

2026 NCAA Wrestling Championship

Friday, March 20, 2026

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Rocket Arena

Oklahoma State

Sergio Vega

Semifinals Media Conference



Sergio Vega (Oklahoma State) d. Brock Hardy (Nebraska), 5-3

THE MODERATOR: This is the 2026 NCAA Division I wrestling championships press conference. We're now joined by Sergio Vega from Oklahoma State.

Sergio, I was wondering if you could reflect on the past couple days, the match tonight, and competing tomorrow in the championship.

SERGIO VEGA: It's been awesome these past few days. This whole season honestly, it's just finding out how tough I am and the things that I'm capable of doing.

If you would have told me three months ago -- not even three months, maybe four -- that I would be in the national finals, I probably wouldn't believe you. I told myself that I believed I could do it, but I didn't really fully believe. These past few months, I've just been wrestling, and I really believe I can do it.

Q. Sergio, you're going against a guy a third time this season. Obviously you know how talented he is. How did you prepare for it? Did you do anything differently, or did you expect anything different from him?

SERGIO VEGA: I expected a war. He's an animal. I mean, we wrestle the same. I've always watched him wrestle, and he's just someone you're going to get in crazy scrambles, you're going to be in a lot of fun wrestling scrambles, whatever.

I knew it was going to be a fun match, and I expected him to be on his "A" game, just like I was. It was an honor to wrestle against him three times this season. I'm glad I was able to win.

Q. Sergio, can you talk a little bit about the youth movement you guys have going on, Jax in the finals,

you're in the finals. And how you guys are able to have such confidence in your wrestling while you have this open style and putting up a lot of points at the same time?

SERGIO VEGA: Yeah, just being free. I've got no pressure on me. These guys have been wrestling for a while. I barely got good. I'm just wrestling to go out there and have some fun. A lot of people back home, they know I was a little chubby kid. My brother was good. I always would say I was going to be better than him but never really believed it again.

Now all these things are full circle. I'm always just starting to believe it. Everything is coming to fruition, and I'm grateful to be where I am.

Q. Sergio, talk about the final moments of that match, takedown, reversal, you guys go back up, crazy scramble at the end. Just walk us through those moments and what was running through your head?

SERGIO VEGA: It was so much fun. It was so loud in that arena. It's what I've dreamed of since I was a little kid, being in these environments, and wrestling Brock, it was awesome to be down -- not down, but you've got to dig deep. I know I can dig deep, and I'm going to do it every single time.

I'm not going to go out there and lose knowing that I didn't do what I should have done out there. I'm going to go out there and scrap. I don't care how I look. I don't care that I'm skinny and stuff. I'm going to go out there and scrap. That's what I love to do.

Q. Just that carefree -- I don't want to call it carefree attitude, but your approach to every match, your approach to this tournament that you've expressed, how much does that help going in dealing with the pressure that would seemingly come with moments like this, a moment like tomorrow night going up against a guy like Mendez? How does that kind of help you kind of handle everything like that?

SERGIO VEGA: Nothing's different. I practice every day

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wrestling. Don't matter who I'm wrestling. It's all the same stuff. I'm going to go, and I'm going to wrestle. I've been in a million of those scrambles that I got into at the end in practice every single day.

It's nothing new. I don't care what stage I'm wrestling on, whatever, people make it like it's something big. I love these. I look around, and it's so many people. My parents, my brother, everyone just out there in the arena, and I see them. That's who I do it for. I do it for myself, but I'm also representing everybody else.

Q. You were talking about your brother, how you said one day you're going to be better than him. What's that phone call or that visit going to look like tonight?

SERGIO VEGA: It's awesome. I saw him when I was getting down off that mat. He's always so excited for me, and he's helped me so much. I'm so grateful for him. He's always been someone I've looked up to so much in my life, and I'm glad I'm able to be doing this in front of him.

Q. Sergio, you're going to have Jesse Mendez in the finals. Talk about that opponent and what kinds of challenges he brings.

SERGIO VEGA: It's awesome. I came in this season. I was 0-4. Everybody against me was a favorite. After that weekend, everyone's comparing me to Jesse Mendez. Not comparing, but they're saying they want to see that match.

Once again, I'm just wrestling free. I just go do what I have to do. Get one more win, and I'm a national champ.

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