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(Neb.)-McAfee, Debus both earn All-American honors

By: Andrew Lacy Posted at: 03/08/2013 09:22 PM

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – Perry McAfee and Jordan Debus didn't have the best start to the NCAA Division II Wrestling National Championships, but the two of them sure know how to end a night in style.

Both McAfee and Debus dropped their opening round matches but battled back through the consolation brackets to earn All-American honors at 133 and 184 pounds, respectively.

The duo will continue to wrestle today (Saturday) during the third session, which begins at 10 a.m.

"We didn't start off the way we wanted to but both Jordan and Perry are guys who just know how to win when it counts," interim head coach Brett Hunter said. "I am so proud of these two, especially how they competed with their backs against the wall. They kept their composure and never let up."

It wasn't easy for McAfee or Debus during Friday's consolation rounds.

McAfee, who finished fourth at Super Region 4, scored an early takedown in his opening match but Central Oklahoma's Casy Rowell escaped and earned a takedown of his own near the end of the first period.

Rowell, who entered the tourney as the No. 1 ranked wrestler at 133, added another takedown in the second and third periods and to secure the win.

In the consolation first round, McAfee wrestled one of his best matches of the season in posting an 8-3 decision over Upper Iowa's Trevor Franklin, a two-time defending national champion and the third-ranked wrestler in D-II.

McAfee never trailed in the match and burst out to a quick 2-0 lead after an early takedown. He added another takedown in the second and third periods and also earned a point for an escape and sealed the decision with riding time.

McAfee also never trailed in his match to earn All-American accolades when he defeated Cameron Throckmorton of Shippensburg, 4-3. McAfee had a takedown in the first and then followed with an escape in the second. He then earned over a minute and a half of riding time in the third period to gut out the win.

"I knew I had to ride him out to get the win and just finish the match," McAfee said. "This is a great feeling, obviously, and I'm blessed to have this opportunity. I'm not done yet, though, I want to get third."

Debus, a three-time national qualifier, was relieved after earning All-American honors.

"To be honest, it hasn't even settled in," he said. "I bet I told myself over a 100 times in the last period: 'If you win this match, you're an All-American'. It's an unbelievable feeling."

Debus and Adam Walters were tied at 5-5 following the first five minutes at 184 in the opening round but there was a scoring frenzy midway through the final period. Walters increased his lead to 7-5 after a reversal and then he added a takedown and scored back points to earn a 15-8 decision.

Like McAfee in the consolation first round, Debus never trailed Derrick Williams of West Liberty. After a scoreless first period, Debus chose bottom and quickly reversed Williams to earn two points. Williams later escaped in the period but Debus rode him out for all but three seconds in the final frame to squeeze out a 3-2 decision.

In the consolation second round, Debus got revenge against Central Oklahoma's Tanner Keck, who had defeated Debus three times in his career, including a technical fall earlier this season.

Debus never trailed in the match and led 4-0 after the first period once he earned back points. He added an escape in the second period and then in a wild third period, Debus fought off several of Keck's shots and sealed the deal with a blast double-leg takedown late in the frame to win, 8-4.