

Greenbush-Middle River/Badger Approaching 50 Years of Excellence

G-MR/B Assistant Wrestling Coach, Jim Mack

The Greenbush-Middle River/Badger wrestling program is proud to announce that they will be celebrating their 50th year of high school wrestling history on Saturday, February 13th 2010. The weekend reunion will include a series of activities to commemorate and acknowledge the accomplishments and commitments of the many teams and individuals who have helped build and establish the program into what it is today. Activities will start at the Greenbush-Middle River High School with the doors opening at 10:00 AM. A spaghetti feed (free will offering) will then take place 11:00-1:00 in the Greenbush School cafeteria with Junior Varsity immediately following. There will then be a parade of past program participants at 2:00. Past teams will be introduced and recognized starting with the most recent teams and ending with the team from 1960, which was the first team in the programs history. These team introductions will include wrestlers, coaches, managers, and cheerleaders alike. The 2010 Gator wrestling team will then take the mat against neighboring opponent Thief River Falls following the parade of past participants. Events will then follow at the Greenbush Legion with a social and DJ at 8:00-midnight.

The program first rolled out its mats in the Greenbush High School at the beginning of the 1959-60 season under the leadership of young coach, Dale Roth. Coach Roth was hired by Greenbush Principal and wrestling advocate, Elmer Doran. There was a plan in mind when Doran came to Greenbush from the military service, and that was to start a wrestling program. As a member of the Army wrestling team, Doran brought great knowledge and respect for the sport to the community of Greenbush. Along with the hiring of Coach Roth, Doran also pushed for the purchase of the school's first wrestling mat as well as organizing the first competitive schedule in 1960. The Greenbush Tigers got the program off on the right track in their first dual that year with a convincing win over Thief River Falls, which is the purpose of the two teams matching up again for the reunion. It is Doran whose influence 50 years ago built what is now a strong wrestling program and community in the local area.

Many more successful years would follow, with many changes taking place. One of those biggest changes was the hiring of Doug Dahl in 1964. Dahl took the program to what few thought possible at the time. For good reason, Coach Dahl has engraved his spot in the legacy of the program and the respect of all who have come after him. Today, the beliefs, pride, and hard work that he instilled are still felt and present in the everyday work of those still involved with the community and program. Coach Dahl would retire from coaching and teaching after 31 years in 1995, compiling 333 wins as a coach.

For athletic enrollment reasons in sports other than wrestling, the Greenbush and Badger School Districts were forced to coop for sports in 1990, which brought in the new name and start of the Greenbush/Badger Bulldogs. Only two years later, Greenbush and neighboring Middle River consolidated their two school districts, once again forcing the

athletic mascot name to change. The three neighboring towns changed their name to the Badger/Greenbush-Middle River Gators. For wrestling only, the abbreviation of G-MR/B has been used to this day, considering that Greenbush was the only town to have wrestling prior to the coop. Coach Dahl who was there through each major change had pushed hard for this change at the conception of the merger.

The wrestling program at G-MR/B has flourished since that 1959-60 season. Individually, they've qualified over 163 individuals for the state tournament. From those individuals, they've had 59 wrestlers place at the state tournament, including 12 State Champions. In there 50 years of existence, there have been only five years where they have failed to advance an individual out of the section tournament. A major feat, considering all five of those years were prior to the 1976 season, when Minnesota Wrestling had only a single class system. Not to mention, at that time only the champion out of Section 8 advanced to the State Tournament. As well as individually, the program has sent five teams to the State Tournament, those years being 1986, 1993, 1996, 1998, and 2005. The program has also turned out numerous College wrestlers and All-Americans at the DI, DII, DIII and JC levels.

Today, with an enrollment (9-12) of only 125 students, GMRB's wrestling future looks strong for years to come as the elementary program continues to turn out great youth numbers and talent despite having much smaller enrollment numbers then its competitors. It's that talent pool that will continue to grow and improve up into the high school ranks which is hoped to eventually bring a State Team Championship home to GMRB in the sport of wrestling. The strong support and unity as a whole within the program from coaches, parents, wrestlers, and fans of all ages has built the Gator program into a model program for Northern Minnesota. That foundation and philosophy will continue to be a major factor in the continued future success of the program.

The planning committee for the 50th Reunion would like to extend an invitation to past Tiger, Bulldog, and Gator wrestlers, coaches, cheerleaders, managers and fans to attend this year's celebration. For more information or questions, please contact Vince Ames or Todd Bergeron.

Vince Ames

Email – lvames@gra.midco.net

Phone – (701)772-5960

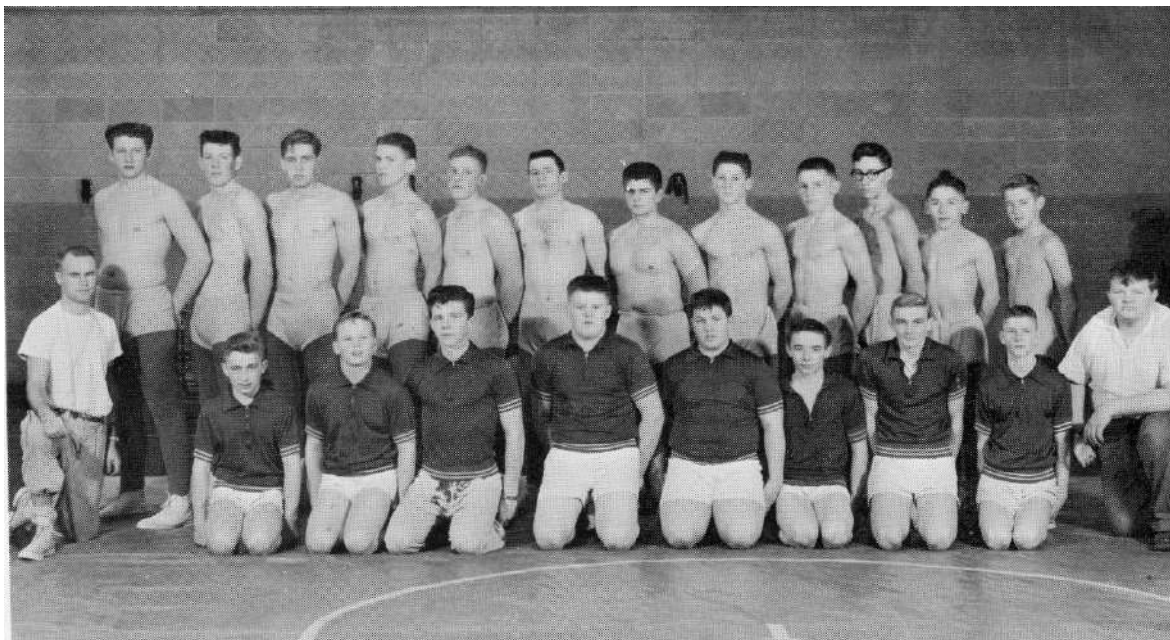
Todd Bergeron

Email - TLBergeron@greenbush.k12.mn.us

Phone - (218)782-2232 ext-235.

1959-60 Greenbush Tigers

Wrestling Team



First Row: Coach Roth, A. Snare, A. Bertilrud, B. Pomplun, O. Waage, J. Gonshowrowski,
W. Paulsen, M. Gjovik, W. Klemetson, J. Stolp, Student Manager.

Second Row: D. Flaten, E. Waage, E. Aamodt, R. Eeg, R. Melby, D. Erickson, M. Gonshorowski,
V. Ames, R. Gonshorowski, R. Hedquist.