

# W.I.N.

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## Junior Schalles winner Hunter Meys earned pedigree of Schalles

By Mike Finn,  
W.I.N. Editor

**Hello Coach** – I hope you're using a portion of this off-season for rest and relaxation, because once July hits, the recruiting calls will begin again. This newsletter is being sent for two reasons in particular. First is to promote one of our club members, Shenendehowa junior Hunter Meys and secondly to illustrate how Journeymen Wrestling, along with the legends and coaches of our sport, have helped bridge the "Collegiate Wrestling Gap." By now you've probably heard Journeymen Wrestling's passionate pitch 100 times over, but I think it's important to reiterate when articles like this are presented. Since Albany, NY does not have an NCAA Division I, II, or III collegiate wrestling program within a 65 mile radius, it is tremendously difficult to develop, inspire and motivate local wrestlers to continue their wrestling journey on to the post high school wrestling world. Our organization works tirelessly to bring that motivation and inspiration directly into our own community. Through the work of the **Journeymen/BRUTE Northeast Collegiate Duals, Journeymen Wrestling Club, Journeymen Fall Clinic, Journeymen/Worldwide Sprawl and Brawl Duals** and our two **Journeymen camps**, we've been closing this gap. For all the coaches and wrestling legends that have reached out to our organization over the past few years, I think this article illustrates how effective your help has been. Thanks for being a part of something dynamic and special. Please remember that we have 300 plus wrestlers in our club and there are several others waiting in the wings to be developed and inspired! For those who have given back to wrestling via Journeymen Wrestling—thank you. For those who haven't yet, please consider...it's a worthy cause.



Frank Popolizio

Enjoy the Journey,  
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If there was ever a wrestler who was born to earn a national pinning award, it had to be Hunter Meys.

"Hunter was named for head hunter, which was the award that was given at my high school when I was wrestling," said John Meys, the father of the winner of this year's Junior Schalles Award, who most recently pinned his way through the New York state tournament as a junior at Shenendehowa High School.

There is also a pinning legacy that exists between Schalles and the ninth winner of the trophy that is presented annually to the nation's best high school pinner.

"I liked that name, Hunter, and the way Wade Schalles wrestled," recalled John, who like his father of the same first name won a National Prep championship in the late 1970s for Salesianum in Delaware.

"Wade was the most exciting wrestler to watch, ever. His pinning legacy was something I always looked up to. Hunter knew who Wade Schalles was when Hunter was five or six because I spoke frequently about him and I used a lot of the stuff I learned from him."

John Meys is familiar with Schalles, because he wrestled for Wade at Clemson in 1979 and 1980.

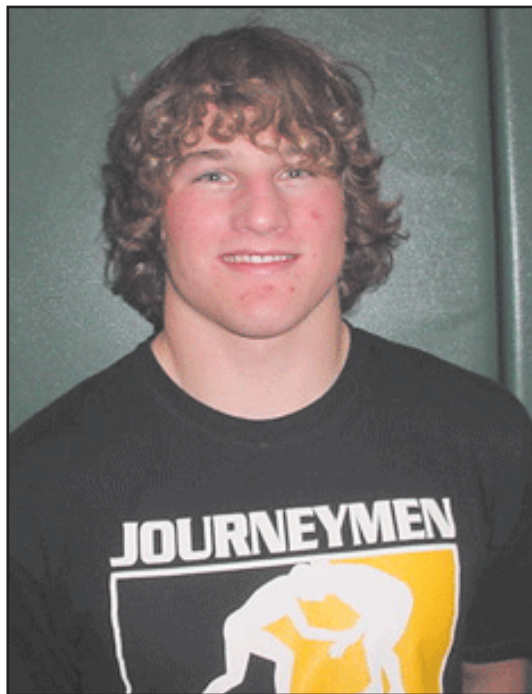
"Every day, he would blow your mind with technique," said John. "Basic rules were broken all the time in order to get a better move. Now we see his stuff is becoming more mainstream on the high level. Back when he was doing it, few knew what it was. Wade's stuff was 30-40 years ahead of its time."

John now sees that in his son, who recently completed his state championship season with a 47-0 record, which included 44 pins at 171 pounds. Since making his high school team as a 96-pound seventh grader, Hunter has compiled a 207-10 record with an amazing 174 pins.

"Hunter likes going for the head," said John. "He likes going for the pin and I like that. I always admired the pinners, who had the extra fear factor. Hunter is very aggressive and simple; nothing flashy. He's always going for a leg or something and then going right after the pin. He is no nonsense."

"Hunter has a freakish work ethic and deceiving power," said his Journeymen Club coach Frank Popolizio. "People will look at him and see a little boy's face, but I've seen real strong men fold like lawn chairs when they work out with him."

Hunter said it's been tough developing this reputation, but finds ways of adding to his pin collection.



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— Hunter Meys

"You have to adapt your moves to who you are wrestling," he said. "One move is not going to work on every person. You have to find what move works well on who you are wrestling now."

Hunter Meys, who gained 20 pounds between his sophomore and junior seasons has grown from a young man who was considered a "pathetic" peewee wrestler.

"He was good at pinning someone and then doing a somersault and getting pinned," laughed John. "That was his best move."

John said he saw a change in his son when he entered third or fourth grade and soon started practicing the sport any place they could find a wrestling mat.

Hunter, meanwhile, credits his coaches, including Shenendehowa High School coach Robert Weeks for developing his style.

"He creates a tough wrestling atmosphere in the room," said Hunter. "Our whole team team has a good work ethic so it's easy to work hard."

Hunter said he's not quite sure when he became a pinner.

"I try to go out there and get the pin," said the younger Meys. "Everything I'm working for is to make my position better and allow me to get the pin quicker and as soon as possible in the match. That's how I was brought up."

Hunter did not even think too much about pinning four straight opponents at this year's New York state tournament.

"That wasn't really my focus," he added. "It was to wrestle well and win. That's the way I would have liked it to go though."

Hunter's bigger goal was winning a state tournament, which appeared to dim after finishing third in the state as a 112-pound eighth grader. In the two years that followed he finished fifth as a freshman and failed to make the state tournament as a sophomore when he lost to Michael Chaires, a two-time champ who will attend Virginia next fall, in a sectional final.

"I'd look at him a month later and you could see that he was ready to cry," recalled John. "It was a very difficult time in our life. We focused on Fargo (for the Cadet Nationals), where he fell short, but he never gave up on the sport, which can beat you up."

"I kept working at it. We have a lot of coaches who also told me what I had to do to get better and I usually follow that," said Hunter.

The younger Meys knows that college recruiters

will be knocking on his door soon, but he wants to keep his focus on high school.

"I've been looking at a lot of good schools and it's going to be a tough decision," said Hunter.