

Braves' grapplers compete at Iowa City Duals

By Matt Smith
Sports Editor

The Black and Gold wrestlers finished with a 2-2 record at the Nov. 20 Iowa Duals in Iowa City, Iowa, posting wins in their first two matches against Cornell (IA) and Iowa Lakes Community College before falling to Coe College and No. 1 ranked Iowa in their final two contests.

The Braves picked up a 19-17 decision over

Cornell (IA) and a 21-16 win over Iowa Lakes to register their two victories.

In both matches, the Braves had to come back in their final two bouts to pull out the victory.

Against Cornell (IA), The Black and Gold picked up two early wins in the 125-pound and 133-pound weight classes as No. 5 ranked Russell Weakley and Timdarius Thurston picked up wins in their respective weight

classes. Weakley used a 5-4 decision to pick up the win while Thurston registered a 19-8 major decision to give the Braves the early lead.

The Black and Gold also had four other wrestlers pick up wins in the contest, with Brandon Bradley, J.J. Davis, Shane Nolan and Erik Stancil picking up victories for UNCP.

In the team's second match against Iowa Lakes Community College,

Weakley again started off with a win with a 14-3 major decision over Iowa Lake's Tim Francisco to get the Braves off to a strong start in their 21-16 victory.

In the 174-pound weight class, Davis flexed his muscles again with a 16-4 major decision, as the Braves went on to win their last four matches with Davis, Nolan, Stancil and John Sturrock taking victories over their Iowa Lakes opponents.

The Braves felt their first adversity of the 2009 season in their next opponent, as Coe College defeated the Braves 15-7 in the team's third contest of the duals.

Thurston, Davis and senior Rashaad Saunders were the only Braves to post wins against the Kohawks, with Davis leading the way with a 7-2 decision over Coe's Seth Rehn.

In their final match of the duals, the Braves were

matched up with the defending Division I No. 1 ranked Iowa Hawkeyes, who destroyed the Braves on the mat 47-0.

The Braves failed to pick up a win over the defending national champions.

With their 2-2 mark at the event, the Braves now sit at 3-2 on the season.

The Black and Gold grapplers will next be in action at home Jan. 9 as they partake in the Braves Open.



Photo by Nick Phillips

UNCP wrestler J.J. Davis takes down his opponent at the Pembroke Classic. Davis finished the event 3-3 after taking a medical forfeit in his last two matchups.

Braves' wrestling hosts 2009 Pembroke Classic

By Nick Phillips
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The UNCP wrestling team hosted the 29th annual Pembroke Wrestling Classic on Nov. 14 inside the English E. Jones Center.

More than 20 teams converged on UNCP's campus, including Division I schools North Carolina, N.C. State, Duke, UNC Greensboro, Campbell and Davidson, as well as regional rival St. Andrews.

Overall, the Braves had 22 wrestlers competing, with some weight classes with more than one UNCP wrestler.

They finished the tournament with six placemen, led by junior Russell Weakley's second place finish in the 125-pound bracket.

Weakley won his first four matches before Newberry's Matt Oliver used a late takedown to defeat Weakley in the Championship match.

In the 197-pound division, sophomore Shane Nolan and freshman Kenneth Lindsey both

earned third place honors.

The two teammates were slated to wrestle against each other in the third place match, but both forfeited so they could share the honors.

Nolan finished the day with four wins and Lindsey earned three wins of his own.

Senior Brandon Bradley went 4-2 on the day to take home a fourth place finish; losing both matches to Division I foes from Duke University and Davidson.

Seniors J.J. Davis and Erik Stancil both finished in sixth place in their respective weight classes. Davis finished 3-3 on the day, winning matches against Newberry, Limestone and Duke.

His losses came against UNC-Greensboro, Appalachian State and Duke wrestlers in the 174-pound bracket.

Stancil also finished 3-3, with wins against N.C. State, Newberry and Limestone.

His losses came to wrestlers from North Carolina, UNC-Greensboro and Duke.



Photo by Nick Phillips

Black and Gold wrestler J.J. Davis (left) and head coach Jamie Gibbs scout the competition at the Pembroke Classic.