

Takedown Club A Boost To Local Wrestling Program

By Michael Stein

Just as with most any high school sport, wrestling requires a little financial boost to keep equipment up to date, allow the team to travel and offer some help to athletes who may not be able to afford to participate.

In Barnesville, the Trojan Takedown Club has been boosting the wrestling program for about 20 years.

“There are many different support groups for athletics,” said Jesse Grabow. “The Takedown Club came into being when the school board was talking about cuts to athletic programs to reduce costs. At the time, Art Meyer was a fairly new coach, building the program and doing a great job.”

Meyer, now the principal at the Climax-Shelly school, was head wrestling coach for several years

before taking a new position in 2017. He still resides in Barnesville and maintains an interest in the wrestling program.

“I believe we started the program about 2000,” Meyer said. “Other school districts had similar clubs as a way to help raise funds for their wrestling programs. With the funds raised, it provides help with uniforms, equipment and allows the athletes to attend tournaments they might not otherwise be able to attend.”

“The original athletic booster club was already in place,” Grabow said. “But we felt we needed something for our own particular club. It gave us the chance to work together, network with the community to support wrestling at all grade levels. It’s about the kids having



ART MEYER



JESSE GRABOW

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; . . . who at best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly.

-Theodore Roosevelt

**NORTHWEST EXCAVATING**
Moorhead, MN

Residential • Commerical • Agriculture

JESSE

701.850.7083

GABE

701.630.1524

Serving Clay County and the Lakes area



Barnesville Animal Clinic, LLC

We are here to serve you!

Hours: Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
1501 4th Ave NE
Barnesville, MN
218 354-2366



a good experience and having the opportunity to participate.”

In his high school days, Meyer wrestled for Perham, MN.

“I got a lot of ideas from the wrestling program at Perham,” Meyer said. “It’s been a win-win for everyone and succeeded in getting the program and the wrestlers out into the community, which has been great for supporting the club and wrestling in general.”

Wrestling is generally known as a winter sport, but there are opportunities throughout the year through skill-building activities such as camps. The Takedown Club assists with sending the team to these skills camps.

“Even though you don’t need a lot of equipment for wrestling, the club can help with registration fees and things like warmup uniforms and shoes for those participants whose family can’t afford it,” Grabow said.

Grabow wrestled for the Trojans as a high school student, and has been a coach since 1999, including a volunteer assistant for grades seven-12.

“Wrestling has been part of my life since kindergarten,” Grabow said. “I’ve learned a lot from my participation and it’s helped me in many ways. When people think about wrestling, they tend to focus on the physical part. But, before, during and after a match, it’s more mental than physical.”

Grabow said wrestlers learn how to deal with stress and pressure.

“It’s you in front of a crowd of people, and that’s not easy,” he said. “If you lose, it’s on you alone. And, like Theodore Roosevelt said, it’s easy to sit and be critical until you actually do it. And when you make

that effort, there’s nothing else like it. There are times when you go out there and face a physically intimidating opponent who may have beaten you before. You still have a chance to keep it together and win.

“Sometimes you win, and sometimes you learn.”

At the time the Takedown Club was formed, budget issues were leading to the real possibility of athletic program cuts.

The Takedown Club’s fund-raisers include Thanksgiving and Easter bingo and summer BBQ bingo events.

“Bingo has been our main fund-

raiser,” Meyer said. “We started with turkey bingo, and that was perfect because it gave some participants a turkey before Thanksgiving. When we expanded it to Easter we gave away hams.”

About 10 years ago, Meyer said, the club did a home-grown sweet corn feed at Potato Days.

Over the past two summers the club has held a golf tournament.

“The first year we held the tournament, we had 32 people on the greens,” Grabow said. “The second year it was up to 72. We’re very fortunate we have businesses behind us to provide funds and prizes.”

About 75 people, including Barnesville alums and family

members of wrestling participants, are member of the club.

“It’s a great way for people to network,” Grabow said. “The club is now well established and has great leadership. The future looks bright, so we’re very hopeful the club will continue to serve as a way to give back to the community.”

“It also helps connect our younger and older wrestlers,” Meyer said. “Our older guys help out with the youth tournaments and also serve as volunteer coaches. They become role models for the younger kids.”

Takedown Club meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month at the Barnesville American Legion.



Stop in for a cup of “Bou” just for you!

We also have:

- * Chocolate Covered Coffee Beans**
- * Biscotti * Shortbread**

Cenex Fuel and Petroleum Products
Groceries, Frozen Foods and Tobacco Products
Cardrol
Ice Cream, Candy, Pop and Snacks
Propane Fills • ATM

Official Minnesota DNR Licensing Agency • Flavor Shot Pop Machine
Outlet For Powerball and Other Minnesota Gambling

Cenex General Store • Barnesville • 354-2139