



2000 PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

LAWRENCE E. FASICK

FULTON, MARYLAND

Sports Photojournalist Lawrence Fasick says he started taking pictures in 1979 while still in high school. Growing up in the Commonwealth of Virginia, he was fortunate that the high school he attended was a vocational technical school. He elected to take classes like television and film production, and photography hoping one day to make a career in news media or as a Hollywood film director.

He also liked to act and perform on stage in the theatrical department. More of a comedian, he always could make people laugh he states, "I think it takes a great person, one with a knack to get people to smile and laugh. I think I am a great people person." To be able to get great photos you need to have great people skills he adds. Fasick says he's always been interested in news events and being where the action is and helping people so he joined the American Red Cross as a youth volunteer, working on the blood mobile, and being on the emergency disaster unit.

Fasick was selected to represent the State of Virginia at a youth leadership conference where youth leaders from across the country attended. "The conference was a awesome learning experience," he stated. During his years he helped out at events, and worked a few disasters, one where an entire apartment building had exploded from a natural gas leak. He worked two days straight on search and rescue without sleep, and after a short break returned to help some more.

He received numerous awards for his "above and beyond" the call to duty as a disaster unit volunteer. In high school he was a photographer for the yearbook and school newspaper and was always out and about taking photos of student life and sports. Shooting most of the schools sporting events, "I was making a few bucks from the guys on the teams who liked the action photos, it paid for the film," Fasick says.

His greatest influence in photography was Mr. Bernie Boston, photo journalist from the *Washington Star* newspaper who came to Lawrence's photography class for a lecture. "He really taught me a lot in one day, a few secrets and some great techniques too!" Fasick says. After suffering a near fatal motorcycle accident in 1980 that ended his wrestling career, Lawrence

left high school and worked various jobs. He later went back to high school (North Pacific PA.) to get his diploma. Then after a break he enrolled in New York Institute of Photography. Always calling sports photography his "true love", he can usually be found at tournaments every week year round. Lawrence also shoots weddings, but, "shooting sports at all levels keeps me active and young," Fasick said.

He shoots a variety of sports but more for wrestling. "I have dedicated myself to getting this generation at all levels the coverage and positive publicity that they deserve," Fasick adds. "I do what I can for the sport of wrestling. You get to know the different wrestlers on the high school and college teams and their parents and you bond with them," Fasick said.

Last summer a high school wrestler was killed in an auto accident and Fasick donated all of the young man's wrestling photographs to the school. They made a permanent memorial showcase in the school lobby. "I wanted some way to help keep his memory alive so others would never forget about him. I considered him my friend and he was an awesome wrestler," Fasick adds. "Donating the photographs for the showcase and to his parents was a part of healing for me since I knew him."

Fasick says, "I was taught by my mom and grandmother to always help others and to give. We all need to play a positive role in shaping and working with the younger generation of today. I donate a lot of my time and photography to help out, not only in my community but statewide," he adds. "It really makes you feel good to help others and to listen to the younger generation. A lot of them call me a role model, they say I'm cool," Fasick laughs. "I just tell them to study hard, be a good person and don't be such a class clown as I once was!"

Fasick states, "To be associated with such a top notch wrestling magazine is great!" He adds, "I truly enjoy my job as State Editor - Photographer for *Wrestling USA Magazine*. Mr. Bryant, his family and staff are truly a blessing to me. What an honor it is to be selected the Photographer of the Year. Thank you all so very much! I look forward to many more years of working with you all at WUSA."

