



## 2006 Editor-of-the-Year Award

# William X. Barron

## New England Pre School Region

**W**restling, for Bill X. Barron ("BxB"), began long before he first competed in 7th grade. Then and now, wrestling is family. Oldest brother Jim wrestled at Springfield College; later while in grad school, he coached Boston University's first varsity wrestling team. Bill followed brothers Tom and Pete in competing for the Air Academy High Falcons in Colorado Springs, CO. All three were captains for Coach Gary Riter, whose teams were always a reflection of his unshakable character and an ever-present commitment to one's best.

*"Hold a mirror to yourself on the wrestling mat and you will see a reflection of the person you are. How you wrestle is directly related to how you live your life. How often have you aspired to live the un-lived life, to carry out an unfulfilled journey, or to complete the half-finished takedown or escape? Life is a seesaw between unresolved doubt and unrealized potential. Which side of the board carries your weight in life and, therefore, on the mat?"*

Bill's coaching began in high school with the spring elementary school program. Founder and coach for Colorado College's wrestling club, he was undefeated and unscored upon in his college intramural tournament career. In 1972 at age 18, Bill began his 30-year and ongoing career as a high school official and coach. Beginning with Corpus Christi, a parochial team of 1st through 8th graders, he turned a last-place team into two-time league champs in his 4-year tenure. By his junior and senior years in college, Bill was a full-time volunteer assisting high school wrestling programs at St. Mary's and Mitchell High in Colorado Springs, CO.

*"Wrestling is more than a sport; it is a dedication to personal excellence unsurpassed in any other sport. It is a belief that one's best is truly just that. For to wrestle and to wrestle well is to persevere, to vanquish not only one's opponent but those demons within oneself which stand between a person and his objective. Facing struggle is the battle won. Rather than measure yourself by the score or clock, the individual is accountable first and always to oneself. Can you live with the self you have presented on – and off – the mat?"*

In 1980, when Bill arrived at Cardigan



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Mt. School, a prep school for grade 6th - 9th boys in Canaan, New Hampshire. Headmaster Norman Wakely asked if he would begin the school's first wrestling team. What began that winter with 12 boys and Assistant Coach Neil Brier, evolved into a tradition that, when Coach Barron departed 18 years later, had seen dozens compete at the highest level, including three who became High School All-Americans: George Lewis '90, a 3-time state champ for McCallie (TN); Joey Gonzalez '91, national prep school runner-up for Blair (NJ); and Geoff Reisman '97, a 3-time New England prep champ (1-time runner-up) for St. Paul's (NH) as well as placing 2nd and 1st in the prep nationals.

In 1983, Bill began the New England Middle School Championships, which grew to include 25-30 teams from 8 states and Montreal. Because Bill believes that wrestling should be as much about learning as competing, a feature unique to this tournament was Olympian Champion Bobby Weaver's individual coaching available to all wrestlers and coaches at no additional fee. In the summers, he coordinated a weekend camp at Cardigan with Olympians Weaver and Nate Carr. Finally, he co-founded the New England Jr. Prep Wrestling Association, from which he

earned the Van Order Award for Distinguished Service in 1996.

*"As coach, I am committed to your best. I can teach devotion and demand dedication, two attributes wrestling has taught me. The desire to learn – and the discipline to practice it – come from within you. Knowing the difference wrestling has made in my life, it is my calling to share its special significance with each of you. Together let's be remembered for a season in which nothing was held back. Wrestle as you would live: fully present, fully alive, fully committed."* (January, 2004)

Now the head coach at Hyde School in Bath, Maine, Bill continues to influence wrestling throughout New England, serving in succession as vice-president, president, and the current secretary-treasurer for the N.E. Independent School Wrestling Association. His teams are known for their persistent effort and consistent sportsmanship. An English and psychology teacher as well as school counselor and dean of residential life, it is Bill's fondness for detail and his love for writing which keep him connected to coaches and wrestlers alike. After serving the New Hampshire Wrestling Officials Association as secretary-treasurer for 11 years, he left for Maine in 1998 with a lifetime membership. He has compiled 16-page record books for N.E. wrestling at both the middle and high school levels and is currently working on a records project compiling all place-winners in the Prep Nationals from 1935 to present. He serves as editor for the N.E. Prep Region's page in *Wrestling USA*, which has also published four of his coaching articles. When he is not coaching, Bill can be found midside with his camera taking pictures of other N.E. wrestlers.

*"Wrestling, as life, is a sport of tests and challenges. If character is the measure of a person's response to adversity, the sport of wrestling consistently reminds you that adversity is inescapable. Therefore, to approach your best, not only in wrestling but in life as well, you must know and believe in the person and athlete you are. Because you may approach a contest not even knowing what your best looks like, you must be willing to experience a best previously unknown to you. That takes courage, foresight, and a heightened level of self-honesty."*

