



USA WRESTLING



USA WRESTLING / / WORLD-CLASS BILL FARRELL WRESTLING CENTER IS DEDICATED AT THE COLORADO SPRINGS OLYMPIC TRAINING CENTER

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BY GARY ABBOTT, USA WRESTLING | AUG. 21, 2015, 10:18 P.M. (ET)



USA Wrestling Executive Director Rich Bender, Bill Farrell's children Kyle and Leigh Farrell and USA Wrestling President Jim Ravannack cut the ribbon for the world-class Bill Farrell Wrestling Center at the Colorado Springs OTC.

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. - It was a time to look back at the remarkable lives of one of the great leaders in wrestling and the Olympic movement, while looking ahead to a bright future for the young men and women who will be American Olympic wrestling heroes for many years ahead.

USA Wrestling and the Colorado Springs Olympic Training Center hosted a special Ribbon Cutting and Dedication Ceremony for the newly renovated Bill Farrell Wrestling Center on the OTC campus. Family and friends of the late Bill Farrell came together with a variety of wrestling dignitaries and current athletes and coaches for the public dedication of the renovated and updated world-class wrestling training facility.

Bill Farrell was the head coach of the 1972 U.S. Olympic freestyle team, New York Athletic Club athlete, and leader and innovator in the wrestling products industry with ASICS. But even more importantly, Farrell changed the course of wrestling in our nation, creating a strong foundation for great success for American wrestlers in the three Olympic styles.

"This is an exciting evening for the USOC and USA Wrestling. One of the greatest honors an athlete can receive is representing their country in international competition. It's one thing to see it here at the Olympic Training Center every day. It's another thing to hear it from the athletes themselves. Our goal here, just like their goal, is to be the best in the world. Our goal is to provide them with all the support and all the tools they need in order to achieve their goals and dreams," said Aron McGuire, Director of the Colorado Springs Olympic Training Center.

Cutting the ribbon at the dedication of the Bill Farrell Training Center were Farrell's children, Leigh and Kyle Farrell, along with USA Wrestling President James Ravannack and Executive Director Rich Bender.

Bender thanked some of the people who made significant contributions to the project including Herb House, the New York Athletic Club, Dave Foxen, Hooman Tavakolian, Steve Friedman, Andy Barth, Viki McCright, Tony Bobulinski and ASICS America.

"Bill Farrell was the most consequential figure in the history of USA Wrestling. What we are today, we are standing squarely on his shoulders. USA Wrestling is what we are because of the vision that he had, and the support that he gave

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to wrestlers. We have many of those champions here tonight," said Bender.

Two close friends and business partners with Bill Farrell from ASICS, Nick Gallo and Neil Duncan, talked about their mentor and leader.

"We want to thank USA Wrestling for putting Bill's name on this wrestling center. He would have been super honored to know his name is enshrined here. Bill's biggest passion in life was wrestling. I worked with Bill. He hired me right out of college. He was a superb leader. He coached under the great Vince Lombardi. Bill learned a lot from him. He taught us how to lead and to work business correctly. He was a great friend, a great family man, a very competitive personality," said Gallo.

"Bill had a tremendous sense of humor. He was the ultimate people person. He could speak to anybody. One of his great leadership qualities was his sense of humor. He had the unique ability to bring people together from different walks of life, from different points of view, and get them to work towards a goal. One of the great things about working for him in our company is that he could motivate you. He was good at figuring out what people needed in order to be better," said Duncan.

USA Wrestling presented Leigh Farrell and Kyle Farrell with a special award, and invited them to cut the ribbon for the facility.

"On behalf of myself, my brother, my mother Lorraine, thank you so much for honoring our father today. Thank you to USA Wrestling and the Olympic Training Center. Bill Farrell was an exceptional man. He was an exceptional athlete, coach, businessman, family man. He would be honored today, although he would have probably said 'enough honors.' He was a very humble man," said Leigh Farrell.

After the ribbon was cut, USA Wrestling's High Performance Manager Cody Bickley led in the many guests, which included two-time Olympic champion and three-time World champion Bruce Baumgartner, Olympic champion Steve Fraser, two-time World champion Adeline Gray, World champion Bill Zadick, Olympian Jim Scherr and many others. Members of the USA Wrestling Board of Directors, and numerous state association leaders were also there.

Bickley told them about the \$325,000 in expansion and upgrades that went into the beautiful eight-mat wrestling facility, an increase from three mats in the previous wrestling room. He pointed out the expanded cardio area, the bleachers for fans, the new office spaces for the national coaches, the sound system, the mat divider which can be raised and lowered, the special photos and graphics on the walls and many other cutting-edge additions to the facility.

Focus turned to the current and future athletes who will benefit from the new Bill Farrell Wrestling Center, in their quest to win Olympic and World medals for the United States.

"In the past, our practice times were very strict. We were always working around the men's schedules to find times. We can now train at the same times. The chance to have the space here to separate and have a private room is unbelievable. We were limited before. This is amazing, I thank you all for making this possible. This was something we needed. It will help our athletes have success," said Adeline Gray, who is currently preparing in the facility for the upcoming 2015 World Championships in Las Vegas.

Fundraising for the final \$75,000 for the costs of the renovated Bill Farrell Training Center is underway. Those who would like to contribute can do so online at usawrestling.rallyme.com.

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