

Champs

NASE Member Randy Kawa and his son, Dustin, own Takedown Sportswear in Lawrenceville, Ga. Their Web site is www.takedownshop.com.

Tell us about Takedown Sportswear.

We started this business in August 2005 and sell all types of uniforms, apparel and gear for athletic sports. We also do corporate apparel. Our primary focus is on apparel and gear for the wrestling market—youth, high school and college. We sell through our Web site and a retail store. Our tag line is 'taking down the competition.'

We custom design different looks for our sports team customers and corporate clients. We also started our own line of wrestling apparel called Takedown. It's designed for wrestlers, by wrestlers. We currently have three full-time employees and a staff of three outside sales people, with plans to hire two additional people to help with our custom orders and our retail store.

Why did you go into business with your son?

I owned an awards and sportswear business for over 25 years. After selling my company, I discussed with Dustin about going into business together and forming Takedown Sportswear. We decided that with our combined knowledge of wrestling and the sportswear business we could make it work.

We've been actively involved in wrestling for over 35 years as wrestlers and coaches. I wrestled in high school back in the early 1970s and started coaching my son in a youth wrestling organization about 22 years ago. He had a successful career, winning numerous state and national championships and received a full scholarship to North Carolina State University.

How do you split the business responsibilities?

I'm responsible for all custom apparel orders. I also handle the marketing and buying for the company. Dustin handles the Web site design and sales, retail store management and development, and the finances.

What's the greatest reward you get from your work?

I get a lot of satisfaction when I get a call from a coach, and he is so excited about his new custom gear. Also, when I attend a tournament and see wrestlers wearing our products, and they look great, it makes me very proud.

How has the NASE helped your business?

We've taken advantage of the numerous business-related discounts available from the NASE. The helpful articles in *Self-Employed* magazine have given us a lot of great advice on different problems that we've faced over the last few years.

What's the coolest thing about running a sportswear business?

I feel very fortunate to be involved in a business involving sports, which is something that me and my son have always loved. Nothing against making and selling widgets for a living, but this is pretty cool, and I look forward to coming to work every day! ■



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