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No. 13 Pitt rallies for 24-9 win over No. 17 Lehigh in Mountain Hawks' opener

PITTSBURGH – Competing on the mats for the first time since March 7, 2020, the Lehigh wrestling team enjoyed a strong start in its dual meet opener at No. 13 Pitt. A first period pin by junior Jaret Lane put the 13th-ranked Mountain Hawks up early and Lehigh led 9-6 after four bouts, but the Panthers won the final six bouts to claim a 24-9 victory Saturday at Fitzgerald Field House.

A number of tightly-contested matches went the Panthers' way as Lane's fall was the only bonus point win of the dual. Lehigh drops a dual meet opener for just the fourth time in Pat Santoro's 13 seasons while Pitt improves to 2-0 on the young campaign.

Lane took on Colton Camacho in Lehigh's first bout of the season. Camacho scored the first takedown but Lane reversed and went to work on top, eventually using an arm bar to turn Camacho for near fall points before repositioning for his 12th career fall.

Five Mountain Hawks made their first career dual appearances, including three deferred freshmen and two true freshmen.

At 133, freshman Malyke Hines took on fourth-ranked Micky Phillippi. Hines was the aggressor early on with the two best shots of the first period, including a takedown to lead 2-1 after one, but Phillippi came back with a takedown in the second period and three in the third to win 10-5 and get Pitt on the board.

The Panthers tied the dual at 6-6 as 14th-ranked Cole Matthews held off freshman Connor McGonagle 4-3 at 141. An exchange in the third period was ruled a takedown for Matthews followed by a McGonagle reversal. Matthews escaped to take a 4-3 lead on the restart and held on from there.

Junior Jimmy Hoffman put Lehigh back in front with a 4-0 decision over Luke Kemerer at 149. Hoffman scored a takedown late in the first period, escaped in the second and rode out the third to put the Mountain Hawks in front.

Pitt's run started at 157 as Tyler Badgett defeated sophomore JT Cooley 6-1 to tie the dual at 9-9 at the halfway point.

Ninth-ranked Jake Wentzel put Pitt in front for good with a 3-0 decision over true freshman Thayne Lawrence at 165. After a scoreless first period, Wentzel reversed early in the second period and rode out with those two points plus riding time accounting for the only points of the match.

The Panthers increased their lead at 174 as Jared McGill defeated freshman Jake Logan 4-2. McGill scored a first period takedown and added a second period escape plus riding time, while Logan scored a takedown late in the third.

Pitt went up 18-9 as 18th-ranked Gregg Harvey won a 4-1 decision over freshman JT Davis at 184, with the lone takedown coming late in the first period.

The only bout matching ranked wrestlers came at 197 where fifth-ranked Nino Bonaccorsi scored a takedown in each period to defeat 15th-ranked senior Jake Jakobsen 7-2.

In the final bout of the dual at heavyweight, junior Victor Lacombe scored the only takedown of regulation but a 1:01 riding time advantage for Jake Slinger sent the match to overtime tied 3-3. In sudden victory, Slinger took Lacombe to his back for a takedown and four near fall to win 9-3.

The dual was followed by 10 extra matches, which also count towards a wrestler's season record. Lehigh won four of the 10 extra bouts.

At 141, senior Joe Lobeck defeated Ryan Michaels 9-3, behind a strong first period where he scored a takedown and a pair of two point near falls to lead 6-1 after three minutes.

True freshman Connor Herceg bounced back after giving up the first takedown to beat Tye Weathersby 6-5 at 165. Herceg broke a 4-4 tie with a takedown late in the third period.

Caden Wright also won his debut as a true freshman with a 4-0 decision over Nicholas Meglino at 184. Wright used a strong performance on top to ride out the second period and escaped early in the third before adding a takedown in the final seconds.

Sophomore Eli Jones won the final bout of the evening at 285, using a second period escape and third period ride out to defeat Cole Rickert 2-0.

The Mountain Hawks will be back on the road next weekend when they visit EIWA rival Navy on Saturday January 16, at 6 p.m. The match will be broadcast on ESPN+.

No. 13 Pitt 24, No. 17 Lehigh 9

125 – Jaret Lane (Lehigh) Fall Colton Camacho (Pitt) 1:58

133 – Micky Phillippi (Pitt) dec. Malyke Hines (Lehigh) 10-5

141 – Cole Matthews (Pitt) dec. Connor McGonagle (Lehigh) 4-3

149 – Jimmy Hoffman (Lehigh) dec. Luke Kemerer (Pitt) 4-0

157 – Tyler Badgett (Pitt) dec. JT Cooley (Lehigh) 6-1

165 – Jake Wentzel (Pitt) dec. Thayne Lawrence (Pitt) 3-0

174 – Jared McGill (Pitt) dec. Jake Logan (Lehigh) 4-2

184 – Gregg Harvey (Pitt) dec. JT Davis (Lehigh) 4-1

197 – Nino Bonaccorsi (Pitt) dec. Jake Jakobsen (Lehigh) 7-2

285 – Jake Slinger (Pitt) dec. Victor Lacombe (Lehigh) 9-3, sv

Extra matches

125 – Colton Camacho (Pitt) dec. Sheldon Seymour (Lehigh) 7-4, tb1

133 – Louis Newell (Pitt) dec. Satoshi Abe (Lehigh) 5-1

141 – Joe Lobeck (Lehigh) dec. Ryan Michaels (Pitt) 9-3

149 – Mick Burnett (Pitt) dec. Paul Watkins (Lehigh) 8-6

157 – Antonio Petrucelli (Pitt) dec. Tyler Sung 6-3

165 – Connor Herceg (Lehigh) dec. Tye Weathersby (Pitt) 6-5

174 – Tommy O'Brien (Pitt) Fall Trey Cornish (Lehigh) 6:49

184 – Caden Wright (Lehigh) dec. Nicholas Meglino (Pitt) 4-0

197 – James Lledo (Pitt) major dec. Andrew Shedleski (Lehigh) 15-2

285 – Eli Jones (Lehigh) dec. Cole Rickert (Pitt) 2-0

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