

# Sports

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## KING OF THE MATS

### WSSU's Donnell Rawls reigns as national wrestling champion at 118 lbs.

By CRAIG T. GREENLEE  
Chronicle Sports Editor

The second time around really brought out the best in Winston-Salem State's Donnell Rawls, who scored four impressive victories in winning the NCAA Division II national wrestling title at 118 lbs. at Fargo, ND.

Rawls, a Fayetteville sophomore, hung tough to record a 6-3 decision over North Dakota State's Bret Maughan in the championship finals. Rawls' four match streak ran his record to 24-2 for the year. As a freshman, Rawls placed fifth at the nationals in '90.

"I was a lot more relaxed this time," said Rawls. "I knew what I wanted to do, knew what I wanted to accomplish. I told coach (Melton Hardee) that if I made it to the final round, there was no way I was going to lose."

Rawls' feat makes him the first ever wrestler at Winston-Salem State to win a national title.

The win, however, didn't come easy. Leading 5-3 with less than two minutes left in the third and final period, Rawls suffered torn ligaments in his ankle. At that juncture, it was clear that he was injured and very vulnerable to an opponent who wanted to go for the kill.

However, Rawls called on his inner reserves to pull him

NCAA DIVISION II TEAM RESULTS		
TOP TWENTY		
TEAM		POINTS
1. Nebraska-Omaha		79.50
2. Central Oklahoma State		64.00
3. Northern Colorado		60.50
4. North Dakota State		49.50
5. Portland State		48.25
6. Cal State-Chico		36.00
7. Lake Superior State		32.50
8. Colorado-Mines		32.00
9. So. Illinois-Edwardsville		30.50
10. South Dakota State		28.00
11. Cheyney State		28.00
12. Ferris State		26.00
13. Humboldt State		23.00
14. Ashland (Ohio)		22.00
15. Winston-Salem State		20.75
16. Kearney State		19.50
17. Central Missouri State		19.00
18. Wisconsin-Parkside		17.00
19. California (Pa.)		17.00
20. Mankato State		15.50

through the final few hectic minutes. He was able to score an additional point to put more distance between himself and Maughan.

"I had no more injury time left, so I knew I couldn't let him get a take down," Rawls explained. "I had to

suck it up. The guy was wrestling in his home gym and had the home folks pushing him and cheering him on."

Rawls entered the competition as the No. 5 seed, but his ranking didn't bother him, even though he felt his chances for winning the title

were as good as anyone's going into the national championships.

"I knew I was the underdog," he said. "But I like it that way. I didn't have anything to prove because nobody thought I could win. When everybody expects you to win, it creates a lot of pressure. If you're the favorite and you lose, people think that you didn't do your best a lot of the time."

Rawls wasted little time once he hit the mat for an opening round match vs. Nick Rastelli of the State University of New York — Buffalo. But when the dust finally cleared, he had earned a victory at 4:47 in the third period. In the quarterfinals, the Rams soph easily handled Grand Valley State's Scott Marvin, 8-1.

But the match that really set the tone for what was to come later was Rawls' 8-6 upset win over St. Cloud State's Rich Douglas in the semi-finals. Douglas came into the nationals as the No. 1 seed at 28-6. Rawls, however, used his aggressive style which is predicated on piling up points to put the opponent at a distinct disadvantage.

Douglas figured to have an easy time with Rawls since he encountered few problems when the two face each other at last year's nationals. Douglas placed second in the '90



Photo by Max Dunhill

Rawls gained more confidence as he advanced to the finals.

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## Coppin goes to NIT, plays tonight on tube

By Chronicle Staff

The season isn't over for Coppin State's Eagles just yet. The MEAC's regular season champions have been selected to play in the 54th annual National Invitation Tournament.

The 19-10 Eagles will visit Southwest Missouri State for an opening round game tonight at Springfield, MO. Game time is 8:05 EST. ESPN will televise the game live.

Coppin won the MEAC regular season title, their second straight, with a 14-2 record. The Eagles, who were hoping to successfully defend their league tournament title, were short circuited, 74-70 in the tourney semi-finals by eventual winner, Florida A&M.

Southwest Missouri (21-11) finished second in the Missouri Valley Conference and lost to top seeded Creighton, 68-52 in their conference tournament championship game.

Coppin, coached by fifth year mentor Ron "Fang" Mitchell, averaged 82 points offensively and allowed just 70 at the defensive end. CSC was the league's No. 1 unit in scoring defense and No. 2 in scoring offense.

The Eagles are led by the splendid pair of Larry Stewart and Reggie Isaac. Stewart, a 6-7 senior forward from Philadelphia, is a two-time MEAC Player Of The Year. Stewart averaged 24 points and 13.6 rebounds a game while shooting 63.4 percent from the field. The Eagles chief inside threat ranks third in Division I rebounding, 13th in field goal percentage, and 21st in scoring.

Isaac, a 6-3 guard, is also from Philadelphia and is the team's prime perimeter marksman. Isaac averaged 24 ppg and led the MEAC in three-point

goals, sinking 82 of 191 attempts. He is a two-time, all-conference pick.

In the middle, the Eagles have 6-9 senior Larry McCollum who averages 7.3 points and five rebounds a game. Larry Yabray, a 6-0 junior, is the point guard who ranked among the league's best in assists, dishing out 5.3 assists per game. Coppin's other probable starter is 6-7 swingman James Mazyek, the league's Rookie Of The Year, who averaged seven ppg and connected on 20 of 63 three-pointers.

Southwest Missouri is coached by Charlie Spoonhour. The leading scorers for Southwest are 6-2 senior guard Darry Reid (16.3 ppg), 6-6 senior forward Ryan Thornton (14.3 ppg) and point guard Arnold Bernard (12.3 ppg). Thornton leads the Bears in rebounding at 6.5 a game, while 6-9 senior center David Brewer adds five caroms an outing.

Bernard ranks ninth in the nation in assists at 7.8 per game.

The NIT second rounds are scheduled for next Monday and Tuesday with pairings, sites and game times to be announced later. The same applies for the third rounds to be played next Wednesday and Thursday. The semi-finals and championship rounds will be held at New York's Madison Square Garden on March 25 and 27.

The MEAC has not had a team in the NIT, the oldest of college basketball's post-season tournaments, since 1981 when North Carolina A&T dropped a hard-fought, 79-69 decision to Duke in a South Region first round game. Prior to that, the Aggies lost to Providence 84-68 in 1976. In 1974, Maryland-Eastern Shore defeated Manhattan, 84-81 before losing to Jacksonsville University 85-83 in the second round.

## Nationals motivate Smith for '92

By Chronicle Staff

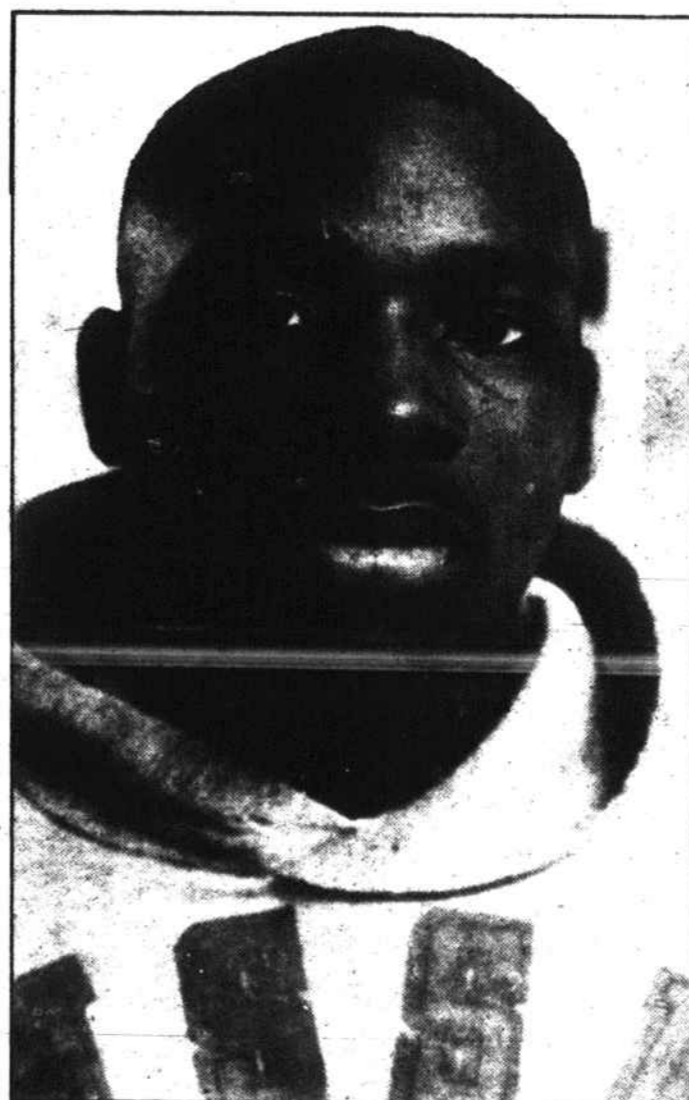
The departure of national champion Donnell Rawls makes Robert Smith the prime returnee for Winston-Salem State's wrestling Rams next season.

Smith, who wrestles in the 150 lbs. weight class, finished the year at 19-4 and qualified for this year's NCAA Division II national championships.

*"Looking back on it, I was a little jittery because it was a new experience for me. But that will make it easier for me next year because I'll be more comfortable."*

-Robert Smith

At the nationals, Smith didn't finish among the top eight, which would have made him an All-American, but he did leave his mark as a hard to beat matsman. After winning his first match 9-4 against Jim Kennedy of Lowell University, the Fayetteville junior dropped his next two matches by one point each. His first defeat was 7-6 to Cheyney State's Herman Moul-



trie (who placed fourth). The final loss that eliminated him from the competition was a 3-2 decision at the hands of Cal State's Blu Taylor.

Even so, Smith isn't cying the blues. "Looking back on it, I was a little jittery because it was a new experience for me," Smith said. "But that will make it easier for me next year because I'll be more comfortable. Plus I learned a few things, such as new take down techniques and certain moves I can make when I'm in the top position."

Melton Hardee, Rams wrestling coach, feels that Smith's experience at the nationals will serve as a motivator for him for next season. "He had some really tough matches where he lost by one point, so he was always in position to win," Hardee said. "But Robert will be OK, because he knows the sport and he can adjust to what's happening on the mat. That's a big advantage, especially when you're wrestling at that level of competition."

Smith qualified for the nationals by winning the NCAA South Regional title, decisively Jess Wilder of Pembroke State, 5-3 in overtime.



Josh Henighan

## Henighan to compete in regional free throw shooting contest this weekend

By Chronicle Staff

When it comes to foul shooting, 13-year old Josh Henighan is right on target and he has a few trophies to prove it.

Henighan recently won the state free throw shooting competition at High Point College, hitting 24 of 25 foul shots.

His victory at the state level qualifies him for the

National Eastern Regional Competition to be held Saturday at Charleston, W.Va.

Henighan's ultimate goal is to compete in the nationals of the Elk's Hoop Shoot Free Throw Competition for the 12-13 year-old age group.

Going into this weekend's competition, Henighan has won four straight free throw shooting contests. He advanced to the state by winning the regional competition held at

Catawba College in Salisbury, hitting 20 of 25 free throws. Prior to that, he won the city competition, hitting 23 of 25, and also emerged as top shooter at the Philo Middle School competition, hitting 24 of 25.

Henighan is an eighth grader at Philo Middle School, who has a B average and is a Duke University Top Scholar. He is the son of Louis and Kaye Henighan.