

Keeping Motivated During Drill

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Wrestlers seem to have a negative reaction to the phrase "Let's drill." Many feel it is boring and would be completely satisfied to wrestle live the entire practice. The problem with going live all the time is you will revert to what you feel comfortable and confident with whether the move is executed correctly or not. Basically you are going back to your old habits until you learn to become more confident doing it the proper way.

Remember two things when entering the practice room:

1. Practice does not make perfect, practice makes permanent. Perfect practice however does make perfect. When you practice a move, do it the right way all the time and this will lead to perfect practicing.
2. When you go to practice you either get better or worse. There is no in between. If you practice the techniques and drill correctly, you will get better. If you come to practice and do it all incorrectly, you have just gotten worse. It would have done better to stay home and play video games.

You should hold yourself to high standards when drilling. Expect to do it right all the time. Once you get it down, you will work harder and can drill at match pace. This will make it become second nature. You want to have the muscle memory of each move/situation.

Try the following:

One Situation/Move Drilling:

Pick one move or situation that you have been working on and drill it. Use a high crotch for an example. Have wrestler #1 hit the high crotch from one situation for a specific amount of time, then switch and have wrestler #2 do it. Most wrestlers want to drill a ton of different moves but never put in enough repetitions on any specific one to really perfect the move before moving on. Usually, pick 2-3 moves at max in a whole practice to drill on. Drill on each move until there have been hundreds of repetitions.

A very important factor coaches and athletes need to understand is in the heat of battle (competition). An athlete will always go back to what they are confident in. A good example of this is the youth wrestler who headlocks everyone all the time to win their matches. They are only made to drill a double leg for a few practices. When that wrestler gets into a tight match, what do you think they will go back to? The headlock! We have to get thousands of repetitions in on each move before we will learn them correctly, have muscle memory, and be confident executing that move.

Continuous Drill:

This style of drilling is great, but you have to make sure you have the moves correctly mastered or you will just be hurting your technique. Example: #1 hits a takedown and finishes it, #2 works right into a stand up. They come up to their feet and wrestler #2 shoots a takedown and finishes, and then #1 does stand a up and then shoots, and so on.

You can vary this. Have #1 work on takedowns the whole time and #2 work on stand ups. Something else to try is having #1 do the same move each time then switch after a set time. You will find your mistakes faster with this type of drilling. As you get tired and start to get sloppy, it allows your coach to correct you.

Physical Drill:

#1 is on the clock for two minutes and shoots as many shots as possible (using the same move each time). As #1 is letting their opponent up, keep straight arms on #2 and keep pressure on. This is how you will break your opponent in competition. Repeat #1 for the full two minutes and then go another two minutes with #2 taking the shots.

Conditioning Drilling:

This is one of the best conditioning drills for athletes at the end of practice when they are tired. The first thing is to figure out how much time to drill for and split this time into different moves. Again, do this off the stopwatch (set time). Example: #1 hits as many double leg shots as possible for 30 seconds. #2 now hits as many doubles as possible. #1 hits as many singles as possible, and so on. This is good for 10-20 minutes. In live wrestling someone can stall if they want, but in this type of drilling it is very hard to hold back when you are on the clock.

As an athlete, you have to come into every practice with a positive attitude. When you enter the room you have to put your ego aside, pay attention, work hard and be humble. When you hit the room it is wrestling time; you do nothing but think and talk wrestling. Once practice is over you move on to something else.

Grab a partner, pick a drilling type, get a stopwatch and have someone time drill you at the end of every practice for 10-20 minutes. Just think how good you will become if you do 50 extra shots every night for the entire season.

Until next time, Dream Big...Work Hard!

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