



Bulldog Wrestling legend Stephen Abas officially inducted into National Wrestling Hall of Fame

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STILLWATER, Okla. - Fresno State Wrestling legend Stephen Abas was officially inducted as a Distinguished Member of the 2018 National Wrestling Hall of Fame Class this weekend at its 42nd Annual Honors Banquet held at the Oklahoma State University Student Union Ballroom.

The four newest Distinguished Members were all international wrestling stars for the United States, each who competed in the Senior World Championships for Team USA numerous times and three who were members of the U.S. Olympic Team. Their list of achievements is endless, but their love for wrestling unified them all.

"The Class of 2018 is an amazing group of people who have made a tremendous and extremely positive impact on our sport," said Lee Roy Smith, Executive Director of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.

2004 Olympic silver medalist Stephen Abas was one of the greatest lightweight stars in American history. A three-time NCAA champion for Fresno State and 1998 Junior World champion, Abas dominated opponents during his era, using outstanding technique developed from a creative style of combat which was his own.

"Thank you to my mom, my brothers and sisters for making it out. My family has always been supportive of my career, traveling to the tournaments and watching me compete. Thank you to my workout partners who were there every day to take it, help me learn and to explore my arsenal. Thank you to my coaches. I have been fortunate to be around amazing coaches, giving me the little techniques to help me grow to who I am. I have been in this sport for 30 years, have met some amazing people and have built some amazing relationships," said Abas at his induction ceremony on Saturday evening.

A five-year Bulldog from 1997-2002, Abas was a three-time NCAA Division I national champion and a four-time All-American at Fresno State, winning titles in 1999, 2001 and 2002 after finishing fourth as a freshman in 1998. He won a silver medal at the Summer Olympics in 2004 and competed in the World Championships in 2001 and 2003. He also qualified for the World Championships in 2002, but the United States did not compete.

Abas was named to the NCAA's 75th Anniversary Wrestling Team in 2005 in the lightweight division, along with current Distinguished Members [Tom Brands](#) (2001), [Dan Gable](#) (1980), [John Smith](#) (1997) and [Yojiro Uetake Obata](#) (1980). He had a career college record of 144-4-0 and did not lose a match at 125 pounds. Abas concluded his college career with 95 consecutive wins, including a 35-0 record as a senior and a 34-0 record as a junior, while setting the school record for career wins with 144 wins and career winning percentage with 97.3 percent.

He was named the Fresno State Male Athlete of the Year in 1999 and 2001, and is currently the freestyle coach at the Valley Region Training Center in Fresno, California.

Throughout the evening, inspiring videos were shown of each inductee, prepared with skill and passion once again by Dave "Doc" Bennett.

"Just the Ticket to Build Our Community" - The Bulldog Scholarship Fund gives Bulldog alumni, fans and friends the opportunity to support Fresno State Athletics and the student-athletes who inspire them. For information about how you can support the Bulldog Scholarship Fund, please visit www.bulldogscholarshipfund.com or call 559-278-7160.

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