

Ron ABATELLI



In his 34 years as the head wrestling coach at Bethpage High School, Ron Abatelli has amassed 336 victories and put Bethpage on the wrestling map at the New York State level. But to those who have wrestled for him, wrestling parents and friends of Bethpage wrestling, he is just known as “Coach Abs.”

Ron got his first taste of wrestling as a 4th grader in intramural wrestling. He wrestled in junior high and at Lutheran High School where he was coached by Daniel Juergensen. “He taught me a lot about wrestling and what it took to be successful”, said Ron. “He was a great coach”. Ron also wrestled for SUNY Cortland, but his senior year was cut short due to a knee injury.

In the years proceeding his start as the Bethpage coach, Ron was an assistant and JV coach at Lutheran and Plainview. At Bethpage, he continued to improve their wrestling program and compile an impressive list of team accomplishments in his 34 years as the Bethpage coach.

He has amassed 336 wins, 11 conference championships, 5 county B championships, 5 time conference coach of the year and 2 time Nassau county coach of the year.

The Ron Abatelli regime at Bethpage, a school with a small

enrollment, finished with some incredible county tournament results. In 1988 Bethpage was 3rd in Section 8/Nassau County with 2 finalists and 6 All-County wrestlers. In 1991 they finished in 3rd place in Nassau County with 3 county champs,

1992 they finished in 5th place with 3 county champs, 1995 they had a 2nd place finish in Section 8 with 2 county champs and 5 finalists and in 1998 they finished in 3rd with 3 county champs and 5 finalists.

As coach Abs puts it, he had the good fortune and luck to coach: 1 state champ, 17 all state wrestlers, 23 county champs, 105 all county wrestlers and 101 qualifying tournament champs.

As strange as it may sound, Ron almost ended up as a basketball player at Lutheran High. At the end of his 10th grade year, his first coach ever, Vinny Angrisani, talked to him about not playing basketball at Lutheran High. That is when Ron chose to try wrestling. As it turned out, Vinny Angrisani was the father of his future wife, Deborah. Ron says he was one of the biggest influences in his life after his parents and brothers. He lives in Old Bethpage with Deborah and has 3 grown sons Erik, Anthony and Christian.