

April 16, 2020

TO: SOUTHERN PLAINS COACHES & LEADERS
FR: RUSTY DAVIDSON
RE: NATIONAL COACHES COUNCIL

Coaches and Leaders,

I hope you are well, during these extraordinary times. Thank goodness for Wrestling and the lessons it teaches. We know we'll get through this. We know there will be a lot of work to do. We know the outcome will make all the work worthwhile. We know we will have some good stories to tell.

Every good practice plan focuses on preparation and communication. As we look forward to resuming our wrestling lives, this is especially true. Whether you are preparing to resume group practices in a local club, high school room or RTC, the same steps of 'Reasonable and Proper' call for attention.

We should start by scratching out a few necessary lists. Seeing these, on paper, will help us organize our thoughts. First, list every single category of stakeholder in your situation. Who provides and who needs what, for or from whom ?

List the things, routines, ideas your environment has always had in place, with either a plus or minus next to them. Now, list things, routines, ideas that can realistically be added. What does each cost... Money ? Time ? Personnel ?

With these two lists, side by side, let's look at creative ways our unique environment can maximize safety and minimize threat. Consider what each stakeholder looks for in a definition of 'Safe'. Remember, there is a very fine line between 'Promise' and 'Threat'. We're looking for a broad perspective that allows the most people to reach a cooperative comfort.

Admit to ourselves that, despite our efforts, a very few will absolutely refuse to join us. Many of our stakeholders will need time and understanding, as they regrow their personal norms and acceptance of risk. Make communication a vital tool in the process.

We have to let our stakeholders be intelligent. Our foreseeable future depends on much more than keeping our hips up, when we have legs in ! This makes you, Coach, the chief listener to ideas from outside the room.

Start laying the groundwork for meeting with stakeholders and their subgroups. Even if we don't know exactly when we'll get back into the room, everyone needs some lead time to process what's about to happen. Can the idea of virtual meetings help get started ? What will your first group meeting (like a lot of people in the same room) look and feel like ? What will your discussions with administrators, custodial staff, building and locker room co-habitants offer ? You need to be BOTH, the Coach who has prepared and the active listener. Prepare for success, then execute.

Here are some stray bullet points, collected in conversation with some of America's best wrestling thinkers. Feel free to edit or add.

- What special talents, skills, knowledge do any of your parents bring ?
- Who and how many have both the time and willingness to commit ?
- What new protocols do we add to Arrival and Departure from practice ?
- Do we check body temperatures ? Who ? When ? How ? What if ?
- Do the hygiene procedures we've had stand the test ?
- What hygiene procedures are reasonable to add ? Cost ? Access ? Time ?
- What does our pre and post practice environment offer or take ?
- Locker rooms ? Shared with ? Supervised by ? Sanitized by ? How often ?
- Do athletes and coaches shower, before leaving the facility ? Where ?
- How do we mesh SafeSport issues with preventative hygiene ?
- What are reasonable expectations for "Mandatory Self-Reporting" ?
- What is the proper frequency of group information ? Who does that ?
- What parameters go with individual communication ? HIPAA ?
- What outside resources does our unique community offer ? Access ?

Our individual and collective willingness to prepare for the restart absolutely has the potential to make or break us. Start working on your own lists and plan. Hopefully, the time to act will be upon us soon. Realize that USA Wrestling, its departments and staff, are totally committed to assisting you. We, your National Coaches Council, are an open conduit for you to communicate.

Hang tough. Take care of yourself and your family. Be healthy and excited, when we get that Green Light. Thanks for being you.

Warm Regards,
RD