year's NCAA Champion at 149, entered the tournament as the No. 1 seed. Retherford took on Arizona State's Joshua Maruca in the opening round. Retherford took the Sun Devil down quickly, getting two near fall points in an opening flurry to lead 4-0 out of the gates. Retherford picked up two more takedowns and four near fall points to lead 12-2 after one. Retherford reversed Maruca to start the second period and rolled his way to an 18-2 technical fall at the 4:55 mark.

Retherford met No. 16 Jordan Laster of Princeton in his second round match-up. Retherford notched an early takedown and spent the rest of the first period controlling Laster on top, turning him once for four back points and leading 6-0 with over 2:00 in riding time after one. The Lion reversed Laster to start the second period and turned him for four more near fall points to lead 12-0 after two. Laster chose down to start the third period and the Lion senior turned Laster one time and ended the match with a 16-0 technical fall at the 5:43 mark.

Retherford met Alex Kocer of South Dakota State in Penn State's first quarterfinal. Retherford opened up an early 4-1 lead with two first period takedowns. After reversing Kocer to begin the second stanza, the Lion senior worked his ride to a technical fall. Retherford turned Kocer twice for four-point near falls, nearly picking up a pin on the second as the period ended. The second period domination gave Retherford a 16-2 lead heading into the third. Kocer chose neutral to start the third period and Retherford ended the bout with a fast double leg takedown to post the 18-2 tech fall at the 5:13 mark. Retherford is now a three time All-American.

Retherford met No. 5 Brandon Sorensen of Iowa in the first of five national semifinal match-ups for Penn State. Retherford roared through a high double just over a minute into the bout to take an early 2-0 lead. The Lion then controlled action from the top position, building up a nice riding time cushion while working to turn Sorensen to his back. The Lion senior worked his magic, forcing Sorensen's shoulders to the mat and, after a few seconds of work, got the first period pin at the 2:36 mark. The win moves Retherford into tomorrow night's national finals against No. 3 Lavion Mayes of Missouri. He will head into the titular bout with a 4-0 mark, including three tech falls and a pin. The victory was crucial in the team race as well.

FOR TONIGHT'S ACTION, SEE ABOVE STORY

157: #1 Jason Nolf, So. – 2X All-American -- National Champion

Rd. 1: vs. Thomas Bullard, North Carolina St. – W, 22-7 (TF; 7:00)

Rd. 2: vs. #16 Victor Lopez, Bucknell – W, 24-9 (TF; 7:00)

Qtrs: vs. B.J. Clagon, Rider – WBF (4:06)

Semis: vs. #4 Tyler Berger, Nebraska -- W, 13-5 maj. dec.

Finals: vs. #3 Joey Lavalley, Missouri – W, 14-6 maj. dec.

Sophomore Jason Nolf (Yatesboro, Pa.), the No. 1 seed at 157 and an NCAA Finalist and All-American last year, took on Thomas Bullard of North Carolina State in the opening round. Nolf notched four first period takedowns and picked up a stall point to lead 9-3 after three minutes. He continued his dominance in the second period and led 12-4 heading into the third period. Nolf escaped to start the third and then tacked on a handful of takedowns and, with a ride out and 1:11 in riding time, posted the 22-7 tech fall at the 7:00 mark.

Nolf faced off with No. 16 Victor Lopez of Bucknell in the second round. Nolf opened up an early lead on the Bison wrestler, notching two quick takedowns in the first period to lead 4-2 with just over 1:00 left in the opening stanza. Nolf carried a 4-3 lead into the second and then poured on the offense, widening his lead to 11-5 after two periods. The Lion sophomore blazed his way through the third period, posting a handful of takedowns and a two point near fall to up his lead to 19-8. Nolf then added two more takedowns, finished on top and with 2:50 in riding time posted the 24-9 technical fall at the 7:00 mark.

Nolf took on B.J. Clagon of Rider in the quarterfinals. Nolf took an early 2-0 lead with a takedown with just

over 1:00 left in the period and then built up a 1:00 riding time edge before Clagon escaped. Nolf picked up a takedown with just seconds left and the Lion led 4-1 after one. Nolf chose down to start the second period and summarily ended the match. He reversed Clagon for a quick two and two near fall, then reset himself on top, turned the Bronc to his back and picked up the pin at the 4:06 mark. Nolf is now a two-time All-American.

Nolf took on No. 4 Tyler Berger of Nebraska in his semifinal match-up. Nolf and Berger battled evenly for the opening two minutes with the Lion nearly connecting on a single that worked its way out of bounds with 1:00 on the clock. The Lion sophomore's offensive pressure paid off in the waning seconds as he turned a low shot into a takedown and 2-0 lead after one period. Nolf escaped to start the second period and quickly blew through another takedown to lead 5-1 after cutting Berger loose. Nolf led 7-1 after two and then put on an offensive show and rolled to a 15-3 major, picking up critical bonus points. He moves into the national finals tomorrow night where he will meet #3 Joey Lavallee of Missouri. Nolf is 4-0 with a pin, two techs and a major so far in St. Louis.

FOR TONIGHT'S ACTION, SEE ABOVE STORY

165: #3 Vincenzo Joseph, Fr. – All-American – National Champion

Rd. 1: vs. Keaton Subjeck, Stanford – W, 5-1 dec.

Rd. 2: vs. #14 Branson Ashworth, Wyoming – W, 12-4 maj. dec.

Qtrs: vs. #6 Daniel Lewis, Missouri – W, 6-5 dec.

Semis: vs. #2 Logan Massa, Michigan – W, 5-4 dec.

Finals: vs. #1 Isaiah Martinez, Illinois – WBF (5:25)

Red-shirt freshman Vincenzo Joseph (Pittsburgh, Pa.), the No. 3 seed at 165, faced off against Stanford's Keaton Subjeck in the first round. Looking to avenge a loss to Subjeck in Rec Hall in November, Joseph battled Subjeck through a scoreless first period. The Lion freshman chose down to start the second stanza and escaped quickly. He added a late takedown and ride out to lead 3-0 after two periods. Subjeck escaped in the third but Joseph ended the match on top with another takedown and ride out to post the strong 5-1 win.

Joseph met No. 14 Branson Ashworth of Wyoming in round two. Joseph drew first blood with a solid high single that he turned into a takedown and a 2-0 lead. He then controlled the action from the top position and turned Ashworth for four near fall points. He then rode the Wyoming out and carried that lead into the second period. Joseph and Ashworth traded takedowns and the Lion led 8-4 with over 2:00 in time after two periods. He picked up an escape and a takedown in the third period and, with 2:48 in riding time, posted a convincing 12-4 major.

Joseph met No. 6 Daniel Lewis of Missouri in his quarterfinal match-up. Joseph looked to score early with a solid shot, but Lewis countered, controlled the Lion freshman's shoulders and took him down for an early 2-0 lead. Lewis then rode Joseph for the remainder of the period and led 2-0 with 2:22 in riding time after one period. Joseph was undeterred and his conditioning paid off. Lewis chose down to start the second and Joseph controlled action for a bit before he escaped to a 3-0 lead. From that point, Joseph took over. He notched one takedown in the second and trailed 4-2. Choosing neutral in the third, Joseph picked up a quick takedown and worked Lewis' riding time down below 1:00 before the Tiger escaped to a 5-4 lead. With just :08 left, Joseph took Lewis down and rode him out to post the thrilling 6-5 win. The victory makes Joseph an All-American.

Joseph faced off against No. 2 Logan Massa of Michigan in the semis. The duo battled through a scoreless first period with neither man finding an opening to finish off any shots. Massa chose down to start the second period and quickly escaped to a 1-0 lead. Joseph worked his way into control of Massa's waist and took him to the mat for a takedown and a 2-1 lead. Massa's quick escaped knotted things at the :40 mark. Tied 2-2, Joseph took down to start the third period and quickly escaped to a 3-2 lead. The Lion fought off a swift Massa shot, working action out of bounds. The Lion gave up a stall point at the :20 mark and then worked a trip into a scramble and a takedown. Massa escaped but Joseph's late takedown proved the difference as the Penn State freshman won 5-4. Joseph will meet No.

1 Isaiah Martinez of Illinois in the NCAA finals tomorrow night. He is 4-0 with a major in this, his first NCAA tournament.

FOR TONIGHT'S ACTION, SEE ABOVE STORY

174: #5 Mark Hall, Fr. – All-American – National Champion

Rd. 1: vs. David Kocer, South Dakota State – W, 8-2 dec.
Rd. 2: vs. Jadaen Bernstein, Navy – W, 16-0 (TF; 2:20)
Qtrs: vs. #4 Zach Epperly, Virginia Tech – W, 10-2 maj. dec.
Semis: vs. #1 Zahid Valencia, Arizona State – W, 4-3 dec.
Finals: vs. #3 Bo Jordan, Ohio State – W, 5-2 dec.

True freshman Mark Hall (Apple Valley, Minn.), the No. 5 seed at 174 and one of two true freshmen in Penn State's line-up, met David Kocer of South Dakota State in round one. Hall notched the first takedown and nearly locked up a cradle in the process but settled for a 2-0 lead. The true freshman then controlled Kocer for the next minute plus to lead 2-1 after one stanza. The second period featured an escape from Hall and Kocer answered with an escape of his own to start the third, setting up a 3-2 score in Hall's favor with 1:45 left to wrestle. Hall iced the match with a takedown and the :40 mark. He then turned Kocer for two back points, finished on top and tacked on 1:36 in riding time to post a strong 8-2 decision.

Hall tangled with Navy's Jadaen Bernstein in the second round. Hall ended the match early. The true freshman took Bernstein down and never let him recover. Leading 2-0 early, Hall used one two point turn and three four-point turns to cruise to a 16-0 technical fall at the 2:20 mark, ending the match with :40 left in the first period.

Hall took on No. 4 Zach Epperly of Virginia Tech in the quarters. Hall took command of the bout early, taking Epperly down at the 2:08 mark and then turning him for two back points to lead 4-0. The Lion continued his strong ride, controlling Epperly, turning him for four more near fall points and leading 8-0 after one period. Taking down to start the second, Hall escaped to a 9-0 lead, but gave up a takedown and led 9-2 at :44. Hall chose down after an Epperly injury time but could not escape the Hokie ride. Still, the freshman led 9-2 after two periods. Epperly chose down to start the final stanza. Hall maintained control of Epperly long enough to push his riding time back over 1:00. Hall's strong work on top broke Epperly to the mat and the Nittany Lion freshman finished the period on top. The ride out gave him 2:23 in riding time and a 10-2 major. Hall became an All-American with the win.

Hall met No. 1 Zahid Valencia of Arizona State in his semifinal match-up. Hall fought off a solid early Valencia shot and was hit for stalling at the 1:24 mark. The duo battled through the rest of the period scoreless and Hall chose down to start the second stanza. The Lion freshman worked his way to his feet, forcing Valencia into a stall warning but not quite escaping. After a reset, Hall escaped to a 1-0 lead at the 1:20 mark. The second period ended with the Lion leading by one. Valencia chose down to start the third period and escaped to a 1-1 tie at the 1:33 mark. Valencia worked his way into what was called a takedown that Hall quickly escaped from. Penn State challenged that Valencia held Hall's headgear and the challenge was accepted. Hall picked up a penalty point, no takedown was awarded and the Lion led 2-1. Hall iced the bout with a takedown with :26 left. Valencia picked up a late stall point and an escape, but Hall's late-game heroics proved the difference as the true freshman moved into the NCAA finals with the 4-3 win.

FOR TONIGHT'S ACTION, SEE ABOVE STORY

184: #2 Bo Nickal, So. – 2X All-American – National Champion

Rd. 1: vs. Mitch Sliga, Northwestern – W, 15-0 (TF; 3:20)
Rd. 2: vs. #15 Steven Schneider, Binghamton – WBF (5:33)
Qtrs: vs. #7 TJ Dudley, Nebraska – WBF (4:33)
Semis: vs. #3 Sammy Brooks, Iowa – WBF (1:01)
Finals: vs. #1 Gabe Dean, Cornell – W, 4-3 dec.

Finals. vs. #1 Gabe Dean, Cornell – W, 4-0 dec.

Sophomore Bo Nickal (Allen, Texas), the No. 2 seed at 184 and an NCAA Finalist and All-American at 174 a year ago, took on Mitch Sliga of Northwestern in the first round. Nickal took Sliga down quickly, opening up a 2-0 lead in the first minute. Nickal turned Sliga for four once, then reset and turned him again for four more to lead 10-0, then again for two to lead 12-0 with 2:20 in riding time after one period. Nickal escaped to start the second stanza and then ended the match with a final takedown, posting a 15-0 technical fall at the 3:20 mark.

Nickal met No. 15 Steven Schneider of Binghamton in round two. The Lion sophomore opened up an early 4-1 lead with two fast takedowns. With 1:30 on the clock, Nickal went to work on top, trying to turn Schneider for near fall. He got the four point turn and led 8-2 with 1:54 in riding time after the opening period. Nickal added a takedown to lead 10-3 with over 2:00 in time after two periods and then ended things early in the third. After action moved neutral, Nickal took Schneider to the mat, locked him up and got the pin at the 5:33 mark.

Nickal met No. 7 TJ Dudley of Nebraska in his quarterfinal bout. Nickal took an early 2-0 lead with a takedown at the 1:50 mark. Nebraska challenged the call but it stood. After a Dudley escape, Nickal took Dudley down once more to up his lead to 4-2. The Lion sophomore carried that lead into the second period. He took down to start the second and deftly reversed Dudley to up his lead to 6-2. Dudley picked up two points to briefly cut into Nickal's lead but the Lions sophomore wrapped his hands around Dudley's head, moved his hold to lock up a cradle and pinned the Husker at the 4:33 mark. Nickal is now a two-time All-American.

Nickal took on No. 3 Sammy Brooks of Iowa in Penn State's final semifinal bout. Nickal, who pinned Brooks in just :38 in Carver Hawkeye, nearly matched the time here on the sport's biggest stage. Nickal tripped and threw Brooks to his back quickly and got a fall at the 1:01 mark.

FOR TONIGHT'S ACTION, SEE ABOVE STORY

197: #5 Matt McCutcheon, Jr. – 'round of 12' – DNP

Rd. 1: vs. Christian Brunner, Purdue – WBF (1:53)

Rd. 2: vs. #12 Frank Mattiace, Penn – W, 6-3 dec.

Qtrs: vs. #4 Jared Haught, Virginia Tech – L, 3-7 dec.

Con 4: vs. #7 Aaron Studebaker, Nebraska – L, 2-13 maj. dec.

Junior Matt McCutcheon (Apollo, Pa.), the No. 5 seed at 197 and a three-time NCAA qualifier, battled Christian Brunner of Purdue in the opening round. McCutcheon got in on an early first period single and Brunner forced a scramble in the middle of the mat. The Lion junior worked his way into control, getting Brunner's back to the mat. McCutcheon worked his ankle free of Brunner's hold and then forced the Boilermaker flat for a first period pin at the 1:53 mark, Penn State's first fall of the tournament.

McCutcheon battled No. 12 Frank Mattiace of Penn in the second round. McCutcheon worked his way in on an early single and turned it into a takedown and a 2-0 lead at the 1:30 mark. After a quick Mattiace escape, McCutcheon used another textbook single to open up his lead to 4-2 after the opening stanza. Mattiace notched the only points of the second period with an escape. Leading 4-3, McCutcheon chose down to start the third period and quickly escaped to a 5-3 lead, maintaining over 1:00 in riding time. The Lion junior nearly picked up a third takedown but Mattiace fought off the final effort. Still, with riding time, McCutcheon posted a strong 6-3 win, going 2-0 on the day with a pin.

The Lion junior met No. 4 Jared Haught of Virginia Tech in the quarters. Haught drew first blood with a solid single leg for a takedown. McCutcheon escaped quickly and trailed 2-1 at the 1:10 mark. Haught took McCutcheon down as the period ended and the Lion trailed 4-1 after the opening stanza. McCutcheon escaped to start the second period but Haught tacked on a third takedown and led 6-3 with :40 left in the middle period. Haught escaped to start the third period and then McCutcheon got in on a low single to force a scramble at the 1:00 mark. Haught forced a stalemate and action resumed neutral. The Hokie fought off McCutcheon's letter shot and posted a hard fought 7-2 win.

The Hokie fought off McCutcheon's latter shots and posted a hard-fought 7-5 win.

McCutcheon met No. 7 Aaron Studebaker of Nebraska in the fourth round of consolations, needing one more win to earn his first All-America tag and keep the quest for third place alive. McCutcheon was the aggressor out of the gates, taking a handful of shots and breaking through for a takedown off a low single midway through the period. He led 2-1 after one period and Studebaker escaped to start the second period, tying the bout at 2-2. The Husker used a double leg to take McCutcheon down and then turned him twice to lead 12-2 after two periods. Studebaker went on to post the 13-2 major. McCutcheon went 2-2 in the tournament, including Penn State's first pin in the opening round.

285: #5 Nick Nevills, So. – 5th seed – ALL-AMERICAN – 5th place

Rd. 1: vs. Doug Vollaro, Lehigh – W, 4-2 dec.

Rd. 2: vs. #12 William Miller, Edinboro – W, 6-2 dec.

Qtrs: vs. #4 Jacob Kasper, Duke – L, 1-3 dec.

Con 4: vs. #15 Ryan Solomon, Pittsburgh – W, 2-0 dec.

Con Qtrs: vs. #8 Michael Kroells, Minnesota – W, 6-4 dec.

Con Semis: vs. #3 Ty Walz, Virginia Tech – L, 3-5 dec.

5th Place: vs. #4 Jacob Kasper, Duke – W, 4-3 (sv)

Sophomore Nick Nevills (Clovis, Calif.), the No. 5 seed at 285, battled Lehigh's Doug Vollaro in the first round. The Lion sophomore battled Vollaro through a scoreless first period and then escaped quickly to start the second period to lead 1-0. Vollaro took Nevills down and the Lion quickly escaped, knotting the score at 2-2 after two periods. Vollaro chose neutral to start the third period and Nevills took advantage. The Lion sophomore got in on a low single, Vollaro tried to counter and Nevills worked his way into control and a 4-2 lead with :40 left. Nevills then broke the Mountain Hawk down and finished on top to post a hard-fought 4-2 win and finish off Penn State's perfect first round.

Nevills took on No. 12 William Miller of Edinboro in Penn State's final match of the second round and the session. Nevills got in on an early single and, after nearly 1:00 of work, got control of the Scot big man for a takedown and a 2-0 lead at the :53 mark. Nevills rode Miller out to lead 2-0 with :57 in time after the opening period. Miller opted to take down to start the second stanza and, after Nevills tried to turn Miller, the Scot reversed the Lion to tie the bout at 2-2 with 1:00 on the clock. Nevills, however, maintained nearly 2:00 of riding time at that point. Nevills escaped to a 3-2 lead with 1:16 in time after two periods. The Lion answered with his own reversal in the third and led 5-2 with 1:37 in riding time. The Lion sophomore finished on top and, with 2:01 in time, posted the 6-2 decision.

The Penn State sophomore took on No. 4 Jacob Kasper of Duke in Penn State's final quarterfinal bout. Nevills fought off an early Kasper shot and kept the match neutral. As the clock wound down below :30, Kasper worked his way in on a single that resulted in a scramble on the edge of the mat where each man nearly scoring. The clock hit 0:00 and action moved to the second scoreless. Kasper chose down to start the second period and escaped to a 1-0 lead after :43. Kasper mounted a late charge with a solid shot and notched a takedown at the buzzer to lead 3-0 after two periods. Nevills chose down to start the third and quickly escaped to a 3-1 score. Nevills was unable to break through Kasper's strong defense and the Blue Devil notched the 3-1 decision.

Nevills took on No. 15 Ryan Solomon of Pittsburgh in his 'blood round' match-up, looking to become an All-American and keep third place in his grasp. Nevills and the Pitt big man fought their way through a scoreless first period. The Lion sophomore chose down to start the second period and quickly escaped to a 1-0 lead. With neither wrestler notching a takedown in the middle stanza, Solomon chose down to start the third period, trailing 1-0. Nevills won the match on top, riding the Panther out for the entirety of the period to post a 2-0 win with 1:43 in riding time, becoming an All-American for the first time. He then took on No. 8 Michael Kroells of Minnesota in the consolation quarterfinals. The duo traded takedowns in the first period with Kroells' coming late enough for the Gopher to ride Nevills out to lead 3-2 after one period. The Gopher extended his lead to 4-2 with a quick escape in the second. Nevills picked up a takedown on the edge of the mat to tie the bout 4-4. Nevills rode Kroells out and the bout moved to the third period tied 5-5. Nevills, with over 1:30 in riding time, chose down to start the third period and

escape to a 5-4 lead while maintaining 1:32 in time. Nevills round out the match with 1:32 in riding time to post the 6-4 win.

Nevills took on No. 3 Ty Walz of Virginia tech in the consolation semifinals. Walz shot low off the start, gaining control of Nevills' ankle. The Hokie finished off the takedown to lead 2-0 at the 2:20 mark. Nevills escaped quickly and action resumed in the center circle. Nevills worked his way in on a low single, forcing a scramble on the NCAA logo that ended with a reset. Trailing 2-1, Nevills chose down to start the second stanza and quickly escaped to a 2-2 tie. Walz added a second takedown to lead 4-3 after two periods. Walz chose down to start the third period and quickly escaped to a 5-3 lead. Nevills got in on a low single at the 1:30 mark but Walz was able to force a stalemate and hold his lead. Nevills nearly scored again on a counter takedown with :40 left but Walz was able to get to his feet and maintain the edge. Nevills met No. 4 Jacob Kasper of Duke in the fifth place match in a rematch of a quarterfinal bout won by Kasper 3-1. Nevills and Kasper battled evenly for nearly the full first period before Kasper locked Nevills at the chest and took him to the mat for a late takedown to lead second 2-0 after three minutes of wrestling. Nevills chose down to start the second period and quickly escaped to a 2-1 deficit. Nevills worked his way into a low single and scramble, finishing off the takedown with :10 left in the period to lead 3-2 after two. Kasper chose down to start the third period and quickly escaped to a 3-3 tie. The duo battled evenly for the rest of period and the bout moved to a sudden victory period. As the extra period started, the two met head first in the middle of the mat and Kasper called for an injury timeout. After action resumed, Nevills chose down on the reset and steadily worked his way free for an escape and a 4-3 sudden victory win, taking fifth place as the No. 5 seed.

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