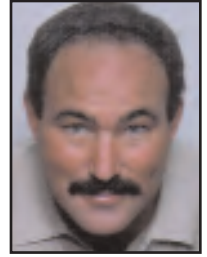


## How to Psyche Out Your Opponent Without Really Trying *The Dave Schultz Way*

By Steven Holt



**B**eing a high school wrestler back in the early 1970s was a fun and innocent time – so long as I was winning, that is. I mean, after dedicating myself wholly to the sport and putting in so much work, time, blood and sweat, winning was everything, just as it has been for thousands of years and will be a thousand years into the future for all competitors of any sport, especially wrestling. My same ideology and determination was also on the mind of my high school wrestling pal, Dave Schultz (1984 Olympic Champion, World champion, etc.) as together we traveled to faraway sites in search of wrestling glory.

At the time we were wrestling in freestyle and high school tournaments, neither one of us could predict the future, especially the fact that Dave would become such an incredibly great wrestler. He was good at the time, ranging around the 138 lb. class as a soph-

omore and junior, but no one thought he'd make it in the way he eventually did. Especially for those who didn't know him and his burning desire to win.

To the average onlooker or opponent, Dave "Pudge" Schultz had the epitome of the "NON-wrestler" physique- a complete butterball with no well defined muscles usually associated with such a grueling sport as wrestling. He was a late bloomer and his body didn't start to develop (if ever at all) until his adult life. Until that time in his 20s, Dave was doomed to always be mistaken at mat side as either a score keeper, trainer or, as we called him in jest, a "Mat Maid."

At times during various weekend tournaments put on by the Bay Area Wrestling Association (BWA) of Northern California, Dave would run into some massively built studmuffin of unknown wrestling skills. As a high school kid, even

"The Pudge" got concerned when going against some unknown opponent who looked like a steroid experiment gone wrong. Some guys just mature earlier than others and in high school wrestling, the muscle-bound goliath who everyone was talking about could bring a case of the jitters to even a composed and confident wrestler like Schultz. Granted, he was never scared of anyone but he was concerned for the fact that one wrong move, one little mistake and, WHAM!, he could come crashing to the mat as flat as a pancake.

Thus, as his buddy (I was usually one weight class above him), it was my duty to assist my fat little friend in every way I could,

California – Alan Canizalez applying a head and arm to win the 68 kilo championships at the Cadet State Championships in Las Mesa, CA. Photo by James Brammer.

