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Illinois Wrestling Close Out 2022-23 Season at NCAA Championships

TULSA, Okla. – The four remaining Illinois wrestlers completed the second day of the NCAA Championships on Friday, March 17 from the BOK Center. Redshirt junior [12] [Zac Braunagel](#) and redshirt sophomore [10] [Lucas Byrd](#) both wrestled in their first NCAA Quarterfinals this afternoon.

Zac pinned Virginia Tech's [21] Andrew Smith (3:59) and in a third period comeback upset Lehigh's [5] Michael Beard (dec. 7-6). He wrestled [4] Ethan Laird (RID) in the quarterfinals and appeared to have the winning takedown as time expired. After review however, it was ruled that he crossed out of bounds by mere inches and was not awarded the takedown. He fell by a score of 3-2. He faced [10] Jacob Cardenas (CORN) in the blood round and fell in a hard-fought dual by a 6-4 decision.

Byrd defeated Iowa's [23] Brody Teske (dec. 13-10) and avenged his loss against Penn's [7] Michael Colaiocco (dec. 6-3) to earn his quarterfinals berth. He wrestled [2] Daton Fix (OKST) in a hard-fought battle, but fell 3-2. He wrestled Jesse Mendez (OSU) in the blood round and fell in the tiebreaking round 4-3 on the criteria of riding time.

Redshirt sophomore [Edmond Ruth](#) won two consolation bouts today. First, he defeated Chattanooga's [10] Rocky Jordan in the second round (dec. 2-0). Next, he fought back against [17] Donnell Washington (IND) to win in a 6-5 decision and advance to the blood round. He faced [11] Nelson Brands (IOWA) in the blood round and fought hard, but fell 4-1.

With no podium wrestlers this year, this ends the 30-year All-American streak which was the fourth longest in the nation. This concludes the 2022-23 wrestling season for Illinois. In head coach [Mike Poeta](#)'s second year they improved their dual record to 6-7 (4-4 B1G) while going 4-2 at home. That's the most dual and home wins since the 2019-20 season.

Session three's attendance was 15,507 and session four saw 15,694 to bring the championship total to 61,742.

FULL ILLINOIS INDIVIDUAL RESULTS

133: [Lucas Byrd](#) – 10 seed.

Champ. Round 1: [10] [Lucas Byrd](#) dec. [23] Brody Teske (IOWA), 13-10.

Champ. Round 2: [10] [Lucas Byrd](#) dec. [7] Michael Colaiocco (PENNY), 6-3.

Champ. Round 2: [10] [Lucas Byrd](#) dec. [7] Michael Colabucco (FLOR), 0-3.
Champ. Quarterfinal: [2] Daton Fix (OKST) dec. [10] [Lucas Byrd](#), 3-2.
Cons. Round 4: [13] Jesse Mendez (OSU) dec. [10] [Lucas Byrd](#), TB-3 4-3.
Byrd eliminated.

165: [Danny Braunagel](#) – 19 seed.

Champ. Round 1: [19] [Danny Braunagel](#) major dec. [14] Peyton Hall (WVU), 16-5.
Champ. Round 2: [3] Dean Hamiti (WIS) pinned [Danny Braunagel](#) in 2:47.
Cons. Round 2: [4] Julian Ramirez (CORN) dec. [19] [Danny Braunagel](#), 17-15.
D. Braunagel eliminated.

174: [Edmond Ruth](#) – 9 seed.

Champ. Round 1: [9] [Edmond Ruth](#) major dec. [24] Philip Conigliaro (HAR), 14-4.
Champ. Round 2: [8] Bailee O'Reilly (MINN) dec. [9] [Edmond Ruth](#), 4-2.
Cons. Round 2: [9] [Edmond Ruth](#) dec. [10] Rocky Jordan (CHAT), 2-0.
Cons. Round 3: [9] [Edmond Ruth](#) dec. [17] Donnell Washington (IND), 6-5.
Cons. Round 4: [11] Nelson Brands (IOWA) dec. [9] [Edmond Ruth](#), 4-1.
Ruth eliminated.

184: [Dylan Connell](#) – 23 seed.

Champ. Round 1: [10] Travis Wittlake (OKST) dec. [23] [Dylan Connell](#), 4-0.
Cons. Round 1: [26] David Key (NAVY) dec. [23] [Dylan Connell](#), 8-4.
Connell eliminated.

197: [Zac Braunagel](#) – 12 seed.

Champ. Round 1: [12] [Zac Braunagel](#) pinned [21] Andy Smith (VT) in 3:59.
Champ. Round 2: [12] [Zac Braunagel](#) dec. [5] Michael Beard (LEHI), 7-6.
Champ. Quarterfinals: [4] Ethan Laird (RID) dec. [12] [Zac Braunagel](#), 3-2.
Cons. Round 4: [10] Jacob Cardenas (CORN) dec. [12] [Zac Braunagel](#), 6-4.
Z. Braunagel eliminated.



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