



Dale Ketelsen

Belaire High School, Louisiana

2001 MASTER OF WRESTLING AWARD

Dale Ketelsen, Belaire High School wrestling coach, has seen a lot of wrestling in his 65 years. He has been associated with wrestling in some capacity for over 53 years. Some people would say that Dale has forgotten more wrestling than most people in Louisiana will ever know.

Dale wrestled at Osage High School in Osage, Iowa. He lettered four-times in wrestling, three-times in football, and two-times in baseball while earning the Co-Athlete-of-the-Year award at Osage. He never won a state wrestling title but he did earn a scholarship to Iowa State.

While at Iowa State, Dale earned three varsity letters as a member of the wrestling team, placing third in the 1957 NCAA tournament and second in the 1958 national meet while earning honors as an All-American those two years. Dale was also a member of the Iowa State baseball team that played in the 1957 College World Series in Omaha, Nebraska.

After graduating from Iowa State in 1959 with a Bachelor of Science Degree, he went on active duty with the Marine Corps Reserve for six months. He then returned to his alma mater as assistant wrestling coach for two years under Hall of Fame coach, Dr. Harold Nichols. In 1960 Ketelsen wrestled in the Olympic trials and lost to the eventual gold medalist of the Rome Olympic Games, Doug Blubaugh.

In 1961, Ketelsen moved to Riverside-Brookfield High in Illinois as wrestling coach and assistant football coach. He revived a team that went on to win a conference championship, produce 30 All-conference wrestlers, 20 district champions, eight regional finalists, and two state titlists. He earned his masters



degree from Northern Illinois in 1967 and was hired to be the first coach of the Louisiana State University wrestling team. As head coach of LSU from 1968 to 1978 his teams won two SEC conference titles, as well as titles in the Southern AAU and Southeastern Intercollegiate Wrestling tournament. He produced 15 individual conference champs. He has been on the NCAA rules committee and is a charter member of USA Wrestling.

After leaving LSU in 1978, Dale helped Catholic High School for one season then moved to Belaire High School and has been there in the capacity of head wrestling coach and assistant football

coach ever since. He helped organize and run the state wrestling tournament on the LSU campus from 1968 through 1974. In 1975 the Louisiana High School Athletic Association took over the administration and operation of the state tournament.

A hard-working advocate of the sport he loves, Ketelsen has always had enthusiasm, dedication, and expertise in the sport of wrestling. Dale had helped many wrestling coaches in the state with technique, equipment, mats, and anything else that anyone has needed. He would be coaching at LSU and after practice he would referee at local high schools. Sometimes after matches he would help coaches or the kids with moves or technique. He held wrestling clinics for coaches as well as kids during the summers. Dale Ketelsen (along with William Schriever and Brother Melchior) is one of the primary founding fathers of the sport of wrestling in Louisiana. Without his dedication, hard work, love of the sport, we would not be where we are today. One of the most important things about Dale is that he has never wavered about his love for the sport of wrestling. He has attacked everything he has done with class and humility. The Team Sportsmanship Trophy given at the Robert E. Lee Invitational Tournament is named for Dale Ketelsen and is symbolic of the way Dale Ketelsen coaches and the way Dale Ketelsen is as a person.

Dale and his wife Pat have three children: Penny, Craig, and Erik. Craig wrestled for Catholic (BR) and is coaching at St. Pauls, while Erik was a two-time state champ for Dale at Belaire. Dale is also a grandfather who couldn't be prouder.

Dale Ketelsen truly is a Master of Wrestling for he represents everything the sport itself stands for.