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## **Ashnault Finalist for Prestigious Hodge Trophy** 2019 National Champion first Hodge finalist in program history

**PISCATAWAY (March 25, 2019)** – 2019 NCAA Champion **Anthony Ashnault** is one of four finalist for the prestigious Hodge Trophy, the top award in college wrestling presented to the nation's most dominant wrestler. Ashnault is the first Hodge finalist for Rutgers Wrestling since the award began being presented annually in 1994.

Voting criteria for the award include a wrestler's record, number of pins, dominance on the mat, quality of competition, past credentials, sportsmanship/citizenship and heart.

Fans are encouraged to participate in the Official Hodge Fan Vote, which closes on Friday, March 29 at 6 p.m. ET. The Official Hodge Fan Vote winner gets 2 Official First-Place Votes towards the final Hodge selection of the Committee made up of all former winners, national wrestling media, retired college coaches from each region and a representative of each national wrestling organization. It ends up being about 50 total votes.

Ashnault (32-0) was one of four individual national champions to finish with an undefeated record in 2018-19. The South Plainfield, New Jersey, native collected 19 wins by bonus this season, good for a 59 bonus percentage, which included eight pins, seven major decisions and four tech falls.

The first four-time All-American and three-time Big Ten Champion in program history, Ashnault concluded his collegiate career with 123 victories, the most in program history. Ashnault and **Nick Suriano** (133) made history last weekend at the 2019 NCAA Championships, as both claimed individual titles to help Rutgers to its first top-10 finish at the national tournament.

The winner will be announced on Tuesday, April 2nd. The winner of the fan vote will earn two first-place votes among the total ballots from a group of formal voters which includes each former Hodge Trophy winner, national media, representatives of national wrestling organizations and retired former college coaches from different regions.

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