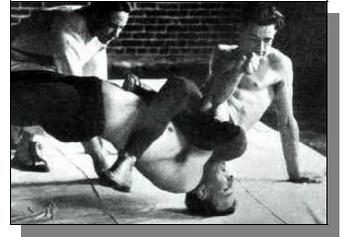


The Case of the Vanishing Mansion:



Wrestler Robin Reed in action (far right)



DeLake Rod & Gun Club
Photo circa 1960, courtesy Salem Public Library

What Really Happened

by Roy Widing, Contributing Writer

ums as being too new-fangled of a concept for buyer acceptance at the time. But more challenging was the war brewing in Europe, as Hitler invaded Poland in 1939. The onset of World War II affected the market and Reed's construction plans.



Demolition

In time, the DeLake Rod & Gun Club building became decrepit and an eyesore to neighbors. Many youngsters spent time in the building during the 1960's and '70's. Poking around the abandoned building was great fun before it was taken down in 1978, when much of the salvageable lumber was then sold. That's the same year Robin Reed died, and when he was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. Whether you tour by shore or boat, take time to enjoy the beauty of Devil's lake on your next visit. There you'll still see the natural setting that so captivated Robin Reed.



Robin Reed from the book 'Legends of the Mat' by Mike Chapman

As waves rhythmically lap the shore of Devil's Lake in Lincoln City, there's little reason to suspect it as the setting for one of Oregon's more interesting true tales. Yet the promontory near a sprawling apartment complex overlooking the south shore is connected to what might best be called *The Case of the Vanishing Mansion*. But to understand what happened there, it helps to start at the beginning.

"Reed is still considered by many to be the best amateur Oregon wrestler who ever lived."

In the midst of Oregon's Depression era, an accomplished young man named Robin Reed was looking for his next big challenge. Born in Pettigrew, Arkansas, Reed attended Portland's Franklin High School, followed by Oregon State University (then known as Oregon Agricultural College). But Robin Reed was not just any youthful dreamer. Reed is still considered by many to be the best amateur Oregon wrestler who ever lived.

Olympics

While at college in Corvallis, Robin Reed won the National AAU Championships in 1921, 1922 and 1924. He proceeded to participate in the 1924 Pacific Northwest Olympic team trials. In 1924, Reed won the prized Olympic gold medal in Paris, France. Upon his return home, he retired from amateur wrestling, but remained a student at

Oregon State. He became coach of the varsity wrestling team, leading his squad to win the national AAU championship in 1926. Late that same year Reed began a professional wrestling career that lasted approximately 10 years.

Career Change

Plenty of documents confirm the Olympian's many successes both on and off the mat. But what few remember is how in the early 1930's, a thirty-something Reed, ready for a new goal, envisioned building a mammoth mansion at the Oregon Coast. It would be known as the DeLake Rod & Gun Club. In the midst of the Great Depression, money was scarce. Construction was considered risky, particularly for a rod and gun club. Features of Reed's sizable development were to include a swimming pool, casino and nearly two dozen condominium-type lodging rooms.

The district where Reed chose to build was then commonly known as DeLake, allegedly since that's how local, tongue-twisted Finns were said to pronounce the words 'Devil's Lake.' Before long, Reed enlisted esteemed Portland architect Jack Annand into the project. Annand helped with plans for a 'Timberline Lodge' type effect. By 1938, initial construction had begun.

Massive Fireplaces

In time, three massive fireplaces were sited, with rock taken from the old Polk County courthouse in Dallas, Oregon. But after completion of the early phase, slowdowns began. Some blame condomini-

Robin Reed Timeline

- **October 20, 1899**
Robin Reed is born in Pettigrew, Arkansas.
- **1920-1924**
After attending Portland's Franklin High School, Reed studies at Oregon Agricultural College, now Oregon State University.
- **1921-1924**
Reed wins the National AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) championships in 1921, 1922 and 1924.
- **1924**
Robin Reed wins a gold medal at the Paris, France Olympic Games.
- **1926**
Reed is coach of the 1926 Corvallis High School wrestling team, which wins the National AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) title.
- **1926—1936**
Robin Reed begins wrestles professionally for approximately ten years.
- **1938**
Initial construction begins at DeLake Rod & Gun Club.
- **September 1, 1939**
World War II begins in Europe with the German invasion of Poland.
- **1978**
Robin Reed is inducted as a distinguished member into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. The DeLake Rod & Gun Club is torn down.
- **December 20, 1978**
Robin Reed dies in Salem, Oregon.

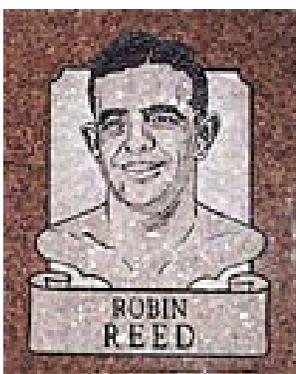


Image courtesy of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and Museum