



**For Immediate Release**

**WPIAL versus Maryland in 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Dapper Dan Wrestling Classic  
on Sunday, March 25, 2012**

**Pittsburgh, PA** (November 8, 2011) – Dapper Dan Charities will host the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Dapper Dan Wrestling Classic on **Sunday, March 25, 2012**, at the University of Pittsburgh Fitzgerald Field House.

The Wrestling Classic – known as “*The Rose Bowl of Wrestling*” – is the most prestigious high school all-star wrestling meet in the United States. It attracts the best high school seniors in the country, Pennsylvania and guest state all-star team in the two dual meet format. The preliminary meet pits the best wrestlers from Western Pennsylvania, or WPIAL, against the Maryland All-Stars at 4:00 PM. The feature match of the evening at 6:00 PM showcases the best-of-the-best high school wrestlers from across the United States challenging the reigning Pennsylvania state champions.

The Maryland All-Star Team is returning to the Classic for the third time still seeking their first victory over the WPIAL. Maryland’s first visit occurred in 1974, the inaugural Wrestling Classic held at the then Civic Arena, winning 3 bouts and scoring 9 team points. Maryland returned in 1996, Classic XXII, at the Pitt Field House winning 5 of 13 bouts, losing the dual 28-17. Missing from the 1996 Maryland All-Star team was **J.R. Plienis**, from McDonogh High School, because he was representing the USA All-Star Team at 275 lbs. Plienis defeated Rick Gilliam of Big Springs, PA, 7-6, capping the USA All-Star team win, 38-12.

Plienis returns to the Wrestling Classic as the head coach of the Maryland All-Stars. *“It was a great honor to be selected to the USA All-Star Team and compete against Pennsylvania’s best. It was one of the highlights of my high school career. The Wrestling Classic Committee makes it a great experience for the kids, coaches and their families.”* said an enthusiastic Plienis. *“I’m excited for our kids and this opportunity. We have a very strong senior class. Our state team will come prepared to battle the WPIAL All-Stars”.* Plienis coaches the Maryland Junior Terps Wrestling Club.

Each year, approximately 3,500 enthusiastic spectators watch the country’s future NCAA, world and Olympic champions compete. Proceeds from the Wrestling Classic benefit a youth wrestling program at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Western Pennsylvania through the Dapper Dan Youth Sports Leagues.

Tickets for the event will be made available in December 2011. More information can found at [www.post-gazette.com/dapperdan/wrestling/](http://www.post-gazette.com/dapperdan/wrestling/) and [www.wrestlingclassic.com](http://www.wrestlingclassic.com).

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