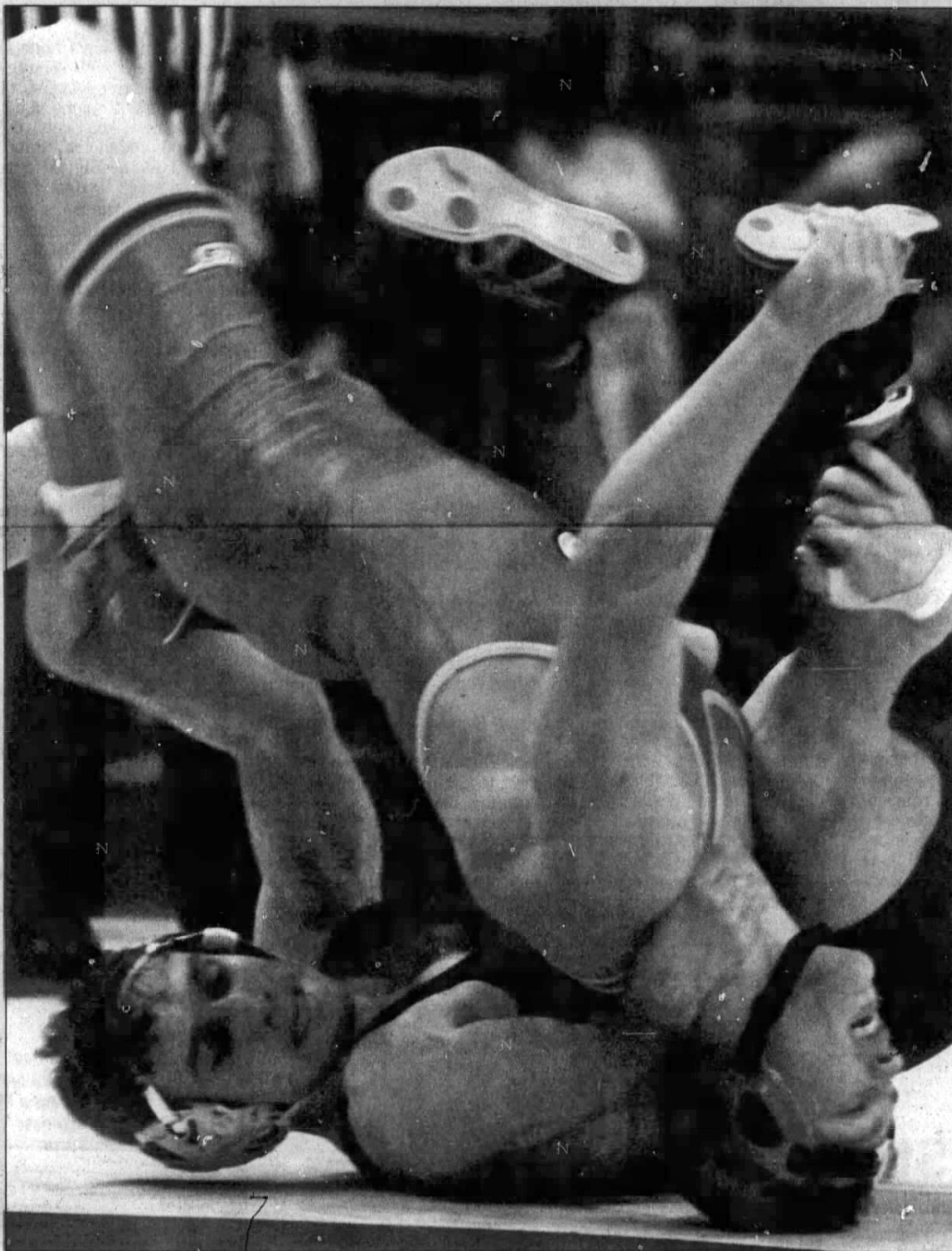


## NCAA WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS



Iowa State's Cole Sanderson (right) rolls with Pennsylvania's Brett Matter during their 157-pound match Friday at St. Louis. Sanderson lost, 9-3, in the quarterfinals.

Gazette photo by Buzz Orr

# 'Clones control destiny

### ISU on verge of NCAA title



By Jeff Johnson

Gazette sportswriter

**S**T. LOUIS — OK, Gene Smith. As athletic director at Iowa State University, you recently doled out some major coin to your men's and women's basketball coaches.

Now how about doing the same thing for your wrestling coach.

Yeah, it's all well and nice that Larry Eustachy and Bill Fennelly produced Big 12 Conference championships this winter. They're both in the middle of what could be long NCAA tournament runs, too.

But have they won a national championship for you lately? Bobby Douglas is poised to.

The Cyclone mats mentor watched his troops take command of the team race Friday night at the NCAA Championships, thanks to a whole lot of good wrestling and some unbelievable losses by arch-enemy Iowa.

The Cyclones have 98 points heading to the final day of competition at the Kiel Center to 88½ for second-place Iowa. Minnesota is a distant third with 67½, followed by Oklahoma with 63½.

"I'll leave all that up to our school president and athletic director," smiled Douglas, when asked about a possible pay raise. "This tournament still is not over, yet. But I hope it is."

Iowa State, in search of its first team championship since 1987, qualified four wrestlers for tonight's finals — 133-pounder Cody Sanderson, 165-pounder Joe Heskett, 184-pounder Cael Sanderson and 197-pounder Zach Thompson. Heavy-

### STANDINGS

1. Iowa State 98
2. Iowa 88½
3. Minnesota 67½
4. Oklahoma 63½
5. Oklahoma St. 55½

■ **TODAY:** Consolation semifinals, finals, 11 a.m.; Championship finals, 7 p.m.

■ **WHERE:** Kiel Center, St. Louis

■ **RADIO:** KXIC-800 AM (Iowa's matches only)

■ Turn to 3C: **Cyclones**



# Cyclones

## ■ From page 1C

weight Trent Hynek is the lone Cyclone alive in wrestlebacks.

"We've had a couple of team meetings the last few months, maybe once or twice a month," said top-seeded Heskett, who strolled to an 11-4 semifinal win over Virginia Tech's Chris Martin. "We'll sit down and talk about our focus. We've talked about how we're not always going to be out there supporting one another, but actually we are."

"So this is a big deal, and everyone on this team is on the same page. You can see how far we've come since the beginning of the year until now. It's because of the focus and the hard work."

Iowa, meanwhile, will have just two wrestlers going for national titles — 133-pounder Eric Juergens and heavyweight Wes Hand.

You might notice the names Doug Schwab and T.J. Williams weren't included in that list. Both defending national champs suffered shocking defeats — Schwab to Carl Perry of Illinois, 7-5, in the 141-pound quarterfinals, and Williams in overtime to Boise State's Larry Quisel, 3-1, in the 157-pound semifinals.

It was Williams' first official loss at Iowa after winning his first 67 matches since transferring two years ago from a California junior college.

Top-seeded and top-ranked Hawkeye 125-pounder Jody Strittmatter also was an upset victim — losing in overtime to Virginia's Steve Garland, 9-7, in the quarters. He, Schwab, Williams and 149-pounder Bill Zadick have all still secured all-American status — at least eighth place — and will wrestle in today's consolation finals with the chance to finish third.

"It's frustrating because you'd rather be in the driver's seat," said Iowa Coach Jim Zalesky, whose team is shooting for its sixth-straight team title. "Anytime you're not in the driver's seat, you've gotta hope for somebody else to fail. And that's not really how you want to win."

"We've gotta probably win all of our matches and hope Iowa State gets beat some. We've just gotta win our matches and do the best we can."

Iowa State nearly did as good as it could do Friday night. The Cyclones went 4-for-5 in semifinal matches, Hynek the only loser — 8-3 to Iowa's Hand in a reversal of their regular-season encounter.

Cody Sanderson qualified for his second-straight finals match, topping Michigan State's Pat McNamara, 5-2. His championship opponent is Iowa's Juergens, who is 5-1 against him the last two years.

Juergens blasted Michigan's Joe Warren, 12-3, in their semi Friday night.

"He's beaten me (five of six times), so I'd call it an upset if I beat him tomorrow night," said Sanderson (33-2), who avenged a regular-season defeat to McNamara.

"History is history," countered Juergens (30-0). "I can't rely on anything I've done in the past to put me through."

Cael Sanderson (39-0) continued his sheer dominance here, pounding Minnesota's Brandon Eggum, 16-5, in the semifinals.

## TOURNEY GLANCE

Here is a look back and ahead at the 70th NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships at the Kiel Center in St. Louis.

### MORNING BLUES II

For the second day in a row, the early session produced some big surprises. Two No. 1 seeds and two defending champions fell in the quarterfinals, including Iowa's Jody Strittmatter and Doug Schwab. Strittmatter was seeded No. 1 at 125 pounds and lost to No. 8 Steve Garland of Virginia, 9-7, in overtime, and No. 1 seed and defending champion Schwab fell to Carl Perry of Illinois, 7-5. The other upset was at 165, where defending champ and No. 4 seed Kirk White of Boise State lost to No. 12 Chris Martin of Virginia Tech, 5-4.

### TODAY'S MENU

The final day kicks off at 11 a.m. with consolation semifinals, followed by placing matches for 3rd, 5th and 7th place. The evening sessions starts at 7 p.m., following the Grand March at 6:30 p.m.

### CROWD WATCHING

The first two sessions on Thursday drew 31,903 fans, 15,915 for the first round and 15,988 for the second round. Those are good numbers, but there still are an awful lot of empty seats in this spacious arena.

### INFORMATION PLEASE

All of Iowa's matches will be broadcast live by KXIC (800 AM). The championship finals will be televised by ESPN2 at 1 p.m. March 23. Results are updated all day at [www.ncaawrestling.com](http://www.ncaawrestling.com)

### QUOTABLE

"Wrestle backs are all attitude." — Iowa Coach **Jim Zalesky**, whose five-time defending champions will need some attitude after Thursday's quarterfinals.

- **Compiled by J.R. Ogden**

Sanderson is now 78-0 in his career and has won every match at this tournament by either pin or technical fall.

Thompson (32-4) won a 3-2 semifinal decision over top-seeded Mark Munoz of Oklahoma State. That was the same score — and same winner — as their previous match this season, at the Big 12 tournament two weeks ago.

"You get a little rush from seeing everybody else win," Thompson said. "It's a snowball effect — one right after the other. First Cody wins, then Joe wins, then Cael wins ..."

Former Cedar Rapids Prairie state prep champ Hynek couldn't quite win, however, suffering his first defeat of the season at the hands of Hand (30-2). Hynek won the December match between the two, 8-1, but this time it was all Hand.

What was the difference?

"That was three months ago," said Hand, who took Hynek down three times. "I was sleeping the last time. This time he was going to get my best. This was the national tournament."

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