The story also covers how Trenge (pronounced "trenj") learns to manage a temper that contributed to his being benched for part of the season after two disqualifications. The film captures the poignant heart-to-heart talks Trenge has with his coach Greg Strobel. Strobel knows Trenge won't be his best until he controls the anger he feels when opponents paw at his eyes or hit him in the face during matches.

Above all, the compelling movie captures how a young man evolves as a person and learns lessons that he can apply in other aspects of his life.

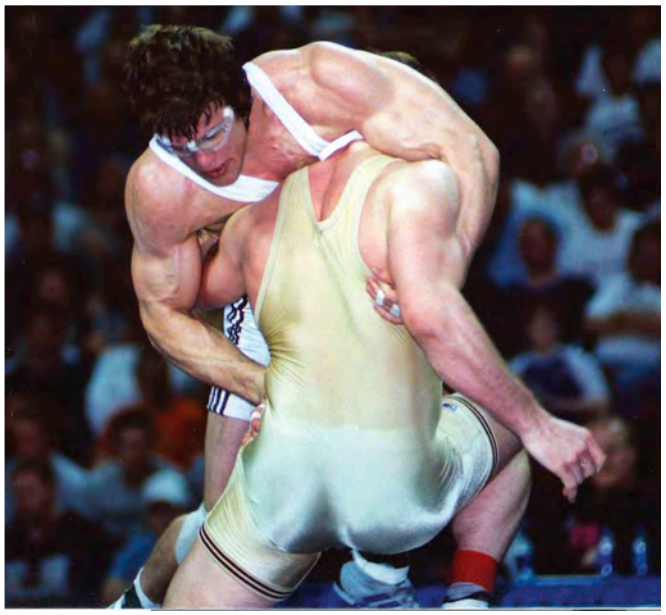
Viewers saw an advance screening of the documentary at the 2007 Division I Wrestling Championships in Auburn Hills, Michigan. Hundreds stood and applauded during the closing credits.

"This was a labor of love," said Veritas producer Howie Miller, who plans to pitch the film to television producers as well. "We are going to present it to distributors for theaters, too, and see what happens. We know there is a passionate fun base for wrestling, and we want to make this available for them as soon as possible."

Lights, camera, action

Miller and fellow producer Alex Weinress followed Trenge with cameras for six months to film the documentary.

Like Trenge, Miller grew up in the Lehigh Valley in Pennsylvania where wrestling has the same religious following at the high school level as football does in Texas, hockey in Minnesota or basketball in Indiana.



Jon Trenge (Lehigh) trying to counter a takedown attempt by Damion Hahn (Minnesota) during the his 2003 NCAA finals match. Hahn prevailed with a 5-4 decision. Photo by John Johnson.

Miller is a few years older than Trenge, but they are both alumni of Parkland High School. Miller's family is also close with Trenge's grandparents, and he felt this was a story that needed to be told.

"That area is a mecca for wrestling," said Miller, who attended the University of Virginia from 1991-96 on a wrestling scholarship. "It's a way of life for people in that area. It's a great tradition that is passed on from generation to generation."

Miller, who also has a law degree from Villanova University, worked as a lawyer in Allentown, Pennsylvania, while filming the documentary.

While he wrestled at Virginia, Miller became aware of a up-and-coming wrestler from his home area. Trenge developed into a blue-chip prospect and dominated in high school. He decided to wrestle in the area at Lehigh.

Trenge was always one of the top-ranked wrestlers in the 197-pound weight class, including being No. 1 heading into the Division I National Championships his senior year.

"One of the takeaways from this film is what you learn about work ethic," Miller said. "As Jon's dad said in the movie, it's not about winning or losing. It's about all the people who care about you."

Two-time NCAA runner-up Jon Trenge (Lehigh) bid for a National Championship falls short in his semi-final match against Sean Stender (Northern Iowa). Stender defeated Trenge 5-3. Photo by Wyatt Schultz.