

NCAA Announces 75th Anniversary Wrestling Team

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INDIANAPOLIS---In honor of the 75th Anniversary of the NCAA Wrestling Championships, the NCAA announced its 75th Anniversary Wrestling Team today at Union Station in St. Louis in conjunction with the Division I Wrestling Championships.

A panel of collegiate wrestling experts compiled a list of 45 former wrestlers in three divisions, lightweight, middleweight and heavyweight to be nominated for the 75th Anniversary Team. Fans from across the nation then voted on-line and the top five vote getters in each category were named to the 15-member team.



In the lightweight division, the winners were Fresno State's Stephen Abas, Iowa's Tom Brands, Iowa State's Dan Gable as well as Oklahoma State's John Smith and Yojiro Uetake Obata.

Abas was a three-time NCAA Champion during his career which spanned from 1998-2002 while compiling a 103-2 record with 46 pins. Brands was a three-time NCAA Champion with an overall record of 158-7-2 and 46 falls as a Hawkeye from 1989-92. Gable, the top vote getter of the 15-member team, was a two-time NCAA Champion, compiling a record of 96-1 with 72 pins while wrestling from 1968-70. Smith also was a two-time NCAA Champion, racking up a 157-7-2 record with 40 falls during his collegiate career from 1984-88. Obata went undefeated throughout his collegiate career with a perfect 57-0 record while winning three NCAA titles from 1964-66.

In the middleweight division, the team members were Wisconsin's Lee Kemp, Iowa's Lincoln McIlravy, Clarion's Wade Schalles, Oklahoma State's Pat Smith and Iowa's Joe Williams.

Kemp tallied 143 wins en route to three NCAA titles as a Badger from 1975-78. McIlravy was also a three-time NCAA Champion during 1993-97 while compiling a 96-3 record. Schalles pinned 106 opponents during his career from 1971-74 in which he won two national titles and went 153-5-1. Smith was the first four-time NCAA Champion while wrestling from 1990-94 and putting together a 121-5-2 record. Williams was a three-time NCAA champion from 1994-98 while compiling a record of 129-9.

In the heavyweight division, the five honorees were Clarion's Kurt Angle, Iowa's Ed Banach, Pittsburgh-Johnstown's Carlton Haselrig, Oklahoma's Dan Hodge and Iowa State's Cael Sanderson.

Angle was a two-time NCAA Champion while at Clarion, posting a 116-10-2 record for his collegiate career. Banach reached the finals of the NCAA Championships all four years and managed three NCAA titles, finishing his Iowa career with 141 wins and 73 falls. Haselrig won three NCAA Championships at both the Division I and Division II level for Pittsburgh-Johnstown, becoming the only wrestler in NCAA history to do so on his way to a 143-3-1 record for his career. Hodge never lost in his collegiate career posting 46 wins, 36 by fall, on his way to three NCAA titles. Sanderson is the only four-time undefeated NCAA Champion in history, putting together a streak of 159 wins without a loss.

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