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Blue Devils Garner Academic Honors from NWCA

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DURHAM, N.C.—Five Duke wrestlers recently garnered Scholar All-America honors from the National Wrestling Coaches Association and the Blue Devil squad came in ninth nationally in overall team grade point average. Duke is the highest ranked team out of the ACC, while the five individual honors are tied for third among all Division I wrestling programs.

The Blue Devils, sporting a 3.3543 team GPA this year, moved up six spots from the No. 16 ranking a year ago. Duke is the lone team to be in the top 10 of team GPA and finish in the top 25 at the NCAA Championships. Overall, only six programs were among the top 25 in the NCAA standings and team grade point average.

Picking up the individual Scholar All-American awards were Duke's five NCAA qualifiers Benjamin Anderson, Josh Finesilver, Matt Finesilver, Mitch Finesilver and Zach Finesilver. Duke was one of seven schools to have at least five players on the list with Ohio State leading the way with seven and Lehigh landing six.

The recognition is the second straight for Josh and Zach Finesilver, while Mitch and Matt Finesilver and Anderson grab their first NWCA academic accolade.

The Scholar All-America award is the latest honor for Mitch Finesilver after being voted the ACC Wrestling Scholar Athlete of the Year and Duke's Male Senior Student-Athlete of the Year. The 2019 ACC Champion at 149 pounds, Mitch became the fourth Blue Devil to earn All-America recognition after taking fourth at the NCAA Championships. He finished his career with a 95-30 overall record to rank eighth on the Duke career list. His 33 wins this past season are sixth on the single-season charts.

Zach Finesilver made his third appearance in the NCAA Championships this past season, while Josh and Matt both earned their second bids to the postseason event. It was the second straight season all four Finesilvers made it to the national stage, with the first being an NCAA-first. Matt garnered his first All-ACC award with a runner-up finish at 174 pounds, while Josh and Zach both took third.

Rounding out the crew is Anderson who grabbed an automatic bid to the NCAA Championships with an upset victory over No. 5 seed Jake Keating of Virginia. In his opening pigtail match at the NCAA Championships, Anderson pinned Lock Haven's Alexander Klucker. Anderson was voted the team's Most Outstanding Freshman and was the team's Scholar Athlete of the Year as well.

Duke finished 2018-19 with its second straight top 25 finish at the NCAA Championships, taking 24th overall.

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