

Huskerland Hall of Fame
Class of 2004



(L-R) Bruce Rogers-Karel Schoepf-Randy Beranek-Jerry Clinch (click picture to enlarge)

Bruce & Karel Schoepf

The love affair with wrestling started in 1969 when Seward High added wrestling to its sports line-up. For over 30 years Bruce and Karel Schoepf and their children have been involved with wrestling locally, statewide, and nationally. They have three sons, Jeff, Jeramia, and Josh, who have wrestled for the Seward Mat Rats and Seward High School. They also have two daughters, Jessica and Jennell, who have been student managers and stats personnel for Seward teams.

In 1969 Karel was the student manager and stats recorder for Seward's "first" team as she watched her brothers wrestle. In 1979 Bruce and Karel started the Seward Mats Rats youth wrestling program with the philosophy that, "If a kids' wrestling program will keep kids out of trouble and teach them self worth and basic life lessons, it will be a success." Bruce and Karel were with the Mat Rats for 19yrs; both served as club directors and Bruce as a coach.



**Karel Schoepf and
Craig Hellewege
(click to enlarge)**

Wrestling has developed into a popular and successful sport in the Seward area. Seward has won a State High School team title, a Runner-up at state and finished in the Top 10 teams the past ten years. The Seward HS program has produced 7 high school state champions, 5 high school runner-ups, and numerous state medalists. Seward has produced many outstanding wrestlers that competed in the Huskerland Duals, Regionals, Asics Junior Wrestling, Disney Dual Teams, and at the college level.

Bruce and Karel have had the pleasure of seeing their wrestlers continue to support and encourage youth wrestling in the state of Nebraska by being referees, coaches, and working at summer camps and tournaments. Jeff and Jeramie are presently coaches at Seward Middle School and Seward High School. The entire Schoepf family continues to support the state wrestling tournament as active volunteers and faithful fans.

Bruce and Karel have been members of Huskerland, USA, AAU, Seward Booster and University of Nebraska

Booster Clubs, and are avid fans of NCAA Wrestling. Bruce Schoepf once asked, “You’ll drive how far and sit how long for just six minutes?” Bruce and Karel Schoepf never counted the minutes.

Bruce Schoepf was called by God on August 12, 2003 to be in the ultimate Parade of Champions. With him he took a piece of every wrestler, coach, fan, and person he had touched or had come in contact with in the past 30 years. The family continues to support wrestling at all levels from being a fan, a coach, or a tournament worker.

The award for Bruce and Karel is being presented by their son, Jeff Schoepf, who is officiating at Huskerland XIX.

Jerry Clinch

Jerry started the Thunderbolt Wrestling Club in 1987 and has coached in at least 15 Huskerland State meets.

He began his youth wrestling career in Ravenna where his dad, Jerry J. Clinch coached wrestling at Ravenna High School in the 70’s. Jerry’s first matches as a youth were at Kearney State College AAU meets. Jerry continued wrestling in high school for Pius X where he placed 5th and 2nd at State in 1985 and 1986. He was also in two of the Maine –Nebraska Exchange Programs coached by Mick Pierce.



**Jerry Clinch and
Craig Hellewege
(click to enlarge)**

Jerry wrestled for UNL for one year under Coach Tim Neumann, and half a season at Dana College. After a short college career he began coaching Pius X wrestlers and has coached most throughout their careers, from youth through high school.

He has helped coach many medalists and finalists including Joe Fraas, Tom Stokes, Kastls’, Genglers’, Hernandezs’, Seidls’ and two Champs in Paul Kastl and Isaac Gengler. The Thunderbolt Wrestling Club has placed 3rd in two Huskerland Duals and second in class A at the 2003 State meet. He has helped coach two 4X Mat Masters - Justine Hernandez and Alex Masilko. Jerry is Head Thunderbolt Club Coach and also Head Varsity Assistant, Head JV and Freshman coach at Pius X High School.

Jerry is being introduced by Dave Masilko, fellow coach for Thunderbolt Wrestling Club, former State Champion and college wrestler.

Randy Beranek

Jerry Froistad started the Ashland-Greenwood Jr. Wrestling Club in 1976 and in 1981 I began helping with that club. In 1985, Jerry decided to turn the program over to Bruce Rogers and I so for the the next 14 years I served as the co-director with Bruce. In 1999 I had the opportunity to become the varsity assistant at Ashland-Greenwood High School so I turned my club wrestling duties over to Jason Nichelson.

I'm amazed when I look back over the years. This sport of wrestling that I truly love, has given me the opportunity to come in contact with so many young people. It's always fun to coach the kid that is the Huskerland State Champion but it is equally as fun to spend time with a young person who wasn't as talented but gave you everything they had, or the boy who maybe just needed an hours worth of attention.

I've had the pleasure of coaching my 4 sons Jeremy, Eric, Curtis & Dan along with 100's of other boys and girls who's goal every year was to make it to the Huskerland State Tournament and eventually become a State Champion. The Huskerland organization is an outstanding group of hard working people that should be very proud of the work they do to promote wrestling in our state.

I would like to thank Jason Nichelson for nominating me and Huskerland State Director Craig Hellewege for selecting me for this honor.

Randy is being introduced by his son, Jeremy Beranek.

Bruce Rogers

In 1985, I was asked if I would be interested in helping out with the Jr. Wrestling program. Little did I know that it would become one of the most gratifying things I've done in my life. I love wrestling and had fun sharing that with hundreds of young wrestlers. Randy Beranek and I ran the club along with several dads, as they took their boys through the program. We have been blessed with plenty of parents donating their time to help out.

I have been involved with the Ashland-Greenwood Jr. Wrestling program for 19 years and coached all but the first Huskerland. I have also been coaching the Middle School at Ashland-Greenwood for the last eight years. Because of this job Jason Nichelson has assumed much of the duty of the Jr. Wrestling program.

Over the years I have enjoyed seeing Huskerland champs from our club. But equally as important was that first win for that wrestler who had gone all season without one. I get teased for having four daughters, but I've had several hundred adopted sons for at least 6-12 hours a week each season.

In 1972, I was Ashland's first state champion (by 45 minutes) but this award feels just as important to me today, because helping the kids strive to reach their own goals is a great way to share something I love with others.

I would like to thank the Huskerland Board and all who are responsible for this recognition. If I had one wish, it would be for the parents and coaches to remember that this is as sport. It is to be enjoyed. Everyone wants to win, but dealing with the losses builds character. How we handle it reflects on how the kids handle it.

Bruce Rogers is being introduced by Jason Nichelson, fellow Ashland-Greenwood coach.



**Randy Baranek
and
Craig Hellewege
(click to enlarge)**



**Bruce Rogers
and
Craig Hellewege
(click to enlarge)**