

Sheldon brings toughness to Coe wrestling

Written by Christine Bekebrede
Sunday, 07 December 2014 17:23 -



Coe senior Ryan Sheldon is tough and dedicated to wrestling.

The biggest thing for Sheldon is being tough during the events.

“There’s not a lot of thinking while I wrestle. It’s just a lot of reacting,” he said.

Sheldon, a Kennedy graduate, is ranked No. 4 at 184 pounds at the NCAA Division III level. He has a 9-2 record, with four major decisions and three pins for the fifth-ranked Kohawks.

He won the 184-pound title at the Turkey Open at Coe Nov. 22 and placed third at the Luther Hill Invitational in Indianola Saturday.

Sheldon said wrestlers build their toughness in the workout room and in practices. “You feel like your body doesn’t want to go any more so you keep pushing it to get tough,” he remarked.

Sheldon earned All-American honors last season when he finished sixth in the nation at 184 pounds. “Hopefully I get even better,” he said. “I’ve hit it once and I want to strive for more.”

Sheldon has rolled up a 86-30 career record with the Kohawks with 20 pins.

“He’s been All-American here and last year he really raised his level of wrestling,” said Coach John Oostendorp. “The ultimate goal is to win the national championship and he’s in a position to do that.”

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Sheldon attributes his success to his will to win. "You have to stay tough and want it more than that other guy," he explained.

Oostendorp thinks Sheldon is capable of competing with anyone.

"He has really embraced what we base our program on, the philosophies and the training and how you handle yourself," said Oostendorp. "He has had success because he bought in at the highest level."

Sheldon had many choices when it came to picking a college.

"I love it here," he said. "When I picked this place, I figured I was really going to like it, but every day I like it more and more. I've never regretted it."