

## Agbi earns 3<sup>rd</sup> place and All-American honors at 2015 NCWA Nationals

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Allen, TX – Two Amherst wrestlers earned a trip to the 2015 NCWA National Championship after a hard-fought day of qualifying at the Northeast Conference Championships at the University of New Hampshire.

Leading the way at the Northeast Conference Championships was senior captain and two-time National Collegiate Wrestling Association (NCWA) national qualifier **Theo Agbi '15** (Brooklyn, NY). After spending a year studying abroad in Geneva, Switzerland, Agbi returned to the mat and dominated much of the 285-pound weight class throughout the regular season. Entering the qualifier with an impressive 18-2 record, Agbi claimed first place honors with a first period technical fall (15 point margin) and first period pin over opponents from University of Massachusetts and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, respectively. Fellow teammate 197-pounder **Jarron Bolingbroke '17** (Syracuse, UT), competing in only his third competition of the season, earned his first trip to the National tournament with a 3-2 record on the day. In a conference championship that featured four, top-ten NCWA wrestlers at 197-pounds, Bolingbroke recovered from a first round defeat to rally off three consecutive victories in the consolation bracket and earned a sixth place finish.

The two national qualifiers headed to Allen, Texas on March 13<sup>th</sup> to compete in 36-man brackets against wrestlers from across all collegiate divisions.

**285-pounder Theo Agbi** made his third and final trip to the NCWA Nationals one to remember. The senior captain finished the three-day event with an impressive 6-1 record, earning him a third-place finish and his first All-American honors. After pinning his opponent from Wayne State College in the first round, the senior found himself down one point with five seconds remaining in the third period against his opponent from South Puget Sound Community College. Unfazed, Agbi's relentless attacking secured a last second takedown that earned him the 4-3 victory, and moved him into the next day's quarterfinal round.

In the quarterfinal round, Agbi suffered his only setback of the tournament against a three-time All-American from the Apprentice School. With the loss, Agbi once again found himself in the consolation bracket's "Blood Round" (a win guarantees a top eight finish and All-American honors, but a loss eliminates the wrestler from the tournament), a scenario similar to 2013 when he suffered a controversial overtime loss that ended his season. Agbi had less than an hour to conquer his mental demons and regain the focus needed for the biggest match of his career. With the new mantra "bronze is the new gold," Agbi responded with a 14-3 thumping of his opponent from Liberty University to earn automatic All-American honors, and the opportunity to wrestle for third-place on Championship Saturday.

On the final day, the senior went on a tear winning his next three matches, including a double-overtime victory in the consolation finals to earn the third place spot on the podium. The win was especially impressive as it came over the same opponent from the Apprentice School who handed him his sole loss of the tournament. Agbi finished the season with a team-best 26-3 record, the most single-season individual victories since the program's revival in 2009. Agbi is the sixth Amherst Club Wrestler to earn All-American status and compiled a 12-5 record at the NCWA National tournament. The senior captain departs the program second in all-time victories with a career record of 52 wins and 23 losses.



**NCWA Nationals** (Allen, TX): Theo Agbi 15' (3<sup>rd</sup> from right) after earning third place and finishing the three-day event with an impressive 6-1 record.

Earning his first trip to the national tournament, **197-pounder Jarron Bolingbroke** faced one of the most competitive weight classes. After losing his first match to an eventual All-American from Liberty University, Bolingbroke drew the second-seeded wrestler from Wayne State College, who was upset in the first round. Unable to generate offense and find his rhythm, Bolingbroke fell in his second match, ultimately eliminating him from the tournament. Although Bolingbroke ended his first campaign with a 0-2 record, the experience on the national stage will benefit him in the future.

Boasting a national champion and now six All-Americans (top eight finish), the wrestling team continues to have success on the national stage despite being one of the smallest schools that competes in the NCWA, and against scholarship programs. Amherst has sent ten different wrestlers to the national tournament, with **Travis Dickenson's '13** (Pewamo, MI), **Stefan Breitling '13** (Ames, IA), **Kody Weaver '14** (Southlake, TX) and now **Theo Agbi '15** reaching the national stage three times. Amherst wrestlers have compiled an impressive 48-29 record in the National Tournament since 2009, firmly establishing the Amherst College name throughout the national wrestling community.

Look for a full season recap in the May Alumni Newsletter.