

# WRESTLING PRINCIPLES

A philosophy of wrestling should be based on sound principles. The **basic** wrestling philosophy is based on ten principles which are necessary for successful wrestling.

Principle 1: A wrestler should be in condition to wrestle for six hard minutes. Many matches are lost in the third period when a wrestler becomes fatigued to the point that he is susceptible to making costly mistakes. It is for this reason that we work our boys to the level where they can wrestle at least two or three strenuous six minute matches in the same manner that they would in a wrestling tournament.

Principle 2: A wrestler should be aggressive. We want our wrestlers to be on the offensive as much as possible when they are on their feet. It is felt that if a wrestler is aggressive on his feet chances are he will be aggressive throughout the match in all positions.

Principle 3: A wrestler should be tough. We stress to our wrestlers that during a match an opponent is an enemy. It is all right to be friends with him before and after the match but not during the match. We feel that toughness is related to aggressiveness and therefore we expect our boys to wrestle accordingly.

Principle 4: A wrestler should know what he is going to do before the referee blows his whistle. He should have in mind what initial moves he is going to make before the whistle blows. Many wrestlers simply do not think enough and, therefore, wrestle entirely too much by instinct.

Principle 5: A wrestler should move on the whistle. It is common sense that the wrestler who moves first on the whistle, whether he is down or up, will generally have the advantage. We want our wrestlers to learn to anticipate the referee's whistle so they can beat their opponents to making the first move.

Principle 6: A wrestler should keep his head up at all times. We have observed that the wrestler who constantly keeps his head down in all positions is usually the one who loses or fails to achieve a particular move. In order for a wrestler to control his opponent's head, he must keep his head higher than his opponent's. This is particularly true when working for takedowns.

Principle 7: A wrestler should be mobile. We want our wrestlers to be consistently moving. When working for takedowns, we tell our wrestlers to circle, push, and pull their opponent's head and arms to set up for takedowns. In addition, we want our boys to keep the pressure on their opponents in order to prevent them from getting to their base. It is important, therefore, that they learn how to use their weight and leverage effectively.

Principle 8: A wrestler should be able to execute combination moves. This principle is related to number seven in that we do not want our wrestlers to make one move and then stop if they are countered. We want to see them making two or more of the same or

different moves especially when they are countered by the wrestler in the advantage situation. These combinations moves are to be performed without any hesitation or stopping between moves.

Principle 9: A wrestler should learn all the alternatives of every move he uses. For instance, if we want our wrestlers to learn a move such as a shrug, they also would have to learn all its ramifications, like counters, re-counters, and possible combination moves. When a wrestler learns the alternatives to moves in all situations, we feel that he will be well on the road to success.

Principle 10: A successful wrestler is a studious one. In order to become proficient at wrestling, a wrestler must be a student of the sport and continually strive to learn as much as he can. We tell our wrestlers to observe good wrestlers in action, read the ample amount of good material on wrestling, and put into practice what they learn. Recent research has concluded that mental practice can be beneficial in the acquisition of physical skills and hence we tell our wrestlers to practice their wrestling skills mentally as well as physically.

These ten fundamental principles form the foundation of our wrestling philosophy. We incorporate our philosophy into our practices, strategy, and style of wrestling. In the final analysis, we as coaches believe that wrestlers on all class levels should become familiar with these principles and use them wisely throughout their wrestling careers.