

Parents' Guide to Youth Wrestling

Of the many sports your child can participate in, wrestling is perhaps the most misrepresented, misunderstood, and underrated. The purpose of this guide is to generate new interest and awareness among parents whose children want to participate in this exciting and rewarding sport. Hopefully, this guide will help expose the myths and uncover the benefits wrestling has to offer, and most importantly, help parents understand how this unique sport best compliments other sports choices their child makes.

THE ACTUAL SPORT OF WRESTLING

- Based on self-discipline, hard work, skill and determination
- Conducted on a mat with wrestling shoes, kneepads, and headgear
- Physically demanding, but relatively safe and non-violent. Does not involve or even tolerate actions intended to cause injury
- World class wrestlers utilize skills, strength and endurance developed over a lifetime of practice and hard work

OBJECTIVE

The primary objective in folk style (youth/middle/high school) wrestling is to gain control of your opponent and to ultimately pin your opponent by holding your opponent with their back (both shoulder blades simultaneously) on the mat for a period of at least two seconds.

GOING TO A TOURNAMENT

- Check the tournament information to know when weigh-ins are, and plan accordingly to arrive before weigh-ins are over

- Parents usually pay at the door to get in, and there is another table for wrestler registration and payment. Fill out the provided form/wavier. Some forms ask for experience level, some ask how many years they have been wrestling. These questions are not always asked. Turn in your registration fee with the wavier, and get your weigh in form. When you have your weigh in form, proceed to weigh-ins.
- Have wrestler take off all extra clothing, except singlet and socks and underwear (or whatever they are wrestling in), and go to a scale. Someone will record their weight, and a skin check is also done. They will also check the length of the wrestler's fingernails.
- Once this is completed, go to the gym and find a place to sit. Your wrestler should go on the mat and warm up. The wrestling mats will be full of kids warming up, it is usually organized chaos.
- At the start time of the tournament, an announcer will call all PK/K wrestlers to be bracketed. This usually takes place in a wrestling room, or another room that is large in size. Go with your wrestler. Once everyone is there, the wrestlers will be organized into brackets. Keep the kids together. They will either be taken out to a mat, or told to sit together until a mat opens up.
- Brackets are round robin competition, meaning the wrestlers will wrestle everyone in their bracket. There are usually two brackets of kids on a mat at one time so the kids get a break in-between matches.
- Once everyone has wrestled each other, the kids go to the awards area and turn in their bracket. The awards are presented, and pictures are taken at this time also.

MATCH BASICS

- Wrestling matches consist of three periods, usually 1 minute periods for K-6 wrestlers
- Either wrestler can win the match at any time if they are able to pin their opponent or develop a lead of more than 15 points

- There are only two positions from which referees start, or continue a match. The first is neutral position, with both wrestlers standing and facing each other. The other is the referee's position, where one wrestler starts in his hands and knees down on the mat, and the other starts on top, behind and in control
- The first period always begins in the neutral position
- Each wrestler has their choice in one of the remaining periods to choose to start from top or bottom referee's position, or in the neutral position
- Wrestlers will shake hands at the beginning of each match
- At the end of the match, wrestlers will shake hands again, and the ref will raise the arm of the winner

SCORING

- Takedowns (when from a neutral position one wrestler is able to bring the other to the mat and gain control) are worth two points
- Escapes (when the bottom wrestler is able to break free from the top wrestler and revert back to a neutral position) are worth one point
- Reversals, (when a wrestler on the bottom is able to reverse the control so that the opponent is on the bottom) are worth two points
- Back points (also called near fall) are awarded when one wrestler comes close to pinning the other (i.e. exposing the other wrestler's back) and are worth two or three points depending on the length of time that the opponents' back is exposed
- Penalty Points can be awarded when the opposing wrestler performs illegal moves or is penalized for excessive stalling

EQUIPMENT

Basic wrestling equipment includes a headgear, wrestling shoes, and a singlet. Kneepads can be worn and is up to the wrestler.

TOURNAMENTS

- Tournament competition is organized by weight and age
- Weight classes are either predetermined, or blocked into groups of 4 or 8 so wrestlers after weigh ins are complete
- Most tournaments during the school season are either Friday night, Saturday, or Sunday
- Wrestling tournaments can last for 4 to 6 hours or longer, depending on the amount of wrestlers and the age of the wrestler. Most tournaments start with PK and K and go up in grade so 6th grade wrestles last.
- Mandatory weigh-ins are held the morning of the tournament approximately 1 to 2 hours before the first round of competition. At weigh-ins, wrestlers' weights, ages and experience levels are recorded on slips of paper that are used to form brackets.
- Tournament regulations usually limit the number of coaches allowed to coach from the edge of the mat
- Trophies

WRESTLING PROVIDES REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCES THAT BUILD AND STRENGTHEN THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS

- Self reliance
- Mental toughness
- Work ethic
- Competitive spirit

- Responsibility
- Self discipline
- Goal orientation
- Confidence
- Positive self esteem





ADDITIONAL DO'S AND DON'TS

- Be supportive no matter what. There is only one question to ask your child, "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun you should not force them to participate. Your job is to support, love and hug your child no matter what
- Get involved. Your club needs your help and support. Attend parent and booster club meetings to find out how you can help. And most importantly, show your child that you care by attending as many meets and tournaments as possible
- Do not criticize the officials. Unless you have been there, you have no idea how challenging officiating can be. Except that in some matches your child could lose as a result of an error on the part of an official or score keeper. That's life. Help your child understand that the official does their best to score the match fairly, and that it is important that we respect the ruling of the officials regardless of how we feel about the situation
- BE POSITIVE ROLE MODELS



OFFICIAL WRESTLING SIGNALS HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE



 Stopping the Match	 Time Out	 Start the Injury Clock	 Stop the Injury Clock	 Neutral Position
 Indicating No Control	 Out-of-Bounds	 Indicating Wrestler in Control Left or Right Hand	 Defer Choice	
 Potentially Dangerous Left or Right Hand	 Stalemate	 Caution for False Start and Incorrect Starting Procedure	 Stalling Left or Right Hand	
 Interlocking Hands or Grasping Clothing	 Reversal	 Technical Violation	 Illegal Hold or Unnecessary Roughness	
 Near-Fall	 Awarding Points Left or Right Hand	 Green Right Red Left Unsportsmanlike Conduct	 Flagrant Misconduct Left or Right Hand	



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