



5th Annual
Wrestling Reunion

October 19, 2012



STEPHEN NEAL

World Champion
2X NCAA Champion
4X NCAA All-American
4X Academic All-American



3X Super Bowl
Champion



KEYNOTE SPEAKER— THE SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WRESTLING AND FOOBALL

Neal attended San Diego High School in San Diego, California and was a letterman in football, wrestling, swimming, tennis, and track and field. In wrestling, as a senior, he posted a 45–2 record and placed fourth at the California State Wrestling Tournament in the 189-pound weight class. In his quest for the state championship that year, Neal wrestled and pinned future Heisman Trophy winner and NFL running back Ricky Williams.

Neal attended Cal-State Bakersfield on a wrestling scholarship and became one of the top wrestlers in the nation, compiling a 151–10 record with four All-American seasons. He placed fourth in NCAA Division I as a freshman and second as a sophomore before winning titles his junior and senior year. His final title in 1999 came via a win over future NCAA Wrestling Champion, WWE Champion, and UFC Heavyweight Champion, Brock Lesnar. In 1999, Neal won the Dan Hodge Award following a year in which he won the U.S. Free-style Championship, the Pan-American Games title and the World Championship, at 286 pounds. In 1999, he won the FILA outstanding wrestler award, an honor given to the best wrestler in the world. His 1999 season led up to the 2000 Summer

Olympics trials where Kerry McCoy, Maryland's current head coach, edged him for the trip to Sydney, Australia. After the trials, Neal retired from wrestling.



Despite never having played a down of college football, Neal entered his rookie season in 2001 with the New England Patriots and played in the playoffs and Super Bowl XXXVI. Neal went on to excel in the NFL for 9 more seasons, earning championship rings in Super Bowl XXXIX and XLII. Like many NFL stars such as Ray Lewis, Larry Csonka, Dan Dierdorf, et al, Neal attributes his successful NFL career to the skill sets he learned while competing as a wrestler.

Neal retired from the NFL in 2011 and now resides with his family, close to San Diego in Poway, California.

Recently, Neal, along with other high-profile athletes was responsible for saving the Cal State—Bakersfield wrestling program. He is now dedicating his post-NFL career to promoting collegiate wrestling nationally.