

## **Illini Wrestling Routes Hoosiers on Senior Day**

### *Brunson picks up 100<sup>th</sup> career win*

**CHAMPAIGN, Ill.** – Illinois wrestling sent off its seniors with a 28-9 victory on senior day against Indiana. Illini seniors **Zane Richards** and **Zac Brunson** both picked up victories in their final matches at Huff Hall. For Brunson, the victory marked the 100<sup>th</sup> of his career, joining Richards who reached the century mark on February 3 at Northwestern.

"It was pretty cool," said Coach Heffernan on Brunson's 100<sup>th</sup> victory. "Just the timing of it; it's always hard on senior day. They're good people. Zac's in graduate school, Zane's really grown up and become a great leader himself. As these guys are progressing they've gotten better at wrestling, they've gotten to be better people. It's been great having them and we still have them for another five weeks so we need to see what we can do."

Illinois finishes the 2016-17 home slate with a perfect 5-0 record, the first perfect season at Huff Hall since Mark Johnson's Illini went 6-0 in the 2008-09 season. Illinois concludes the season 9-3 overall in duals, 6-3 in the Big Ten.

"The fans that come are truly Illini fans and they really appreciate the athletes, and let them know that they love all 10 starters after we go out there and compete," said Brunson. "It's truly something special here in Champaign that they have when it comes to supporting the wrestling team."

Brunson capped off his senior day with a 7-4 decision against Devin Skatzka to earn his 100<sup>th</sup> career victory, becoming the 24<sup>th</sup> Illini wrestler to reach the century mark. Brunson used two early takedowns to gain control of the match, and then added a third in the second period.

"Looking back now, this has been one of my dreams since I was a little kid," said Brunson following the victory. Back home, I watched college wrestling and always dreamed of getting to wrestle on this stage. Having done it, I'm extremely honored to get to have my last match at Huff Hall, and also be my 100th win, is truly special for me. I think it's still settling in. There's still one more goal and that's to win the NCAA tournament and I'm still looking forward to that"

Like Brunson, Richards finished off his career at Huff Hall with a victory, overwhelming Garrett Pepple with a 21-6 technical fall. Richards used five takedowns coupled with eight back points to earn his 103<sup>rd</sup> victory of his career. The 103 wins tie him with former Illini Griff Powell for 21<sup>st</sup> on the Illinois all-time list.

The Illini also earned bonus points at 165 pounds, as No. 1 **Isaiah Martinez** wrapped up a perfect regular season (23-0) with his 10<sup>th</sup> technical fall. Martinez needed just 4:03 to tally eight takedowns and a four-point near fall

to dispatch of Bryce Martin.

Illinois also received victories from **Travis Piotrowski** (14-11), No. 19 **Eric Barone** (9-6), No. 12 **Kyle Langenderfer** (21-5), **Andre Lee** (10-13) and No. 15 **Brooks Black** (11-5).

A back-and-forth battle between **Travis Piotrowski** and Indiana's Elijah Oliver opened today's dual, as Oliver grabbed an early 2-0 lead before Piotrowski recovered to takedown Oliver for a 3-2 lead at the end of the first. Oliver leveled the match, 4-4, in the third period with a takedown, but chose to cut Piotrowski loose. However, the Hoosier's final attempts at a third takedown proved unsuccessful, as the Illini freshman prevailed, 5-4.

At 149 pounds, a takedown by Barone 12 seconds into the match proved to be the difference as the Illini redshirt freshman defeated Chris Perez, 4-1. Barone racked up over two minutes of riding time, including the full two minutes of their third period.

After having his eight-match winning streak snapped on Friday night, Langenderfer bounced back with a 9-2 decision against Jake Danishek at 157 pounds. Langenderfer used a takedown and four-point near fall at the end of the first period to take a commanding 6-0 lead, and then added a second takedown in the third period to put the match away.

**Andre Lee** added a 5-2 victory at 197 pounds, defeating Indiana's Jacob Hinz. Trailing 1-0 in the third period, Lee earned an escape to tie the match and then got the go-ahead takedown with 1:08 left on the clock. Hinz closed the gap to 3-2 with an escape, but Lee kept the Hoosier at bay before adding a second takedown as time expired.

**Brooks Black** closed out the Illinois victory by picking up his fifth in Big Ten duals. The Illini heavyweight used an escape in the second period along with 1:50 of riding time to shutout Fletcher Miller, 2-0.

Indiana lone victories in the match came at 141 pounds and 184 pounds, as Cole Weaver pinned **Mousa Jodeh** (4:33) and No. 7 Nate Jackson defeated No. 12 **Emery Parker** by way of a 9-6 decision.

With the regular season complete, the Orange and Blue will have two weeks off before traveling to Bloomington, Indiana for Big Ten Championships, March 4-5.

### **Illini Notes:**

- The 28-9 victory gives Illinois a perfect 5-0 record at Huff Hall this season. Illinois last went undefeated in 2008-09 when the Illini finished 6-0 at home.
- With a 7-4 victory today, **Zac Brunson** becomes the 24<sup>th</sup> Illini to reach 100 wins in his career. The Illini senior has compiled an overall record of 100-35 over his four seasons, including 25-6 this year.
- **Zane Richards'** 21-6 tech fall of Garrett Pepple moves him into a tie with Griff Powell for 21<sup>st</sup> on Illinois' all-time win list with 103 career victories. Richards also ranks ninth in Illinois history with a .824 career win percentage.
- **Isaiah Martinez** concludes the regular season 23-0, the second undefeated regular season of his career. Martinez started 2014-15 with a 25-0 record on his way to a 35-0 undefeated freshman season.
- Martinez's technical fall of Bryce Martin is his 10<sup>th</sup> of the season and 35<sup>th</sup> of his career

### **#10 Illinois 28, Indiana 9**

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125: **Travis Piotrowski (ILL)** dec. Elijah Oliver (IND), 5-4

**ILL 3**, IND 0

133: **#6 Zane Richards (ILL)** tech fall Garrett Pepple (IND), 21-6 (6:07) **ILL 8**, IND 6

141: Cole Weaver (IND) fall **Mousa Jodeh (ILL)**, 4:33

**ILL 8**, IND 6

149: **#19 Eric Barone (ILL)** dec. Chris Perez (IND), 4-1

**ILL 11**, IND 6

157: #12 Kyle Langenderfer (ILL) dec. Jake Danishek (IND), 9-2 ILL 14, IND 6  
165: #1 Isaiah Martinez (ILL) tech fall Bryce Martin (IND), 24-7 (4:03) ILL 19, IND 6  
174: #12 Zac Brunson (ILL) dec. Devin Skatzka (IND), 7-4 ILL 22, IND 6  
184: #7 Nate Jackson (IND) dec. #12 Emery Parker (ILL), 9-6 ILL 22, IND 9  
197: Andre Lee (ILL) dec. Jake Hinz (IND), 5-2 ILL 25, IND 9  
HWT: #15 Brooks Black (ILL) dec. Fletcher Miller (IND), 2-0 ILL 28, IND 9



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