

sports

Berney brings experience to coaching

By Rob Conner
Of The Print

"Coaching is a lot like life, it has its ups and downs," Norm Berney, head wrestling coach and counselor, said.

The Norm Berney story started some years ago. "In eighth grade I played basketball, but I was too small, I only weighed 89 pounds," Berney recalled, "We lived on a small farm and mom sent us to a private school (Portland Christian)."

During high school Berney began to realize his potential as a grappler. In his three years at Canby High, the wrestling team won two state titles. Berney looks back on a high school career that was plagued with injuries.

"My senior year I broke my thumb—but I did come back to win the state title," Berney said. That same year Berney also received a brain concussion. "It was actually an illegal move," Berney recalls, "but I tried to take it like a man and didn't take the disqualification."

After high school Berney elected to attend Cascade, a private Oregon college. After just a year, he decided it was too small and set out for Portland State University. After a year there, he decided he didn't like the atmosphere of the big city. He headed back to Cascade.

Berney red-shirted a year at Cascade, so he was still eligible for two more years of col-

legiate competition. It was then that his high school best friend from Canby persuaded him to come to Eastern Oregon State College. While at Eastern, the team traveled to Nationals both years. "Because of financial reasons, only four guys got to actually take the trip," Berney recalled. "We took sixth that year," he added.

"It (wrestling) is a challenging sport, definitely the hardest sport I've competed in. It got me through school, I made some good friends, and I got to do some traveling," Berney said.

After college, Berney got a job. "Everyone was going into business, but I decided not to," Berney said. It was 1968 and Berney didn't want to join the

military, so he went into teaching. For two years Berney taught Political and social sciences, while assuming the role of athletic director. "I never thought about coaching, but they needed one at the high school," he said. The school actually needed about three coaches. Berney wound up coaching volleyball, basketball and track.

A brief stint in the military followed, but upon termination of his service, Berney found himself without a job. In 1972, Norm Berney first arrived at Clackamas Community College. He took a job as assistant coach for cross country and track, while working in the locker room.

With strong support and

encouragement from former Dean of Students Jim Roberts, Berney went for his master's degree. A short time later a part time counseling job opened up. "And here I am," Berney said.

"It's exciting, challenging, and tiring," Berney said of coaching. "We've had our wins and losses. We're just going against some real tough teams, mainly the four year schools."

Berney says that world or international competition is available for the college wrestling graduate. "There are also some real good clubs around the area," Berney pointed out. The Olympics are the "biggie," however.

Grapplers dominate 16-team tournament

By Doug Vaughan
Of The Print

With two meets and a tournament to be faced within two days the Clackamas Community College wrestling team had their backs to the wall last weekend. But when Sunday came around they had done their work and collected wins in both meets and finished the 16-team tournament with the championship crown.

"We had a lot better performance this weekend," Head Coach Norm Berney said. "We came out and won the tournament, and showed a lot of improvement."

The long weekend started Friday night as the Cougars hosted two meets. Pacific University JVs and Big Ben Community College from Moses Lake, Washington, both played parts in the Cougar sweep, 27-18 and 25-20 respectively.

The competition only got tougher from there as the Cougs traveled to Salem the following day to take part in the 16-team Willamette Invitational. Despite the fierce competition, none of the 16 teams stood up to the Cougars as they cruised to the tournament championship burying second place finisher Mt. Hood Community College by 17½ points, 85-57½. Rounding out the top five teams was Oregon Institute of Technology (48½), Pacific's JV (43½) and Big Bend (39½).

Considering the Cougars were only wrestling at nine weights, due to the loss of Dave Hawk, 118 pounds,

Berney thought that their performance was very impressive.

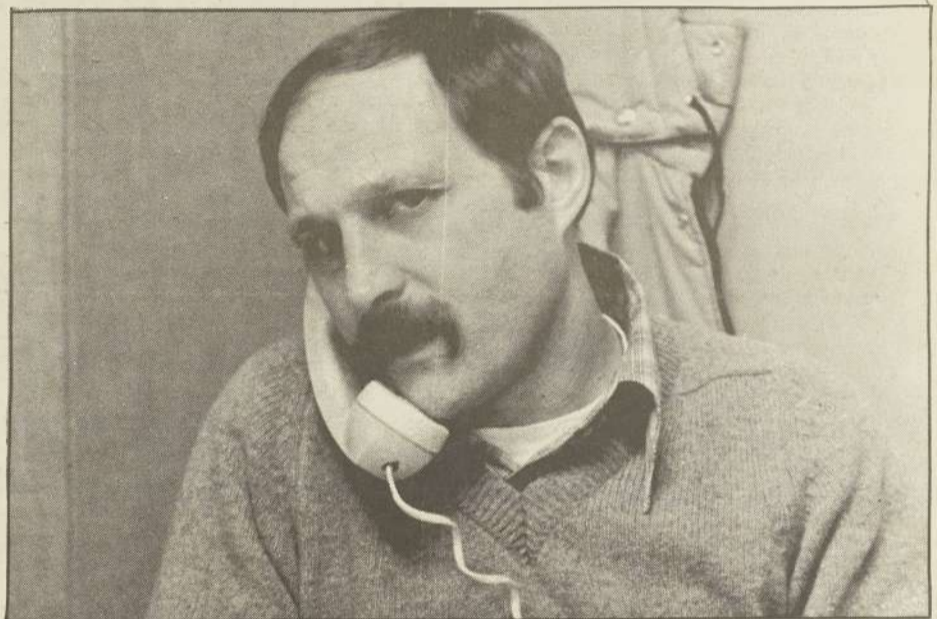
At 134 pounds Cruz Urbini's showing during the weekend was marked "outstanding" by Berney as he made losers out of all six of his opponents, grabbing the tournament in Salem.

The same performance was evident at 147 pounds as Mike Bolf plowed his way through the competition on his way to a tournament championship and an undefeated weekend mark.

In the 150 pound weight class, the Cougars also controlled the competition as they put two wrestlers into the finals at the Invitational. Rick Hutchinson came out a winner to keep his weekend record unblemished as he handed teammate Steve Peters his only loss in the tournament championship.

At 158 pounds the Cougs also hung tough as Mike Martin captured second place in the tourney despite having to forfeit the championship round because of a broken knee brace. In only his second time wrestling this year Martin's performance was considered excellent, Berney said. After losing to Big Bend's national competitor, Mike Harrod, Friday night, 13-8, he retaliated by dominating him at Salem with an seemingly easy 18-3 decision.

Dan Martin, 167 pounds, placed third in the tourney as he also overcame a loss from the night before. Big Bend's Dave Zamora got what was



COACH AND COUNSELOR Norm Berney.

Staff photo by Rick Obritschkewitsch

coming to his after his decision over Martin Friday night, as Martin won a close 4-3 match to grab the third place finish at the Willamette Invitational.

In the heavier weights, Doug Gunnels place fourth at 177 pounds, while at 190 pounds Tom Baker placed second for the College.

"I really felt good that some of our guys did not accept losing and came back and won Saturday," Berney said. "We are not at North Idaho's level but if we keep improving we can compete against them."

Berney feels that the North Idaho team is the top team in the Cougar's region.

Looking ahead towards the Regional tournament Feb. 18-19 at Coos Bay, Berney said, "We have as good as shot as anyone to compete against them (North Idaho). But right now we are not at their level on paper."



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