

# **Granite City's D.J. Millett Returns, Millikin Picked To Win Third Straight CCIW Wrestling Title**

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DECATUR, Illinois — After winning back-to-back College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin (CCIW) Championships, the Millikin University wrestling team was picked to finish on top again in the 2021-22 CCIW Preseason Wrestling Coaches Poll released on October 27.

Granite City's D.J. Millett is a returning all-conference performer for Millikin.

Millikin received 59 points including five first place votes in the poll. North Central College was picked to finish second after garnering 57 points and three first place votes. Augustana College was picked to finish third followed by Elmhurst University and Wheaton College rounding out the top five. Complete poll is listed below.

In addition to the traditional CCIW Championship Tournament in February, the conference wrestling coaches unanimously agreed to add dual team competitions amongst CCIW schools during the 2021-22 regular season. The Big Blue open the season facing Elmhurst University in a dual on Monday, November 1 at the Griswold Center in Decatur at 7 p.m.

Millikin won its second straight title last season setting a conference record by scoring 153.5 points. The Big Blue won four individual titles and had nine wrestlers earn All-Conference honors by finishing in the top three in their weight class. Millikin returns eight of the 10 athletes that competed in the CCIW Tournament in 2021. The group of returners is led by fifth-year senior Bradan Birt (Epworth, Iowa, Western Dubuque H. S.). Birt is a four-time CCIW Champion and four-time All-American. Birt was the 165 pound National Champion at the 2021 NWCA Division III National Champions last March. Two-time CCIW Champion and two-time All-American senior Logan Hagerbaumer (Quincy, H.S.) and junior Peter McCusker (Rantoul, H.S.) both return. McCusker was the CCIW Champion at 149 pounds last season and earned All-American honors. Other returning All-Conference performers including sophomore Trey Percy (Charleston, H.S.), senior DJ Millett (Granite City, H.S.), senior Jordan Carson (St. Louis, Mo., Triton College), and Brayan Reyes (Springfield, Lanphier H.S.)

## 2021-22 CCIW Preseason Wrestling Poll

### Rank Institution Points (1st Pl. Votes)

1 Millikin 59 (5)

2 North Central 57 (3)

3 Augustana 49

4 Elmhurst 37

5 Wheaton 35

6 CUW 29

7 MSOE 22

8 Carthage 21

9 Lakeland 15 (1)