

# 2023 NCAA Wrestling Championship

Saturday, March 23, 2024

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

T-Mobile Center

## Levi Haines

### Finals Media Conference



LEVI HAINES: That was fun.

**Q. You said it was fun, but there wasn't a lot of action, and we've seen a lot of action come from you this year outside of a couple of matches. How did you maintain your composure and get to your offense? And were you surprised he took neutral in that third period?**

LEVI HAINES: No, I'm not really surprised he took neutral. Done an exceptional job in this tournament riding tough on top. That goes a long way. I just knew if I stayed on him, he's kind of an explosive guy off the bat. If I just stayed on him the entire time, eventually the score would open up. I have really good shots, when I get to a leg I'm going to finish.

**Q. Looks like you don't ever lose your focus. You keep the same emotion. Without giving up your game plan, what is your thought process right there?**

LEVI HAINES: Just going back to my practice habits, really. So just kind of falling back on that. I don't think it's necessarily staying focused or anything like that. Obviously you have to be present in the match, but it's real easy to do when your practice habits are good. Just staying in that good position like I practiced all year long.

**Q. Last year you lost to O'Connor in the same stage. Now this year you're on top of the podium. What's that mean to you going forward in your collegiate career?**

LEVI HAINES: It doesn't really mean too much different to me. Obviously everybody wants to win. So losing last year may have been one of the best things that ever happened to me.

In the moment it wasn't like that, but I think I'm just more proud of this year because I just went out and competed free. I wasn't worried about losing. That just means a lot more to me than winning or losing.

**Q. I think (indiscernible) the team for Penn State,**

**probably a couple more titles for you guys. What's the three days been like for you (indiscernible)?**

LEVI HAINES: It's been a lot of fun. I see the work these guys put in all year long, and they helped get me to this point. I'm just blessed I have teammates like I do and amazing coaches that I do. So I feel very blessed to have these opportunities.

**Q. I'm not sure you used the word "dynasty," but people look at Penn State as a dynasty. You're still relatively young. People wonder when this could end. You're a part of this future. Tell me, could it ever end?**

LEVI HAINES: There could always be an end to everything. But I like to believe as long as Coach Cael is there it's probably going to keep going on.

**Q. You talked about losing in the Finals last year and the pressure and worrying about things like that. What did you take from taking the atmosphere in at last year's Finals that you took into your mindset for this year?**

LEVI HAINES: I don't really think the atmosphere had much to do with it. So just wrestling big stages all the time is -- like we wrestle at Penn State, we wrestle in front of sold-out crowds all the time. Very similar to here that we have at home, dual meets, kind of a blessing, we practice all year long like that. I don't really necessarily think about the atmosphere so much.

**Q. Can you just talk about your family and the people behind the scenes who have really helped you throughout this journey.**

LEVI HAINES: My family is the best. I have the best support system. Just the best. I don't know what really else to say about it. I hope they know how thankful I am that they did all this to help me get here, and I'm just super appreciative to have them here. I know it's kind of a long travel and stuff. Means the world to me that they could be here to watch.

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