



2002 COLLEGE COACH-OF-THE-YEAR

Jeff Swenson

Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Editor's Note: Successful college programs are based on tradition, good coaching, and effective recruiting. Recruiting is the element that separates college programs from high school programs. The key to good recruiting is that the coach and his program is of the quality that attracts the top high school wrestlers. Over time, this is what makes for a consistently successful program. Our 2002 College Coach-of-the-Year certainly reflects those skills. – Cal Johnson

When you ask Augsburg head wrestling coach Jeff Swenson about his goals for each season, the words "national championship" never flow from his mouth. Neither do the words "All-Americans" or any of the other words so commonly associated with the Auggies wrestling program.

The Swenson led Auggies recently won their third consecutive NCAA Division III Championship by placing three in the finals and winning one individual title. Augsburg is the first Division III program in the twenty-nine year history of the division to win three straight titles.

Coach Swenson has contributed to the Auggies for a long time. After a constructing 102-17 career record and earning NAIA All-America honors three times, including a national title in 1979, Swenson started coaching at the school.



After one year as an assistant he became the head coach in 1980-81.

Since that season Swenson has coached 124 All-Americans and 28 individual national champions. The Auggies have captured a total of eight national team titles and nineteen conference championships.

Jeff is just as proud of this team's academic success as he is of the wrestling titles. Augsburg has crowned 71 Academic All-Americans and won a Division III Academic National

Championship and finished second twice.

Swenson, who also coached football for ten years (and earned four letters playing for the Auggies), feels that the reason Augsburg attracts good athletes is because of the emphasis on academics. "With the emphasis and reputation we have academically....combined with the success of our graduates, all that makes Augsburg a place where student-athletes want to go", says Swenson.

Competitively the Auggies want to be the best they can be by the time nationals roll around. "We just have to improve one percent a day," says Jeff. "When the kids buy into the one percent philosophy, that's when we get good. When they believe it, you know it because it translates into every workout session, every practice, and every weight training session."

The Augsburg programs has all three elements to a successful program... tradition, attraction of good athletes, and good coaching. *Wrestling USA Magazine* salutes Coach Jeff Swenson for a job well done and his third consecutive national title!

Swenson was nominated by Don Stoner, Augsburg Sports Information Coordinator.