



**2004 NCAA DIVISION II WRESTLING
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS
HOSTED BY MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO
MYERS FIELD HOUSE &
BRESNAN ARENA IN TAYLOR CENTER
MARCH 12 & 13, 2004**

Nebraska-Omaha Rallies For Team Title In Final Bout Of 2004 National Championships
Cole Province Wns Fourth Straight Individual Championship

Mankato, Minn. --- While the individual honors were known immediately, the team title for the NCAA Division II Wrestling National Championships was not decided until the final match in the heavyweight division. In the end it was the University of Nebraska-Omaha that picked up the overall team title for 2004. The Mavericks edged North Dakota State University 97.5 to 95.

The top individual performance at the 42nd annual championships was the University of Central Oklahoma's Cole Province winning his fourth straight national title. Province becomes only the third wrestler in Division II history to run the table and win a national championship each year. Knowing they had just seen something special the crowd rose to their feet to acknowledge his performance.

Championships are often decided by a missed free throw, a missed extra point, a throwing error or some other play that impacts the entire contest. North Dakota State University brought 10 wrestlers to the tournament. The Bison were ranked number one in the nation. This would be their last Division II tournament since the school is moving up to Division I next year. Eight of the team's wrestlers survived the first day and three would make it to the finals.

For NDSU the key play of the evening was the match at 197 pounds. Brian Kramer squared off against Jeff Sylvester from the University of Nebraska-Kearney. Kraemer was second at last year's national championships while Sylvester was seventh. This year Sylvester was ranked second while Kraemer was ranked fourth. After the final whistle Sylvester had a national title, Kraemer was once again the runner-up, but the door was open for Nebraska-Omaha to take team honors with a victory in the heavyweight division.

The match at 141 was simply a rematch from the 2003 tournament. Defending national champion Shane Barnes (Adams State) met Merrick Meyer (Truman State) again. This time the results were different as Meyer nabbed his gold.

For the team title this was how it was suppose to end. The final match, a heavyweight bout, featuring Nebraska-Omaha's Les Sigman and Ft. Hayes State's Andrew Ubben, would determine whether or not the Bison or the Mavericks would be the team champion. Sigman, the defending national champion, just needed to win to give the Mavs their team crown. A loss would give the Bison the title. Unfortunately, the drama of the situation was tempered as early in the first period Ubben was forced to withdraw due to an injury. The result was team Maverick is the 2004 team champion.

INDIVIDUAL RESULTS

- At 125 Western State's Jared Haberman defeated Nebraska-Omaha's Dustin Tovar.
- University of Central Oklahoma's Cole Province fought off San Francisco State's Donald Lockett for his fourth consecutive individual championship at 133 pounds.
- The rematch of the 2003 final at 141 saw Merrick Meyer (Truman State) get by Shane Barnes (Adams State).
- At 149 Adrian Jiron (Western State) knocked off Nebraska-Omaha's Patrick Allibone.
- Adams State's Travis Koppenhafer beat Jack Quintana (Western State) in the 157-pound division.
- Waylon Lowe (Findlay), moving up two weight classes this year, picked off two-time national champion Shawn Silvas for the title at 165 pounds.
- At 174 Central Oklahoma's Jason Tapia pinned John Burda (Pittsburgh-Johnstown) in 1:25.
- Tom Meester (Augustana) handled NDSU's Matt Herman. In the 184 pound division.
- At 197, Jeff Sylvester (Nebraska-Kearney) dominated Brian Kraemer (NDSU).
- In the heavyweight division, defending national champion Les Sigman (Nebraska-Omaha) won by default over Ft. Hayes State's Andrew Ubben.

OTHER AWARDS

Outstanding Wrestler: Waylon Lowe, Findlay

Coach of the Year: Miles VanHee, Western State