



IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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The IHSAA's 2019 Wrestling Hall of Fame class

Five wrestlers and two coaches to be honored at Wells Fargo Arena on February 16, 2019

COACHES

Mark Bertsch – Newman Catholic, Mason City's wrestling honors have coincided with Bertsch's coaching career, as he entered the 2018-19 season – his 35th in charge – featuring 380 dual victories, 78 state tournament qualifiers, 45 place-winners, 14 finalists, and eight state champions. Newman's highest state tournament team finish in Class 1A came in a third-place effort in 2016. A former president of the IWCOA, he helped create state dual team rankings in 1994. Bertsch also serves as the high school's physical education teacher.

Bill Plein – The coach behind more than 400 dual team victories over 28 seasons at Columbus Community, Columbus Junction won two state tournament titles and three state dual team championships. The Wildcats won the Class 1A team title in 1995 and stepped up to take Class 2A in 1997 under Plein's leadership. His squads finished with a 404-88-1 dual team record, making him the 13th coach in state history to top the 400-win mark. Columbus Community featured 10 individual state champions and nearly 50 place-winners during Plein's run. He took over at Notre Dame-West Burlington/Danville for the first time in the 2018-19 season.

WRESTLERS

Trent Goodale, Osage – A three-time state champion and four-time finalist, Goodale helped Osage to the 2001 dual team title and compiled a varsity record of 159-6. He won state tournaments at 112 pounds in 1999, 119 in 2000, and 125 in 2001. Became four-year letterwinner at Iowa, a 23-year-old NCAA head coach at Limestone College, and eventually a coach for the USA Women's Freestyle team at multiple international events.

Mark Rial, Fort Dodge – A four-time state qualifier and three-time finalist, Rial's varsity career ramped up as a sophomore, when he reeled off a 115-2 record in his last three seasons. That mark included 90 falls and eight technical falls. Two titles came at 103 pounds in 1994 and 125 pounds in 1996. A three-year starter at UNI, Rial went on to qualify for five national teams in Greco, including a 2008 national title and 2009 runner-up World Team Trials finish. Rial is currently head wrestling coach at Buena Vista.

Jimmy Rodgers, Riverside, Oakland – Born into a family of accomplished wrestlers, Rodgers was a prodigy – 16 youth state titles across folkstyle, freestyle, and Greco – who became a three-time state champ for the Bulldogs. After a sixth-place finish in 1994, he won 119 pounds in 1995, 135 in 1996, and 145 in 1997. Went 46-0 in 1996 as Riverside won its only state team title and finished as dual team runner-up. Wrestled collegiately with Iowa State, Nebraska, and Nebraska-Omaha.

Merle Roths, New Hampton – Won the 105-pound championship in 1941 before competing in what is believed to be the longest match in state tournament history in 1942. The scoreless 14-minute final against Council Bluff, Thomas Jefferson's Bob Hunt was given to Hunt on an official's decision after two extended overtime periods, and Roths ended the tournament in third. Featured on cover of 1942 tournament program, was also state runner-up in 1940. Assisted with the introduction of Vinton's school wrestling program.

Josh Watts, Assumption, Davenport – Graduated in 2001 with three championships and, at the time, the most career varsity victories in state history. Part of back-to-back Class 2A title teams in 1998 and 1999, winning state tournament and dual team crowns. Went 190-4 as a prep with 114 pins. Three losses came in 1999, his only season without an individual title, when he completed the postseason with a leg injury. Won 103 pounds in 1998, 125 in 2000, and 135 in 2001. Wrestled at UNI and Loras collegiately. Now a successful head coach at Iowa Western Community College with 15 All-Americans and top-five team finish in his first five seasons in charge.

CONTACTS

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