

Michael Payette



Mike, a notable figure in the wrestling realm, displayed early athleticism during his time at Canterbury High School in Ottawa. He secured Canadian national Juvenile and Junior wrestling gold medals, along with a silver medal at the 1979 Junior World Elite Championships. Coached by Golden Bears wrestling alumni Gord Bertie and Ole Sorenson in Ottawa, he was inspired to pursue wrestling at the University of Alberta under the guidance of Golden Bears coach John Barry. During his tenure at the university, Mike flourished as a member of the Golden Bears wrestling team, achieving remarkable feats including winning Canada West championship five times, an achievement unmatched in the team's history. Furthermore, he clinched the national university

championship on three occasions and received prestigious awards, notably the Beaumont Cup and the Wilson Trophy, highlighting his outstanding performances as a wrestler and athlete. Mike holds two degrees from the University of Alberta, solidifying his commitment to both academics and athletics.

Following his illustrious wrestling career, Mike transitioned into coaching, serving as the head coach of the Golden Bears wrestling team from 1986 to 1990. His coaching ability was acknowledged with the Canada West coach of the year honors in 1989. Simultaneously, he contributed to athletic administration, holding executive roles in both the Edmonton and Alberta Amateur Wrestling Associations. As a certified Level 5 wrestling coach and holder of a FILA International Coaches License, Mike's expertise led him to a role as the Technical Director of the Canadian Amateur Wrestling Association (CAWA) from 1991 to 1993. During this period, he initiated a developmental system for age group wrestlers and pioneered the women's amateur wrestling program in Canada.

From 1993 to 2006, Mike served as the National Program Director for CAWA, overseeing a comprehensive development system that encompassed national team selection and training, sport medicine support, science and research, and event operations at senior national and international levels. Under Mike's leadership, Canada exhibited significant improvements in World Championship results and bolstered its Olympic and Pan American Games medal totals. Even after his extensive career, Mike continues to give back to the wrestling community, contributing his time to coaching at the Edmonton Wrestling Club and Harry Ainslay High School.

Key Accomplishments

- 5 Time CanadaWest Champion
- 3 Time CIAU (USport) Champion and 2 Time Silver Medalist
- 1983 – 1986 Beaumont Cup Recipient (UofA's Most Outstanding Male Wrestler Award)
- 1985 Wilson Trophy Recipient (UofA's Most Outstanding Male Athlete Award)
- 1979 Junior World Elite Championships Silver Medalist