

“From Bella-Russia With Love”

By Royce Alger

NCAA Champion and Olympic Team Member

In 1996 I was wrapping up my career in competitive wrestling. One last shot at the elusive Olympics. I had participated in every world event except this one. At 31 years of age, I knew it would be my last one. At any rate, I was

contacted by Rich Bender, the present president of USA Wrestling.

Back then Rich was a competition coordinator for the US Teams. He was in charge of setting up all the dual meet competitions at home and a broad. We often

joked that we came up through the ranks together. He is one of the few people I will let give me crap about my career. At last check, I think I wrestled in a total of 14 dual meets in a 10 year span. With a 11-3 record, it would amaze you how much crap I still