

# FAQs

## **WHEN DOES THE SEASON START? HOW LONG IS THE SEASON?**

The wrestling season starts in early November. Our Pre-K and K program runs about six weeks, from early November to mid-January. The grade school program starts in late November and runs 10-12 weeks, depending on participation in late season tournaments.

Both groups practice two days a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

## **WHAT EQUIPMENT DOES MY CHILD NEED? WHERE DO I GET IT?**

Shorts and a t-shirt are normal attire for practice. If your child is just starting out, wrestling shoes are helpful but not required; practicing in socks is fine.

When participating in tournaments, singlets and headgear are typically required. From a safety standpoint, we recommend wrestling shoes, a singlet, and headgear.

Wrestling gear is fairly inexpensive and can be found in a number of places, most commonly your local sporting goods store.

You can often track down used gear from older wrestlers. Contact the Head Coach or a Board member to learn more about equipment opportunities.

## **DO I NEED TO STAY AT PRACTICE?**

Parents are encouraged but not required to stay at practice. If you wish to be in the wrestling room during practice, you are required to complete a background check through Community Education. Please see a board member if this is something you are interested in.

## **CAN GIRLS PARTICIPATE?**

Yes, and we encourage as many girls as possible to enjoy the sport of wrestling.

## **WHAT IS AN OPEN TOURNAMENT AND HOW DOES IT WORK?**

An open tournament simply means the tournament is open to any individual wrestler who would like to compete. Open tournaments are held around the state of Minnesota throughout the season, as well as in other states. Many Cannon Falls/Randolph Mat Rats wrestlers compete in tournaments in neighboring states.

To foster a strong team dynamic, CF/R Mat Rats designates a number of open tournaments in Minnesota as coach-supported. We encourage you to bring your wrestlers to these tournaments, but ultimately where you choose to compete is up to you.

MN/USA registration is not required unless it's a sanctioned MN/USA tournament or state qualifier.

Most meets are run with 4 wrestlers in a group competing in a round-robin format.

## **HOW DO WEIGH-INS WORK?**

Weigh-ins are simple and are conducted prior to the start of a meet. Officials weigh-in athletes so wrestlers can be placed with other athletes their weight and age.

The athlete must check-in and get a weigh-in card. The athlete must weigh-in with only a singlet on. Leave your weigh-in card with the officials; this is what tournament organizers use to create brackets.

## **WHAT IS A SKIN CHECK?**

Skin checks are performed during weigh-ins before a match. Your athlete will need to be free of any contagious skin irritations to compete. The athlete wears a singlet pulled down to the waist for the skin check.

Finger nail length is also checked at this time. It's a good idea to keep a nail clipper in your bag.

## **WHAT ABOUT HYGIENE?**

Every athlete is encouraged to maintain a high level of cleanliness and hygiene at all times. Athletes should shower after every practice and meet to help prevent the spread of skin irritations.

## **WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO A MEET?**

- Headgear
- Two singlets if possible
- Spare underwear
- Nail clipper
- Water bottle
- Loose, comfortable warm-up clothes
- Low-sugar snacks like bananas and other fruits, nuts, granola or protein bars, cheese sticks, beef jerky, etc.
- Copy of registration if you pre-registered online
- MN/USA or NYWA card for sanctioned events

## **WHEN IS MY CHILD READY TO WRESTLE IN MEETS?**

Generally, as soon as they feel comfortable on the mat. They should have a basic understanding of the rules before competing.

## **HOW DOES A MATCH WORK?**

A match is between 2 athletes of similar weight and age. Matches are up to 3 periods long and a winner is determined by most points or pin fall. Referees at open tournaments are often volunteer parents or high school wrestlers. A parent and/or a coach fill the coaching role for the athlete during the match.

## **WHAT IF I CAN'T COACH MY CHILD?**

Unfortunately, CF/R Mat Rats cannot supply coaches at every meet. If you do not feel qualified to coach, you should choose meets our coaches and volunteer coaches have added to the coach-supported calendar, and we will do everything we can to make sure a coach is mat-side for your wrestler's match. It is helpful to us if you also let a coach know you desire coaching support.

You may also contact the head coach to learn where coaches will be coaching each weekend.

## **HOW DO I LEARN MORE ABOUT MOVES?**

Watching practice can be a great way to learn the moves in wrestling. Folkstyle wrestling is the most common form of wrestling your athlete will participate in. To learn more, contact the Head Coach for resources and training opportunities.

## **WHAT IF MY CHILD AND I AREN'T READY FOR A MEET?**

No worries! There are many meets throughout the season and opportunities to compete. We encourage your athlete to compete when they feel ready.

## **HOW LONG DOES A MEET LAST?**

Meets generally run 2-3 hours unless you're at a state meet. Generally, the youngest wrestlers are first to compete, and athletes are free to leave after their awards are handed out.

## **HOW DO I KNOW WHEN MY KID IS DONE FOR THE SEASON?**

The athletes are encouraged to compete as long as they are having fun and staying safe. The folkstyle season generally wraps up each year in the spring.

## **HOW DO I GET MORE INVOLVED?**

Contact a coach or board member to learn more about the program.

## **WHAT ARE YOUR VOLUNTEERING AND FUNDRAISING EXPECTATIONS?**

It takes a village! We expect every family to contribute to the program in some fashion or another. We can always use a hand with coaching, tournament prep, practice prep, apparel, and so on.