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**Subject:** WREST: Three App State Wrestlers Win SoCon Titles  
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## **Wrestling**

**ONLINE:** <https://appstatesports.com/news/2019/3/10/wrestling-three-app-state-wrestlers-win-socon-titles.aspx>

**BOONE, N.C. —** Three Appalachian State wrestlers earned automatic berths into the NCAA Championships as first-time Southern Conference champions, and the Mountaineers finished second in the team standings during a back-and-forth event at the Holmes Convocation Center on Sunday.

App State senior Randall Diabe won a 5-4 decision in the final at 197 pounds, junior Cary Miller claimed an 8-1 decision in the heavyweight final and sophomore Codi Russell posted a 9-4 decision against top-seeded Noah Gonser of Campbell in the final at 133 pounds. Their victories helped the Mountaineers amass 92.5 points, or 2.5 fewer than that total accumulated by first-place Campbell.

Appalachian State, Campbell and Chattanooga shared the regular season title.

The Mountaineers had six finalists in the 10 weight classes, as senior Irvin Enriquez (141 pounds) reached a final for the third straight year, senior Michael Elliott advanced to the final at 165 pounds and sophomore Alan Clothier reached the final at 184 pounds. Matt Zovistoski (149 pounds) and De'Andre Swinson-Barr (125 pounds) were third-place finishers.

With Diabe making the field for the second straight year and App State's two other SoCon champs qualifying for the first time, Appalachian will have at least three wrestlers at the NCAA Championships that begin in Pittsburgh on March 21. There are also at-large possibilities for wrestlers such as Zovistoski, who is ranked 28th in his weight class by the NCAA Coaches' Panel.

Russell will be joining his older brother, Sean, a Minnesota senior who wrestles at 125 pounds, in Pittsburgh thanks to Sean's third-place finish in the Big Ten tournament.

Russell, ranked 31st, had beaten the 17th-ranked Gonser at the Hokie Open but lost to him in a dual matchup in mid-January. Sunday, Russell tied the match at 3-all on a takedown with 47 seconds left in the second period and moved ahead on a takedown eight seconds into the third period. After an escape by Gonser, Russell seized control on a takedown with 1:12 left and a two-point near fall with 1:02 remaining.

In a matchup of two top-25 wrestlers, the 18th-ranked Diabe edged 23rd-ranked Sawyer Root of The Citadel after winning a 9-0 major decision against Chattanooga's Rod Jones. A first-period takedown of Root helped Diabe lead 3-1 entering the third period, but an escape by Root with 1:48 left and hands-to-the-face penalty on Diabe with 1:40 remaining tied the match.

Diabe executed a tiebreaking takedown with 1:21 left and held on after Root managed an escape with 1:01 remaining.

In the last championship matchup of the night, Miller led 3-0 after one period against Campbell's Odgerel Batkhishig and took a 5-0 lead into the final period. In his six SoCon duals and two SoCon Championship bouts, Miller went 8-0 with three pins, one technical fall and two major decisions.

A year after winning the SoCon title as a No. 4 seed, the third-seeded Enriquez reached the 141 final with a 7-4 semifinal decision against Campbell's Nathan Boston, who had pinned Enriquez in their regular season meeting. Top-seeded Chris Debien won 12-7 in Sunday's final.

Elliott reached his final with a 16-0 technical fall in the first round and a semifinal pin of Davidson's Hunter Costa. Top-seeded Tyler Marinelli of Gardner-Webb had an 8-0 major decision in the final.

Clothier won his semifinal match by a technical fall before suffering a 4-3 defeat against Campbell's Chris Kober in the next-to-last final.

Zovistoski endured a 3-2 semifinal loss but went 3-1 in the tournament, and a 1-1 showing allowed Swinson-Barr to take third. Thomas Flitz went 2-2 at 174 pounds, and Angel Najjar won his first match at 157 pounds.

### **Team scores**

1. Campbell, 95.0
2. App State, 92.5
3. Chattanooga, 62.0
4. The Citadel, 42.5
5. Gardner-Webb, 23.5
6. Davidson, 22.5
7. VMI, 17.0

### **App State Results**

125: (3) De'Andre Swinson-Barr (Third place)  
First-round bye  
L, 9-3 dec. vs. Korbin Meink, Campbell  
W, 6-4 dec. vs. Derek Shockey, VMI

133: (2) Codi Russell (First place)  
W, 19-4 tech. fall vs. Cliff Conway, VMI  
W, 10-1 maj. dec. vs. Kyle Gorant, Davidson  
W, 9-4 dec. vs. Noah Gonser, Campbell

141: (3) Irvin Enriquez (Second place)  
W, fall in 1:41 vs. Caleb Ziebell, Davidson  
W, 7-4 dec. vs. Nathan Boston, Campbell  
L, 12-7 dec. vs. Chris Debien, Chattanooga

149: (2) Matt Zovistoski (Third place)  
W, 12-1 maj. dec. vs. Zach Schmitt, VMI  
L, 3-2 dec. vs. Tanner Smith, Chattanooga  
W, 14-4 maj. dec. vs. Will Baldwin, Davidson  
W, 10-0 maj. dec. vs. Selwyn Porter, The Citadel

157: (4) Angel Najar  
W, 6-0 dec. vs. Evan Schenk, Gardner-Webb  
L, 8-2 dec. vs. Benjamin Barton, Campbell  
L, fall in 5:23 vs. Ryan Resnick, Chattanooga

165: (2) Michael Elliott (Second place)  
W, 16-0 tech. fall vs. Luke Niksic, VMI  
W, fall in 4:37 vs. Hunter Costa, Davidson  
L, 8-0 maj. dec. vs. Tyler Marinelli, Gardner-Webb

174: (3) Thomas Flitz  
W, 16-4 maj. dec. vs. Noah Satterfield, Davidson  
L, 8-3 dec. vs. Andrew Morgan, Campbell  
W, 3-1 dec. vs. Hunter Fortner, Chattanooga  
L, 6-4 dec. (SV-1) vs. Kyle Homet, Gardner-Webb

184: (1) Alan Clothier (Second place)  
First-round bye  
W, 19-2 tech. fall vs. Conor Fenn, Davidson  
L, 4-3 dec. vs. Chris Kober, Campbell

197: (1) Randall Diabe (First place)  
First-round bye  
W, 9-0 maj. dec. vs. Rod Jones, Chattanooga  
W, 5-4 dec. vs. Sawyer Root, The Citadel

285: (1) Cary Miller (First place)  
First-round bye  
W, fall in 1:45 vs. Michael McAleavey, The Citadel  
W, 8-1 dec. vs. Odgerel Batkhishig, Campbell

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