

2026 NCAA Wrestling Championship

Friday, March 20, 2026

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Rocket Arena

Oklahoma State

Jax Forrest

Semifinals Media Conference



Jax Forrest (Oklahoma State) d. Aaron Seidel (Virginia Tech), 14-3

THE MODERATOR: Good evening, everyone. Welcome to the 2026 NCAA Division I wrestling championships press conference. We're excited to be joined by Jax Forrest from Oklahoma State.

Jax, I was hoping you can reflect on the past couple days, the match tonight, and what it means to play in the championship tomorrow.

JAX FORREST: It's awesome. It's a dream come true. I came and watched the NAAs countless times with my dad and my family. Not only being able to wrestle here, not only doing it a lot earlier than what I expected, but just going out there with this awesome team, it's been a great last couple days. I'm excited for a really good tomorrow too.

Q. Jax, you talked earlier today about the mindset you learned at Bishop McCort and how you want to keep going out and scoring points. Did you really want a bonus point victory in this one after the 10-9 decision earlier?

JAX FORREST: Yeah, I definitely wanted to go out there and put on a show, put a statement out there. A lot of people thought it was going to be a really, really close match where he was going to beat me. I know I had to stay on the offense.

Got that first takedown relatively easy, and then from there it's just like, all right, I'm not going to sit back on my heels. He's so good offensively. I'm not going to let him attack me and take the shots to the face or whatever. Keep going out there, keep scoring points, finding my leg attacks, getting off bottom, just doing all the little things that I didn't do in that last match.

Q. Jax, you talked a little bit about just the event and the dream nature of this. You've been in a lot of big things. Does this feel different, or how does it feel compared to other major events you've been a part of?

JAX FORREST: It's definitely different. Just the NCAA, how many people know NCAA versus the U.S. Open versus state tournaments, even the World Championships. NCAA, that's like the pinnacle for U.S. wrestling.

It's a little different with that aspect obviously being focused on being with your college. But it's so awesome. I've watched this for so long. To be here, it's just surreal.

Q. Throughout this season and throughout the tournament, what has kept you grounded and focused and in a good mindset?

JAX FORREST: Just knowing that my coach is an Olympic champ. That keeps me really grounded. It helps me, not like I'm better than you. What do you know? What are you going to tell me? I've got Coach David. I've got Coach Jimmy who kicks my butt every day.

I have really good people who keep me humble when I don't want it. On the flip side, on days like today, Coach David told me before the match, hey, this could be hard. It could be a really tough match, but it doesn't have to be. You can blow it open. You can take him down multiple times. You can ride him high, get off bottom. You can have perfect balances with the criticism in beating me up versus lifting me up, telling me how good I am.

Q. That February meeting against Aaron Seidel, the 10-9 final, what lessons did you take from that match to use to your advantage tonight and make this one more decisive?

JAX FORREST: I knew he was going to come into the match like, oh, I was really close last time. I took him down three times. I can beat him. I know I can beat him. I use that to my advantage with an early takedown. All right, you're going to wrestle me like you're going to beat me. That's what I want.

I want you to wrestle me and come at me and make it hard. Let's get in scrambles and positions where it's not comfortable. That's what I want. He wrestled a good match, he wrestled a really good match in February, but I was able to learn a lot from that.

That's another thing that kept me grounded. Helped me in a way where I know I can win the ugly matches, down by six points, down by five points or whatever. Then I don't have to. I can go out and major him if I want.

Q. It just became official, Ben Davino will be your finals opponent. Can you talk about your history with that opponent and that match?

JAX FORREST: We're 2-2 in freestyle. I beat him four years ago. He beat me three years ago. I beat him at the Open this year. He's really hard to score on. He's really elusive. He's powerful. He's got really good offense. I'm expecting a hard match.

If I can go out there and put up points, that would be awesome. I'm expecting a scrap. I'm expecting seven minutes or more. He said after the semis match, he wants to put on a show. I want to put on a show. Let's put on a show for these people. Whoever's the best that day is national champ.

Q. Just talk about the difference between that, with Aaron you guys have wild scrambles, wild flurries, a lot of points going up. Now with Davino it's more of a really hard to score on guy. How difficult is it to go from one to the other?

JAX FORREST: It's just I wrestle with guys that are really hard to score on in the room. I wrestle guys that are hard to go on scramble like Sergio. I've got guys that I wrestle with every day that are like that.

It's just going back to the practice room and figuring out what are his tendencies, the little things, all of that chatter going into a match and let it loose.

This is my first year. This is his first year. I've got three more chances. I know we're going to win multiple titles down the road. This means a lot, but I know we've got a lot of years ahead of us.

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