

## Larry Kristoff

Larry Kristoff has been called one of America's all-time great heavyweight wrestlers; however his credentials as a successful coach are equally impressive. Larry is a member of the NCAA II Wrestling Hall of Fame as both a wrestler and a coach.

In college at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Larry was the Heavyweight National Champion at the first two NCAA College Division Tournaments in 1963 and 1964, leading his team to second and third place finishes in those two tournaments. He also placed second in the 1964 NCAA University Division Nationals as a senior. After graduation, Larry represented the United States in international competition. From 1964 through 1971 he won five World medals for the U.S., 3 silvers and 2 bronze. He represented the United States in the Olympics twice, placing seventh in 1964 and fifth in 1968. He also won 12 senior national titles, including nine in freestyle and three in Greco-Roman. He was also a gold medal winner at the 1967 Pan American Games. Larry's over-all career record, including high school, college and international wrestling was 313-13.

While still competing internationally, Larry began his coaching career at Carbondale Community High School where he had a record of 28-4. Two years later he began coaching at Division II Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. He led the team to three consecutive NCAA titles from 1984-86 and coached the team to top 10 finishes 18 times. Twelve of his wrestlers combined for a total of 18 NCAA Division II national titles, and when Division II wrestlers could still compete in the Division I tournament, eleven of his wrestlers earned All-American honors at that level. During Larry's coaching tenure at Southern Illinois University, 111 wrestlers were named Division II All-Americans. Both of Larry's sons, Kip and Mark, were both 4-time All-Americans and national champions. In 1974 and 1985 Larry was named the NCAA Coach of the Year.

Larry also coached at the international level for many years. He served as head coach of the 1975 and 1976 World Cup teams and was also a staff member of the U.S. World Team for many years.

Larry retired from 30 years of coaching in the spring of 1999. Larry and his wife, Doris, currently reside in Anna, Illinois. His many contributions to wrestling, both as a competitor and coach, have earned Larry much respect in the world of wrestling. He was inducted as a Distinguished Member of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2007. We now welcome Larry Kristoff as a 2009 inductee into our AAU National Wrestling Hall of Fame.