



NEWS FROM THE DRAGON'S DEN

REMINDERS:

- **WHITE TEAM WRESTLERS** who are finished competing this season, should wash and return their uniforms to Coach Pat Bledsoe at the next practice.
- Not sure what to do with your weekends after Duals Season? Check [Track Wrestling](#) for local freestyle meets and ask around the wrestling room to see where other families are competing. There are instructions for navigating Track Wrestling in the Dragons Wrestling 101 manual posted on the [DWC home page](#).
- Please save some time the weekend of February 3rd and 4th for another Home Meet! Sign-ups for food and volunteer opportunities will be coming out shortly.
- Uniforms are in and they look great! Connor Maddox is modeling the compression top below if you'd like a sneak peek. If you've not yet picked yours up, please see a coach at the next practice.
- **Please don't forget to perform routine skin checks on your wrestlers!** Ringworm, warts, staph, cellulitis and other nasty infections are quite common during wrestling season, but can be caught and eliminated quickly if you remain diligent. When in doubt, seek a second opinion.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

ISWA State Finals Red Team on 01/07

Beech Grove Invitational Red Team on 01/14

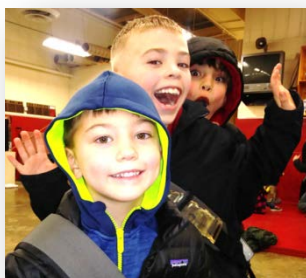
Click [here](#) to find more information about these and other events.

12/30 WHITELAND RESULTS

Not every dragon stayed cuddled up in their den over the past 3 bitter cold weeks. Seven wrestlers made the trek to Whiteland Indiana for their freestyle tournament on 12/30. There were over 600 wrestlers from all over Indiana packed into two gyms, but the dragon's presence was definitely felt! Paxton Babcock and Ryan Cain had excellent days as beginners competing against seasoned wrestlers, Cole Vandygriff wrestled his way to the finals of an incredibly challenging bracket, and one of the most exciting matches of the day pitted two of our fiercest dragons against one another. Conner Maddox must've been tired of winning so easily all season, because he decided to wrestle up a weight class and ended up facing Carter Sanford in the finals of the 50lb. bracket! It was a hard but thrilling match for the dragon clan to watch.

Results from the day include:

- Warren Sanford: 3rd Place
- Paxton Babcock: DNP
- Conner Maddox: 2nd Place
- Carter Sanford: 1st Place
- Ryan Cain: 6th Place
- Gunner Butt: 2nd Place
- Cole Vandygriff: 2nd Place



Above: Warren Sanford, Carter Sanford and Gunner Butt horse around after practice.



Above: Warren Sanford, Cole Vandygriff and Carter Sanford pose with their medals.

Duals Team State is this Sunday!

Get some rest & focus on your mental state (see below).

"It simply isn't an adventure worth telling if there aren't any dragons."

J.R.R. Tolkien

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COACH'S CORNER: 5 Ps for The Big Meet

by: Jim Powers Ph.D

“ARE YOU MENTALLY PREPARED FOR THE BIG MEET?”

The greatest challenge that athletes have is to wrestle their best when it really counts. Regardless of the level of competition, whether a state championship, nationals, the Olympics, or World Series, every athlete needs to rise to the occasion of the big meet. That goal is accomplished by working hard in practice and being as prepared as you can be as the important meet approaches.

The days leading up to the big meet are crucial to achieving your competitive goals. You have to get your equipment dialed in, you need to get some rest, and you might do a little fine tuning on your technique and tactics. But the area that will probably make the biggest difference in whether you wrestle your best or get crushed is your attitude toward the big meet.

Your mindset will impact every psychological contributor to your competitive performances including your motivation, confidence, intensity, focus, and emotions. A healthy attitude will set you up for a psychology that will allow you to wrestle your best. An unhealthy attitude, by contrast, will only set you up for failure.

A healthy attitude can be summed up in what I call the "5 Ps for the Big Meet:"
Perspective, Process, Present, Positive, and Progress.

Perspective:

It's easy as the big meet approaches to lose perspective. When I talk about perspective I mean the importance you place on the meet. You may think: "This is the BIGGEST meet of the season and I've worked so hard. If I don't wrestle well, it will kill me!! I MUST wrestle well!" **It is just that attitude that may prevent you from getting the results you want.** The reality is that, though this meet may be important to you and, if you don't wrestle well, you will be disappointed, it most certainly will not kill you.

Think of it this way. Let's say that before the big meet, someone comes up to you, shows you a gun, and tells you that if you don't wrestle well, he will be there after the meet and will shoot you. Would you be nervous? Yes! Terrified, in fact! Would you be able to wrestle well? Definitely not! Of course, there will be no one after the meet with a gun, but, when you lose perspective and feel that your life (not your physical life, but your ego life) is on the line, then the same feelings of threat and fear arise. And there is little chance of your being confident, relaxed, or focused enough to wrestle your best.

If you look too closely at this meet, it's easy to think that it is life or death. But if you can step back and put the meet in a long-term perspective, namely, it is just a small step in a journey toward your long-term goals, the so-called big meet won't seem quite so important. The result? You'll be psychologically and emotionally prepared to wrestle your best.

Process:

One of the most common problems that occurs in athletes as the big meet approaches is a shift in their focus away from process and onto outcomes. Let me explain. A process focus involves paying attention to those things that help you wrestle your best, for example, technique, tactics, and pre-meet preparation. In contrast, outcome focus involves focusing on the possible results of the meet: winning, losing, rankings, or who you might beat or lose to. Let me make this very clear: An outcome focus is the kiss of death in the big meet. Here's why.

Many people believe that focusing on the outcome will increase the chances of that outcome occurring, but the opposite is actually true. When does the outcome of a meet occur? When the final whistle blows, of course. And if you're focusing on the end of the meet, what are you not focusing on? Well, the process, obviously. Here's the irony. **By focusing on the process rather than the outcome, you have a much better chance of wrestling your best because you are paying attention to things that will help you wrestle well.** And, if you wrestle well, you're more likely to achieve the results you wanted in the first place.

Also, why do you get nervous before big meets? Because you're afraid of the outcome, more specifically, you're afraid of failure. So by focusing on the outcome, you're more likely to feel anxious (a little anxiety is good, but too much is really bad) and less likely to wrestle well and achieve the result you want. In contrast, if you focus on the process, you won't have a fear of failure, you'll stay relaxed, and you're more likely to wrestle your best, the result of which is that you'll achieve the competitive goals you had set for yourself.

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Present:

Another shift that can occur before big meets is a focus on the present (what you need to do to wrestle well now) to either a past focus (onto results you had in the past), or a future focus (onto the results you may or may not get in the big meet).

Let's start with a past focus. There's a saying that you can't change the past, but you can ruin a perfectly good future by worrying about it. The reality is that you can't change the past, so there's no point in even thinking about it (except perhaps to learn from your mistakes so you don't repeat them). If something bad happened in the past, be disappointed, then let it go. If something good happened, revel in it, then let it go. Looking back has no value to your present.

Now about the future. Thinking about the future also does you no good. It can cause doubt and worry because it often triggers a fear of failure. A future focus can create anxiety because it makes you think about expectations that you might feel from others, whether parents, coaches, or the media. Mostly basically, if you're focusing on the future, you're not focusing on your wrestling in the here and now.

If you want to control the future, the only way to do so is to control the present. This means directing your focus on what you need to do to wrestle your best right now.

Positive:

Perhaps the worst thing that happens to many young athletes before a big meet is they go negative. The expectations and pressure that you can feel before a big meet can cause your confidence, which may have been high from all of your training and meets up to this point in the season, to plummet as you focus on all of the bad things that can happen in the upcoming meet. You may go from being your best ally to your worst enemy. What are the chances of good things happening in the big meet with this "dark" mindset? Let me answer that question for you: pretty darned low.

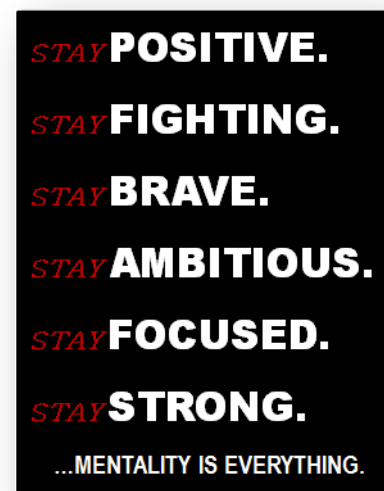
Your only chance to achieve your goals for the big meet is to stay positive and remain your best ally. This doesn't mean you have to be Stuart Smiley (of Saturday Night Live fame) all the time; feeling some doubt is natural. Just make sure that most of what you think about your upcoming meet is positive.

Progress:

Sports are unforgiving in how it judges athletes; the score doesn't lie. And we also live in a world where it is difficult not to compare yourself to your teammates and other competitors. But when you focus on them, for example, think about how they are wrestling, how they will do in the big meet, and whether you will beat them, they win because if you're focusing on them, you're not focusing on you.

The only thing you should really focus on is yourself and the progress you're making toward your goals. You will always have ups and downs, but the key is to see that you are heading in the right direction. Are you improving your technique and tactics? Are your rankings getting better? As long as you are moving toward your goals and staying focused on improving, you will continue to get better and everyone else will take care of themselves.

So, if you really want to wrestle your best in the upcoming big meet, remember the 5 Ps and you can be pretty confident that your mind will help you, rather than hurt you, achieve your goals.



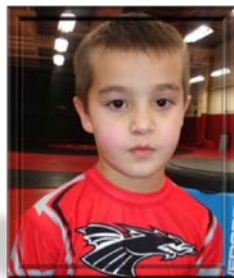
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ATHLETES OF THE WEEK:

Connor Maddox is in the 2nd grade at Westfield Elementary School. He's currently having a phenomenal second year of wrestling on the Dragon's Dual team. Connor isn't thinking about this year, though.



Connor is thinking about wrestling for either Penn State or U of Iowa where his current hero, Thomas Gilman is currently competing. His goals are just as big as his spirit. He wants to be an NCAA and Olympic Champion. Just try to stop him!

When he's not wrestling, Connor is busy memorizing Michael Jackson songs and dances (Smooth Criminal is his favorite), collecting football cards, and watching Saved By The Bell. Connor's favorite animals include his dogs Bubba and Layla, as well as any and all foxes.

Cohen Wuethrich is in the 1st grade at Sugar Creek Elementary and his second year of wrestling. Cohen has been a beast on the mat since day one, and the highlight of his wrestling career was when he beat an incredibly skilled and seasoned wrestler at his first real tournament last year. Cohen doesn't just shine



on the mat though, he is also an incredible football player! Not just football and wrestling either! Cohen loves basketball, swimming, diving, running and any other activity. In his down time, Cohen loves playing video games, watching Sponge Bob, playing with his cat, Alley Cat and collecting Pokemon cards. Cohen and his family are also very busy getting ready for his baby brother (who is due *any* minute now). He loves his very close knit family and holds his Dad up on a pedestal as his hero.

TEAM ROSTERS:

Weight	Red Team Wrestler	White Team Wrestlers
40	Warren Sanford	Cooper Price
45	Connor Maddox	Paxton Babcock
50	Carter Sanford	Jordan Lebron, Logan Soskre
55	Cohen Wuethrich	Jackson Lavin, Ryan Cain, Morgan Hutchinson, Joey Dawson, Tucker Harbert
60	Brysen Wood	Emmit Abernathy, Ryker Yonts, Charlie May
65	Gunner Butt	Aiden Olson, Colt Pratt
70	Cole Vandygriff	Tyler Lavin
75	Blake Dammann	Brantley Minchin, Preston Boyd, Brad Tully
80	Daysen Wood	Nathan Hartinger, Jack Kessinger
85	Connor Shatz	Zeke Jefford
90	David Pack	
95		
105	Sydney DeLois	Anthony Clevenger
115	Gavin Wilcher	Carter Simpson
130		
150	Damon Mink	
HWT		

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