



By Russ Pankonin
The Imperial Republican

Imperial's Taylor May won his first Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC) wrestling championship Saturday at the RMAC tournament held in Kearney.

As a member of the University of Nebraska-Kearney team, May won all four of his matches to claim the championship.

May, a junior at UNK, went into the tournament as the top-ranked wrestler at 165 pounds.

However, after the top wrestlers were seeded, May drew an opening round opponent by the "luck of the draw," he said.

The second, third, fifth and seventh seeds, along with one unseeded wrestler, all got byes into the quarterfinals.

May said Tuesday the opening match is always the toughest of the day for him because it comes right after weigh-ins. "But I survived it," he said.

He did indeed, winning a 6-1 decision over Jack Porter of Grand Canyon University.

In his quarterfinal and semifinal match, May pinned both opponents in under two minutes to advance to the championship round.

He pinned Omar Gonzalez of Adams State College in 1:47 in the quarterfinals. He followed that up with a 1:34 pin in the semifinal match with Jordan Larsen of the Colorado School of Mines.

In the finals, he defeated third seeded Skye Wells of Western State College 6-3.

May used a takedown in the first and third periods to beat Wells for the second time this year.

The championship improves May's record to 32-11 and guaranteed him a spot in the NCAA Division II national championships in Houston, Texas, beginning Friday, March 13.

Another teammate of May's, Marty Usman at 174, also won an RMAC championship.

UNK finished third in the meet, breaking their seven-year RMAC team championship run.

A total of six UNK wrestlers qualified for the national meet. UNK goes in as the defending national champs in Division II.

Shoulder separated during week

May accomplished his championship after suffering a dislocated shoulder just four days before the meet.

May said he suffered the injury on last Tuesday, before Saturday's meet.

He said they were doing some drills and got his arm caught as he got thrown backward, dislocating the shoulder.

He said it snapped right back in but noted that wasn't exactly the way he wanted to start off the week of the conference tournament and national qualifying.

May said all six of the UNK wrestlers have a good chance at making All-American status at the national meet.