

Dr. Bill Welker Added to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Hall of Fame

JEFF HARRISON

For the News-Register



Dr. Bill Welker

Dr. William 'Bill' Welker (Shamokin (Pa.) High School, Class of 1965). No one has been involved as an official or promoted the sport of wrestling not only in the conference, but far beyond, more than the “*doctor*”.

Welker officiated in the OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Tournament from 1980-91 and has served as the rules interpreter from 1992-2017. He was also the OVAC Tournament’s souvenir program coordinator and editor for 18 years (1979-96).

He received the OVAC’s prestigious “*Mr. Mat*” award in 1991 and was tabbed the OVAC Wrestling Official of the Year in 2003.

Welker was the WVSSAC Wrestling Rules Interpreter, Clinician and Supervisor of Officials at the state tournament from 1989-2017.

He received the 2001 NFHS Mideast Section 2 Distinguished Active Official Award and the 2002 National Wrestling Official of the Year Award from Wrestling USA Magazine.

Welker was selected the 1987 & 2013 National Sportswriter of the Year by Wrestling USA Magazine for his "*Mat Talk*" column which appeared in a host of publications and was named that publication's West Virginia Wrestling Man of the Year in 2001. He was also tabbed the West Virginia Wrestling Sportswriter of the Year seven times.

He has also conducted numerous wrestling clinics over the years.

As an athlete, he was a three-time sectional and district champion; a two-time regional champion; the PIAA State Champion in 1963 and the state runner-up in 1965. He earned a wrestling scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh.

Welker served as head wrestling coach at Wheeling High (1970-72), Wheeling Central Catholic (1972-76) and Wheeling Park (1979-80).