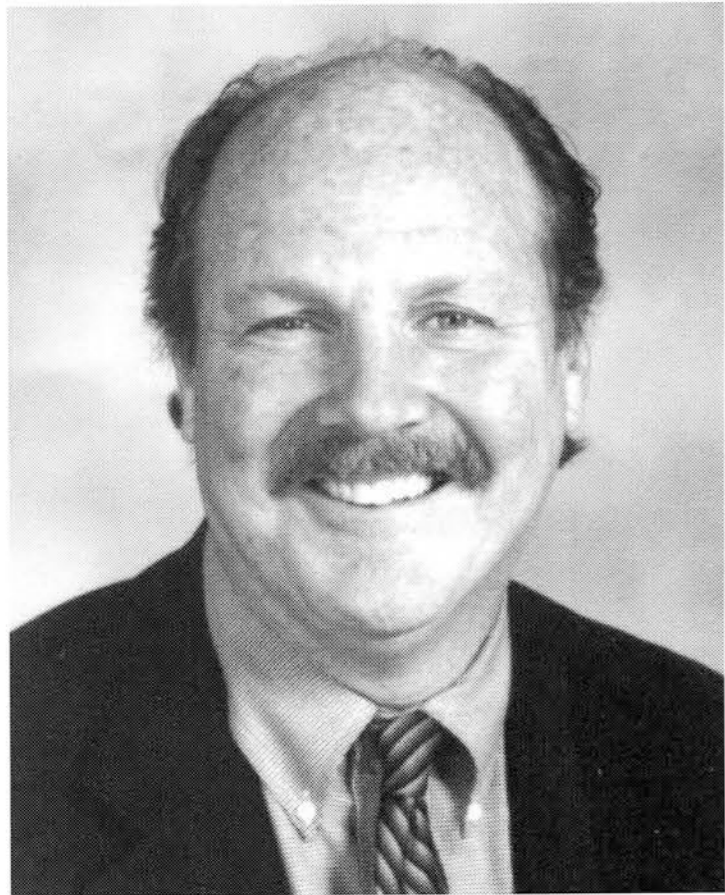


# Matt Sanzone

## The "Father" of Locust Valley Wrestling



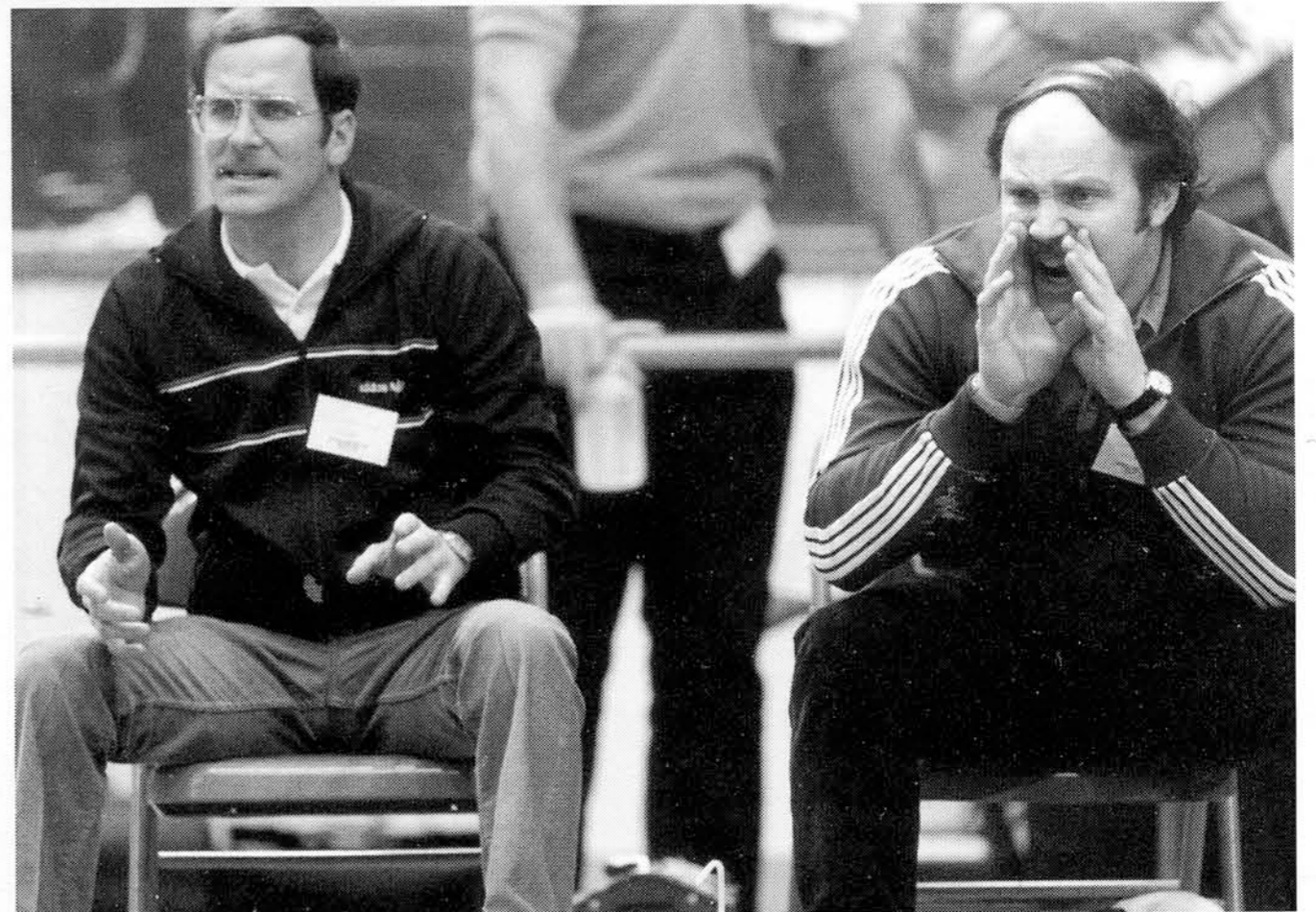
Coach Matt Sanzone

Matt graduated from Wheatley High School where he participated and starred in football, wrestling, and track, earning All-Nassau County honors in each sport. Continuing his education at Springfield College, Matt's athletic career flourished. He lettered in three sports, but it was in wrestling Matt found his passion. Matt credits his high school coach, Bill Stevenson, and Springfield coach, Doug Parker, for

instilling a love of wrestling that he still carries today.

Upon graduation, Matt accepted a teaching and coaching position at Locust Valley. His charge was to start the wrestling program, which proved to be a daunting task. Three years later, Locust Valley was competing for its first league championship, the first of many. Locust Valley won 16 league championships, one North Shore championship, one Nassau County dual meet championship, two Nassau County championships, two New York

State runner-up championships, and one New York State championship. Over the course of the 24 years as the head coach, Matt had the privilege to teach and coach some of the finest young men in the county. The story of wrestling at Locust Valley is now part of the tradition and history of Nassau County

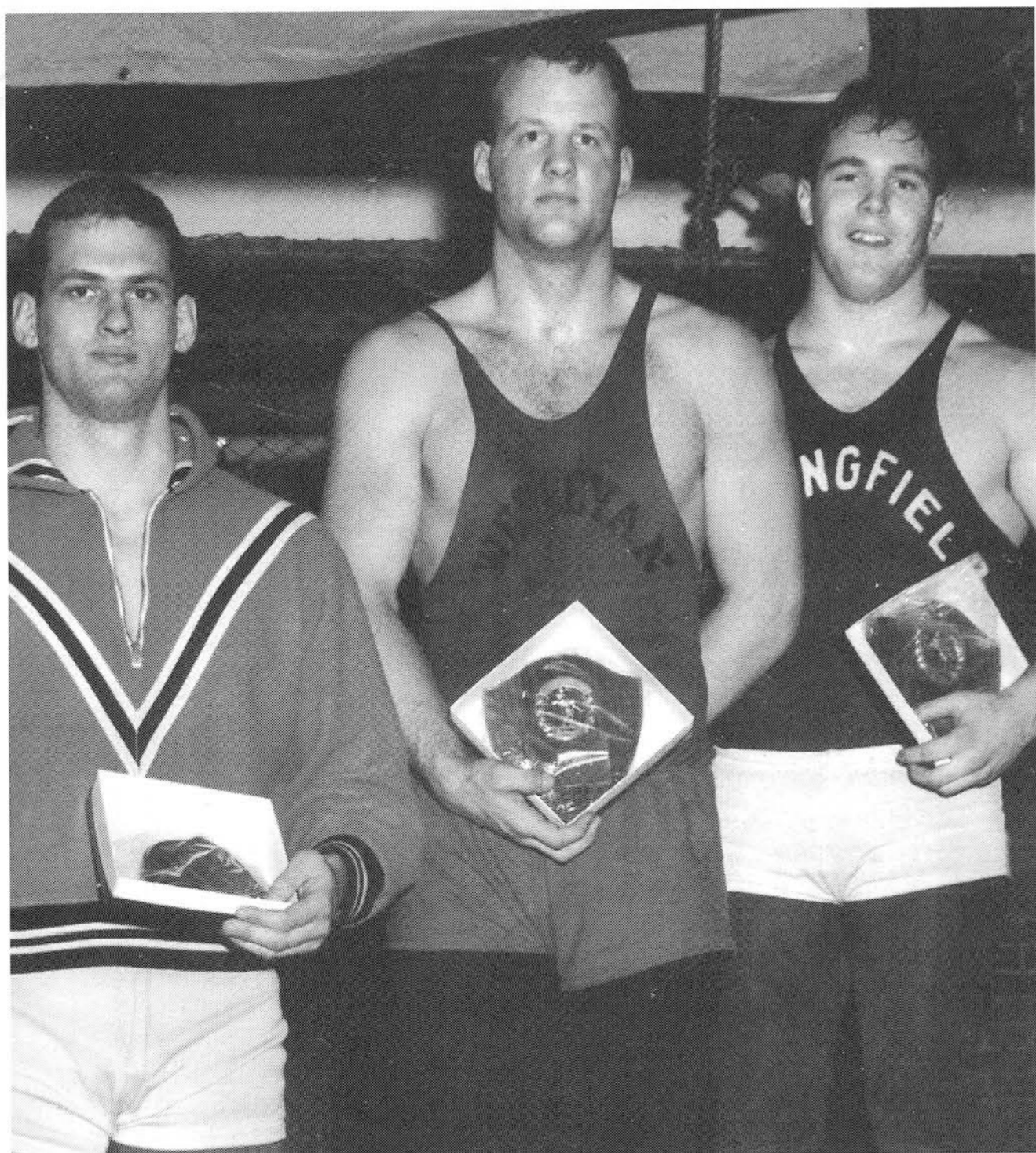


Matt (right) is pictured with his assistant and now head wrestling coach at Locust Valley High School, at the New York State Tournament in Syracuse.

wrestling. Over the years, Locust Valley produced some outstanding wrestlers, many of whom are recognized as Nassau "greats." Any mention of Locust Valley must always include the great wrestling families: the DeStefanis brothers—Ron, Ken, Bob, Carl, all of whom won championships including Carl's NCAA championship at Penn State. The Pidgeons—Ed, Kevin, Richard—were all noted for their toughness, heart, and skills; Ed earned All-American stature for Hofstra! The family tradition continued. The Johnsons—Greg, Doug, Ricky, and cousin Patrick, all earned All-County honors; Denatales, Doug, Mark, Matt, All-County; Barbaccias, Tony and Tore, All-County; Pillaris, Tom and Lou with Tom standing tall while wrestling at Binghamton where he was crowned Division II NCAA Champion! It had to begin somewhere, and in those early years, many terrific kids stepped up to establish the foundation of Locust Valley's success. Terry Walsh, Bob Freeman, Lou Figari, Eric Schoedel, Rick Alfano, Dom Proce, Mike Bush, Frank Matozzo, the names go on, and so does the rich tradition of wrestling at Locust Valley.

No story would be complete without the mention of some very special men who contributed a great deal as coaches over the years. Men such as Jack Russo, Joey Enea, Jim Rogin and especially Doug Axman, Locust Valley's current head coach.

*Al Butler, John Hamilton, Fred Smith and Doug Axman contributed to this story*



Matt Sanzone (right) was the New England Heavyweight Champion in 1963 while wrestling for Springfield College