



# Wrestling USA

## 1998 Coach Of The Year

### Jim Wittibslager - Michigan

**E** DITOR'S NOTE: *WUSA Magazine's* Coach of the Year Award is determined by considering two aspects of the careers of the nominees...their coaching performance during the season just completed and their consistency over a period of time. All of our final honorees offer both. All of them are deserving of the wrestling community's highest level of respect. All have contributed a great deal to the sport of wrestling.

How do you follow a performance of three consecutive state dual meet championships? It's simple. You take a team that graduated eight starters from the previous year, pick up the intensity, do one of the best single season coaching jobs in your career, and win a fourth state dual meet title.

Coach **Jim Wittibslager** of Dundee High School in Michigan did just that. As wrestling fans and coaches know, dual meet victories, especially at the state championship level, require balance. Wittibslager and assistant Tim Roberts took four experienced seniors, mixed five freshmen and two sophomores into the other ten weight classes, and molded a fourth consecutive Michigan Division IV State Dual Championship team. The Vikings finished 23-0 on the season and defeated the number 2, 3 and 4 seeded teams on their way to the title. They lost one of their top wrestlers prior to the state tournament, yet overcame that obstacle to crush Fulton-Middleton 55-16 in the finals. Opposing coaches as well as Dundee fans feel that it was possibly Jim's best coaching job ever.



Wittibslager is no stranger to dual wins. His career record stands at 333-36-3, including 285 wins at Dundee. The Vikings are 108-3 over the past four seasons, including a state record 74 consecutive dual wins and two undefeated seasons. This record has been assembled while wrestling many larger schools in order to provide the best possible competition.

Jim has been honored recently by being named Wrestling Coach of the Year by the Michigan High School Coaches Association and Region Coach of the Year by the *Monroe Evening News*, the latter for the fifth time.

*WUSA Magazine* salutes Jim Wittibslager for a job well done. In the words of New Lothrop Coach John Quaderer, "Jim Wittibslager is a coach who is able to take kids athletically where they can not take themselves...he is admired by his peers for his great accomplishments."

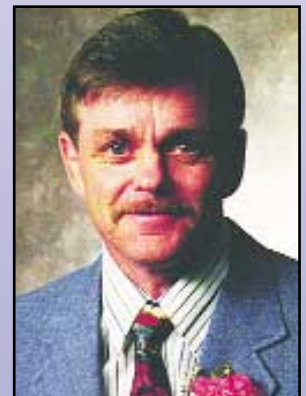
Wittibslager was nominated by Charles Shankin, principal at Dundee High School.



**Runner-up**  
**Cliff Laughlin**  
Idaho Falls High School (ID)  
Undefeated State Champions  
Nominated by Assistant Principal  
Cody Claver and the Idaho Falls  
Wrestling Team



**Honorable Mention**  
**Mike Newbern**  
The Miller School of  
Charlottesville (VA)  
Nominated by Frank Lipoli



**Honorable Mention**  
**Tom McCann**  
Kearney High School (NE)  
Nominated by Johnnie McCann