



Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame

15 West Third Street - Jamestown, NY 14701

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The following article about Julie (Gawronski) Tickle, a 2016 inductee of the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame, appeared in the August 20th edition of the Daily Inter Lake (Kalispell, Montana).



DREAM Adaptive's New Director Worked with Paralympic Athletes

Julie Tickle has only been in the Flathead Valley for a short time, but she has quickly made an impression.

Tickle was recently named executive director of Whitefish-based DREAM Adaptive Recreation. The nonprofit has been helping people with disabilities get

outdoors since 1985.

Growing up in Dunkirk, N.Y., Tickle's dream was to be an Olympian. She played soccer and softball at Division III Union College. Her college soccer coach said she was a Division I athlete who went to Union so she could play two varsity sports.

There, she led Union to four NCAA tournament berths in softball and three in soccer.

After earning a bachelor's degree in psychology at Union and a master's in sports administration at Canisius College in Buffalo, Tickle made her way west to the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

She worked there for five years, coordinating camps and events for athletes working to become Olympians.

But it was also where she began her involvement in working for U.S. Paralympics.

Highlights of her tenure included supporting the 2010 Winter Paralympics in Vancouver and the 2012 Summer Olympics in London.

It was an epiphany of sorts for Tickle.

“I really respected how hard para-Olympians worked to achieve their goals,” Tickle said. “Seeing them rise above challenges to achieve their goals is very inspiring.”

“Helping people get outside, making new friends, it really builds confidence and that translates into all parts of life.”

Tickle knew then she wanted to help others chase their dreams.

“I knew that someday I wanted to run an adaptive sports program,” she said.

Colorado Springs was also where Tickle met her husband, Sam. He was a former helicopter pilot who served his country in the U.S. Navy.

He then became involved with the Semper Fi Fund and working with disabled veterans at the training center.

Tickle’s time in Colorado developed her love for living in the mountains. She got into more extreme sports, such as snowboarding and mountain biking.

Then, the couple moved to Southern California for Sam’s work with the Semper Fi Fund. But after a few years, mountain life beckoned and they moved to Whitefish in December 2016, living in an RV park before deciding to settle here.



Tickle is looking forward to building Dream Adaptive’s reach.

“We have a great volunteer force, more than 150 people, but I think we’ve only scratched the surface for what can be done,” Tickle said.

She is working to stabilize its funding and she is planning on reaching out to local groups that are involved with disabled people.

“I feel really blessed and really lucky,” Tickle said. “It’s happened much faster than I thought it would.”

“I can pour myself into this,” she said. “This is a special community and we really feel very welcome here.”

For more information about Dream Adaptive, go to dreamadaptive.org.

In September of this year, legendary businessman and motorsports owner Roger Penske earned his 500th race victory. Jim Beichner, a 2004 CSHOF, is a member of Team Penske. The following article was excerpted from www.speedwaymedia.com.

Jim Beichner: Team Penske Athletic Director

Jim Beichner has been the Athletic Director of Team Penske since 2014, where he is responsible for the important fitness level for drivers and crews alike.

Beichner has certainly had quite the journey to this position, from race fan as a youngster to wrestling coach as an adult and throughout much of his career.



“I’m originally from western New York,” Beichner said. “I grew up on a couple hundred acre farm just outside of Jamestown, New York.”

“I was a race fan and my family was involved with all kinds of different forms of racing, from stock cars, motorcycles and whatever has an engine attached to it,” Beichner continued. “So, I grew up around the sport.”

While Beichner was a race fan, he fell in love with another sport, wrestling, which he has been involved in throughout his life. And while he loved the world of coaching, he augmented his skills in the administrative area at Clarion University, where he earned a degree in Business Administration and Marketing, as well as the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Buffalo where he coached.

“While at the University of Buffalo, I took on as many administrative duties as I could,” Beichner said. “I was Director of Compliance at the University of Buffalo and then got involved with student housing and some other administrative activities.”

“So, the University of Buffalo afforded me opportunities to not just be a coach, of which I’m very appreciative,” Beichner continued. “I knew that I wasn’t going to retire a coach. Somewhere down the line I wanted to be a manager of people and I’m very fortunate that Roger Penske and his group picked me to do this.”

Beichner did not have an inside track on the position. In fact, he saw the job posting like so many other regular job-seekers.

“I saw the job posting and the more I read it, it sounded like me is the best way I can explain it,” Beichner said. “As I read the posting, I said to myself, ‘Jim, that sounds like you.’ All the things that they were looking for in an AD just spoke to me.”

In his AD role at Team Penske, Beichner is responsible for supervising the pit crews, including the coaches, the strength coach, others in the shop that work with the pit crew.

“So, I’m the manager of people and I feel like that’s one of my strengths,” Beichner said. “I can cross boundaries and relate to just about anybody. Also, I’m a fair and honest person and that’s what they get from me.”

While Beichner is thrilled with his role and the people with whom he works, Beichner is also excited about the facilities in which he and his staff have the privilege to work.

“I can tell you, our facility is beautiful,” Beichner said. “We have state-of-the art equipment so I couldn’t ask for a better place to be working.”

While Beichner has been used to training Division I wrestlers who have a certain mentality that they will do whatever they need to get the job done, he readily admits that those he is training at Team Penske demonstrate the same attitude and commitment.

“I see, hear and feel the same dedication with my pit crew members here at Team Penske,” Beichner said.

“I’m very impressed with their attitude,” Beichner continued. “It’s really a great crew to work with. Our coaches are top notch and our athletes are top notch.”

“Our administration is great and through the changes that we are doing, they have bonded in a way that I had hoped they would respond.”



While Team Penske is involved with NASCAR, they are also involved in other forms of motorsports including the IndyCar Series. Given that, Beichner has been called upon to expand his work from just focusing on the world of stock car racing to open wheel racing as well.

“I want to see our guys compete at the highest level and I want to see them do great,” Beichner continued. “I believe they are prepared very well and each one of those guys has a good reason to feel excited about race

days. I’m excited about getting to the tracks and being out there and watching our guys perform.”

Although Beichner has had quite a career in sports, from wrestling to NASCAR, he admits that he is simply in awe of his position with Team Penske.

“You’re working for Roger Penske, a legend in motorsports,” Beichner said. “Where else would you rather be if you are a fan of racing than with Roger Penske and Team Penske?”

For additional information about the athletic careers of Julie Tickle and Jim Beichner:

<http://www.chautauquasportshalloffame.org/juliegawronskitickle.php>

<http://www.chautauquasportshalloffame.org/jamesbeichner.php>