

2025 NCAA Wrestling Championship

Friday, March 21, 2025

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Wells Fargo Center

Dean Hamiti

Semifinals Media Conference

174 Lbs

THE MODERATOR: Welcome Dean Hamiti of Oklahoma State with a win tonight 4-2. Dean?

DEAN HAMITI: Obviously I'm excited. I've worked hard. I'm grateful for the opportunity. Go get it tomorrow.

Q. Dean, what did you feel like was working for you? Seemed like you were in on a couple others that you could have scored even more.

DEAN HAMITI: Yeah, he's a really tough guy. He goes out there and competes every single match. He's hard to score on. He's strong in every position. Former national champ.

But I think baseline defense, being a little smarter on my defense, not trying to roll around too much and get into positions that I can get scored on.

Q. With David Taylor coming from the Penn State program and having a close relationship with Levi Haines prior to this year, did he bring you any scouting that you think other wrestlers didn't have against him this season that led you to have more success?

DEAN HAMITI: No, I don't think so. We focused on what I had to do personally and what I had to do to win that match. I'm more worried about what I got to do than what my opponent is going to do to me.

Q. Dean, you were talking about defense. How important is that for you tomorrow especially given how the Big 12 ended?

DEAN HAMITI: It's been a big emphasis for the past two weeks, on what to improve. So going out there and doing what I worked on.

Q. Obviously being in the finals of the national tournament is something you have been looking



forward to and worked hard for. Now that you have this opportunity and you know the journey that got you here, what do you think is the thing that will bring you to the conclusion that you want tomorrow?

DEAN HAMITI: Staying focused, you know, and remembering to enjoy this tournament. There is nothing like this tournament. Coach Dave said the other day, there is nothing like the national tournament, and he's been around the whole world. So it's about being grateful for the opportunity and really getting to enjoy this last tournament of mine.

Q. Dean, you have Keegan O'Toole in the finals tomorrow. What is your history with that opponent? What are your expectations?

DEAN HAMITI: Couple weeks ago I lost in the Big 12 championship, but getting to wrestle him again was definitely a goal of mine. I want that one back. And I expect it to be a war, and hopefully it's enjoyable for you guys to watch, too. But I'm expecting a fun match tomorrow.

Q. Dean, maybe you've done the phone celebration before?

DEAN HAMITI: Yeah.

Q. What's the meaning of that?

DEAN HAMITI: I don't know, it's kind of like a thing that I did one dual and everybody was like, When are you going to do the phone again? And I thought it was a perfect place to do it.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations, Dean.

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