



February 8, 2017
Wrestling

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MOUNTAINEERS CLAIM SECOND-STRAIGHT SOCON CHAMPIONSHIP

BOONE, N.C. — Appalachian State University wrestling downed VMI, 38-6, on Wednesday night to win its second-straight Southern Conference regular season championship and third under head coach **JohnMark Bentley** – ninth championship overall.

The 17th-ranked Mountaineers (13-2, 7-0 SoCon) go undefeated in league play for the first time since 2011-12 – coach Bentley's first regular season championship. The win gives App State its most wins since 2011-12 (13-4), its most SoCon wins in team history and fewest losses since 2002-03 (11-2). Winning 87 percent of their dual matches this season, the Black and Gold posted the best team winning percentage in program history.

Since Dec. 15, 2015, App State wrestling has won 22 of 26 dual matches for exceptional recent dominance in the mid-majors, downing five Power 5 programs and two top-25 teams.

This season saw the Mountaineers rank as high as No. 20 in the *USA Today*/NWCA Division I Coaches Poll, No. 16 in the *InterMat* rankings and No. 6 in the newly formed NWCA/National Duals Selection Committee Mid-Major Top 20 Poll.

After a down-to-the-wire match against Chattanooga, App State only had three days to turn around and head to the Keydets' (1-10, 0-4 SoCon) home gym to wrestle in its final SoCon match. The Black and Gold got out to a quick start, winning the first four matches – three of them by pins.

No. 20 senior **Vito Pasone** (Wilkes-Barre, Pa./E.L. Meyers) battled hard at the 125-pound weight class against Dalton Henderson, edging out the 9-7 decision victory. No. 24 freshman **Colby Smith** (Wentzville, Mo./Holt) pinned Michael Hulcher in a time of 4:38, **Irvin Enriquez** (Aberdeen, N.C./Pinecrest) pinned John Reed in a time of 2:22, and No. 18 sophomore **Matt Zovistoski** (Paramus, N.J./St. Joseph Regional) pinned Alex Rinehart in a time of four-minutes flat.

The Keydets were able to take close 157 and 174 weight classes, with Neal Richards taking down freshman **Gavin Londoff** (St. Louis, Mo./Holt) in a tight 4-2 sudden-victory decision and Shabaka Johns downing **Elliott Raiford** (Branch, Ga./West Hall), 9-7.

Junior **Forrest Przybysz** (Jefferson, Ga./Jefferson) took the 165-pound weight class by defeating Cade Kiely by an impressive 11-3 major decision. Junior 184-pounder **David Peters-Logue** (Hillsborough, N.C./Orange) continued the bonus point streak, downing Chris Beck of VMI with a 13-4 major decision.

Sophomore **Randall Diabe** (Greensboro, N.C./James B. Dudley) gave Appalachian another victory at 197 pounds when he defeated Taylor Thomas with an 11-4 decision. Meanwhile, No. 9 senior **Denzel Dejournette** (Winston-Salem, N.C./R.J. Reynolds) finished out the evening with the Mountaineers' fourth pin, taking down Thomas Shea-Roop in 2:59.

As the SoCon Champions, Appalachian State will now host the 2017 NWCA Division I Dual Championship Series presented by The United States Marine Corps and Theraworx. The match will be on Feb. 19 at 3 p.m. against a to-be-determined Big Ten Conference team.

Further information and updates about the match will be announced on appstatesports.com and @AppWrestling.

RESULTS:

125: #20 Vito Pasone (APP) def. Dalton Henderson (VMI), 9-7 dec.

133: #24 Colby Smith (APP) pinned Michael Hulcher (VMI), 4:38

141: Irvin Enriquez (APP) pinned John Reed (VMI), 2:22

149: #18 Matt Zovistoski (APP) pinned Alex Rinehart (VMI), 4:00

157: Neal Richards (VMI) def. Gavin Londoff (APP), 4-2 dec./S-V

165: Forrest Przybysz (APP) def. Cade Kiely (VMI), 11-3 maj. dec.

174: Shabaka Johns (VMI) def. Elliott Raiford (APP), 9-7 dec.

184: David Peters-Logue (APP) def. Chris Beck (VMI), 14-4 maj. dec.

197: Randall Diabe (APP) def. Taylor Thomas (VMI), 11-4 dec.

285: #9 Denzel Dejournette (APP) pinned Thomas Shea-Roop (VMI), 2:59

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