

New life allows Juergens to place third

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CLEVELAND

Eric Juergens thought he had lost another tough match Saturday morning.

Friday night, he lost a heart-breaking 6-4 decision to Teague Moore of Oklahoma State in the semifinals, and he believed the same thing happened against Stephen Abas of Fresno State.

"I didn't realize ... I must have gotten a stalling point or something. I thought I was down 3-2," said the redshirt freshman who won four Iowa state prep titles.

In reality, he was tied with Abas 3-3 at the end of regulation time, and he went on to score a 5-3 win in the match for third place at 118 pounds. His two wins, and two more by Lee Fullhart in the consolations, were more than the difference in the team race for Iowa.

"He (Abas) was moving around and I didn't feel like he was stalling," he said. "It was such a big surprise that it was tied up. I looked at the scoreboard ... I thought I'd lost. It was such a horrible feeling."

"It was a pretty good feeling to get another shot."

The native of Maquoketa made the most of it, much like he did earlier in the season.

Injuries and weight problems were among the things that dogged Juergens early in the year. About the time he got healthy, along came the extra seven pounds the NCAA allowed and he was back in business.

"A lot of things go through your mind when you have hard times," said Juergens. "Things looked bad, but that's what friends are for, to help pull you through. I was having problems ... with college. School is always a major thing with me. I have a hard time not

really a hard time, but it definitely isn't easy for me."

That's where the support system of the Iowa wrestling team came to his rescue, and Juergens felt like he couldn't let the team down even though he was disappointed in losing his chance for a national title in the semifinals.

"I didn't want to be the one to let us down," he said. "When I came here I thought I knew what good friendship was all about. I didn't know ... it's like all of our team is one big family. When one of us loses, it means so much to everybody. We pull together. Even if we all can't place, we darn well are going to try to win as a team so everybody gets a piece of the championship."

Even a third-place finish on a national championship team doesn't satisfy the desire of Juergens.

"Hell no," he said when asked if he was satisfied. "Not a bit, not a bit. I didn't come here for third, I came here for first."

FOUR TIMES. Iowa State's Dwight Hinson came here looking for a national title too, but leaving with his four straight All-American finish was pretty pleasing to the 126-pounder.

"I should be first, but third place, I'll take it any day because I had to work my butt off to get it," said Hinson.

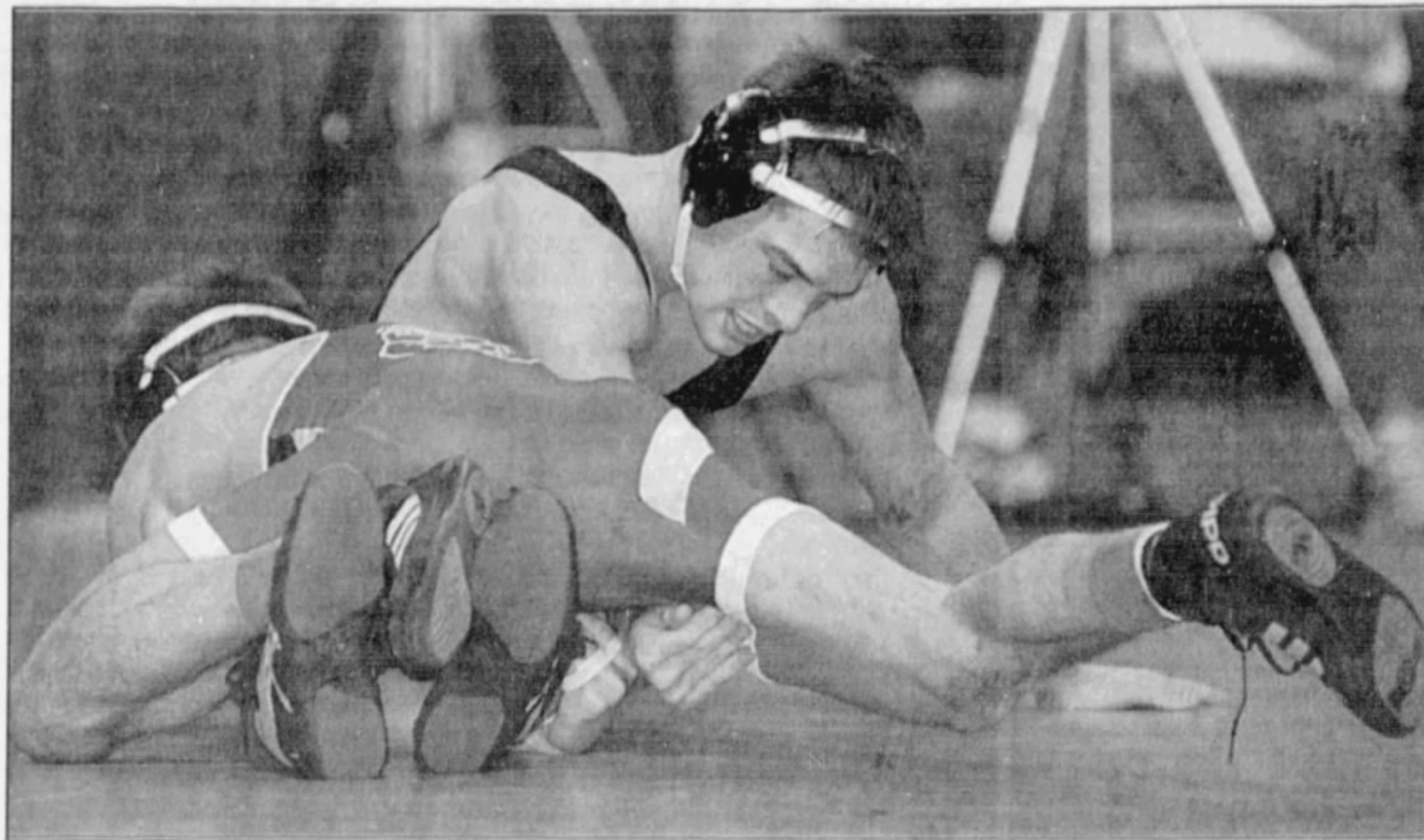
He finished his career with one second, two thirds and a fourth, and is the second-winningest wrestler in Iowa State's glorious wrestling history.

His 6-1 decision over Stan Greene of Fresno State in the third-place match was the 138th of his career, second only the 150 wins posted by Mike Land back in the 1970s.

"When I look back on it tomorrow I'll be real disappointed," said Hinson. "But I'll settle for third right now."

Hinson had to come back after a disappointing semifinal loss to Eric Guer-

NCAA WRESTLING NOTES



AP PHOTOS

Above, Iowa's Eric Juergens, background, battles against Fresno State's Stephen Abas for third place in the wrestlebacks of the NCAA Wrestling Championships Saturday. Juergens won the match. At right, Iowa State's Dwight Hinson and Fresno State's Stan Greene get tangled up during Saturday's action. Hinson closed his Cyclone career with a third-place finish.

rero of Oklahoma State.

"It's hard to come back, your self esteem is down, you are down on yourself," he said. "But you've got to wrestle through that. I wish I could be there (in the finals), but there's only so much wishing you can do."

Hinson came to Iowa State after a standout prep career in Lawton, Okla., and said it was the right decision for him, and that he come back again

tomorrow if he could.

"Yes I would," he said. "Iowa is a great place to wrestle. We've got Iowa State, Iowa and Northern Iowa, and it gives you a lot of good competition. Being a four-time All-American is an honor because not many people do it. I've got to give a lot of credit to (coach) Bobby Douglas and my teammates. It's just a good wrestling environment and it helped me a lot."

