

WOOD COUNTY WRESTLING
Jr. HIGH – MIDDLE SCHOOL
2011 50th ANNIVERSARY

WHO'S WHO LIST

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1. Bob Dutton – 1938-1940 Weston High School, 1947 Coach East Liverpool High School, 1949-51 Coach Weston High School, 1951-1976 Coach Parkersburg High School, 2003 National Wrestling Hall of Fame. Coach Dutton is credited with introducing wrestling to the Jr. Highs when he would send his grapplers to visit the Jr. Highs to teach wrestling during their gym time. Coach Dutton assisted Buddy James in organizing the first County Jr. High Tournament in 1962. Coach Dutton wrestled in the 95 pound class for Weston High School which claimed the state duals championship during the 1939 season. Coach Dutton led the Big Reds to seven team titles and 37 individual titles and was elected to the state chapter of the National Wrestling Hall Of Fame in 2003. The state's most outstanding wrestler award is name after Coach Dutton.

2. A. James Manchin – 1960 Coach Jackson Jr. High, WVU Wrestler, 1950's Football and Wrestling Coach at Rupert, Hundred and Webster Springs High School, 2007 National Wrestling Hall of Fame inductee. The flamboyant politician was a pioneer of the Wood County Jr. High Wrestling League when he established intramural wrestling during lunchtime at Jackson Jr. High in 1960. Coach Manchin was appointed as the State Director of the Farmers Home Administration in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy. He also served the state as a House of Delegate Member, Secretary of State and State Treasurer. Before coming to Jackson Jr. High, he coached Webster Springs' Phil Harris to the 145 pound title in 1959 for their only individual state crown. The popular and entertaining Manchin could often be found at wrestling venues throughout the years sporting a black suit and fedora. He was elected to the state chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2007.

3. Buddy James – 1961-1963 Coach Jackson Jr. High, 1955-56 165 State Champ PHS, 1957 Montana State letterman, 1959-60 Marshall letterman, 1964-68 Asst. Wrestling Coach PHS. In 1961, Buddy James organized the first Jr. High team in Wood County and possibly the first team in West Virginia. He encouraged VanDevender and Hamilton Jr. Highs to also put together teams for scrimmages in 1961. The County Board approved wrestling as a school sport and Coach James organized the first County Tournament in 1962. Coach James wrestled two years in High School, winning the state 165 lb. crown in 1965 and finishing fourth at heavyweight in 1955 while weighing 155 pounds and wrestling up two weight classes. He continued wrestling in college at Montana State and Marshall and earning three letters. The newly formed Middle School Coach of the Year Award is being named in honor of Coach James, the "Buddy James Coach of the Year Award"

4. Bob Pickens – 1961 Jackson Jr. High, 1979 co-Coach Williamstown Jr. High, 1977-2002 Coach Williamstown High School, 2004 National Wrestling Hall Of Fame. As a Jr. High student at Jackson, Bob Pickens hounded Coach Buddy James to start a wrestling team which Coach James did in 1961. The 1961 Jackson team was the first organized squad in Wood County and possibly in West Virginia. Bob Pickens wrestled for Parkersburg High School and was a state champion in 1964. While a Junior in High School, he officiated the second County Jr. High tournament. He wrestled in college for Marshall and was team captain for two years. He was named Williamstown's head coach in 1977 and led them to state titles in 1982 and 1983 and was voted coach of the year both times. He coached 37 individual state champions and was elected to the state chapter of the National Wrestling Hall Of Fame in 2004.

5. Bob Wigal – 1962-80 Edison Jr. High. Bob became the first county champion for Edison and the first ever county champion by winning the 80 pound class over Dave Paxton of Jackson. Lloyd Dowler at 123 pounds and Herb Eaton at 145 pounds also won titles for Edison during the initial year in 1962.

6. Bob Armour – 1962-90 Jackson Jr. High. Bob became Jackson Jr. High's first county champion by winning the 90 pound class over Edison's Ed Harris. Other champions for Jackson that year were: 100 Bob Clayton; 105 Mike Deem; 112 Mike Jonas; 118 Dan Bumgarner; 123 Allen Handlan; and 127 Gary Whited. Other members of Jackson's first championship team in 1962 were: 80 Dave Paxton, 2nd; 135 Melvin Wiseman, 2nd; 145 Arthur Young; 155 Steve Chichester, 2nd; and UNL Harold Eaton, 2nd.

7. Bob Burner – 1962-155 Washington Jr. High. Bob became Washington Jr. High first county champion by winning the 155 pound class over Jackson's Steve Chichester. Before the school's closure in 1993, Washington Jr. High had claimed 31 County Champions and one team title.

8. Bill Kupfner – 1962-UNL Hamilton Jr. High. Bill became Hamilton's first county champion by winning the unlimited weight class over Jackson's Harold Eaton. Bill would later become the first wrestler to claim a Jr. High County Championship and also a State High School Championship when he won the 1964 unlimited class. Bill also won the 1965 unlimited title.

9. Bill Gonzalez – 1962 Coach Edison Jr. High. Coach Gonzalez lead Edison in the first official meet against Jackson during the preliminary of a PHS vs. Marietta High School Dual. Coach Gonzalez and the Edison Eagles finished as runner-ups in the inaugural County Tournament in 1962. Members of Edison's first school team are: 80 Bob Wigal 1st; 90 Ed Harris 2nd; 100 Bill Purcell 3rd; 105 Terry Dunn; 112 Mike Richards; 118 Roger Smith 3rd; 123 Tom Gribble 2nd; 127 Don Harris; 135 Lloyd Dowler 1st; 145 Herb Eaton 1st; 155 Gerald Townsend 3rd; and UNL Mike Post 3rd.

10. Glenn Kiger – 1962 Coach Franklin Jr. High. Glenn Kiger coached at Franklin for one year before taking the principal position at Jackson Jr. High. His assistant at Franklin was Rod Oldham. Wrestling on Coach Kiger's only season in the league were: 90 Ken Vensel 3rd; 100 Steve Radcliff 2nd; 105 Bill Allman; 112 Tom Black 3rd; 118 Roger Winters 2nd; 123 Blaine Snider 4th; 127 Robert Vensel; 135 Paul Hupp 3rd; 145 Randall Stull 2nd; 155 Jerry Freeman; and UNL Dave Wright.

11. Harold Nicholson – 1962 Coach Hamilton Jr. High. One of the original six charter coaches, Coach Nicholson headed up Hamilton’s first official team. Coach Nicholson was a basketball man with no previous experience and credits student Bill Kupfner as coaching the team. Wrestling for Coach Nicholson third place team were: 80 Dave Watkins 2nd; 90 Bill Carpenter 4th; 105 Steve Kirby 4th; 112 Bill Cameron 2nd; 118 Chester Stanley 4th; 123 Gary Freed 3rd; 127 Bob Watkins 2nd; 135 Bill Tebay; 145 Mike Roberts; 155 Steve Wilson 4th; and UNL Bill Kupfner 1st.

12. Len Hanford – 1962 Coach VanDevender Jr. High. Coach Hanford was the first coach for VanDevender Jr. High. Wrestling on VanDevender’s first school team were: 80 Mike Garrett, 4th; 90 Rod Newell, 100 Bob Dils, 4th; 105 Dave McCCase, 2nd; 112 Paul Hart, 4th; 118 Keith Kelly; 123 Wayne Andick; 127 Gary Taylor, 4th; 135 David Fuchs, 4th; 145 Bob Lockhart, 4th; 155 Ron Morgan; and UNL Don Dearth, 4th.

13. Ron Kincaid – 1962 Coach Washington Jr. High. Ron Kincaid completes the list of the original charter coaches as he headed up Washington Jr. High’s program. Wrestling for Coach Kincaid in 1962 were: 80 Tom Carter; 90 Chuck Gruser; 105 Steve Williams 3rd; 112 Ken Shaffer; 118 Ken Owens; 123 Mike Province; 127 Steve Null 3rd; 135 Dave Wright; 145 Jim Butcher 3rd; 155 Bob Burner 1st; and UNL Larry Shaver.

14. Dr. Jim Mendenhall – 1962 Referee 1st Annual Wood County Wrestling Tournament. Dr. Jim Mendenhall first got his start wrestling at Parkersburg High School from 1938 to 1941 under legendary Syracuse Football Coach Ben Schwartzwalder. Dr. Mendenhall was a three year letterman for West Virginia University from 1941 to 1948 being interrupted for military service during World War II when he was drafted by the Navy. Dr. Mendenhall then attended Dental School at Temple and set up practice in Parkersburg in 1952. He returned to the mats as an official in the Parkersburg Area and officiated the 1954 High State Tournament at Memorial Fieldhouse with his brother Bob. Dr. Mendenhall officiated in the Parkersburg area for over ten years before commitments to State and National Dental Boards occupied his free time and slowly removed him from the sport. He officiated the championship and consolation finals at the First Wood County Jr. High Tournament in March, 1962. This year’s tournament is establishing an Official of the Year Award and will be known as the “Dr. Jim Mendenhall Official of the Year Award”.

15. Joe Handlan Jr. – 1962 Referee 1st Annual Wood County Wrestling Championship, 1962 State Champion PHS, Ohio State and Ohio University letterman, 1973-1974 Coach at Eastern Kentucky, Coach Parkersburg High School. Coach Handlan refereed the preliminary and semifinal rounds on the first night of the first County Tournament while a senior in High School after winning the 133 pound State Championship. Coach Handlan wrestled at Ohio State and Ohio University and continued officiating for a number of years in the area. He returned to the area as an assistant coach then left for two years as head coach at Eastern Kentucky University in 1973 and 1974. He returned to Parkersburg High as an assistant and became head coach at PHS in 1976. In 25 years he coached 52 state champions ranking him in the top ten in the country. He has coached twelve All-Americans, six Dutton Award winners, six State Tournament Outstanding Wresters, and has been voted the AAA Coach of the Year Award on six occasions. In 2005 he was inducted into the state chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.