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## Wrestling:

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# Strength training for wrestling

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*Reprinted from USA Wrestling National Camp Training Manual*

**W**restling is a power sport. In sports, power is commonly known as explosiveness, a combination of speed and strength. The athlete overcomes the maximum weight possible in the shortest amount of time.

Explosiveness must not be limited to one body part. We must be explosive in the leg, trunk and arm movements. Increased explosive power enables the wrestler to apply a greater force to his body--in a shorter period of time.

It is important to develop all musculature of the body, and mostly those muscles needed in wrestling. I have observed in general some American wrestlers have developed muscles which are unnecessary for wrestling and serve only as surplus body weight. We must concentrate and use our muscle capability to the maximum and combine it with perfect wrestling technique.

Yes, there are many **general** programs, but most of the elite wrestlers' programs need to be based on the **individual's needs specifically relating to his wrestling performance**. Today's athlete must be willing to devote himself to a specific strength program that translates into maximum results.

Thus, an explosive speed-strength program is the answer.

*Wrestling is primarily an anaerobic sport which involves periods of quick explosive movements. Wrestling is 90 percent immediate (explosive) energy and 10 percent short term (lactic acid).*

### Motivation

It is primarily up to the individual to approach every workout in a positive manner, believing it is going to be productive. Of course, no one is productive every day, but you have to go into practice with the attitude that you are going to come away from it a little farther ahead than you were the day before.

### Three Types of Weight Training

1. Low reps with high weight--for bulk strength: one to five repetitions.
2. Medium reps with 65 percent to 85 percent of maximum repetition --for explosive speed, strength and endurance: six to 12 repetitions.
3. High reps with low weight--for muscle endurance: 12 to 20 repetitions.

To incorporate the explosive speed-strength program we will be utilizing the medium-range category most of the time.

### Overload Principle

We all know that there must be an overload in order to develop strength, whether this overload is in the form of the increased resistance, increased repetitions, increased amounts of work, or more work in the same amount of time. Each time we create an overload (after the body has adapted to the previous load), the nervous system responds with renewed excitability. But if the program remains static for more than several weeks or months, the nervous system becomes deadened and the physiological gains will not occur.

Probably everyone has experienced fatigue and boredom from doing one thing over and over in the same way. This is what happens to the nervous system when the same exercise is repeated in the same manner all of the time. And because of this, your training program must have variety for the most effective development of strength. Thus, "training cycles" or a periodization system needs to be maintained.

### Training Cycles

Greco and Freestyle wrestlers reach their peak levels two times during the year, in August for World/Olympic competition and in November for World Cup competition (see Figure 1).

1. The lowest level of training is probably December through January when practice begins.
2. The level continues to increase in preparation for Trials.
3. After a short revitalization period, the athletes will maximize their training to reach peak level attained prior to the World/Olympic championships.
4. Peak level is maintained for World Cup competition.

### Flexibility

Flexibility is one of the best friends an athlete can have. If you are really loose you can move into better wrestling positions and greatly reduce the possibility of injury. We

know that flexibility will be maintained or increased if the following criteria are observed during the performance of an exercise.

1. Raise and lower the resistance through the muscles' full range of movement.
2. Exercise muscle antagonists.
3. Emphasize the lowering of the weight.
4. Perform specific exercises designed to improve strength and flexibility.

### Sequencing

Sequencing of exercises in a training session is important. It is usually best to do light, fast movements (such as power cleans) first. They should be followed by exercises with heavy weights (i.e., squats). Last should be secondary movements (i.e., rows and curls).

### Sets and Repetitions

The elite athlete will want to

emphasize high reps (eight to 12) and a moderate number of sets (three to five) per muscle group. Over a period of time, a wrestler should experience significant gains in explosive speed-strength without significant increase in weight. The athlete must remember to overload the muscle and reach momentary muscle fatigue. Gains are achieved while struggling with those last two to three reps. "Sticking" to the program is extremely important.

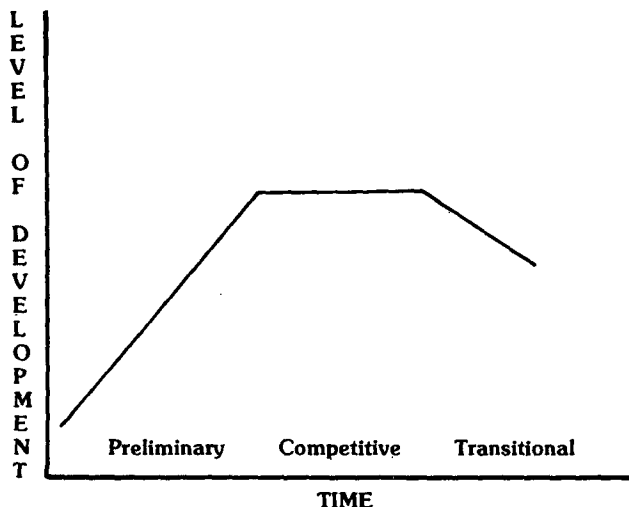
### Recovery Time

Recovery time between sets during the off-season can be a slower pace (i.e., two to three minutes), but during the season should be less than 90 seconds between sets. (Note: no muscle group should be trained on consecutive days.)

### Circuit Training

Circuit training is good to "flush" your body in the off-season program, and is a must for in-season training.

Figure 1. Traditional System of Yearly Planning



### Pre-Test Exercises

Pre-Test Needed to Establish Base

	Maximum Repetition				
<b>I. Overall</b>					
Power Cleans	Max at 5 repetitions/and Max # of reps with bodyweight				
Pull Ups*	Max # of reps				
<b>II. Chest</b>					
Bench Press	1RM				
<b>III. Shoulders</b>					
Military Press	1RM				
<b>IV. Triceps</b>					
Dips	Max # of reps				
<b>V. Back</b>					
Hyperextensions	Max reps with lbs. (if possible)				
<b>VI. Legs</b>					
Back Squat	Max at 5 reps				
<b>*Pullup Test</b>	<b>52kg</b>	<b>62kg</b>	<b>74kg</b>	<b>90kg</b>	<b>90kg+</b>
Excellent	24	24	23	19	16
Good	20	20	19	16	10
Satisfactory	16	16	15	11	05

Circuit training involves at least two exercises for each major muscle with no rest between sets.

### Plyometrics

Lower body plyometrics (jumps) are an outstanding explosive-speed developer for wrestlers. Bunny hop and side to side movements at three sets with eight to 12 reps are sufficient. One should not go into a full squat position; rather jump again as soon as the feet hit the floor. Bunny hops will enhance speed and

strength in the vertical movements a wrestler uses. Side to sides will help achieve quickness in horizontal moves such as countering.

### Specificity

It is of the utmost importance to train with movements similar to those used in wrestling. Power clean is the best example, as it reflects movements common to the sport. For working the tricep-shoulder-chest area, the incline bench press, rather than bench press, is more

valuable to the wrestler.

### Workouts Per Week

In-season training is characterized by working out two to three times per week with fewer sets per muscle group, but a greater number of repetitions. Off-season training involves lifting three to six times per week at approximately 65 percent to 90 percent 1 RM with a greater emphasis on power movements. Remember at least 65 percent of 1 RM must be used to increase strength.

Cycle I - Acquisition Phase Off-Season Weight Program			Cycle II - Prep Phase In-Season Program		
EXERCISE	SETS	REPETITION	MUSCLE GROUPS & EXERCISE	SETS	REPETITION
Power Clean	5 sets	5-8 reps	<b>Overall</b>		
			Power Clean	3 sets	5-8 reps
			Pull-Ups	3 sets	10-20 reps
Incline/Bench Press	5-6 sets	6-8/8-12 reps	<b>Chest</b>		
Flies or Dumbbell Incline	3 sets	10 reps	Bench Press	3 sets	10-12 reps
			Incline Press	3 sets	10-12 reps
			Dumbbell Flies	2-3 sets	10-12 reps
			Dumbbell Incline	2-3 sets	10-12 reps
Military Press	3 sets	8-10 reps	<b>Shoulders</b>		
Press Behind Neck	2-3 sets	8-10 reps	Military Press	3 sets	8-12 reps
Lateral Raises	2-3 sets	10 reps	Press Behind Neck	2-3 sets	8-12 reps
Tricep Extension	3 sets	10 reps	Dumbbell Press	2-3 sets	10 reps
			Lateral Raises	2-3 sets	10 reps
Bentover Rows	3 sets	8-10 reps	<b>Triceps</b>		
Lat Pulldowns	3 sets	8-10 reps	Tricep Push Downs	2-3 sets	10 reps
Cable Rows	3 sets	8-10 reps	Supine Tricep Extension	2-3 sets	10 reps
			Dips	2-3 sets	10 reps
Pull-Ups	3 sets	8-20- reps	<b>Back</b>		
			Lat Pulldown	3 sets	10 reps
Curls	3 sets	10-12 reps	Cable Rowing	2-3 sets	10 reps
			Bentover Rows	2-3 sets	10 reps
			Hyperextensions	2-3 sets	10-12 reps
			Good Mornings	3 sets	10-12 reps
Back Hyperextensions	3 sets	10-12 reps	<b>Biceps</b>		
Good Mornings	3 sets	10-12 reps	Standing Curls	2-3 sets	10 reps
			Preacher Curls	2-3 sets	10 reps
			Dumbbell Curls	2-3 sets	10 reps
Squats	3-5 sets	8-12 reps	<b>Legs</b>		
Leg Extension	3 sets	8-12 reps	Squats	3 sets	8-12 reps
Leg Curls	3 sets	8-12 reps	Leg Press	3 sets	10-12 reps
			Hip Press	3 sets	10-12 reps
			Leg Extension	3 sets	10-12 reps
			Leg Curl	3 sets	10-12 reps
Plyometrics	3 sets	8-12 reps	Plyometrics (lower body)	3 sets	8-12 reps