



Jack Fallon awarded 2015 Michael Jackson Scholarship

Jack Fallon, a senior wrestler for the Woodford County High School wrestling team, was named the 12th recipient of the Michael Jackson Memorial Scholarship award on Thursday, June 16.

One of the key things that helped Fallon earn the award was his work ethic, according to Debbie Jackson, Michael Jackson's mother and one of the creators of the scholarship award.

"I think probably what impressed me the most was his (Jack's) work ethic, and he didn't give up," she said. "He started when he was in elementary school, and he just kept with it, and kept with it, and that tells me he loves the sport."

Added WCHS head wrestling coach Rusty Parks Jr., "He has a great work ethic. (He's) a great kid. You know, a lot of kids would have gave up a long time ago, but he kept working and kept working to achieve his goal, and I believe he's done that. I'm very proud of the kid."

Fallon was very excited about receiving the award, especially considering who it is named after and all that it symbolizes in WCHS wrestling history.

"When I got the mail that I received the award and I saw the congratulations and everything, I got really excited, because I was nervous about getting it," said Fallon. "It's a big pride thing to get it because so many other great wrestlers (at Woodford) have gotten it. And, Michael Jackson was such a great wrestler. It's a really big honor to get it, and I was really excited when I saw that I had gotten it."

Fallon joins 11 other Mat Jackets who have received the award, which was named in honor of former WCHS wrestler Michael Jackson, who was killed in a car accident in 2002.

Past winners of the award include Nathan Boston (2014), Wesley Morris (2012), Curtis Graham (2011), Robert Bracco (2010), Harrison Courtney (2009), Chad Scott (2008), Steven Butler (2007), Rusty Parks Jr. (2006), Nick Neessen (2005), John Barrett (2004), and Jamison Large (2003).

The award was created by Jackson's parents, Debbie and Guy Jackson, to ensure their son's legacy lives on through this award.

According to the Jacksons, "The Michael Jackson Wrestling Scholarship was created in memory of Christopher Michael Jackson who was fatally injured in a car accident on December 15, 2002.

Michael was a varsity wrestler for four years at Woodford County High School (1996-2000). He won the 135-lb. Kentucky High School Wrestling Championship title his senior year. Michael's relentless determination, unceasing work ethic, team spirit, exemplary sportsmanship, and respect for his coaches, fellow teammates, referees, and opponents made him a true champion.

"The Michael Jackson Wrestling Scholarship is awarded annually to a Woodford County High School senior wrestler who is planning to attend college. The recipients of this award exemplify the qualities exhibit by Michael as an athlete at Woodford County High School."

Fallon began his wrestling career in elementary school, and wrestled through middle school at Woodford County Middle School, and then through high school at Woodford County High School.

His best finish while in middle school was a fifth-place finish at the middle school state championships when he was in eighth grade.

He then moved up to the high school, and continued having solid success, first under co-head coaches Joe Carr Sr. and Joe Carr Jr., and then this past year under Parks.

During his senior season, he had to overcome some adversity and some injuries, but as he had done throughout his career, he worked hard and got back on the mat for regions and state.

Fallon says that he has two favorite moments he'll remember most from his senior season.

"I want to say hanging out with all the kids on the team and everything, because I got super close with all of them this year," said Fallon. "(Also), the first tournament of the season, when we beat Campbell County in a dual meet, was pretty cool, because we had everybody wrestle up (a weight class). That was pretty cool to beat them."

As for Fallon, he had some solid victories this season. Then in the region tournament, which was held at Woodford, he reached the finals, but lost in the championship match. Still, with his second-place finish, he qualified for the state championships, which were held at the Alltech Arena at the Kentucky Horse Park on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 10 and 11.

At state, however, while he wrestled hard, he was unable to place, which was a disappointment to the senior Mat Jacket.

"Honestly, not placing (at state) was a big bummer," said Fallon. "I really wanted to place and I just still don't feel like I completed my career really because I didn't place or anything."

Still, while he might not have placed at state, Parks was still proud of all that his wrestler had accomplished.

"Jack had a great career at Woodford County," said Parks. "A very, very good kid. Great athlete. Great student, also. Had a great career and battled adversity like every wrestler does, but he over

came the adversity and ended up having a great senior season. (He was) one match from placing in the top eight (at state) for us this year, so I was very proud of his accomplishments.

"But, (I am) even more proud of what he is receiving today in this scholarship, because the meaning and the background of this award right here ... I don't know how to explain really, but it is awesome. I was a Michael Jackson award winner and it meant the world to me, so I'm just glad that a great young man like Jack is able to get it also."

With his wrestling career over and after graduating from WCHS this past spring, Fallon looks forward to attending the University of Kentucky this fall. There, he plans to major in agricultural economics, with the hopes of one day possibly managing a cattle farm or a goat farm.

After receiving the award, Fallon reminisced a little about his days at as a student-athlete, and having the opportunity to wrestle at Woodford, which, he believes, was the reason he had so much success.

"It was a pretty big deal getting to wrestle here just because it is such a good wrestling high school," he said. "I don't think I would have been as good if I went somewhere else. I think it enhanced my career."

For more information about the Michael Jackson Wrestling Scholarship, and the story of Michael Jackson, the scholarship's history, its past winners and how you can donate to the scholarship, go to [MichaelJacksonWrestlingScholarship.org](http://MichaelJacksonWrestlingScholarship.org).