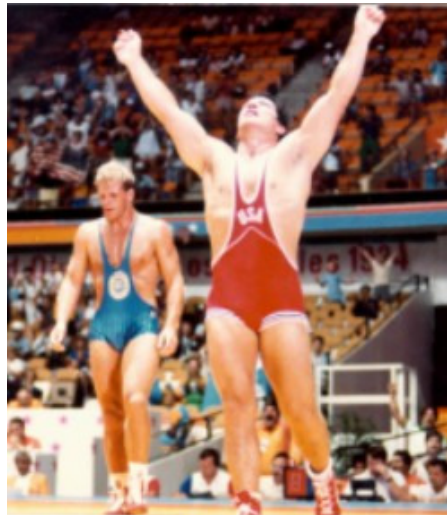


## **Grappling Heroes – Greco Roman Wrestling – Steve Fraser - USA**

I had just placed 3rd at the 1996 Espoir National Championships in Greco Roman Wrestling and was qualified to take part in the 'Big Brother' Program offered by the US Olympic Training Center. I arrived on the campus and had an electrifying charge come over me. I'd never experienced anything like it before. I can only define it as the Olympic Spirit.

Steve Fraser is someone who fully embodies this spirit of excitement, passion, and energy. While I was at my first OTC camp he talked a lot about "Expecting to Win" and being mentally tough. Who better to talk about mental toughness than the first ever Olympic Gold Medalist for the United States in Greco Roman wrestling.

In 1984 Steve stunned the world as he defeated the seemingly invincible Frank Andersson of Sweden who had already won 3 Greco Roman Wrestling world championships (1977, 79, 82). As an athlete Fraser won a gold medal at the 1983 Pan Am Games. Multiple national titles in Greco Roman and Freestyle Wrestling, was a 2x World Team Member and was also a 2xAll American for Michigan.



Steve Fraser making history winning the US's first ever Greco Roman Olympic Gold Medal against Frank Andersson of Sweden at the 1984 Olympics.

Fraser's athletic credentials certainly impress but what is even more impressive is his ability to pass on his success to athletes under his watch. As the US National Team coach Fraser's teams have; placed 3rd World championships in 2001 (the US's best finish to that point) and won multiple world and Olympic individual medals and championships. The crowning moment of Steve's coaching career was in 2007 when he lead the US squad to its first ever world championship title.

One of the most amazing things that Coach Fraser did was instill a sense of cockeyed optimism in his athletes. While I was an OTC athlete I remember seeing outlandish and lofty goals in the wrestling room like; "Win Olympic Championships, 6 medalists and 2 champions", "Win World Championships, with 7 medalists". To Steve these weren't just words on a wall they were dreams with deadlines, they were solid and compelling goals. His desire for the US to succeed often exceeded that of the athlete's themselves.

Steve Fraser has had a hand in developing 23 World and/or Olympic medalists during his coaching career. Including one of the biggest upsets in Olympic history in which Rulon Gardner defeated the undefeated Alexander Karelin at the Sydney Australia Olympics in 2000. Karelin had been undefeated in competition for 16 years up to that point.



Steve Fraser is the current national team coach for USA Greco Roman Wrestling.

**Resources: Steve Fraser**

<http://www.uscamps.net/champion-wrestling-coaches/steve-fraser-founder-a-olympian>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve\\_Fraser](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Fraser)

<http://www.themat.com/bios.php?page=showbio&ContactID=558>