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people know a lot about Carr from

in order to graduate on time,

TX7hen trying to handicap the Big Ten wrestling tournament this season, I decided to enlist some help. Accompanying my analysis of each weight class are comments from two-time Big Ten champion Kerry McCoy. Although McCoy has been out of the college scene this year, always the student of the game, he lent some keen insights.

118 — Mike Mena of Iowa has dominated everyone in his path. Every time a new Amateur Wrestling News poll comes out there seems to be a new No. 2, and Mena dominates him. Prediction: Mena, easily over David Morgan of Michigan State (fall, 6:00).

McCoy's take: "(Mena) really believes he's the best wrestler at his weight class, and a lot of his competition believes that too. When he has lost, it's to guys that take it to him."

126 — By all accounts, this is a showdown between Penn State's Sanshiro Abe and Iowa's Jeff McGinness. AWN has Abe No. 1, the Big Ten coaches have McGinness in the top spot. Abe has struggled with McGinness in their most recent meetings. Prediction: I hate to pick against the home team, but McGinness should win (6-3).

McCoy's take: "On his feet, not too many people can hang with (Abe). He needs to stay off bottom and not get ridden by (McGinness). Right now, they're 3-3. (Abe) doesn't like to lose. I think pride's gonna kick in (for Abe).'

134 — Mark Ironside from Iowa defeated Cary Kolat at the NWCA meet. That automatically makes him a favorite. Frank Laccone of Purdue and Tony Pariano of Northwestern are capable of pulling the upset and will be ready should Ironside falter. Prediction: Ironside over Pariano, handily (11-4).

McCoy's take: "Ironside is a clear favorite. But I definitely think (Penn State's Biff Walizer) has a good chance to finish in the top three. It depends on how bad he wants it.'

142 — Penn State's defending national champ John Hughes is a slight favorite over Bill Zadick of Iowa. Hughes has narrowly defeated Zadick in their recent encounters. But the Hawkeye seems especially pissed when he loses to Hughes. Roger Chandler from Indiana could be a factor. Prediction: like the other Iowa guys, but he



He'll get one, beating Zadick (3-1). McCoy's take: "John's got a real good grasp on what he wants to do. I don't think anybody will touch him as long as he keeps wrestling well — not defending the title, but trying to win matches."

150 — Russ Hughes is the clear favorite here. He will face challenges from unproven Andy Trevino from Indiana and Charlie Becks from Ohio State. Becks beat John Hughes in a dual meet earlier this month, and could pose similar problems for Russ. Prediction: Russ, like John, likes the close matches. Hughes over Becks (2-1, OT).

McCoy's take: "If Russ goes out and wrestles, he should breeze through the competition. Betts likes to capitalize on people's mistakes, but Russ doesn't make many mistakes."

158 — The defending champion, Ernest Benion of Illinois, is rated No. 4 by the Big Ten coaches. While Benion should fare better than fourth, Joe Williams from Iowa appears to be hungry coming off a redshirt season. Prediction: Williams over Benion (9-5).

McCoy's take: "Benion's has had some losses this year. Williams is a favorite, but just because of his ranking. (Jeff Catrabone from Michigan) is wrestling real well. And (Penn State's John) Lange, he may not be the best technical wrestler, but if he takes you to your back, it's over.'

167 — Daryl Weber of Iowa is the defending champion. Kevin Wilmot of Wisconsin compiled an impressive 20-3 record. Joel Morissette of Michigan State usually finds a way to win. Gerald Carr from Minnesota has been impressive too. Prediction: It's anybody's guess. I'll go with Weber's experience over Morissette (6-5).

McCoy's take: "Weber goes hard Hughes thrives on close matches. could be stopped. Not too many

Minnesota, but he could turn it up a notch."

177 — This should be a three-way brawl between Erich Harvey from Michigan State, Rohan Gardner of Northwestern and Jesse Rawls of Michigan. Prediction: Rawls is a physical specimen. He should beat Gardner in the finals (4-3).

McCoy's take: "Between those three, it will be whoever finds a way to win, not who's the best wrestler. Rawls has had a good attitude this season, and it is his fifth year. His experience gives him the edge."

190 — With the graduation of Joel Sharratt of Iowa and Emilio Collins of Michigan State, this weight is the weakest of the bunch. I'll go with the fill-ins for the finalists last year, Spartan Brian Picklo and Hawkeye Lee Fullhart. Prediction: Picklo had a solid regular season (4-3).

McCoy's take: "(Penn State's Rob Neidlinger) lost to Picklo in overtime and Fullhart by two points. If he believes he can beat those guys, he could walk out of there with a title.

HWT - Tony Vaughn of Purdue and Jeff Walter of Wisconsin aren't bad, but Billy Pierce of Minnesota is the clear favorite. He gave Kerry McCoy all he could handle last year, and wrestled on a badly injured foot at NCAAs. Prediction: Pierce guts his way through, beating Walter in the finals (4-2).

McCoy's take: "(Pierce) has a dislocated kneecap. If he were 100 percent, he could be a clear favorite. Now, it's wide open. Vaughn will be ready. He has some fire built up from last season."

Team evaluation: Iowa should easily take its 23rd straight conference crown. But there's no reason Penn State cannot finish second. As Vlade Divac recently said about playing the Dream Team in the '96 Olympics, second place isn't bad.

McCoy's take: "Mena, Ironside and Weber would have to lose early for anyone to beat Iowa. It would be a big surprise. Then again, in the sport of wrestling, upsets happen all the time."

Jonathan Bombulie is a senior majoring in journalism and a Collegian night sports editor. Kerry McCoy is a former NCAA heavyweight champion. Who do you believe?

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