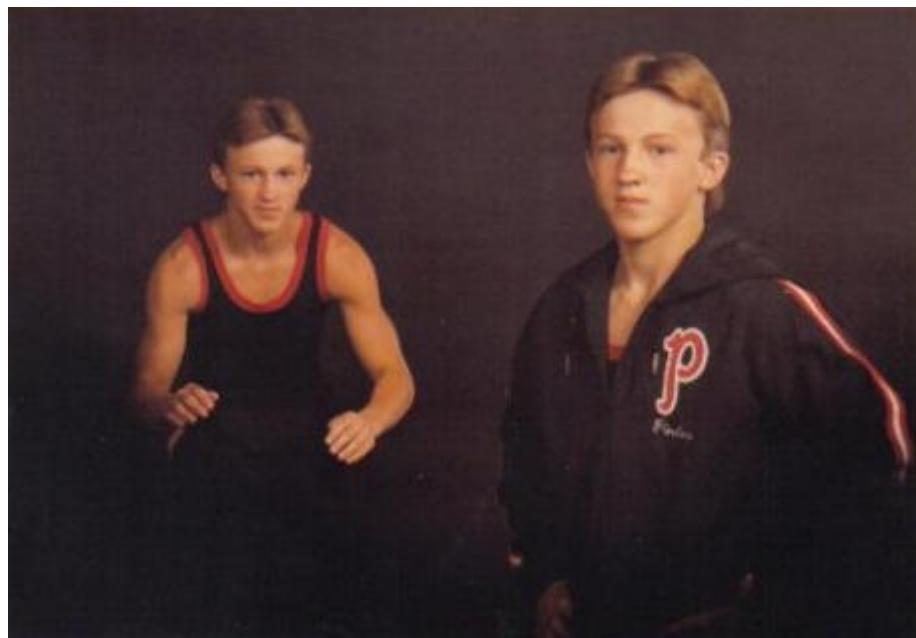


# THE ESSENTIAL WRESTLER

## How To Become A Dominant Wrestler



By Tharin Schwinefus  
<http://wrestlingforglory.blogspot.com>

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**I am not a professional. You should always seek the advice of a professional before acting on anything that has been published in this e-book.**

## **About the Author**

Tharin began his wrestling journey in the fifth grade. Tharin's father had been a high school wrestler and Tharin wanted to follow in his father's footsteps by also becoming a wrestler. Tharin was a four year letterman at Postville High School in northeast Iowa. Tharin attended Wartburg college in Waverly, Iowa.

Tharin's most notable accomplishments include:

- Voted Most Dedicated Wrestler during his junior year of high school
- Conference Champion his senior year of high school
- Sectional Champion his senior year of high school
- District Champion his senior year of high school (thereby qualifying for the 1986 Iowa State High School Wrestling Tournament)
- Voted Team Captain his senior year of high school
- Voted Most Valuable Wrestler his senior year of high school

- Team member of the 1984-85 Postville High School Wrestling Team that was inducted into the Postville Pirate Athletic Hall of Fame in 2010

As you can see I have never been an Olympic Champion, World Champion, NCAA Champion, or even a State Champion. But, I wrestled from fifth grade through my senior year of high school. I even wrestled a few matches at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa which has become a NCAA Division 3 powerhouse in collegiate wrestling.

I continue to study many aspects of wrestling from technique and conditioning to nutrition and mental toughness. This e-book can help you become a better wrestler or introduce you to wrestling if you have never wrestled.

This e-book will cover some material that I have posted on my blog <http://wrestlingforglory.blogspot.com>.

This e-book will cover some basic information about technique, conditioning, nutrition, and mental toughness as it pertains to the sport of wrestling.

## **Technique**

The most essential ingredient needed to become a dominant wrestler is great technical skill. For the most part, the wrestler who possesses the greatest technical skill will win the match. It's that simple.

I had a professor in college who gave us a tip on how to study for a test. He said quite simply, "Know everything." My advice to you for wrestling technique is the same--know everything. Learn every technique that you can and every variation that you can. You will likely never use every technique that you learn but you should still learn them all anyway. The wrestler who has more skills to choose from is likely to win the match.

The best place to learn wrestling technique is by being the member of a wrestling team and having a good coach. Your coach can teach you a lot. Your fellow wrestlers can teach you a lot as well. Pay attention! Take notes! Practice makes perfect!

You can also learn much from books and videos. I will list some books and videos later on. If you're short on cash you can find many wrestling articles online and free wrestling videos at websites like <http://www.youtube.com>. You can also see if your local library carries any books about wrestling. If you can afford it you can consider attending a wrestling camp during the summer.

I believe that some of the most important techniques and wrestling moves are also the simplest. You need to be able to do a good double leg, single leg, and high crotch takedown. You should also be able to do a good stand up, sit out, and hip heist (i.e. switch) from the bottom position. In addition, you should know how to ride your opponent, break him down, and how to pin him by using a good half nelson or arm bar. This will be your base to build upon.

Make sure you are doing each technique or move correctly and remember that the more you practice each technique the better you'll become at it and the easier you'll be able to effectively utilize that technique in a wrestling match.

## Conditioning

In the section on technique I stated, "For the most part, the wrestler who possesses the greatest technical skill will win the match. It's that simple." Well, it's not *quite* that simple. If both wrestlers have equal skill level then the match will probably be won by the wrestler who is in the best condition. The great wrestling legend Karl Gotch said, "Conditioning is the greatest hold." In other words, no matter how great one's technique is, he can still be beaten if he's not in great condition.

But, how does a wrestler get into great condition? Well, it's helpful to remember that wrestling is primarily an anaerobic sport. Anaerobic simply means "without air" or "without oxygen." Wrestling a match is very different from performing an aerobic activity like running a

marathon. Wrestling requires strength, power, agility, and stamina. Simply stated, running five miles every day is not going to get you into the best wrestling condition. That's not to say you won't use your aerobic system at all. But, a wrestling match is nothing like a marathon.

Dr. William Wong had this to say about wrestling: "Olympic Freestyle wrestling is the best example of an anaerobic sport. Freestyle wrestlers are the best conditioned athletes in all of sport both aerobically and anaerobically, as the demands of their skill are so great. Conditioning for anaerobic ability involves near endless repetition of exercise drills involving one burst of energy after another. Athletes wind up breathless, nauseous, dizzy and the number of precious energy producing centers of the cells known as mitochondria just build and build. This increases both the stores of potential energy as well as the actual furnaces to burn that energy in the cells. The result is longer, stronger more controlled and able bursts of skill performance."

I am not a strength and conditioning coach, a fitness guru, or a scientist. I will provide a list of resources later on. Once again, you need to read articles and books to educate yourself. And, <http://www.youtube.com> has many videos related to strength and conditioning as well.

Remember that each sport is unique and requires a different strength and conditioning plan. Of course, one of the best ways to develop good wrestling conditioning is to simply engage in hard, live wrestling.

Make sure to educate yourself about the different energy systems that are used in different sports. And, be sure to read some articles about periodization. Periodization involves breaking up your training year into small cycles where you focus on strength, power, endurance, etc. for a given amount of time.

## **Nutrition**

Wrestling is a sport that involves competitors being in different weight classes. Therefore, some wrestlers find it beneficial to diet (i.e. cut weight) thinking they will have a competitive advantage in a lower weight class. This is not always the case but this notion seems to

persist. Regardless of whether or not a wrestler decides to cut weight or not he should still practice proper nutrition to ensure that he performs at top level.

A few simple things to keep in mind:

- One pound is equal to approximately 3,500 calories
- If you consume 500 fewer calories per day then you will lose one pound per week (500 calories per day x 7 days = 3,500 calories per week equating to one pound)
- One gram of carbohydrate has four calories
- One gram of protein has four calories
- One gram of fat has nine calories
- Your body's preferred source of fuel for energy is carbohydrates like bread, cereals, rice, potatoes, and pasta

A simple formula regarding weight loss, weight gain, and weight maintenance:

- Take your body weight x 10 to find the number of calories to eat per day to lose weight (e.g. a wrestler weighing 150 lbs. would need to consume 1,500 calories per day to lose weight)
- Take your body weight x 15 to find the number of calories to maintain your weight (e.g. if a wrestler cuts down to 120 lbs. he could then eat approximately 1,800 calories per day and still maintain that weight)
- If you want to gain weight then take your body weight x 20 to find the number of calories needed each day to gain weight

As you can see fat contains more than twice the number of calories per gram than carbohydrate or protein. So, if you want to lose weight then cutting down on fats will help. Fat isn't all bad. Fat helps in the production of hormones like testosterone and does many other good things in the body so don't eliminate it entirely.

When I wrestled in high school I ate a lot of fruit, potatoes, plain unsweetened oatmeal, plain unbuttered bread and toast, vegetables, milk, yogurt, and lean meat.

Check out my blog and read articles and books to learn more about wrestling nutrition.

Cutting weight can be dangerous if a wrestler attempts to lose weight through fasting and dehydration. My advice is to eat a sensible diet, drink plenty of water, and to forget cutting weight. If you decide to cut weight then read articles about how to go about doing it safely.

Keep your pre match meal light and carbohydrate based.

## **Mental Toughness**

The legendary Dan Gable said, "The 1st period is won by the best technician. The 2nd period is won by the kid in the best shape. The 3rd period is won by the kid with the biggest heart."

Wrestling is a very demanding sport. At times it can be hard to keep going if you're getting fatigued toward the end of a match.

Sometimes wrestlers get nervous before a match and aren't focused when they step onto the mat.

Points to consider:

- How can a wrestler deal with pre match nervousness?
- What should a wrestler's strategy when he steps onto the mat?
- How can a wrestler get psyched up?
- How can a wrestler stay focused?
- How can a wrestler get and stay motivated throughout the entire season?

When I wrestled I had trouble with running out of gas toward the end of a match and losing my focus. I often had no strategy at all when I stepped onto the mat for my match. I was nervous before matches at times. I didn't always feel motivated to wrestle. How can problems like this be fixed?

Here are a few ideas to keep in mind:

- Using positive self-suggestions before a match can be helpful (e.g. I know I can beat this guy).
- Having a pre match routine that you follow can be helpful (e.g. warming up in a certain way before each match).
- Visualize the moves you want to execute in the match. Visualize beating that opponent and having your arm raised in victory.

- Set goals to stay motivated (e.g. I will drill 50 double leg takedowns in practice tonight. Or, I will be Conference Champion this season.)
- Let any losses be a learning experience and motivation for you to work even harder to achieve success.
- If you are in excellent condition and you know that your technical skills are good then you will likely be more confident than if either of those areas is lacking.
- Sometimes it helps to have a strategy (e.g. I will attempt a double leg takedown early in the 1st period. And, I will choose the bottom position in the 2nd period and get an escape.).
- Sometimes it helps to focus on the "means" and not on the end result. Instead of focusing on the big picture of winning you can focus on getting several takedowns and several back points and then winning the match will simply take care of itself.

I hope you have enjoyed reading this e-book and have found it to be informative. Please take a look at the resources listed at the bottom.

I will leave you with some words from Dan Gable: "Once you've wrestled, everything else in life is easy."

## Resources

### Books

*Winning Wrestling Moves* by Mark Mysnyk, Barry Davis, Brooks Simpson

*The Wrestling Drill Book* by Bill Welker

*Wrestling Tough* by Mike Chapman

There are many other good wrestling books and videos available at <http://www.amazon.com>.

### Websites

<http://wrestlingforglory.blogspot.com> - my humble little blog with stories and information about all aspects of wrestling

<http://www.youtube.com> - type in Dan Gable, Tom Brands, John Smith, Cael Sanderson, wrestling technique, single leg takedown, etc.

<http://ezinearticles.com> - type in wrestling or wrestling workout and see what comes up

<http://www.grapplersgym.com>

<http://combatgrappler.com>

<http://www.dangable.com>

<http://www.dragondoor.com> - many articles about strength and conditioning

<http://www.getwrestlingstrength.com>

<http://www.wrestler-power.com>

<http://www.strengthtrainingforwrestling.com>

<http://www.themat.com> - the official website of U.S.A. Wrestling

<http://www.win-magazine.com>

<http://www.championshipproductions.com> - sells instructional wrestling videos

<http://www.workingclassfitness.com> - Matt Wiggins has free articles and economical products that can get you into great condition

<http://www.flowrestling.org>

<http://www.wrestlingsbest.com> - many free videos and other cool stuff

<http://www.sectiononewrestling.com> - click on articles

<http://foundationwrestling.com>

<http://granbysystemwrestlingvideos.com>

<http://www.mikemahler.com> - strength and conditioning

<http://www.defrancostraining.com> - strength and conditioning

<http://www.dieselcrew.com> - strength and conditioning