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THREE HOOSIERS EARN ALL-AMERICA STATUS

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Sophomore Andrae Hernandez (133) and redshirt freshmen Angel Escobedo (125) and Matt Coughlin (149) all finished eighth or higher at the 2007 NCAA Championships to earn their first All-America selections. Escobedo led all Hoosiers by finishing fourth at the event, while Coughlin took seventh and Hernandez was eighth.

Escobedo started Saturday with a bout against Jayson Ness, the Big Ten champion, with a spot in the third-place match on the line. After a scoreless first, Escobedo started on top and quickly earned a two-point near fall to take a second-period lead. After Ness scored a reversal, Escobedo started down in the third and earned an escape to hold a 3-2 lead. The Griffith, Ind., native scored two more takedowns to clinch a 7-3 victory.

In the third-place match, Escobedo drew Cornell's Troy Nickerson, who defeated Escobedo in the championship bracket. Once again, Nickerson held Escobedo at bay with a 3-0 shutout victory as he scored a second-period takedown and a third-period escape. Escobedo finished the season 39-7, and his fourth-place finish at nationals is the highest finish by an IU freshman since the 1930s.

In the seventh-place match, Coughlin drew fourth seed Jordan Leen, who he defeated in the third-place match at the Cliff Keen Las Vegas. Coughlin got the better of the Cornell wrestler again at NAAs, scoring an 11-6 victory with five takedowns and a riding time point to earn All-America status in his NCAA debut. In an up-and-down year for the redshirt freshman, Coughlin finished his season 31-16, one of five Hoosiers to finish the year with 30 wins.

At 133, Hernandez went face-to-face with Penn State's Jake Strayer for seventh in a battle between unseeded wrestlers. Strayer made the suspense go away quickly though, as he scored a first-period takedown and fought for a fall at the 2:48 mark of the first to give Hernandez an eighth-place finish. He finished his sophomore campaign 30-16.

The Indiana wrestling team finished its 2006-07 dual-meet campaign with a 13-5 record including a 4-4 mark in the Big Ten. IU finished fifth at the Big Ten Championships, its second top-five finish in the last three years.

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