

# Top-10 Wrestlers to Watch at 149 pounds



S. Van Ness



K. Buesgens



J. Joy



C. Tyus



C. Gaj



A. Valencia



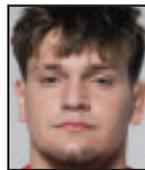
C. Swiderski



S. Mendoza



J. Frost



E. Stiles

The following is a look at WIN's Top-10 ranked wrestlers, plus other notable wrestlers, at 149 pounds before the conference/NCAA qualifying tournaments. Go to WIN-Magazine.com for an updated NCAA preview after the qualifiers.

## 1. Shayne Van Ness, Penn State, Sr., Somerville, N.J.

**Note:** Missed the 2023-24 season due to injury.  
**Season/Career Record:** 18-0/70-10  
**2025/Career NCAA Resume:** 3rd in 2025; 3rd in 2023.

**Regular-Season Notes:** Has an 88.9% bonus rate; lone decisions came against Nebraska's Chance Lamer, 12-5, and Stanford's No. 6 Aden Valencia, 10-4.

## 2. Koy Buesgens, NC State, So., New Prague, Minn.

**Note:** Improved from a 16-13 record last season to 20-2 heading into ACC Championships.

**Season/Career Record:** 20-2/36-15  
**2025/Career NCAA Resume:** 0-2 at 2025 NCAAs.

**Regular-Season Notes:** Southeast Open champ; split matches with No. 5 Collin Gaj; other notable wins came against No. 6 Aden Valencia via 14-5 major decision, over No. 7 Casey Swiderski, 2-1, and over No. 3 Jaxon Joy, 6-3, on Feb. 20.

## 3. Jaxon Joy, Cornell, Fr., Wadsworth, Ohio

**Note:** 3x state champion for Wadsworth High.  
**Season/Career Record:** 22-1/22-1

**2025/Career NCAA Resume:** n/a  
**Regular-Season Notes:** Notched a big early-season win over No. 7 Casey Swiderski at the National Duals Invitational; CKLV Invite champ, earning a tech fall over ASU's previously-unbeaten Kaleb Larkin in the finals; started career on a 21-match win streak.

## 4. Caleb Tyus, SIU-Edwardsville, Sr., Bethalto, Ill.

**Note:** Redshirted 2024-25 season but did not compete.

**Season/Career Record:** 15-0/61-30  
**2025/Career NCAA Resume:** 1-2 at 2024 NCAAs; 1-2 at 2023 NCAAs.

**Regular-season Notes:** Defeated No. 10 Ethan Stiles, 10-4, at Clarion Open on Nov. 2; took down No. 7 Casey Swiderski, 8-1, at Cougar Clash on Dec. 7.

## 5. Collin Gaj, Virginia Tech, Fr., Quakertown, Pa.

**Note:** 2x PA state champion, winning titles as a

sophomore (2023) and senior (2025).

**Season/Career Record:** 17-8/17-8

**2025/Career NCAA Resume:** n/a

**Regular-Season Notes:** Started season 0-4 while bouncing between 149 and 157 at National Duals Invitational; placed 7th at CKLV Invite; Midlands champion. Avenged early-season loss by defeating No. 2 Koy Buesgens, 6-0, on Jan. 30.

## 6. Aden Valencia, Stanford, Fr., Morgan Hill, Calif.

**Note:** Placed 3rd at 2025 US Open in men's free-style at 65 kg, twice defeating eventual Senior World bronze medalist Real Woods.

**Season/Career Record:** 12-6/12-6

**2025/Career NCAA Resume:** n/a

**Regular-Season Notes:** Opened season with a 13-8 loss to Utah Valley's David Evans; defeated No. 7 Casey Swiderski, 13-3, on Nov. 7; split matches this season with No. 5 Collin Gaj and with No. 9 Jacob Frost.

## 7. Casey Swiderski, Oklahoma State, Jr., Dundee, Mich.

**Note:** Transfer from Iowa State.

**Season/Career Record:** 10-5/41-22

**2025/Career NCAA Resume:** 7th in 2024; R12 in 2023.

**Regular-Season Notes:** Began season 0-4 after dropping three bouts at National Duals Invitational to No. 2 Koy Buesgens, No. 3 Jaxon Joy, and Iowa's Ryder Block; has since rebounded with a six-match winning streak dating back to Dec. 14; defeated No. 8 Seth Mendoza and No. 9 Jacob Frost, his former teammate and roommate at ISU.

## 8. Seth Mendoza, Missouri, Fr., Mokena, Ill.

**Note:** Remains to be seen whether Mendoza or Josh Edmond will compete for the Tigers this postseason.

**Season/Career Record:** 15-5/15-5

**2025/Career NCAA Resume:** n/a

**Regular-Season Notes:** Cyclone Open champion; lost twice to No. 7 Casey Swiderski, including at Cougar Clash; medically forfeited to teammate Josh Edmond at Soldier Salute.

## 9. Jacob Frost, Iowa State, Jr., Metairie, La.

**Note:** Bumped up from 141 pounds last season.

**Season/Career Record:** 13-5/41-14

**2025/Career NCAA Resume:** 7th in 2025.

**Regular-Season Notes:** Fell to No. 8 Seth Mendoza, 8-2, on Feb. 22; placed 4th at CKLV Invite after medically forfeiting to Kaleb Larkin for 3rd; defeated No. 10 Ethan Stiles, 4-1 SV on Dec. 21.

## 10. Ethan Stiles, Ohio State, So., Chicago, Ill.

**Note:** Transferred from Oregon State.

**Season/Career Record:** 12-4/31-12

**2025/Career NCAA Resume:** 6th in 2025.

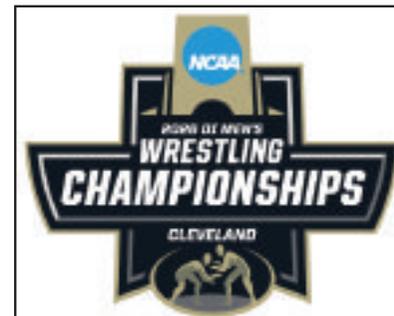
**Regular-Season Notes:** Lost to No. 3 Jaxon Joy and No. 4 Caleb Tyus at Clarion Open on Nov. 2; defeated No. 2 Koy Buesgens, 4-3, in dual meet on Dec. 12.

### Others to Watch

- Penn sophomore **Cross Wasilewski** has followed up a stellar freshman campaign with a 23-2 mark in his second year, with his only losses coming to No. 3 Jaxon Joy and No. 11 **Carter Young**, a midseason transfer from Oklahoma State to Maryland. Wasilewski's most notable win was a 2-1 decision over No. 5 Collin Gaj at the Keystone Classic on Nov. 23 before his home crowd.

- **Lachlan McNeil**, who transferred from North Carolina to Michigan for his senior campaign, is seeking his fourth All-American honor after the Toronto native placed 4th in 2023, 6th in 2024 and 5th in 2025. McNeil is 13-5 for the Wolverines heading into the Big Ten Championships.

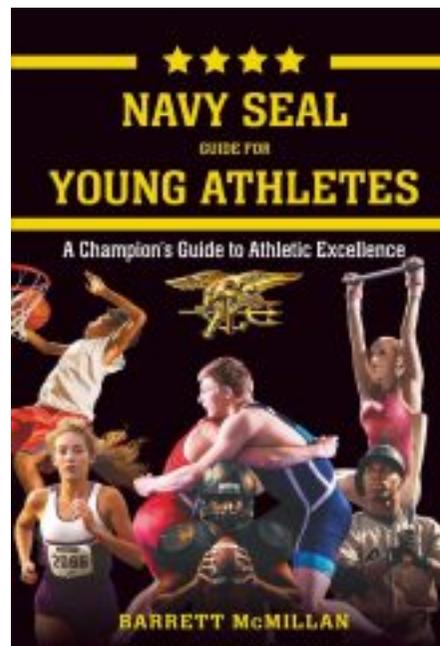
- In this same bracket at the 2025 NCAAs



## 149-Pound Preview

in Philadelphia, North Dakota State's Gavin Drexler reeled off four consecutive consolation victories to earn a spot on the podium as a No. 22 seed. Drexler has moved up to 157 pounds, but another Bison is making waves at 149 this season in Fargo, especially as of late. **Maxwell Petersen**, who sports a 12-5 record entering the Big 12 Championships, is riding a seven-match winning streak that includes five bonus-point wins. Petersen also has notched wins over **Caleb Rathjen** (UNI) and **Drew Roberts** (Minnesota) this season. ■

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### 2025 All-American Matches at 149 (seed in parenthesis)

1st - (2) Ridge Lovett (Nebraska) dec. (1) Caleb Henson (VT), 1-0

3rd - (3) Shayne Van Ness (PSU) maj. (13) Dylan D'Emilio (Ohio St.), 14-5

5th - (6) Lachlan McNeil (UNC) dec. (12) Ethan Stiles (Oregon St.), 8-4

7th - (11) Sammy Alvarez (Rider) dec. (22) Gavin Drexler (NDSU), 9-6 SV