



■ TOUGH BATTLE

Wrestler must lose weight to gain on mats

ANA REPORTER

FOR THE past few weeks, University of Pretoria (Tuks) wrestler Matthew Bartlett has been in a constant battle to get the numbers on his bathroom scale to drop.

However, his real fight will start at the weekend when he steps on to the mats to compete at the South African wrestling trials in Secunda.

The 20-year old wrestler has set himself two goals for the season. The first is to qualify to compete at the African Junior Championships in Tunisia (March 26 to 31).

In the past, he was close to winning that coveted gold medal. But mistakes at crucial times meant he had to settle for silver on four occasions.

The Tuks wrestler is not one to do things in half-measures.

He relishes nothing more than a good challenge. That is why he is also going to compete in the senior trials with the hope that he might even be selected to represent South Africa at the All-African Games in Morocco as well.

He is of the opinion that the experience he will gain in doing so can stand him to good stead in his quest to qualify for next year's Olympic Games.

Bartlett is actually still on the road to recovery after undergoing an ankle operation at the end of last year just after competing at the World Junior Championships.

He only started seriously training in January again.



Tuks wrestler Matthew Bartlett steps on to the mats this weekend at the South African wrestling trials in Secunda.

The time away from the wrestling mats had an unfortunate consequence. His weight ballooned to about 86kg. Many would consider this to be a real problem considering he competes in the under-74kg category. However, he is not too fazed about it.

"If there is one thing wrestling taught me, it is discipline and perseverance. I have been doing the Banting diet which makes losing weight easy." | African News Agency (ANA)

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