



# OFFICIAL-OF-THE-YEAR AWARD

## LARRY DEATON Martins Ferry, Ohio

**D**evoted longevity. If there are two words to describe Larry Deaton's officiating efforts over the years, it is most definitely "devoted longevity." In fact, Larry Deaton has officiated the grand sport of wrestling over the course of five decades!

An outstanding wrestler and 1964 graduate for Martins Ferry High School, Larry Deaton has dedicated his adult life to the promotion of wrestling in the Ohio Valley (Eastern Ohio and Northern West Virginia). Over the years, he has worn many hats: referee, coach, tournament director, team-official across the United States and as far away as Germany in 1979. But his greatest love is officiating, be it folkstyle, freestyle, or Greco-Roman.

Since 1966, Deaton has refereed at every level of the mat sport, from youth to college. And the beat goes on. His officiating efforts on the mats read like a "Who's Who" in the Ohio refereeing circuit. The following are just a sampling of the many events Deaton has officiated since the 1960s: 3 NAIA National Championships, the NCAA Division 2 Regional Tournament, 8 Ohio State Championships, 15 West Virginia State Tournaments, and 33 Ohio Valley Athletic Conference (OVAC) Championships, and 11 Medina (Ohio) Invitational Tournaments, and 3 National AAU Wrestling Championships.

Larry Deaton's "devoted longevity" over the last 42 years has not gone unnoticed. His numerous accolades include: 1992 OVAC Mr. Mat Award, 1994 Charter Distinguished Member of the Ohio Wrestling Officials Hall of Fame, 1997 WV Official of the Year & Martins Ferry High School Wrestling Hall of Fame, and the 2004 Ohio High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.



*Larry Deaton  
Martins Ferry, OH*

One of his proudest refereeing moments occurred at the prestigious 2009 Ron Mauck OVAC Championships in January. The annual official-of-the-year award is now given in his name: "The Larry Deaton OVAC Official of the Year."

Larry Deaton has been the secretary and interpreter of the Ohio Valley Wrestling Officials Association for 12 years. A former Ohio District and OVAC Champion, Deaton founded and began coaching the Ohio Valley Youth Wrestling Club in 1975. It was one of the first small-fry wrestling organizations formed in the Ohio Valley. He has also conducted many wrestling and officiating clinics over the years, and still continues to do so.

In the private sector, Larry Deaton has been involved with many worthwhile organizations including the Elks Lodge 231, the Masonic Lodge 496, Scottish Rite of Steubenville (Ohio), past president and treasurer of the Martins Ferry High

School Booster Club. He is currently the Chairman of the Trustees at the First United Methodist Church in Martins Ferry. Larry also served on the Martins Ferry Board of Education for 4 years and is presently a member of the Martins Ferry Parks Board, a position he has held for the past 6 years. As you can see, Larry Deaton has been very busy contributing to his community, both on and off the mats.

A plant foreman at Weirton Steel for 37 years, Larry Deaton now works for the City of Martins Ferry as an electrician.

Larry Deaton and his devoted wife, high school sweetheart, Sylvia, are the proud parents of two children: Teri (Deaton) Taylor of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio and Bill Deaton, who resides in Martins Ferry.

Teri and her husband, Tom, have three sons: Ethan, Colin, and Donovan (They are all wrestlers!). Bill and his lovely wife, Kathy, are the parents of four children: Curt, Brittany, Rebecca, and Andrew.

*Wrestling USA Magazine* congratulates Larry Deaton as the "2009 National Wrestling Official of the Year." We proudly recognize Mr. Deaton for his lifetime commitment to the development and growth of the mat sport in the Ohio and the upper Ohio Valley.

(Written by Dr. Bill Welker, Chairman of the Official Selection Committee and 2002 National Official of the Year.)

