

How Can I Wrestle In College?

The following are some basic guidelines for Fountain-Fort Carson parents and wrestlers to be aware of throughout their journey, in this extremely tough, yet rewarding sport.

I have been very successful in placing student-athletes in excellent academic and wrestling programs, however, the number one ingredient they all possessed; were very strong commitment to their academics as well as the year round training and competition schedule to achieve their highest human potential in wrestling.

Things to think about:

First, you need to decide what level of competition you wish to strive for. There are a number of thoughts that go into this process.

Second, when picking a school, make sure it has the program or degree that you want to study before you go any further. You have this degree for life.

Third, once you have narrowed it down then you must figure out if you would like to start on the team as a true freshman or sit the bench for a few years. Some programs have the top one percent recruited every year which creates a tremendous amount of depth, so the opportunity to wrestle right away may not come until your junior year. Are you willing to wait?

Lastly, money may matter. If the amount of money offered is important versus the quality of the program then always go to the program giving the most money.

*Example #1: A 50% scholarship at the University of Oklahoma or Michigan is not a lot when considering out of state tuition and travel to and from school during breaks. Tuition, fee's, books, room and board may run somewhere in the range of \$20,000-\$30,000 for those schools and the other 50% would have to come from student loans which could mean \$15,000 per year. **NOTE:** Figures are not exact.*

*Example #2: A 50% scholarship at Adams State, Western State, U.N.C, or CSU-Pueblo is a lot better value when considering it may only cost \$9000 a year to attend which includes; tuition, fees, books, and room and board. This would mean the family only had to come up with \$4500 per year through student and/or parent loans. **NOTE:** Figures are not exact.*

Level of competition, do you or will you measure up?

Below is a list of all the wrestling classifications at the college level in the United States. Each division is broken down into a bulleted format to help simplify what needs to happen for you to compete at that specific level. Please refer below:

NCAA Division I

- You must have the grades to wrestle in a Big 10, Big 12, Pac-10, or Ivy League University. This means 3.0 GPA is good, and a 2.8 GPA is accepted with a comparable ACT (18 minimum for NCAA D1 Clearinghouse). *The higher the GPA, the lower the ACT scores in order to pass the NCAA Clearinghouse (sliding scale).*
- Must have 16 core courses....Fountain-Ft. Carson automatically meets these requirements when you graduate.
- You must have beaten and/or competed within a point or two of top opponents that are nationally recognized.
- Multiple individual State High School Championship titles or placing at the high school state tournament 3-4 years in a row.
- **A year round wrestler who competes in national events and excelled/medaled, such as; Fargo, ND – Cadet and Junior Nationals, High School Senior Nationals (Junior or Senior year), and USAW Las Vegas Western Regional's.**
- A scholarship that covers 50%-80% of your tuition, fees, books, meals, and possibly room and board at this level is usually reserved for the elite level wrestlers who meet all the above criteria. It is very rare that anyone will receive a full athletic scholarship to a top 25 program.
- *The potential to earn a full academic scholarship comes once the athlete has achieved All-American status at the NCAA DI tournament in March.*
- Ivy League athletic programs do not give athletic scholarships they give need based aide and grants.
- You can walk on and try out for the team.
- The commitment level is 1-2 training sessions a day, August through March. There are high expectations to assist with summer camps and train during the summer months.

NCAA Division II

- You also need to have strong grades to compete in the RMAC comprising some of the following local institutions: Adams State, Western State, CSU-Pueblo, Ft. Hayes, New Mexico Highlands, Mesa State, and Kearny. 2.0 or better GPA with a minimum of 17 on the ACT as well.
- Individual State High School Title(s) or placing at the high school state tournament 1-2 years in a row.
- Year round wrestlers who competes in national events and excels/medals, such as; Fargo, ND – Cadet and Junior Nationals, High School Nationals (Junior or Senior year), USAW Las Vegas Western Regionals, USAW Rocky Mountain Regionals, USAW National Events, and USAW State Events.
- A scholarship that covers 50%-80% of your tuition, fees, books, meals, and possibly room and board at this level usually reserved for the elite level wrestlers who meet all the above criteria.
- **The potential to earn a full scholarship comes once the athlete has achieved All-American status at the NCAA DII tournament in March.**
- You can walk on and try out for the team.

NCAA DIII

- You also need to have strong grades to compete as DIII does not give athletic scholarships. They only give academic scholarships, grants, and student loans to help offset costs.
- Individual State High School Title(s) or placing at the high school state tournament 1-2 years in a row.
- Year round wrestlers who competes in national events and excels/medals, such as; Fargo, ND – Cadet and Junior Nationals, High School Nationals (Junior or Senior year), USAW Las Vegas Western Regional's, USAW Rocky Mountain Regional's, USAW National Events, and USAW State Events.
- You can walk on and try out for the team.

NAIA

- You also need to have good grades to compete in the NAIA level is a 2.0 GPA or better GPA with a minimum of 17 on the ACT as well.
- Individual State High School Title(s) or placing at the high school state tournament 1-2 years in a row.
- Year round wrestlers who competes in national events and excels/medals, such as; Fargo, ND – Cadet and Junior Nationals, High School Nationals (Junior or Senior year), USAW Las Vegas Western Regional's, USAW Rocky Mountain Regional's, USAW National Events, and USAW State Events.
- A scholarship that covers 50%-80% of your tuition, fees, books, meals, and possibly room and board at this level usually reserved for the elite level wrestlers who meet all the above criteria
- **The potential to earn a full scholarship comes once the athlete has achieved All-American status at the NAIA tournament in March.**
- You can walk on and try out for the team.

JUCO (Junior College)

- You must have a minimum of a 2.0 GPA and a 15-16 on the ACT.
- The goal of a Junior College program is to place you in a higher competitive college level once you brought your grades up to the NCAA D1/DII standards and passed the NCAA Clearinghouse.
- Individual State High School Title(s) or placing at the high school state tournament 1-2 years in a row.
- Year round wrestler(s) who compete(s) in national events, such as; Fargo, ND – Cadet and Junior Nationals, High School Nationals (Junior or Senior year), USAW Las Vegas Western Regional's, USAW Rocky Mountain Regional's, USAW National Events, and USAW State Events.
- A scholarship that covers 50%-80% of your tuition, fees, books, meals, and possibly room and board at this level usually reserved for the elite level wrestlers who meet all the above criteria. It is very rare to receive a full athletic scholarship in wrestling at the Junior College level.
- **The potential to earn a full scholarship comes once the athlete has achieved All-American status at the JUCO tournament in March.**
- You can walk on and try out for the team.

Four Year Plan and Recruitment Process

NOTE: This four year outlined plan is not an exact science. There are other tournaments that your son may wish to attend. Also please understand that you and your family have only one shot at life and your son's high school career is very important.

Just because you are very successful in high school, does not mean that you will be equally successful in college. You must work even harder in college for everything you wish to achieve. All college coaches want hard working athletes, period.

Sacrifice is a must for the whole family when striving to be successful in academics and athletics. Are you willing to drop the video games to achieve something that will last a lifetime? Anything worth doing requires great sacrifice as nothing worthy is free.

Good luck in your endeavor!

Freshman year:

- It starts with your commitment level during your freshman year of high school.
- Everything you did or did not do begins to affect your ability to wrestle at the college level. If you did not wrestle 50-200 matches prior to high school, then you need to play catch up in the spring and summer of this year (50+ matches should be a goal).
- Drill your technique 2000 times or more this year.
- Compete in state freestyle and Greco-Roman tournaments so you can qualify for the Colorado National team.
- Compete and win Western (Las Vegas, NV) Regional's, Rocky Mountain Regional's, Southern Plains in order to have better seeding for USAW Junior Freestyle/Greco Nationals (July)
- A "Blue Chip" athlete during this year are looking to place at the state wrestling tournament and medal in Fargo, ND during Cadet Nationals.
- Attending team camps.
- **This is where your transcripts begin to count, make the best of your time in class.**

Sophomore year:

- See Freshman year
- Training for the Colorado State Wrestling tournament held in February and “win it!”
- Watch video and observe techniques and strategies that succeed on the national level.
- Strive to perfect all aspects of your technique on the feet, mat, and top positions. A goal would be to hit your favorite technique 3000 times this year.
- Compete in state tournaments so you can qualify for the Colorado National team.
- Compete and win Western (Las Vegas, NV) Regional’s, Rocky Mountain Regional’s, Southern Plains in order to have better seeding for USAW Cadet/Junior Freestyle/Greco Nationals (July).
- Attend wrestling camps with the team as well as possibly a University you would like to attend.

Junior year:

- Sign up for the ACT (take it three times for your best score).
- You need to start the NCAA Clearinghouse process online (<https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/>) there is a **\$60 fee:**
 - Register with the eligibility center.
 - Make sure you are still on course to meet core-course requirements (verify you have the correct number of core courses and that the core courses are on your high school's 48-H with the eligibility center).
 - After your junior year, have your high school guidance counselor send a copy of your transcript. If you have attended any other high schools, make sure a transcript is sent to the eligibility center from each high school.
 - When taking the ACT or SAT, request test scores to be sent to the eligibility center (the code is "9999").
 - Begin your amateurism questionnaire.
- Marketing
 - Fill out online interest forms for the school(s) of your choice.
 - Make a DVD of 5 matches, the matches should consist of:

- Your toughest competition that you had success with. Not some wrestler you pounded 15-0 in the first round of a tournament unless the kid was ranked nationally or in-state.
 - If you lose to a nationally ranked kid by a point or two and you performed well place this match on the DVD.
 - If you had been losing early in a tough match and came back to win. This shows tenacity, toughness, competitiveness, and the ability to maintain composure in tough situations.
 - Write a wrestling/academic resume that highlights your accomplishments that will be sent with your DVD:
 - Class rank
 - Athletic awards and accomplishments by year
 - Academic awards
 - Community service
- Continue to train year round perfecting and learning new techniques.
- Training to win the *Colorado State High School Wrestling Title*, in February.
 - Goals:
 - Do not give up a takedown the entire season.
 - 90+ takedowns
 - 20 pins
- Compete and place in the “High School Junior Nationals” (Colligate) usually held the first week of April.
- Compete in local state Freestyle/Greco tournaments so you can qualify for the Colorado National team.
- Compete and win Western (Las Vegas, NV) Regional’s, Rocky Mountain Regional’s, Southern Plains in order to have better seeding for USAW Junior Freestyle/Greco Nationals (July)
- Compete in Junior Duals
- Win Junior Nationals in either Freestyle or Greco-Roman
- **JULY 1st (heading into your senior year) is the official contact period for college coaches. This is when they can call you once a week if they are interested in you as an athlete.**

Senior year:

- NCAA Clearinghouse process online is up to date:
 - When taking the ACT or SAT, request test scores to be sent to the eligibility center (the code is "9999").

- Complete amateurism questionnaire and sign the final authorization signature online on or after April 1 if you are expecting to enroll in college in the fall semester. (If you are expecting to enroll for spring semester, sign the final authorization signature on or after October 1 of the year prior to enrollment.)
- Have your high school guidance counselor send a final transcript with proof of graduation to the eligibility center.
- EARLY SIGNING PERIOD BEGINS IN NOVEMBER FOR WRESTLING.
- Marketing
 - Fill out online interest forms for the schools of your choice.
 - Make a DVD of 5 matches, the matches should consist of:
 - Your toughest competition that you had success with. Not some wrestler you pound 15-0 in the first round of a tournament unless the kid was ranked nationally or in-state.
 - If you lose to a nationally ranked kid by a point or two and you performed well.
 - Write a wrestling/academic resume that highlights your accomplishments that will be sent with your DVD:
 - Class rank
 - Athletic awards and accomplishments
 - Academic awards
 - Community service
- Schedule non-official and/or official school visits (NCAA rules state you can only have 5 official visits, choose wisely). Official visits are when the school is footing the bill to include hotels, food, and possibly travel expenses.
- Continue to train year round perfecting and learning new techniques.
- Train to win the **Colorado State High School Wrestling Title**, in February.
 - Goals:
 - Do NOT give up a takedown the entire season.
 - 125+ takedowns
 - 25 pins
- Compete and WIN the “High School Senior Nationals” (Colligate) usually held the first week of April.
- Compete in local state freestyle/Greco tournaments so you can qualify for the Colorado National team.

- Compete and win Western (Las Vegas, NV) Regional's, Rocky Mountain Regional's, Southern Plains in order to have better seeding for USAW Junior Freestyle/Greco Nationals (July).
- WIN Junior Nationals in either Freestyle or Greco-Roman

Singing the Letter of Intent and what that means:

*Signing the letter of intent means you will compete for said university or college. **All scholarships offered are renewed every year in college.** If you excel once you are in college they may give you **MORE** money. If you decline in performance or get into trouble either academically or socially then they can take **AWAY** money from you scholarship.*

Lastly, my intent of this was to inform and educate the Fountain Fort Carson wrestling community on what it takes to compete at a college or university. All information is subject to change and each college or university has different things they look for when recruiting athletes to attend their university team

Thank you for your commitment to the team,

Coach James