

From: Ryan Weinkauf rweinkauf@athletics.wisc.edu 
Subject: UW WREST: No. 14 Wisconsin wins thrilling dual over No. 22 Illinois
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To: Kelli Grashel KG3@athletics.wisc.edu



No. 14 Wisconsin wins thrilling dual over No. 22 Illinois Badgers win in tiebreakers over the Illini

MADISON, Wis. – There is no quit in this Badgers' team. Trailing 16-9 with two matches to go, No. 14 Wisconsin (8-5, 3-5 B1G) gritted out a decision and a major decision to tie the match against No. 22 Illinois (2-7, 1-6 B1G). The fate of the dual went to tiebreaker criteria, where the Badgers won on total match points by the thinnest of margins, outscoring Illinois over the course of the dual 68-66, giving Wisconsin the tiebreaker point and the victory.

Through the first six matches, the dual was completely back-and-forth.

Sophomore Ethan Rotondo of UW took on No. 11 Travis Piotrowski at 125 pounds to start the match. While Rotondo was never in a position to win the dual, he fought hard to limit the result to a 12-6 decision.

At 133 pounds, senior Jens Lantz got Wisconsin on the board with a 5-4 decision over Dylan Duncan of Illinois, who beat Lantz when the two faced each other last season. Lantz trailed 4-3 in the third but picked up a big takedown in the final minute to secure the victory.

The biggest match of the day was at 141 pounds between junior No. 8 Tristan Moran of Wisconsin and No. 4 Mike Carr of Illinois, but there wasn't a lot of fireworks in the match. Both wrestlers earned an escape to tie it at one, but there were no offensive points recorded. Carr took a 2-1 victory after a stalling penalty was assessed to Moran in the third.

Junior Cole Martin of UW tied the match for the second time on the day with a comfortable 7-1 decision victory over Christian Kanzler of Illinois.

After recording his first dual win last weekend, UW freshman Garrett Model was put to the test against No. 9 Eric Barone of Illinois at 157 pounds. Barone was in control early, scoring three takedowns in the first period and two more in the second, but Model wouldn't quit. He responded with three takedowns of his own in the third and if the match had gone any longer he might have come out on top, but Model ultimately dropped a 15-13 decision to No. 9 Barone.

For the third time in the match, a Wisconsin wrestler tied things up again, this time at 165 pounds with No. 3 Evan Wick. He was tested early by No. 18 Joey Gunther who got on the board first with a takedown, but Wick countered by riding Gunther for the entire second period and scoring two takedowns in the third to win 9-3.

Illinois broke the decision-streak in the next match. Wisconsin freshman Anders Lantz wrestled in his first dual and suffered a 12-3 major decision loss to Carver James that put the Illini up 13-9. The lead was extended for Illinois in the 184-pound match, as No. 5

Emery Parker defeated Wisconsin's junior Mason Hennardt by a 10-4 decision, making the team score 16-9 in favor of Illinois.

Wisconsin needed seven team points from the final two matches to at least tie the dual, and seven points was what they got. Sophomore Beau Breske, fresh off his first dual win for Wisconsin as well, was in a stalemate with Illinois' Andre Lee all match, taking a 1-1 score into overtime. The match went into the second sudden-victory period, where Breske shook off Lee and got a takedown to win the match.

Wisconsin came into the final match trailing by four, needing at least a major decision freshman heavyweight Trent Hillger, and he delivered. Hillger racked up the points against Illinois' Deuce Rachal, scoring six takedowns in the match and earning a 16-5 major decision. Hillger's result eventually gave Wisconsin the win, as his 11-point win was critical in the two-point margin in total match points that propelled the Badgers to victory.

Up next, Wisconsin will face No. 3 Iowa (12-0, 7-0 B1G) on Feb. 17 at the UW Field House at 2 p.m.

Straight from the mat Head Coach Chris Bono

On the comeback win:

"That shows you the kind of team we have and the kind of kids we have. These kids are unbelievable. They fight for each other. It's a great team win. I'm really happy for a couple of the guys, Beau Breske in particular, sitting out the whole first semester after transferring over. He got a big win and he needed that for himself. Overall, it was a great team win and I couldn't be happier."

"I think what you're going to see in our guys is fight. No matter how overwhelmed they are, no matter where they come from, they're going to fight for us. They believe in our system. We're built around fight; we're built around hustle. We've gone through a tough year with a lot of transition. We're battling adversity up and down the lineup. The one thing about this group is everybody believes in what we're doing now. Everyone is excited, everyone cares about each other."

On Trent Hillger's match:

"He got thumbed in the eye, and his eye is already swollen shut. It's a little bit of adversity which I liked. I like that he had to fight through a little thumb in the eye, and it wasn't looking good and then he gets reversed at the end, it shows his character. It wasn't what he did up to that. It was when he got reversed and he knew that he needed to reverse his opponent back to win the dual."

"He went out there for his team. It's not about Trent. He loves his brothers and he loves his team. Like I've said if you go up and down the lineup, every point mattered in that duel. All 10 guys did their 10 percent and they did a great job."

Freshman Trent Hillger

On the team's superior conditioning:

"We are working harder than anyone else in the nation. That's obviously helping. Running back to center helps break people. Not only does the conditioning help us physically but it

back to center helps break people. Not only does the conditioning help us physically but it helps us mentally. We're going into the third period knowing that we are going to break guys. Our conditioning level is second to none."

Senior Jens Lantz

On his late comeback:

"Just trusting my training. That's what Bono always says: we win the third period. It seems to become a habit that I'm down in the third period, but I know that's my period and I am going to score my points there."

Sophomore Beau Breske

On his adjustment to 197 pounds:

"These guys are pretty big at 197, but I'm pretty big too. I've grown in a lot. I've been putting on weight these last few weeks, eating a lot of steaks, potatoes, chicken, rice, everything. I've been staying on top of my diet, on top of my lifting, and I'm growing into the weight class really well."

Results

Attendance: 1276

Wisconsin 17, Illinois 16

125 – No. 11 Travis Piotrowski (ILL) over Ethan Rotondo (UW) by dec. 12-6

133 – Jens Lantz (UW) over Dylan Duncan (ILL) by dec. 5-4

141 – No. 4 Mike Carr (ILL) over No. 8 Tristan Moran (UW) by dec. 2-1

149 – No. 11 Cole Martin (UW) over Christian Kanzler (ILL) by dec. 7-1

157 – No. 9 Eric Barone (ILL) over Garrett Model (UW) by dec. 15-13

165 – No. 3 Evan Wick (UW) over No. 18 Joey Gunther (ILL) by dec. 9-3

174 – Carver James (ILL) over Anders Lantz (UW) by maj. dec. 12-3

184 – No. 5 Emery Parker (ILL) over Mason Reinhardt (UW) by dec. 10-4

197 – Beau Breske (UW) over Andre Lee (ILL) by sudden victory 4-2

HWT – No. 7 Trent Hillger (UW) over Deuce Rachal (ILL) by maj. dec. 16-5



RYAN WEINKAUF | WISCONSIN ATHLETICS

Communications Intern

Kellner Hall | 1440 Monroe Street | Madison, WI 53711

414.839.9892 | @RyanWeinkauf1 | UWBadgers.com