



2007 Official of-the-Year Award

RON COLLINS Butte, MT

For the Love of the Sport.

If there is one phrase to describe Ron Collins' zeal for wrestling, it's his love of the mat sport.

A native of Butte, Ron Collins began his officiating career in 1963. He must have impressed a lot of coaches because only four years later Ron was officiating the Montana State High School Wrestling Championships. And Collins has done so to the present time. In fact, Ron Collins was selected by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) as the 1993 Montana State Wrestling Official of the Year.

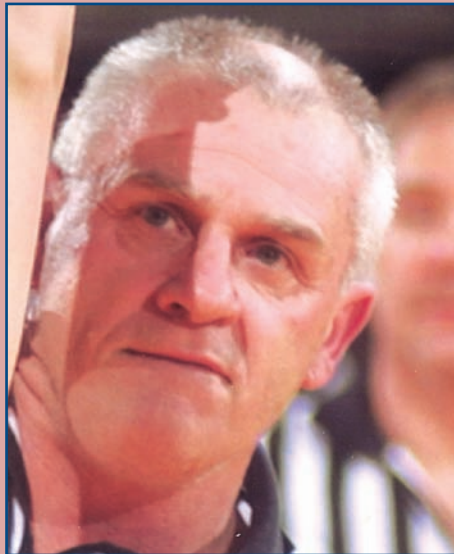
Ron Collins is a virtual "Who's Who" as a mat arbiter from the state to national levels. Ron has officiated many national collegiate tournaments as well, since 1982, including numerous NAIA National Championships, four Junior College National Tournaments, and the Big Sky Conference twice.

Collins was so highly respected at the national collegiate level, he was appointed the supervisor of the NAIA tournament officials from 1996 to 2005.

Presently, Collins assumes the duty of assigning wrestling officials to high schools in his pool area. He also trains his officials, leading study sessions on the art and science of refereeing. Collins works hand-in-hand with the Montana High School Association. He also keeps in constant contact with the state's wrestling coordinator, reviewing current changes and interpretations with regards to the sport of wrestling in general.

Collins initiated and is a charter member of the Butte Wrestling Club, promoting all facets of the mat sport in the community.

Ron Collins is also deeply involved in Butte civic affairs. He was a past president and board member of the local



Ron Collins
Butte, MT



Ron Collins in action

United Way. Collins also served as president of the Butte Silver Bow Kiwanis Club.

Ron Collins concern for the youth of Butte is not limited to the sport of wrestling. He previously chaired the Sports and Recreation committee of the Butte Chamber of Commerce. In the past, Collins was elected to serve as a Butte School Board trustee.

A 1963 graduate of Butte High School, Collins attended Montana Tech for two years. A banker for 14 years, Ron and his wife Jenny now own two insurance agencies in the Butte area.

When asked what was his most memorable experience in wrestling, Ron Collins replied, "I cannot really single out one situation; I have had so many rewarding experiences. If I were to select one, it would be the night I was called to officiate my first national tournament.

I have met so many fine people and have maintained several close relationships as a result of my years as a wrestling official.

As Ron Collins' photo illustrates, he has a very unique pinning signal. He states "It is something I have been doing for over 25 years when a fall occurs. I really don't know why I started doing it, but I think I wanted to make the matches even more exciting for the wrestlers and fans. It worked!"

Ron and Jenny have been married for over 40 years and still reside in Butte, Montana. They are the proud parents of two sons: Ron (1982 Montana State Champion) and Robbie (1984 Montana State 3rd Placewinner), and three daughters: Jodi, Julie, and Janelle. They presently have six grandchildren and one great grandson. In fact, their grandson, Tyler Johnston, was a Montana State Champion in 2006.

Wrestling USA Magazine congratulates Ron Collins as the "2007 National Wrestling Official of the Year." We commend Mr. Collins for his lifetime commitment to the development and growth of the mat sport in the state of Montana.

Written by Dr. Bill Welker, chairman of the official selection committee and 2002 National Official of the Year.