1992

Don Murray Scrapbook

Don Murray

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Welcome Don Murray and Brockport Wrestlers
Don Murray

by Steven Steingisser

"I'll be pleased as long as they wrestle" says Eagle wrestling coach Don Murray, expressing his thoughts on the upcoming National Tournament to be held in Illinois in the early March.

Don Murray, who with his wrestlers, have placed in 7 SUNYAC championships in the last 8 years are now attempting to take their second straight National Championship. If they succeed they will be the first team ever to hold that honor. In addition the Eagles have not been defeated by a SUNY conference opponent in a dual match since 1972.

The National Tournament will have some tough competition but as Coach Murray says "We're as well poised as any team in the country".

Whereas in the SUNYAC's, Murray instructs his men to "go for the pin" for the team score. The Nationals are handled differently. "It's his tournament... it's his shot at recognition". I push for the individual person. I want to see him win a national title and if not (at least) "All American".

Don Murray attended Huntington High School on Long Island. He then attended SUC Brockport, and after spending two years in the Air Force, returned here to coach the wrestling team in 1970. That season he finished 3rd in Division III. After a second place finish in the 1972-73 season, he coached the team to five straight SUNYAC titles.

In their most recent venture, the Eagles took on the 3rd ranked University of Buffalo and lost. Brockport used their reserve squad however. Murray believes "When you give a person a chance he works harder for you" which was exhibited by the squad at the U.B. match.

In the end Murray sums it all up by saying that victory or defeat are not his prime concern, but smart wrestling and whether or not "We end up healthy and happy" are.

Ray Porteus works with teemate

Rich Schwartz
Wrestling coach uses soft words for hard results

Wrestling Coach Don Murray doesn't rant and rave during practice sessions. In fact, during a workout it's often difficult to even hear the soft-spoken coach above the low grunts and groans of his men.

But then Coach Murray doesn't have to speak loudly because his success over the past six years speaks for itself. His Golden Eagles have won SUNYAC championships four times and the team is the front runner this year as well. He has produced ten All-Americans and four college division national champions.

Coach Murray's $3,200 wrestling budget is paltry compared to big-name schools' like Oklahoma. Yet he continually produces strong squads composed largely of wrestlers who were not outstanding in high school.

The coach has been successful largely because he is a master at developing the potential of those wrestlers. "He knows what each individual is capable of doing and he helps each one set realistic goals for the season," says co-captain Jerry Goodfellow who is aiming for an All-American title.

"I love to help the kids achieve individual success," admits Coach Murray, a former All Air Force wrestler. "Setting goals helps because it gives them something to shoot for," adds their mentor. He has shot for a few goals himself, having coached the U.S. Junior World team and presently a member of the U.S. Olympic committee for wrestling.

Another key to his success at Brockport is sequential wrestling, the programming of alternative moves and counterholds. "Too many coaches tell their men to concentrate on offensive moves and not worry about what their opponents are trying to do. I want my wrestlers to know what the other guy will do and then react instinctively," says Coach Murray.

Conditioning also plays a part, with the wrestlers going through three or four matches during each practice session.

"He stresses aggressiveness and taking the man down. You need that to compete nationally," says co-captain Mackey Tyndall, a conference and state championship holder who is eyeing the nationals.

Despite his solid win-loss record, Coach Murray is nonplussed about winning. "I love to work with these kids and help them develop," he says. "I can't get excited over winning, but I can get excited over them."

Alumni Day scheduled May 21

The 1977 Alumni Day will be held on the campus Saturday, May 21, the Alumni Association board of directors decided at the January meeting. A committee to plan Alumni Day events was appointed at the February meeting. Alumni who would like to work on the committee or who have program suggestions are urged to contact Ronald Watts, acting executive secretary, at the College Community Relations Office.
Coach Don Murray (top left) talks to his team in last practice before the championship. photo by Jim Gale

Joe Giani (bottom left) is the son of former Olympian Lou Giani who was Murray's high school wrestling coach. photo by Jim Gale

Kevin Richard (top right) walks away from his match not knowing his reversal brought him a 12-11 victory. photo by John Maddock

John Parisella (bottom right) wrestles for national title. photo by John Maddock

Cover photo: John Parisella about to pin Joe Giani in their last practice before the championship. photo by Jim Gale
MURRAY HONORED

Brockport State wrestling coach Don Murray has been selected "Coach of the Year" by the New York State Wrestling Coaches Association.

Murray's 1978-79 Golden Eagle squad won eight consecutive dual matches after dropping early decisions to Division I powers, Michigan and Syracuse. Brockport placed second to Cortland at the SUNYAC meet and finished third in the state tournament.

The highlight of the season came when the Golden Eagles traveled to the Division III championships at Humboldt State in Arcata, California. With only one senior, Murray's grapplers finished second in the country missing a national championship by a mere quarter of a point to Trenton State.

Overall, Murray has been at the helm for nine years at Brockport State and in that time has produced 26 All-Americans, 6 individual national champions and one team champion (1977).

1979 ALL-AMERICANS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wt</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Div III Place</th>
<th>SUNY Place</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>John Parisella</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>Joe Giani</td>
<td>So.</td>
<td>3*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>158</td>
<td>Woody Vandenburg</td>
<td>So.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>167</td>
<td>Prince Green</td>
<td>So.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>177</td>
<td>Rich Sipple</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>5**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>190</td>
<td>Tony Smith</td>
<td>So.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Won trophy for Most Pins in least accumulated time
** Brockport State's first 3-time All-American

DIVISION III NATIONAL INDIVIDUAL CHAMPS

Regan Beers 1970
Bruce Biondi 1972
Frank Calabria 1974
John Matellucci 1975
Rich Sipple 1977
Macky Tyndall 1977

DIVISION III TEAM FINISHES

1976 - 13th
1977 - 1st
1978 - 8th
1979 - 2nd

SUNYAC TEAM FINISHES

1974 - 1st
1975 - 1st
1976 - 1st
1977 - 1st
1978 - 1st
1979 - 2nd
Murray selected to head world team

Brockport head wrestling coach Don Murray has been selected by the Amateur American Athletic Union to be head coach of the U. S. Junior World Wrestling Team which will wrestle at Trieste, Italy, June 8 and 9.

Coach Murray, who has been head coach at Brockport since 1970, has done an outstanding job in building a fine team. Murray has had several wrestlers attend the national tournament and has coached two championship teams in three years.

Murray's Jr. World Team will consist of ten wrestlers, age 17 through 20. The members of the team will be selected in a tournament this spring.

In addition to being a member of the U. S. Olympic Committee, Coach Murray was also the assistant coach of
Coach Don Murray
Named Man of the Year

Wrestling Coach Don Murray, right, accepts his Man of the Year award from college President Albert Brown.

Donald Murray, wrestling coach and associate professor of physical education at SUNY College at Brockport, was named "Man of the Year" by the National Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Dec. 4.

The award was presented to Murray in Miami, Fla., by the National AAU Wrestling Committee. Murray was recognized for his many years of dedicated service to wrestling at the state, national, and international level.

Currently, Murray's team is ranked number one nationally in NCAA division III. Last year, his team won the national NCAA division III championship, the New York State Collegiate Championship, and the SUNY conference championships. His peers in the NCAA division III voted him 1979-80 "coach of the year" for his accomplishments.

Murray has served as wrestling coach at Brockport for a decade and has won seven conference championships, two state championships, two national titles, and a national runner-up recognition. He has had more than 30 "All-American" wrestlers on his teams; seven were on last year's roster.

The Brockport Post - Wednesday, December 10, 1980-5
Brockport coach, Don Murray, has been selected as "Man of the Year" by the Wrestling Division of the A.A.U. at its recent annual meeting. Don was chosen on the basis of his past contributions including the hosting of two past U.S. Olympic Camps, and National Wrestling Camps at S.U.C. Brockport. Moreover, he has chaired the A.A.U.'s Junior World program for 19 and 20 year olds.

We salute Don for this coveted honor. Certainly, this recognition, coupled with last year's selection as NCAA Division III National Coach of the Year demonstrates how fortunate the college is to have a man of coach Murray's caliber.

Doctor Albert W. Brown to Retire!

As many of you may know, Dr. Albert W. Brown, president of Brockport State is retiring from his office.

Dr. Brown has always supported Coach Murray personally and professionally, to maintain a high quality wrestling program.

We thank him for his past support and contributions to the student/athlete and wish him well with his future endeavors.

Golden Eagles Take Silver at Division III National's!

Eight Brockport State matmen advanced to the Division III National Tournament held at John Carroll University of Ohio, February 27th and 28th.

Arch-rival Trenton State managed to wrest the gold from defending champion Brockport by accumulating 111.75 points to the Eagles 100.

Brockport gained six All-Americans including National Champions Joe Giani (150) and Woody Vandenburg (167). This brings the total number of All-Americans, under Don Murray's direction at Brockport to 38. The most that any Division III school has attained.

Achieving All-American Status for Brockport were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>#Times All-American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Joe Giani</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Woody Vandenburg</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Tony Smigh</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Frank Famiano</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>Soph.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Dereck Bigford</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>Jr.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>*Anthony Conetta</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>Soph.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Conetta was a replacement for injured two-time A.A. Prince Green
Coach Don Murray's wrestlers may be ranked number one on paper, but he's waiting for the day when they'll be number one "on the mats."

The day may come soon.

By winning the SUNYAC tournament with 112 points Feb. 15-16 (their nearest competitor was second-placed Binghamton with 45) the Brockport State wrestlers qualified for the Division III nationals to be held Feb. 29-March 1 at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn.

Murray is not stuck in the present, or the immediate future, though. He flips through a hundred or so index cards of "leads." And for a moment thinks of next year.

"Here's a good prospect," he says. "He's got 960 on the SATs and eight pins." What's academic ability got to do with wrestling? "Everything."

"I get hundreds of leads from high school coaches." He flips through the index cards. "We'll recruit a hundred, 15 or so will come to the school, 8 or 9 will try out for the team and three will make it." He picks up a resume. "Now this kid I'll probably call personally." He glances over the stats and a personal note attached by the wrestler's high school coach. "This kid I'd like to coach."

"These wrestlers must be good college prospects. That means they must be good students.

And Murray's philosophy about the valuable student wrestler carries over into less definable areas. "There is no training table. This year's team, they're good guys," he says proudly, sweeping an arm toward the practice area where team members have begun calisthenics without the coach.

"I don't want them hiding in a bar, having a beer. I tell them, "If you want to drink, drink, just don't get drunk." They're setting standards for themselves, not just me. It's very hard to be a young person today, making your way toward maturity -- but these guys, I could take them anywhere and they wouldn't embarrass me."

"Some coaches want to have a great ego, think they have a lot to do with a kid's success. But that's only a small part."

MURRAY'S TEAMS (he's been at the College since 1970) have won one national championship, six SUNYAC titles and one New York State Championship. In 1978-79 he was named by his peers as the State Wrestling Coach of the Year. He is a former U.S. Junior World Team coach.

Beyond this year..."Next year's team," he smirks, "they'll be all right. We'll have a winning team. I'm not saying what they'll win, but they'll have a winning season."

Whatever comes in the future, Murray, who also teaches physical education and supervises student teachers, thinks he has a plan to continue Brockport's success.

The key elements are:

-- recruitment: with a $3,000 per year budget, Murray can compete with Division I or II schools which "may spend that, and more" on one wrestler. He establishes contacts with high school coaches and alumni. Some of his wrestlers are now high school coaches.

-- desire: It's "hard work, but rewarding" on his part. But the wrestlers' desire is more important. "The second and third string are waiting for their time to come around." He credits all team members with "pushing" the first stringers. He doesn't like to recruit transfers. He likes having a wrestler around for four years. He points to academic ability, again, "if the kid flunks out, you've wasted time."

-- a top-notch trainer: Al Peppard is one of the best trainers in the country, according to Murray. "It's one of the things that goes unnoticed, but it's one of our keys to success."

-- clinics: Murray has made Brockport attractive as a clinic site, and has encouraged his wrestlers to attend clinics. Facilities at Brockport, he says, "are equal to any in the East."
-- regimentation: He'd rather call it "group unity." You've got to have faith, he says. "I don't like them using drugs, I don't like them getting drunk. If they come to me saying they've gotten into trouble, I'll stand by them. Very rarely have I had to discipline a wrestler.

-- he's a good coach: "I'm good, my time is valuable. I tell them that, they understand. We have well-run practices. But the kid himself makes it, I just provide the format.

EVEN THOUGH PROFESSIONAL wrestling will survive in America ("People always love violence"), Murray doesn't expect his wrestlers to partake. Most of them will be coches or will benefit in other professional areas by being a wrestler under him. "I tell them, 'When you become an All-American, it opens doors. Most people want to identify with All-Americans. Americans like success. It won't keep you in, but it will open doors.'"

He takes a personal interest in the student wrestlers. They also consider him a friend. He glows with pride, watching them warm up in the new PE building. They praise him as if they're surprised everyone doesn't already know about Don Murray.

"He's a good guy," says freshman Ralph DeSantis. "He invited me over to his house for the Super Bowl, and I'm not even on first string. He had the whole team over and cooked for us."

DeSantis, 167 pounds, from Wappinger Falls, N.Y., hopes to start in "two years," but finds his mission as a backup man now equally important. "We've (non-starters) got to push the team -- the harder you work with them, the better they get, the better they perform on the mat. You've got to understand, we're working with the best."

Murray must instill that self-confidence. He talks about DeSantis and chuckles. "He gets killed every night. He's a freshman wrestling with All-Americans. But he stuck it out, he'll make it. He, and all the others, are vital to me. Pushing, all the time. Giving 100 percent every night."

AND COACH MURRAY doesn't feel he'd like to "move up" to a Division I or II school. (The difference in divisions is determined by the number of scholarships the school gives to wrestlers.) "We've got wrestlers as good as Division I guys -- we came close to beating Syracuse and Temple. We have those teams on our schedule because it's easy to make up an easy schedule."

I like working with non-scholarship kids. A lot of scholarship kids are pampered. There's no thrill like watching them (his wrestlers) win. To see them achieve victory. I can't describe how it makes me feel to see even a third place win, to see a kid win a championship or to stand up on an awards platform.
Big-time wrestling

By MEL REISNER
Associated Press

In most ways, athletic tradition at Brockport State is down there with other units of the State University of New York system — no scholarships, no Division I teams in major sports, no charisma. But in wrestling, the school has hit the big time on a shoestring budget and the Irish charm of Coach Don Murray.

"I'm getting inquiries from out of state now," says Murray, who has steered the Golden Eagles to two national Division III team wrestling championships and seven SUNY Athletic Conference titles in 10 years. "This year, I've had contacts from Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Ohio, which is real nice in terms of recognition."

The 36-year-old Huntington, N.Y., native underestimates his stature among his peers. Murray is the 1980 national small-college Coach of the Year and the Amateur Athletic Union's 1980 Man of the Year in wrestling, an award that led him to Miami for three days a few weeks ago and which he blames for a 37-7 dual-meet loss to Division I power Syracuse.

"I don't think it (the loss) means we're down this year. Don't forget that we're Division III and we don't keep the kids here (during Thanksgiving), so they were off a week before the match. Then I didn't get the award until Monday and the plane got held up in Atlanta so I missed practice before the (Tuesday) match," he said.

"I never keep track of wins and losses; we're going for championships — the SUNYACs and the nationals — and for All-Americans. So far, I've had 33 of them and seven (individual) Division III national champions," he said.

His wrestling program has a $4,000 budget but Murray has lived opulently in his success.

A 1970 graduate of Brockport State who was "good, but nothing great" on college mats, he has traveled to Yugoslavia, Russia, Iran, Bulgaria, Germany, Austria, Turkey, Outer Mongolia and Poland as coach or as a volunteer on national senior or junior squads.

In 1976 and again in 1980, he turned Brockport into mecca to the nation's best wrestlers with the U.S. Olympic Wrestling Trials.

Don Krome, who handled publicity for the 1980 trials, said Brockport was a natural because of the efficiency of Murray's operation.

Murray adds a footnote: "We have plenty of gym space and we're close to Rochester, which has such excellent medical facilities. I think those things played a role in the decision to have to have the trials here."

Along with the national attention drawn to the new, 10,000-student campus by the trials, Murray found another way to capitalize on the event: videotape.

If one of his U.S.-trained wrestlers wants to study a move in the modes of international freestyle or Greco-Roman wrestling, the coach has it on tape being performed by a world-class athlete.

Murray speaks fondly of the training he received on Long Island from Lou Giania, whose Huntington High School teams have compiled one of the top records in the state. After high school, he benefitted from top coaches in the wrestling hotbeds of Oklahoma and Nebraska during a four-year hitch with the Air Force.

First-year performers — used as cannon fodder in some programs — are just as important as the juniors and seniors who usually fill the 11-wrestler starting roles on teams of the affable Murray.

"If I get a freshman, he usually sticks with me," he said. "We don't use the first team as a motivational technique for the second team. I tell them we can't function at the national level without them. If a young wrestler realizes how important he is, he'll usually stick with it. The years we won our national championships (1977 and 1980), we went out and got extra gold medals for the second team so that everyone could have a plaque."
SUNY-Brockport Scores a Reversal

Brockport (AP)—In most ways, athletic tradition at Brockport State is down there with other units of the State University of New York system: no scholarships, no Division 1 teams in major sports, no charisma. But in wrestling, the school has hit the big time on a shoestring budget and under the guidance of coach Don Murray.

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The 36-year-old from Huntington understated his stature among his peers. Murray is the 1980 national small-college coach of the year and the Amateur Athletic Union's 1980 man of the year in wrestling, an award which led him to Miami for three days a few weeks ago and which he blames for a 37-7 dual-meet loss to Division I power Syracuse.

"I don't think it [the loss] means we're down this year. Don't forget that we're Division III and we don't keep the kids here (during Thanksgiving), so they were off a week before the match. Then I didn't get the award until Monday and the plane got held up in Atlanta so I missed practice before the [Tuesday] match," he said.

"Plus, we don't pull weights [starve stronger men into lower weight classes] in the first half of the season. I think if we'd pulled weights, Syracuse still would have won, but something like 24-12. But you're talking about 11 full rides with a Division I team."

Murray insists he doesn't care about dual meet results.

"I never keep track of wins and losses; we're going for championships—the SUNYACs and the nationals—and for all-Americans. So far, I've had 33 of them and seven individual Division III national champions," he said.

His wrestling program has a $4,000 budget but Murray has managed quite well.

A 1970 graduate of Brockport State, who was "good, but nothing great" on college mat, he has traveled to Yugoslavia, Russia, Iran, Bulgaria, Germany, Austria, Turkey, Outer Mongolia and Poland as coach or administrator of national senior or junior squads.

In 1976 and again in 1980, he turned Brockport—a former Erie Canal shipping point—into mecca to the nation's best wrestlers with the U.S. Olympic Wrestling Trials. Narrow-waisted young men framed with triangular heaps of muscle atop thin, wiry trunks outnumbered local students in June.

Don Krome, who handled publicity for the 1980 trials, said Brockport was a natural because of the efficiency of Murray's operation.

"There is good cooperation at the administrative level and the facilities are excellent," he said. "Then the setting is good for the competitors because there are few distractions."

Murray adds a footnote: "We're also centrally located as far as Montreal goes, so it made sense geographically before the 1976 Olympics. This year if they'd been going to Moscow, they would have flown from the East Coast."

"We have plenty of gym space and we're close to Rochester, which has such excellent medical facilities. I think those things played a role in the decision to have the trials here."

Along with the national attention drawn to the new, 10,000-student campus by the trials, Murray found another way to capitalize on the event: videotape. If one of his U.S.-trained wrestlers wants to study a move in the modes of international freestyle or Greco-Roman wrestling, the coach has it on tape being performed by a world-class athlete.

Murray speaks fondly of the training he received on Long Island from Lou Giania, whose Huntington High School teams have compiled one of the top records in the state. After high school, he Benefit from top coaches in the wrestling hotbeds of Oklahoma and Nebraska during a four-year stint with the Air Force.

But he has absorbed wrestling lore wherever he has gone and added his own brand of ingenuity and understanding to keep the sport booming on a campus where nearly a dozen intercollegiate sports were dropped last year to trim costs.

First-year performers—used infrequently in some programs—are just as important as the juniors and seniors who usually fill the 11-wrestler starting roles on Murray's teams.

"If I get a freshman, he usually sticks with me," he said. "We don't use the first team as a motivational technique for the second team. I tell them we can't function at the national level without them. If a young wrestler realizes how important he is, he'll usually stick with it. The years we won our national championships (1977 and 1980), we went out and got extra gold medals for the second team so that everyone could have a plaque."
Wrestling coach Donald Murray has once again been named New York State College Coach of the Year by the New York State College Wrestling Coaches Association. Murray also received the honor in 1980.

Murray has led 50 Brockport wrestlers to All-American status. His 1982 team won the state championships, SUNY Athletic Championship and the NCAA Division I Championships. Three wrestlers qualified for the Division I Championships: Frank Famiano, Anthony Conetta and Ronald Winnie. Famiano and Winnie became Division I All-Americans.

Murray was also named Division III coach of the year in 1980 and SUNY Athletic Conference Coach of the Year in 1981 and 1983.

**MURRAY WINS AGAIN**

Donald Murray, head wrestling coach at the College at Brockport, has been named Coach of the Year by the New York State College Wrestling Coaches Association. He also receive the honor in 1983. An alumnus of Brockport, Coach Murray was Division III National Coach of the Year in 1980 and SUNY Athletic Conference Coach of the Year in 1981 and 1983. In addition to this year’s Coaches Association award, he was honored by Brockport Student Government “for bringing national recognition to the college through excellence in coaching and an intense commitment to student development in higher education.”

**40** Times-Union, Rochester, N.Y., Thursday, October 20, 1983

**COLLEGES**

Murray selected to coach all-star wrestling match

**By GENE DUFFEY**

Brockport State wrestling coach Don Murray, the little guy with the big program, has been named co-coach for the East-West collegiate all-star wrestling match Feb. 5 at the University of Iowa.

Murray and LSU’s Larry Serafettino will coach the East squad and North Dakota’s Bucky Morgan and Northern Illinois’ Don Briggs will coach the West team. The wrestlers are mostly from Division I schools.

“It’s an honorary thing,” said Murray. “You don’t know the kids that well, but you have to make sure they’re psychologically ready. I’ll do some checking on the West kids.”

Although it’s an exhibition match, there is incentive for the wrestlers.

“It’s vital for the seedings for the nationals,” said Murray.

Murray, 40, has coached Brockport for 13 years and produced 50 Division III All-Americans. His teams have won the SUNYAC championship 11 times and won the national title four times, in 1977, ’80, ’82 and ’83.

Brockport opens its season Nov. 12 in the Michigan State Invitational.

**Don Murray**

Wrestling guru
Wrestlers: stronger than ever

by Valerie Marotta

SUNY Brockport has many fine sports teams. One team that stands out is the wrestling squad.

Brockport’s wrestling coach, Don Murray, is proud of his wrestlers. He believes this year will prove to be successful. A man of experience, Murray has been with Brockport for 14 years, including coaching his team to the National Championship last year. He was also elected National Coach of the Year by other coaches, an important fact to be considered when speaking to him about wrestling.

This year’s team is an extremely young one, with 18 freshmen. Murray says it is still too early to tell how far the team will go, but he is quick to add, “I always win.”

And win he does. Last year’s wrestling team captured the championship, which Murray attributed to the many tremendous wrestlers, their hard work and dedication. “They also came through under pressure,” concluded Murray.

Returning to Brockport’s team this year are many of last season’s successful wrestlers, including All-American Scott Nichols. “All of my returning men have improved,” Murray notes. “They are constantly improving.”

Murray has no special plans for his wrestlers this year, except to see what they are doing wrong, correct it and adjust them to the opposition. He claims that this year’s freshmen show more potential than any other year. The attitude among the freshmen is positive and according to Murray, “as long as they keep it up and continue to work hard, they’ll be the best group of freshmen I’ve recruited yet.”

Murray will have a better chance to observe his young squad and the returning members when the wrestlers have their first official practice. Brockport’s first match, the Brockport Open, will be held in the beginning of October. Certain junior colleges and four-year schools will be invited to the event. The team will probably not be ranked this year, due to the graduation of many of last year’s stars, but Murray is looking forward to the season.

In the meantime, Murray is concerned with securing his freshmen wrestlers in their academic courses. He is making sure that they get the correct classes, go to them, and perform well in school.

Coach Murray believes that academic skills and sports prowess can make anyone a champion.
Wrestlers take 2nd in Division III Nationals

by Andrew Voelkel

The SUNY College at Brockport wrestling team finished up its 1985-86 season at Trenton State College competing for the Division III National Championship. The Golden Eagles came up ten points shy of the title, to land in second place.

The team scored 78 points. Montclair State, (New Jersey), won the title with 87.25 points.

Coach Don Murray said, “As long as the team gives 100 percent, I’m happy. And the whole team did that.”

Of the nine team members competing for the Golden Eagles, five came home All-Americans by placing in the top eight. They were Scott Detore (second year All-Am), Rob Allison, John Leone, (third year All-Am), Rusty Middlebrook and Todd Slade (second

year All-Am).

Coach Murray has now had 62 All-American wrestlers in his career.

Three wrestlers made it to the finals in their respective weight classes and competed for individual honors.

Junior Todd Slade was Brockport’s lone National Champion this year at 158 lbs. Murray said, “Todd was outstanding...he wrestled good and tough in all of his matches.”

Detore placed second at 134 lbs. This was his second year in the finals for SUNY Brockport.

“He (Detore), made a good comeback. He showed tremendous motivation and desire by coming off of his injuries...I’m proud of him for a job well done,” said Murray.

Leone placed second also for the Eagles at 150 lbs.

“John was a superb leader and did a tremendous job throughout the tournament,” Murray said.

Freshman Rob Allison took fifth in his first appearance in the Nationals at 142 lbs.

Heavyweight Rusty Middlebrook placed third in his second nationals.

Murray commented, “Rusty took a man down with three seconds left, it was the most inspiring three seconds I’ve seen. It came from deep down inside.”

Middlebrook said, “It was really close, but we dug a whole too deep to get out of.”

The team started off slow and lost some early first round matches, eliminating members of the squad from the single elimination tourney.

A ceremony honoring the wrestling team was held in Tuttle North when the team arrived from New Jersey. Murray presented his SUNYAC Coach of the Year award to Athletic Director Dr. William Stier Jr., and the second place award that will be displayed in Tuttle North.

The wrestlers were also awarded their individual plaques for participating in the Division III Nationals.

By taking second place and coming so close this year, Coach Don Murray and his wrestlers will want the national championship even more next year. The talent and desire are increasing.

There are no seniors on the team to graduate this year.

The freshmen have a year of experience under their belt that they won’t forget until the elusive National Championship is theirs.

But for this year, second in Nationals in Division III should be a proud accomplishment for the Eagles.
Nice guys don’t make champions

Murray pushes Brockport wrestlers to be the best

By Gary Fallesen

Pat Middlebrook revealed the news of her husband’s serious illness to Don Murray last winter shortly after the wrestling coach had read the riot act to their son, Rusty, Brockport State’s heavyweight.

“Do you want him to be an All-American?” Murray shot back. “Or do you want him feeling sorry for himself? I think it would make your husband happier if he was an All-American.”

Coach knew best.

The Middlebrooks huddled together tear-eyed after the sophomore from Midlakes High School finished third in the NCAA Division III championships to earn All-America honors.

“That,” Murray recalled yesterday during the Golden Eagles’ practice, “was one of the nicest moments I’ve seen in sports.

“To see a kid become an All-American for the first time and to shake his hand and see that look on his face is a tremendous feeling. You’re a team, you and the kid. You’re the one pushing him.”

Murray has shoved 37 individuals to All-America status 62 times in 16 years. Shouting all the way, never sweet talking.

“A kid comes out of here unschooled,” the 43-year-old coach said. “I bust his butt. None of this kissing his butt because he’s an All-American.”

Murray learned that lesson early.

“I was too liberal,” he said of his coaching style in the early 1970s. “I let the kids do what they wanted. I had to become more structured and strict. I had to crack down on the kids.

“Too many coaches prostitute themselves. That’s why athletics in this country are in such a mess. Coaches are worried about winning. They’re afraid if they sit a kid
Murray pushes wrestlers to be All-Americans

FROM PAGE 10

out they’ll lose.”

Not Murray. On Saturday, against the University of Buffalo, he forfeited the 142-pound class when All-American Scott DeTore failed to make weight. Brockport still won, 31-10.

“To be national champ or All-American you’ve got to work hard,” said Murray, who has enjoyed four National Collegiate Athletic Association team titles. “There’s no shortcut to success.

“If a kid thinks he’s going to drink and raise hell because some idiot on TV does, he’s crazy. They’re cheating themselves.”

And their teammates.
That’s why Murray had each of his 22 wrestlers sign a contract before the season agreeing to play by his rules — or else.

“I can replace them very quickly,” Murray said.

Even the All-Americans — John Leone of Penfield, Todd Slade, Dave Recor, DeTore and Middlebrook — who headline this prospective NCAA champion team.

“He’s a great coach,” said Leone, a 150-pound senior who may join 1984 Olympian Frank Famiano as only the second four-time All-American at Brockport. “He gets you ready.

“Mental toughness is 85 percent of the game going on 90. Hard work and winning go hand in hand.”

Hard work, winning and Murray go together like a clenched fist.
Under his guidance, Brockport has won 13 State University of New York Athletic Conference titles, including seven straight and 12 of the last 13. In addition to NCAA titles in 1977, 80, 82 and 83, the Golden Eagles finished second in 1979, 81 and 86. Individuals have captured 17 national championships.

“One thing I’ve been fortunate in doing,” Murray said, “is spotting talent and developing it.”

Famiano was his prize pupil. The Schenectady Draper graduate could do no better than a sixth-place finish in the state high school championships.
Yet, at Brockport, he went on to earn All-America recognition in the Division I tournament twice, a rarity for a Division III wrestler.

“It just took him a while to develop,” Murray said.

Leone and Middlebrook, too. Neither reached the state tournament in high school.
Yet both are potential national champs.

Here coach is a real hard-guy for discipline,” Middlebrook explained. “He pushes you. If you can make it here, you’re going to turn out a winner.

“When I get into a match I think, ‘I put up with that hell all week, I’m not going to lose on the weekend.’”

Weekends were made for the Golden Eagles, who likely will be ranked No. 1 in the country when the first poll is released next month. Already they have finished third in a Division I field at the Michigan State Invitational and defeated SUNYAC challenger Buffalo. They will face Syracuse at 1:30 p.m. Sunday at Brockport.

“We came up a little short last year” in the NCAA tournament, Middlebrook recalled. “We don’t plan on it this year.”

Murray, who welcomed back nine of last year’s 10 starters, will see to that.

“Our practices are videotaped,” he said, motioning to the equipment in the corner of the wrestling room. “We watch them and if they don’t do it right, they do it over again.”

Don’t think that this Boston native who graduated from wrestling-rich Huntington High on Long Island lacks a heart, however.

He will give the team two weeks

off at Christmas. Of course, when they return they will practice three times daily for the next three weeks.

“He wants you to win,” Middlebrook said. “Wrestling is his life.”
So, too, are the young men who labor under his watchful eye.

“I push a kid pretty hard in here,” Murray said. “But I never yell at a kid outside the wrestling room.”

“I really enjoy the kids on my team. And I know what’s best for them.”

Like the time Middlebrook needed an earful in spite of his father’s illness.

“You can deliver that as a coach,” Murray said. “You know what the kid needs.”

In Middlebrook’s case, he knew what the whole family could use — an All-American.

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TUESDAY

NOVEMBER 18, 1986

ROCHESTER

NEW YORK
John Leone of Penfield adjusting headgear as he pursues All-America recognition for fourth straight year.
Wrestling Coach Gets Director’s Chair

COLLEGE WRESTLING COACH Don Murray, left, receives his very own director’s chair from Bill Stier, athletic director. (Photo by Jim Montanus.)

SUNY College at Brockport wrestling coach Don Murray was presented with a director’s chair Feb. 1 with his name and a star on it for his years of service, dedication, and success at the college.

Murray, in his 16th year as head coach, has won four national titles while coaching at Brockport. This year’s team, despite not having any seniors, is currently ranked number one in Division III in the country.

Dr. William F. Stier, Jr., director of intercollegiate athletics at Brockport, presented the chair to Murray before Saturday's final dual meet of the year versus SUNY Binghamton. The Golden Eagles were victorious in the match, winning 35-9.

Brockport will travel to Binghamton to compete in the SUNYAC championships on Feb. 14-15. Murray’s squad will pursue its seventh straight SUNYAC title and 13th in the last 14 years.
Coach Don Murray wasn’t surprised by Team USA’s good showing.

Soviets warm up to outwrestle U.S.

By LEO ROTH
Times-Union

When Rob Koll toured the Soviet Union last winter as part of a select team of United States wrestlers, he wished he had brought along a pair of ear muffs instead of his head gear.

Glassnost aside, the arenas and gymnasiums in which a series of exhibition meets were held gave new meaning to the old term “cold war.”

“They didn’t exactly turn the heat up for us,” said Koll, a former NCAA champion from the University of North Carolina. “One gym had to be 30 degrees. I walked onto the mat with goose pimples.”

Things were considerably warmer — in temperature and in spirit — when the two superpowers got together again last night at Brockport State College.

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Soviets outwrestle U.S.

With each country fielding a team of Olympic prospects — mostly wrestlers on the verge of cracking the top three in their respective weight class — the Soviets staged a late rally to edge Team USA, 23½ to 19.

The dual meet was witnessed by 1,500 enthusiastic fans and young wrestlers attending the first of three USA Wrestling Junior Olympic camps at Brockport this summer.

Tonight at 8, a similar USA squad will take on the Cuban national team.

The matches are part of the World Duals, a series of tuneup meets for the Goodwill Games, the World Championships and U.S. Olympic Festival later this summer.

"This was a really young team for us, but we wrestled well," USA coach Don Murray of Brockport said. "I'd call it a good 'friendship' match. Even when the Soviets were behind early, they showed some goodwill. That hasn't always been the case in these matches. Compared to the 1970s, things have really changed."

The Soviets appeared to enjoy the hospitality shown them last night.

During the traditional exchange of gifts, each team member received a pair of Ray-Ban sunglasses, courtesy of Rochester-based Bausch & Lomb. The Soviets handed out team pennants.

During the meet, each winning wrestler — there were six to four for Team USA — received polite applause.

Meanwhile, the visitors didn't seem to be fazed by the capitalism in progress — T-shirts on sale in the hallway, advertising in the program, corporate sponsorship of each individual match.

The only thing missing was Gorbys.

On the mat, though, it was the Soviets who were all business, winning the final five matches to erase a 17-7 deficit (one loss by forfeit).

"Winning is always good," said Victor Borisov, a Soviet team official, through an interpreter. "Sometimes it can help to understand your enemy. It helps the wrestlers and the coaches. Next time we meet, we'll know what we did right and what we did wrong."

Winning for Team USA last night (each match was five minutes long) were Penn State's Jeff Prescott, a three-time New York State High School champion from Olean, by technical fall at 114.5 pounds; Brad Penrith, a former New York State High School champ and former NCAA champion at Iowa, a 10-4 decision at 125.5; Gil Sanchez, an NCAA runner-up from Nebraska, an 8-3 decision at 138.5; and Koll, a four-time All-American while at North Carolina, a 6-1 decision at 163.

Koll, an assistant coach at Cornell, was the lone No. 1-ranked American wrestler competing.

Last night, Koll was never in trouble against former Soviet national champ Saigid Katinovasov.

Brian Quick, Brockport's NCAA Division III national champ last winter and Kurt Angle, NCAA Division I champ from Pittsburgh, each lost last night.

Quick, making his international debut, was beaten 12-0 by Fraev Soslan at 186 pounds while Angle was pinned in just 34 seconds by up-and-coming Soviet star Sabeev Aravut at 220.

That gave the Soviets a 20½ to 19 lead.

Sports shorts

Wrestling coach inducted to Hall

The most successful Division III wrestling coach in New York state, SUNY Brockport's Don Murray, has been inducted into the New York State College Wrestling Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Murray has been head coach at SUNY Brockport since 1970, compiling an impressive 189-49-3 dual meet record. Most impressive is his record on a national level. In his 22 years, Murray has led the Golden Eagles to four Division III national championships (1977, 1980, 1982, 1983). The team has finished second on four other occasions and has finished out of the top 20 just once in his illustrious career. The Golden Eagles are currently ranked third in the nation with an 8-0 record.

Of the 79 wrestling All-Americans at SUNY Brockport, Murray has been a teammate of one (Bruce Turner, 1968), an assistant coach for another (Regan Beers, 1970), and head coach for the other 77. Nineteen have won national titles. No coach in school history comes close to his success.
Wrestling with success

After 25 years, Brockport's Murray never quits pushing

"Coach Murray has all the components of a successful coach — sacrifice, intensity, loyalty. He's demanding and obsessed, but he'll do anything for you. You get involved with him, you're in it for life."
— Former Brockport wrestler John Leone

By JIM MANDELARO
STAFF WRITER

His office is messy enough to make Oscar Madison cringe. Papers strewn everywhere, file cabinets overflowing, walls plastered with photographs and plaques.

This is the office of a man who has been decorated more times than Midtown Plaza at Christmas.

In 25 years at Brockport, Don Murray has coached 87 All-American wrestlers, 20 national champions and five NCAA Division III championship teams.

He has been named Division III coach of the year twice, AAU man of the year once, and been inducted into the NCAA Division III Coaches Hall of Fame.

The walls reflect the rewards of winning, but the lone memento on his cluttered desk says much more.

"It's a trophy from my 1988-89 team," he says, proudly holding it up. "They were a bunch of freshmen and they were terrible, finished 12th in the nationals. But they kept trying, kept pushing and never gave up. And when they were seniors, they won a national championship."

The trophy speaks volumes about Murray's philosophy. He takes nothing and makes something.

DON MURRAY
Brockport wrestling coach

"If they're going to whine and cry, let them go someplace else."

Heads-up coach Brockport State coach Don Murray, now in his 25th season, checks the scalp of one of his wrestlers during a recent practice at the school.
Murray
FROM PAGE 1D

“He’s like a second father to us,” said Eastridge graduate Fritz Zagaorski, one of six Brockport wrestlers who will compete in this weekend’s Division III championships at Augusta, Ill. “I’ve never seen a man care so much about so many kids at once. This is his life.”

Murray, a lifelong bachelor, has earned a permanent place in the hearts of hundreds of Brockport wrestlers. Many came from broken homes. Most were only marginal stars in high school. Yet Murray has posted 25 consecutive winning seasons and finished in the top 10 at nationals 17 times.

“Coach takes kids under his wing and makes them champions,” says Frank Famiano, a four-time Brockport All-American who was part of three U.S. Olympic teams. “He is completely devoted to his kids, and he demands nothing less than the best they can give.”

Murray, 51, grew up in Boston, wrestled at Huntington High School on Long Island, and began a four-year stint in the Air Force one day after his 1961 graduation.

He was based in Florida and wrestled well enough to make the 1964 Olympic Trials. Upon his 1965 discharge, he spent two years at Nassau Community College and another three at Brockport, earning his bachelor’s and master’s degrees.

“He showed up on our doorstep,” then-Eagles coach Roscoe Hastings said in 1992. “We didn’t recruit him. He was a good wrestler, but a funny wrestler. He couldn’t get his head together for dual meets but he was great in tournaments.”

Murray wrestled one year at Brockport, then decided to concentrate on coaching. He started as the freshmen coach and took over the varsity in 1970.

With the Vietnam War and student rebellion raging, the 27-year-old coach commanded as much respect as a substitute teacher the day before spring break.

“I was too liberal back then,” said Murray, who also teaches physical education at Brockport. “I trained hard assuming kids would train hard, but that didn’t happen. Now I make sure it does.”

Murray is in charge of all facets of the program. He is a tireless recruiter — he put 170,000 miles on his 1985 Lincoln Town Car in a five-year period — but remains extremely careful about whom he lets in.

“I want a supportive parent who knows I run the show,” he said. “I’m here to get the kid a degree, make him a man. If they’re going to whine and cry, let them go someplace else.

“If I don’t feel I can work with a kid, I don’t care how good he is, I don’t want him. Look, I make champions. Champions are made, they’re not born.”

Murray’s greatest project may have been Famiano, his prize pupil.

“I wasn’t even planning on going to college,” says Famiano, now a snack distributor in Schenectady. “But I met Coach Murray at a camp and he talked me into coming to Brockport. Best move I ever made.”

Famiano could do no better than sixth at the state high school championships. But guided by Murray, he became a four-time All-American, two-time national champion and three-time Olympian. He also was a two-time All-American at the Division I tournament, a rarity for a Division III wrestler.

Famiano provided Murray with his proudest moment as a coach at the 1984 U.S. Olympic Trials in Allendale, Mich.

Famiano entered the Greco-Roman competition as the top seed at 125½ pounds but dislocated his left shoulder during the first of his best-of-three matches against Florida’s Rob Hermann.

Despite having the shoulder popped back into place several times during the match, Famiano rallied to win 3-2, then dragged himself into the trainer’s room to recuperate before the second match.

“I remember going in there all depressed, ‘cause I knew how hard he had worked for it,” Murray recalled. “He was laying on the counter, and I said ‘Jesus, Frank, you threw out your shoulder.’ He liked to throw (opponents) with that shoulder. And he looked up and said, ‘Well, my other side’s my best now. And I’m gonna win.’”

Famiano won the second match 2-0, then finished fifth at the Los Angeles Olympics.

Murray’s tactics will never win any Mr. Nice Guy awards, but they do win matches. During practices, he taunts, yells and challenges his wrestlers at every turn. During matches, he really gets mad.

“He’s on his wrestlers constantly,” says Leone, a Penfield High School graduate who also earned All-American honors four times at Brockport in the 1980s. “Sometimes he even gets on his man’s opponent, just to distract him.”

Murray runs structured, cycled practices — “high intensity followed by low intensity” — and he thrives on being the ultimate disciplinarian.

“You can’t be easy-going all the time or authoritarian all the time,” he said. “You’ve got to know when to put your arm around a kid, and when to give him a kick in the butt. I’m trying to make sure these kids are the best they can be. They don’t have to be a national champion, but they have to give 100 percent.”

Famiano remembers Murray’s strictness.

“Back then, the drinking age was 18,” Famiano remembered. “Coach would actually go into the bars around town trying to catch us in there. We’d see him coming and run out the back door.”
The Don of Brockport

Brockport State's Don Murray is one of the most successful wrestling coaches in NCAA history. Here are some highlights from his 25 years at Brockport:

- Coached 87 All-Americans.
- Coached 20 NCAA Division III individual champions.
- Won five Division III team titles (1977, '80, '82, '83, '92).
- Captured 17 SUNYAC titles.
- Coached U.S. international teams in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Mexico, Norway, Turkey and the Soviet Union.
- AAU man of the year, 1980.
- NCAA Division III coach of the year, 1980 and '92.
- Member, New York State and NCAA Division III coaches halls of fame.

Before every season, Murray makes his wrestlers sign a contract pledging not to drink, smoke or demean the program in any way. He also discourages dating.

"When you wrestle for him, he's such an intimidating presence," said Leone, an assistant coach at Spencerport High School. "Now we're like best friends. I called him three days ago and he's just as psychotic as ever, planning every move for nationals."

Murray is recognized throughout the international wrestling community, and has received several Division I offers but has laughed every one off.

"A lot of Division I athletes are pompous asses," he says. "Most of my kids haven't been successful in high school. I enjoy making them into men, getting them a degree."

For that, his wrestlers say, Don Murray is the winner and still champion.
Murray's dedication key to championships

by PAUL WAGER
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

Heading into next weekend's Division III nationals in Cortland, SUNY Brockport's wrestling program has won five national titles.

The man responsible for the success of the Golden Eagles is Brockport Head Coach Don Murray.

Murray grew up in the Boston area before moving to Huntington, N.Y. After graduating from high school, he enlisted in the Air Force before coming to Brockport where he has remained since his graduation in 1969.

While at Brockport, Murray wrestled for the Golden Eagles while earning a Bachelor of Science degree. He later completed his Master's at Brockport.

In 1970, only a year after graduation, his former teammates wanted Murray to become their coach.

"When I graduated I knew coaching wrestling was what I wanted to do," Murray said.

"I was interested in the psychology, physiology and technology of the sport."

His first season in 1971 ended with an 18th-place finish at the nationals. Murray's teams steadily improved and in 1977 they would win the first of five national championships.

The next three titles would soon follow in 1980, 1982 and 1983, while the fifth title wouldn't come until 1992.

"I can't honestly say that any one stands out above the rest because they are all great in their own individual way," Murray said.

In his 26 years as head coach, Murray has had 18 top ten finishes at nationals and has only finished out of the top 15 just three times.

When asked whether any particular season stood out above the rest Murray replied, "Not really because the next season is always the most important.

"Maybe after I have retired I will be able to look back and be able to tell."

Over the years Murray has coached 21 national champions and 93 All-Americans.

In Murray's opinion, three-time All-American Joe Giani is the most courageous wrestler he has coached because he wrestled three years with a knee injury.

With all of the success he has had, Murray has had other offers, but has remained at Brockport accumulating a 210-56-4 record.

"I have had the opportunity to go elsewhere, but I didn't really consider it because I enjoy being at Brockport," Murray said.

During his career Murray has picked up several awards for his achievements. These include Division III coach of the year in 1980 and 1992 and induction into the Division III wrestling coaches Hall of Fame in 1992.

Murray attributes his success to working hard and getting quality student athletes.

"I have had a very successful graduation rate," Murray said. "With a cycle like that you don't have to reinvent the wheel every year."

For Murray, coaching has been an emotional "roller coaster," but one he plans on riding as long as he enjoys it.

Murray said he would like to be remembered, "as someone who showed commitment and dedication to the students, athletes and the university. I would never have had so much success without alumni who have stayed on and helped like my current assistants (Brian) Quick and (Chris) Stevens."

"I never dreamed that I would have so much success, I guess it just goes to show what hard work and dedication will do," Murray said.