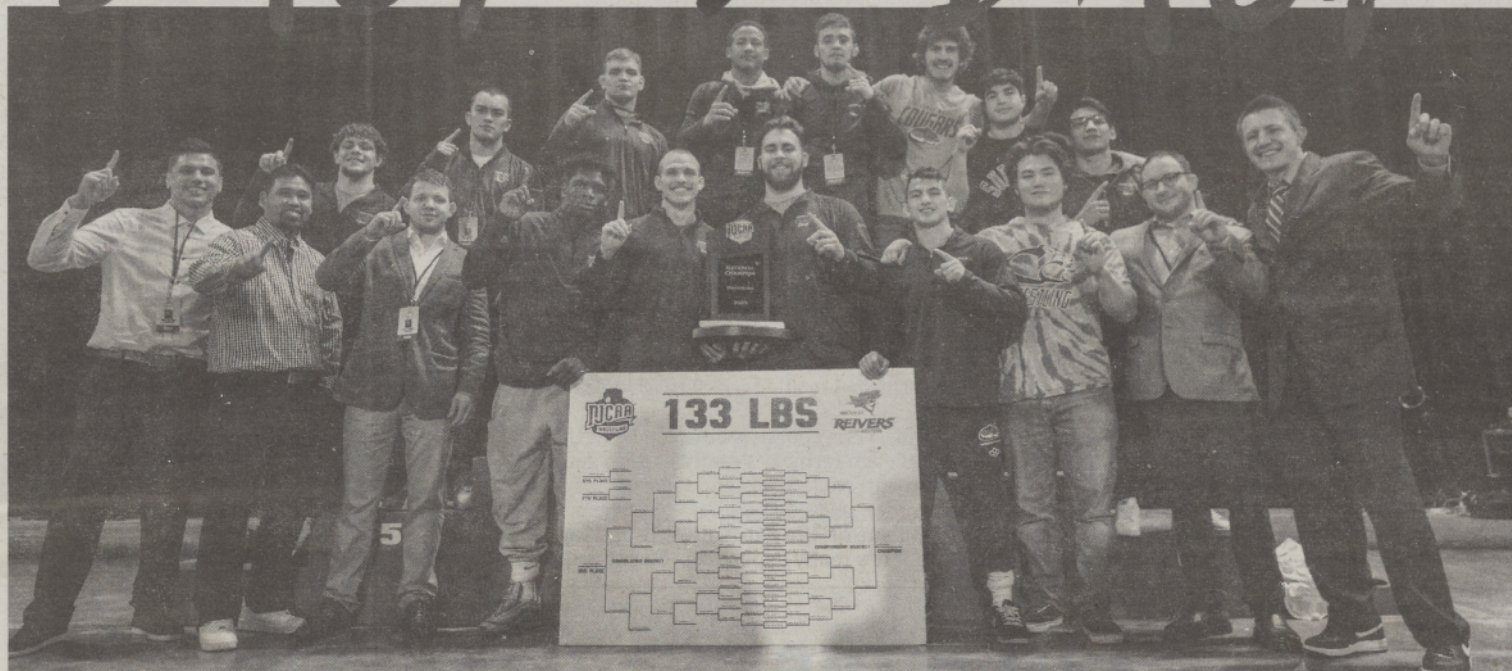


BACK 2 BACK



BY LEXIS SHULL
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PHOTOS PROVIDED BY TRAVIS WHITTAKER

On March 6 and 7 in Council Bluffs, Iowa, the Clackamas Community College wrestling team brought home another NJCAA National Championship, making it their fourth in school history and second in a row

after winning the title last season. For the second year in a row, the Cougars outscored Northeastern Oklahoma A&M with 133.5 total points compared to Northeastern's 108.5.

Clackamas sent three of their wrestlers into the final rounds; sophomore Marty Margolis III who finished as the 149 runner-up and sophomore Joel Romero, who fought to the last few seconds of the match and became the 157 national runner-up after a challenged call upheld his opponent's 4-2 lead.

Sophomore Jason Shaner took home the gold at the national meet as the 133 National Champion, defeating Iowa Western opponent Ladamien Sturdivant in a 5-3 decision, despite surrendering a reversal with 10 seconds in the third period.

Shaner even gave an excited bow to the camera and crowd after the win as friends and family celebrated from home.



Coach Josh Rhoden celebrates the victory.

When I was wrestling my last match I knew I could win, it was just a matter of doing it and owning the moment. I just told myself to have fun and wrestle tough."

The pressure of performing your best can be tough, especially at such a big event like the NJCAA Wrestling National Championship. But that didn't stop the Clackamas wrestlers from taking their rightful win.

"I love the pressure that comes with a big event," Shaner said over text. "It's different from a regular meet because we get an opportunity to win a national title and that's something that's extremely hard to do."

Tommy Mommer, sophomore in the 285 weight class, said through text, that winning is, "One of the greatest feelings ever. It's so satisfying to see all of our hard work paying off in such a great fashion, and not many teams can say they've won back to back championships in our division."

Shaner said via text, "Yeah, I won it."

being able to compete at this event is because it's the best of the best going at it, and not a lot of people get to qualify for that event so it's something special. We have a big target on our backs so everyone is gunning for us, which is awesome."

None of this could have been made possible without the hard work and dedication of the whole team.

"We celebrated this win by getting together after the tournament, having dinner, and just reflecting back on how such a great couple of years it's been," Mommer said. "We all said a couple things about how grateful for this team we are and the strong brotherhood we have is truly beautiful."

Clackamas wrestling certainly ended their 2019-2020 season with a bang, but will be losing 14 strong sophomores for their upcoming season.

Many of the freshmen show strong potential, however, and a third consecutive win at Nationals could plausibly be in their future.