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## The Husky Voice – Volume 1, Issue 3

St. Cloud State University Wrestling  
By Coach Steve Costanzo

### **Let's Start with No. 8**

The 2009-10 wrestling season is upon us and should be an exciting year of competition. The NCAA DII National Wrestling Championships will take place on March 12-12 at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

The NCAA DII rankings were released on October 21 and the Huskies are starting out the season as the No. 8 ranked team in the country with five SCSU wrestlers making the top eight in their respective weight classes. Jacob Roberts (8<sup>th</sup> at 149-pounds), John Sundgren (8<sup>th</sup> at 157-pounds), Tad Merritt (2<sup>nd</sup> at 165-pounds), Derek Skala (3<sup>rd</sup> at 184-pounds) and Lucas Munkelwitz (8<sup>th</sup> at 197-pounds).

Defending national champions, Nebraska-Omaha, are at the top of the rankings with Minnesota State, Newberry College, Nebraska-Kearney and Adams State rounding out the top five. Nebraska-Omaha has seven individuals ranked in the top eight followed by Minnesota State's five nationally ranked individuals.

The 2009 NCAA DII title was claimed by Nebraska-Omaha and head coach Mike Denney with 146.5 points. Nebraska-Omaha distanced second place Newberry College by 66 points. This was the sixth national title for the U.N.O. Mavericks.

Therefore, the question remains, "Who will be this year's team to beat?" Will it be the Mavericks of Nebraska-Omaha who return seven All-Americans or will there be a new team taking over reigns? Well, there are many talented teams in the mix this season and only time will tell. Of course, no matter how good or bad things look on paper, the national title hopes will depend on teams staying healthy and eligible.

### **Huskies Kick Off at Northwestern Duals and Bison Open**

The St. Cloud State wrestling team opened its team with a trip to the Northwestern Duals in Evanston, Ill. on Nov. 14. The Huskies collected a victory over North Central College and lost close matches against DI opponents Northwestern and Eastern Michigan.

On the day, newcomer Jacob Kahnke was a big winner for the Huskies with three victories at heavyweight included a 5-4 win over Northwestern's Ben Kuhar. Returning All-American Tad Merritt, a sophomore from Canby, also charted three wins on the day. He scored a 10-4 win over NU's Kyle Bertin and also had a pinfall against Eastern Michigan's Lester France and a major win over North Central's Ron Uccardi.

#### **• Northwestern 17, St. Cloud State 12**

285: Jacob Kahnke (SCSU) dec. Ben Kuhar (NU), 5-4 (SCSU 3, NU 0)  
125: Robert Joyce (NU) dec. Trent Herold (SCSU), 4-3 (SCSU 3, NU 3)  
133: Eric Metzler (NU) dec. Shane McQuade (SCSU), 4-0 (NU 6, SCSU 3)  
141: Double forfeit  
149: Andrew Nadhir (NU) MD Alex Kontz (SCSU), 11-3 (NU 10, SCSU 3)  
157: Dominic Marella (NU) MD John Sundgren (SCSU), 11-3 (NU 14, SCSU 3)  
165: Tad Merritt (SCSU) dec. Kyle Bertin (NU), 10-4 (NU 14, SCSU 6)  
174: Shamus O'Grady (SCSU) dec. Frank Battaglia (NU), 10-3 (NU 14, SCSU 9)  
184: Derek Skala (SCSU) dec. Marcus Shrewsbury (NU), 3-2 (NU 14, SCSU 12)  
197: John Schoen (NU) dec. Luke Munkelwitz (SCSU), 3-2 (NU 17, SCSU 12)

#### **• Eastern Michigan 25, St. Cloud State 24**

HWT: Jacob Kahnke (SCSU) Dec. David Wade (EMU), 3-2 (3-0 SCSU)  
125: Chris Jenkins (EMU) FALL Trent Herold, 1:03. (6-3 EMU)  
133: Shane McQuade (SCSU) FALL Andrew Novak (EMU), 4:40 (9-6 SCSU)

141: Corey Phillips (EMU) Forfeit (12-9 EMU)  
 149: J.J. Johnson (EMU) Fall Jacob Roberts (SCSU) 1:44 (18-9 EMU)  
 157: Aaron Sulzer (EMU) Maj. Dec. John Sundgren (SCSU) 11-3 (22-9 EMU)  
 165: Tad Merritt (SCSU) Fall Lester France (EMU), 4:13 (22-15 EMU)  
 174: Justin Brandell (EMU) Dec. Shamus O'Grady (SCSU), 11-5 (25-15 EMU)  
 184: Derek Skala (SCSU) Dec. Nick Hendrick (EMU), 5-4 (25-18 EMU)  
 197: Lucas Munkelwitz (SCSU) Fall Josh Lewis (EMU), 1:13 (25-24 EMU)

### **St. Cloud State 20, North Central 19**

HWT: Jacob Kahnke (SCSU) Fall Rodney Knowlton (NC), 3:46 (SCSU 6, NC 0)  
 125: Joe Norton (NC) Dec. Trent Herold (SCSU), 5-3 (SCSU 6, NC 3)  
 133: Nathan Fitzenreider (NC) Maj. Dec. Shane McQuade (SCSU), 9-1 (NC 7, SCSU 6)  
 141: Andrew Zobac (NC) win by forfeit (NC 13, SCSU 6)  
 149: Jacob Roberts (SCSU) Dec. Tim Gingerich (NC), 6-4, (NC 13, SCSU 9)  
 157: Joe Andersen (SCSU) Dec. Jacob Sandborn (NC) 7-3, (NC 13, SCSU 12)  
 165: Tad Merritt (SCSU) Tech. Fall Ron Uccardi (NC), 20-5 (SCSU 17, NC 13)  
 174: Cowan Brown (NC) Dec. Shamus O'Grady (SCSU), 10-7 (SCSU 17, NC 16)  
 184: Gabe Youel (NC) Dec. Derek Skala (SCSU), 5-2 (NC 19, SCSU 17)  
 197: Lucas Munkelwitz (SCSU) Dec. Vinnie Sapienza (NC), 5-1 (SCSU 20, NC 19)

Twelve additional Huskies participated at the Bison Open, Saturday, November 14 on the campus of North Dakota State University. The Huskies placed seven wrestlers in the top six of their respective weight classes. Leading SCSU was Mic Berg (Fr, 184, Inver Grove Heights, MN). Berg placed third at 184 lbs. revenging a loss previously in the tournament to Kaleb Young, University of Minnesota, by decision 12-10.

Other notable place winners include: Chris Brassell, 5<sup>th</sup> at 285, Michael Cullen, 4<sup>th</sup> at 157, Adam Helgeson, 6<sup>th</sup> at 133, Josh Joriman, 5<sup>th</sup> at 157, Chad Schultz, 6<sup>th</sup> at 141, and Zach Stewart, 5<sup>th</sup> at 125.

### **Wrestler of the Week**

St. Cloud State University sophomore Tad Merritt (Canby/H.S.) has been selected as the Northern Sun Intercollegiate wrestler of the week for Nov. 16.

Merritt earned the league honor by posting a 3-0 record in action at the Northwestern Duals on Nov. 14, in Evanston, Ill.

Merritt opened the day with a 10-4 win over NCAA Division I opponent Kyle Bertin of Northwestern. He continued his success against NCAA Division I competition with a pin at 4:13 against Eastern Michigan's Lester France. To end the day, Merritt charted a technical fall over Ronald Uccardi of North Central College (Ill.) by a 20-5 tally.

### **Cobber Up**

The St. Cloud State University wrestling team enjoyed much success at the 2009 Cobber Open, which was held at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn. on Nov. 21. In total, the Huskies earned five titles at the Cobber Open and placed seventeen wrestlers overall.

### **125-Pounds**

At 125-pounds, SCSU was led by Trent Herold, who posted a 4-1 record. He claimed third place at the Open with a 5-4 win over Josh Kelly of Concordia. Zach Stewart also placed 5th with a record of 3-2.

### **133-Pounds**

At 133-pounds, Shane McQuade led the Huskies with a 3-1 record that placed him in the championship match. He finished in second place after falling to Evan Forde of MSU Moorhead in the title match by a 5-3 decision. Teammate Adam Helgeson placed fifth in the weight bracket with a 3-2 record.

**149-Pounds**

Jake Tabbert was the lead Husky in a weight division dominated by SCSU. Tabbert was 3-0 in the tournament and claimed top honors with a 1-0 decision over teammate Alex Kontz in the title bout. Kontz finished the day with a 3-1 record. SCSU's Jacob Roberts placed third in the weight bracket with a 3-1 record. In the match for third place, Roberts gained a 12-2 win over Nick Dahl of Ridgewater C.C.

**157-Pounds**

Junior John Sundgren brought home another Open title with a top finish at 157-pounds. He charted a perfect 4-0 record that include three pins. In the championship bout, Sundgren pinned Tallen Wald of MSU Moorhead. The Huskies' Joe Anderson placed third in the bracket with a 5-1 record, which included a 4-2 win over Kevin Fynboh of Concordia. SCSU's Josh Joriman placed fifth with a 3-2 record.

**165-Pounds**

Sophomore Tad Merritt earned top honors at the Cobber Open with a 4-0 sweep at 165-pounds. Merritt scored three pins and a major decision on the way to the title. In the championship match, Merritt gained the top spot with a 6:30 pin against Lane Lunde of Concordia.

**184-Pounds**

At 184-pounds, Derek Skala placed second with a 3-1 record. He gained a tech fall and a major decision in the Open, before losing by a 6-0 match to Phil Moenkedick of Concordia. Teammate Mic Berg placed fourth in the weight bracket with a 2-2 record.

**197-Pounds**

The Huskies' sophomore Lucas Munkelwitz won first place honors at 197-pounds with a 4-0 record. In the title match, Munkelwitz won by an 8-2 margin over Dusty Vliem over Mary. Teammate Josh Antonneau placed fifth in the weight with a 4-2 record on the day.

**285-Pounds**

SCSU's Jake Kahnke earned a first place finish at the 285-pound division with a perfect 4-0 record. In the championship match, Kahnke gained a 5-1 win over Moorhead's Tim Johnson. Teammate Chris Brassell placed third in the weight class with a 3-1 record.

**Huskies Close Up: Head Assistant Coach, Matt Lowers**

Matt Lowers enters his third season as an assistant coach for the Huskies. Lowers serves as the head assistant wrestling coach and also acts as the team's Academic Coordinator. In his first 2 seasons, Lowers has helped coach 15 National Qualifiers, 6 All-Americans and 9 Academic All-Americans.

In his second season, Coach Lowers helped guide the Huskies to an 8-5 dual meet record. The 2008-2009 Husky wrestling team set 4 program records. The Husky grapplers won an astounding 500 individual matches on the season with 111 of them coming by fall.

The post-season was equally impressive for the SCSU Wrestlers as they set team records for the most points scored in the regional tournament with 112. The Huskies qualified 8 out of 10 wrestlers to the NCAA Division II National Tournament in the process of setting that record. The 8th Place finish at the NCAA's was the highest finish for a SCSU Wrestling team since 1983. The 44 team points scored was another record for the Huskies. Of the 8 NCAA Qualifiers 3 earned All-American honors. Tad Merritt (165) and Brad Padgett (184) led the way with 3rd place finishes while Derek Skala also earned All-American honors placing 7th at 174 pounds.

In his first season, Lowers helped lead the Huskies to a 13-2 mark. This was the most wins produced by the Huskies in a season since 1972-73. The Huskies also advanced seven wrestlers to the NCCA Division II Championships and they saw three of those grapplers earn All-American status (Brad Padgett, Nick Wilkes and John Sundgren). At the NCAA Division II Championships, SCSU placed 12th as a team and it was ranked among the nation's top 10 squads in the Division II polls in 2007-08.

"He (Lowers) has been a driving force regarding the revival this program has had over the last two years," said head coach Steve Costanzo. "I honestly believe that we would not be where we are at if it wasn't for Matt."

### **10 Things You Need to Know About St. Cloud State Wrestling**

1. The Huskies will return six national qualifiers and three NCAA Division II All-Americans in 2009-10. This groups includes two-time NCAA qualifier junior Gabe Suarez at 141-pounds, NCAA qualifier Jacob Roberts at 149-pounds, two-time qualifier and All-American junior John Sundgren at 157-pounds, All-American sophomore Tad Merritt at 165-pounds, two-time NCAA qualifier and All-American junior Derek Skala at 174/184-pounds and sophomore NCAA qualifier Lucas Munkelwitz at 197-pounds.

2. St. Cloud State is 26-16 over the last three years (2006-09) in dual meets. Between the years of 2002-06 the Huskies were 2-36 in dual meet action.

3. SCSU finished 8th in the nation at the 2009 NCAA Division II championships. This marked SCSU's best finish at the NCAA championships since 1986.

4. Tad Merritt, who placed third in the nation at 165-pounds in 2009, is an aviation major at SCSU and a licensed pilot. In addition, Alex Kontz is a licensed pilot as well. Both student-athletes are from Canby, Minn.

5. Redshirt freshman Shamus O'Grady, who will wrestle at 174-pounds this winter for the Huskies, is also a member of the St. Cloud State men's cross country team.



6. SCSU wrestling legends Dave and Jim Hazewinkel were on the USA Olympic wrestling teams in 1968 and 1972. Jim Hazewinkel won NAIA national titles for the Huskies in 1963, 1964, 1965 and 1967. They are now the head coaches at the Marion Military Institute in Marion, Alabama.

7. Other individuals who have won NAIA or NCAA national titles for the Huskies include Dick Anderson (1958), Monte Sinner (1961), Grant Nelson (1963), Gary Smith (1963 and 1964), Mike Rybak (1967) and Gene Hanemann (1995).

8. Redshirt freshman Jacob Kahnke (285-pounds) is a two-time Minnesota state high school champion, and a transfer from Division I Old Dominion.

9. The 39th annual Husky Open wrestling tournament is scheduled to be held on Dec. 12, at St. Cloud State's Halenbeck Hall. This annual tournament features some of the nation's top collegiate wrestlers.

10. Former professional wrestlers Lars Anderson (Larry Heimemi) and Buddy Wolf (Les Wolff) both wrestled at St. Cloud State during the 1960s.

### **Support Husky Wrestling**

St. Cloud State University has a long and proud tradition of wrestling dating back to the 1950's. Over 60 All-Americans have competed at St. Cloud State including 11 national champions and 3 Olympic team members.

The 2009-10 season will bring a variety a new faces and changes to the program. In addition to an abundance of returning talent, the coaching staff has diligently worked hard to bring in a successful recruiting class. Over ten new student-athletes have joined the Husky Wrestling program this fall!

To continue our rich tradition, Husky wrestling is requesting your help. Currently, the SCSU wrestling program is in the process of raising money for the 2009-10 wrestling season. Funds raised will go directly to supplement the wrestling operational budget, allowing our program to reach new heights.

If you are interested in supporting Husky wrestling and becoming a member of the Takedown Wrestling Club, please check-out the following link:

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/athletics/support/SCSUTakedownClub-SupportHuskyWrestling.asp>

**Introducing the 2009-10 St. Cloud State University Wrestlers**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>High School (Previous School)</u>
Mitchell Altermatt	RsSo	165	Wabasso, MN	Wabasso/South Dakota State
Joe Andersen	RsSo	157	Bemidji, MN	Bemidji
Josh Antonneau	So	197	Heartland, WI	Arrowhead
Mic Berg	Fr	184	Inver Grove, MN	Simley
Chris Brassell	Fr	285	Park Ridge, IL	Maine South
Josh Conrath	RsFr	197	Waseca, MN	Waseca
Michael Cullen	RsFr	157	Coon Rapids, MN	Coon Rapids/UW La Crosse
Adam Helgeson	RsSo	133	Sauk Centre, MN	Sauk Centre
Trent Herold	Fr	125	East Bethel, MN	St. Francis
Jacob Horn	Fr	149	St. Michael, MN	St. Michael-Albertville
Joshua Joriman	RsFr	157	Lino Lakes, MN	Centennial
Jacob Kahnke	RsFr	285	Shakopee, MN	Prior Lake/Old Dominion U.
Alex Kubatz	RsFr	149	Canby, MN	Canby
Chad Kubasch	RsJr	149	New Germany, MN	Watertown-Mayer
Brian Litch	RsSo	141	Plymouth, MN	Wayzata/Univ. Nebraska
Shane McQuade	Fr	133	Appleton, WI	Appleton West
Tad Merritt	RsSo	165	Canby, MN	Canby
Adam Minette	RsSr	157	New Prague, MN	New Prague
Lucas Munkelwitz	RsSo	197	Forest Lake, MN	Forest Lake
Shamus O'Grady	RsFr	174	Coon Rapids, MN	Coon Rapids
Mathew Piersak	RsFr	157	Shoreview, MN	Mounds View
Mac Rivard	Fr	149	Cedar, MN	St. Francis
Jacob Roberts	RsSr	149	Jordan, MN	Scott West/Augsburg College
Erik Rogness	RsJr	197	Buffalo, MN	Buffalo
Ted Saatzer	RsSr	197	Mound, MN	Mound-Westonka/Ridgewater
Kurt Salmen	So	165	Dassel, MN	Dassel-Cokato/Ridgewater
Chad Schultz	RsFr	141	Mauston, WI	Mauston
Derek Skala	RsJr	184	Owatonna, MN	Owatonna
Zach Stewart	Fr	125	Green Bay, WI	Ashwaubenon
Gabriel Suarez	RsJr	141	Las Vegas, NV	Cimarron-Memorial
John Sundgren	RsJr	157	Blaine, MN	Blaine
Jake Tabbert	RsSo	149	Inver Grove, MN	Simley

**Upcoming Events – December**

December 5 @ UW La Crosse Duals – 9 am

December 5 @ Dragon Open – 9 am

December 12 Husky Open (Parents Day) – 9 am

Alumni/Booster Luncheon (Hal Hall – Fieldhouse) - Noon

Parents Social – Best Western Kelly Inn – 7:30 pm – 10 pm

December 13 Team Holiday Party – 5 pm, TBA

December 29-30 @ Midlands Championships – 9 am



**NO ONE LEFT BEHIND**