Though more than 30 years have passed, I still vividly remember parents stopping my father at a store or along the street to express their thanks. While they could have been thanking him for yet another victory for the wrestling team or a personal victory for their son, they most often thanked him for his impact on their son's life. As a high school wrestling coach, my father has influenced many lives throughout his career. John Maxwell the prolific author on the subject of leaders says that leadership is influence - nothing more nothing less. Every coach is a leader and provides influence, but not all coaches provide quality leadership. If this is true· what makes the difference? I believe a leader's motives determine not only the quality of leadership but the style through which he leads.

Wrestling is a sport which relies on discipline. My father required the normal disciplines that most wrestling coaches convey - weight control, physical conditioning, attending practice, and technique. Coach Wolf, as he is still called, also required social and heart disciplines. Socially, his wrestlers were required to keep their hair at a certain length, could not drink alcohol or use tobacco during the season, were expected to keep grades above the minimum the league required, and had a strict curfew. If anyone was caught breaking any of his rules, the punishment was often missing at least one match whether a state champion or a second string wrestler.

The heart was Pete Wolf's key focus. He would often say that the difference between good wrestlers and great wrestlers is measured by about 12 inches - the distance between the head and the heart. He was always after the hearts of his wrestlers. His focus on discipline was first to make us responsible people, then good wrestlers. His social rules were not to control, but to provide a foundation of good living and respect. He captured hearts in the practice room through individual teaching, through discipline, through inspiration, and encouragement. He expected his wrestlers to excel in the fundamentals of their sport