

KHALIL TAHA (FLORIDA)

Khalil, from Lebanon, was a bronze medal winner in the 1952 Helsinki Olympic Games in Greco-Roman Wrestling. Prior to that he was a Lebanese National Champion many times.

In the early 1950's, Khalil came to the United States and settled in the Detroit area. Soon Khalil was coaching for the Ford Motor Wrestling Club (later becoming the Michigan Wrestling Club) and developing outstanding Greco-Roman wrestlers.

When Joe Scalzo was named America's first Greco-Roman coach, he asked Khalil to be his number one assistant in the pre-Olympic training camp for the Melbourne Olympics. Some say that was the best Greco-Roman team ever to represent America. In 1962 Khalil was asked to be the US World Greco-Roman Team Assistant Coach by head coach, Dean Rockwell. Later, in 1964, he was named the coach of the Olympic Greco-Roman Team. Khalil was also an assistant coach on the 1979 Senior World Greco-Roman Team.

In 1987, Jerry Wager, who had wrestled under Khalil, called on him to be his assistant coach for the US Greco Roman Wrestling Team for the cadet age division. They became the first American Greco-Roman coaches to coach a US Greco-Roman team to a world championship. That team remains the first and only team to win a world championship in the classic style.

Khalil Taha has been a benefactor, leader, coach, and administrator ever since he set foot in America. His contributions to wrestling in the United States are immeasurable.