Football to Wrestling
Let The Pros Tell You
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Wrestling’s Action Network
Influence of Wrestling in the NFL

- 10 Hall of Fame Football Players
- 43 Multiple Pro-Bowlers
- 60 Individual State Championships
- 13 NCAA Wrestling Championships
- 3 Heisman Trophy Winners Wrestled
- 14 1st Round Draft Picks Wrestled
- 23 RB’s / 20 LB’s / 2 QB’s / 66 Lineman / 6 DB’s / 1 K / 54 NP
The Coaches Perspective

• “I draft wrestlers because they are tough, I have never had a problem with a wrestler.” - Joe Gibbs, Hall of fame Football Coach

• "I would have all of my Offensive Lineman wrestle if I could." - John Madden, Hall of Fame Football Coach
The Coaches Perspective

• "I love wrestlers, they are tough and they make great football players." Mike Stoops, National Championship Football Coach - University of Oklahoma.

• "Wrestlers make coaching football easy, they have balance, coordination, and as a coaching staff we know they’re tough." - Tom Osborne - College Hall of Fame Football Coach - University of Nebraska.
Pros With Wrestling Background

• Ray Lewis - The Football Player
  – Seven-time Pro Bowler
  – 2-time NFL Defensive Player of the Year
  – Super Bowl XXXV MVP
  – Arguably the greatest LB and 1 of the best players in NFL history.

• Stephan Neal - The Football Player
  – 28 years old, was originally
  – The 6-foot-4-inch, 305-pound offensive lineman has played in 34 career games with 31 starts.
  – Recorded the longest current consecutive starts streak on the Patriots offensive line.

• Ray Lewis- The Wrestler
  – Florida native
  – Florida State 4A Wrestling Champion - 189 lb. weight class
  – Credits wrestling as the training ground for his prolific football career.

• Stephan Neal - The Wrestler
  – San Diego native
  – Did not play football in college and instead was a championship wrestler at Cal State-Bakersfield.
  – He compiled a 156-10 record and won two NCAA Division I titles.
  – In 1999, Neal won the Dan Hodge Award - known as the Heisman Trophy of wrestling - following a year in which he won the U.S. Freestyle Championship, the Pan-American Games title and the World Championships.
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lincoln &quot;Drew&quot; Hodgdon, C</td>
<td>C,</td>
<td>Houston Texans</td>
<td>- CA State Champ</td>
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<td>Roddy White</td>
<td>WR,</td>
<td>Atlanta Falcons</td>
<td>- 2x SC State Champ 1st Round Pick</td>
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<td>Mike Patterson</td>
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<td>Roger Craig*</td>
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<td>Curley Culp*, DL</td>
<td>LB,</td>
<td>Kansas City Chiefs</td>
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<td>Ronnie Lott**</td>
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<td>Lorenzo Neal</td>
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<td>- 2x PA State Champ &amp; NCAA All-American</td>
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<td>Bruce Smith**</td>
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<td>Jim Thorpe**</td>
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<td>Ricky Williams*</td>
<td>RB,</td>
<td>Miami Dolphins</td>
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Hall Of Famers Who Wrestled

Ronnie Lott  Larry Czonka  Jim Thorpe  Chuck Noll
Multiple Pro-Bowlers Who Wrestled

Teddy Bruschi
Ricky Williams
Bo Jackson
Chad Hennings
Crossover Skills:

• Many of the positions and skills are absolutely transferable between both sports.

• Some of those skills include but are not limited to footwork, hand-eye coordination, mental toughness, explosive movements, and balance.

• Learning the ability to beat the man in front of you can not be ignored.
Crossover Skills:
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A Look at The Numbers

- 32 Professional Football Teams
- 65 Man Rosters
- 2080 Professional Football Players
- 185 Wrestlers in the NFL
- 11.24% of the NFL has a wrestling background
- 5% of the Hall of Fame inductee’s
The Link Cannot Be Dismissed

• The relationship between wrestling and football is real.

• There are too many legends in both sports who have proved it.

• Hall of fame football coaches and players espouse the benefits of wrestling for football players.

• Football never made a wrestler a better wrestler BUT Wrestling made every football player a better football player!!!