

Tracy G'Angelo Hancock
Through the World of Wrestling, All People Are As One
By Bill X. Barron – RMN Events Writer

“Of all the trails in this life, there is the trail of a true human. I believe you are on this trail.” (Chief Kicking Bird to Lieutenant John Dunbar in “Dances with Wolves”)

In knowing Tracy G'Angelo Hancock, for whom wrestling has been his family, one believes that his path to greatness is true. Leaving home at age sixteen, the school of life has helped him mature quickly. Now as he travels the world, he has found that “the people you meet are so genuine, so unique. Without even knowing you, they invite into their homes to meet their family. To them, a Greco wrestler is a fighter – and they respect fighters.” G'Angelo also cites that he has never felt prejudice because “wrestling neutralizes differences. Overseas, you're a sportsman first.”

G'Angelo began wrestling relatively late at age eleven; in his first season of middle school, he fractured his growth plate. But the coach kept him as part of the team, his first experience of wrestling as family. Just two years later, G'Angelo was holding up a first-place trophy representative of finishing on top of the RMN-sponsored Colorado Middle School State Championship. Already big for his age, G'Angelo put on more muscle while acquiring the skill which earned him 4th and 3rd place at his 195-pound junior high weight in the 2012 and 2013 state high school championships.

“While growing up, Rocky Mountain National Events was the place to be, the big thing to win,” says G'Angelo. “Not only was RMN where I could get a huge trophy, but it also prepared me for the big stage. I thank RMN for the opportunity to grow as a person. RMN taught me to have a champion mindset, for which I am forever grateful. Ultimately, I believe that the sport of wrestling helps you grow as an individual, boy or girl. RMN provided me with that chance.”

On the national stage, G'Angelo has earned three U.S. junior titles along with two at the senior level. Now 20, G'Angelo has traveled the world on three junior national teams, earning a 96 kg world bronze medal in 2016; in 2017, he had the unique privilege of competing for his country on the junior and senior national squads as well as winning 3 of 4 championships as heavyweight for the United States U-23 team. His motto for success on this tour was “step and regret.” It helped him offset the weight difference with finesse.

G'Angelo cites aspirations to “be best in the world. The more I wrestle, the more I fall in love with the sport. I willingly commit my all to it, to train to be the best on the planet. Wrestling has been my life and always will be.” At the Olympic Training Center, Coach Ahad – now the Cornell RTC coach – “showed me insane training styles which, while brutal, made me stronger and built a foreign-style fire within me.” At the same time, Ahad's teaching kept him humble “by reminding me that no one has mastered the sport, that everyone can be beat.”

Throughout his journey, he has had father figures like Olympian TC Dantzler, who influenced his decision to focus on Greco. A multi-dimensional person, G'Angelo plays the piano, loves to challenge friends to a game of chess, and after graduating early from high school he has followed TC's lead to continue his education while earning a \$75,000 scholarship to finish his bachelor's degree in business management.

“Going to the world championship is a unique experience,” reflects G'Angelo. “You train for so long to go against people who give it their all, win or lose. This sport demands so much focus. To become best of the best, perhaps a small adjustment will make the difference. Matt Lindland (U.S. Olympic Greco head coach) taught me that wrestling is like watch-making: learn to critique the little things.”

For one who has grown up in the family of wrestling, G'Angelo has lessons of his own he will one day impart to those just starting out. He would like them to remember that wrestling, like life, is “a fight, a battle.” Yet it is also one to enjoy, “to experience in a positive way.” If life and wrestling are his teachers, G'Angelo Hancock is one of its foremost students, one who will continue to make a difference, on and off the mat.