

## WRESTLING and FOOTBALL

*"I believe that wrestling is one of the best constructive sports that an individual can take part in and should be encouraged in prep schools, universities, and other institutions whose aim is to develop young men."*

- Knute Rockne, Former Norte Dame Football Head Coach, College Football Hall of Fame Inductee, and Arguably the Greatest College Coach of all time

Wrestling is the perfect complement to football. While football is in its offseason, wrestling provides the perfect opportunity for the athletes to remain active, while developing crucial skills that measure success on the field. Here are some of those general skills that wrestling will build.

- Agility - The ability of one to change the position of his body efficiently and easily.
- Quickness - The ability to make a series of movements in a very short period of time.
- Balance - The maintenance of body equilibrium through muscular control.
- Flexibility - The ability to make a wide range of muscular movements.
- Coordination - The ability to put together a combination of movements in a flowing rhythm.
- Endurance - The development of muscular and cardiovascular-respiratory stamina.
- Muscular Power (explosiveness) - The ability to use strength and speed simultaneously.
- Aggressiveness - The willingness to keep on trying or pushing your adversary at all times.
- Discipline - The desire to make the sacrifices necessary to become a better athlete and person.
- A Winning Attitude - The inner knowledge that you will do your best - win or lose.

*"I never met a wrestler that was a coward."*

- Joe Gibbs, Former Washington Redskins Head Coach and NFL Hall of Fame Inductee

The job of a wrestler is to control his opponent. He is trained to do so against other wrestlers. Therefore when he is put against a non-wrestler who has not been trained the same way he has, his job becomes much easier. A huge part of wrestling involves knowing how to manipulate your opponent. This is crucial when playing offensive and defensive line. The ability to control the man in front of you, to use his weight and movements against him, and to shed blockers with ease cannot be learned quicker than through the sport of wrestling.

*"I would have all of my Offensive Lineman wrestle if I could."*

- John Madden, Former Oakland Raiders Coach and NFL Hall of Fame Football Inductee

Wrestlers are taught one of the most important things to remember is their stance and position of their bodies. They learn very early that staying low is crucial to power and explosiveness. The same applies in football. I can't tell you how often it is that I'm watch an NFL game and see guys coming in for a tackle doing one or all of the following.

- Hitting up high
- Coming in with their head down
- Just throwing their shoulder in and not wrapping up

Anyone who knows football will tell you these are very bad habits. Wrestlers are taught to lower their level, wrap their arms around their opponent, and explode through them. The following things are reinforced again and again. NEVER put your head down and Stay low!

Wrestling is not just beneficial for lineman, but all positions. The ability wrestlers obtain to shed blockers works the same for ball carriers to shed tackles. There are 11 people on the field, but it's all about beating the guy in front of you. Learning the ability to beat the man in front of you cannot be ignored. This is where wrestlers shine.

*"I draft wrestlers because they are tough, I have never had a problem with a wrestler."*

- Joe Gibbs, Former Washington Redskins Head Coach and NFL Hall of Fame Inductee

Perhaps the greatest asset a wrestler has is his mental toughness. Once you become a wrestler, everything else in life seems easy. I can remember growing up and listening to all the kids on my football teams complaining about how tired they were during practice. I'd just smile. All I had to do was think "this is nothing compared to wrestling practice". I can't tell you how many kids I saw come and go on the wrestling team. But I can tell you that each and every one of them gained a huge respect for the kids who stuck with it.

### **A Look at The Numbers**

- 32 Professional Football Teams
- 65 Man Rosters
- 2080 Professional Football Players
- 185 Wrestlers in the NFL
- 11.24% of the NFL has a wrestling background
- 5% of the Hall of Fame inductees

### **The Link Cannot Be Dismissed**

- The relationship between wrestling and football is real.
- There are too many legends in both sports who have proved it.
- Hall of fame football coaches and players advocate the benefits of wrestling for football players.
- Football never made a wrestler a better wrestler BUT Wrestling made every football player a better football player!!!

**"I love wrestlers, they are tough and they make great football players."**

-Mike Stoops, National Championship Football Coach - University of Oklahoma.

Please consider the great opportunities this sport has to offer your child not only as an athlete, but as a person. Nothing builds character, teaches discipline, and matures kids like the sport of wrestling.

Thank you for reading and I hope you choose this life changing sport,

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