

# DAVE SCHULTZ BIOGRAPHY

## Early Years

Dave Schultz was born in Palo Alto, California. As a young child, Dave was often bullied by schoolmates for his weight and appearance. He suffered from dyslexia, which many of his teachers mistook for mental disabilities. Dave shook off these childhood challenges and found himself in wrestling, building his life around the sport.

## Wrestling Career

Schultz began wrestling in junior high school, and would eventually win both his first national and international wrestling titles in 1977 – the same year he became a state champion as a senior at Palo Alto High School. Wrestling two classes above his normal weight, Schultz cruised to a state championship.

By 1977, Schultz's high school wrestling records had qualified him to compete on his first U.S. international team in the Tblisi Tournament in Soviet Georgia, considered by many in the wrestling community as the "toughest tournament in the world." Schultz earned a silver medal and was the highest-placing American at the tournament – even though he was a high school senior !

Later that year, Schultz won his first national title by winning the U.S. National Open Greco-Roman Championships and won the award for most falls in the least amount of time. At the Great Plains Championships that same year, Schultz pinned 2-time NCAA champion and NCAA "Outstanding Wrestler" Chuck Yagla . Schultz's high school senior year is considered by most experts as the most successful senior year in U.S. high school wrestling history.

In college, Schultz was a three-time NCAA All-American, first at Oklahoma State University and then twice at the University of Oklahoma. In 1982, he was the 167-pound NCAA Champion, defeating Mike Sheets from Oklahoma State University in the finals.

Dave Schultz would go on to win 10 Senior National titles (eight in Freestyle and two in Greco-Roman) over a 19-year span, at three weight divisions. In international competition, Schultz won a 1983 World Championship and then a 1984 Olympic gold medal. He won four World Cup and two Pan American Games titles, and is the only American ever to win the prestigious tournament in Tbilisi, Georgia twice. In all, Schultz was a seven-time World and Olympic medalist. He also shares the rare distinction, along with his brother Mark Schultz, of two brothers winning gold medals in the same Olympics, and also winning World and Olympic Championships.

At various times, Schultz served as an assistant coach at the University of Oklahoma, Stanford University, and the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

## His Death

While training for another Olympic bid, Dave Schultz was shot and killed on January 26, 1996 by the Foxcatcher Team's sponsor, John E. du Pont, who had exhibited bizarre and threatening behavior preceding the murder. Du Pont was sentenced to 13–30 years incarceration and died in jail on December 9, 2010. Schultz, who was 36 at the time of his death, was survived by his wife Nancy, his son Alexander, and his daughter Danielle. The following year, Dave Schultz was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame as a Distinguished Member.

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## His Legacy

After Schultz's murder, 20 former Foxcatcher athletes were left without training or coaching resources only six months before the 1996 Olympic Games. Schultz's widow Nancy founded the Dave Schultz Wrestling Club in March 1996 to sponsor the Foxcatcher wrestlers through the Olympics. The Club succeeded beyond its initial short-term projection and continued to train athletes in both men's and women's freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling until its closure in 2005. Among the wrestlers who competed under the Dave Schultz WC sponsorship were Olympic gold medalists Kurt Angle and Brandon Slay, Olympic bronze medalist Patricia Miranda, and World Champion Stephen Neal.

Since Schultz's death, USA Wrestling has hosted the annual Dave Schultz Memorial International wrestling meet at the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Each year since 1997, the National Wrestling Hall of Fame presents the Dave Schultz Award to deserving high school wrestlers in all 50 states, with regional and national award winners selected from this group. In honor of Dave, the Schultz Award winners are chosen for their excellence in wrestling, academics, and citizenship.

## Wrestling Accomplishments

- 1982 NCAA Division I Champion, 167-lb class
- \* 1983 Senior Freestyle world champion, 163-lb
- \* 1984 Olympic gold medalist, 163.1-lb
- \* 1986 Goodwill Games gold medalist
- \* 1994 Goodwill Games silver medalist
- \* Seven-time USA Senior Freestyle champion (1984, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1993, 1994, 1995)
- \* Five-time World Cup champion (1980, 1982, 1985, 1994, 1995)
- \* Two-time Pan American Games champion (1977 (Greco-Roman), 1987(Freestyle))
- \* Three-time AAU National Champion (1977 GR, 1981 FS, 1982 GR)
- \* Three-time NCAA Division I all-American (1978, 1981, 1982)
- \* Two-Time Tbilisi Champion (1984, 1991)
- \* Two-time Olympic Festival Champion (1985, 1987)
- \* Two-time Sunkist International Champion (1989, 1990)
- \* Three-time DeGlane Challenge Champion (1983, 1990, 1991)
- \* Three-time World silver medalist, 163-lb (1985, 1987, 1993)
- \* Two-time World Bronze medalist (1982, 1986)

## Vignette

- ◆ Dave Schultz overcame dyslexia and other childhood challenges to become one of the most successful high school wrestlers in US wrestling history.
- ◆ As a high school senior, Dave won a California state championship, a national AAU championship, and a Pan-Am Games championship.
- ◆ In college, Dave was a three-time All-American, winning an NCAA championship as a senior.
- ◆ Schultz won numerous national and international titles throughout his career, including a world championship and an Olympic gold medal.
- ◆ After his death, Schultz's widow Nancy and others from the wrestling community formed the Dave Schultz Wrestling Club to sponsor aspiring world and Olympic champions.
- ◆ In 1997, Dave Schultz was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame (NWHOF). Each year since then, the NWHOF honors Schultz by selecting state, regional, and national Schultz Award winners who display excellence in wrestling, academics, and citizenship.