



**Samuel R. Gano '49** was associated with wrestling either as an athlete or coach for over 40 years helping thousands of young men grow in the sport.

He started his career in the 1945-46 season as a freshman at Penn High School wrestling at 98 pounds, and went on to letter all four years. Gano went on to win three District 10 championships in 1947, 1948 and 1949. He was a three-year letter winner in football as well, starting at quarterback as a senior. Sam was team captain of both the football and wrestling teams.

After graduation from Penn High in 1949, Sam served in the US Army, stationed in Germany during the Korean War. He returned to Greenville and worked for Sawhill Tube for 38 years.

To give back to the sport he loved most, Gano began his coaching career helping his high school coach, Mel Berry, with grade school wrestling at the Greenville Rec Center. He then assisted Bob Lenkner at Commodore Perry High School (1955-66), coaching two state champions during that time. After Lenkner retired, he ran the junior mat program at Commodore Perry for several years.

Sam returned to Greenville as a coach in 1978 where he continued helping young wrestlers for many seasons. He also ran a summer program to help high school, college and junior wrestlers stay in shape for summer tournaments. Except for a stipend paid in 1978, all of his coaching efforts were as a volunteer.

In 1984, Gano was awarded the Charles Evanoff Memorial Award for outstanding contributions and service to Pennsylvania Junior Wrestling.

He was then inducted into the Mercer County Hall of Fame in 1996.

Under Sam's leadership, the Greenville Wrestling Club was able to purchase mats, scales, uniforms and other items to advance the wrestling program. The Wrestling Club annually gives the Sam Gano Award to a 6<sup>th</sup> grader determined by the coaches to be the hardest working with the best attitude. Sam was also chairman of the Mel Berry Memorial Trust Fund which annually granted a scholarship to a Greenville senior wrestler.

Gano passed away in March 2024 at the age of 93. He and his wife, Elaine had three children - Karen Gano '77, Dianne (Gano) Diefenderfer '79 and Robert Gano '82. Bob was an outstanding GHS wrestler and coach in his own right amassing a coaching record of 357-151 while leading Delone Catholic and Biglerville.