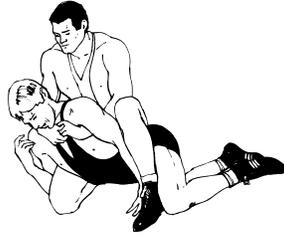


Guide to Youth Wrestling



Lion Wrestling Club

Jim Borschel – Sr. Club Advisor

Introduction

Welcome to the Lion Wrestling Club! The goal of this guide is to familiarize you with the sport of wrestling. Not all parents, families & children have a wrestling background. Hopefully, the information outlined in this guide will help introduce you to the sport.

Wrestling Club Goals

The simple goal of the Lion Wrestling club is to introduce your child to the sport. We want your child to have a fun and positive experience. Like most athletic activities, we will emphasize the fundamentals of the sport, including the basic skills, drills and technique. Every wrestler from grade school to the Olympic wrestling levels concentrate on the fundamentals. Drills may often be routine, even monotonous, but are necessary in your child's wrestling development. Conditioning, stretching, flexibility and many of our drills are basic to all other sports; including football, soccer, basketball and baseball.

Questions? / Suggestions

When you register your child in the club, you also register your voice for questions and suggestions of improvement. If there are ever questions or suggestions, please contact a coach or the club coordinator.



Athletic Development

Please understand that your child may not have instant success in wrestling. Very few wrestlers start winning when they are first introduced to this sport. There will be other wrestlers who started earlier, have more wrestling experience, or may at this time be more athletically inclined. In some cases, it may be years before your young wrestler develops the competitive edge.

The physical, emotional and competitive stages of athletic development will vary for every young athlete. Some children may be ready for tournament competition as a 1st grader; others may develop this confidence later. You know and understand your child's development more than anyone. Don't push or drive too hard until you feel the child is ready. Give your child the choice, listen to what they say and give a lot of praise and encouragement. Start slow and introduce more wrestling when you feel they are ready. The coach and other parents can assist you with some insight into this decision.

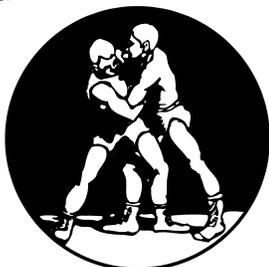
Parental Support

We strongly encourage parents to attend wrestling practice with their child, especially at the younger levels. Parents may not have wrestling experience, but their involvement is critical. Your child's progress in the sport can develop at a faster rate if you are assisting or are visible at the practice sessions. With a small number of coaches and a high number of wrestlers, working with your child and other wrestlers increases individual development. We would also like to ask for your support, helping at the Little Lions Wrestling Tournament. This tournament benefits the total wrestling program at the club, junior and senior high levels.

Competition, Winning & Losing

Unfortunately, many and most wrestling tournaments available to your child do not take into account your child's athletic development or experience. Tournaments take into account weight and age or year in school. On occasion it is not uncommon for your young wrestler to meet more physically dominant and talented wrestlers. Tournaments can be difficult on the development of young, inexperienced wrestlers.

Regardless of whether your child wins or loses, always reinforce the positive. In an individual wrestling match, discuss the things that went well. Emphasize the importance of participation, not winning or losing. Losing can be more traumatic to a young wrestler due to the individual nature of the sport. Losing in a team sport may not be as emotionally difficult because the loss is shared with others. Our club has lost a number of good athletes and potential wrestlers because of the lack of short term wrestling success. Again, individual success in this sport is not instant and develops with ongoing practice, mat time (competition), and parental encouragement.



Wrestling Styles

There are three primary styles in amateur wrestling: folkstyle, freestyle and Greco-Roman. Folkstyle is the traditional American style of wrestling coached in the Lion Wrestling Club. It is also the style wrestled at the junior high, high school and American college levels.

Freestyle and Greco-Roman are the internationally recognized styles of wrestling. It is the style you will watch at the Summer Olympic Games. Although similar to folkstyle, there are differences in scoring, strategy and technique. Freestyle wrestling is encouraged for the advanced youth folkstyle wrestler. Most of the place winners at the state high school tournament have strong freestyle backgrounds.

Equipment & Dress

For club practices: shorts, tennis shoes and a tight-fitting T-shirt are all that we require. Loose and baggy clothing is discouraged because hands and fingers can get twisted or bent. Sweat pants or kneepads can be worn if the knees become tender from contact with the mat. Wrestling shoes, headgear, and wrestling singlets are optional. At the youth level practices, there is generally not enough contact to warrant the use of headgear. Headgear, however, is recommended to prevent rubbing, banging or twisting of the ear causing "cauliflower ear" (swelling and hardening of ear soft tissue). Mouthpieces are not required but encouraged.

We ask that all wrestlers wear a clean pair of tennis or wrestling shoes. Do not wear the same shoes that you wear outside. Stocking feet are not recommended because they provide limited traction. We need to keep the wrestling mats clean at all times.

The same type of clothing worn at practice is accepted at most tournaments. Some tournaments may require headgear and most youth are dressed in the full wrestling attire to include headgear, singlet and wrestling shoes.

Equipment costs:	Singlet	\$18.00-\$55.00
	Shoes	\$30.00-\$95.00
	Headgear	\$15.00-\$20.00

Equipment can be purchased from most local sporting goods or shoe stores. Wrestling catalogs are available from the club coordinator or coach. The Play It Again Sports store often has a stock of used singlets and wrestling shoes.

For free wrestling equipment catalogs call:

- *Sunflower Wrestling Phone (888) 211-1888
www.sunflowerwrestling.com
- *Wrestling One Phone (800) 950-7744
www.wrestlingone.com
- *RC Wrestling Phone (800) 755-6770
www.rcwrestling.com
- *Wrestlers World Phone (800) 634-4874
www.suplay.com
- *Worldwide Sport Phone (800) 756-3555
www.wwsport.com

Kids Tournaments

Because of the popularity of the sport of wrestling in Iowa, it is possible to wrestle year around. The traditional youth (Grades K - 8) folkstyle wrestling tournaments begin in November and end in early April. Freestyle tourneys begin in March and end in July.

Youth tournaments are held at most all schools throughout the state. You can travel as much as you like, but it is not necessary. You can participate in nearly 20 tournaments a year within an hour's driving distance. It is hard to point you to entry-level tournaments because large and small school tournaments can be very competitive. As mentioned before, most tournament pairings are made by age / year in school and weight. Your young wrestler could be bracketed in with more experienced wrestlers.

Youth tournaments are usually available for grades K-8. Kindergartners are usually allowed to wrestle even though it is not so advertised. Tournament entry costs range \$9.00-\$15.00. There is also an admission charge for parents and other children. Most tournaments are 4-man round robin, so each wrestler has 3 matches consisting of 3 one-minute periods. Medals and occasional trophies or ribbons are distributed to each wrestler at the end of the tourney.

Weigh-in times will vary but are usually on the same day of the tournament from 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. Some tournaments will stagger the wrestling times for the different age/grade groups and weigh-in times could vary. Breakfast and snacks are available at all tournaments.

The number of tournaments you attend is up to you. It is recommended that grades K - 1 attend at least four tournaments a year; Grades 2 - 3 at least 8 tournaments and grades 4 - 8 should attend eight or more tournaments a year. To supplement club practices, these tournaments offer the needed "mat time" for success in the sport.

Transportation to tournaments is the responsibility of the parent. The club is not organized to provide this service. If you are unable to take your child, another parent may be traveling to a tournament

and willing to provide the transportation. Coaching at the tournaments usually falls in the hands of the parent. Our club, by nature of the organization, does not have a traveling coach. Even though you may not have a wrestling background, don't be afraid to go to mat side and cheer for your child. Feel free to ask another experienced parent for help. Many times parents in the club or club assistants will help coach the club wrestlers during their matches.

Tournament Registration Forms

A master schedule of available tournaments will be distributed to club members. We encourage you to attend these tournaments so club wrestlers can support one another. Tournament entry forms will be distributed at wrestling club practices. You will also find them distributed at many of the youth tournaments.

AAU District & State Tournaments

During the middle and end of March, the AAU District Tournament is held. The top four finishers in each weight class qualify for the state tournament currently held in DesMoines. This tournament is open for Grades 3 - 8. AAU cards are required. These tourneys are competitive but offer quality-wrestling experiences for young wrestlers. Entry forms will be available at club practices.

Camps & Clinics

Wrestling camps and clinics are generally held in the summer months of June, July, and August. Weeklong overnight or commuter camps are held at many of the state colleges and universities. These weeklong camps are available to youth wrestlers in grades 3 – 12 grade and range in cost from \$175-\$600. Costs include room, meals and a T-shirt. Camps are recommended for the serious youth wrestler. Week-long commuter camps or clinics vary in cost from \$25-\$75 and are held at many of the local high schools including Linn-Mar, CR Jefferson, CR Prairie, Vinton, and Manchester.

Let's.....WRESTLE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

We wish you the best of success in the sport of wrestling. Hopefully this guide has sufficiently outlined the opportunities ahead. Good luck!