

Badgers triumph over Wolverines in tight 19-18 dual

Medbery and Ritter's bonus-point wins propel UW to victory

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MADISON, Wis. -- In a dual that came down to the wire, the Wisconsin wrestling team gave fans plenty to cheer for as the Badgers came away with the 19-18 win over No. 14 Michigan on an exciting Sunday afternoon in the Field House.

Five Badgers recorded wins and the two bonus-point victories proved to be the difference maker in propelling No. 18 Wisconsin (5-5 overall, 3-5 Big Ten) ahead of the Wolverines (8-6, 4-5 Big Ten).

"We looked a lot better today than we did on Friday," UW head coach Barry Davis said. "We had a lot more intensity, more urgency which is good to see."

184-pounder Hunter Ritter gave the Badgers their first win of the day. Ritter got things going right away against Ernest Battaglia by recording 10 points in the first period alone. As the eventful bout came to a close, Ritter tallied one last takedown with 21 seconds on the clock to walk away with the 17-8 major decision.

In true Connor Medbery fashion, the second-ranked heavyweight made quick work of his opponent by pinning Dan Perry in just 1:45.

In a tight 197-pound matchup, 11th-ranked Ricky Roberston and Jackson Striggow were scoreless headed into the third period, but Robertson relied on his endurance to grab a 3-0 lead with 1:25 remaining. A Striggow escape with 35 seconds left cut Robertson's lead to two, but Robertson recorded one final takedown and riding time gave him the 6-1 decision.

Living up to his "Comeback Crone" nickname, 149-pounder Andrew Crone was quickly taken down by Malik Amine in the first period but eventually retaliated with a reversal of his own to tie it at 2-2. At the end of a tough second period, Crone received one penalty point to take the lead and was able to maintain control throughout the third to come away with the 3-2 decision.

After a scoreless first period, 141-pounder Cole Martin took a 3-1 lead over Sal Profaci entering the third. With just a narrow lead as the match neared the end, Martin came up big with 58 seconds to go by recording four nearfall points. Thanks to riding time, Martin earned the 8-2 decision.

In the much-anticipated 165-pound Cliff Keen Invite title rematch between No. 3 Isaac Jordan and No. 2 Logan Massa, Jordan went on the offensive right away to record a takedown just ten seconds in. Massa then retaliated, however, by tallying two takedowns and two escapes to enter the final period up 6-2. An escape and takedown put Jordan within reach of Massa with just 53 seconds left, but Massa managed to escape to make it 7-5. With the crowd on its feet and just seven seconds on the clock, Jordan tied it up with one final takedown but a Massa escape and riding time gave Michigan the 9-7 decision.

Up against No. 17 Conor Youtsey, 125-pounder Johnny Jimenez battled through four overtime periods but came up just short as Youtsey recorded a takedown when time expired to claim the 3-1 SV-2 decision.

174-pounder Ryan Christensen dropped a 10-2 major decision to No. 8 Myles Amine to start the dual while 133-pounder Eli Stickley suffered a 20-5 tech fall against No. 7 Stevan Micic.

After entering the third period down 8-2 against No. 9 Brian Murphy, 157-pounder TJ Ruschell nearly completed the comeback by recording a takedown along with four nearfall points to even it up with 50 seconds left. Following a Murphy reversal, Ruschell ran out of time as Murphy pulled out the 11-8 decision.

Next up, the Badgers return to the Field House for a final Big Ten dual against Michigan State on Feb. 17 at 7 p.m. Wisconsin will then wrap up its dual season with a senior day matchup against Central Michigan on Feb. 19 at noon.

"We're going to spend some one-on-one with the guys," Davis said. "We'll make a few corrections but stay positive and get ready for Michigan State. We have two more home duals left, some big matches for the rankings. We just have to win and get ready for next week."