



Wayne Bennett

"Register-Herald", Beckley, West Virginia

2001 SPORTSWRITER OF THE YEAR

Editor's Note: The criteria for Sportswriter of the Year includes depth of coverage, photo accompaniment, human interest stories, and other factors. Depth of coverage requires that the writer go beyond the simple reporting of results and is able to capture the essence and personality of the sport of wrestling. This is sometimes a difficult task in a media world that places so much emphasis on the high profile sports of football and basketball. It is also a challenge to find the time it takes to write good local sports stories when many newspapers, due to economic considerations, are increasingly dependent upon wire services to provide material. Wrestling USAMagazine salutes these writers for the dedication and contribution to our great sport!-Cal

The state of West Virginia is very fortunate. In a nation with very few "wrestling sportswriters", that state can brag of having one of the very few. His name is **WAYNE BENNETT**, a writer for the *Register-Herald* in Beckley, West Virginia.

Bennett exemplifies the criteria outlined in the editor's note above. His writing is in-depth, insightful, and reflects a passion and knowledge for the sport. He writes about high school and college wrestling, and covers the sport outside of



the local area around Beckley. He has been doing so for twenty years. His writing has been recognized in the past. Wayne was named as an honorable mention selection for this *Wrestling USA Magazine* award in 1984 and was selected as the West Virginia Wrestling Sportswriter of the Year in 2001.

Bennett's contributions to the sport do not end with the writing of newspaper articles. He has been a registered referee for twenty-four years and has officiated numerous regional and conference cham-

pionships. He is also the co-founder of the Southern Coalfield Officials Board and served as that organization's secretary for twenty-two years.

Wayne has also served the sport in the capacities of coach and administrator. He coached junior high and high school teams for eighteen years. His teams were undefeated five times and put together a string of sixty-five straight wins. As an administrator he founded the Southern West Virginia Youth Wrestling League in 1976; was founder of the Mountain State Wrestling Camp, and director of numerous camps and tournaments.

Wayne was nominated by Pete King, Wyoming East High School. Pete says of Bennett, "Wayne writes about wrestlers of all levels, whether it be youth, high school, college, or the Olympics. In addition to his writing he devotes a tremendous amount of time and energy to the promotion of this great sport."



1st Runner-up
Paul Adamski
Green Bay News Chronicle
Green Bay, WI
Nominated by Terry Manning