

Tigers Wrestling Club

Successful Tournament Procedures and Routines

Revised December 2023

***Disclaimer:** This document is a general guideline for experienced wrestlers over 13 years of age. Consult a coach for more specific parameters for younger athletes. Losing a lot of weight is not an ingredient of the Team Impact success recipe. Losing any weight under the age of 16 is strongly discouraged.*

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for athletes in order to establish successful tournament routines.

Preamble:

Success is not only determined by one person's wrestling ability vs. another person's wrestling ability; it is lifestyle vs. lifestyle. The best athletes are those that live life to higher standards every minute of their day. Focus your daily activities on the actions that avoid stress and use up less energy in order to conserve energy for practices, training and matches. Every minute of the day counts, it can be either productive or destructive.

When the way you practice and compete (being aggressive, never quitting, giving a full effort, being comfortable with being uncomfortable, having a positive optimistic attitude, enjoying the battle, fighting not to give up points, looking to dominate etc.) becomes more important to you than winning, then is when you will start winning more and maximizing your potential.

Trust in the process is a critical ingredient in the recipe for success. Not working along with your coaches is detrimental to progress. Trust is based upon honesty and being transparent what you do. Work along with the coaches with regards to your wrestling participation in and out of practice. It is important that what you do outside the practices is in line with what you are doing in practice. This includes strength training, attending tournaments and other club's practice that are not part of the Team Impact program. Team Impact coaches have extensive experience that includes developing multiple National champions and World team members. Coaches have been putting athletes first and treating them like family for decades. Trust in the process is critical in possessing confidence in competing and that confidence is essential to being successful. Please maintain open communication with your coaches.

Routine Two Days Before:

- Regularly check your weight on an accurate scale.
- You should be within 2-3% of your weight class.
- Confirm your exact weight with a coach.
- Get a good night's sleep (8-10 hours) with no electronics 2 hours before going to bed.
- Eat what you usually eat and drink plenty of water, until your urine is clear. Plenty of clear urine indicates adequate hydration. It is best to eat a healthy large meal with 65-70% of carbohydrates (i.e., pasta, rice, baked potato, bread, fruit, vegetables etc.). Try to avoid salty, spicy, fried or fiber rich foods, as well as too much meat or dairy products. Too much salt will make it harder to sweat if you have to sweat some weight off. Eat healthy and avoid nutrient poor foods (junk food such as chips and candy bars).
- Know the competition details: where exactly is the tournament and/ or weigh-in; the start time, how will you be getting there etc.

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- Visualize every day to get a clear picture in your head what an excellent performance looks like. What the mind sees the body believes.
- Visualize how the tournament will play out besides your wrestling. Such as what if something goes wrong, how you plan to deal with it. Use the information to apply the content in this document. Refer to the Team Impact Visualization document.
- If you are planning to lose more than 2% of your bodyweight, you will need to start this process under the guidance of a coach. Depending how much weight you are losing, this process **MUST** start several weeks in advance. It is recommended that you do not drop more than to the closest weight class.

Day Before Routine:

- Check your weight on a reliable scale. Be within a pound (0.5kg) when going to bed.
- Confirm your exact weight with your coach. Based upon your weight, the coach will give you a plan to make weight and/ or what to eat.
- Know the tournament details including red dot weigh-ins or weigh-ins: how long it takes to get there, when it starts etc. and get there on time. On time means being there 10-15 minutes early.
- Make sure your finger nails are trimmed.
- Have a light workout. Try to have a relaxing, enjoyable and fun day.
- Eat the foods you are used to eating. Do not over eat as you might not make weight
- Pack a lunch, the lunch should be mostly carbohydrates, include a drink. Gatorade is good only after a match. Drink only water, 20 minutes before a match. Pop is not recommended. Eat fruits, apple sauce, vegetables, rice cakes, or granola bars instead of chocolate bars or cakes. Too much sugar is not ideal for achieving a top performance. Nutritional meal supplements like Boost are good for quicker digestion, as well as not being hungry due to nerves. Eat small snacks when you have at least one hour before your next match. Only eat what you are used to eating.
- Pack your gym bag before you go to bed, include a towel, combination lock, soap, clean shirt, socks, underwear, singlet (blue & red), wrestling boots, and whatever else you will need. You are expected to wear Team Impact Club gear to represent. Pant bottoms must be black.
- Set your alarm. Have a back-up plan in case it does not go off, like having someone else wake you up.
- Get at least 8 hours sleep with no electronics 2 hours before going to bed.

Tournament Day Routines and Procedures

Be grateful/ thankful for this opportunity because it is difficult to be stressed and thankful at the same time.

Morning of Competition with or without weigh-ins or red dot routine

- Best to get up 3 hours prior to the start of competition to ensure adequate body activation and you wide awake. Weigh-ins are usually 2 hours before the competition.
- **Morning weigh-ins:** Check your weight when you wake up and do what is needed to make

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the weight class. Inform your coach if you are overweight immediately. You will need to wake up earlier if you went to bed overweight. Confirm the plan with your coach on how to make weight.

- Get to the weigh-in/ tournament early to confirm your weight on the official scales and to have time if needed to lose weight. Immediately inform your coach if you are overweight.
- Upon making weight, drink plenty of “room temperature water”; Rehydrate by drinking 1.5 cups slowly every 15 minutes, until urine is plenty and clear in color. You can alternate with Gatorade. If you lost a lot of sweat to make weight, you will need to drink children’s Pedialyte.
- You will require 3-4 hours to digest a large meal, 2-3 for a medium meal and an hour for a small snack. Eat a small snack (apple sauce) after the cool down of each match you wrestle; provided your matches are not coming up fast (at least 1 hour before the next match).
- Do not eat egg-based dishes, high fat or high protein meals.
- Dress in your tournament warm-up sweats and/or including wrestling singlet on the way to the weigh-in/ Tournament.
- Locate a common team area, put all your gear together with everyone else's and never leave the gear unattended, things often get stolen at tournaments.
- 5th and 6th place matches involve athletes who have lost two matches, do not expect that losing 2 matches eliminates an athlete from a tournament.
- If you are in a round-robin draw, where you have to wrestle everyone in the weight class, you need to pin those weaker opponents instead of going for the 10-0 technical superiority. How you win your matches can impact your placing in a round robin draw.

Tournament Club Warm-up Routine:

- Arrive at the competition venue, no later than 1 hour before the start. This is the usual time our club warm-up starts. The mats are less crowded and less chance for injury, as well as, opportunity for others to scout us.
- The pre-tournament warm-up should be the same as the practice warm-up. You should be dressed the same way you are dressed at practice. Do not wear heavy warm-up clothes during the warm-up; put them back on after the warm-up. The goal is to duplicate the exact feeling as if you just finished a tough match; therefore, drill the techniques you plan to use at high tournament speed. At the conclusion of the warm-up, do some sprints to leave a little burning your lungs. This warm-up should be a hard 30-45 minutes; 1-hour before the competition starts.
- Be aware of when your matches are and make sure you are properly warmed-up and ready to go. Let a coach know when you are “up in” 4 matches before your bout.
- Do not spend too much time standing during the tournament, your legs will get stiff and will be slower to react.
- Listen to music to relax to feel good and confident. Listen a different type of music to energize yourself 4 matches prior to wrestling. Know the difference and download these songs prior to the tournament, on your phone.

Pre-match Warm-up Routine:

- Get someone to record your matches on your phone. Match review will improve your performance and you can also share them with family and friends
- Always have a coach in your corner; the same coach might not be able to be at all your matches. Let the coaches know your match is coming up. If you cannot find a coach, get a

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teammate. You might need someone to throw in a protest brick.

- Make sure your laces are taped
- Four matches before your match, start your pre-match warm-up routine, this should give you at least 10-15 minutes to break a sweat, in case there are some short matches. The goal is to get the body sweating and feel confident before every match. At this time, do not scout matches, coach other athletes, or get caught up in other matches. To achieve your optimum performance, focus on the task at hand and be in the moment, focus on what you need to do to win your next match, not on the outcome of your match.
- If you see your opponent not warming up at all, you will need a quick high paced start to the match as they will be planning to use the 1st minute of the match to warm-up.
- Think and visualize what will be your first moves on your opponent for a right leg lead stance, a left leg lead stance, a square stance and a low stance as well as your dominant tie-up. Stay loose and use movement by keeping hands heavy and busy and feet moving to create a clear opening for attacking a heavy and close lead leg.
- Think about how much fun you are going to have, what you are going to execute (your plan of attack), reasons why you will perform well and focus only on that, nothing else is important. Wrestle smart and be 100% sure of all your moves. Wrestle every match as if it is a final.
- Do not watch and get caught up watching other matches, this will drain your emotional energy and exhaust you.
- One match before your match, be ready to wrestle, out of your warm-up gear with wrestling shoes laces taped well before your start time. Always be the first at the center of the mat.
- Do not to spend your time in between matches standing, too much standing will make your legs stiff and you will not be able to move at your best. Try to get some fresh air and quietness outside the stuffy and loud gym if possible in-between matches

The Match:

Post-Match Routine:

- Cool down for at least 10 minutes after every match. Use the cool down routine that you use at practice, using the same light exercise and stretching. Evaluate your performance noting techniques and tactics that worked well and what need to be improved; learn from your experiences and get better every, subsequent, match. This will help to improve your performance with each match and get better as the day goes. The longer the match goes the longer the day goes, the stronger you get. Reviewing the match on your phone may help in this process.
- You can be called to wrestle 20 minutes after your last match, but be ready to wrestle at any time.
- In between matches try you get some fresh air, drink water and have a very small snack
- Immediately after the cooldown, drink and eat a little bit at a time, to avoid having 1 big meal later. It takes longer to digest a large meal. Drink some Gatorade or have a light snack (1 or 2 of the following: apple sauce, fruit, cup of crackers half a toast sandwich) or a Boost meal-replacement drink. Best practices include eating only what you usually eat. Try to step outside and get some fresh air.
- Focus most on what you do well and visualize that clear picture of what a successful performance looks like for your next match

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Tournament Procedures:

- **Never** leave the tournament venue without informing a coach. The coach should know where to find you at all times. It's ideal if you stay to help and support your teammates until the end. Watching the finals has great value in learning
- Take a very good shower after the tournament using plenty of soap. This will help to prevent any possible skin infections. Also, wash/sanitize your hands throughout the day. Bring and use hand sanitizer
- You are expected to follow the rules of society and the hosting school. Remember you represent "your school, your coaches, your family and your community." Therefore, exercise the highest standard of behavior, we want to continue to be a 1st class club. How you carry yourself is more important than winning. If you cannot represent with class, please do not participate until you can. No showboating, gossiping, putdowns, blaming, criticizing, complaining, trash-talking, cursing, lying or swearing; these actions are not good sportsmanship, nor are they admirable character traits. Be humble in victory and proud in defeat. Better things will happen to you if you follow this.

After the Event

- Be grateful for the experience and whatever happened was the best thing that could happen. Build from this and grow, everyone has their own journey and the journey is the end game, not this tournament. One match or one tournament doesn't define who you are. What defines who you are is your character.
- Take good notes on areas for improvement and work diligently on improvement under the advisement of a coach as immediately as possible
- Seek immediate professional treatment for any injury, minor or major.
- Eat healthy and sleep at least 9 hours for maximum recovery

General Match Strategy: this is the auto-default game plan, unless a more specific match plan is provided by a coach or you share one with the coach. Please refer to the Team Impact Match Evaluation document as well.

Focus on your strengths. Know what you are the best at and execute what you are best at doing. Do what you do best and make no mistakes.

Expect to succeed! Set your mind on the process of winning: Approach every match with an aggressive, relentless and tenacious forward moving offensive strategy. Get a fast start into the match by anticipating the whistle and force your opponent from the start of the match, to wrestle your style (your strengths) by initiating offense first. Get to your attacks and dominate the ties immediately off the whistle. Keep your opponent constantly struggling to maintain their balance by continuously attacking using combinations of push and pull head snap downs and faking attacks. Set a pace the opponent cannot stand by applying this "offensive forward pressure" throughout the match. It's your tie-ups or no tie-ups. Always dominate head and hand control. Score first, score early and keep scoring. Be offensive and move forward constantly with a high rate of attack, even in defense.

Wrestle in every position, never conceded without a calculated fight and look to score every

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second of the match. Finish the last 30 seconds of each round with an intensive offensive pressure. If you are winning during the last round, be safe and pressure forward without taking any risk. No need to attack.

Match Tactics and Strategies:

Standing Position:

- Always maintain excellent stance discipline. Keep your hands with thumbs up in front of your knees for hand defense reactions and your elbows in-line with your body and not flaring away parallel to the shoulders.
- Start in the center of the center of the mat, or as close to your opponent as possible. If at any time, your opponent is not at the center, go get within attacking distance ready to start where he is. Always keep him in your attacking range (arm's distance).
- Stick with the basics and always go for the easier points (take 1 or 2 points if it possible, do not force or rush your moves if they are not there or focus too much on 4-point throws if they are not here. Know the cues for successful execution and use them).
- The best time to score on the ground is immediately after your takedown.
- Leg attack cues: Shoot only if you are close in attacking range (You must be able to touch your opponent's leg before attacking). Keep your elbows in, do not reach as you penetrate on your attacks, moving your feet and run your opponent over. Shooting a leg attack off the whistle is effective when your opponent is not prepared in their stance. Be tenacious to the finish, in all attempts.
- If in doubt, do not "try a technique;" apply "offensive forward pressure" and score those step-out points.
- **Do not use a technique if it fails once and only use techniques used effectively in practice or previous matches. If a move, works continue to use it until your opponent stops it.**
- Always show that you have plenty of energy and are anxious to wrestle aggressively. Fake it if you have to, but never show you are tired. Be fearless.
- Always keep your back to the center of the mat and face the zone throughout the match.
- Force your opponent's back into the zone and use it to your advantage, shoot a leg attack and take them out of bounds; having your head in your opponent's chest, for this, works best. Never back up and allow the match to continue at the center. Circle or move forward, no backward retreat.
- **When the whistle blows to stop the action, be the last wrestler to stop action, always get to the center starting circle, at the center of the circle before your opponent and wait to start.** Never move slowly to get to the starting circle, after a whistle.
- **Be ready and in a good stance 5 seconds before every whistle.**
- Always head and hand fight to control your opponent. Make head contact prior to hand contact, as the head is acting to block any attack. Never give-up control.
- Fight to the end no matter the score and always give a full-out effort. **The only loser is a quitter or someone who fails to learn to improve from a loss, if you give your all, things will always work out in the end and you will always be a winner.** Winning the battle in the match is better than losing both the battle and the match.
- Maintain your composure throughout the match; wrestle the match and not the opposing coach or the official. Focus on the task at hand, executing your techniques like in practice,

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with a determined effort to win the match. If the official has wronged you, right the wrong by scoring points to win the match; not wasting effort on being upset at the score.

- Never get into a fistfight with your opponent, both wrestlers will be disqualified from the tournament.

Defense:

- The best defense is an aggressive and relentless offense.
- Stay in your stance, use your hands to block, then counter attack immediately,
- If your opponent gets by your hands- sprawl (hip-in, legs back wide, head-up, square off, jam opponents head underneath you, extend them so their hips are far ahead of their knees i.e., block opponent's knees), circle behind to score by going in the direction his head was, and placing weight on, blocking or dragging the opponent's arm. A 2-point takedown is safer than a 4-point takedown; therefore, always take two and never force a 4-point technique at any time. At least one knee must be touching the mat for a takedown.

Parterre (ground): Bottom Position :

- Go flat to the mat, head up, chest down, hands out front at 45 degrees (10 & 2 o'clock), elbow off the mat, dig your palms into the mat, little to no space between armpits and mat, split your legs (to avoid x-ankles) and lock all your joints. Stay tough and wait for the whistle, usually 10 seconds. Be prepared to exercise pain tolerance. Do not voluntarily go out of bounds, unless you are avoiding being pinned.
- Do not wrestle for a reversal if you are winning, the score is close, or your opponent is behind you and out of reach. Never reach behind! The only exception is when using the ankle pick reversal, if it is reachable.
- If you are being turned, go hand to hand instead of across your back. Do not let your elbow touch (this includes gutwrenches and x-ankles). This old rule does not apply but it is better than going across your back for a possible pin.

Parterre (ground): Top Position :

- Stay behind; work your techniques from behind and out of the opponents reach
- You need to have a go-to move like the cross ankle or gutwrench to score your points and end the match with a technical superiority of a 10-point difference; each subsequent turn should be faster than the past turn and do not stop until the official stops you.
- Work your techniques in series by responding to your opponent's reactions with a counter reaction; if one move does not work immediately go into the next.
- Make your opponent work. Tire and wear them down. Make them always carry your weight.
- The most effective and most commonly used technique in this position is the gutwrench and the x-ankles. Be able to use and defend both.

Mindset:

- You are the competition and the focus is on bringing the best you and your best effort on doing what is on this document.
- Trust the process, trust your training, eliminate all doubt and be completely confident in

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your ability to be successful. Have a clear picture of what successful wrestling looks like based upon the Team Impact match evaluation and this document. You need to visualize this daily. It is about how you do it and less about whether you won or lost.

- The Grateful 3P's: Be Grateful for the opportunity, stay focused on the Process of winning, be Present in the moment and all thoughts are Positive
- Focus on what you have the greatest control over: the "process" (what you need to do to win- SCORING POINTS), not entirely on winning; your attitude and your effort is what you have the greatest control over. Be optimistically positive and outwork your opponent by pushing the pace of the match aggressively.
- Fight to constantly progress your position from good to better to best every second, every round.
- Focus on what you do best and not on what you cannot do well. Focus on what works for you the most and not on what works for you often or occasionally. It is either right or wrong, there is no "almost" or "close"
- When the score is zero to zero, you are winning, build your confidence.
- You win in every stalemate situation, build your confidence
- You are winning every time you make your opponent work hard to score points on you. Never give up easy points as this will give your opponent the confidence, they need to beat you.
- Know you can do it; know you can exceed the demands required to meet the challenge. Expect to win; impose your will to make it happen. Refuse to lose, be relentless in the pursuit of winning.
- It is not who you are that holds you back, it is who you think you are not. Convince yourself you earned the right to win and list all the reasons for earning it.
- You are fearless: unstoppable, unbreakable, untouchable and unbeatable.
- Have a Mantra that you use often. For example:
 - a. Score first, score early and keep scoring.
 - b. Dominate with Relentless Offensive Forward Aggressive Pressure. Relentless forward offensive domination (DROFAP);
 - c. I am fearless: unstoppable, unbreakable, untouchable and unbeatable
 - d. Make your own Mantra
- Doing what you do best- this is what you focus on the most. Know what you are strongest on & keep the match there.

At the end of the event, you either won or you learned, if you did not learn you lost because there was no learning. You only lose if you did not learn and improve.

Nutrition Digestion Period and Rehydration Guidelines as per the NCCP

Nutrition Digestion Period Guidelines

The meal size and food choices will vary depending on the time between eating and performing. Athletes must allow sufficient time for digestion. High calorie meals, especially those high in fat content, take longer to digest than lighter snacks.

The guidelines below should be used when planning meal times relative to a training session,

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a competition, or a series of competitions held on the same day. Experiment with these guidelines in practice in order to establish an appropriate protocol.

- (1) Allow 3-4 hours for a large meal (approximately 500-800 kcal or more) to digest
- (2) Allow 2-3 hours for a smaller meal (approximately 300-500 kcal) to digest
- (3) Allow 1-2 hours for a small snack or blender/liquid meal to digest, or whatever the athlete's own tolerance indicates.

If the athlete will be competing within the next 2 hours, small quantities of carbohydrate are the best choice: fruit, fruit beverages, low-fat crackers, bread, fat free yogurt, and/or well-cooked pasta. The athlete should also drink plenty of water. (When the athlete is traveling, bottled water is the preferred choice)

Rehydration

It is well established that the sensation of thirst is not a good indicator of an individual's level of dehydration. When thirsty, approximately 2% of body mass has already been lost. Consequently, one cannot gauge dehydration by referring to the sensation of thirst. Therefore, during exercise it is important to drink on a schedule rather than according to thirst. Athletes should drink plenty of fluid every day, particularly before a practice session or competition. Athletes who are well hydrated have the following characteristics:

- (1) sweating begins sooner, and is more abundant
- (2) an enhanced rate of absorption of the fluids consumed during exercise.

In practical terms, this means drinking 1.5–2.5 cups (400–600 mL) of fluid 2 to 3 hours before exercise. This allows time for excess fluid to be excreted as urine before the exercise starts. To ensure complete hydration, consuming 0.5–1.5 cups (150–350 mL) of fluid about 15 minutes before exercise is recommended.

The color and amount of urine are an easy way for athletes to monitor their dehydration level. Scanty, dark urine signals a need for more fluid, in which case athletes should force themselves to drink more fluids. Plenty of clear-coloured urine usually indicates adequate hydration.

Rather than drinking large amounts of fluid at one go, it is better to drink 0.5–1.5 cups (150–350 mL) of fluid every 15 to 20 minutes, or as much as one can tolerate without feeling any discomfort.

Weight Loss Guidelines: Three Steps to Effective and Safe Weight Loss

Weight loss is not encouraged for athletes under 18 years of age. These athletes should wrestle what they weigh. Athletes losing any weight must do so under the consultation and supervision of a coach. It is recommended that you purchase a scale to regularly monitor your weight. Do not drop more than the weight class under your current body weight. For example: the weigh classes are 61 and 65 kilos, you weigh 66, drop to the 65 kilos and not 61. Not checking your weight regularly

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leads to problems.

Determine Present Total Body Fat Percentage

Male athletes should not attempt to go below 5-7% body fat. Females should not drop below 14% fat (Walberg-Rankin, 1998). Some weigh scales provide the option measure body fat percentage

Gradually Lose Body Fat

Weight loss, when necessary, should be gradual and should not exceed 1.5% of the total body weight per week (Mirzaei, 2009). Eliminate foods that are high in calories and low in nutrition. Athletes should consume more fruits and vegetables, which are loaded with important nutrients, and are low in calories

Avoid Excessive Dehydration

Greater than 5% dehydration will compromise performance (Oppliger). The practice of sweating off or “cutting weight” should not exceed 5% of the athlete’s hydrated weight. Not more than 1% of the athlete’s weight should be lost in a sauna or steam room.