

Sikora In Search Of Title At Wrestling Nationals

Posted: Wednesday, March 1, 2006

EAU CLAIRE - UW-Eau Claire wrestler, **Derek Sikora** (Sr. -Neillsville, WI) will look to become the first Blugold wrestling national champion in school history when he competes at the 2006 NCAA Division III Wrestling Championships this Friday and Saturday in New Jersey.

This will be Sikora's third straight appearance at nationals as he finished fifth last year and third the year before. Sikora, who is ranked first in the Division III in the 165-pound weight class, has compiled a 27-2 record this season and a 97-23 career record. Sikora has won 14 matches in a row since an overtime loss to Wisconsin's Seth Garvin back on January 13th.

During that 14-match win streak, Sikora placed first in the St. John's Invitational and the Blugold Invitational, where he defeated then No.1 ranked Ryan Valek of Augsburg. He also won his second career conference championship in his last meet at the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Wrestling Championships.

Sikora is tied for the most pins on the team with eight and has the fastest pin this season of 33 seconds.

Sikora will face some stiff competition when he arrives in New Jersey. Of the 14 wrestlers in the 165-pound weight class, Sikora would have faced four of them already this season. Along with No. 2 ranked Valek of Augsburg, Sikora has faced eighth ranked Scott Dorn of La Crosse, who he defeated in the finals of the WIAC Championships.

He has also faced and defeated Brian Daly of Augustana by a close 3-2 score. Cole Williams of Dubuque gave Sikora one of his two losses this season. The match went into overtime where Williams defeated Sikora 3-2.

Augsburg is the defending team champions and has won a total of nine championships in its history. UW-La Crosse has the most qualifiers in the field this year with 10.

The NCAA Championships get underway Friday morning at 11 a.m. with opening round action. It will pick up again Saturday morning at 10:30 a.m. with semifinal and championship matches. All of the action takes place at The College of New Jersey in Ewing, NJ.

Tournament Web Site

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