



2007 Master-of-Wrestling Award

BOBBY DOUGLAS Lansing, Ohio

A scrawny boy from Lansing, Ohio, who was often bullied because of his small physical stature, Bobby Douglas matured into one of the world's greatest wrestlers and coaches.

He humbly attributes his plethora of successes on the mats to his grandfather and Coach George Kovalick.

As a competitor, Bobby Douglas began his wrestling career at Bridgeport (Ohio) High School, where his coach was the legendary late George Kovalick. In fact, Bobby became the first black athlete to win a state championship in Ohio. Also, an outstanding football player, Douglas decided to put all his energy into wrestling when he entered college.

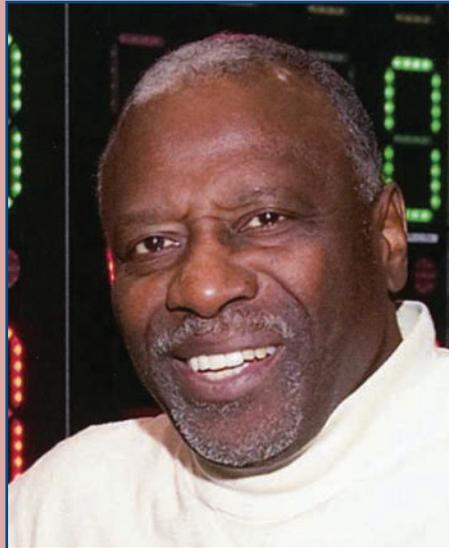
Following in the footsteps of his high school coach, Bobby again wrestled for George Kovalick at West Liberty (WV) State College, where he won a NAIA Title and was second in the NCAA Championships in 1963. After these successes at West Liberty as a sophomore, Coach Kovalick, who Bobby considers to be the father he never had, suggested that he could make a better name for himself at a traditional wrestling school. That fall, Bobby Douglas transferred to Oklahoma State University.

At OSU, Bobby Douglas won the Big Eight Conference at 147 pounds. In point of fact, the Cowboys never lost a dual meet with Douglas in the line-up, capturing a pair of conference championships and the 1964 NCAA Team Title.

After graduating from college, Bobby decided to continue wrestling, and what a wise decision that was. Douglas went on to win five national championships and two U.S. Olympic Trial Titles. He finished fourth in the 1964 Olympic Games held in Tokyo, and he was the captain of the U.S. Olympic Freestyle team at the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City. At the World Championships, Douglas placed second, third and fourth, respectively.

Bobby Douglas retired from competitive wrestling in 1970. That same year he was named the nation's "Most Outstanding Wrestler." His career record from high school to the World Championships was 303-17-7, an amazing .953 winning-percentage. But there is much more to the Bobby Douglas story.

It was time to give back to the sport he loved so dearly, as a coach. Where do I begin? In the collegiate arena, Bobby has coached at



*Bobby Douglas
Lansing, Ohio*

Santa Barbara State University, Cornell University, Arizona State University, and Iowa State University.

At Arizona, Douglas coached the school's only Division I National Championship team in 1988. What is amazing about this title is the fact that Bobby had no champions that year. If that isn't total team strength, I don't know what is! While there, he coached the likes of such wrestling greats as Eddie Urbano and Zeke Jones.

Bobby Douglas then moved on to Iowa State, the hotbed of college wrestling. While there, Douglas's teams placed in the top ten of the NCAA Tournament ten times. Three of his squads won runner-up laurels (1996-2000-2002) at the NCAA Championships. He also produced seven national champions, 18 conference champions, and a myriad of All-Americans. In 2000, Douglas sent four Cyclone wrestlers to the national finals, and was named both the "Big 12 Conference Coach of the Year" and "National Wrestling Coach of the Year" for his efforts. He also won the National Duals Title, defeating Minnesota. In 2002, Coach Douglas was named by the Wrestling Institute in its news-magazine as "National Coach of the Year." Moreover, his most amazing coaching feat came in that year as well. His name: CAEL SANDERSON.

That year Cael became the greatest wrestler

in collegiate history. He was the first wrestler ever to complete his college career undefeated (159-0), while winning four NCAA Division I Championships. Sanderson was also the first wrestler to be named the "Outstanding Wrestler" of the tournament four times, also claiming the prestigious Dan Hodge Trophy three times.

Coach Bobby Douglas traveled to Athens and mentored Cael Sanderson on to an Olympic Gold medal. Sanderson has attributed his collegiate and international success on the mats to Bobby Douglas.

Over the years, Bobby Douglas has been the head coach or on the coaching staff of numerous international teams, including U.S. Olympic Freestyle Teams, U.S. World Squads, and Pan American Games Teams.

As head coach of the 1992 U.S. Olympic Team, all 10 of his wrestlers were placed among the top ten competitors in their respective weight classes – a U.S. Olympic first. He, likewise, produced six medal winners, headed by gold medallists John Smith, Bruce Baumgartner, and Kevin Jackson. Due to his coaching magic at the Barcelona, Spain Olympics, Bobby Douglas was named USA Wrestling "Man & Coach of the Year" in 1992.

Bobby Douglas, one of a handful of U.S. gold certified coaches, has traveled the world over. He is considered by the world's wrestling community as one of the top ten international wrestling technicians. I could go on and on, but there's not enough space. In sum, for his exceptional skill on the mats as a competitor and coach, Bobby Douglas was inducted as a "Distinguished Member" into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 1987. He is also a member of the NAIA Hall of Fame, the Ohio Hall of Fame, the Arizona State University Hall of Fame, and most recently the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Hall of Fame. And just as remarkable, Coach Douglas somehow found the time to write six world-class books on the art and science of the mat sport.

Bobby Douglas earned his bachelor's degree from Oklahoma State and his master's degree from Arizona State, where he was admitted to candidacy for his doctoral degree. Douglas and his wife, Jackie, have one son, Bobby.

Congratulations, Coach Bobby Douglas! You are truly the "Coaches' Coach" and *Wrestling USA's Magazine's* "2007 Master of Wrestling" award winner.

