

## Trotman Qualifies for NCAA Wrestling Quarterfinals

Written by Paul Blascovich  
Friday, 16 March 2012 07:32

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It was a mixed day for the Mountaineers, as Appalachian State University competed in the opening day of the 2012 NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships at the Scottrade Center

on Thursday. Senior Austin Trotman (Winston-Salem, N.C./Mount Tabor) won both of his matches to lead the Apps' effort in the tournament, while classmate Kyle Blevins (Sapulpa, Okla./Sapulpa) and junior Tony Gravely (Martinsville, Va./Magna Vista) remain alive and will join Trotman in Friday's competition.

Action resumes Friday at 10 a.m. (11 a.m. Eastern) with Session III, which includes one round of championship and two of consolation action.

Trotman entered the weekend seeded as the No. 9 wrestler at 184-pounds, reflecting his dominant senior season.

Facing North Dakota State's MacKain Stoll in his first match, Trotman scored his first takedown in the first 20 seconds and tallied three total takedowns in the first period to open up a 6-2 lead. Stoll looked to comeback in the second period and scored an escape in the first five seconds. The two exchanged takedowns, and Trotman's lead was narrowed to 9-6. Trotman sealed his win with an escape, takedown and riding point in the final stanza, winning his opening bout, 13-6.

In his second bout Trotman took on No. 8 Ryan Loder of Northern Iowa. In the first period, Trotman needed just 10 seconds to score a takedown but was only able to hold on for eight seconds. Leading 2-1 at the start of the second, Trotman carried his opponent out of bounds several times trying to escape and finally did so in the first half-minute. Trotman tacked on a takedown to carry a 5-1 advantage into the final stanza. Loder broke free in the third and nearly scored offensive points, but Trotman remained dominant, adding a final takedown with 15 seconds left to win 8-2 with a 1:10 riding time advantage.

"I knew coming in that this is my last year," commented Trotman, "and it's time to push myself. After five years on the team, it's my last chance to step up. For me, it's amazing, and as a team, it does nothing but help. I knew I'd be going to Appalachian in 10th grade, and all the training is really paying off."

Trotman will face top seed Joe LeBlanc of Wyoming in his quarterfinal. LeBlanc defeated Trotman 10-2 at the Reno Tournament of Champions to break Trotman's season-opening, 14-bout winning streak. If Trotman wins either of his Friday bouts, he will earn a spot in Saturday's competition and the Mountaineers' first podium spot since 2003.

Gravely drew Oklahoma State's Jon Morrison in his opening bout, and the Cowboy scored his first points in the bout's first minute. Scoring on a takedown, Morrison rode out the first and held on to a 2-0 lead. The bout was broken open in the second period, as Morrison opened with an escape and followed with a takedown and two near-fall points. Trailing 7-0, Gravely started on top but failed to keep Morrison on the mat. Morrison's lead ballooned and the final seconds featured a final set of near-fall points as Morrison won by technical fall, 16-0 (7:00).

In Gravely's consolation match, the Mountaineer took on Austin Miller of Bucknell. Gravely struck first earning a takedown in the first 10 seconds. Looking for back points, Gravely fought hard, but the Mountaineer was evaded and fell subject to a reversal. Miller added on three near-fall points and built a 5-2 lead. In the final minute of the first, Gravely broke loose for an

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escape and a takedown, tying the match at 5-5 after one. Miller reversed to open the second and Gravely escaped before Gravely added a takedown with a corresponding Miller escape. With the match tied 8-8, Gravely started the third period on bottom and broke free in less than 10 seconds. He notched a takedown with 90 seconds to go and rode long enough to clinch the riding point. Though Miller reversed, Gravely scored again on an escape and closed out the win, 13-10.

Gravely will take on No. 12 Steve Bonanno of Hofstra in the opening bout of Friday's Session III.

Blevins came out aggressive in his opening match against No. 5 Michael Evans of Iowa. After a scoreless first minute, the Hawkeye opened the scoring with a takedown and held on to a 2-0 lead to end the first period. Starting on bottom, Blevins reversed to tie the score 2-2 in the second period, but Evans retorted with a reversal of his own to regain a 4-2 lead. Despite the Mountaineer's efforts, Blevins was unable to score in the third period, and Evans won the bout 5-2.

In his consolation bout, Blevins faced Scott Winston of Rutgers. After a scoreless first period, Blevins notched the first point on an escape 35 seconds into the second period. Blevins scored the first offensive points with a takedown with 20 seconds to go in the period; Winston broke out seven seconds later. With Winston trailing 3-1, the Scarlet Knight failed in his efforts to break free of Blevins' grip, and the Mountaineer completed the two minute ride for a 1:32 riding advantage and a 4-1 decision.

Blevins' next opponent is Michigan's Daniel Yates.

Appalachian's remaining consolation wrestlers will need to win in back-to-back bouts in Friday's early session plus an additional win Friday evening in order to win a spot on the podium.

Senior Mike Kessler (Bay City, Mich./Western) faced No. 7 Nick Nelson of Virginia in a rematch of a regular-season bout that went 3-0 in favor of the Cavalier. In Kessler's first period, both wrestlers worked to feel each other out, but the three minutes ended with no score. Nelson started on bottom in the second period and rose to his feet without escaping for nearly 30 seconds before Kessler managed to bring him the whole way to the mat. After a restart with 41 seconds left, Nelson broke out with 36 to go in the period, and Kessler trailed 0-1 heading into the third. Kessler nearly got to his feet in time to preserve his riding time point, but Nelson kept his grip and continued to ride. In the end, Nelson's one point advantage was enough to take the bout.

Kessler's consolation opponent was No. 10 Jake Sueflohn of Nebraska, upset earlier by Virginia Tech's Zach Neibert, 6-5. Kessler scored first, earning a takedown with 2:11 remaining in the opening stanza. After over a minute of riding, Sueflohn broke loose and countered with a takedown, earning a 3-2 lead. In the second period, Sueflohn needed 30 seconds to escape and extend the lead to 4-2. Trailing by two points heading into the third, Kessler elected to start neutral. In the end, Sueflohn extended his lead with a takedown and dismissed the Mountaineer 6-2.

Kessler's career ends with a Southern Conference title and 84 career wins, good for eighth on the Appalachian all-time wins list.

**Photo Courtesy: Austin Trotman, ASU Athletics**

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