

## McGaw Hall, The Legend Slayer

By Royce Alger

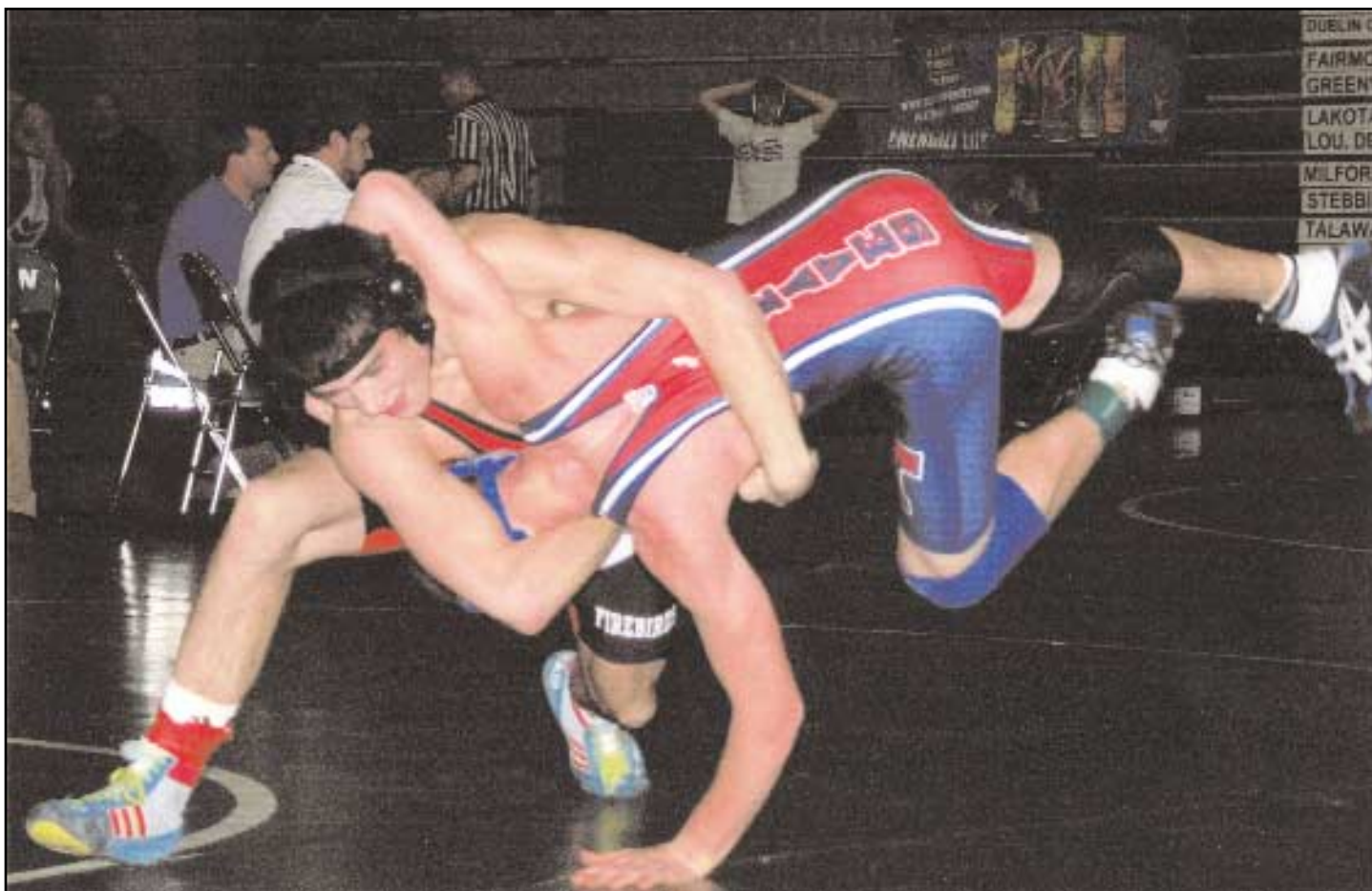
**H**aving competed in the Midlands Wrestling Tournament in its heyday, ol' Dad has a different perspective on open wrestling tournaments. Back in those days the Midlands was the only dance in town as far as Christmas tournaments were concerned. It was thought of as the killing fields for collegiate wrestling. The thing that made it the most remarkable was that you couldn't swing a frozen cat around by the tail without hitting a world or Olympic Champion. So not only did you have to contend with all the great college guys, you had grown men attending. No other tournament offers, or should I say offered, that kind of competition. It is now limited in its numbers and teams have to be allowed a certain number of spots. Furthermore, freshmen are not allowed unless they wrestle Varsity for a recognized team. Yes, they finally

tweaked the definition of an open tournament. That is why I love the U.S. Open. Any man with any stones can enter and get gutted like a range deer. And have, on many occasions. Any guy... or woman... with any game can throw their hat into the ring and go all in for a real National Title. No age limitations or eligibility. You don't even have to qualify, which I might add, makes it all the more eventful. I saw Joe Williams assault a 45-year old grandpa in 1999. It was scary.

At any rate the Midlands, at one time was the Granddaddy of them all. I once saw Barry Davis, who was ranked number 2 in the world and had a silver medal from the Olympics, get beat by a freshman from Michigan. I believe it was John Fisher. A complete, total upset. And a great match to boot. I also saw Duane Goldman beat the defending world champion Bill Scherr at

that tournament. I saw Greg Randall beat Randy Lewis by 10 points the fall before Randy won the Olympics. Gable told me back in his day that there were several times when world champions would square off. Ol' Dad even pulled a big one off. My sophomore year I beat Andre Metzger in the 158 pound final. He was 2nd in the world at 149 pounds the summer before and placed 2nd that following summer. Granted, he was a little '49 pounder up a weight, but I did beat a "world class" wrestler. A great feather in my hat.

Now back to the title 'The Legend Slayer'. There were a lot of people who thought it was the hall itself that was the catalyst for the upsets. All the matches I have described in the latter are pretty remarkable. But that hall has an even bigger upset that shook its rafters. McGaw



Ohio - 135 pounder, Tony Bradberry (Lakota West) defeated Jordan Porter (Talawanda) by fall in 4:30 at the 1st Annual James Horning Memorial Tournament. Lakota West High School came out on top of the 12 team invitational. Photo by Karl Monk.