

South Jersey Wrestling Association (SJWA) and Ohio Tournament of Champions (OTOC):

National Tournament Organizers Announce Collaboration to Recognize Outstanding Wrestlers

Press Release 2-24-2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In what is being hailed as one of the most unique youth wrestling ventures yet, The Ohio Tournament of Champions and the War at the Shore (NJ) have announced that they have joined forces to present a new wrestling award.

“In my opinion Eastern wrestling is the best in the country, said War at the Shore organizer Jim Agostino. “This is evidenced in the fact that every year, at all levels, these states, and those surrounding them, continually produce some of the finest teams and individuals. Given the quality of competition involved, an award combining these two tournaments should and will grow into the most prestigious anywhere.”

One of Pennsylvania’s top collegiate coaches stated, “I think it's a great opportunity for the Eastern wrestlers to compete in two of the most competitive tournaments in the country, as the East has some of the best wrestlers in the country.”

This year’s event schedule is as follows:

April 14-15	War at the South Jersey Shore	- Wildwood, NJ
April 29	Ohio Tournament of Champions	- Columbus, OH

“What is most unique about this award, is the fact that each event will continue to operate as a separate entity,” said Ohio Chairman Bart Freidenberg. “We have no plans to tell the other event organizers how they need to run their event. The rules, age groups and all other factors are up to each individual tournament and I believe that is going to make this award extremely prestigious and tough to earn. Wrestlers will have to be able to win at a variety of styles, as well as being on both the top and bottom of their age group.”

The Ohio Tournament, now in it’s 14th year, is the largest one-day amateur wrestling event in the world and draws more than 3500 entries, while the War at the Shore III is expected to draw close to 2000 entries.

While the final name for the award is not yet set, event organizers plan to allow wrestlers to suggest names they feel would be fitting for the award. Ideas can be sent to bart@ohiotofc.com or jagos10479@aol.com and there will be some type of award given to the first individual that suggests the winning name.

In addition, the organizers have not ruled out the possibility of adding additional events to the series, in the future. They added that they were continually looking at those events currently being conducted, to determine if they felt the event had the potential to grow into a larger event, or if a new one could be started. Such an event could take place in a number of states they said, though Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia seemed the most logical, based on the wrestling population.

“We had hoped to have a third event for this year, but it didn’t work out,” Freidenberg added. “By all rights, Pennsylvania would be home to a third event, as they probably have the top youth wrestling program in the country,” Freidenberg said. “While each of the Eastern states have some outstanding young talent, Pennsylvania just seems to have a bit more depth.”

The awards will also be unique. “We are working on some ideas that are really special,” Freidenberg added. “As a group, we felt that a large trophy or plaque was nice, but not something that we wanted to give as our awards of recognition. Instead, we are working with a pair of nationally known artists to design some conceptual ideas for a portrait or drawing. Besides being something unique, and created especially for each individual winner, it will be an award that the winning wrestler will want to keep on display their entire lifetime.”

Additional information on the events can be found at: War at the Shore (www.sjwrestling.com) and Ohio Tournament of Champions (www.ohiotofc.com).

“This alliance just goes to show that organizations can work together for a common goal,” said Agostino.

/END