

2025 NCAA Wrestling Championship

Friday, March 21, 2025

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Wells Fargo Center

Mitchell Mesenbrink

Semifinals Media Conference



165 Lbs

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Mitchell Mesenbrink of Penn State, with a 13-2 win tonight. Mitchell?

MITCHELL MESENBRINK: I don't know, go ahead. They'll come with your questions, if you have any.

Q. Mitchell, congratulations. I think you have a familiar -- you're going to see a familiar face in the final. How would you assess how you've wrestled in the tournament thus so far? How are you feeling? All of your teammates are now All-Americans. You're the first team since Minnesota, all of you guys are going to be All-Americans. Is that special for you guys?

MITCHELL MESENBRINK: Yeah, that's cool. I was just going to speak to how great the people are in our room and our coaches and the men and women surrounding our program, and it doesn't matter who is in front of us, it's constantly getting better.

I know I said that last year, and I know I said that almost every time someone has asked me a question this year, it's just that that's the main goal. Sometimes it's hard because you want to win, right?

You want to do well. You want your efforts to add up to something, to mean something. I'm excited, and every opportunity is awesome. So far in my whole life this is the stuff I've lived for. Obviously I want to be a dad one day and be a husband and whatnot, and that's probably what I'm going to live for soon, but for now this is what I really enjoy doing.

Q. You're wearing the Win Mitchell Win shirt. Is there any meaning behind that? What fuels you?

MITCHELL MESENBRINK: Well, I mean, decades of people smashing in the college scene, college wrestling scene, and in the world scene. Guys that can through our room and keep bringing it and they're still there, you know?

I think it's funny because it's ironic that it says Win, but I'm talking about the process of getting better. There was this thing that I heard before this and it was about how joy is a verb and you're finding enjoyment through the process of things to reach an end goal. And that's really, you know, the end goal. There is only one end goal that's promised, and that's death. So it's kinda just go out there and bring it.

That's what I'm thinking, right? If I go out there and I win, but I don't bring it, I would rather bring it and lose, which sounds insane, but that's -- it's funny, my coaches and my dad, who was my coach, I cannot go up to him and be like, man, I feel like I didn't go. But it's funny, I will black out in the matches and go back and look and see the 25 shots that I tried to fire off.

It's funny, but I enjoy the process more than winning. But it's a subtle reminder on the sides here and stuff like that.

Q. You've obviously faced Mike Caliendo numerous times. You talk about the chess match of wrestling and the strategy behind that. Along those lines, do you expect him to change up his strategy in any way to change the result against you tomorrow night?

MITCHELL MESENBRINK: I mean, hopefully he would try. I feel like every time you step out to someone, if you're wrestling them for the first time or you're not, your efforts will be there. And he's a guy that will.

You would hope on this level of wrestling that every time you get someone's best effort, right? So that's fun. That makes it a battle of the wills. And I know Carter -- I heard Carter saying it's a lot on the line, not win or lose, but who toes the line. It's like your coach or my coach and all that stuff, so that's fun.

He said this as well, the target on the back. That has been so far removed, the target on the back from my wrestling and from my life. I want to go get people. It doesn't matter if I'm number one or last, it's going to be the same effort every single time.

Q. The kid from Oklahoma State, he was a defensive

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wrestler. I think you beat him 5-0. Did you feel like you got something out of that, because you had to work for that win?

MITCHELL MESENBRINK: Yeah, you always gotta bring it and look for points. I believe that I was doing that every single second. It's funny because you start getting people's expectations, like what they're going to see, and it's interesting. I wonder if that sways stalling or not. If it's like, oh this is what this guy does every single time. He goes up there and he shoots, so is it like, is the guy really stalling that much? I don't know. But I enjoy battles, and me and him have been able to battle many times, and I like that.

Q. Congrats on the win. Obviously the President is going to be in attendance tomorrow. What do you think it means for the sport of wrestling to have the President of the United States being on college wrestling's biggest stage? Were you able to meet him when he visited Penn State a few months ago?

MITCHELL MESENBRINK: No I was in Albania at the World Championships. But if you put politics aside, no matter if you're conservative or liberal or whatever, to have the President of the United States be at something that we want to get people to watch, right? We want people to watch wrestling. We want people to be able to funnel not just money but people's time, and their attention, and that is money.

I think that's cool. I think if it was a conservative or liberal it would be really, really cool. Democrat or Republican, whoever it is, it's the President of the United States, the leader of the free world at our wrestling event. That's really cool when you think about it that way.

THE MODERATOR: Mitchell, thank you. Congratulations.

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