

Ohio State's Sammy Sasso Named National Freshman Of The Year



Ohio State may not have been able to compete at the NCAA Championships on March 19-21 as it was hoping to because of the spread of COVID-19, but a Buckeye still picked up some hardware today, thanks to the impressive regular season he put together.

Sammy Sasso, a 149-pound freshman from Nazareth, PA, was named the National Freshman of the Year by InterMat.

The winner of the award is based entirely on balloting of InterMat writers, who select and rank five freshmen, with each place being worth a set number of points, with first-place bringing in nine points.

In the voting, Sasso found himself in the top spot on four ballots, netting him 36 of his 60 total points. Next up in the voting was Stanford's Shane Griffith, who grabbed three first-place votes and 53 total points. Penn State's Aaron Brooks won 48 votes, Iowa State's David Carr came in fourth with 45, and Stanford's Real Woods rounded out the top five with 25 points.

Sasso was one of four Big Ten wrestlers represented in voting, along with Brooks, Iowa's Tony Cassioppi (sixth) and Minnesota's Brayton Lee (eighth), the latter of whom Sasso has formed a strong rivalry with after splitting the season series.

Sasso is joining very good company as a Buckeye winning this award. Only one Ohio State wrestler has been named Freshman of the Year before, and he may be the best wrestler in school history: Logan Stieber in 2012.

Sasso finished the season with a 24-3 record, including a 9-0 mark in conference dual season. He took second place to Iowa's Pat Lugo (who he actually defeated during the season) at the Big Ten Championships and was set to enter the NCAA Championships as the No. 3 seed at 149 pounds. Of his 24 wins, 12 came against top-25 opponents.

The win is the first for Ohio State of the awards season, though senior 197-pounder Kollin Moore came close, finishing second in voting for the Dan Hodge trophy to Iowa's Spencer Lee, also announced today.