

Wrestling Tournament Suggestions For Parents

Or things you would like to know but would never think to ask

Weekend tournaments are extremely valuable to young wrestlers (and old ones, too) – they offer an opportunity to face more and better competition, and to learn from other wrestlers. Look around at just about any high school wrestler competing at the state level, and most likely they'll have a number of weekend tournaments under their belt.



But you shouldn't go unprepared -- here are a few suggestions that might make these long tournaments better for you and your wrestler:

Suggested Items for Your Wrestler

- **MP3 Player** (or CD Player) – Your wrestler will have plenty of down-time between matches, especially at large tournaments, and a pair of headphones grafted to the ears seems to make time pass more quickly. And, of course, music can be great for getting psyched for the next match.
- **The usual wrestling stuff** like singlets, shoes, headgear, jumprope, contact solution (sometimes contacts pop out during wrestling), tape, etc.
- A **small cooler** with:
 - **Gatorade** – Most tournaments will sell Gatorade or Powerade or some kind of 'ade at concessions, but it will be expensive.
 - Low-sugar **snacks**. Some tried-and-true snacks that seem to work well are Beef Jerky, grapes, bananas, Wheat Thins, string cheese, *low salt* nuts, Power Bars, turkey luncheon slices...

Note: If your wrestler is working hard to maintain weight, and if your tournament is a two-day event with weigh-ins on both days, steer clear of salted nuts, jerky, and Gatorade. The sodium in these items can cause a dramatic increase in 'water-weight'...

If your wrestler needs more food than this, consider packing a sandwich or two, or some other food they are accustomed to. Pizza and hot dogs are the most common concession items, and that's not the best fuel for optimal performance.

A Word on Tournament Nutrition

Some wrestlers find it difficult to eat regular meals during a day-long tournament, so encourage them to eat small snacks throughout the day to keep their bodies fueled.

To enhance recovery and to ensure fuel reserves are topped off, it's a good idea to eat and drink a small something within 30 minutes of completing a match.

Survival Kit for Parents

- **Padded seat** for bleachers. The ones with back support seem to work best for most people.
- A good **book**, if you're so inclined. You'll have a lot of time on your hands between matches.
- **Camera or video camera** – Win or lose, you'll want to capture this milestone for the scrapbook!
- **Money for concessions** – You will be a captive audience and they know it. At most large tournaments, brackets are posted with bout numbers, so you can sorta kinda maybe estimate the number of matches 'til your child wrestles – but you can't know how long these matches will take.

Chances are good that if you take a break to run to Wendy's, all the matches leading up to your child's match will be 15-second pins, and a fresh salad may not be worth missing his match. So, while pizza and hot dogs definitely aren't good foods for wrestlers, they may have to suffice for the long-suffering parent.

- **Money for admission** – tournament admission prices commonly range from \$5.00 to \$12.00 per day.
- Plenty of **Encouragement** – These tournaments offer the toughest competition your wrestler will face, and that's the best way to get better. Your wrestler should be commended for participating!
- **Patience** – It will be a long day in the bleachers, but this is a great opportunity for you to get to know parents and wrestlers from your own team and from other teams. If your son stays with wrestling, he'll be seeing these guys (and you'll be seeing their parents) for the next four or five years, or more.



The North Carolina wrestling community is very friendly – your son will form friendships with wrestlers from other schools that will last for years, and you'll enjoy friendships with other wrestling parents around the state. Your time at these tournaments is time well-spent!