

2026 NCAA Wrestling Championship

Friday, March 20, 2026

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Rocket Arena

Nebraska

Antrell Taylor

Semifinals Media Conference



Antrell Taylor (Nebraska) d. Ty Watters (West Virginia), 4-2

THE MODERATOR: Good evening, everyone. Welcome to the 2026 NCAA Division I wrestling championships press conference. Tonight we are joined by Antrell Taylor from Nebraska.

Antrell, I was wondering if you could reflect on the past couple days, the match tonight, and going into tomorrow.

ANTRELL TAYLOR: This match tonight has been a scrap. I'm always willing to come out here and showcase my skills and show people how hard I've worked my entire life.

I'm very blessed to be in this position. There's a lot of people in my life that have passed away. They aren't able to really watch me succeed how I wanted them to. Honestly, I'm just carrying out my dreams for my brother and my dad. They passed away. I'm doing it for them, you know. Bigger than myself.

Q. What is the culture of Nebraska, and how has that played a role in your journey?

ANTRELL TAYLOR: The culture in our room is we're very tight knit. We work together and cry together. We win together, lose together. We're truly a family. I wouldn't want to be anywhere else truly.

Q. Outside of the titles and the glory, what motivates you to be the best you can be?

ANTRELL TAYLOR: Like I had mentioned in that first statement, it's my dad and my brother, man. My dad put me in these wrestling shoes, and I've just been living out the dreams that he wanted me to really accomplish.

My brother as well, he was the father figure after my dad passed away when I was 7. So I'm truly living out those dreams for them.

Q. I heard you talk about Dad, talk about your brother, but there's a queen that you have to talk about.

ANTRELL TAYLOR: There's a queen.

Q. Talk to me and give me her flowers.

ANTRELL TAYLOR: My mom, Tammy Taylor, I wouldn't be sitting here without her truly. When my dad passed away, I honestly stepped away from wrestling for a little while. She was like, you got to do everything how he wanted you to. Don't act like he's not there, but almost just, like I said, live out my dreams for him and just continue to do everything I was already doing before.

My dad at a young age, he instilled hard work. Hard work beats talent. Hard work beats talent every day of the week. I truly carried that on from when I was 6, 7 years old until now, 22 years old. It's deep.

Q. Can you just walk us through the final minute of that semifinals match with Ty Watters, what it took to get that takedown and what was running through your mind at that time?

ANTRELL TAYLOR: I knew he was real scrambly, so I had to be very, very -- what is it? Very smart about my positioning and not rushing my attacks and doing all that. Not rushing to the finish. I had that in my mind to really go out and just do what I do every time. Just be confident in how I wrestle and just go out and let it show.

Q. Antrell, a couple weeks ago I was up at the Big Ten Championships. You took the loss to PJ Duke pretty hard there. Talk about that rededication over the last few weeks that got you back here again to fight for another championship.

ANTRELL TAYLOR: Those Penn State fans, everybody knows they're a real heckling crowd. I replayed them heckling me while I was walking out that tunnel every time I stepped out on the mat ever since then. So that really pushed me to get to this final.



I say thank you to all the Penn State fans. You all pushed me to this final.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

Q. What's coming from the coach's corner during matches like tonight or just in general, what feedback are the coaches giving you and how are they continuing to coach you?

ANTRELL TAYLOR: They just are like, keep being you. Take a deep breath in between the breaks. Don't get too big headed. Don't get too in the moment. Don't let the lights affect you. Just stay in the moment, be confident. How I wrestle each and every day, I've been doing this 17 years, and they're just like be confident in all your skills and, yeah, don't let the moment get too big.

Q. The state of Nebraska -- not everybody from Nebraska gets to accomplish what you've accomplished. Tell us what it means to be from Nebraska, wrestling for Nebraska, and then being a role model for future generations in the state.

ANTRELL TAYLOR: I'm going to take it back to day one. My dad always put us in Husker gear. Every tournament we went to, it was Nebraska gear. He gave me a Letterman's jacket when I was 6, 7 years old. Ever since then, I always wanted to be a Husker. When I got to high school and I was able to go through the recruiting process, it was no other schools really in my mind. It was always Nebraska. You're home grown, go live out your dreams, and be that kid that's able to do it in their home state, not go anywhere else.

I want to say to all the little kids in Nebraska, it's more to life than just the streets and all the bad things that everybody like put a light on in this generation. You can go be an athlete. Go do something bigger than the streets. That's a no-go. You end up dead or in jail.

I just want to say go be an athlete, go do something to compromise your time. Yeah, go do something bigger than yourself.

Q. Antrell, you're going to have Landon Robideau in the NCAA finals. Talk about your history with that opponent and what you expect in that match.

ANTRELL TAYLOR: I know he's going to come out ready to scrap, like everybody else in this bracket. I'm not too real focused on him, like as a person. I just think about myself and how I can go out there and wrestle my match and do the things I know I'm capable of doing.

I know he's a tough opponent. I'm ready to put the toe on the line and go fight.

