

CLARION READY FOR 36TH EWL CHAMPIONSHIPS MARCH 6

Clarion's NCAA Division I Wrestling team is ready for its "second season" as the Golden Eagles prepare to compete in the 36th annual EWL (Eastern Wrestling League) Championships.

EWL CHAMPIONSHIP HAS 2 SESSIONS

The 2011 EWL's will be hosted at Nelson Fieldhouse on Sunday, March 6th. Session 1 is set for 10am and will feature quarterfinal action, followed by semi-finals and Round 1 consolations. Session 2 starts at 5pm and will have the consolation semi's, followed at 7pm by the championship finals and matches for third and fifth places. A total of 20 wrestlers will qualify for the NCAA Tournament from the EWL's via the new selection system. The new national qualifying system will then identify the next best wrestlers at each weight class who did not qualify across the country to fill out the national bracket of 33 per weight class.

Tickets will be available at the door. All Session Adult passes are \$30, while All-Session Senior and Student passes are \$15. Individual session tickets will also be available.

"We're really looking forward to competing at the EWL's," said Clarion fifth year head coach Teague Moore. "Hard work, patience and steady improvement have been our main goals this season. We feel we've made steady strides forward this season, but this is where all that dedication and sacrifice are meant to pay off. Our goal will be to wrestle to our seeds - maybe pull an upset or two - and we'll be just fine. We want to try and qualify as many wrestlers as possible to the NCAA Division I National Tournament later in March."

CLARION 4-10 OVERALL AND 2-4 IN EWL IN 2011 SEASON

Clarion has compiled plenty of accomplishments throughout the 2011 season under fifth year head coach Teague Moore. Clarion won the PSAC Team Title at Bloomsburg on December 4th, with Clarion scoring 125.5 points and having three individual champions in Fleming, Bekzod Abdurakhmonov at 165 and Alex Thomas at 197.

December 29-30 the Golden Eagles finished 17th at the Midlands tournament with sophomore James Fleming taking fourth place at 157-pounds.

Clarion finished the dual meet season with a 4-10 record defeating Cleveland State (30-10), Davidson (36-15), Princeton 25-21 and Edinboro 25-21, while key losses were to #3 Virginia Tech (39-3), North Carolina (32-10), West Virginia (39-4), #17 Kent State (44-6), Bloomsburg (19-15) and Pitt (32-9).

CLARION'S 2011 EWL TOURNAMENT LINEUP

Clarion's lineup Sunday will be: **Trey Hicks** (2-19, So. Amityville, N.Y.) at 133; **Hunter McGraw** (11-15, Fr. Crestwood) at 141, **Anthony White** (22-10, Fr. Philadelphia, Pa. North Catholic) at 149; **#9 James Fleming** (27-2, So. West Mifflin, West Mifflin) at 157, **Bekzod Abdurakhmonov** (32-9, Jr. Tashkent, Uzbekistan) at 165, Steven Cressley (11-20, So. Punxsutawney) at 174, **Scott Joseph** (11-19, Sr. Export, Kiski Area) at 184, **Alex Thomas** (18-9, So. Seaford, De., Sussex Tech) at 197 and **Quintas McCorkle** 21-12, Jr. Alexandria, Va.) at heavyweight.

Clarion finished third at the 2010 EWL Tournament at West Virginia. The third place finish was the highest for the Golden Eagles since 1996. Fleming, who was an NCAA Qualifier last year at 149,

finished second as did Alex Thomas at 197. Steven Cressley was fourth at 174 and Quintas McCorkle was fourth at heavyweight.

PREVIOUS EWL TOURNAMENT RESULTS (2001-2010)

The **2010 EWL's** were hosted at the West Virginia Coliseum, Edinboro took the team title with 135.5 points, Pittsburgh was second with 125.5, and **Clarion** a strong third with 111 points. Rounding out the seven team field were Bloomsburg in fourth with 84.5, West Virginia fifth with 78, Lock Haven sixth at 58 and Cleveland State seventh with 37.

The **2009 EWL's** were hosted at Lock Haven with Edinboro taking the team title with 126.5 points, WVU second with 95.5, Bloomsburg third with 88.5, Pitt fourth with 84.5, Lock Haven fifth with 80, Cleveland State sixth with 62 and Clarion seventh with 60.5 points.

The **2008 EWL's** were wrestled at Pittsburgh and Edinboro won the team title with 133 points, Pitt was second with 111.50, West Virginia third with 103.5, Bloomsburg fourth with 86, Lock Haven fifth with 70.5, Clarion sixth with 55 and Cleveland State seventh with 53 points.

The **2007 EWL's** were hosted by Cleveland State and Edinboro won the team title with 113 points, West Virginia was second with 104.5 and Lock Haven was third with 98 points. Rounding out the seven team field were Pitt in fourth with 95.5 points, Bloomsburg fifth with 94.5, Cleveland State sixth with 77.5 and Clarion seventh with 35 points.

In 2006 at Edinboro, the Fighting Scots finished first with 120.5 points, West Virginia was second with 110.5, Pitt third with 97, Bloomsburg fourth with 94.5, Cleveland State fifth with 82, Lock Haven sixth at 70.5 and Clarion seventh 29.5 points.

The **2005 EWL's** were hosted at Clarion's W.S. Tippin Gym. Edinboro won the team title with 113 points, with Lock Haven second at 104 and Pittsburgh third with 98. Rounding out the field were fourth place West Virginia with 93, Bloomsburg fifth with 81 and Clarion and Cleveland State tied for sixth with 62 points.

The **2004 EWL** Tournament, hosted at Bloomsburg, saw the most closely contended title race in league history. When the dust settled, West Virginia and Edinboro tied for first place with 99.5 points, while Pittsburgh was third with 97 points, Cleveland State fourth with 80.5, Bloomsburg fifth with 79, Clarion sixth with 70, Lock Haven seventh with 57.5 and Virginia Tech eighth with 44.5

The **2003 EWL** Tournament, hosted by West Virginia, saw Edinboro win the team title with 129.5 points and West Virginia second with 123.5. Cleveland State finished a distant third with 80.5, Lock Haven fourth with 75.5, Pitt fifth with 75, Clarion sixth with 63.5, Virginia Tech seventh with 44.5 and Bloomsburg eighth with 44.

The **2002 EWL** Tournament was won by West Virginia with 114.5 points, Edinboro second with 104.5, Lock Haven third with 104, Pitt fourth with 87.5, Cleveland State fifth with 67, Clarion sixth at 66, Virginia Tech seventh with 48.5 and Bloomsburg eighth with 41 points. The 2002 EWL's were

hosted by Lock Haven.

The **2001** EWL tournament was won by Edinboro with 123.5 points, with Lock Haven finishing second at 95, Pitt third with 94.5 and Clarion fourth with 87 points.

Edinboro has won or tied for first in 12 of the last 13 EWL Tournaments including titles in 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, the tie in 2004, a win in 2003, and a string of four straight from 1998-2001. West Virginia tied for first in 2004 and won the title in 2002, while Lock Haven won in 1997, West Virginia in 1996 and Clarion won back-to-back titles in 1994 and 95.

2011 EWL TEAM RACE

#22 ranked Pitt will be the favorite to win the team race this year. The Panthers under Rande Stottlemeyer won their second straight EWL Dual meet title in 2011, while posting an overall record of 13-6.

The remainder of the EWL teams have a few holes in their lineups and it will be interesting to see if any can challenge Pitt for first place, or how the tournament will actually fall out.

Clarion of course finished 2-4 in the EWL and 4-10 in dual meets against some nationally ranked teams. Coach Moore will have his Golden Eagles ready to go. Edinboro, led by veteran head coach Tim Flynn, has rallied the Fighting Scots to finish 4-2 in EWL dual meet action while posting a 9-10-1 dual meet record. West Virginia, led by long-time mentor Craig Turnbull, also posted a 4-2 EWL record with a dual meet mark of 9-6. Bloomsburg and coach John Stutzman were 3-3 in the EWL and 14-6 overall, while Lock Haven was 2-4 in the EWL and 6-12 overall, with Cleveland State 0-6 in the EWL and 3-13 in dual meets.

CLARION NOTES: Clarion has crowned 51 EWL champions since the league started in 1976... The Golden Eagles have crowned at least one individual champion in every year except 1983, 1989, 2000, 2006-2010 ... Clarion has three team titles including 1980, 94 and 95 ... Kurt Angle won 4 titles (1988, 1990-92) ... Charlie Heller (1980-82), Sheldon Thomas (1994, 96, 97) and John Testa (2001-2003) are the only other Clarion wrestlers to win three EWL individual titles since the league began in 1976... The NCAA= is in Omaha, Nebraska on March 18-20 ... The new qualifying system has already established qualifiers across the country in each weight class - 149 and 165 have 27 automatic spots, 125, 141, 184 and 285 have 28 spots, 133, 157, 174 and 197 have 29 spots determined by league qualifiers.... Since each bracket is limited to 33 wrestlers, the brackets will then be filled by the next best wild card entries left available via the season ranking system. Those will be determined in the days following the completion of all national qualifiers.

Rankings are the best between InterMat and AWW Magazines:

WEIGHT CLASS PREVIEW:

125 (Top 2 Qualify)- 2010 EWL Champion Anthony Zanetta (Pitt) and runner-up Shane Young (WV)

will likely vie for the title in 2011. Zanetta won the title match 4-2 and this year's dual 5-3. Lock Haven's Nick Hyatt , who was fourth in 2010 and 2009 will challenge. Clarion will have Trey Hicks looking to place.

133 (Top 2 Qualify) - Should be a very talented weight class with #16 rated Eric Morrill (Ed), #18 Nathan Pennesi (WV) and returning champion John Trumbetti (LH). Morrill was third at 125 in 2010, second in 2008 and 4th in 2007. Pitt freshman Shelton Mack and bloom frosh Nick Wilcox, who was the PSAC champ at this weight will also challenge. Trumbetti was also 5th at 125 in 2008. Clarion will have Devin Cook competing at 133.

141 (2 Qualify) - Pitt junior #7 Tyler Nauman is the two-time defending champion and favorite to win at 141. Lock Haven's Matt Bonson, a 2009 NCAA Qualifier when he was at Virginia, could challenge. Edinboro freshman Kasey Davis and Bloomsburg's Derek Shingara will look to place. Clarion will have Hunter McGraw.



149 (Top 2 Qualify) - Edinboro All-American #15 Torsten Gillespie, who won here last year, was 6th at 149 in 2009 and 2nd at 141 in 2008. Two-time All-American Brandon Rader (WV) is back to try and win a crown at 149. He previously competed at 141-pounds and was a 2-time EWL champion at 141 in 2006 and 2007. Also ready to roll here is Clarion freshman Anthony White, who has a big dual win over Gillespie. Pitt freshman Dane Johnson and LH's Owen Wilkinson can also finish high. He was fourth at 141 last year.



157 (Top 3 Qualify) - Clarion's #9 James Fleming will be the favorite at 157. He was 6-0 in the EWL and placed second at 149 last year. A number of talented wrestlers will vie to get to the finals as well including Pitt's Donnie Tasser, Bloom's Frank Hickman, Edinboro's John Greisheimer and Ryan Goodman of WVU. Greisheimer was third at 157 last year and Tasser fifth.



165 (Top 2 Qualify) - this weight class will likely be wide open and very evenly talented. West Virginia's #19 Donnie Jones has been the runner-up three times and is looking for his first title. Clarion's Bekzod Aburakhmonov, along with Pitt's Ethan Headlee, Bloom's Josh Veltre and Cleveland State's Rob Michaels all could vie for the title. Michaels was sixth here last year.

174 (1 Qualifier- Champ) - A wide open weight class will have WVU's Alex Meade, Bloom's Mike Dessino, LH's Mike Khoury and Pitt's Andy Vaughn likely vying to get to the finals. Clarion will have Steven Cressley here who placed 4th a year ago.

184 (Top 3 Qualify) - Edinboro's #1 ranked Chris Honeycutt is the top seed and heavy favorite at this weight class. Honeycutt was the EWL Champ at 184 in 2009. Pitt's #20 Max Thomusseit, WVU's #20 Matt Ryan and Bloom's Nate Graham are all talented grapplers. Graham was the runner-up at 174 last season.



197 (Top 2 Qualify) - Pitt's #5 Zac Thomusseit, who was the runner-up at 184 a year ago, is the pre-tourney favorite at this weight class. Clarion's Alex Thomas was second here last year, while Edinboro's Shawn Fendone, Bloom's Richard Perry and WVU's Kyle Rooney can make things interesting. Fendone was third here last year, Rooney fourth. Thomas pinned Fendone in the PSAC finals and was pinned by Fendone in the dual - same scenario as 2010. Thomas defeated Fendone in the semi's last year 11-2.



HWT (1 Qualifier - Champ): 2010 champion #4 Ryan Tomei of Pitt is the favorite here to repeat. A number of wrestlers will be trying to get to the finals and they include Clarion's Quintas McCorkle, Edinboro's Ernest James, LH's Harry Turner and Bloom's Zac Walsh. McCorkle was fourth last year and Walsh fifth at heavyweight the last two seasons. Turner was sixth at 197 last year.