



Diplomat News

The Oldest Sport: CHARLES WILLIAM MAYSER

by AWN

Not many wrestling coaches can claim to have been associated with four of the great traditions of the sport, but “Uncle Charley” Mayser was just such a man. His career spanned 45 years and his influence stretched over even more. Born in 1876, he died in Lancaster, Pa., at the age of 91 leaving behind the immense reputation as the man who “started wrestling” at Franklin & Marshall, Yale and Iowa State, as well as achievements in rules evolution and in other sports, primarily football and track.

Professor Mayser was born in Buffalo, Ny., but little is known about his early years. Somewhere along the line he is reported to have been a professional boxer and wrestler; he also somehow learned to tap dance, speak German and Latin, play banjo, walk the slack wire, and perform magic tricks too. He wound up in New Haven just before the turn of the century intending to study medicine at Yale but instead went into physical education.

As coaching assistant to W.G. Anderson in Yale gym, he was given the task of organizing a wrestling team and although he left Yale in 1903, his charges easily swept the original collegiate wrestling meet at Penn two years later. He next held coaching and instructor jobs at a series of prep schools and then in 1913 landed his first major position as head football coach at F&M. One year later the Diplomats upset Penn 10-0 and brought his skills into the limelight in a big way. It is not accident that one member of this team, Hook Mylan, was later named national football coach of the year in 1937; Mayser influenced his men that way.

The fame brought a call from Iowa State where he became athletic director and head football coach in 1915. The following year he introduced the fine art of wrestling to the students at Ames. Although the Cyclones lost their first dual meet to Iowa U. Where an earlier program had been in existence for six years under E.G. Schroeder, they then ran through nine victories in a row before dropping another dual to Indiana in 1920. Mayser’s men lost one more dual (to Penn State in 1921) and then had two more perfect seasons in a row, culminating in the Big Ten open tournament of 1923 when they carried four of the seven gold medals.

During the ear, “uncle Charley” got his nickname and had the brainstorm which started his third great tradition; he invented Iowa High School wrestling, and held the state’s first championship at Ames in 1921 to which 24 towns sent representatives. The meet proved so popular it was repeated annually thereafter until the state HSAA took over in 1926, and there are today more than 100 high school tournaments each year in this hot bed of wrestling supported by over 300 teams. But as much as Mayser liked Iowa, he had an even fonder attraction for Lancaster, Pa., and returned to a post as director of physical education at F&M in 1924. It is said 3,000 at Ames signed a petition to keep him from leaving. Upon arrival, he promptly started the F&M wrestling tradition. His dual meet record at Ames had been 36-3 and at the little Pennsylvania school he ran up 145-19-4 over the next 20 years taking on the best of the nation wherever available. He hosted the 1938 NAAU championships and the NCAA meet the following year. His

teams had a winning string of 46 consecutive duals running when WWII interrupted the sport.

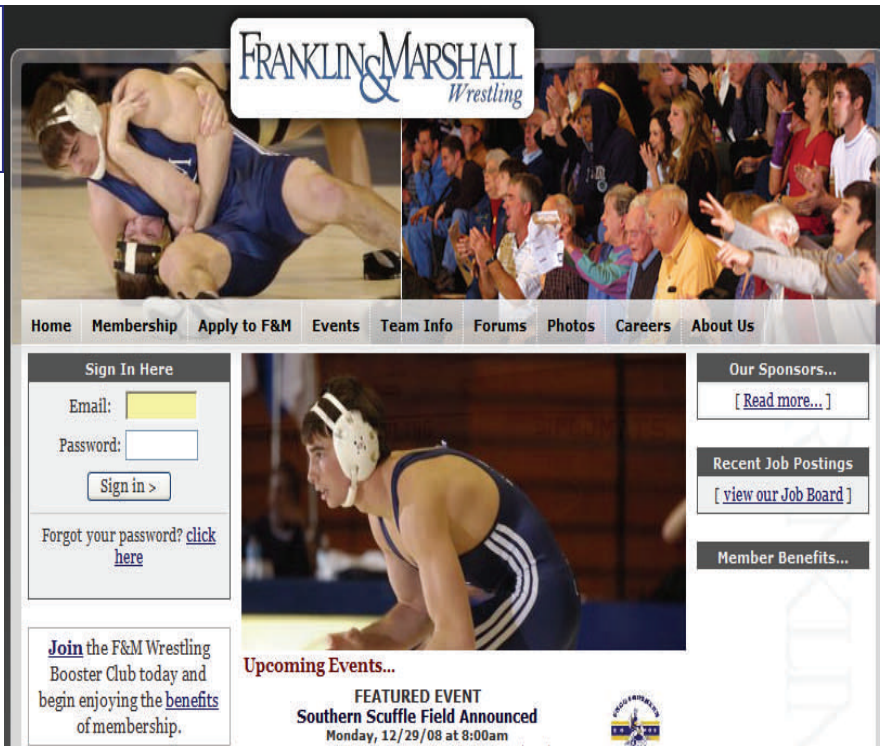
Mayser retired from after the war at age 70 and was succeeded by two of his finest pupils, Austin Bishop and Roy Phillips, who brought F&M into the Eastern Conference. The balance of the vast group of outstanding athletes influenced by “uncle Charley” is too numerous to list entirely. At F&M he coached National AAU champs, Joe Schutt and Richard Vaughn, and two NCAA runners-up Phillips and Frank Burgess.

Mayser’s charges were always famous as pinner; Al Schacheman, for example, gained 29 falls in his 34 collegiate duals. At Iowa State he produced Fred Shepard, Dick Barker and Ralph Prunty, all of them gained later fame as coaches, and Polly Wallace, a fine football player as well. A.C. Gilber of Yale, the famous toy manufacturer, credited him with being the deciding influence in his life. A physical culture enthusiast at all times, in middle age he could defeat anyone at push ups, hand ball, wrestling, etc. He could still do a one minute handstand at age 72. The highest honor the College bestowed on him for his work on behalf of the College and improvement of the Department of Athletics was the dedication of the College's current gymnasium in 1962 as the Mayser Physical Education Center. Upon the dedication, Mayser noted, “I understand there's a little mortgage on this building. I hope you can pay for it. I can't; I spent my life in education.”

THE FRIENDS OF F&M WRESTLING LAUNCH WEBSITE IN EARLY NOVEMBER...

If you have yet to check out the Friends of F&M Wrestling website, I strongly suggest that you take a minute and not only follow the link but bookmark this page. The Friends of F&M website uses one of the latest technologies for next generation web platforms on the market today, it is hosted by the company alumni magnet <http://www.alumnimagnet.com/>. This website will allow you, the fan, to become more involved in the program and eventually help bring F&M wrestling back to national promise.

Friends of F&M Wrestling Website:
<http://www.fandmwrestling.com/index.html>



Homecoming Weekend



Dear Members of the Franklin & Marshall Wrestling Community, thank you for making ALUMNI WEEKEND 2008 a huge success! Many thanks to all who came out to meet the 2008-2009 wrestling team.

F&M vs. SDSU/SACRED HEART
JANUARY 10th 12:00PM
MAYSER GYM

Diplomats out-shine others at sign making during homecoming weekend



Game Action Photos



daidsinclair.org

F&M Inducts three wrestlers into HALL OF FAME

Congratulations to *Victor Bernardino, Brian Fisher and Bill Dunbam* (1972 Football Team) for their induction into the Athletic Hall of Fame.

The Franklin & Marshall Hall of Fame was created in 1969 to honor those men and women who made significant contributions to the College's athletic program through outstanding achievement in intercollegiate athletics. A committee representing the College, alumni and friends of F&M, annually evaluates and selects worthy candidates. Induction requires a majority vote of the representation present at the election meeting.



2008 Inductees

[1972 Football Team](#), [Victor Bernardino](#), [Kenneth Davis](#), [Brian Fisher](#), [Kenneth Gramas](#), [Amy Kreitz Kimball](#), [Lauren Petrella Greer](#)

F&M vs. ESU

JANUARY 23rd 7:00PM

MAYSER GYM

Somers Fourth at Michigan State



Nico Somers placed fourth in the 285-pound open bracket to lead Franklin & Marshall's effort at the Michigan State Open on Saturday. This afternoon marks the first time since the 2006-2007 season that Somers has placed in a tournament. He won the Wilkes Open and placed fifth at the Mat Town Open that season.

DIPLOMATS OF THE WEEK



Gianforti Selected Athlete of the Week

Senior wrestler Al Gianforti has been named F&M Athlete of the Week for placing fourth at 149 pounds at the Navy Classic on Saturday afternoon.

Somers Earns F&M Athlete of the Week

Nov 10, 2008

Senior quad-captain Nico Somers began the season with a fourth-place finish in the 285-pound open bracket to lead Franklin & Marshall's effort at the Michigan State Open on Sunday.

In the championship bracket, Somers placed a 3-2 decision on Virginia's Jack Danilkoicz before falling 4-1 to second-place finisher, Nate Everhart of Indiana. Somers proceeded to hand out decisions in the wrestle-back, including a 5-2 win over Northwestern's Ben Kuhar and a 3-2 win over Michigan State's Alan O'Donnell. A win by injury default propelled Somers into the consolation finals where he dropped a 3-2 decision to Michigan's Chad Bleske.

Diplomats Produce a Pair of Place Winners at Navy



ANNAPOLIS, Md. - Franklin & Marshall's wrestling team produced a pair of place winners at the Navy Classic Saturday afternoon. Al Gianforti placed fourth at 149 pounds, while Justin Herbert placed fifth at 174 pounds. Herbert's fifth place finish marks the second-consecutive season in which he placed at Navy. The Diplomats' senior finished third at 174 a year ago. Their efforts led F&M to a ninth place finish amongst the tournament's 12 teams.

"Overall, I think we wrestled a great tournament," said Diplomats' head coach, Pete Schuyler. "The guys battled hard to earn their places, and we picked up wins up and down the lineup. It was a good day for our wrestling team."

Gianforti wrestled his way through the consolation bracket with five wins before falling 19-6 in the consolation final at the hands of Virginia Tech's Peter Gates. Virginia Tech's Matt Rosen had bumped Gianforti from the championship bracket in his first bout of the day. Gianforti went on to win his next four matches, two by technical fall, one via fall, and one by decision.

Gianforti posted back-to-back tech falls in his first two consolation matches, dropping Joel Caudell of Campbell and Bucknell's Gavin Johnston. He followed that with an 8-5 decision of Navy's Bernie Crandley to earn his way into the consolation semifinals where he pinned Duke's Mike Bell 47 seconds into the first period.

Herbert made his way into the semifinals of the championship bracket with wins over

Navy's Anthony Laurita and Virginia Tech's Anthony Trongone before being bumped by Navy's Luke Reberfus. Herbert fell to eventual third place finisher, Shane Riccio of Bucknell, then defeated Navy's Mike Billings 19-10 for fifth place.

Colin Ely, picked up his first win in an F&M singlet defeating West Virginia's Ryan Fell 12-5 in the 197-pound bracket. Ely was knocked out of the championship bracket by the second seed, Virginia Tech's D.J. Bruce. Bruce went onto second place while Ely went on to defeat Greensboro's Peter Sturgeon and then dropped to Odie Delaney to end the day at 2-2.

Anthony Bongarzone also went 2-2 on the day working in the 165-pound bracket, while Jimmy Schulz went 2-2 at 184-pounds.

