

WRESTLING **INSIDER** NEWSMAGAZINE

WIN

Five preps
who could
win the 2023
Junior Hodge
Trophy

Previewing
the 2023
NCAA Div. I
Conference
Tournaments

Holding Onto A Dream

Faced with the challenge of starting 100 girls high school teams, Pennsylvania is now within striking distance of sanctioning over the next year



Join me at 2023 WIN Expo with 'intriguing' stars

It was way back in 1991 when my wife Bev and I came up with an idea that we hoped would catch on with fans attending the NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships. Now, 32 years later, the grand experiment is going stronger than we ever imagined.

What I am talking about is the WIN Memorabilia Show, now called WIN Fan Expo. It will be held March 16-18 between sessions of the tournament in Tulsa, and some 20,000 fans are expected to stream into the beautiful Tulsa Convention Center over the three days.

That's a far cry from where it started that cold March weekend in 1991 in Iowa City, largely due to the efforts of Bryan Van Kley, publisher of WIN and a tireless champion for wrestling on various levels.

For years, I had been going to the NCAA tournament (my first was in 1966) and it was always a struggle to meet friends between sessions for some good conversation and food. We would try to find a place large enough to accommodate a dozen or so of us. But it seemed thousands of other fans were looking for the same type of spot to congregate, and it was difficult, if not impossible, to get in the door of many such places.

And most were not family friendly for those who had youngsters along, hoping to introduce a new generation to the grandeur of collegiate wrestling.

So, I came up with the idea of renting

a space in the Holiday Inn in downtown Iowa City. I was able to find a few exhibitors willing to invest time and a little money in the new venture, and I brought in two very special guests that I hoped would draw some fans. With us that first year were Dan Hodge, the legendary three-time, undefeated NCAA champion from Oklahoma, and Verne Gagne, two-time NCAA champion for Minnesota and the first ever four-time Big Ten champion.

Both had fashioned tremendous careers in the professional ranks as well, and they were a huge hit with those fans who found us. Frankly, there was only 600 or so that first year.

One of the main attractions was my vast collection of memorabilia, which included rare trading cards from as far back as 1898, seldom-seen NCAA programs from the early 1930s and several of the books I had written, including my first called "Two Guys named Dan", about Hodge and Gable.

The event grew steadily each year and the long list of celebrities included many of the biggest names in the sport's history. Among those who honored us with their presence were Olympic champions Bill Smith, Doug Blubaugh, Yojiro Uetake, Dan Gable, Dave Schultz, Ben and John Peterson, Ed and Lou Banach, Bruce Baumgartner and Kurt Angle, World champions Lee Kemp and Lloyd Keaser, UFC sensation Randy Couture, and heroes like Wayne Baughman, Russ Camilleri, Stanley

and Joe Henson, Wade Schalles, Greg Strobel, Dale Anderson and Carlton Haselrig.

THIS YEAR, we are excited to have as our special guests two of the most intriguing wrestlers I have ever known: Curran Jacobs and John Hanrahan. They will be with Bev and me at our tables to chat with fans and share their remarkable stories.

Curran Jacobs was captain of the 2012 Michigan State team and earned a master's degree in theater arts. He has appeared in several movies and is the star and director of a new documentary called "For the Love of Catch". It traces the development of wrestling through the early days in America, from Abe Lincoln's iconic match in New Salem, Ill., to the Frank Gotch era in Iowa, and the way the catch-as-catch-can style of submission wrestling morphed into the forms we now know as scholastic, freestyle, BJJ and even pro "rassling."



Curran Jacobs



John Hanrahan

Among the many stars appearing in the documentary are Dan Gable, Tom and Terry Brands, Mark Johnson, Randy Couture and

Wrestling's Past and Present



Mike Chapman

Dan Severn. It is a fascinating journey through the grand history of our sport. It has become a big hit on various streaming platforms.

Curran has won a number of major Catch wrestling tournaments, including the World United Catch Championship in 2018. He is also the star of a new movie called "Silent Night in Algona" which is the true story of a German prisoner of war camp in a small Iowa town in 1944. It has also been getting rave reviews.

In 2020, John Hanrahan wrote a book called "Wrestling With Angels" with

See Page 42: 2023 WIN FAN EXPO

WIN EXPO * Tulsa Convention Center * March 16-18

Come to the Culture House booth and meet Curran Jacobs, John Hanrahan & Mike Chapman



See the famous **DAN HODGE TROPHY** and have your photo taken with it



CURRAN JACOBS:

The captain of the 2012 team at Michigan State and a star of catch wrestling, Curran is now a movie actor and director. His documentary "For the Love of Catch" explores the history of wrestling and Curran will have DVD copies for sale at our booth Friday and Saturday.



During his 50-year journalism career, Mike Chapman (center) has met many of the biggest names in wrestling history, including Dan Hodge (left) and Randy Couture (right). Mike created the Dan Hodge Trophy and will have many of his 32 books for sale at the WIN Expo, at large discount prices!



JOHN HANRAHAN

A two-time All-American for Penn State, John became a world-renown model and then suffered a horrific setback that nearly ended his life. His book "Wrestling With Angels" tells his amazing story and John will have books at our booth Friday and Saturday.

some people are tough and others are not. Those who are tough have been exposed more than you to challenging physical or mental situations.

So, you need to start staring fear in the face and do things that are “hard” for you. The more you do that, the tougher (physically and/or mentally) you become. Fear is an acronym that stands for “FALSE EVIDENCE APPEARING REAL.” There are only a few legitimate fears in life. A near-car accident. An animal is attacking you. Not a wrestling match or test.

Step #3: What will you do each day

to develop toughness? Have an ongoing mantra in your head? “I am relentless and aggressive.” Will you start to challenge yourself physically by doing extra each day after practice? Physical and mental toughness go hand in hand and affect toughness. Will you take cold showers each day for at least 30 seconds? Will you set aside 10 minutes a day to work on your mindset? Will you commit to no longer making excuses and avoiding difficult things?

It is simple and hard to get tougher. It is simple because all it takes is regularly doing things that cause you fear. It is hard

because it requires you to consistently do uncomfortable things.

Over time, you will develop resilience to what you are afraid of and have been conditioned to. You may not call it fear. It could be pain. Embarrassment. Lack of self-belief. It is all the same. You are afraid of facing those emotions, so you avoid them by not taking risks, giving up, or making excuses.

What commitment can you make to yourself today? This is far from making a difference only in wrestling. COVID has hurt our younger generation. I mean it and see it every day. It has caused

entitlement (expecting something without earning it), laziness (someone else will do it for me), and lack of accountability (a learned behavior that it is not your fault if things don’t go well.)

It is not your fault if you are not mentally or physically tough, run from adversity, or have a poor mindset. However, it is NOW your responsibility to change it.

(John Klessinger is a teacher and wrestling coach at South River High School in Maryland. You can follow him on Instagram @coachkless and like his Facebook page “Coach Kless”.) ■

WHY DIV. III?, From page 33

“You really are a student first at the University of Chicago,” Gentry said, pointing out that practices are scheduled around wrestlers’ class times. “But wrestling is a very important part of your education, your development as a person,” he added. “It’s not either/or.”

The first question he asks recruits is, “What do you love about wrestling?”

“I don’t want them to say ‘Winning,’

because winning is not enough,” Gentry stressed. “Wrestling is hard. You have to love to compete, getting better, pushing yourself.”

A Division I team might boast 20 wrestlers ranked nationally in the top 10, he said, “but that means 10 aren’t wrestling.”

Most in Division III will have a challenging and fulfilling experience, a lot of opportunity to compete, Gentry said, pointing

out that Division III Wisconsin-Whitewater wrestler Jarit Shinhoster finished second in December’s Midlands Championships.

“My job as a coach is to maximize your wrestling potential, and the vast majority of wrestlers get that in Division III,” Gentry said. “The sport of wrestling at the collegiate level is really underserved. There’s a lot of talent around.”

And about those talented wrestlers in

Division III, Eau Claire coach Fader declared, “They’re absolutely doing it for the sport.”

Note: Check out the next issue of WIN for a view from Division III wrestlers’ perspectives on why they chose that level.

(Sandy Stevens is a long-time public address announcer of national and international events and was named to the National Hall of Fame in 1998.) ■

2023 WIN FAN EXPO, From page 34

a subtitle which says it is “A true story of addiction, resurrection, hope, fashion, training celebrities and man’s oldest sport.”

I wrote about the book in a previous column. It was shocking, sometimes scary and finally uplifting. I simply couldn’t put it down and read it in two days. John was a two-time All-American at Penn State and UWW Veteran World champion. While competing in a televised match, he was discovered by a prominent agent and became a world-famous model. It was that wild

modeling lifestyle that took him to the very brink and a terrifying battle for survival.

John rebounded with the help and support of his wife, Kirsten, and became a well-established celebrity fitness trainer. They also founded a non-profit group called Recovering Angels to assist addicts and their families on the road to recovery.

He has appeared on national TV shows to discuss his book, including Fox & Friends, CBN’s Faith Nation and FloSports’s Bader Show. He has also

been featured on The Brian Kilmeade Radio Show, The Big Talker Network’s Recovering Hope and Rescuers Radio Show with Art Brooks, as well as many podcasts.

He was a guest on the Coffee Hour Show, which features notable Penn State alumni and was even a speaker at the international NDE (Near Death Experience) Summit. A prominent Hollywood agent has shown interest in a books-to-film project.

Both Curran and John will be at our tables Friday and Saturday to talk with fans

and offer their DVDs and books for sale. And we will have many of my books for sale, too.

We hope you will stop by and see Curran, John, Bev and me to help us put an exclamation mark on this long journey we began in 1991!

(Mike Chapman is the founder of WIN Magazine, Dan Hodge Trophy, the National Hall of Fame Dan Gable Museum, author of 30 books and was named to the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2007.) ■

COLORADO’S ACE, From page 40

“We want our kids to be tough, in-your-face competitive, yet be good sports at the same time. If you lose, you lose. Shake hands and move on.”

Dave is most proud of what his wrestlers in the club have accomplished off the mat.

“Our kids not only do well in school,

but every year they earn several state and national titles at all levels,” he said. “We are building good people.”

It is not unusual to see the Duran Club heading up community fundraising initiatives, including one that supports the aHUS Foundation, a disease of the kidneys which Urijah Duran battles daily.

“I am always inspired by Yaya’s willpower and desire to fight hard on the mat,” said Acelyn. “In between matches, he endures regular weekly dialysis sessions.

“When my brother became sick, I realized life is valuable. In the blink of an eye, life can forever be changed. This experience taught me to be a fighter and to believe in myself on and off the mat.”

Because of aHUS, Urijah must compete at his own weight without the ability to cut down to a lower class. Despite this limitation, Yaya has won several RMN national events and a plethora of Outstanding Wrestler awards.

In the voice of one who has already succeeded in life as well as on the mat, Yaya said, “I’m thankful every day to be alive. Wrestling gives me the strength and the courage to fight a lifetime illness. I will continue to battle and, one day, I know I will win.”

Yaya looks up to his older sister.

“Like my mom, she’s always in my corner,” Yaya said. “I am lucky to have a sister who is a beast, a multiple state and national champion. We wrestle all the

time, but only when I get lucky can I beat her.”

“When I started wrestling, there were no girls’ divisions,” remembers Ace. “Now there are sixteen girls in our club. These girls look up to me, thus I must be the best student-athlete I can be. I want them to know that if they are dedicated and hard-working, they can accomplish anything in life.”

“Being a female wrestler is a challenge. It is also an opportunity to expose wrestling to all female athletes. Wrestling has taught me discipline, courage and to trust the journey.

“Wrestling will mess with your confidence, but you learn you can overcome any challenge. You will come to believe you can get through all life’s obstacles. This sport teaches life lessons you will use as an adult.”

“If I am to leave a legacy to those who lead the club after me, it is that building a champion begins from the inside,” reflected Coach Duran.

“Once a champion in spirit, one becomes a champion in life.” ■

SUMMIT
measurement

PREMIUM
Wrestling Scales
& Tournament Kits

NTEP AND AUTOHOLD
MODELS AVAILABLE

**WEIGHT LOCK
FEATURE**

855.972.2537

WWW.SUMMITMEASUREMENT.NET