Editorial

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Wrestling can be said to be among the most universal, timeless, and inclusive of sports. It is found on every continent, it has been recorded in antiquity, and is practiced by men and women, boys and girls of all sizes and shapes, the hearing impaired, those without sight, and, remarkably, those without some limbs! It can be called the best of the combative sports in that there is no reward for striking, kicking, choking, or intentionally causing harm to your opponent. Yet, the physical and mental demands it places upon the practitioner are of the highest order.

What is our role as wrestling professionals and members of the International Network of Wrestling Researchers in our association with this great sport? Our Mission Statement:

The International Network of Wrestling Researchers (INWR) seeks to facilitate the development of wrestling around the world by drawing all wrestling sport science professionals together, in a manner that through our international and intercultural cooperation we are empowered to support the development of wrestling with our research and educational programs.

Important areas in the development of wrestling are found in women’s wrestling and the introduction of wrestling to youth with safe and attractive programming. Articles in this issue by Podlivaev, Maître, and Gioftsidou et al. provide strong testimony for our attempt to serve women and youth.

At the same time we need to remember the roots of our work, and the shoulders of those on which we stand. That is the reason for the establishment of the Rayko Petrov Honor Lecture. Professor Petrov was a wrestler, coach, and prolific scholar. Each year the INWR names the person to be honored to deliver the memorial lecture at the INWR annual meeting. They are presented with the spectacular bronze trophy that was commissioned of Christo Christov by the Bulgarian Wrestling Federation. Christo Christov is a renowned sculptor from Varna, Bulgaria. The 2015 Rayko Petrov Memorial Lecture was delivered by Professor Boris Podlivaev and is published in this issue.

Professor Podlivaev has spent a lifetime in wrestling. He is a member of the UWW Scientific Commission and a professor in the department of theory and methodology of sports and martial arts at the Russian State University of Physical Culture, Sports and Tourism in Moscow. Boris was born in 1946 and is currently a senior coach of the Russian team in women’s freestyle wrestling. He is an Honored Coach of Russia as well as an Honored Worker of Physical Culture of the Russian Federation. He has published more than 200 works. Congratulations and thanks to Dr. Podlivaev!

The important work of this organization can be found at all levels. It may be at the wide base of beginners, where we find the fitness, fun and self-worth from progressing through the basics of wrestling techniques; or it could be at the top of the triangle where Olympic medals are won and glory is given. Both are mightily important!

As we work together, let us all remember the ethics and positive spirit which must be a part of our scientific works. The wrestlers we work with are not commodities—something to exploit for glory and profit, and we should heed the words commonly attributed to Einstein “Everything that can be counted, does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted.”