

2025 NCAA Wrestling Championship

Saturday, March 22, 2025
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA
Wells Fargo Center

Dean Hamiti

Finals Media Conference

174 pounds

Dean Hamiti (Oklahoma State) d. Keegan O'Toole
(Missouri), 4-1 (OT)

DEAN HAMITI: I'm excited. I think it's still hitting me a little bit. The adrenaline is still pumping in my veins. I'm grateful. I really enjoyed this tournament. Enjoyed the year. Nothing but grateful.

Q. Can you walk me through that scramble at the end there?

DEAN HAMITI: It was kind of just instinct. I didn't really think about anything in there. Just I go in those positions every day in practice with Coach Dave or Coach Caldwell. I'm comfortable in there. It was all instinct for me.

Q. It was a little unclear there whether you had gotten it. Obviously they reviewed. Did you know when you had gotten to the point of having the takedown or were you a little unsure even?

DEAN HAMITI: No, I was sure. I had full cross-face. I was behind him, ankle hooked, leg in at one point. I had control. I was confident I got it. But I was prepared to go another period or two.

Q. How much did having a coach like David Taylor in the room help transcend you into a national championship athlete past the success you had in prior years?

DEAN HAMITI: I think first off it's just mindset-wise, we're prepared for anything. We're ready to go and score points whenever I have to. From a training aspect, just really keying in on areas I need to get better in and it leads to stuff like this. Small moments lead to big moments. Today was a big moment.

Q. Since going down to Stillwater, I'm curious about your thoughts of the legacy of Cowboy wrestling from



all the Olympic champions and the tons and tons of national champions -- the school has had the most team titles ever in any sport -- to be one of the champions to come from that kind of legacy of excellence. What's it feel like for somebody who just came became part of the program and is helping carry the banner forward?

DEAN HAMITI: The reason I went to Oklahoma State is I know they like to win championships and they're very historic, very historic program. I'm honored to be a part of it.

I'm grateful for all my teammates, my coaches. I'm really just honored to be a part of this great program.

Q. When you're on that raised stage and your family's over there, can you feel them? Can you feel their energy?

DEAN HAMITI: When the overtime started, I looked up. I saw my dad looking right at me. Gives you a little breath of fresh air. We're asked why we do it every day. Of course we love it. But when the going gets tough you want to be a role model for your brothers and your family. So it gave me a little bit of a second wind.

Q. We talked about how difficult it was to score on Levi. And obviously scoring was very difficult in this one on both sides. What enabled you to be the one that came out on top?

DEAN HAMITI: Being patient. I think that's also a big switch in my wrestling. Last year, if I wasn't scoring in the first second period, I would go crazy and end up getting taken down. Really picking and choosing and being patient with my attacks and reattacks. It got me the win.

Q. In that first period Keegan had your leg and it was the same situation at the end of Big 12. How much did you work on that in the past two weeks?

DEAN HAMITI: I've had a tendency for the past three years to get my leg stuck up there and be hobbling around on one foot. I'm pretty comfortable there and I'm used to



being in that position in practice and competition. I was comfortable.

Q. You obviously have a great wrestling legacy. A lot of success at Wisconsin, finishing up at Oklahoma State. How do you sum your career now at the top of the podium considering your success, finally getting to the top here?

DEAN HAMITI: It's a testament to my hard work. I've lived the right lifestyle. I've put in the countless minutes in practice and competitions. I'm grateful for my career and I wouldn't change a single thing.

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