



# TOM *RICCIO*

Few people dominate the highest level of their profession in the manner with which Tommy Riccio dominated the top rating as a wrestling official. For over a quarter of a century, he was recognized as the "go to" official for the most important championship wrestling matches. Excellence as an official is synonymous with his name. His unparalleled lifetime of service and dedication to the sport of wrestling, particularly as an extraordinary official, warrant his induction into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.

It all began for Tommy as a wrestler under coach Fred Houssen at Walt Whitman High School in Huntington Station, NY. After graduating in 1960, Tommy attended Hofstra University where he wrestled for Pete Damone and Jerry Harrell.

In the fall of 1968, Tommy began his officiating career with the Long Island Wrestling Officials Association. By 1971, after only his third year as an official, Tommy was selected to work the entire Suffolk County Wrestling Championship held at Hauppauge High School. That same year, he was elected as the first president of the newly formed Suffolk County Wrestling Officials Association. As president, Tommy had a key role in drafting the constitution and bylaws of the organization. Tommy also served as the interpreter between the New York State Officials Association and Suffolk County.

Tommy really made his mark as an official over a twenty-year period from 1971-1991. During that period, he held the top ranking as an official a remarkable nineteen times while finishing second only one time. He worked the New York State Wrestling Championship Tournament five times, receiving the top ranking four times and sharing the top ranking with another official for the fifth. Tommy was consistently assigned to work the toughest competitions. In the

eyes of many, he is the most respected and competent wrestling official in Suffolk County history.

After the 1992 season, Tommy took a brief retirement from officiating for two years. He returned for the 1994-95 season and then permanently retired in 1996. Even though Tommy has retired his whistle, he continues to be very active in the sport of wrestling. For the last ten years, Tommy has served as the assistant wrestling coach at Riverhead High School and was recently named head coach.

Clearly, Tom Riccio has devoted a lifetime of exceptional service to the sport of wrestling. His perennial place at the top of the officials' podium stands as a testament to his unmatched ability to officiate at the highest levels of interscholastic wrestling competition.

He is universally held as the gold standard by which other wrestling officials will be measured. We are pleased to welcome Tommy Riccio to the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.

