

Wrestling: Ohio State Places 9th At Big Ten Championships



Ohio State finished ninth in the team standings at the Big Ten wrestling championships on March 7, putting an end to the 2021 Big Ten wrestling season with just the NCAA Championships left now on the season.

Although the team result wasn't what Ohio State was looking for, it wasn't a lost weekend by any means for the Buckeyes. Sammy Sasso took an individual title at 149 pounds to avenge his loss in the championship last season, while Ethan Smith finished as the runner-up at 165 pounds.

At 125 pounds, Malik Heinselman left the event at least a bit disappointed, as he finished fourth, one spot below his pre-seed. He fell to Rayvon Foley of Michigan State in the third-place dual.

Dylan D'Emilio took a ninth-place finish at 141 pounds with a victory over Cayden Rooks of Indiana and will look for an at-large bid to the NCAA Championships.

Sasso knocked off Ridge Lovett of Nebraska in the 149-pound championship to claim his first Big Ten title. He'll be a favorite to claim the national title at 149 pounds, along with Austin O'Connor from North Carolina, Brock Mauller from Missouri and Boo Lewallen from Oklahoma State.

Elijah Cleary grabbed a ninth-place finish at 157 pounds, and will also need to depend on an at-large bid to qualify for the national tournament.

Smith wasn't quite able to knock off defending champion Alex Marinelli at 165 pounds but put up a serious fight against the Iowa grappler, coming up just short in the final seconds and falling 3-2.

Kaleb Romero secured a fifth-place finish at 174 pounds, falling to Carter Starocci of Penn State and Logan Massa of Michigan during his run but toppling Donnell Washington from Indiana to take the fifth spot. Like Heinselman, Sasso, Smith and heavyweight Tate Orndorff, he'll qualify automatically for the NCAA Championships.

Rocky Jordan could never find his groove in Pennsylvania, and fell to 10th at 184 pounds after a loss in the ninth-place match against Zach Braunagel of Illinois. His season is likely over, though he could still find an at-large bid.

Gavin Hoffman saw his trip ended after a loss to Billy Janzer in the second consolation round.

Ohio State closed out the day on a relatively high note, with Orndorff finishing in sixth place, though he fell in the fifth-place match against Nebraska's Christian Lance.