



## President's Message

David Bugen—SKWC President  
(RC'70,RBS'72)



As the home season concludes, we are all proud of another great showing by our wrestlers and the outstanding support from our fans. Attending a duel at the RAC is a “don't miss” event in the wrestling community. We have become “the best fans in the land.”

This month's article by John Welch reflects the contribution and importance of every wrestler who competed in the Princeton match. Wrestling is about more than wins and losses. It is about preparing our students for the challenges they will face upon graduation. Coach Welch understands the value of wrestling.

Our resident NCAA expert, Dan Seifring discusses the qualifying process for the NCAA tournament and the likelihood for each Rutgers wrestler to make the tournament. Upon reading the article please contact Dan at [obrats@aol.com](mailto:obrats@aol.com) with any questions.

Please mark your calendar for two exciting events occurring in May and June. The night of May 3<sup>rd</sup> the SKWC will have our inaugural KNIGHT GAMES. It will be an evening of fun, networking, and socializing that will test your gaming skills. On June 10<sup>th</sup>, fans will have the opportunity to see the best American wrestlers compete for the Senior USA World Team. Final X will be at the RAC. As ticket inventory is limited, please contact the Rutgers Ticket office to secure your seats.

Finally, please visit the new SKWC website: [www.scarletknightswrestlingclub.com](http://www.scarletknightswrestlingclub.com).

Our website committee lead by Josh Gross welcomes all comments and suggestions to further improve the site. Please send comments to [skwcmembership@gmail.com](mailto:skwcmembership@gmail.com).

Thanks again for your continued support of the SKWC and Rutgers Wrestling. I hope you can make it to Pittsburgh and watch our students excel on the national stage.

David Bugen

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**SKWC** Annual Membership  
SCARLET KNIGHTS WRESTLING CLUB

**SKWC**  
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# Who Won the Princeton Match for Rutgers?

**John Welsh - Wrestling Alumnus - RC '66**



A newspaper headline after the Princeton match read,

**“Rutgers defeated Princeton...on a major decision by heavyweight Christian Colucci in the final bout.”**

This is absolutely correct! While the last bout was exciting, ten men were responsible for our victory. The heavyweight often wrestles the last bout. He can get the accolades for a close team win. He can also be the one who takes on the added pressure of a close loss. As a retired coach, I want to convey how I viewed each individual bout and how every wrestler contributed to the Princeton victory.

At 125 pound class; Pat Glory pinned Shane Metzler. That was 6 points for Princeton. We will come back to this match.

At 133; Nick Suriano, one of our highest performing wrestlers had his turn to get Rutgers right back in it. It was obvious that the Princeton wrestler realized he would not get his offense to be as successful as in some of his other matches. He pulled back on risking shots that could result in Nick scoring a lot of points. Nick, on the other hand, had to weigh in his mind how much he should risk against this retreating opponent. Do I go for the pin (6 team points)? Do I go for the tech fall (5 team points)? Throughout the bout it was a second by second decision in Nick's mind, “should I let him up and take him down? How many times could I do this? Should I stay on top and try to turn him? If he won't be turned this might take a lot of time and I might be giving up the opportunity to score takedowns.” Nick, along with the coaches worked as hard as they could in this balance. Nick was able to score 15 points more than his opponent and gain 5 team points. That extra point Nick got was the point that caused Rutgers to win!

At 141 Mike Van Brill wrestled Marshall Keller who had 16 wins this season. On paper, Mike was the underdog. He had a weight on this mind to help the team with a win, but not to hurt the team with a big loss. This balance is hard not to think about even when a coach says: “don't get caught up in thinking about winning or losing. Just focus on scoring and counter attacking.” Mike never stopped wrestling and by only losing 8-5 he saved team points and contributed to the team win.

At 149, we had Anthony Ashnault. This match was the event of the week throughout the nation. Anthony has wrestled Matt several times. Matt was also undefeated this season and held the number 1 ranking in the nation. Anthony held the number 2 spot. For all the wrestlers, fans, and coaches, the key was to “win this bout.” A win would put Anthony's name as “Ranked First in the Nation.” He could win the lottery next week and decide not to wrestle again. But, the claim about Anthony acquiring a first place ranking would forever stand. As the match ensued, Anthony was on a mission. His intensity was evident. He stayed focused and kept scoring. It could have been easy for a wrestler to change strategy to defense once he was ahead. However, an experienced Anthony Ashnault knew that it was much better if his opponent is kept thinking about how do I stop him, as opposed to feeling that his opponent is shutting down and now it's his turn to score. Anthony did not go defensive. He got a Major decision (8point spread) and 4 team points. This surely was the point that caused Rutgers to win the match!

At 157 John Van Brill had to wrestle a scrappy freshman who had 14 wins. His opponent was the son of USA's Olympic Gold medalist, Kenny Monday. It was visible to all that John wrestled with a lot of focus. He beat Quincy Monday 9-3. His win contributed 3 team points and may have been the key match that caused RU to beat Princeton!

165: Stephan Glasgow's bout was one of continuous guts. It would be easy for Stephan to simply wait for a bad shot by his opponent and scramble behind for two points. Stephen took the offense several times. He also took moments during the match to compartmentalize his pain and get back to work. The match was close and the official awarded a point to the Princeton wrestler that put him into the lead. The coaches saw something and protested the official's call. It allowed Stephen to go into overtime. Stephen lost. However, if Stephan's head was not right, if his heart was not right, if the faith of the coaches wasn't there, if the faith of the thousands of screaming fans was not there, the loss could have been 4 team points for Princeton. Moreover, it could have been an injury default giving 6 team points to Princeton. Stephan's denial of his discomfort and his tenacity kept the win for Princeton to just 3 points. This could have easily been the point that caused Rutgers to win.

174: Joe Grello's opponent had 12 wins this season. There were a lot of oohs and ahs as Joe fought off many leg attacks that could have been points for the Princeton wrestler. Joe battled to a 2-2 tie and took the bout into overtime. Joe refused to give up and secured the win. This close match that went our way had to be the match that caused the win for Rutgers!

184: Nick Gravina came off injured reserve and was back for his first match since Wisconsin. Rutgers and Princeton wrestled in the 3<sup>rd</sup> overtime in a row. Nick lost in overtime. If Nick's injury put some doubt in his mind about how he might perform, this fan did not notice it. It was not noticed by any who were screaming around him. We all wanted Nick to win. Nick did not slow up in his intensity. His persistency in coming back might have saved Rutgers another team point.

197: Matt Correnti has wrestled several matches against very highly ranked opponents. The fan wants Matt to shoot just like they have seen Suriano shoot. Matt is tall and may never shoot the same way Nick shoots. In a few matches he has attempted a shot and it has cost him points and the bout. He seemed more focused during this match. He took calculated risks. His almost single leg takedown was not just a test to see how close his opponent was. It was a deep shot, one that often yields reward. It did not appear that Matt was thinking that his opponent was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation. The way Matt wrestled did not appear to the fans that he was wrestling someone who was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation. Through the bout it appeared that Matt was in just as good a position to win. It didn't happen. But, without Matt's faith in himself and his intensity he might have lost that bout by an 8-point spread or more. This also was the bout that caused Rutgers to win the match!

285: Christian Colucci had to go on the mat knowing that if he lost the bout, the team would have lost the match. If he won the bout by less than 8 points the team would have lost the match by criteria. In order to be sure of a team win, he had to beat his opponent by 8 points or more. So, what does a wrestler do first? Does he race to head lock his opponent right away and end this anxiety? Does he get his takedown and spend all of his time trying to turn his opponent for back points. Does he take him down and quickly let him up. There can be a lot of thinking in a wrestlers' head with the pressure of a team win/loss as the outcome. Christian stayed focused and methodically scored his points to get the 8 point spread which gave Rutgers 4 team points and the dual meet win. It can be said that Christian was the hero. In many ways due to the timing of the bout, he was.

Now back to 125. We lost by fall. Nothing more could be said here as far as team score. No wrestler wants to get pinned. I was pinned 5 times in high school. I did not want to be pinned. A half nelson gets put on you and you say, “He will never turn me.” Well, sometimes there are people who are better than others at applying a half nelson. Each time something like that happens. The WRESTLER in us makes a vow, “Never again.” We make a plan; we follow our plan. We stop it sooner; we fight it harder; we get stronger. Shane wrestled the #10 ranked wrestler in the nation. As far as Shane's match many would say that it didn't help us point wise. Well, that can be argued! Did Shane push his opponent when the match was over? Did Shane throw his head gear? Did Shane argue with the referee? No! No! No! He did not cost RU a team point. He did what was expected. He respected his opponent and his school. He took some time to deal with his loss and make a plan. He could have easily been the RU wrestler who saved us a team point just by keeping his head up and respecting.

This was a team victory. Ten wrestlers earned the win the Rutgers wrestling family.



**NJRTC CASINO NIGHT  
“KNIGHT GAMES”**

May 3rd, 2019

As spring approaches and the end of wrestling season is in sight, we continue to build our Rutgers Wrestling Family.

The SKWC is proud to announce the inaugural “KNIGHT GAMES” Casino and Texas Hold ‘Em Poker Tournament.

It will be a fun night for fans to mix and mingle with the coaches, athletes, and other wrestling fans!!!

Please plan to join us on Friday evening May 3, from 6-10PM at Perle’ Night Club located at 13 Paterson Street in downtown New Brunswick.

Join Coach Scott Goodale and his staff, Rutgers Wrestling All Americans past and present, and other legends of RU Athletics as we celebrate our tradition of excellence in Wrestling!!

If you would like to volunteer for the KNIGHT GAMES organizing committee, please contact Gary Rudow at: [garyrudow@yahoo.com](mailto:garyrudow@yahoo.com)

**Stay tuned for details  
following the  
NCAA tournament**

## Coach’s Remarks

### Donny Pritzlaff - Associate Head Coach



Sunday, February 17th was an emotional senior send off where Anthony Ashnault put an exclamation point on a perfect career inside the RAC. John VanBrill wrestled in his last home match as well and put out his usual workmanlike performance but ultimately fell to a tough competitor. Nick Gravina and Ralph Normandia were both honored prior to the dual as well but unable to compete in the match due to injury.

I want to take a moment to thank the 40,306 fans that attended our eight dual meets this season. There have been some tremendous moments that our students have created with exciting action and we truly thank the loyal fans for showing up and providing encouragement and energy for the team to feed off day and night. As an old Rutgers alum says “grass or gravel”, you loyal fans always have our back and give a charge to our students as they take the mat, encouragement while they are wrestling and applause as they leave the circle.

Our program takes great pride in wanting to put forth an excellent effort as well as create a performance that’s memorable and inspiring. At certain points we fell short of success but we definitely have great feedback to build off as the team takes on Maryland Friday night in College Park. The development group and red-shirts also have two consecutive weekends of competition as they head to Lock Haven on Sunday for the Mat Town II tournament followed by the National Collegiate Open next weekend in Delaware.

We are motivated to finish the dual meet season on a high note and bring home some individual championships these next few weeks leading into the most important phase of the year. The Big Ten championships will be approaching quickly so after we take care of business in Maryland, our focus will shift to tournament time. Another sincere thanks to all who follow and contribute one way or another to Rutgers wrestling and support us on various fronts. With everyone pulling in the same direction we will achieve amazing results this postseason.

### Red Team Upstream

Donny Pritzlaff

# NJRTC Update

**Reece Humphrey - NJRTC  
Head Coach**



## SKWC Annual

### NCAA Championships Social

Saturday March 23rd, 2019

**TERRACE**  
*on Fifth*

(Across the Street from PPG Paints Arena)

**Time: 3:00pm to 6:00pm**

**(Prior to the NCAA FINALS)**

Registration information and Pricing will be sent out in a separate email shortly.



**WRESTLING  
CHAMPIONSHIPS**

### Saturday March 9th, 2019

Session I: 11:00am EST

Session II: 7:00pm EST

### Sunday March 10th, 2019

Session III: 1:00pm EST

Session IV: 4:00pm EST

**COVERAGE OF ALL SESSIONS AND  
ALL MATS AVAILABLE VIA:**



**BIG TEN FINALS WILL AVAILABLE  
EXCLUSIVELY ON:**



In January, NJRTC athletes competed at the Dave Schultz Memorial International at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. It was AWESOME! We had 6 senior athletes compete in freestyle and came away with 4 medals! Pat Downey won the gold at 86kg. Nate Jackson took second at 79kg. CJ Brucki at 79kg and Bryce Meredith at 65kg won third place medals. While Brian Murphy and Kamal Begakov didn't medal, they both finished fifth.

This was Pat's first senior level title and Nate, CJ, and Bryce's first senior level medal! We had an absolute blast so be on the lookout for our vlog from this competition.

We are just getting started and we're already having great results. Next up: The US Open from April 24-27th in Las Vegas. The Open is one of the most important tournaments of the year as it sets the seeds for the World Team Trials and Final X. On June 8th, Final X will be held at "the RAC". Mark your calendar, as this is an opportunity to see the best American compete for the Senior USA World Team.

For me, the Rutgers vs Princeton match was interesting and challenging. As the head coach of the NJRTC, I work equally with Princeton and Rutgers. I was excited to watch both of my teams face off. At the same time, I felt a bit out of place as my normal tasks as a coach were altered. During our freestyle practices, I would normally imitate an opponent's style to give the wrestlers a feel for what was to come. This week was different. I couldn't scout the opponent because...I was the opponent!

While a little awkward, it was exciting to watch both sides prepare for the in-state rivalry in a dual that is only going to get bigger, louder and more intense in years to come! Rutgers and Princeton have a great partnership and all Jersey fans should be proud.

Prior to the match, I spoke at the Rutgers Skull Session previewing how close the dual would be and how excited we all were. The results did not disappoint!

During the dual I sat, not in the corner, but in the stands, as I didn't want to pick a side. I watched the dual as a spectator and wow! The RAC was the loudest I've ever heard and both squads were fighting to the last second in each bout.

I'm proud to be associated with both sides of this great Jersey rivalry. Duals like this are what is going to keep New Jersey high school athletes in Jersey! The future is bright!

Follow the NJRTC:

@NJRTC (Instagram)

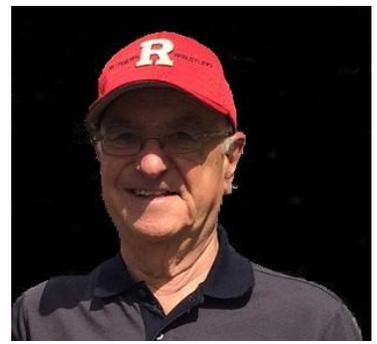
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[reecehumphrey@gmail.com](mailto:reecehumphrey@gmail.com)

# Billy G's Corner

Billy Garbarini RC'63 - SKWC Board Member



When we last left off, we anticipated a visit to Carver Hawkeye Arena for a matchup with a strong Iowa team. The trip to Hawkeye land was a rude awakening. The venue is a difficult arena to perform in and it lived up to its billing. The Nick Suriano/Austin DeSanto bout featured two top 5 wrestlers. After Suriano opened up a 3-0, Nick gave up 2 questionable stalling points and a last second takedown to lose 6-4. Our other hamper, Anthony Ashnault, averted a potential defeat to a dangerous Pat Lugo with an ankle pick takedown in sudden victory to secure the win. The only other win for the Knights was by Joe Grello as he defeated Mitch Bowman 7-3. The Hawkeyes defeated our grapplers 30-6.

The resurgent Michigan State Spartans invaded the RAC on January 25. The match began at 197 with Matt Correnti scoring an early takedown. However, he was thrown by his Spartan opponent and pinned. After Christian Colucci won a tiebreaker decision, Metzler lost a tech fall to number 7 ranked RayVon Foley. Rutgers was in an 11-3 hole. RU then reeled off five straight victories with tech falls from Suriano and Ashnault. Unfortunately, Willie Scott injured his ribs and had to default. The final match result was a 22-20 victory for the Knights.

On February 1<sup>st</sup>, Nebraska came to the RAC and did not treat the Scarlet Knights kindly winning 31-9. After the first five bouts RU trailed 11-9. Then, Nebraska swept the last 5 bouts. RU was shorthanded at the upper weights missing Joe Grello, Willie Scott, and Nick Gravina. Nick Suriano and Anthony Ashnault, scored a major decision and tech fall respectively. Our squad fell to 8-5 on the year and 2-3 in conference.

Next up for RU was the battle for New Jersey against Princeton at the RAC. The match was held in front of 5,290 fans that sounded like 20,000 at times. Rutgers prevailed by a 19-18 score with a major victory by Christian Colucci at 285 pounds. As John Welch described in his article, every wrestler contributed to our victory.

The bout of the season was # 1 ranked Matt Kolodzik against # 2 ranked Anthony Ashnault. It lived up to its billing for Rutgers fans. Ashnault took charge after a scoreless first period by getting 2 back points and a takedown after a Kolodzik escape. I thought that the roof exploded by the sound of the roar of the crowd. With a 5-2 lead Ashnault took down Kolodzik on the edge of the mat for 2 more points. He added a tilt for 2 back points and a point for riding time to win 10-2. This win resulted in Anthony securing the # 1 ranking in the country. That said, it was total team victory as the Rutgers team hoisted the trophy over their heads.

The following week, the team went on the road to Indiana to

face a tough Indiana squad and a ranked Purdue team. Against Indiana we captured 7 out of 10 bouts and moved to 10-5 on the year and 3-3 in conference. The win ensured that RU will have its 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive winning season. The victory was a hard fought one as Suriano, Lipari, and Colucci scored major decisions. Ashnault, Van Brill, Grello and Correnti defeated tough opponents as part of the victory.

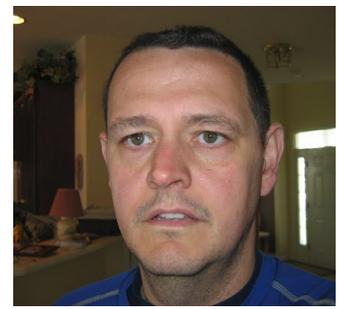
Two days later, the Knights faced a rugged Purdue team ranked 20<sup>th</sup>. In a match much closer than the final score of 22-15, Rutgers won 6 out of 10 bouts. Again, Rutgers was down 9-3 early but rallied to win the next 5 bouts. Even though we were not at full strength, we won most of the close bouts. Gravina, Colucci and Lipari prevailed in one-point wins. Suriano and Ashnault won by major decision and a fall, respectively.

The following Sunday number 4 ranked Michigan came to town. The Wolverines dominated against an outmanned and injured RU squad. Michigan won 29-7. Michigan had 8 ranked wrestlers, mostly in the top 10. The big bout was between # 1 ranked Stefan Micic and # 4 ranked Nick Suriano. Suriano was the aggressor and was in on a single leg several times. Twice Nick's shots on the single were halted as potentially dangerous. Micic countered with his length and strength. The difference was a lone takedown by Micic in the third period that carried him to victory by a 3-2 score. Peter Lipari took #6 ranked Kanen Storr into overtime before losing.

Our senior leader, Anthony Ashnault, wrestling for the last time at the RAC, gave the crowd a thrill by winning by a major decision. Throughout his four-year career, Anthony never lost at the RAC. Senior John Van Brill also wrestled his last match and fell to # 5 ranked Alec Pantaleo in a game effort. With an injury depleted line-up we forfeited the 165-pound weight and 165 pounder Anthony Olivieri dropped a decision wrestling up at 184 pounds. Joe Grello earned a solid victory over Reece Hughes. Correnti at 197 lost on a late takedown and Christian Colucci dropped a squeaker to # 7 ranked Mason Paris 4-3. Unfortunately, injury prevent Nick Gravina from wrestling in his final home match of his career.

# Qualifying for the NCAA Tournament

Dan Seifring - SKWC Contributor



You hear it all the time in D1 wrestling:

## “The only thing that matters is the three days in March”

This refers to the NCAA tournament (NCAA's). This year's tournament will be contested from March 21st to the 23rd. The question on many of our minds is: how many Rutgers wrestlers will qualify. It all starts two weeks prior to the NCAA's at the eight conference tournaments. This year the Big Ten Championships will be held March 9th and 10th on the campus of The University of Minnesota. The top wrestlers in each conference earn automatic qualifier bids (AQ) for the conference at their respective weights. While we don't know the full breakdown of qualifiers, we can start to make some educated guesses. We will learn all the AQ's the week leading up to the conference tournaments. Every wrestler will know the path it will take to qualify for the NCAA's prior to the start of the conference tournaments.

The formula for earning an AQ bid is complicated. For simplicity let's say a wrestler needs to meet two of three qualifying factors. Earning an AQ bid means a bid was earned for the conference. Each wrestler has an opportunity to claim the bid during the conference tournament.

The established qualifying factors are:

1. 70% winning percentage (minimum of 8 matches vs. D1 opponents)
2. Ranking of 30 or better in the Coaches Pool (minimum of 5 matches vs. D1 opponents)
3. RPI ranking of 30 or better (minimum of 17 matches vs. D1 opponents)

Currently Nick Suriano and Anthony Ashnault meet all three factors. John Van Brill and Joe Grello meet two of the factors. Christian Colucci is close as he is currently ranked 21st in RPI and 32nd in the Coaches Panel. Peter LiPari, Nick Gravina and Matt Correnti meet one of the three qualifying factors.

Using 125 pounds as an example, I project that the Big Ten will get eight AQ's. Provided all eight wrestlers that earn an AQ weigh-in for the tournament, finishing top eight in the conference will qualify you for the NCAA's. So if Shane Metzler were to finish eight or better he would qualify for the tournament. Essentially, he would “steal a bid” from someone else that earned it for the conference. That is why it is possible to qualify all ten wrestlers.

Staying at 125 pounds, let's say a highly ranked wrestler loses his first two matches; the wrestler may still qualify for the tournament. When the NCAA determines the AQs for each weight they leave a buffer. They allocate 27-29 AQ's, per weight. But come the tournament, 33 wrestlers will make up the bracket at each weight. So there are between four and six at large wrestlers in each weight.

So, what will it take for Rutgers to qualify all ten wrestlers? I will assume the below wrestlers will be the wrestlers that Rutgers enters into the Big Ten tournament.

**125 lbs:** – Assuming there are 8 AQs in the 125-weight class, Shane Metzler will

need to finish in the top eight in his weight class. Shane would not have a chance to receive an at large bid.

**133 lbs:** - Nick Suriano, just has to make weight at the conference tournament. As a guy who currently meets all three criteria, he is virtually assured a bid.

**141 lbs:** – This is a very deep weight in the Big Ten so Peter LiPari may need to finish top 9-10 to earn a bid. Chances are slim that Pete will earn an at large bid; but I like his chances of finishing top ten.

**149 lbs:** – Similar to Nick Suriano as long as Anthony Ashnault makes weight he will qualify.

**157 lbs:** - John Van Brill, he will bring an AQ into the tournament and 157 being a very deep weight I am guessing finishing top 11 would qualify him. If he didn't qualify at the conference tournament I feel pretty confident he would get an at large bid. I do expect him to claim an AQ and not worry about the at large.

**165 lbs:** - This is a very top-heavy weight for the conference but with not as much depth as other weights. Stephan Glasgow may have to finish in the top seven to qualify. Like Metzler, Stephan would have a slim chance at an at large bid.

**174 lbs:** - This weight could have as many as 11 AQ's. If this is the case, Joe Grello has a pretty good shot at making the NCAA's. With that many spots I am not too sure the committee would be willing to give the conference an at large bid.

**184 lbs:** – There may be only 6 or 7 AQ's at 184. This may be a tall task for Nick Gravina with his injuries. With Nick's limited number of matches he may not be able to get an at large bid. Nick will likely need to finish in the top 6 or 7 in his weight class to qualify.

**197 lbs:** - This may be another weight where we don't see many AQ's for the conference. It is possible that there will only be six. Matt Correnti is capable of finishing top six if he is on his game as he was his true freshman year. Receiving an at large bid will be difficult.

**285 lbs:** - We could see as many as 9 or 10 bids at heavy-weight. This gives Christian Colucci a good shot at grabbing one. I like his chances a little more than Correnti or LiPari if it came to getting an at large bid.

In summary it will be very difficult for Rutgers to qualify all ten weights. Being honest, I think we could be looking at four to six, and six would be guys wrestling above their current level. But that is why they wrestle; no match has ever been won or lost on paper.