

Dear Parents,

Each fall, many young athletes debate whether or not to go out for wrestling. Football players have had a full fall season of practices and games. Some are excited about their prospects for the next season in that sport, so they think that lifting specifically for that sport would help them the most. Others are anticipating a spring sport, like baseball, soccer or lacrosse. If either of these is your case, consider the following benefits of wrestling for your child's other sport(s):

- 1) Wrestling is built on position and body mechanics as they relate to leverage. A good stance is vital to most any sports activity. Football's "hit" position and a baseball player's stance are both similar to a good wrestling stance. Quality training for wrestling will include repeated drilling of a good stance, moving in that stance, and moving quickly from that stance. Wrestling keeps an athlete alert to his body position and balance, as well as that of others he comes into contact with. These skills apply well in football, lacrosse and soccer, as players fight for position (anyone who has played soccer or lacrosse knows that it's a contact sport). Wrestling will help develop those contact positioning skills. Many have found that these team sports (like football, soccer, and baseball) emphasize the positioning of all the players on the field, with little training for their individual body skills. Wrestling training majors in these skills. When an athlete steps on the field already having body position, balance, and awareness, he increases his effectiveness for his team and increases his chances to excel in that sport.
- 2) Wrestling teaches discipline and good work habits. It is no secret that wrestling is a sport that demands a lot of work. Wrestlers and non-wrestlers regularly comment on how wrestling training exceeds that of every other sport. Anyone involved in wrestling training for any length of time works extensively on repeated drills, strength improvement, conditioning, and mental toughness. It requires a lot of work – coaches develop it, and success relies on it. Wrestling work habits have helped many in the classroom, in the home, in the workplace, and in other sports. To quote the USA Olympic wrestling legend, Dan Gable: "Once you have wrestled, everything else in life is easy."
- 3) Core strength and conditioning are basic to wrestling. By "core strength," we refer to the strength and muscle endurance of the large muscle groups of the hips, waist, thighs, and lower torso. Core conditioning is referring to the lungs and heart. Wrestling constantly works on the strength, flexibility and balancing of the hips. Muscle power from lifting or moving static weight is good. But lifting or moving an opponent that is fighting back is much more valuable to the dynamics of most sport activity, especially football. Core strength is important in hitting a baseball, too (all wrestlers know the maxim that "power comes from the hips"). And anyone who has wrestled very long knows his lung and heart conditioning has improved greatly, which is especially valuable in football.
- 4) Wrestling cultivates personal confidence. Many of us have to fight through major amounts of fear and apprehension. When accepting the challenge to wrestle, you take great strides toward overcoming those fears. This is one of wrestling's major benefits! Children often hide their performance and limitations in a team environment. After wrestling for even one season, they learn to take responsibility for their performance like never before. Their confidence and determination soar.

5) Wrestling stresses sportsmanship. Can you name another sport in which participants shake their opponent's hand before the competition, again after the competition, and then shake their opponent's coach's hand? To learn to compete and not fear the outcome, and to behave in a dignified, respectful manner regardless of the result of the match, is something every young athlete should be taught.

Many high school and colleges football coaches will tell you that wrestling enhance football skills. Linemen, linebackers, corners and safeties are complimented because they know how to keep strong position and leverage, they work hard, they have great core strength, their conditioning is second to none, and are supremely confident. Many athletes will tell you that his high school and college wrestling have been invaluable to them on the football field. Case in point, the rosters at football schools like Penn State, Rutgers, Delaware, and Colgate are littered with state high school wrestling champions. Take the wrestling challenge, and convince others to do the same. There is no better way to reach your full potential.

Wrestling will help you excel in every facet of life!!