



RIVER FALLS WRESTLING

Booster Club and River Falls Toss & Turn

Dear parent / guardian:

My name is Butch Cummings and I am the head coach of the River Falls Middle School Wrestling Team. Your son has shown some interest in wrestling as part of River Falls Middle School Wrestling. I am following up to give you some additional information and context so that you can be informed and discuss this further with your child. I would sincerely like to see him join and be a part of our team this season.

For some, when your child tells you that they want to try wrestling - you immediately envision your child vaulted into the air by a testosterone-filled adolescent wearing a Superman costume or a cage fighter with blood streaming from their forehead. If the idea of wrestling brings fear to your mind based upon the images on television, then put your mind at ease. Amateur wrestling is very different from the professional wrestlers and cage fighters seen on television.

Unfortunately, there are some misconceptions and preconceived notions about being a "wrestler". You do not have to be the strongest, the fastest or even the most aggressive. A wrestler must be persistent, willing to work hard and learn while having fun. Many successful wrestlers are truly intellectuals that study the sport in terms of simple leverage, body movement and control. Previous experience is also not a prerequisite. Many of our most successful wrestlers had their first taste for the sport when they were in middle school. The sport of wrestling involves hard work, determination, and a high degree of physical training and commitment. Amateur wrestling is an aggressive sport that requires skill, strategy, agility, conditioning and strength of the individual.

Amateur wrestling is an actual international Olympic recognized sport, where so-called "professional wrestling" is an entertainment show, designed for shock value and high ratings. There are no rings used in high school wrestling, only cushioned mats designed for the purpose of the sport. Where professional wrestling uses crazy antics, costumes, and inappropriate attire that provide no safety benefits, amateur wrestling has uniforms that are equipped with safety gear such as head protection, kneepads, and regulation shoes. Safety is the primary concern when it comes to the sport of amateur wrestling; entertainment and theatrics are the main point in "professional wrestling".

Beyond the obvious, wrestling also develops agility, balance, speed, conditioning, and intensity - that transcends into many other sports and activities. Every wrestler will quickly learn about the humility that comes with setting goals and working hard to achieve them. Swimming, gymnastics, and wrestling are the few sports that work on all muscle groups. Experts believe unilateral (equal emphasis on all muscle groups) physical fitness is especially important in young developing athletes. This helps the child not just strengthen their core muscles but they are learning how their body is growing.

What about "cutting" weight? River Falls wrestling has no expectations of making any wrestlers lose weight; in fact, I personally and specifically discourage cutting at this level of competition. Your middle school student's body is changing rapidly on its own. They are growing and developing right before our eyes. The last thing they need to do is worry about managing their weight. That being said, we will encourage proper nutrition, good choices and conditioning; however, weight is simply a by-product of calories versus exercise. The purpose of the middle school program is to have fun as well as prepare them for the next level of the sport in high school.

Wrestling is one of the greatest sports that a child can get into; it has positively influenced and made a significant impact on hundreds of productive citizens right here in River Falls, let alone the rest of the world. I consider it a true privilege to pass on my years of knowledge of the sport to them. I am an accredited and background-checked certified wrestling coach from USA wrestling. We have a parent information meeting on Thursday, November 18 at RFHS and our first practice starts on Monday, December 13 after school. To get your child signed up I have supplied a checklist to guide you through the process. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions. Lastly, I highly encourage you to visit www.riverfallswrestling.org. This site is a virtual cornucopia of wrestling information in River Falls; it is a great resource to learn about our sport.

I am looking forward to meeting you on November 18, then seeing your wrestler on the mat this December 13.

Sincerely,
Coach Butch Cummings

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