

BEAU'S BEAMING

Four-time National Prep champ Bartlett made most of move from Arizona to PA

When he was a 7-year old competing for the Arizona-based Sunkist Kids Wrestling Club in the California State Youth Championships, Beau Bartlett lost his shoe.

He ended up competing all day with a size 3 black shoe on his left foot and a size 4.5 blue galosh on the right. Just the same, Beau battled to a third-place finish.

Beau first got on the mat at four years old with his father Andre, a former Fresno State starter, and continued under the tutelage of two-time Soviet Olympic champion Sergei Beloglazov.

Fast forward: he is only the 12th four-time National Prep titlist in the rich 73 years of the championships and the first to do it all four years competing for Wyoming Seminary in Kingston, Pa.

Bartlett and five other individual champs led the Sem squad to its sixth national team title, its second under Coach Scott Green (2014), by 81 points over second-place Blair (NJ) with six champions, 10 finalists and 12 placers.

"I would enjoy coaching this young man even if he lost every match he wrestled," said coach Green. "The fact that Beau is a four-time Prep National Champ is just icing on the cake."

(The PA boarding school finished the 2019-20 season as WIN's top high school team. Sem's National Prep girls' team joined the boys, earning the team championship with 5 out of 7 individual titlists, and outscoring its nearest competition by over 100 points.)

At an early age, Bartlett, a coach's son, learned how to turn a challenge into a teaching lesson.

"Instead of sympathizing with me, my father made me wear the mismatched pair of shoes as a lesson in responsibility," Bartlett said. "Right then, I learned how to stay focused and not to lose composure when faced with distractions. Now I can never remember what life was like without wrestling."

Bartlett, an ASICS first-team All-American at 138 pounds, has committed to Penn State.

"I always wanted to be on a great team," says Beau. "As I got better and the Sem team around me also im-

By Bill Barron



Beau Bartlett, the four-time National Prep champ from Wyoming Seminary in Pennsylvania and future Penn State wrestler, is the son of Renee and Andre Bartlett.

proved, I learned the importance of being surrounded by like-minded individuals who strive off each other's work ethic, thus keeping you motivated to work hard."

Beau's journey began out West, where "those RMN (Rocky Mountain Nationals) tournaments were my entire childhood," he said. "From at least first grade through

sixth, we'd load up the vans or planes. It was like a vacation, but all along we were bonding, and we always knew when to get to down to business.

"RMN had these 'ginormous' trophies — taller than I was at the time. Getting them through airport security with the workers joking with us, I realized these trophies meant something important. It was in those years that I learned to value team bonding."

Beau's family moved to Pennsylvania after sixth grade, thereby accommodating his six-year commitment to Wyoming Seminary.

"Living in Arizona, we always had to travel to find competition," explained Beau. "Plus, from an educational standpoint, Seminary had students going to Ivy League schools along with being one of the best wrestling teams in America.

"While the Sem is the only high school I have attended, transfers who have started at another school are blown away and shocked by how different it is. Every student here is going to a prestigious college. I am so grateful for what all the teachers have done for me."

Another enticement for the young Bartlett was that the last national prep championship the Seminary won was the year before he came. It was in his character to be part of building something great. Uniquely, the Seminary appoints no team captains; everyone contributes.

Beau describes character as "how you present yourself to the world, how you act when no one is watching.

"Since coming here, we trained all the time," Bartlett said, "but this year we came together, from 13-year-olds all the way through postgraduates in grades 7-12.

"It was an interesting dynamic, but we made sure everyone was on point. There were no stragglers. Furthermore, everyone connected to the school, including parents and faculty, supported us especially at Lehigh.

"While I never experienced the emotion of being in a packed high school state arena, at the National Preps, three of the nation's top programs — Wyoming Seminary, Blair Academy, and Malvern Prep (PA) — compete every

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separated spring signee Anthony D'Alesio (184-197) from a second Ohio title.

20. Minnesota: The Gophers' newest class is the tale of two southern Californians. Aaron Nagao (141), who was expected to dominate and did, signed last fall. Andrew Sparks (165), who wasn't expected to dominate but did anyway, signed this spring. Three-time Colorado champion Isaiah Salazar (174-184) also signed this spring.

21. Princeton: Four of seven recruits signed by coach Chris Ayres were state champions this season. The two ranked wrestlers, three-time New Jersey champion Anthony Clark (133-141) and Luke Stout (184-197) of Pennsylvania, own a combine five state titles. Two Georgia recruits, four-time champion Nick Masters (133) and Blaine Bergey (165-174), go them one better with six state crowns.

22. Columbia: New England champion Mason Clarke (133) of Rhode Island and Joshua Ogunsanya (157), who navigated a loaded weight class to win in Illinois, led five recruits who reached their season-ending finals. Jaden Le and Connor Kievman, who reached state and National Prep finals, are future 157-pounders, and Matthew Arciuolo (165) was a Pennsylvania finalist.

23. Purdue: The leaders of coach Tony Ersland's newest class, Illinois place-winner Jacob Rundell (133) and two-time Pennsylvania champion Gerrit Nijenhuis (184), are both top 10 recruits. In-state recruits Cooper Noehre (165) and Dorian Keys (285) didn't perform up to expectations in the state tournament, but spring signee Trey Kruse (149) was a Minnesota champion.

24. Pittsburgh: The three cornerstones of coach Keith Gavin's newest class advanced to their state finals, led by two-time Pennsylvania champion Colby Whitehill



(Andrew Cerniglia photo)

Andrew Cerniglia, a PIAA state champ from Notre Dame-Green Pond, is one of three nationally-ranked recruits headed to the Naval Academy to wrestle for new coach Cary Kolat.

(285). Californian Tyler Badgett (149-157) led the other four recruits to make a state final. Mick Burnett (141-149), the highest-ranked Panther recruit, lost his state tournament to the COVID-19 pandemic.

25. Indiana: Coach Angel Escobedo's class was sneaky good with its two ranked recruits, Derek Gilcher

(157-165) winning his second Michigan title and Santos Cantu (197) his fourth in Oregon. Back home, Robert Deters (174-184) and Andrew Irick (285) made the Indiana state finals, Deters winning a title.

26. Air Force: Five of the nine recruits in coach Sam Barber's newest class won state titles, including all three ranked recruits: top 10 John Martin Best (165-174) in West Virginia, Giano Petrucelli (174) in California and Matthew Kaplan (285) in Florida. Alec Viduya (141-149) in Indiana and Gabriel Hawthorne (141-149) in Washington make it champions from five different states.

27. Navy: The three ranked wrestlers in the incoming Midshipman class, Andrew Cerniglia (4th at 160) of Pennsylvania, Trevor Swier (19th at 182) of Illinois and Grady Griess (6th at 220) of Nebraska, all lived up to their rankings. Spring signee Matthew Rogers (174) was a New York state champion.

28. Stanford: A pair of future 197-pounders, Nick Stemmet of Illinois and Marshall Kools of Wisconsin, completed dominating unbeaten seasons in the rankings. Charlie Darracott won his third Georgia title and the COVID-19 pandemic kept Kyle Rowan (125) from bidding for an Ohio repeat.

29. Pennsylvania: The Quakers' pair of ranked recruits, Ryan Miller (125) of Blair Academy and Jackson Dean (141-149) of Delaware, came within an eyelash of taking home two titles. Dean won his third state title and Miller, the owner of two National Prep titles, finished runner-up in the finals this year.

30. Wisconsin: Braxton Amos (197-285), coach Chris Bono's top recruit among his talented group of five signees, won his third Ironman title and his third West Virginia state title, along with ASICS Wrestler of the Year honors. ■

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In the wrestling world, there were often statements like "it was not fair for me to be out there," or "I was too pretty to wrestle," or "I would get hurt" that diminished my right to be on the mat. I had a great support system that helped me not believe these ideas and helped me to focus on being a better athlete.

On the mat, I learned an eye for an eye leaves both people mad. Compassion has its place and so does removing yourself from a situation. I learned to trust and evaluate people, skills and motives. It serves me well in my decision-making skills. I learned to feel strong and powerful in words like pride, joy, pain, discomfort and disappointment.

If anyone has gone through a full week of practices, they will know the thoughts that run through your mind can go from "I hope I don't break my arm," to "I'm so strong I could win an Olympic gold medal." This is my life as an athlete, practicing and learning.

BEAU BARTLETT, From page 34

year to see who's best in the country."

"Beau has embraced everything about Sem and the Northeastern PA (NEPA) region," Scott remarked. "He could work as a tour guide in our admissions office or the local Chamber of Commerce. Beau is an incredible representative of what it means to be a Blue Knight."

Beau appreciates that coaches at a boarding school like Sem are "more than a wrestling coach," he said. "I had Coach Green for two English classes, where he made me see something special in literature. Not only that, but he was like a life coach, a mentor who helped me in ways that I did not even realize at the time."

While he would like to give back someday, as his coaches have done for him, Beau first has his sights set on a Master's and Ph.D. in sports psychology. The wise teenager comments: "There is more to life than wrestling. It has influenced the direction of my life, but I want to reach kids in a deeper way."

Beau admits that, if he had his say, wrestling would

have matside weigh-ins like jiu-jitsu.

"I have never been a proponent of weight-cutting," he said. "I also enjoy changing from folkstyle to freestyle; it keeps things from getting too mundane, almost like a new sports season."

How would life be different if Beau had never wrestled?

"Dad trained me as a Marine and after awhile, I learned to love working hard," he said. "Without wrestling, I would be much lazier, without a work ethic or discipline. Now I am hyper-focused on many goals for the life ahead of me. I believe I will get there because wrestling made me willing to put in the work."

Beau's former teammate and National Prep runner-up Masha Schwartz (CO), now starting for the University of Northern Colorado, comments: "Beau is an extremely hard worker in everything he does from athletics to academics. His parents immediately welcomed me as part of their family.

I got to experience all of this because I wrestled. It was easier for me because I had good people that let me thrive on the mat and embraced me as an athlete. I had help every step by people like my cousins and my coaches who guided young kids to grow up and accept people no matter their gender, skin color, religion or sexual orientation.

I am lucky enough to still be learning from this sport and plan to use the skills I develop in sport to get through these tumultuous events that are unfolding. I hope we are back to wrestling soon so we can continue to improve and grow as people.

Remember to be more than a bystander for young women and for people less fortunate. Help them. People helped me and now I get to win medals for Team USA and be part of something as powerful as the Olympic movement.

(Adeline Gray, USA's first five-time World champion and 2016 Olympian, can be followed on Twitter @AdelineGray.) ■

"Beau is a great example of a young man who sets the bar high and reaches it. He makes it look easy, but behind the scenes, he's putting in the time and hard work that it takes to be the best. He's been a great example to many upcoming wrestlers.

"Beau is so aware of his own body and his own training," added Coach Green: "You don't have to worry about pushing him. But he also knows when to back off, so he is healthy and always ready to compete.

"Beau's approach to wrestling is the same as it is to life. He maintains positivity. Everyone has their down days, but you seldom see Beau in a bad mood. This approach has served him well."

Dedicated and outgoing, Beau's Senior Superlative, voted on by the Class of 2020, is the classmate 'most likely to pass the vibe check.'

Beau laughs, then says: "That's Generation Z lingo for a person who is friendly and positive, someone who makes others smile." ■