



DUKE BY THE NUMBERS IN 2015

5 NCAA qualifiers in 2015 - a program record

3.302 Duke's team GPA - the sixth highest nationally

29 wins for Conner Hartmann en route to his sixth place finish at NCAAs

4th Duke's place at 2015 ACC Championships - highest since placing third in 2004

9 NCAA qualifiers in Glen Lanham in his three seasons - three more than the four years prior combined

6 Blue Devils who earned degrees in May, including Brandon Gambucci who garnered his master's degree

BUILDING THE TOTAL STUDENT ATHLETE: A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

As you probably know, the governing body for college wrestling recognizes individual and team academic success each year following the NCAA Championships. This acknowledgment allows for programs to see how well rounded they are on the mat and in the classroom. On the list shown there are nine teams that made the national top 30 both academically and athletically. The Duke wrestling program has been on this list for consecutive seasons and no team placed higher than Duke in both categories. The five teams which placed ahead of Duke academically finished 18 spots behind at best in the final NCAA Championship standings.

School	Academic Rank	NCAA Finish
Duke	6	28
Minnesota	10	8
Penn State	12	6
Nebraska	15	9
Kent State	16	26
Northwestern	21	15
North Dakota State	24	23
Cornell	26	5
N.C. State	30	16

NWCA ALL-ACADEMIC HONOREES



BRIAN DORSEY



MARCUS CAIN



CONNER HARTMANN



JACOB KASPER

"Building The Total Student-Athlete" is our mission here at Duke and will remain the focus of the program. Your Blue Devils have placed themselves in an elite category with only eight other wrestling programs in the country. These accomplishments have brought greater expectations for the future and can only be obtained through continued growth and commitment from everyone involved in the program. YOUR support is one of the most important factors for continued success in moving the Duke wrestling program forward.

Links: [NWCA Announces Academic Honors](#)
[Duke Lands Four on NWCA All-Academic Team](#)

DUKE PLACES FIVE ON ALL-ACC ACADEMIC TEAM

Duke led all ACC programs and matched last year's total with five selections to the All-ACC Academic Team. Evan Botwin, Marcus Cain, Brian Dorsey, Jake Faust and Jacob Kasper all earned recognition for their efforts on both the mat and in the classroom. It is the second honor for Botwin, Cain and Kasper, while Dorsey and Faust each garnered the accolade for the first time in their careers. Duke's trio of repeat honorees is nearly half of the eight ACC wrestlers to have earned the award multiple times in their careers. To be eligible for All-ACC Academic Team consideration, a student-athlete must have earned a minimum 3.00 grade point average for the previous semester and maintained a minimum 3.00 cumulative average during his academic career.

BLUE DEVILS TAKE HOME TEAM AWARDS

The Duke University wrestling team gathered at the end of April to celebrate a successful 2014-15 campaign with an end of the season banquet. The Blue Devils celebrated the many team and individual achievements from this past season. One of the highlights of the banquet was the naming of the Dylan Ryan "Rhino" 11th Man Award, which will be presented annually to the best teammate. Ryan's leadership, work ethic and positive attitude left a lasting impact on each of the wrestlers and on the Duke program.

MOST OUTSTANDING WRESTLER
Conner Hartmann



ROOKIE OF THE YEAR
Mitch Finesilver



TOTAL STUDENT-ATHLETE AWARD
Immanuel Kerr-Brown



"RHINO" 11TH MAN AWARD
Dylan Ryan



SCHOLAR ATHLETE AWARD
Marcus Cain



CATCHING UP WITH ALL-AMERICAN CONNER HARTMANN; HARTMANN SET FOR FINAL RUN AT NCAA TITLE

The face of Duke wrestling, Conner Hartmann, has positioned himself as one of the top contenders for the 2016 NCAA title. Hartmann and company can't think of a better way to end a career than making Duke history in historic Madison Square Garden. The two-time All-American is poised to potentially bring home Duke's first NCAA wrestling title as well as be the first Blue Devil grappler to earn All-America recognition three times in his career. Conner, for the first time in his career, is spending his summer away from Duke in an internship as he prepares for his future after collegiate wrestling. We caught up with him to talk about his internship, wrestling and his final year at Duke.

Give us some insight on who you're doing your internship with and what the position is hopefully preparing you for back in the state of Washington?

I am currently an intern at Conestoga Wealth Partners. We are an independent affiliate of Wells Fargo Advisors Financial Network. There are three partners, and together they own the business. This position is a great opportunity to learn about the retail side of financial advising and how a business is formed and maintained. It is helping me transition from college into a vocation I can enjoy. They have decades of experience, and there is so much to learn from them. They are very good at what they do.

How have you been able to translate your incredible drive to achieve what you accomplished in wrestling to the intern position?

I have made thousands of phone calls to find people interested in our services. I find myself competing against myself. How many calls can I make today? How can I do this more efficiently and effectively? How can I help people the most? I would say my desire to succeed translates from the mat in that respect. It keeps me from treating the process as mundane. I focus on improvement, not failure.

Conner, you seem to get better and better as the competition improves from high school to college wrestling. Your mother and father had a couple of their own examples when you seemed to hit a wall and then it was like a light went on and they witnessed spikes of improvement over the course of your scholastic career.

When do you recall a period of time or a particular match growing up and in college when something just clicked or you made really fast improvements in wrestling?

Conner Hartmann vs. Bilal Smith at a practice for South Kitsap High School.



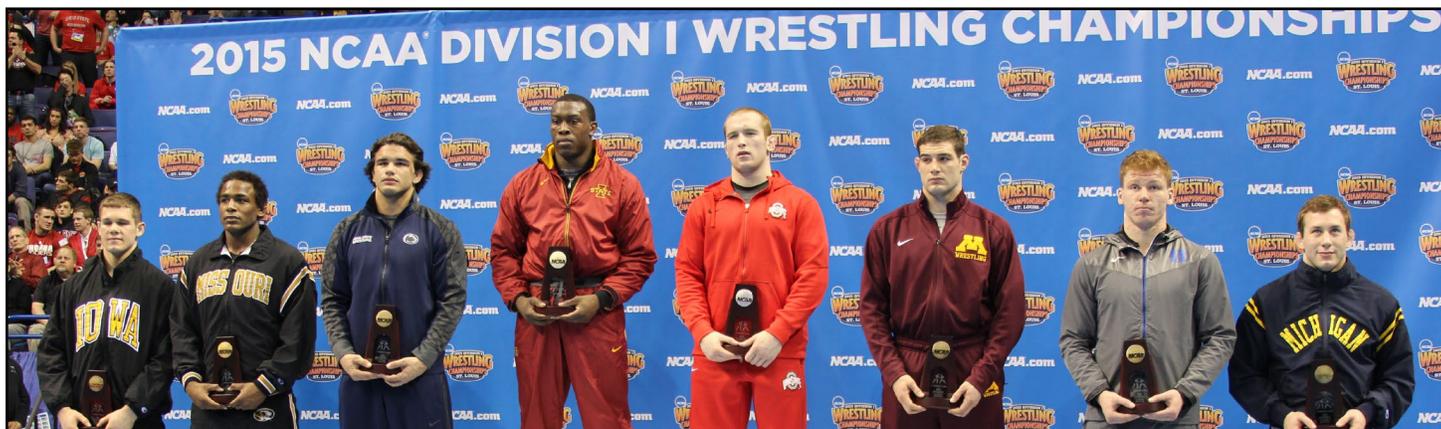
After my first year of high school wrestling (sophomore year for my high school), I qualified for state but did not win a match. That summer, I mowed lawns to earn money for a tournament in Fargo, North Dakota. There was a camp for the Washington team that was designed to prepare us for the tournament. It was the first time I participated in an intensive camp, and it gave me an opportunity to wrestle good kids from around the state. Though I wasn't used to freestyle wrestling and did not do well at the tournament, the experience made me much better. That next season, I was in the state finals.

Later, I also spiked when I was first able to wrestle in a collegiate wrestling setting. I like to think that I am able to take full advantage of opportunities to improve. With that mindset, I can learn to dominate whatever environment I have been placed into.

You have developed a reputation in the program for your work ethic and drive. Your father and mother shared a couple of interesting statements and stories about your habits that have been present from a very young age and seemed to come natural.

Not to put you on the spot and force you to brag about your phenomenal characteristics so share a story or let us in on your way of thinking that will explain how you approach reaching the high goals you set for yourself?

The truth is that I have not achieved my goal yet. I can appreciate my accomplishments, but my approach is centered around the fact that I am not done yet. I focus on the details. Some people have rituals or certain things they need to prepare for competition. My ritual is the day to day process. I focus on practicing right, eating right, and taking care of my body. I trust in the process. I trust in my coaches. By the time I step on the mat, there are no questions. I know I have done everything I can. And this way, I don't have to think about being a national champion. I think about swallowing the quinoa on my plate, jumping in the ice bath, and making each practice count. And above all, I am positive. Even when I critique myself, I refuse to be negative. It keeps me from burning out.



By following your career it seems like there have been some instances where you have been overlooked or didn't get the credit you may have deserved for how things have ended up. Coming out of high school you didn't get an offer from your top college pick. You weren't seeded in the top 16 the first time you became an All-American and ended up the highest unseeded placer on the podium at the NCAA tournament. Last season you were tied for the second best record in your weight class, yet you were seeded 10th.

How do you cope with these types of situations when it seems like you regularly get overlooked or don't get the credit you deserve?

My coaches tell me to wrestle with a chip on my shoulder, but I usually find myself doing something else. I believe deep in my gut that I am going to be a national champion. I absolutely believe that I have what it takes to beat anyone.

When I feel overlooked or uncredited, it makes me smile. I feel like a lion mistaken for a sheep in the herd. And a lion really doesn't mind if the shepherd overlooks him: he just eats sheep until the shepherd takes precautions. And then he eats the sheep anyway. My goal does not include people giving me credit; my motivation comes from myself, not what others think they see in me. A lion does not eat sheep because the shepherd thinks he can. He eats because he's hungry.

In an interview during your senior season of high school you stated that the previous state champions that were listed on the wall served as a great motivator to get there (state title). Now you're going into your final season at Duke and have the chance to be the only national champion in program history and the only wrestler to reach the podium three times which would obviously place you in a spot where nobody in a Duke singlet has ever reached before. YOUR name will become a motivator for teammates and future Blue Devils.

How have you prepared yourself and what is your mindset for this challenge ahead?

I prepared myself by losing in the national semifinals. It was like I tasted the future and had it dangled in front of me. I have already done most of the work, and the people I lost to were only better than me on that day. Once I fine tune a few small things, I believe I will be ready. At this point, I am appreciating every moment I have left.

The names on my high school room's wall were motivating then. I remember believing that being a state champion was attainable because all of the people on that wall had achieved my goal in the very same room. If they could, I would.

Now I want to give that to others. Future Duke wrestlers need someone who can affirm their belief that they can accomplish their goals here. They need someone on the wall. Someone has to be first. If there is one thing I can give Duke Wrestling, that is what I want it to be.



Your mother had mentioned that you've always had a strong moral compass from an abnormally young age and your nature to build people up with sincere encouragement has always been a quality of yours. Now you are going into your last year at Duke and will likely serve as team captain for the 4th year. The Duke coaching staff obviously sees great leadership qualities in you to tag you as a leader even before you had accomplished anything in a Duke singlet.

How have you been tested in the difficult task of serving as a team captain and has it become easier with time?

The role of team captain is unique. There are different styles of leading a team, and some come easier than others. Leading by example is effective. It gives others a blueprint to follow. Once you succeed, that blueprint becomes even more effective. But there are times when being vocal and actively pushing others is better. This has taken longer for me to do, but I think I have improved with time. I still think I can do much better as a captain. Through the years, my idea of a team captain's role has changed. I have my teammates' best interests at heart, but I also think of my coaches in the same way. I know both have needs and goals, and communication is crucial for those to come to fruition. It is an honor to be a part of Duke Wrestling's ascension. I know this to be just the beginning.

THANK YOU!!

After a great season of Duke wrestling, all of the coaches and athletes would like to thank everyone for all of the support over this past year! The great additions to our wrestling room allowed us to get better every day and we know this is just the beginning. The room was made possible by the continued support of our alumni and fans! In December, the team traveled to New York City for the Grapple at the Garden. Not only did we go 3-0, including a win over Big Ten foe Maryland, the guys got to enjoy time in Rockefeller Center and at the New York Stock Exchange. Trips like this to Wall Street allow us to give our student-athletes the full college experience. It is moments like these on and off the mat they will not forget and ones we hope to continue in the future.



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