



# 2000 MASTER OF WRESTLING AWARD

## JACK ROLLER

BIXBY, OKLAHOMA

Jack Roller has been directing national youth wrestling tournaments for 20 years. He has held the position of coaching wrestlers in his local club, president of the Oklahoma Kids Wrestling Association for many years, and tournament director of the Tulsa Nationals, Reno World of Wrestling Championships, and the AAU Folkstyle Nationals. In 1995, Jack was inducted into the Wrestling Hall of Fame by receiving the Lifetime Service Award for his many years of involvement with youth wrestling. In 1995, he was chosen as the AAU Association Person of the Year. In 1996, he was chosen as AAU's Person of the Year.

Jack became involved in youth wrestling in 1979 when his wife came home from their oldest son, Keith's football practice to announce that she was signing him up for wrestling. The elementary wrestling coach had seen Keith at football practice and asked her to consider allowing him to wrestle. The coach was in need of a wrestler his size to fill his team. When she took Keith to his first practice, there were younger and smaller boys also in the wrestling room. Her younger sons, Jimmy and Michael, also wanted to sign up. Their youngest son, Shane, was only 4 months old at the time. Neither Jack nor Bev had even seen a wrestling match. They both loved basketball and had excelled in that sport in high school.

The first wrestling tournament the boys competed in, Jack was out of town and Bev took all four boys alone. The coaches had all gone to a tournament with the advanced wrestlers and she was at a beginner tournament with the boys. When they announced "Roller to mat one", she gathered all three of the wrestlers and the baby and took them all to mat one to ask, "Which one do you want?" All the

boys were successful wrestlers and amassed eight high school state championships. They each signed athletic scholarships to Division I schools.

Jack takes a lot of pride in the fact that he applies the rules of the tournament to everyone and he makes every effort to always be fair. He attributes the success of his tournaments to those facts. The Tulsa Nationals, Cliff Keen Kickoff Classic, and Reno World of Wrestling Championships are not sanctioned by either USA Wrestling nor AAU. He chooses to put the money generated from the tournaments back into the awards presented to the wrestlers. Jack receives many compliments for the extra things he does to make the events special for the wrestlers. Sometimes the parents complain of having to wait too long for the special ceremonies but Jack always tells them he is doing it for the kids!

Jack does all the layout for each of the programs at the tournaments he directs. His publications have received many awards as Outstanding Wrestling Publication from *Wrestling USA Magazine*.

He recently began the World All Star Team which honors wrestlers success in the Cliff Keen Athletic Tulsa Nationals, the Cliff Keen Athletic Kickoff Classic, and the Cliff Keen Athletic Reno World of Wrestling Championships. This All Star team was selected to give recognition to young wrestlers.

Congratulations Jack for receiving our highest award for the new millennium. The wrestling community and *Wrestling USA Magazine* wants to honor you for your life and time commitment to the positive development of young men and women of America through the sport of wrestling.

