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University of Iowa Wrestling  
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### **Dan Gable Awarded Presidential Medal of Freedom**

**IOWA CITY, Iowa** -- Dan Gable, 1972 Olympic gold medalist and 15-time NCAA champion coach of the University of Iowa wrestling team, will be presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Trump, the White House announced in a written letter on Oct. 13.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is the highest civilian honor the United States bestows. It was established in 1945 by President Truman and renamed in 1963 by President Kennedy. According to the letter sent from President Trump to Gable, the honor recognizes “extraordinary talents and incomparable individuals who have made exceptional; contributions to American national interests, society, or culture, or the cause of world peace.”

Gable is the first athlete or coach from the sport of wrestling receive the honor. Other coaches and athletes of prominence that have earned the award include Jesse Owens, Babe Ruth, Paul “Bear” Bryant, Pat Summit, and John Wooden.

In the official letter to Gable, he was recognized for his “remarkable accomplishments” on the mat, and an even greater coaching career at the University of Iowa for 21 seasons. The letter went on to add, “Today, you continue to inspire your fellow citizens as a motivational speaker and serve as a living testament to countless young people that the American Dream is very much within reach of anybody willing to think big, work hard, and never relent.”

#### **Tom Brands:**

“Gable has left me a lifetime philosophy that I do not deviate from. My brother and I are keen on the lessons we learned from him. That will never change. This award is awesome because it puts Dan Gable in context and brings him back front and center. Gable was a winner. He did not lose. He won nine straight national championships, as many as John Wooden. The stratosphere that those two guys co-exist in is unheard of, and I am reminded every day when I see his statue. Those memories are strong with me. The bedrock of Hawkeye wrestling will always be Dan Gable, and especially when Tom and Terry Brands are running the program, because we cut our teeth right here.”

#### **Terry Brands:**

“This honor is earned over a lifetime of doing the right things and persevering through tremendous adversity. Gable earned it by coaching up people as individuals and paying attention to what makes people tick and really caring about moving humanity forward. It is well earned.”

**DAN GABLE BIO**

During his prep and college Wrestling careers, Dan Gable compiled an unbelievable record of 181-1. He was undefeated in 64 prep matches, and was 117-1 at Iowa State University. His only defeat came in the NCAA finals his senior year. Gable was a two time NCAA National Wrestling Champion and three-time all-American and three-time Big Eight champion. He set NCAA records in winning and pin streaks.

After college, Gable added titles at the 1971 Pan American Games in Cali Columbia and World Championships in Sofia Bulgaria and in 1972 the Soviet Union's famed Tbilisi Tournament in Tbilisi Georgia. He won an unprecedented six Midlands Open championships and was that meet's outstanding wrestler five times. Gable won a Gold Medal at famed 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich Germany without surrendering a single point. The Soviets came to the Olympics with only one goal in mind: to defeat Gable. They were unsuccessful.

In Gable's final 21 Olympic qualification and Olympic matches, he scored 12 falls and outscored his nine other opponents, 130-1.

Gable joined the Iowa coaching staff in 1972, assisting head coach and Hall of Famer Gary Kurdelmeier until taking over the program in 1976.

As the University of Iowa's all-time winningest coach from 1976 to 1997, Gable won 15 NCAA National Wrestling Team Titles while compiling a career record of 355-21-5. He coached 152 All-Americans, 45 National Champions, 106 Big Ten Champions and 12 Olympians, including four gold, one silver and three bronze medalists. The Hawkeyes won 25 consecutive Big Ten championships, 21 under Gable as head coach and four while he was an assistant coach and administrator. He had a winning percentage of .932 and captured nine consecutive (1978-86) NCAA Championships. At the time that equaled the longest streak of national titles won by any school in any sport, and is also held by Yale golf (1905-13) and Southern Cal track (1935-43).

On only five occasions did a Gable-coached team lose more than one dual meet in a year. In fact, Gable's teams averaged over 17 wins and just one loss per season. The 1996-97 season added the final chapter to Gable's storied career. In late January, he underwent hip replacement surgery, missing four dual meets while recuperating. He reappeared in the Hawkeyes' corner just in time to lead the team to their 24th consecutive Big Ten title and 17th NCAA title. Iowa shattered its own NCAA team points record, scoring 170 points during the three-day tournament in Cedar Falls.

Gable has coached many United States teams in International Freestyle competition. He is a three-time Olympic head coach (1980, 1984 and 2000). The 1984 Olympic team, which featured four Hawkeyes, won seven gold medals. He was an assistant freestyle coach at the 1976 and 1988 Olympics. Gable also served as head coach of the World Team in 1977, 1978, 1979, 1983, 1994 and 1999, as well as 10 World Cup teams winning three team golds in the World Cup competition. Gable also coached the U.S. team to a bronze medal at the 1986 Goodwill Games, and has led several all-star teams to Europe and the Soviet Union.

Gable has been named to several Halls of Fame including but not limited to the USA Wrestling Hall of Fame, the US Olympic Hall of Fame, the National Wrestling Hall of

Fame Stillwater, UK and is the name sake of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame Dan Gable Museum in Waterloo, IA. He selected the nation's outstanding wrestler by the AAU in 1970, and the US Wrestling Federation in 1971. Gable was the Amateur Wrestling News "Man of the Year" in 1970.

In June 2002, he was appointed to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. Several networks, including ESPN and HBO have aired documentaries on Gable's life and accomplishments.

Some of his most recent accolades include being named the top wrestler of the 20th Century by Gannett News Service; listed as one of the top coaches in the 20th Century by ESPN and named Iowa's top "sports figure" in the past 100 years. In 1996, Gable was named one of the "100 Golden Olympians", an honor bestowed to the top 100 U.S. Olympians of all time. During the 2012 Olympics Gable was inducted into the FILA Hall of Fame Legends of the Sport category – becoming just the third person in the World to have this honor bestowed upon them.

Gable resides in Iowa City with his wife Kathy.

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