



Ken Hunte

Coach Ken Hunte who passed away in 1986 is a true legend in Long Island wrestling. He started his wrestling career at Mepham High School in 1942 under "Sprig" Gardner as a 103 lb. competitor, and ended it as Coach Gardner's successor in 1976.

Between those dates, Ken established himself as one of the best wrestlers ever developed on Long Island and as one of the most successful coaches in Long Island history.

As a high school wrestler he was an important contributor to Mepham's initial 100 meet winning streak, and won two Long Island individual championships. As a collegiate wrestler he was an outstanding competitor at Syracuse University where he was twice EIWA Champion and won an Outstanding Wrestler award. He placed 2nd in two NCAA Division 1 Championships and Co-captained Syracuse to their first two Eastern Intercollegiate Wrestling Association team championships. After graduating, Ken won numerous open and AAU championships including the Canadian Open.

After succeeding "Sprig" Gardner in 1959, Ken, as coach, continued the remarkable success of Mepham wrestling. His coaching record is one of the finest ever on Long Island. 187 wins-34 losses-2 ties, His teams won 10 league titles and 8 Nassau County Titles. In 1964 his team was the best in New York State, going undefeated and winning 3 individual titles and 1 second at the state tournament. In all, Ken coached 64 League, 26 County and 8 New York State Champions. In 1975 he was voted Nassau County Coach of the Year and in 1985 was inducted into the New York State Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Both of Ken's sons, Bob and Steve were successful wrestlers. Steve was a 3 time Nassau County Champion and 2 time New York State Champion. Ken's wife Jane is still an active fan of wrestling and attends many Mepham matches.