Sikora Captures National Championship

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EWING, NJ - UW-Eau Claire's Derek Sikora (Sr. -Neillsville, WI) ended his career in grand fashion as he became the first Blugold wrestler in school history to win a national championship tonight at the 2006 NCAA Wrestling Championships held at the College of New Jersey.

In the finals of the 165-pound weight class, it was a rematch of an earlier contest this season between No.1 ranked Sikora and second-ranked Ryan Valek of Augsburg. Unlike the first contest Sikora did not need overtime in this one as he defeated Valek by decision, 6-4, to capture the national title.

In the semifinals earlier in the day, Sikora defeated the No.5 seed Gerald Bowne of York College with a sudden victory in overtime 7-5 to advance to the finals.

Sikora beat the best of the best to capture the title as he ended up defeating the second place finisher in Valek, the third place finisher Dustin Bliven of Wartburg, the fourth place finisher Steve Martell of Johnson and Wales University, and the fifth place finisher Gerald Bowne of York College. All of which were ranked in the top seven in the nation.

Sikora ends his Blugold career winning his final 18 matches and ending his senior season with a record of 31-2. He ends as a three-time All-American with a career record of 111-23, a fifth place, a third place, and of course a first place national finish in his four seasons.

Prior to tonight, the best Blugold finish at nationals was a second by Blugold Hall of Famer Bob Wozniak in 1990.

Wartburg College captured its fifth national title with 145.5 points. Sikora's 20 points was good enough for the Blugolds to finish tied for 16th place with St. Johns University.

Tournament Web Site

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