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Subject: Duke WRES: Blue Devils Comeback Bid Falls Short Against Appalachian State
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Blue Devils Comeback Bid Falls Short Against Appalachian State

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DURHAM – The Duke wrestling program (6-5, 0-0 ACC) mounted a late comeback attempt but fell short, dropping a 22-12 decision to Appalachian State (2-2, 0-0 SoCON) on Thursday night at Card Gymnasium.

Starting the night at 125 pounds, the Mountaineers were able to jump out to a 22-0 lead, behind their six ranked wrestlers in the first seven slots. However, the Blue Devils did not go away, flexing their muscle in the heavier weight classes.

The first points of the night came from redshirt senior **Matt Finesilver**, who picked up his fourth ranked victory of the year in a 4-0 decision over No. 33 Thomas Flitz. Finesilver picked up his 22nd win of the season to lead the team and generated the first three points of the comeback attempt.

Junior **Vincent Baker** was next on the mats and recorded a thrilling 6-4 sudden victory over Barrett Blakely. The Roswell, Ga., native was meeting Blakely for the second time this season and evened the score against him, after dropping a 4-3 decision to him at the Mountaineer Invitational in November.

Redshirt senior **Kaden Russell** delivered the most convincing win of the day, with a 7-1 decision over Wyatt Miller at 197 pounds. The Cleveland, Ohio, native recorded over three minutes of riding time and helped shave the deficit to 22-9.

While unable to complete the team's comeback, junior **Jonah Niesenbaum** made it four straight match wins for the Blue Devils with a 5-2 decision over Michael Burchell. Redshirt junior **Brayden Ray** also took home an extra match victory over Jacob Sartorio after the conclusion of the dual.

The Blue Devils are back in action on Friday, Jan. 21, as they open the ACC slate with a trip to Chapel Hill to face No. 22 North Carolina. The match begins at 7 p.m. and will be broadcast on ACC Network Extra.

Appalachian State 22, Duke 12

125: No. 27 Caleb Smith (App State) def. Logan Agin (Duke) – MD, 14-2

133: No. 28 Codi Russell (App State) def. Drake Doolittle (Duke) – TF, 27-8 (6:25)

141: Heath Gonyer (App State) def. Patrick Rowland (Duke) – Dec., 6-2

149: No. 5 Jonathan Millner (App State) def. No. 8 Josh Finesilver (Duke) – Dec., 8-3

157: No. 32 Cody Bond (App State) def. Wade Unger (Duke) – MD, 12-4

165: No. 21 Will Formato (App State) def. Gabe Dinette (Duke) – Dec., 7-4

174: No. 13 Matt Finesilver (Duke) def. No. 33 Thomas Flitz (App State) – Dec., 4-0

185: Vincent Baker (Duke) def. Barrett Blakely (App State) – SV, 6-4

197: Kaden Russell (Duke) def. Wyatt Miller (App State) – Dec., 7-1

285: Jonah Niesenbaum (Duke) def. Michael Burchell (App State) – Dec., 5-2

Extra Matches

125: Chad Bellis (App State) def. Ty Naquin (Duke) – MD, 10-0

285: Brayden Ray (Duke) def. Jacob Sartorio (App State) – Dec., 6-5

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