

## **Nomination of William "Bill" Koll to the AAU Wrestling Hall of Fame**

Bill Koll was born in 1923 in Fort Dodge, Iowa. As a high school senior, he captured the Iowa State Championship while competing for Fort Dodge High School.

How good was Bill Koll as a collegiate wrestler? Take a look at the record--he wrestled 3 1/2 years and won every match in devastating style. Along the way, he earned three consecutive National Collegiate championships.

In the midst of his first season, he left college to serve three years with the combat engineers in World War II, earning the Bronze Star. He returned to become a ringleader of the great Northern Iowa teams developed by coach Dave McCuskey in the late 1940s.

In 1946, at the first post-war NCAA tournament, he won the award for the most falls in the least amount of time. A year later, in 1947, he was voted outstanding wrestler of the collegiate championships. When he was selected outstanding wrestler again in 1948, he became the first contestant ever to win the NCAA's most coveted individual trophy a second time. His collegiate won-loss record was 72-0.

Bill Koll won three consecutive National AAU titles and, in 1948, he won the U.S. Olympic trials at 147.5 pounds and placed fifth in the unfamiliar international style at the London Games.

After graduation, Koll turned his masterful skills to coaching, where he established another outstanding career. Starting at the University of Chicago, then moving to Cornell College, he returned to the University of Northern Iowa to succeed Coach McCuskey.

During his 11 years at UNI, his Panthers won 71 dual meets. He was instrumental in inaugurating the NCAA's College Division national tournament and served as host and tournament director of the first two events in 1963 and '64.

He then succeeded Charlie Speidel at Penn State University, where his teams always ranked high in the Eastern and national standings, with more than 100 dual meet victories. He coached five Nittany Lion teams to undefeated seasons in 1967, 1970, 1971, 1972 and 1974.

As one of the truly great wrestlers of the modern era, and a coach of national stature, Dr. William H. Koll was inducted in 1977 as a Distinguished Member of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Koll, the father of Cornell University head coach Rob Koll, passed away in 2003 at the age of 80 while residing in Centre Hall, PA.