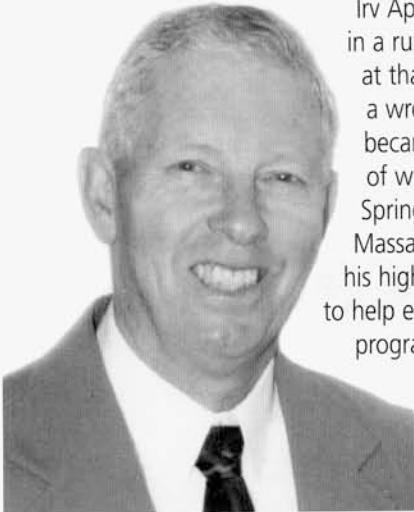


Irv Apgar

Architect of success at Farmingdale By Walter A. Brem



Coach Irv Apgar

Irv Apgar attended high school in a rural New Jersey town that, at that time, did not even have a wrestling program. He became interested in the sport of wrestling while attending Springfield College in Massachusetts. Irv returned to his high school while in college to help establish a wrestling program. While at Springfield

College, he wrestled for the junior varsity teams and in his senior year assisted in coaching high school teams.

Following graduation, he

moved to Long Island to teach physical education and coach junior high wrestling in the Farmingdale School District. His first two teams had a record of 17–1. During this time, he met the famous Sprig Gardner and attended coach Gardner's Gettysburg wrestling clinics. For many summers he took carloads of Farmingdale wrestlers with him to attend the clinics. Irv also spent a lot of time with coach Gardner at his summer home to continue to learn more about his philosophy of wrestling instruction.

In 1965 Coach Apgar became the varsity wrestling coach at Farmingdale High School. His first varsity team won 10 matches. His 1966 team went 13–0 and won the North Shore championship. During his tenure his teams produced 31 Nassau County champions and 37 North Shore champions. His team placed in the top four in Nassau County 10 times, winning the county championship in 1971–72. His team was the first from the North Shore to accomplish this feat. His teams produced 11 League I championships and numerous invitational and holiday tournaments, resulting in a total of 314 wins. He had state place winners in the 1960's, 1970's, 1980's, and 1990's. He was named Nassau Coach of the Year in 1970. Several of his wrestlers went on to college to have successful careers and lead productive lives—which many attribute to wrestling and Coach Apgar.

In March of 1978, a Russian magazine featured an article about Coach Apgar, discussing what it takes to produce a top-notch wrestling program. The article focused on Irv's

techniques in training and handling wrestlers, as well as the rapport that exists between a coach and his wrestlers.

Coach Apgar spent his summers conducting the Lutheran High School summer wrestling clinics. He built the wrestling program from 15 wrestlers to over 80 each summer. He conducted clinics throughout the year for new coaches and anyone who was interested in learning more about the sport of wrestling. His wrestling room was always open to anyone interested in learning. He developed a youth wrestling program for Farmingdale elementary students. That program is still in place today and is coached by many of his former wrestlers with over 80 students attending each year. Coach Apgar assisted in developing the seeding plan for the North Shore and the current plan used for the Section 8 tournaments.

In June of 1997 Irv was honored by the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance with a "Lifetime Achievement Award" in recognition of his dedication and commitment to the students he has worked with. Coach Apgar taught physical education for 37 years, and he was

the varsity wrestling coach at Farmingdale High School for 31 years. He was also the assistant varsity football coach and defensive football coordinator at Farmingdale for 35 years, winning many state, county, and divisional titles. One of the many highlights was an undefeated and unscored upon season in 1978.

Irv retired from the Farmingdale School District in 1998. Currently he volunteers at Old Bethpage Village Restoration, works for the Plainview-Old Bethpage School District Athletic Department, and enjoys fishing and traveling.

In January 2002, the Farmingdale School District dedicated the high school wrestling room to Coach Apgar. Former wrestlers Bill Barrett, Tom Buckman, and Bill Hewitt organized the affair, which included a

dedication ceremony, the presentation of a magnificent showcase for the school, and a bronze sculpture of Coach Apgar.

Coach Apgar's wife Diane is a former elementary teacher in the Farmingdale Public Schools. She retired in 2002. They have two children—Scott and Amy. Scott is a physical therapist at Plainview Physical Therapy. Amy is a special education teacher in the Kings Park Public Schools. Coach Apgar attributes his success to the support, encouragement, and understanding he received from his family and to Sprig Gardner and his wrestling techniques.

Walter Brem teaches at Farmingdale High School where he coached several sports with Irv and also served as his JV wrestling coach for seven years



Irv Apgar competed for Springfield College