

# 2025 NCAA Wrestling Championship

Friday, March 21, 2025

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Wells Fargo Center

## Joey Blaze

Semifinals Media Conference

157 Lbs

THE MODERATOR: We welcome Joey Blaze of Purdue. A 4-2 victory tonight. Joey?

JOEY BLAZE: I don't really have much other than I want to thank my coaches over there. I definitely wouldn't be here without them. They've done so much for me. They've built me up not just in the wrestling room but in character and as a person you can rely on and trust in. So I want to thank them.

I want to thank my parents. I mean, they're the greatest. I want to thank Scotty Burnett, my high school coach. I definitely wouldn't be here without him. He's the reason that I'm wrestling in college and I have a dream to wrestle.

So I want to thank those people and tell them I love them.

**Q. Joey, it seems to me like as each round comes by you, you're stepping up even more. It seems like you're more comfortable in what's going on. Talk about how this tournament is going and why it looks that way to everybody.**

JOEY BLAZE: Because I think I am and have been gaining confidence. I have kind of accepted the last couple weeks being grateful for everything I get. Coach talks about it a lot. The fun part is competing, so not to put a lot of pressure on yourself. I think last year I put a lot of pressure because I had a lot of expectations on myself, but lately I've been free as a bird and just having fun, and I'm just grateful to be here.

I'm just embracing every moment.

**Q. Do you feel like you're overlooked?**

JOEY BLAZE: You know, I don't know. Sure. I'm just here to wrestle and have fun. That's my life is wrestling and having fun. So I honestly don't really care about the opinion of people that aren't with me every day and



working with me. That's it.

**Q. Talk about Purdue wrestling. You're in the Big Ten. You guys wrestle a tough schedule. You have good kids up and down the lineup, but you get to the tournament and people say, hey, look at Purdue. Talk about that.**

JOEY BLAZE: Purdue wrestling is a family. Honestly, everybody on my team is my brother and my -- I'm young. So I'm 19, and I make dumb mistakes all the time. I let my emotions get the better of me. But I have great teammates that -- they love on me every chance I get. If I'm complaining, they're telling me to pick my head up and start working.

That's the kind of program that we are at Purdue. It's get to work. We want to be the best, and we work to be the best. And it's trusting in the process and moving forward.

I hope that this tournament, my teammates can look at it and realize that they can be here and doing the same thing that I'm doing.

**Q. You mentioned a free bird mentality. As the 8 seed, you have to have that to get to the final. Talk about that.**

JOEY BLAZE: Yeah, you know, I think I was -- I don't look too much at it, but I think I was ranked fourth or fifth on the rankings and stuff. So when I saw the 8 seed, you know, it was just another reason to wrestle hard and have fun.

That's all I'm out here to do. I don't care about numbers. I don't care about people's opinion. I'm just here to have fun.

**Q. Joey, you have Antrell Taylor in the NCAA finals. What's your history with that opponent, and what are your expectations?**

JOEY BLAZE: I'm 1-2 with Antrell. He beat me in the quarters in Big Tens, and I got him back for 3rd and 4th. So I'm excited to try to even it up and thankful I have an opponent like that who is going to come at me and let there



be fireworks.

I want it to be exciting. Winning and losing is something, but having memorable matches is another thing. I just hope we bring some fireworks, and it will be fun.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Joey.

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