

SOVA AWARDS

Dave Brown Memorial Award: Given to Middle School Wrestler of the Year

- Background: Before his death in June, 1997, Dave Brown had coached youth wrestling on the Peninsula for 25 years. He was the founder of the James–York Youth Wrestling League, which was renamed the Peninsula Youth Wrestling League (PYWL) in 1996, and later renamed to Southern Virginia (SOVA) Wrestling League in 2013. He served as Head Coach and Matchmaker for the former Newport News Cobras from the beginning of the Club’s establishment.
- Nomination Criteria: You need to write a few lines explaining how your nominee exemplified outstanding character, leadership, dedication and sportsmanship during the current wrestling season.
- Selection: A person who knew Dave Brown will make the selection based on packages provided. Each nominee will receive a Certificate in a ceremony after the medals are distributed for the morning session and winner will receive a plaque.

Pat Chall Memorial Award: Given to SOVA (Non-Coaching) Volunteer of the Year

- Background: Before his death in January, 2000, Pat Chall had coached youth wrestling on the Peninsula for 15 years, first at Denbigh, and then establishing a youth wrestling program at Woodside High School when it opened. He also served as an Assistant Coach at Woodside High.
- Nomination Criteria: You need to write a few lines explaining volunteer contributions your nominee provided to your club, SOVA, or wrestling in general.
- Selection: The winner will be selected by the SOVA Board of Directors based on packages provided. Each team’s nominee will receive a Certificate of Appreciation in a ceremony after the medals are distributed for the morning session and the winner will receive a plaque.

Brad Thomas Memorial Award: Given to the SOVA Coach of the Year

- Background: Before his death in June, 2002, Brad Thomas had coached youth wrestling on the Peninsula for 6 years, as a member of the Jaguars staff. Brad was a tireless volunteer at PYWL/SOVA (and many other) wrestling events. Brad was known for his smile, his friendliness, and his eagerness to help anyone with anything
- Nomination Criteria: You need to write a few lines explaining how your nominee exemplifies the criteria below for SOVA Coach of the Year. (Please provide a picture of the Nominee to SOVA)
 - Adherence to the PYWL Coaches’ Code of Conduct:
 - Very high level of concern for the safety and well-being of ALL the kids
 - High degree of wrestling skills
 - Dedication to the sport of wrestling and especially to the kids on their own team
 - Actively promoting youth wrestling in their own community
- Selection: A picture of each team’s nominee will be posted on the wall during the tournament and ALL coaches will be wearing nametags. For selection of the winner, each team will get 1 vote (which must be cast for an opposing team’s coach). Votes will be tallied and the Award will be presented after the medals are distributed for the morning session and each nominee will receive a Certificate of Appreciation in a ceremony and the winner will receive a plaque.

Ben Altshuler Memorial Award: Given to the SOVA Referee of the Year

-- Background: Before his death in June 2007, Ben Altshuler was exceedingly dedicated to the sport we all love, but he actually did not start wrestling until he was in college. Ben was a founding member of the Peninsula Wrestling Officials Association (PWOA) and a founding member of the Peninsula Youth Wrestling League (PYWL), later renamed in 2013 to the Southern Virginia (SOVA) Wrestling League. Further, he was a co-founder of the Peninsula Catholic High School wrestling program and a volunteer coach for any team who would accept his help. Ben was the most ardent and complete historian of wrestling in our Region and the most knowledgeable, dependable and enthusiastic Assistant Coach, Booster and fan any team ever had.

-- Nomination Criteria: You need to write a few lines explaining how your nominee exemplifies these criteria.

-- Selection: A picture of each team's nominee will be posted on the wall during the tournament and ALL referees will be wearing nametags. For selection of the winner, each team will get 1 vote. Votes will be tallied and the Award will be presented after the medals are distributed for the morning session and each nominee will receive a Certificate of Appreciation in a ceremony and the winner will receive a plaque.

Lucy Stowe Award: Given to the Outstanding SOVA Board Member of the Year

-- Background: Lucy Stowe was a long-time Commissioner/President of SOVA who focused her efforts on ensuring the value and success of the League. Lucy gave an enormous amount of her time and energy over many decades coordinating League planning activities, keeping team/clubs engaged in League meetings & functions, scrimmage scheduling, and running the League's annual end of year Championship Tourney. She understood the importance of the League, especially to newer wrestlers, and the economic value league scrimmages provide to participating families. This award represents the spirit and tenacity of Lucy's efforts exhibited by the selected Board member remains vibrant within the SOVA Board.

-- Nomination Criteria: Anyone in the League or on the Board may submit a few lines explaining their rationale for the contributions their Board nominee provided to their club, SOVA, or wrestling in general.

-- Selection: The winner will be selected by the SOVA voting members via blind vote at or prior to the League Tournament based on packages provided and the winner will receive a plaque.

*******SELECTION WILL BE BASED ON CLUB ROSTERS*******

Norm & Ronnie Thacker Memorial Award: Given to team with highest number of First Year EVER wrestlers

-- Background: Before his death in December 2010 Norm Thacker was a long-time youth wrestling coach and one of the first Peninsula VA Wrestling Hall of Fame members. Norm and his wife Dee (of more than 50 years) ran the Hampton Jaguars youth wrestling club and were instrumental in the old Hampton City League, which combined with the old James-York County League to create the Peninsula Youth Wrestling League (PYWL) in 1996, which was later renamed the SOVA wrestling league in 2013. Norm was passionate about getting new wrestlers into the sport. Over the years, Norm and Dee also took in numerous unprivileged Hampton children and helped them to move on successful lives. Before his death in 2008, Norm's son, Ronnie Thacker, was a long-time coach and supporter of wrestling for the Jaguars and Hampton High School. Ronnie shared his father's passion in getting new wrestlers into the sport at the youth and high school levels.

-- Selection Criteria: The selection will be made using each team's roster in the Matchmaker software using the experience column (0=zero experience). The winning team will be presented a plaque after the medals are distributed for the morning session.