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Office: 812-856-0215
Cell: 413-222-2788
www.IUHOOSIERS.com

IU Athletic Media Relations
Matt Brady, Wrestling Contact
Phone: 812-855-9399
Fax: 812-855-9401
Email: mlbrady@indiana.edu

HERNANDEZ, BECKER LEAD HOOSIERS TO FIFTH PLACE FINISH AT BIG TEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

East Lansing, Mich. – Andrae Hernandez (133) and Brandon Becker (157) took home second-place finishes to lead the Indiana wrestling team to a fifth-place finish at the 2007 Big Ten Championships. It marks Indiana's highest team finish since the 2004-05 season, when the Hoosiers tied for fifth. Angel Escobedo finished third at 125 in his first appearance at the championships.

The Hoosiers tallied 86 points in the tournament. Minnesota won the team championship with 156 points, followed by Wisconsin (99.5 points), Iowa (91 points), and Penn State (90.5 points).

Becker, who was seeded second in the tournament, was upset by fourth-seeded CP Schlatter of Minnesota in his title match, 1-0. With the loss, he goes to 27-6 on the year heading into the NCAA Championships.

Hernandez' run at the championship ended with a 6-4 loss to top-ranked defending champion Nick Simmons at 133. Hernandez had defeated the second- and third-seeded wrestlers in his bracket en route to the championship bout. He will enter the NCAA Tournament with a 26-13 record on the season.

Escobedo began the day with a 5-2 win over Wisconsin's Colin Cudd to advance to the third place match against Illinois' Gabe Flores. The two grapplers each scored a point in regulation to go into overtime tied 1-1, when Escobedo registered an escape and a takedown to win 4-1. He is now 33-5 on the season heading into the NCAA Championships next weekend.

Matt Coughlin earned a fifth place finish at 149 after defeating Wisconsin's Tyler Turner for the second time this season, 5-2. Coughlin was sent to the fifth-place match after being defeated by Ohio State's Lance Palmer, 4-2. Coughlin will enter NAAs with a 28-13 record on the season.

At 174, Trevor Perry found himself in the fifth-place match after a 6-1 loss to Iowa's Eric Luedke. Perry faced Matt Maciag of Wisconsin for fifth place, coming away with a 4-1 victory. Perry's record improved to 23-10 in his redshirt freshman campaign.

In the heavyweight division, Josh Buuck finished sixth after retiring from the fifth-place bout with a medical forfeit. In his first bout of the day, Buuck was bested by Iowa's Matt Fields, 7-3. Buuck will travel to Auburn Hills, Mich., with a 14-8 mark.

Dean bested Dave Rella of Penn State, 3-2, to win his seventh-place bout to improve his season mark to 27-14. Marc Bennett was awarded eighth place at 184, as he fell 9-5 to Phil Keddy of Iowa. Bennett enters the NCAA Tournament with a record of 30-11. True freshman Nathan Everhart finished his run at Big Tens with a 4-3 loss to Nathan Moore of Purdue in the seventh-place bout. Everhart is now 20-17 on the season.

Indiana will return to action at the 2007 NCAA Championships, to be held in Auburn Hills, Mich., from March 16-17.

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