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Kutler, Preisch, Wood reach quarterfinals as Lehigh advances six to day two of NCAAs

PITTSBURGH – Six Lehigh wrestlers advanced to day two of the NCAA Championships following action Thursday night at PPG Paints Arena. Three Mountain Hawks: junior Jordan Kutler (174), senior Ryan Preisch (184) and sophomore Jordan Wood (285) advanced to Friday morning's championship quarterfinals, while freshman Josh Humphreys (157), senior Gordon Wolf (165) and sophomore Jake Jakobsen (197) will compete in consolations.

The Mountain Hawks finished day one with 11.5 points, good for 14th place.

"Like every postseason tournament there was some good and bad," Lehigh head coach Pat Santoro said. "It's like a wedding and a funeral. One time you're up. One time you're down. We have six guys still in it and three guys who can still win a national championship, so we need to wrestle really hard tomorrow. Tomorrow morning in particular is a huge round for everybody.

"We need to be solid fundamentally," he continued. "We have to get to our leg attacks. We need to drop our hips. We had some matches today where we let guys get to our legs six-seven times in a match. If you do that, you're going to get beat.

Lehigh went 3-2 in the championship round of 16. Kutler was solid in all three positions in a 6-2 decision over No. 12 Matt Finesilver of Duke. The fifth-seeded Kutler scored takedowns in the first and third periods and rode out most of the second period. He will now face No. 4 Myles Amine of Michigan in a rematch of last year's quarterfinals.

"Jordan's always really solid," Santoro said. "He has a big match tomorrow. It's a guy he's really familiar with. It should be a fun match."

Preisch, like Kutler, is back in the quarterfinals for the second straight year. He rode a dominant performance on top to a 4-3 win over Nebraska's Taylor Venz in an 8-9 matchup. Preisch scored the first takedown and rode most of the first period but gave up a late reversal, which ultimately kept Venz in the match. In the end 3:23 of riding time advantage was the difference in Preisch's favor. He will now face top seed Myles Martin of Ohio State in the quarterfinals.

"He really controlled the match but gave up that last five seconds reversal and a last five seconds escape," Santoro said. "That might it a tight match. Those are things you need to clean up as you move into the quarters and moving forward after that. You can't give away free points at the end of periods."

Wood will make his first quarterfinal appearance after shutting out No. 20 Zach Elam of Missouri 3-0. Wood scored a second period escape, picked up a penalty point for stalling and then rode out the third period to beat Elam for the second time this season. The fourth-seeded Wood will now face No. 28 Sam Stoll of Iowa in the quarterfinals. Stoll, who was originally slated to meet Wood in round one

before a shift in the seeds on Wednesday, knocked off the No. 5 and No. 12 seeds to reach the quarterfinals.

“Jordan’s pace was great,” Santoro said. “It was almost identical to the match they wrestled in Florida. That was 2-0. This was 3-0. He set a great pace. Elam’s really hard to attack and a great athlete. We were fortunate to get those stall calls and Jordan was really tough on top there. He did a nice job.”

Humphreys started strong in his 8-9 matchup against Arizona State’s Christian Pagdilao, but the Sun Devil battled back and used a big third period to claim the win. Humphreys scored the first takedown and led 4-2 after one after trading reversals. A couple penalty points kept Humphreys up in the third but Pagdilao scored a takedown and added four point near fall to rally for the 11-7 win. Humphreys will now face No. 23 Chase Straw of Iowa State in the second round of consolations.

Jakobsen couldn’t knock off his second top 10 seed of the day as he dropped to the consolations following a 4-1 loss to No. 8 Nathan Traxler of Stanford. Traxler scored takedowns in the first and second periods to go up 4-1. Jakobsen took top in the third and rode out but could not get the turns needed to claim the victory. He will meet No. 26 Anthony McLaughlin of Air Force in the second round of consolations.

Wolf had more of a traditional Wolf match against Evan Delong of Clarion. There were takedowns for both sides and multiple reversals both ways. In the end, Wolf’s reversal, two point near fall and ride out in the second period was the difference in a 12-10 decision. He moves on to face No. 16 seed Thomas Bullard of NC State Friday morning.

Two Mountain Hawks were eliminated losses in Thursday night’s first round consolations. Sophomore Brandon Paetzell trailed 5-0 against Gary Joint of Fresno State at 133 and battled back with two takedowns in the third period but fell 7-4. He finishes his sophomore season at 15-13.

Senior Cortlandt Schuyler scored first in his match against Russell Rohlfing of CSU Bakersfield but gave up a late first period reversal and takedowns in the final two periods to fall 11-6. Schuyler’s senior season finishes at 14-11. A two-time NCAA qualifier, Schuyler finishes his career at 59-32.

Penn State leads Ohio State by seven points after day one, while Iowa sits in third place, 8.5 behind the Nittany Lions.

The NCAA Championships continue Friday morning with session three, featuring the championship quarterfinals and two rounds of consolations, beginning at 11 a.m. Session three will be televised on ESPNU with streaming on ESPN3 and the ESPN App. Once again audio for all Lehigh bouts will be available on Lehighsports.com/watch.

The 2018-19 Lehigh wrestling season is presented by the Historic Hotel Bethlehem.

133 – No. 20 Brandon Paetzell - Eliminated

Round of 32: L by major dec. No. 13 Austin Gomez (Iowa State) 11-0

First round consolation: L by dec. No. 29 Gary Joint (Fresno State) 7-4

149 – No. 24 Cortlandt Schuyler - Eliminated

Round of 32: L by dec. No. 9 Justin Oliver (NC State) 10-6

First round consolation: L by dec. No. 25 Russell Rohlfing (CSUB) 11-6

157 – No. 8 Josh Humphreys

Round of 32: dec. No. 25 Justin Ruffin (SIUE) 6-0

Round of 16: L by dec. No. 9 Christian Pagdilao (Arizona State) 11-7

Second round consolation: No. 23 Chase Straw (Iowa State)

165 – No. 18 Gordon Wolf

Round of 32: L by dec. No. 15 Connor Flynn (Missouri) 5-4

First round consolation: dec. No. 31 Evan Delong (Clarion) 12-10
Second round consolation: No. 16 Thomas Bullard (NC State)

174 – No. 5 Jordan Kutler
Round of 32: major dec. No. 28 Jacob Oliver (Edinboro) 10-2
Round of 16: dec. No. 12 Matt Finesilver (Duke) 6-2
Quarterfinal: No. 4 Myles Amine (Michigan)

184 – No. 8 Ryan Preisch
Round of 32: Fall No. 25 Max Lyon (Purdue) 4:04
Round of 16: dec. No. 9 Taylor Venz (Nebraska) 4-3
Quarterfinal: No. 1 Myles Martin (Ohio State)

197 – No. 24 Jake Jakobsen
Round of 32: dec. No. 9 Ben Honis (Cornell) 8-5
Round of 16: L by dec. No. 8 Nathan Traxler (Stanford) 4-1
Second round consolation: No. 26 Anthony McLaughlin (Air Force)

285 – No. 4 Jordan Wood
Round of 32: dec. No. 29 Colton McKiernan (SIUE) 6-4
Round of 16: dec. No. 20 Zach Elam (Missouri) 3-0
Quarterfinal: No. 28 Sam Stoll (Iowa)

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