

**From:** Nicholas Reith nbreith@umail.iu.edu  
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**To:** Reith, Nicholas B nbreith@indiana.edu

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## Mike Dixon Returns to Indiana as Associate Head Coach

*Hoosiers round out coaching staff with veteran leadership and another IU alum*

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June 4, 2018

**BLOOMINGTON, Ind.** – Indiana head wrestling coach [Angel Escobedo](#) announced Monday the addition of [Mike Dixon](#) to his coaching staff. Dixon, who completed his varsity career at Indiana in 2001, returns to his alma mater as the Hoosiers' associate head coach.

"I'm excited to bring [Mike Dixon](#) on staff, as he was an instrumental part of the rise of Old Dominion Wrestling and brought in many top-25 recruiting classes," Escobedo said. "As an alumnus, his passion and commitment to see Indiana Wrestling at the top is unwavering. I know he is excited to have a big impact on taking this program to new heights. My staff and I are eager to foster success in this program."

Dixon enters the IU wrestling room with over a decade of veteran leadership and experience with raising a wrestling program to national prominence. In 13 years as an assistant and associate head coach at Old Dominion, Dixon guided his wrestlers to nine NCAA All-American honors and 18 individual conference championships.

Dixon's hiring is the second by coach Escobedo, who [took over the helm as IU's eighth head coach](#) in April. Last month, Escobedo [announced four-time All-American Isaac Jordan as an assistant coach](#).

"I'm excited to be coming back to Indiana and joining Angel's staff," Dixon said shortly after the announcement. "I look forward to working alongside both Angel and Isaac to build a sustainable program that can compete for championships within the Big Ten and nationally."

In over a decade with Old Dominion, Dixon helped head coach Steve Martin find success on the mat and in the classroom while putting the Monarchs on the map of the wrestling landscape. In the 2007-08 season, Dixon's first with the Monarchs, Old Dominion earned their first top-20 ranking in program history with six NCAA Championships qualifiers, then a school record.

The next year, Old Dominion captured a top-20 NCAA Championships while Ryan Williams (141 lbs.) became the program's first NCAA finalist in 15 years.

The 2011-12 season saw the Monarchs raise the bar with a program-best seven NCAA qualifiers and an outstanding dual meet season that included ranked upsets over Iowa State, Rutgers, and Central Michigan. Two wrestlers, Scott Festejo and Te Edwards, claimed individual titles at the 2012 CAA Championships.

Dixon helped guide a seamless transition to the Mid American Conference (MAC) in the 2013-14 season, as all six NCAA qualifiers finished in fourth-place or better at the ensuing MAC Championships.

In just their second season as a MAC member, Dixon and the Monarchs took runner-up at the conference championships in 2015. Dixon was named the SAAC Staffer of the Year and led two wrestlers, Chris Mecate and Alexander Richardson, to the All-American podium. That marked the first time Old Dominion earned two NCAA All-Americans in one season since 1991. Mecate became Old Dominion's first back-to-back All-American with a fifth-place finish the next season.

Dixon assisted in the development of Kevin Beazley, one of the most prominent wrestlers in program history, as he achieved All-American status at the 2017 NCAA Championships. Most recently, Beazley took a Greco-Roman bronze medal finish at the 2018 City of Sassari International in Italy.

In his 13 years with the program, the Monarchs achieved a 109-82-2 dual meet record with two CAA regular season titles. Old Dominion also earned six NWCA All-Academic honors in Dixon's tenure alongside two NCAA Elite 89 awards, given annually to the NCAA Championships participant with the highest GPA. Tristan Warner became just the second wrestler in Division-I to win back-to-back Elite 89 honors.

Prior to his tenure in Roanoke, Virginia, Dixon served as an assistant at James Madison University. Dixon guided two conference podium finishes and revitalized their recruiting strategy after the university dropped athletic scholarships in 2000.

Before joining the staff at James Madison, Dixon embarked his coaching career in his hometown of Indianapolis. As an assistant at the University of Indianapolis, Dixon oversaw five national qualifiers and three top-12 finishes. He also assisted the wrestling program at Arsenal Tech High School and guided four conference champions, two sectional champions, and the school's first-ever freshman to win a city championship.

A 2001 graduate of Indiana University with a degree in management from the Kelley School of Business, Dixon was an NCAA qualifier at 275 lbs. in 1998. He earned the team's Most Improved Wrestler award in 1998 and the prestigious Billy Thom Leadership award in 2001. Also in the 2001 season, Dixon became a University National Freestyle Champion and earned a fourth-place finish in the 2001 Pan-American Games at 97kg.

Dixon earned his master's degree in education from Old Dominion University in 2012.

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**Nick Reith**

Media Relations Assistant  
Indiana University Athletics  
Primary Contact: Field Hockey,  
Wrestling, Water Polo  
C: 317-371-6079  
Email: [nbreith@indiana.edu](mailto:nbreith@indiana.edu)

