

RIC WRESTLING AIMS FOR NATIONAL TITLE

BY GEOFFREY RICCIO
ANCHOR CONTRIBUTOR

As Kevin Sutherland springs from the mat, sweat pouring down his face, it is just the start of what Sutherland hopes will be a season of redemption after a dream season was ended early in a Division III National Championship Tournament loss.

Sutherland and the 2010-2011 Rhode Island College men's wrestling team looks to continue a tradition of excellence. Once again, the Anchormen will be guided by head coach Jay Jones, who enters his 11th season at the helm. Jones has set the standard for Division III wrestling programs across the nation with his success.

"This season we are focusing on significant individual coaching as well as managing our bodies to remain healthy. Last year we sort of died off at the end, but we are taking steps to ensure that our guys are healthy for February," said Jones.

Having won their first nine matches last year, the team ended

on a low note with a seventh place finish at the New England Wrestling Association (NEWA) conference tournament. However, what was once a young team comprised of mainly freshmen and sophomores has now matured into a team consisting of mostly juniors and seniors that are hungry for a national title.

Jones said "We try not to put the pressure of winning right away on the young guys, but rather have them focus on the academics while the veterans fill in the starting roles."

One concern for the team is the upper-weight classes, where they lost two seniors from last season, including one All-New England athlete due to injury. However, Jones is confident in the ability of his team's young faces to step into the big holes.

"It is a tale of two teams really, in that we are very tough and can compete with anyone in the first five to six weight classes, but the next four are mostly young and untested," Jones. "However, as a whole, this team is very tough."

Senior Christopher Dean

will be filling the 184 pound weight class as a full-time starter for the first time. Dean has compiled a successful career thus far for the Anchormen, with ten wins last season

and a second place finish in the NEWA Future's Tournament. Senior Brendan Guarino will continue his stead at the 165 pound weight class, where he has been strong and consistent

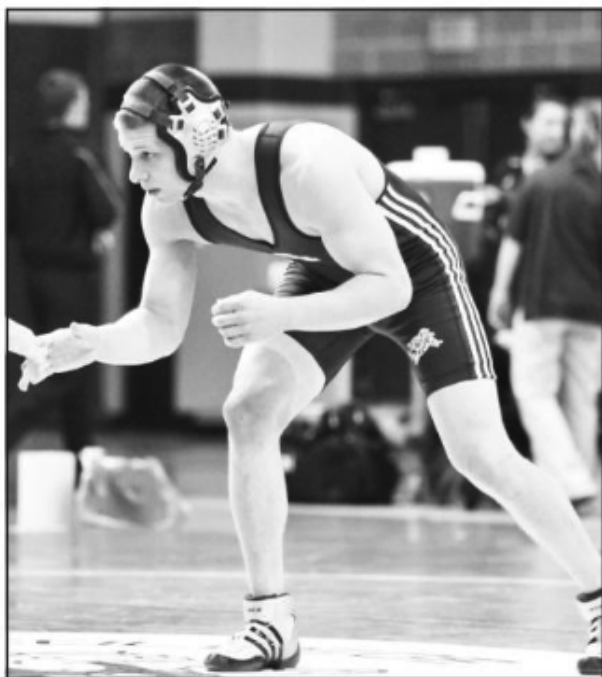
for the team for the past three seasons. He was just one match away from All-New England honors last season.

Sophomore Devin Callahan will step in at heavyweight for the Anchormen. In 2009, Callahan was having a successful season until a knee injury sidelined him for over a year. Callahan looks to be solid as the team's heavyweight.

The wrestling team also hopes to continue its tradition of success off the mat as well. Year after year the wrestlers maintain a team GPA above a 3.0 and in 2008 and 2009 they were among the top 25 academic teams in the country.

"Here at Rhode Island College, we are student-athletes; student coming first," said Jones. "We thrive on our academic success and love the fact that in this program we don't only build great athletes, but great students and great men."

The Anchormen take to the mats for the first time on Nov. 13th at the Roger Williams Invitational, and make their home debut on Dec. 10th against Western New England College.



COURTESY OF RIC ATHLETICS

RIC SENIOR WRESTLER KEVIN SUTHERLAND.

THE LINEUP

Josh Baker	Brohen Krsulic
Kevin Barrucci	Scott Legacy
Kyle Bousquet	Adam Lynch
Andrew Bove	Jesse Posl-Rhinehart
Devin Callahan-Cormier	Vinny Provost
Aric D'Alessio-Dubre'	Brandon Regnault
Chris Dean	Ryan Rheame
Ronnie DiSanto	Jared Rhodes
Travis Drappi	Geoff Riccio
Brandon Gauthier (C)	John Short
Justin Georgiano	Robert Sotelo
Cameron Glad	Mike Sugermeyer
Brendan Guarino	Kevin Sutherland (C)
Josh Harrison	Mike Trasso
Steven Hunt	Dustin Wilcox

(C) Denotes team captain

PLAYERS TO WATCH



**Captain
KEVIN
SUTHERLAND**

Leading the Anchormen in one of those starting roles will be Sutherland, the returning team captain. Sutherland paces the team with over a hundred wins under his belt at RIC, including three All-New England Honors, two Academic All-American Honors, two national championship tournament appearances, and three tournament titles including an NEWA Championship in 2009.

"We have a hardworking group of guys here and if we can put all the pieces together we can definitely bring home a conference title," said Sutherland.



**Captain
BRANDON
GAUTHIER**

Joining Sutherland as co-captain this season is junior Brandon Gauthier, who was fourth in his conference last season in arguably the most difficult weight class, 125 pounds. Gauthier believes that this season the Anchormen will be a national contender once again.

"Everyone has put in the time in the off-season, and it's showing on the mat; it's a long season but we hope we will be ready in the end," he said.

In support of the captains, the wrestling team is also returning three All-New England wrestlers in senior Travis Drappi and juniors Michael Trasso and Scott Legacy. Drappi is a two-time All-New England grappler. He won his first 19 matches last season, and won three tournament titles for the Anchormen while ending the season with a fifth place conference finish.

Trasso was a conference finalist in his freshman year in 2009, and looks to build off of his impressive record and bring home a conference title of his own. He was a finalist at the Citrus Open last season, and finished sixth in the conference.

In 2009, Legacy was fifth in the conference at 133 pounds and although he moved up to the 157 pound weight class in 2010, he still did very well and even earned his first tournament title at the Ursinus Invitational.