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1500 WEST HIGGINS ROAD

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**For Immediate Release**

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**March 2, 2009**

**2009 BIG TEN WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS PRE-SEEDS ANNOUNCED**

**PARK RIDGE, Ill.** – Conference officials announced the preliminary seeds for the 2009 Big Ten Wrestling Championships today. The pre-seeds are determined by a vote amongst the conference's head wrestling coaches after consideration of regular-season results. This year's Big Ten Wrestling Championships will take place Penn State University in University Park, Pa., at the Bryce Jordan Center on March 7-8. The official Big Ten Championships bracket will be set on Friday, March 6.

Five different schools are represented as No. 1 seeds in the 10 weight classes. Iowa and Wisconsin lead the way with the most top seeds at three apiece, while Northwestern features two wrestlers atop the preliminary seeding chart. Overall, of the 10 No. 1 seeds, nine rank among the top three in the nation in the latest USA Today/NWCA/InterMat Poll.

Iowa's **Daniel Dennis** (24-2 at 133), **Brent Metcalf** (28-0 at 149) and **Daniel Erikson** (18-6 at Hwt.) represent the Hawkeyes as top pre-seeds for this year's event. The Hawkeyes were Big Ten regular season dual champions and are currently the No. 1 nationally ranked team. Metcalf is in search of his second consecutive 149 lbs. conference title after winning at last year's competition where his performance also earned him Wrestler of the Championships honors. Dennis and Metcalf are the top-ranked wrestlers in the land at their respective weight classes, while Erikson currently ranks seventh among the national leaders.

**Zach Tanelli** (23-3 at 141), **Andrew Howe** (22-4 at 165) and **Dallas Herbst** (20-2 at 197) earned top-billing for Wisconsin. Tanelli, Howe and Herbst currently rank one, two and three, respectively, in the nation. After adding a 55<sup>th</sup> pin to his all-time Wisconsin pin record last Sunday against Ohio State, Tanelli remained in the top spot on the national leaderboard for the fifth-consecutive week. Howe's No. 2 ranking currently makes him the highest ranked freshman in the country. Herbst will look to improve upon his previous third-place finish at this year's Big Ten Championships.

Northwestern's top seeds consist of **Brandon Precin** (25-2 at 125) and **Jake Herbert** (26-0 at 184). Precin is ranked third in the country. Top-ranked Herbert will look to enter Saturday's championships coming off an impressive win over Phillip Keddy of Iowa, who ranks third on this year's pre-seed list.

Rounding out the top seeds are Illinois' **Michael Poeta** (10-0 at 157) and Michigan's **Steve Luke** (24-0 at 174). Both Poeta and Luke will be looking to retain their 2008 Big Ten titles at 157 and 174, respectively, joining Metcalf as the only three defending champions to be featured among this year's top seeds.

Last year Iowa won the conference championship with a score of 127.0 points, headed by 2008 Big Ten Wrestler of the Year **Metcalf**, who was the only Hawkeye to claim an individual title in the 149-pound

bracket. Minnesota placed second (112.5) and Michigan (97.5), Illinois (94.0) and Ohio State (92.5) rounded out the top five.

The complete list of pre-seeds follows.

### **2009 BIG TEN WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS PRELIMINARY SEEDS**

#### **125 lbs.**

1. Brandon Precin, NU
2. Charlie Falck, IOWA
3. Angel Escobedo, IND
4. Brad Pataky, PSU
5. Zachary Sanders, MINN
6. Nikko Triggas, OSU
7. Michael Watts, MICH
8. Bernard Futrell, ILL

#### **133 lbs.**

1. Daniel Dennis, IOWA
2. Franklin Gomez, MSU
3. James Kennedy, ILL
4. Jayson Ness, MINN
5. Reece Humphrey, OSU
6. Jake Strayer, PSU
7. Zac Stevens, MICH
8. Carson Beebe, PUR

#### **141 lbs.**

1. Zach Tanelli, WIS
2. Kellen Russell, MICH
3. Alex Tsirtsis, IOWA
4. Mike Thorn, MINN
5. J Jagers, OSU
6. Keith Sulzer, NU
7. Ryan Prater, ILL
8. Andrae Hernandez, IND

#### **149 lbs.**

1. Brent Metcalf, IOWA
2. Bubba Jenkins, PSU
3. Lance Palmer, OSU
4. Kyle Ruschell, WIS
5. Jake Patacsil, PUR
6. Andrew Nadhir, NU
7. Nick Walpole, IND
8. Eric Terrazas, ILL

#### **157 lbs.**

1. Michael Poeta, ILL
2. Jason Welch, NU
3. Kurt Kinser, IND
4. Tyler Safratowich, MINN
5. Jason Johnstone, OSU
6. Aaron Hynes, MICH
7. Anthony Jones, MSU
8. Ben Jordan, WIS

#### **165 lbs.**

1. Andrew Howe, WIS
2. Colt Sponselier, OSU
3. Ryan Morningstar, IOWA
4. Roger Smith-Bergsrud, ILL
5. Luke Manuel, PUR
6. Dan Villamont, PSU
7. Paul Young, IND
8. Rex Kendle, MSU

#### **174 lbs.**

1. Steve Luke, MICH
2. Jay Borschel, IOWA
3. Quentin Wright, PSU
4. Dave Rella, OSU
5. John Dergo, ILL
6. Trevor Perry, IND
7. Robert Kellogg, NU
8. Ian Hinton, MSU

#### **184 lbs.**

1. Jake Herbert, NU
2. Mike Pucillo, OSU
3. Phillip Keddy, IOWA
4. Jordan Blanton, ILL
5. A.J. Kissel, PUR
6. Anthony Biondo, MICH
7. Nick Palmieri, MSU
8. Eric Bugenhagen, WIS

#### **197 lbs.**

1. Dallas Herbst, WIS
2. Tyrel Todd, MICH
3. Chad Beatty, IOWA
4. Gordon Bierschenk, MINN
5. Patrick Bond, ILL
6. Matt Powless, IND
7. Logan Brown, PUR
8. John Schoen, NU

#### **HWT**

1. Daniel Erekson, IOWA
2. Ben Berhow, MINN
3. Kyle Massey, WIS
4. John Wise, ILL
5. Nate Everhart, IND
6. Corey Morrison, OSU
7. Edwin Phillips, MICH
8. Chris Kasten, PUR