

Wrestling USA – Pennsylvania Wrestling

I started writing PA columns for Scholastic Wrestling News way back in 1974.

Since then things have changed a lot in the process. We've gone from state reports in each issue to website postings.

I have provided photos and with a committee selected the PA Person-of-the-Year. It is always gratifying to recognize the people who contribute so much to our sport.

In PA this year, it looks to be the usual suspects in AAA that should battle for team honors: Bethlehem Catholic, Nazareth, Council Rock South, and Erie Cathedral Prep. But this year there may be some new challenges issued by Canon McMillan, Cedar Cliff, Bethlehem Liberty and Chambersburg. Northampton also seems to be making a strong return to prominence. In class AA, Reynolds, Southern Columbia, St. Joseph's Catholic Academy, Saucon Valley, Chestnut Ridge along with Notre Dame-Green Pond, Bishop McDevitt, and Freedom Area look to be the teams to beat.

The current hot potato in PA is the question of fairness between public and private schools. The argument being the 'recruitment' capability of the private. The PIAA (governing body) affirms they cannot do anything about it as the state legislature decreed back in 1974 that private schools cannot be separated or excluded from state championships. The issue is currently back in the hands of the legislators to determine and define the purpose. This is not an easy one. Stay tuned.

Penn State is once again off to a fast start and is ranked #1 in the Country. Certainly Cael Sanderson and his staff have been excellent (understatement). This may be the best team Cael has sent out on the mat. Recently, the big draw was Mark Hall vs Zahid Valencia – with Hall winning this one 4-0. You cannot discount the sellout crowds as being the 11th man on the state team. Pitt has been looking stronger and

Congratulations to Rich Lorenzo for his selection as a distinguished

Member of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. The former Penn State wrestler and coach is among the finest people you could ever meet. I hope to be in Stillwater when Rich is honored this June.

Can we stop calling no-contest bouts as 'double forfeits'? To me a forfeit means 6 points for the team. If it were double, wouldn't each team get six? Also, it is 'dual meet', not 'duel meet.' The term dates back to when there were few teams with wrestling so they wrestled twice a season—once at home and once away. Finally, there is no 'medical forfeit' in high school. A forfeit is a forfeit. Climbing off the soapbox carefully, as I recently did tumble off a platform that had about an inch or two space for my chair. Was broadcasting a tournament and the chair leg edged off the platform. All ended well with just a bruise on the shoulder and a bigger one on the ego. But, hey (as Biff Walizer would say), wrestlers are used to bumps and bruises.

With the urging and blessing of the PA Wrestling Coaches' Association, I'll be keeping state dual meet rankings on my PA Wrestling website, I'll share them often via this magazine.