

MEET THE GRAND MARSHALS



Illinois High School Association

2020 State Finals

Here are the 2020 Grand Marshals who will lead the annual Grand March of Finalists Saturday night before the championship bouts of the 83rd IHSA Individual Wrestling State Final Tournament.

DAVE KLEMM

A graduate of Lincoln High School, Dave Klemm was a two-time state qualifier for Hall of Fame Coach Floyd Bee, placing third in the state as a senior. He went on to become a four-time NCAA All-American at Eastern Illinois University, including winning an NCAA Division II national championship. Dave was a member of the USA World Team in 1979 and had olympic aspirations, but the 1980 Olympic boycott caused him to set his sights on coaching.

Dave's coaching career began in 1980 as an assistant at Eastern Illinois, and included stops as an assistant at the University of Oklahoma, the University of Illinois and then a return to Eastern Illinois. He then became a head coach for the first time in 1989 at MacMurray College, before taking the same position at Lincoln College two years later.

Dave established Lincoln College as national power during his coaching tenure there, producing 174 Junior College National Qualifiers, 58 All-Americans, and nine individual National Champions before retiring from coaching in 2011. His teams finished in the top six in the nation eight times, and he was named the National Coach of the year in 1997 and Man of the Year in 1999. From 1991 to 2008, Dave was a tenured faculty member at Lincoln College in Physical Education and added Physical Education Division Chair to his duties in 1999. In 2008, Dave left the classroom after being named Lincoln College Director of Athletics, in addition to coaching wrestling. Lincoln won two national championships and had 17 teams place nationally during his tenure as athletic director, and he would later help the school transition from a two-year to a four-year program.

His time away from coaching didn't last too long, as he returned matside in 2014 and 2015 at Lincoln College, and then became the head coach at Mt. Zion High School in 2018 after retiring from Lincoln College.

Dave's incredible career was immortalized with Hall of Fame enshrinement from Eastern Illinois University, Lincoln College, the IWCOA, the NJCAA and the Illinois Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. He also received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Illinois Wrestling Coaches and Officials Association in 2015.

DEBBIE NASON

Debbie Nason has been an active volunteer and contributor to the wrestling community for over 25 years. She serves on the IWCOA Board as Event Director of the Freshman/Sophomore State Series & Girls Wrestling State Championships.

Debbie has been responsible for programming the IWCOA Spring Convention & Awards Banquet. She was named the IWCOA Person of the Year in 1997, and was inducted into the IWCOA Hall of Fame in 2007, along with receiving the IWCOA Lifetime Service Award in 2017. Debbie was inducted into Illinois Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame Lifetime Service in 2015. She also serves on the Illinois Chapter National Hall of Fame selection committee.

As a Beat the Streets Advisory Board Member, she has assisted in the planning of the first BTS/IWCOA Fall Coaches Clinic. She has organized and worked a display booth at the IHSA Individual State Wrestling Tournament for over 17 years. She served as IWF State Chairman from 1997-2001. She worked on IWF committees including the 1994 USAW Cadet World Championships, and she was the Event Director of the National Duals held at SIUE in 1997 and 1998.

After the tragic death of her son Ken III, Debbie created the Ken Gerdes III Memorial Foundation. This non-profit effort is totally dedicated to supporting Illinois wrestlers at all levels of competition and all wrestling styles. Today, the foundation hosts the annual Ken Gerdes III Golf Outing. Since 1997, the Foundation has awarded over \$100,000 dollars in Leadership Awards to over 100 wrestlers across the state of Illinois. In addition, the KGIII Foundation has



Dave Klemm
Warrensburg



Debbie Nason
Orland Park



Mike Matozzi
Oswego



Kevin Puebla
Moline

contributed to the last six Olympic Team Members from Illinois, multiple World Team Members, and many high school National Team Members since 2000.

Debbie's son, Ben Gerdes, is currently an assistant wrestling coach at Joliet Catholic Academy. He and his wife, Mandy, have three children, Kate, Owen, and Molly. All three of her grandchildren currently attend JCA and participate in a variety of sports including wrestling, football, soccer, and cheerleading.

MIKE MATOZZI

Mike Matozzi's passion for coaching began in high school when he was asked by his teacher and mentor, Bill Yena, to coach the Park District wrestling program in La Grange Park, in which Mike's youngest brother, who is hearing impaired, was participating. After graduating Magna Cum Laude in three years from MacMurray College with a degree to teach the deaf and hard of hearing, Mike earned Master's Degrees from both Ball State University and Roosevelt University.

Spending his entire educational career at Hinsdale South High School, Mike was a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing, Dean of Students and Director of Deans. He was inducted into the school's Hall of Fame in November, 2018. He coached girls' softball, football and wrestling. Twenty-five of Mike's 32 years of coaching wrestling were as the program's head coach. He coached his teams to 390 dual meet victories, numerous tournament championships and the only five conference championships in the school's history. He coached 155 all-conference wrestlers, 37 state qualifiers, and nine state medalists, including two individual state champions.

A number of Mike's wrestlers have gone on to be educators, as well as wrestling coaches and officials. In addition, Mike was again able to coach his brother, Al, using his sign language skills to involve him and other deaf students in the program while also having his brother, Steve, who is now Hinsdale South's head coach, as one of his assistant coaches. After retiring in 2013, Mike became an IHSA wrestling official and has worked numerous IHSA and IESA tournaments.

Mike is an active IWCOA member and a past Board President. He continues to serve on the organization's Hall of Fame Selection Committee, while he and his wife, Debbie, have hosted four Illinois/Indiana Classic Dual events. He was inducted into the IWCOA Hall of Fame in 2011 and selected as its Man of the Year in 2013.

Mike has volunteered at numerous IHSA Individual and Team State Tournaments, and for the past three years, he has been a weigh in coordinator for the state finals here in Champaign. A resident of Oswego, Mike and Debbie have been married for 38 years. They have three children, a daughter, Michelina, who was a wrestling statistician at Oswego High School, and sons Michael and Anthony who wrestled for Oswego East and Oswego High Schools respectively. All three also served as bout card runners for the IHSA State Wrestling Tournament.

KEVIN PUEBLA

Kevin Puebla wrestled at Moline High School where he compiled a 101-5-3 career record, including going 58-0-3 in duals. He was a three-time Regional & Sectional Champion and went on to place fifth and fourth, respectively, as sophomore and junior. As a senior in 1975, he claimed the Class AA state title at 126 pounds.

Kevin was also the State Freestyle & Greco Roman Champion his senior year, and won the USA Junior National Greco Roman Championship. He was named the Outstanding Wrestler of the tournament, and was also First Team Scholastic Wrestling News All-American.

Kevin moved on to the University of Illinois where he compiled a 105-27-4 career record. Twice a Big Ten runner up, he was an All-American with a fifth place national finish as a senior. A three-time St. Louis Open Champion & two-time Illini Open Champion, Kevin was a finalist in 14 tournaments during his career. Twice he was named Most Valuable Wrestler for the Illini and was selected team captain his senior year. At the time of his graduation, he held the Illini school records for single-season & career victories.

After graduation, Kevin's coaching career began as an assistant at Illinois for six years. He was then named the head coach at Augustana College in Rock Island. In his 13 seasons at Augustana, he led the Vikings to 12 CCIW Championships & eight Top 25 National finishes. His teams posted a dual meet record of 168-57-7, making him the winningest coach in program history. Kevin has the rare distinction of winning over 100 matches at three different levels.

At Augustana, he coached four National Champions, 22 All-Americans & 61 Conference Champions. He was twice nominated for Coach of the Year. Kevin has served as Tournament Director for two NCAA Division III tournaments and while at Augustana, hosted two IHSA Dual Meet State Tournaments.

Kevin is a member of the IWCOA, the National Wrestling Hall of Fame Illinois Chapter, NCAA Division III, and Augustana Hall of Fames, as well as a recipient of the IWCOA Lifetime Service Award. Kevin has served as a Head Table worker at the IHSA State Tournament for the past 14 years.

National Anthem Soloists



Keenan Holliday
Jacksonville (School for
Visually Impaired)
Friday



Gwen Temol
Jacksonville (School for
Visually Impaired)
Friday



Roman King
Maroa-Forsyth
Saturday