

# Ace Is High at N-W And So Is Wrestling

This is another in a series of wrestling articles prepared and written by Joe Rotundo, former mat coach at North Tonawanda. Today Rotundo features the champions of Niagara-Wheatfield and explains the reasons for much of their success and why they are an outstanding wrestling power.

Armand Cacciatori, known to his friends as Ace, has again placed himself and his team at the pinnacle of wrestling in the Niagara Frontier League. Many like myself find it difficult to imagine that Ace has strung 28 victories back to back against such tough competition. A recent victory over Kenmore West demonstrated this year's fine team balance and over-all strength.

Kenmore West at the time of the match was in second place and considered to be the top contender. However, the Falcons grudgingly gave up a mere 6 points while scoring 40. With consistent performances like this over the past three years I am looking forward to Iroquois staking its 127 match win streak against so formidable a foe.

The secret of Niagara-Wheatfield's wrestling success can best be explained by examining the personality of Coach Cacciatori and the hard work of his boys. In an interview with him recently Ace told me, "this year's team consists of boys who don't mind doing the work to make them champions."

However, it should be noted that the job of encouraging the right kind of boy and having at least two good ones at each of 12 weight classes is a near impossible task. With only 475 boys enrolled in school, there were 68 present on the bitter cold Saturday that I visited the team practice. This large number and fine team attitude (all travel several miles to practice) would make many college coaches envious.

With the possibility of college coaching in the back of his mind, the young bachelor has devoted hundreds of hours of his personal time working to better his teams and himself. Coach Cacciatori has spent two weeks, each of the past three summers, at a coaches clinic to refresh and expose himself to the new trends in collegiate wrestling.

The quality of his work can be seen by recalling such fine wrestlers as Franklin Patterson (New York State champion), Al LaChance (two losses in 39 matches), and Ed Mt. Pleasant. The names of Jim Printup (third in state), Bill Stokes, Mike Camman, and Jim Hunt are often mentioned by NFL coaches as boys who typify quality wrestling in our league.

One official and wrestling authority confided that — "Mike Camman not only has the good moves but the poise and confidence to go all the way. And this Rich Kowalick at 215 lbs. has outstanding speed for such a strong man."

When asked why he works so hard: "I'm happy when these boys are happy and that's when they're winning. If it takes this much time and effort to win, then that's what we'll do."

This same feeling of hard work seemed to radiate throughout the team, not one of the boys that I talked to had the feeling that luck or chance had anything to do with winning.

Ace has gained the respect of the other coaches of the NFL through his understanding of the boys and men. I can say with confidence that at present the



N-W's Armand Cacciatori

highest goal in Ace's mind is to bring good wrestling to the Niagara Frontier area. Unfortunately this has all too often been at the expense of the other teams of the league. He has encouraged the wrestling program in the Niagara Falls YMCA, and has been both a friend and advisor to the newest member of the league, Dick Meckees of Niagara Falls.

The wrestling spirit which prevails at N-W is the result of a number of clever ideas which can be attributed to the coach.

The program of a high protein, low fat wrestler's lunch is offered in the school cafeteria.

The use of music and special

seats and are introduced along with their sons. Earlier in the season Ace played host to a number of parents at an explanation night at which time he explained the rules and point system in wrestling. Both a Junior and Senior High School intramural program have brought new boys and over-all school interest to the sport. The 10-member girl wrestling "pep club" is responsible for the signs that fill the corridors and spectators that fill the buses for the out of town matches.

Jim Printup, the team pacer at 98 lbs., feels that the students at the school this year have a lot of respect for the wrestlers.

"It took a few years for those kids to understand about the sport and how much work it is to get in shape to wrestle six minutes."

With outstanding competition at 98 lbs. this year Jim will have to stay in top shape all season to stay undefeated.

If it's hard work that is responsible for success, then those in the Niagara Frontier League don't have to look very far for a good example — the wrestlers and coach of Niagara-Wheatfield.

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lights to produce a dramatic effect along with tom-tom drums to encourage some of his wrestlers has brought good results.

Parents' Night is an annual event at which time the wrestlers' parents are honored with free admission, special reserved

## Milt Richman's Sports Parade

NEW YORK (UPI)—Johnny Yogi Berra. He quickly emphasized, however, he did not plan to manage like either of them.

"I'm not going to run the ball club like Ralph did or like Yogi did," Keane declared.

That message was especially