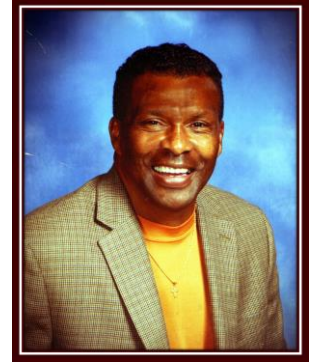


WARREN REAVES

Warren Reaves first entered the sports world through participation in football on an Amherst Recreation League team, coached by Jimmy Hise. He picked up his lifetime nickname of “Lightning” from those experiences as a running back. He and his mother attended the high school wrestling matches, where his older brother, Wilson, and several friends excelled.



Upon reaching high school, he began his wrestling career, under Hall of Fame coach John Seal. Seal greatly influenced Reaves' development, recognizing potential, and giving enough flexibility and latitude to allow Reaves to hone his individual skills. A strong bond, sometimes over dinner at the coach's home, emerged, as Seal saw Reaves' drive and ability. Reaves placed in the regionals every year, starting as a freshman in 1976.

At ACHS, he also played football under Hall of Fame Coach Tom Berry, and ran track, directed by Earl Foster. He was a quarter-miler, and also ran on the quarter-mile relay team. Speed was his forte in each of his sports; he worked tirelessly to improve.

The culmination of Reaves' wrestling career occurred in his junior year at Amherst, when he won the state championship at 119 pounds. His senior year, he placed fourth in the state competition, following an injury incurred during football season, when he and Hall of Fame inductee Kenny Dixon became entangled on a running play. They ended up at the bottom of a heap of Altavista Colonels tacklers, and Reaves was taken from the field with a torn knee ligament, requiring surgery. He tried to practice, thinking he was protecting his knee, even while in a cast. He realized later that his knee had not fully healed from the surgery, yet he placed fourth in the state in his less-than-peak performance as a senior wrestler.

Reaves cites his best memory from wrestling as being his experience with a heralded wrestler from Lord Botetourt who had beaten him in regionals as a sophomore. Reaves realized that he had been intimidated by his opponent's array of medals on his jacket, but he turned that negative feeling into motivation for winning the state championship the following year. Even though that particular opponent had been injured and was not in the meet, his yearlong regimen of running, weight training, and practice had driven him to success in the state finals. He had learned from the past, worked to improve to his greatest potential, and achieved the goal.

Even though the senior year was a bit of a disappointment, three top wrestlers from that team qualified for the state meet, after undefeated individual seasons in the district. Reaves was able to attend Liberty Baptist College, now Liberty University, on a wrestling scholarship.

Warren Preston Reaves – August 8, 1960

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Youth: Madison Heights football, running back
- Amherst Junior High: Football – running back
- ACHS: Football – running back (1975-78), sportsmanship award (1976); Track – 440, 440 relay (1976-79); Wrestling – (1975-79), 119 lbs., District championships (1975-79); state championship (1978), fourth place (1979); Regional championships (1976, 1978)
- Liberty Baptist College (now Liberty University): Wrestling (1980-82)