

## Pete Herrera: The Chronicler of New Mexico Sports

Pete Herrera, a distinguished figure in New Mexico sports journalism for nearly four decades, dedicated his career to capturing and elevating the stories of athletes across the state. His work, spanning from high school gymnasiums to the Olympic stage, brought honor to New Mexico and earned him a reputation for integrity, humility, and excellence. A native of Chamita, New Mexico, Herrera's legacy is defined by his commitment to service, his passion for storytelling, and his unwavering dedication to his craft.

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### A Career Built on Excellence

Herrera's journey began at **Espanola High School** and continued at the **University of New Mexico**, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism in 1968. His professional career as a sports writer was split between **United Press International (UPI)** from 1968 to 1979 and the **Associated Press (AP)** from 1980 to 2007.

**Key achievements and accomplishments that merit extraordinary recognition include:**

- **Olympic Coverage:** Herrera was selected as a member of the Associated Press team to cover four Summer Olympics: **Los Angeles 1984, Seoul 1988, Barcelona 1992, and Atlanta 1996**. His reporting on iconic moments, such as Mary Lou Retton's gymnastics victory, showcased his ability to capture both the technical details and the profound human drama of a story.
  - **Dedication to High School Sports:** He covered **40 state basketball tournaments and numerous football championships**, understanding that these events were the heart of New Mexico's communities. His dedication to telling the stories of local heroes like **Renn Bailey**, a blind competitive runner from Moriarty High School, demonstrated his commitment to finding and celebrating inspirational figures.
  - **Preserving Boxing History:** Herrera covered New Mexican boxing legends, including **Bobby Foster, Johnny Tapia, and Danny Romero**, ensuring their stories and the state's rich boxing heritage were documented for generations.
  - **The American Futurity:** For **39 years**, he covered the American Futurity in Ruidoso, the world's richest quarter horse race, showcasing a deep expertise and a long-term commitment to a cherished state tradition.
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### Honors and Community Involvement

Herrera's work was recognized with several prestigious awards:

- **New Mexico Sportswriter of the Year:** He received this honor twice, in **1979 and 1999**.
- **Sprint Award for horse race journalism:** He was a two-time recipient of this award in **1995 and 1997**.

- **Distinguished Service Award:** The **New Mexico Activities Association (NMAA)** honored him with this award in **2007** for his lasting contributions.

Throughout his life, Pete Herrera was also deeply involved in his community of faith. He has been married to Patricia for 42 years and has three children, Matthew, Peter, and Kristen, as well as three grandchildren.