



Stockbridge HS Wrestler Handbook



General Coaching Philosophy

We, the wrestling coaches at Stockbridge High School feel that our job as coaches is twofold: First, we want to help each athlete in our program gain a complete knowledge of the sport of wrestling, their fundamental skills, rules, and the strategy involved in each. Second, and more importantly, to develop in each athlete the capacity to successfully compete in the world outside of athletics. To be modest in victory and reflective in defeat and to make sacrifices that this sport as well as life requires.

The coaches strongly believe successful wrestling is based on the following attributes which contribute to making the program its best: effort, technique, intelligence, strength, and quickness. The wrestler must use all of these attributes to maintain an aggressive style of wrestling. One that's intense and places wrestlers on the defense, which focuses on dominating the opponent physically and mentally. The wrestler does not cease the pressure and remains in the opponent's face for the duration of the match. A true champion must work harder, have discipline, and remain focused for the entire match and season to fulfill his goals.

We believe *effort* is vital to the success of the program. The wrestler must be willing to sacrifice pride, dignity, and heart for the outcome of the match, as well as the determination to give their all without worrying about the outcome. The technique, strength, quickness, and intelligence will come once the desire to win is achieved. Wrestling is a mental game of confidence and belief in one's talents.

General Wrestling Philosophy

Wrestlers need goals for both the team and individual. Goals will provide direction towards ultimate desires the wrestler wants to achieve. The goals should be measurable, attainable, and based on their strengths and weaknesses. This will maintain the effort to wrestle at a high intensity and stamina throughout the season. We have two goals for the wrestling team. These are to be a strong tournament team and to be a strong dual meet team. We regard regular season dual meets as extra practice; as a time to experiment with new holds and new maneuvers; as a time for our wrestlers to learn; a time for our under levels to gain experience and confidence, building for the varsity; a time for our varsity wrestlers to find out what works for them and what doesn't so that when the post season time comes around they will know what they should use.

As far as individual matches are concerned, we will expect our wrestlers to be offensive minded. We want to



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take the match to our opponent, not in a blind rage but in a cool, calculated manner. We'll counter when need be, but turn our counters into offensive maneuvers. Shoot, shoot, and shoot again, until we have our opponent under control.

Wrestling Philosophy – Takedowns

Since we feel that the wrestler who is better on his feet will win more matches, we will stress takedowns in practice and meets. In dual meets we will often let our opponent go in order to take him down again. This judgment will be left up to the discretion of the individual coach and should be dependent on the circumstance involved (match score; meet score, and individual wrestler). This should be especially practiced by the under level coaches in order that our wrestlers become proficient in takedowns by the time they reach the varsity level of competition.

Strength and quickness leads to a well-rounded wrestler capable of dominating opponents. What is lost in technique and intelligence can be gained in heart and conditioning. Wrestlers must continuously push their bodies to the limits with intensity above their opponents. This intensity will place their opponents on the defense and wear down their stamina. Eventually, it will cause the opponent to quit.

Wrestling Philosophy – Mat

Top Position - We will expect our wrestlers to work for a pin. We don't believe we can pin everyone in good competition, but we should be proficient enough to expose his back to the mat and gain extra points. We want to ride tough and rarely hang back. But we'll also be smart, if a reversal is imminent, we'll expect our wrestlers to let his opponent go and give up the one point escape rather than the two point reversal.

Bottom Position - We feel that a good wrestler never gets ridden. We will stress quickness, getting out on the whistle, and serious wrestling going from one move to another, to still another until we gain escape. We will take a reversal when it presents itself, but we must be able to gain an escape so that we can again work for a takedown.

Technique and intelligence is the key towards state champions. Athletes who develop their skills become more creative, self-assured, and successful. Coaches must communicate highly successful skills and strategies so



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wrestlers have the confidence to perform them in a competitive situation. It is the quality of skill that matters, not the quantity of the skills. The wrestler must have confidence in the skills before the technique will be used in a match situation. Most importantly, the wrestler must be willing to put it all on the line for a few minutes of glory.

Wrestling (Technically)

Your success in wrestling is a direct result of your expertise in the fundamentals. After you master the following basic aspects of the sport, you can build on them to expand your wrestling repertoire. You've probably heard the phrase "the best offense is a good defense". That phrase applies to the sport of wrestling, in which counters and defensive maneuvers can help a wrestler win a match. There are several defensive wrestling moves every wrestler should know to be better prepared for a match.

Stance: Your body position and posture on the mat; can be parallel or staggered. Your defensive wrestling position is extremely important and can affect the outcome of a match. Use your hands, arms, head, and waist to defend your position. You should use your hands for hand fighting. Try to control one or two of your opponent's hands by grabbing the wrists. Use your head to block an opponent trying to tie up with you. Keep your hips back when in your stance. Use your hips for power when sprawling. Work on strengthening your core muscles so that you will have a more stable wrestling stance. *-Perfect throughout the ENTIRE match*

Level change: The act of raising and lowering your hips to set up or execute an attack or to counter the moves of your opponent-*Shot Set Ups*

Neutral position: The starting position in which you stand face to face and with your shoulders square to your opponent in the wrestling area-*Left, Right, Defensive*

Sprawling- Sprawling is an effective defense against opponents trying to go for a leg takedown. The first thing you should do when an opponent shoots at you is to drive your legs back as far as possible. You should land on the upper back of your opponent and drive your hips down. If your opponent grabs one or both of your legs before you can get away, keep driving your hips down. Your opponent will begin to flatten out and loosen his grip. If that is the case, you can turn your defensive position into an offensive one by getting behind



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your opponent. Sprawling is an athletic move and one of the best defensive wrestling maneuvers you can learn to defend from leg attacks.

Referee's position: The starting position in which one wrestler is in the top position and the other is on the bottom-*Both Sides*

Takedown: A move during which you take your opponent down to the mat and gain control from the neutral position. Penetration step: The first offensive movement that puts you in a position to score

Single Leg Takedown- The single leg takedown is a terrific move you can use to take down your opponent. Check your opponent's stance. You should be attacking your opponent's front leg, or the leg that is closest to you. Stay low so you have a clear view of the leg. Drive out at your opponent's leg, wrap your arms around it, and lock your hands together. This drive is called a shot, and if it is done quickly, you will have a decent chance of getting a takedown. After your shot, drive your head up into your opponent's chest and lift your hands. Stand up so that you are upright while holding your opponent's knee. Your goal is to get your opponent standing on one foot. You can then trip your opponent or get him off balance by raising the trapped leg up higher or attacking the supporting leg.

Double Leg Takedown- This is a move that many high school wrestlers learn early. The double leg takedown is similar to the single leg takedown, but instead of one leg, you grab two. Grab both legs, and lock your hands. You can then either drive forward with your shoulders or lift and slam your opponent. Proper execution of this move will put you in a good position to pin your opponent.

Ankle Pick- Put one of your hands behind your opponent's neck. Move in the direction of your hand so that your opponent takes a step with his opposite leg. When your opponent takes this step, grab the ankle with your free hand. Pull the ankle up with one hand and push the head down with the other. This will put your opponent off balance. Then, drive forward to get the takedown. You will be in a good position for a pin as well.

Reversal: A move during which you quickly turn the tables and go from being in a position of defense to being in a position of control as the offensive wrestler-*Switch*

Side Roll- Grab your opponent's wrist and pull it across your waist. Use your other arm to reach out and secure your opponent's arm above the elbow. Pull your opponent's arm and turn your body so that your opponent loses balance and lands next to you. This move is best when it is a surprise.



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Escape: A move you use from the bottom of the referee's position to *escape*, or get away from your opponent-*Stand Up*

Breakdown: A move you use when you're in the top of the referee's position to try to get your opponent off balance and down to the mat-*2 on 1, Knee Drive*

Finish: The act of pinning your opponent with special techniques that leads to a *fall*, meaning that the back of your opponent's shoulders are on the mat for at least two seconds

Half Nelson- A half nelson can be done using one arm. Slip your arm underneath your opponent's armpit and wrap your hand around the back of your opponent's neck. Use your free hand to hold your opponent's other wrist so the half nelson can't be broken. This wrestling move is excellent for when your opponent is on the ground and you're going for a pin.

Wrestling (Physically)

Getting and keeping your body in the best condition possible can help you reach your full potential as a wrestler. If you're in shape and physically fit, you can better handle moves your opponent may try on you during a match. Here are some fundamental aspects of fitness and wellness that can help you stay fit during your wrestling season:

Rest: Getting plenty of good-quality rest is critical to your success on the mat. Take at least one day off a week during the season, and get 8 hours of sleep every night. Practices and training shouldn't last more than 150 minutes during the season.

Disease prevention: Closely check your skin every day for discoloration, swelling, areas of tenderness, and changes in texture. Scrub your body with antibacterial soap and wash your practice gear daily. Never share shirts, shorts, towels, or headgear with teammates. Impetigo, herpes, and ringworm are just a few of the skin diseases common to wrestlers that you can prevent by following these simple steps.

Endurance: All wrestlers need to build their endurance if they want to be successful; in other words, you need to build your heart's capacity for maintaining intense levels of exercise over time. To be ready for



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competition, you need to be able to run or ride an exercise bike continuously at moderate intensity for 40 minutes.

Strength training: You and your coach need to develop training programs that increase the maximum amount of force your muscles can exert against resistance. Your muscles get stronger when you experience *momentary muscular failure* (the point at which you can't accomplish any more repetitions of an exercise). The point of momentary muscular failure should occur on the 11th or 12th repetition of an exercise in the 2nd and 3rd set of a 3-set/12-repetition strength building plan. Some great fundamental strength training exercises include the bench press, shoulder press, triceps extensions, upright rows, pull-ups, leg extensions, leg curls, and arm curls.

Flexibility: To become an agile wrestler with quick feet, you need to increase the ability of your muscles and joints to move through their full range of motion. You can develop your flexibility by doing light dynamic loosening exercises followed by stretching exercises before and after each practice. Dynamic loosening exercises include lunges, walking toe touches, high-knee jogging, lateral jogging, carioca jogging, and arm circles. As for stretching, focus on stretching the main muscle groups (hamstrings, quadriceps, hip flexors, lower back, shoulders, gluteal muscles, and neck); hold each stretch for 15 to 30 seconds.

Nutrition: You need to understand how carbohydrates, proteins, and fats affect your wrestling ability and training during exercise, after exercise, and before exercise. While the dietary needs of each athlete depend on a variety of factors, including age and gender, a good rule of thumb is to try to eat a diet consisting of 50 percent carbohydrates, 30 percent protein, and 20 percent fats.

Hydration: Approximately 75 percent of your body is water. Because of the weight classifications in wrestling, you need to make sure you get the right amount of fluids before, during, and after exercise. Drink 2 to 3 cups of water four hours prior to exercise, 2 cups two hours before exercise, 2 cups 30 minutes before exercise and 1/2 cup of water every 15 minutes during exercise. After exercise, drink 2 cups of water for each pound lost during exercise.

Concussion: A head injury is a brain injury. So make sure to have a medical professional check you out right away after you suffer any type of head injury. Your doctor must also clear you before you can take to the mat again.



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Wrestling (Mentally)

Because of the one-on-one nature of wrestling and the relatively brief length of a match, the mental approach to competition and the commitment you need to succeed are unique. The following list provides some keys to winning the mental game as a wrestler:

Inspiration: External motivation and rewards can take you only so far; to be a great wrestler, you need to be truly inspired.

Positive attitude: Successful wrestlers must be in the right positive mindset to win a match on any given day.

Strength in the fundamentals: Great wrestlers understand the importance of the fundamental moves and work to improve them every day.

Style: You need to develop a style that fits your skills, strengths, and abilities. Each wrestler's style is different, so you need to develop yours with confidence and then pay attention to the styles of your opponents so you can beat them.

Competition: Develop a desire for competition by competing all the time, even at practice. Maintain consistent intensity in everything you do both on and off the mat and stay focused on the task at hand.

Mental toughness: Understand that concentration, confidence, self-control, and goal-setting are all mental drills that wrestlers have to master to gain a mental edge.



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Wrestling (Healthy)

Like boxing matches, wrestling competitions are organized by weight class. This ensures that competitors match up with comparable opponents. As any wrestler knows all too well, sometimes the most difficult part of wrestling isn't the training, but making weight for a match. For most wrestlers, a few pounds can be the difference between being the biggest in a weight class and the smallest in a weight class – the difference between a win and a loss. With such high stakes for wrestlers to make the proper weight, it's no wonder that many resort to unhealthy methods to cut extra pounds. Here are a few tips for losing weight without sacrificing safety or health.

Start Early: Don't wait to start cutting weight until the day before an important match. You are setting yourself up for failure. The human body is simply not designed to lose weight suddenly and quickly. Healthy weight loss must be gradual. Start your weight loss plan a week in advance, so that you don't find yourself having to make extreme reductions in food intake at the last minute. Weight that is lost gradually and healthily will be mostly fat, whereas weight that is lost quickly will likely include muscle.

Drink Water: One of the most common methods for cutting weight, especially among high school wrestlers, is cutting down on fluid intake. While this does lead to weight loss, the resulting dehydration is not only unsafe, but also detrimental to a wrestler's physical strength, mental clarity, and aerobic ability. Safe weight loss can be achieved by cutting down on other fluids, such as sodas, juices, and sports drinks, which contain additional calories.

Eliminate Fatty Foods: By sticking to healthy, low-fat foods, you can lose weight and improve your overall health and nutrition. Fruits, vegetables, and whole grains are all terrific choices. For restricted diets, it's a smart idea to incorporate vitamin supplements to ensure you are getting enough vitamins and minerals.

More, Smaller Meals: Rather than eat three full, sit-down meals in the days before a big meet, try eating a higher number of smaller meals. This will curb hunger, improve metabolism, and decrease overeating.

If you follow these healthy steps well in advance of your meet and are still nowhere near reaching your target, perhaps you are shooting for an unrealistic weight class. In this case, you should have a discussion with your doctor and coach about what is right for you. Remember, you win a match through training and hard work, not by what a number on a scale says!