

THE IN'S AND OUT'S OF YOUTH WRESTLING TOURNAMENTS

Most tournaments are held in high school gyms //Parents and wrestlers sit in the bleachers, at many tournaments – finding a seat is a challenge, keep this in mind when deciding how much to bring in with you //Cash is King at youth tournaments – from concessions to wrestling gear that some tournaments have for purchase – however you DO NOT have to buy these things... they are there however!//It is loud, hectic, exciting and crowded – understanding this up front will be key for any one brand new to youth wrestling tournaments...

Upon arrival:

- Arrive 20-25 minutes before your wrestlers grade's weigh-ins are set to close
- Fill out wrestler registration form; leave blank the spot for wrestler's weight
- Pay for wrestler registration (if it is a "paid" tournament the registration table will have a list for wrestlers name)
- Pay for spectator fee (guillotine will list what fees are for all types)
- Checks are generally accepted, however as stated prior – cash is king.
- There are concessions – avoid having wrestler eat until AFTER weigh-ins is done
- After paying admission go to weigh in area, have wrestler strip down to singlet only. Check his nails. Have him get in line to have skin check done, nail check done, and weigh in. He will need the slip of paper you filled out upon arrival.
- After done with weigh-ins, find a comfortable spot in the gym and let your wrestler warm up, many times there will be other team members there and hopefully a coach. Doing sets of sit-ups, pushups, stretches, short runs are great ways to warm up prior to coach directing team, wrestler should put on his t-shirt/shorts/ and wrestling shoes on after weigh ins for warming up. Wrestling shoes should not be put on until AFTER they have weighed in
- Bring something to keep wrestler occupied while they wait for their grade to be called (book, iPod, gaming – ONLY IF THEY NEED A DISTRACTION from all the activity going on, there are times that gaming devices can be a distraction to the wrestlers, parents know best)
- When wrestling begins generally those hosting the tournament will make an announcement letting parents/wrestlers know where staging is. Staging is where your wrestler will go when they call his grade. He will be placed in a bracket with 3-4 other wrestlers from his grade and weight range (these last two are always the goal of those hosting the tournament) If your wrestler is close to the next grade up's weight and there is not a wrestler in his grade close to his weight the parents or a coach may be asked if the wrestler can "wrestle up". This is not uncommon – although for younger wrestlers, the first couple of times it happens can be a mental challenge for them.
- From staging your wrestler will be led with his bracket to the spot on the mat where he will wrestle. Unless the hosting tournament tells you different, your wrestler will generally always wrestle all his matches on the same mat. The wrestler will need to stay mat side throughout his bracket. Parents/coaches should ALWAYS TAKE A KNEE mat side. Do not stand in front of the mat unless there is no one behind you on the bleachers. The hosts of the tournament will remind you of that each time.
- Once all those have wrestled within the bracket (if he has a 4 man bracket he will wrestle 3 times) the table workers will finalize the bracket sheet. Either a tournament volunteer or a parent of a wrestler within your bracket will be asked to walk the bracket (and all wrestlers) to the awards table. Many hosting tournaments have a section where, once awards are received, the wrestlers can get on the 1st-4th place stand and take pictures. Some do not have this.
- Check in with your wrestlers coach in the event he was not able to be mat side with your wrestler, let him know how he did, what questions you have, what observations you made

Keep in mind that our coaches are all volunteers and nearly all have one or more children of their own who are wrestlers and they will be coaching their children at tournaments as well as trying to help with yours. They will do everything they can to have one of them there for you and your wrestler. They may arrive to your mat just as your wrestler starts to wrestle.

MAT SIDE:

Expectations:

- Shake ref's hand and opponents prior to wrestling
- Regardless of win or lose — after wrestler shakes opponent hand, ref's hand, opponents coaches hand, and wrestler coaches hand — in that order — no exceptions. Please practice this with your wrestler. Sportsmanship is key. If your wrestler gets into this pattern then when he wins or loses he will follow conduct standards.
- The matches are short — each “match” consists of three periods of 1 minute each.
- They will wrestle for 1 minute, stop, another minute, stop, and then the last minute. If a wrestler gets “pinned,” you don't go on to the next period — they are out of that match, but not out of the rest of the bracket.
- Each maneuver that gives the wrestler an upper hand gets points; getting out of a bad situation gets points too — see “Scoring of Youth Wrestling” below
- Each wrestler has a red or green strap around an ankle. This keeps track of who has which score — color coded on the scoring table (which is where the clock lives too).
- The ref will make hand signals to the scoring table to indicate which color scored points, and how many.
- The wrestler with the most points at the end of the match wins that round. The wrestler, who wins the most rounds, wins the bracket.
- There are usually medals for each place, sometimes there are trophies and/or t-shirts. All depends on the host.
- Please let the coach's coach if they are able to be mat side, after each match, the coach will give the wrestler pointers on what was done well, and what might have been done differently. Positive cheering is encouraged; screaming is not. Although the wrestlers are encouraged to cheer on their teammates at the mats, please continue to keep an eye on them. You need to know where they are at all times, and that they are behaving well.
- Lots of kids cry after a match — win or lose. It's emotionally and physically draining to wrestle. Don't be surprised by this.
- If you think there's a mismatch — weight, size, age — or other problem, address it privately with your coach. Don't speak with the other wrestler or the other team's coaches — that's our coaches' job, when necessary.
- Don't talk to the referees unless the building is on fire. If there's something that needs to be addressed with them, talk it over with the coach and let them do it. Try not to get too excited before, during or after the match as the kids have enough pressure on them and will be disappointed if they lose.

How Individual Matches are scored

The Referee indicates points as they are scored with the fingers of his hand with the color band that matches the wrestler who scores. The color is decided before the match begins and will stay with that team for the entire meet.

Take Down: 2 points (*from the neutral or standing position, when a wrestler gets behind or on top of the opponent in control on the mat*)

Escape: 1 point (*Getting out from underneath the opponent to a standing or neutral position facing him/her*)

Reversal: 2 points (*Getting out from underneath, and getting behind or on top of an opponent in one maneuver*)

Near Fall: 2 points (*Holding the opponent's shoulders to the mat for less than one second, or holding his/her shoulders within four inches of the mat for one second or longer, or holding one shoulder to the mat and the other at a 45 degree angle.*)

Near fall: 3 points (*Holding a 2 point near fall for 5 consecutive seconds.*)

Pin: A pin ends the match with a Win going to the wrestler who pinned his opponent. (*A Pin is called when a wrestler's shoulders are held on the mat*)

Illegal holds, Roughness, Technical Fouls — 1 point awarded to offended wrestler

Abusive and/or Unsportsmanlike Conduct — Deduct 1 Team point

Flagrant Misconduct — Disqualify and deduct 1 Team point.

MNUSA Tournaments do operate brackets and staging differently. Coaches will review prior to a tournament if you choose to attend a MNUSA tournament. Please let coaches know if you have any questions.