

## Tough Loss

By Dave Conifer

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**W**hen the whistle blew, nothing was more important to me than to get the initial take-down. I had wrestled 6 minutes already today, and hadn't even scored a point. I decided to try an ankle pick. As we circled each other in the opening period, I reached and put my hand on the back

of his neck. I then reversed my circling direction, a perfect setup for the ankle pick because he would be stepping towards me. I lowered my level and prepared to grab the ankle with my left hand. I intended to use my right hand, which was still on the back of his neck, to push him towards that ankle once I blocked it with my left hand.

I hadn't considered the effect of the mask when I had decided on the ankle pick. Like the mouth hole, the eyeholes on the mask seemed big. Even so, it did restrict my vision significantly. I had his neck and was preparing to take the ankle, but I couldn't see where it was! As I was moving towards his foot, and the mat, I