Weight watcher

Grappler battles more than just Big Ten foes

By TIM HYLAND Collegian Sports Writer

EAST LANSING, Mich. - After Penn State freshman Jason Betz lost the fifth place 126-pound match at the Big Ten wrestling tournament to Michigan's Chris Viola on Sunday, he didn't want to talk much. Of course, he didn't want to do anything - except eat.

And that is just what he did. When his day of wrestling was over, Betz made a bee-line for the concession stand and dug into a much deserved order of nachos. After what Betz went through, one can't blame him.

The Lions 118-pounder, who entered the tournament unseeded and very inexperienced, struggled all weekend to make weight, yet still wrestled six matches, including five in one day, and earned an unexpected sixth place finish. With his surprisingly strong finish, Betz also earned a berth in the NCAA Tournament.

"It was one of the hardest things that I've ever had to do," Betz said.

The night before his matchup with Viola, Betz was faced with the agonizing task of losing seven and a half pounds. Despite the best efforts of the Lion coaching staff, Betz was unable to drop all of the necessary weight that night, and was forced to go to bed hungry in hopes of making weight the next morning.

An exhausted Betz was awakened the next day at five in the morning by Lions assistant coach Hachiro Oishi with weight yet to be dropped and a match yet to be wrestled.

"I don't think he knew where he was," Lion coach John Fritz said.

But when it came time to wrestle, Betz definitely knew where he was

Betz traded shots with Viola in the first period of the fifth place clash. Viola, however, pulled away in the second period and built a 11-3 lead. But Betz had worked too hard to give up at that point, and fought Viola to the very end of the match, scoring a near fall as time ran out to close the gap to 12-10.

The effort Betz showed in that match could be seen in every match he wrestled in the tournament.

"I just can't say enough about Jason Betz," Fritz said. "He showed great effort."

Although visibly dazed by the debilitating weight loss, the natural 126-pounder was consistently stronger than his opponents, controlling the pace of his bouts through his quasi-conservative style.

In his first ever Big Ten tournament match, Betz took on sophomore Tim Dernlan of Purdue. Despite Dernlan's advantage in experience, Betz took control early and won with a overtime takedown, 7-5.

The next round saw Betz take on and lose a 6-5 heartbreaker to Viola, the only opponent who seemed to be able to get Betz to wrestle out of character.

After scoring a victory over Dominic Caruso in his first consolation match, Betz came out for the second session of the day in fiery fashion. He dominated Minnesota's Kipp Wullianison throughout the first period and then pinned him in the second. The match proved to be the high point of Betz's tournament.

Betz now must look ahead two weeks to the NCAA tournament in Minneapolis.

"Hopefully I can place up there," Betz said. "If I can stay focused. I can handle it.

Unranked grappler hits spotlight

By STEVE FEITL Collegian Sports Writer

EAST LANSING, Mich. - An unranked wrestler finishing third in a highly competitive tournament like the Big Ten Championships is an interesting story

Add in the fact that he had to beat the second and third-ranked wrestlers along the way and it becomes an impressive story.

Add in the fact that the same wrestler had a left bicep bruised so badly that he couldn't even curl his arm and you'd have the story of Penn State wrestler Rob Neidlinger.

The 190-pounder came to the Michigan State campus with a bum arm, but still was merely one match away from competing for a Big Ten title.

"See that bruise mark from here to here," Neidlinger said as he pointed from the top to the bottom of his left bicep. "I got that before I came here. We were playing kill ball, just the game, and our fat heavyweight Stark of Wisconsin. (Matt Gaul) hit me."

which it occurred, but noted that of the first period. A takedown of from using one of his favorite maneuvers — the underhook.

But wrestling injured is nothing new to Neidlinger.

At the same tournament last year, he competed with a torn ACL. Those results were not nearly as impressive though, as he found himself on the losing end of two matches and did not place.

That was characteristic of Neidlinger's rookie campaign, which Lion coach John Fritz said was basically a wash due to several injuries which slowed his progress.

"This year he picked up a lot of experience," Fritz said. "I just see him getting better and he's got a great career ahead of him."

Neidlinger got off to a good start on Saturday with a first round victory over Jason Case of Northwestern, 6-2.

Ahead was a difficult task for Neidlinger, which came in the form of second-seeded Aaron

Stark struck first with a take-Neidlinger laughed about the down at 1:23, but Neidlinger was

the painful injury prohibited him his own with just 25 seconds left in the match secured the 5-4 win and brought the Penn State contingent in the Breslin Center stands to its feet.

In the semi-finals, Neidlinger fell to Iowa Hawkeve Lee Fullhart who rode him throughout the match en route to a 5-1 decision.

"I thought I could beat him," Neidlinger said. "When I get ridden like that, it takes a lot out of vou.'

Third-seeded Karl Roesler of Illinois, Neidlinger's opponent on Sunday, also rode him hard but this time Neidlinger came out on top of a 6-4 score.

Neidlinger will have time to improve his performance in the down position during the two weeks before the NCAA Championships in Minneapolis. The hiatus will also give the ill-fated bicep time to heal.

And with those two factors in his favor, Neidlinger hopes there will be another chapter to his story

"I don't want to consider this to be just an experience," he injury, as well as the manner in able to reverse it before the end said. "I want to keep on going."

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Tuesday. March 12, 1996:

this year, because your self-expres- about. sion could be erratic. You experience CANCER (June 21-July 22) many conflicting feelings as you go *** Focus on getting the job done, be having a difficult time dealing after what you want. You will get where you want to go, but you will plenty of rest so you can deal with stress and issues in your day-to-day life. If you are single, your desirability isn't the question. The concern will regard your desires. If attached, positive, sensitive communications tweak you.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic: 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2- So-so; 1-Difficult.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

 $\star \star \star \star$ You are in the limelight and manage a lot very efficiently. Stay on a partner get to you. A positive attisomeone who is far away. The possi- point of view. Someone's attitude will for what you want. bility of travel lurks. Tonight: Reach out to someone.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Tonight: Have fun.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

sense of humor, and you'll have a lot Maintain a low profile. Diplomacy is a skill you will need to laugh at. Tonight: Be out and SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

and you might be able to bypass with changes. Family, home and your some of the unexpected hassles of the personal life are highlighted. Revamp need to do some processing. Get day. News may force a change in a plan. Be more in sync with what is plans. Remain confident, and ex- going on. Tonight: Beam in what you plore options. Challenges surround want. you; they may be a gift in disguise. CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Tonight: Get a good night's sleep. **LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22)

plications. Be careful when dealing with a child or a romantic attach- quickly. ment. Do what you can to remain AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) secure. Tonight: Go for a romp. VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

pass. Check out an investment. To- PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) night: Do for yourself.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

highlighted. Settle an immediate has- Comprehending a change will help conflict with a change or an opportu- ation that has an impact on your nity. Examine your options with a work. Rethink how you approach the limelight. partner who has good intentions. your life and expectations. Tonight:

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

quest for solutions. What you are choices Changes empower you. Mini- actress Liza Minnelli (1946). hearing could change, especially mize a liability that is staring you in when the boss flips his lid. Take a the face. A risk could backfire in an quick course in diplomacy, and unforeseen way. Be more open to the

you'll come out flying. Maintain a positive things in your life. Tonight:

 $\star \star \star \star \star$ Be upbeat about what is happening with a partner who may

★★ Misunderstanding plagues your thoughts and ideas. Listen more care- $\star \star \star \star \star$ Your imagination knows fully to a child or loved one, yet be are necessary. SAGITTARIUS can no limits. Figure out how to help firm when requesting what is imporsomeone understand you. A miscom- tant. Do not expect resolutions today; munication could have financial im- this situation is about establishing your boundaries. Tonight: Vanish

 $\star \star \star \star \star$ Be in touch with your goals as you deal with a friend. You $\star \star \star$ Be sure of yourself; do not let are trying too hard to make what you want happen. Evaluate where you are top of the positives. You have drive, tude goes far in making what you coming from in this relationship. Be but someone could misinterpret it. need happen. Get in touch with a careful about spending, because it is Conduct research, and check in with family member who has a different easy to go overboard. Tonight: Go

 $\star \star \star$ Stay on top of changes; your style of adjustment could use some $\star \star \star \star \star$ One-to-one relating is $\star \star \star \star \star$ Reach out to others. brushing up today. Try to understand where someone is coming from. Your sle. A friend wants to engineer a cer- you interact with someone. Follow way certainly isn't the only way. tain scenario, but it puts you in direct your instincts with a difficult situ- Loosen up, and work better with a boss or partner. Tonight: You're in

BORN TODAY

Actress Barbara Feldon (1941), singer Al Jarreau (1940), singer-

Hang out at a favorite spot. $\star \star \star \star \star$ Defer to partners in your $\star \star \star$ Be clear about your financial

my Collegian,

morning newspaper

Penn State's







JPI