

Officials Appreciation Week Profile:

Ed Glassheim

Ed Glassheim has long been associated with wrestling, beginning with his days competing as a freshman at East Brunswick High School.

He wrestled there under legendary coach Jay Doyle, and as a senior was unbeaten until losing in the region finals. He continued his career at the University of Dayton in Ohio, where he was their first varsity wrestler at 118 pounds.

“Upon graduating from Dayton, I returned to EB and offered to help coach the team during the 1972 and ‘73 seasons,” he said. “My officiating career began in 1974 and has lasted to the present. Officiating was the next natural step to continue my involvement in wrestling. In my 50 years of officiating, I have had the honor of doing many high-profile matches, county tournaments, sectionals, districts, regions and state championships. I had the pleasure of teaming up with Ken Bernabe for 25 years as we did many of those high-profile matches.”

Ed has received several awards throughout his career, including his selection as 2024-25 Official of the Year for wrestling by the New Jersey Scholastic Officials Association.

“I have officiated many of the top wrestlers in New Jersey history,” he said. “I have been asked why I officiate and why I keep doing it. I have the best seat in the house, and I see many of the best wrestlers perform, the relationships formed between the wrestlers, coaches, parents administrators and fellow referees, and I get paid to do it. It doesn’t get any better than that.”



Getting to know NJSIAA sports official Ed Glassheim:

What do you enjoy most about being an official?

“The relationships that I have formed over the 50 years, especially the ones derived with my fellow referees. It’s a fraternity for life. Also, seeing the progression of wrestlers from freshman year to senior year. Watching these young men and women improve their craft and succeed.”

Do you have a favorite memory from officiating an event?

“I have many, but the one that sticks out the most was an exhibition match I did at Manville vs. Voorhees. Coach Hall of Voorhees asked if I could do this exhibition match before the varsity match between two of his wrestlers. The one participant was a senior who had been on the team for all four years and never wrestled a match in front of a crowd. This young man was autistic. The gym was packed and everybody was tuned into this match. We got to the third period with the young man in the offensive position. His teammate assisted in the outcome by allowing the wrestler to put a half-nelson on him, turning him over and I called a pin. The wrestler leaped into the air and had the most fulfilling smile I have ever seen on a winning wrestler. The whole gym stood up and gave him a standing ovation. I had tears rolling down my cheeks. I don’t think there was a dry eye in the house. So moving!”



What's the best part about any given day of officiating?

"Leaving the gym and knowing that you did a great job. You had your 'A' game. It's all about the wrestlers. They are the feature and not the official. My job is to protect them. I have had few wrestlers get injured under my watch. I am very proud of that."

Do you have any memories from your first match as an official?

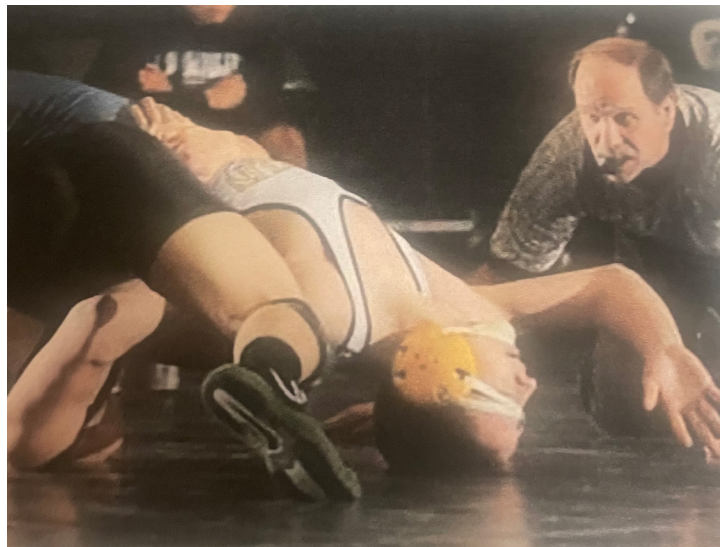
"Gosh, it was so many years ago. I was nervous as hell with a whole lot of butterflies in my stomach. I guess I did well enough because I showed up at my next scheduled match."

Do you have a funny memory of an interaction between yourself and a player or coach?

"One that comes to mind was a match I was doing at Hillsborough High School. I got to the school, parked and went to grab my bag from the back seat. I went into shock. My bag was not there. I left it in the garage. I confronted the coach when I got inside letting him know that I had no gear. I asked him if he wanted the JV official to do the match. He said no. He got me a pair of shorts. The JV official gave me his referee shirt and his arm bands. The coach gave me a whistle and flipper. Needless to say, I felt out of place. I certainly got Worst Dressed Official."



Ed Glassheim with wrestling legend Dan Gable.



What's the biggest misconception about the job of being an official?

"I wouldn't say it's a misconception, but the job of official consists of three main parts. Foremost is SAFETY. Protect the kids, and you want them to leave the same way they came in. A close second is SPORTSMANSHIP. Express to the wrestlers and coaches the importance of good sportsmanship towards your opponent, yourself and the sport. Thirdly, that I officiate to the best of my ability, wrestlers wrestle to the best of their ability, and coaches coach to their best. If all three parts are achieved, you had a great match."

What would you say to anyone thinking about becoming an official?

"Try it! What a great way to give back to the sports you participated in and have a love for. If you didn't participate in a given sport yet enjoy it nonetheless, what better way to get involved? The rewards are so great."

Think you might be interested in becoming a high school sports official?
Check out this link to learn more: <https://www.njsiaa.org/officials/become-official>