



~ Letter to the Editor ~

100 Years of Wrestling

Dear Editor:

A response to the announcement of the 100th anniversary of Cresco wrestling appearing on "The Predicament" website (Cresco100Banquet2021.pdf):

Congratulations to all responsible for organizing and sponsoring the celebratory events honoring the rich tradition of 100 years of Cresco wrestling. This indeed has been one of the most outstanding high school wrestling programs in Iowa and the nation. Below are some additions which reveal even further the unmatched achievements and impact of Cresco wrestling on the sport. ... and the world:

In the announcement's listing of some of the most successful wrestlers and coaches the notable academic accomplishment of Dr. Harold Nichols, PhD is cited. Doctors Dave Bartelma, Don Henry and Bob Hess also earned PhDs. Hess' was at Yale, where he also became a Professor of Forestry. And, Dr. Don Maland was an MD who practiced in Cresco his entire career. Other Cresco wrestlers have earned advanced degrees as well.

Most notably, Dr. Norman Borlaug was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970. CHS, where Borlaug was coached by Dave Bartelma, and the University of Minnesota, where Borlaug wrestled and earned his PhD (and was also coached by Dr. Bartelma) are most likely the only wrestling programs in the world to have ever had a participant so honored. Because of his unparalleled life-saving career achievements and his never-ending advocacy for the sport, Borlaug is an inductee in five wrestling halls of fame, including the National and Iowa halls.

Another University of Minnesota wrestler from Cresco, Dale Hanson, won two Iowa high school state tournaments and at Minnesota an NCAA championship in 1939, for which he was named the Most Outstanding Wrestler. He is one of two Cresco wrestlers to ever earn this honor in NCAA Championship competition, the other being Don Nichols for Michigan one year later. Like with Borlaug, Dave Bartelma was his coach at both Cresco and the U of MN.

After being at Pearl Harbor and Midway in WWII, First Lieutenant Hanson lost his life when the B-17 bomber he was co-piloting was shot down over Rabaul, New Britain.

There is also Gary Kurdelmeier, MA. He won two state championships for CHS, an NCAA championship at the University of Iowa, two straight NCAA team titles and three straight Big Ten team titles as coach of Iowa, became assistant athletic director there. ...and hired Dan Gable to replace him as coach of the Hawkeyes. For a period of years both Cresco natives Kurdelmeier and Harold Nichols coached at the same time at Iowa and Iowa State.

Finally, more to say about three-time state champion Carter Fousek: With one year of eligibility remaining he has a chance to be the first CHS wrestler in 101 years to win four state titles and the second to be a finalist all four years. Good luck, Carter.

Don Henry, PhD, CHS wrestling teams, 1958-1961 U of MN wrestling teams, 1962-1965

Pastor's Column

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Cresco First a.

