

2026 NCAA Wrestling Championship

Friday, March 20, 2026

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Rocket Arena

Iowa State

Yonger Bastida

Semifinals Media Conference



Yonger Bastida (Iowa State) d. AJ Ferrari (Nebraska), 15-7

THE MODERATOR: We're joined now by Yonger Bastida of Iowa State.

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

YONGER BASTIDA: It's such a fun tournament for me, especially I made the final for the first time in my career. Yeah, it's been incredible these past two days.

Q. Yonger, I think I just saw happy, healthy, fun loving Yonger getting after it. I mean, you really put some space between you and him. That was impressive. That was like 197 Yonger who doesn't have to cut weight. It was amazing. The performance was incredible. How were you able to just outwrestle him tactically and dominate every aspect of the match with AJ Ferrari?

YONGER BASTIDA: I've been waiting for this rematch for a long time. I came to the U.S. in 2020. I wrestled AJ Ferrari back in 2021. He beat me at 197. So I was excited about this match. Like four years since we wrestled -- no, five years since we wrestled. I don't know about him, but I was excited for that matchup, and we see how it ended up.

Q. Yonger, can you talk a little bit about your finals opponent Isaac Trumble? What's your history with him, and what's your game plan going into that match? You are two altering styles? He has good baseline defense. You have high-powered offense.

YONGER BASTIDA: I never wrestled with him in my career before. When I was at 197, I didn't either. I'm just excited for that matchup. I'm just going to be offensive.

It will be a fight to the finish. I've been saying that since I

got here. It's going to be a good match.

Q. Big opening kind of moment there to start the match. Just walk me through what you were sort of seeing in that sequence to be able to get that takedown.

YONGER BASTIDA: We planned that out, the coaches and everything. They told me to work on my underhooks, and that's what I did since that first moment, and it worked out well. Yeah, that was the mindset. That was the game plan for Ferrari.

Q. Yonger, could you describe the moment when the whistle was blown, the match is over, and you look over at Coach Fernando and Dresser, the emotions of having them in your corner. Can you describe your relationships with them?

YONGER BASTIDA: They are kind of like my parents out here since I got here, Dresser, Coach Fernando. Just making the final is such a big accomplishment for me because the past six years I've just been learning and growing.

My last year to be able to be in the finals of NCAAs is an incredible moment for me and my coaches. That was such fun and enjoyable moment right there.

Q. In the past you've described wanting to be able to have an impact on Iowa State the way you watched David Carr have. How does it feel to be making that impact here, Iowa State's lone competitor in a title match. You have a real chance of winning a title to bring back home. How special is that for you?

YONGER BASTIDA: It's incredible, man, especially the support and the staff and the Cyclone fans, and everybody in Ames gave me, it's an amazing opportunity for me to be representing and be on the top of the podium for them.

I'm just waiting for tomorrow, and we'll see how it ends up.

Q. Yonger, can you talk a little bit about last year, your hand injury, and the biggest thing you took away from



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that and what helped you learn from that to get to where you are now?

YONGER BASTIDA: When I came here to the NCAA, before even the NCAA, like four or five days, I broke my hand and came here, won two matches, and lost my next two matches. It was bad, that experience for me.

In wrestling we're always growing with the losses, the wins, we're always growing, man. The year before, I redshirt, I got hurt, and I've just been growing, man. I've been learning, watching, just waiting for this moment.

Q. What does the next 24 hours look like for you? Obviously you'll have certain training to do, but what do you like to do to prepare for a match, especially for one as big as this one?

YONGER BASTIDA: Just rest, get my mind, like we already got done with this match, and we're going to focus on the next opponent in the final.

I'm just going to rest, eat, and get ready for tomorrow. That's what I'm going to do.

Q. Yonger, can you talk about how both of you in the finals here at heavyweight did make the transition up from 197. Why do you think that is that you're having such success coming up and maybe being smaller for the division relatively speaking?

YONGER BASTIDA: We've got the speed. We've got everything. Some of the top guys, they still hustle at 197. It just makes a big difference, being able to eat, to drink, and just focus on wrestling. It's such a big, big impact.

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