

Welcome to Blaine Youth Wrestling

In this handbook, you will find details about the club and the sport of wrestling.

Blaine Wrestling Takedown Club is a non-profit organization run under the direction of a booster club. The club is funded by a portion of each member's registration fee, proceeds generated from our annual wrestling tournaments, and other fundraising activities. Donations are always welcome, as the club receives no public funding.

Philosophy

The coaching staff is dedicated to preparing children for life's experiences through the sport of wrestling. We will promote the values of sportsmanship, discipline, integrity, self-esteem, physical and mental conditioning, with an overriding goal of having fun.

Volunteer Requirement

Each youth wrestling family is required to volunteer a minimum of 2 shifts (approximately 4 hours total) during the season. Families who do not meet this requirement will be charged a **\$100 volunteer fee** at the end of the season. Multiple volunteer opportunities will be available and communicated throughout the season to ensure everyone has the chance to fulfill their hours.

Wrestling Culture

There is a great deal of "attitude and intensity" in the sport of wrestling. With self-discipline to keep them in check, this can be a great thing. Wrestlers with good attitudes become great assets to the sport and their team. The Blaine coaching staff strives to coach with a small-step mentality. Success is not necessarily measured by the win/loss column. Wins boost the wrestler's self-confidence; losses are viewed as opportunities for improvement. The first step might be not being pinned by an opponent that has pinned you every other time, scoring a single point on an opponent that you have never scored on, or scoring your first takedown, escape, or pin. All of these accomplishments, when strung together, will result in success.

Wrestling is a very physically and mentally demanding sport. Some say it is the most demanding of all sports. *Be prepared for tears*; it happens, and there is no shame in it. Losing can be especially difficult when your wrestler makes a mistake and begins losing a match they were winning. Screaming, yelling, and criticism during a match are not the best way to help your wrestler regain their composure. Frustration and anger at losing are not uncommon, but we ask that any displays of anger by the wrestler be kept outside of public view and never occur on the wrestling mat. We would like them to focus this frustration into a desire to improve. The coaching staff would like to use the first few moments after a match to speak with the wrestler, offering constructive criticism or congratulations on a success. Please respect this time as parents and wrestlers. Your words after a match as a parent should be positive, whether they won or lost. They may feel that they have in some way let you down. If the wrestler is still

angry or frustrated, letting them leave the gym area and walking around by themselves can allow them time to cool off and regain their composure. One of life's lessons is to learn how to deal with losses, as well as successes.

Folkstyle Terminology

Two athletes square off in the middle of a mat in neutral (both standing) positions. Youth wrestlers get three (60-90 seconds each) periods to pin each other. If no one gets pinned during the match, the winner is determined by points. Points are scored by successfully completing wrestling moves. An athlete wins by a pin, which is achieved by holding both of the opponent's shoulders to the mat for two consecutive seconds. A pin ends the match. A technical fall also ends the bout. It occurs when a wrestler has a 15-point advantage over his/her opponent.

Point scoring

TAKEDOWN - 3 Points - Awarded after one of the neutral wrestlers forces their opponent down to the mat and gets behind the opponent AND becomes the offensive wrestler. Neutral to Offense is a three-point takedown.

ESCAPE - 1 point - Awarded after the defensive wrestler gets out from underneath the opponent's control and gets into the neutral position AND is facing the opponent. Defense to Neutral is a one-point escape.

REVERSAL - 2 points - Awarded after the defensive wrestler escapes the opponent's control and gains top or back position in one move, thereby becoming the offensive wrestler. Defense to Offense is a two-point reversal.

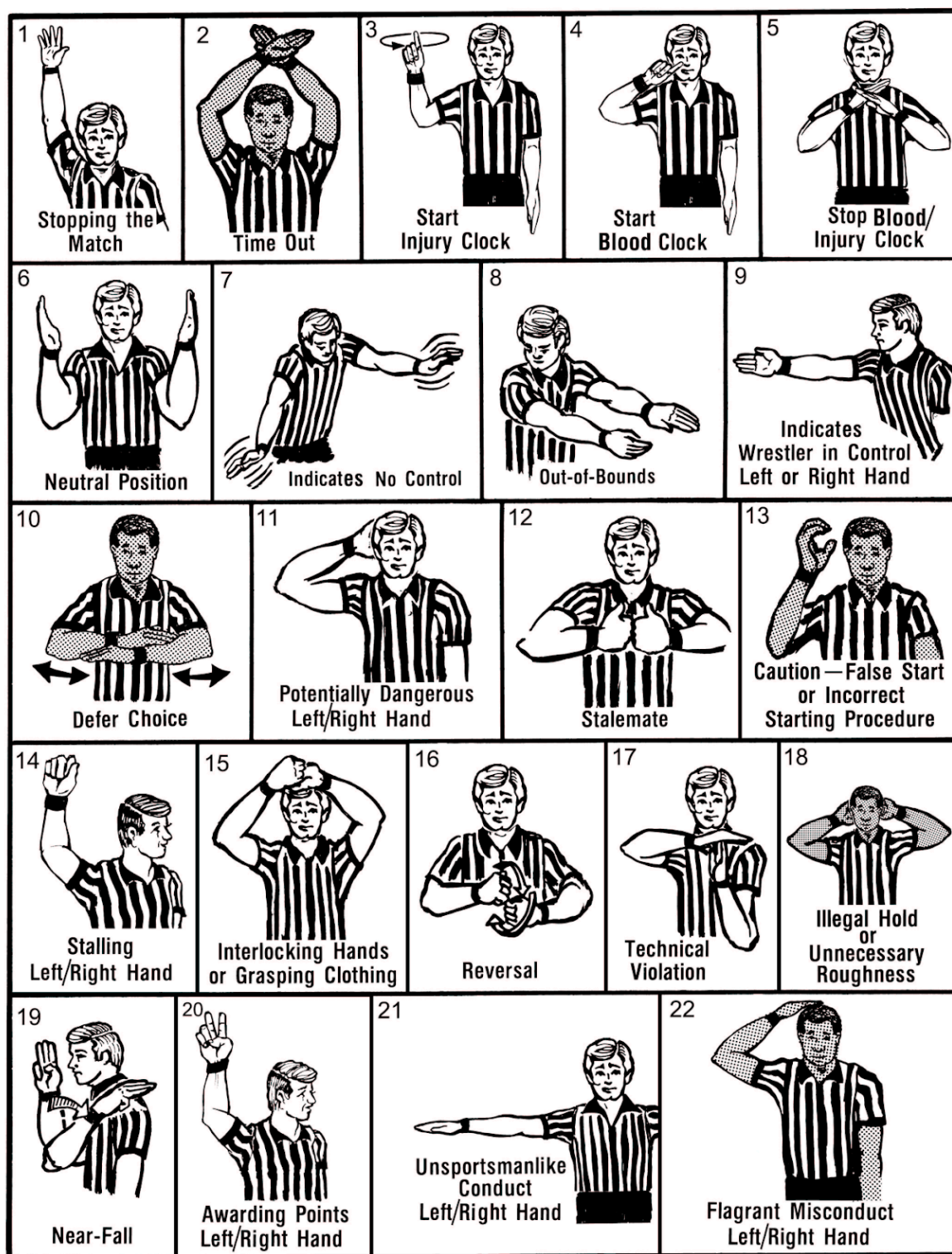
NEAR FALL - 2-4 points - Awarded after the offensive wrestler turns the defensive wrestler over onto their back and holds them at a 45-degree angle or less for between 2-5 seconds (2-5 counts by the referee). Defense on their Back.

FALL (PIN) - is met by holding an opponent's shoulders or scapulae (shoulder blades) on the wrestling mat for a prescribed period of time (2-3 seconds). A pin immediately ends the match, and the offensive wrestler is the victor.

LOCKED HANDS PENALTY - It is a penalty for the offensive wrestler to lock hands (except cradles) around the torso or both legs of the defensive wrestler unless the opponent is standing on their feet or within a near fall count. Overlapping fingers is considered locked hands by the referee and is a common warning or penalty issued by the referee in youth wrestling.

As mentioned earlier, a match is broken into three periods of one to two minutes. In the first period, both athletes start standing. In the second period, the wrestler who wins a coin flip may start in the top, bottom, or neutral position, or may defer the decision to their opponent. In the final period, the other wrestler may choose the top, bottom, or

neutral position. When athletes go out-of-bounds, the official blows the whistle and stops the action. He starts them again in the center. No scoring can occur out of bounds unless the scoring individual has two feet remaining in-bounds.



WRESTLING TOURNAMENTS

Tournaments are usually held on weekends, but participation is not mandatory.

Depending on the age and experience of your athlete, you may want to slowly introduce them to tournaments to prevent them from becoming discouraged or even burnt out. Please use your discretion if you do not feel your wrestler is ready for competition and ask a coach if you are unsure.

The club recommends that Blaine Youth Wrestlers and their families sit together as a group at tournaments. We also ask that wrestlers wear their club singlets and t-shirts at tournaments to provide unity and help the coaches easily pick them out from the hundreds of other wrestlers. Food and snacks are the responsibility of each wrestler, although most tournaments feature a concession stand. Nutrition is an important part of any athletic activity, so please help us to encourage a healthy diet.

A Blaine coach MAY be available to coach your child during each match, however, depending on the number of Blaine wrestlers present this may not always be possible. Please feel free to reach out to other wrestling parents or even older wrestlers for assistance, if necessary. After your child's bracket is complete, they should head to the awards table to receive their award (typically a medal or trophy), if not led there by a volunteer.

WHEN & WHERE

Most tournaments take place on Saturdays or Sundays and last anywhere from 2–6 hours. We'll share recommended events through our Facebook group, team website, bulletin board, and email. You can also explore additional events on:

- [The Guillotine](#)
- [MN/USA Wrestling](#)
- [NYWA](#)

Open Tournaments

This type of tournament is open to any wrestler. There are no qualifying requirements. When you arrive, your wrestler will be grouped into a small bracket with kids who are close in grade, weight, and sometimes experience level.

Qualifying Tournament

Blaine Wrestling supports athletes who want to compete at the MNUSA State Tournament. To enter any MNUSA qualifier or regional event, wrestlers must have a

valid USA Wrestling card. Wrestlers in the 6U and 8U age groups qualify for state by earning 40 season points through participation in MNUSA-sanctioned tournaments.

Wrestlers in the 10U through 16U age groups qualify by competing at a MNUSA regional tournament and placing in the top four of their bracket.

For more information on qualifying for state, please refer to these websites:

- www.mnusawrestling.org
- www.usawmembership.com/login

MN/USA WRESTLING GUIDEBOOK - Includes instructions for purchasing your athlete's membership and using USA Bracketing, the software used at tournaments to show brackets, mat assignments, and live scores.

Age groups for 2025-26 season:

6U: 2020-2021

8U: 2018-2019

10U: 2016-2017

12U: 2014-2015

14U: 2012-2013

16U: 2010-2011

Some tournaments do include a girls-only division based on the same birth years as above.

COMPETITION TEAM

Our program will attend select team events during the season. The team can consist of 20+ wrestlers, all weighing from 45lbs up to HWT (max 215 lbs.) and in PreK-6th grade. Wrestle-offs will happen periodically to determine which wrestlers are interested in trying out for the team. The wrestle-off will not be the only deciding factor. The coaches will take commitment, work ethic, attitude, and availability into consideration to make a final decision. *Not everyone will make the competition team.* For more information regarding the Competition Team and/or any other team events, talk to either the Youth Representative or the team coach.

WRESTLERS

Expectations/Code of Conduct

1. Respect will always be given to coaches, teammates, and opponents.
2. Wrestlers must listen and follow the directions of all coaches.
3. Wrestlers are not to be disruptive during practice, meets, or tournaments.
4. Come to practice prepared, dressed, and ready to wrestle.
5. At all times, wrestlers must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.
 - A) Physically and/or verbally abusive behavior is not allowed.

- B) Win or lose, wrestlers must shake hands and congratulate their opponent.
 - C) Wrestlers will behave themselves at all practices and events.
 - D) NO horseplay!
6. Blaine Wrestlers are guests at all facilities, so respect all property.

Practice

Practices will be held at Blaine High School, in the Athletic Center, in the wrestling room. Each practice, we will provide instructional time to teach wrestlers new moves, allow them to drill the moves, and wrestle live with each other to apply what they have learned. We match wrestlers up based on age, size, and experience. We will do our best to match those according to the numbers at a particular practice. We will occasionally play games during practice to keep the FUN in wrestling!

Rules for Practice

1. Show up at least 5 minutes early, dressed and prepared to start.
2. There is to be NO horseplay before, during, or after practice.
3. Do not leave the practice area without a coach's permission.
4. Report all injuries immediately to a coach.
5. Respect your teammates. (No name-calling or bullying).
6. Be positive and never say "I can't."
7. Shower after you get home, after EVERY SINGLE time you wrestle, to help prevent the spread of any bacteria or disease.

Required Equipment

Clothing

Wrestlers should wear athletic shorts/pants without zippers and a T-shirt to practice. Sweatpants are acceptable, as long as they don't have zippers or other fasteners. Long-sleeve T-shirts or compression shirts are also acceptable, while hoods are not, as they could lead to injury.

Wrestling Headgear

Headgear is not mandatory, but is suggested to protect your wrestler from getting cauliflower ear. Some tournaments may require headgear.

Mouth guards

Mouth guards are optional, but are required for any wrestler with braces.

Footwear

Wrestling shoes are optional, but we require wrestlers to bring a clean pair of sneakers to change into before stepping on our mats. This helps maintain a clean environment and reduces the chance of skin infections. Shoes worn outdoors can damage the mats and also track harmful and contagious skin diseases. The mats are cleaned daily, but you can also help us maintain a healthy and safe environment for our wrestlers. We have an exchange program where you can donate gently used items, and we resell

them at a low cost at the beginning of the season (it's a small fundraiser for the club). If you can't find the right size, consider checking "Play It Again Sports" as an alternative to investing in a new pair of wrestling shoes.

Health Issues

Wrestling Gear

Put your clothes directly into the washer after practice or a tournament, and don't leave them lying around for an extended period of time. Headgear should be cleaned with warm water and mild detergent every week.

Cauliflower Ear

This injury is caused by trauma to the cartilage of the outer ear. This can be very painful and will deform the ear. Headgear is not required at practice at this level, but is strongly suggested. *Some tournaments DO require headgear.

Clean Shoes

This is required to ensure the safety of our wrestlers. Before the wrestlers enter the wrestling room for practice, their shoe soles must be clean. The easiest way to accomplish this is by bringing a different pair of shoes to wear on the wrestling mat. *Don't ever wear your wrestling shoes outside!*

Cuts & Scrapes

If your child has cuts or scrapes, please ensure they are clean and covered before coming to practice. Also, keep fingernails clipped short to prevent scratching other wrestlers. Keeping a nail clipper in your wrestler's bag is always a good idea!

Shower

Showering with an antibacterial soap should be the FIRST thing an athlete does when they get home to prevent the spread of infections. Many families purchase Defense brand products (defensesoap.com) to use when unable to shower right away or between matches at tournaments.

Colds/Skin Checks

If you notice any lesions, sores, or rashes on the skin (especially if they are red, swollen, or draining fluid), notify the coaches and contact your healthcare provider for diagnosis and treatment. If you are sick, please refrain from attending practice until you have received treatment for your illness.

BLAINE YOUTH WRESTLING PARENT EXPECTATIONS

In an effort to provide a competitive, yet fun atmosphere for Blaine Youth Wrestlers, we are asking all families to read and abide by the following guidelines:

1. Have Fun! That is what we aim to do! We will try to challenge your child to reach beyond their “comfort level” and improve as a player, and thus, as a person. We will attempt to do this in environments that are both fun and challenging. We look forward to this process. We hope you do too. Good sportsmanship must be maintained by both parents and wrestlers before, during, and after any matches.

2. Be your child’s best fan. Be positive and support your child unconditionally. Every child learns wrestling skills at a different pace.

3. **Leave the coaching to the coaches.** You have entrusted the care of your child to these coaches, and they need to be free to do their job. If you wish to volunteer as a coach, contact the current head coach. Performance usually declines when a wrestler is confused by directions from too many sources. Advice or observations after the match is concluded should be kept positive and free of criticism.

4. Volunteer in some aspect for the annual wrestling tournaments held at Blaine High School. It will be arranged so that you don’t miss your child’s matches. We always need help with tables, concessions, setup/cleanup, entry/registration, and awards distribution.

5. Parents and wrestlers must refrain from castigating, denigrating, or providing any other non-constructive feedback to wrestlers, coaches, officials, or spectators. A violation of this provision will result in a warning or a request that the parent and/or wrestler leave the practice or the match. (Including any and all tournaments, whether the wrestler has already paid to wrestle or not).

6. Use of profanity by any wrestler, parent, or spectator will result in the immediate removal of the offending person using the profane language from the practice or match. Such behavior is also grounds for suspension or expulsion from Blaine Youth Wrestling after review by the Blaine Wrestling Takedown Club Board of Directors. For these purposes, “profanity” is defined as commonly known “swear” or “curse” words, and do not include words that would be considered profane due to religious connotations.

7. Any threats or violent physical contact by wrestlers, parents, or spectators against other wrestlers, coaches, officials, or spectators will result in the immediate removal of the offending person from the practice or match. Such behavior is also grounds for suspension or expulsion from Blaine Youth Wrestling after review by the Blaine Wrestling Takedown Club Board of Directors.

8. Due to the unique nature of wrestling and the format in which wrestling tournaments are conducted, behavior expectations can be enforced by any Blaine Youth Wrestling Coach, President, or Commissioner of the Blaine Wrestling Takedown Club Board of Directors. Hearings and/or appeals, if any, will be handled by the Blaine Wrestling Takedown Club Board of Directors.

9. Blaine youth wrestlers and their families are considered guests at Blaine High School. We ask that you respect both the space and the other teams accessing the area. The wrestling area houses storage for many other sports. Please step aside and/or move belongings so other athletes can gain access to their respective equipment rooms during youth practices.

10. If you choose to stay and watch practice, please remain in the wrestling room. Parents, siblings, and wrestlers should not be in the hallways or other areas of the school. Other sports will be in session, and we need to avoid interference.

11. Siblings who are spectators are not allowed to run on the mats.

10. Last, but not least, **please refrain from sitting on the mats and on the mat walls during practice.** This is the wrestler's field/court/course. You won't find parents sitting on the pitching mound during practice, so please do not sit on the mats.

BLAINE TOURNAMENTS

Our club hosts a high school dual and two youth tournaments each year. We would like as many of our wrestlers as possible to compete. Our tournament has a reputation for being exceptionally well-run. We owe that in large part to our wrestling family, alumni, and volunteers. With that being said, we will need your help to continue the tradition. More information will come out via email closer to the event date.

COMMUNICATION

Our main sources of general communication will be our website, www.blainewrestling.com, emails, and Facebook.

We will keep relevant information populated on our website. This will include registration, a calendar of events including changes to practice schedules, important links, upcoming tournaments, etc.

Email

Once the season begins, we will be sending out key communication via email. Any questions or concerns can be sent to: **blaineyouthwrestling@gmail.com**. A general all-club email will be sent out monthly from our booster club and a youth email will be sent out weekly from the youth representative.

General Information and Club Updates

We will provide you and your wrestler with the general information and updates during the last 5 minutes of each practice. If a practice has to be canceled ahead of time, we will post the cancellation in the calendar section of the website and will make every effort to give you several days' notice via email. If we have to cancel unexpectedly, an email will be sent and we will also post the announcement at the top of our website.

Inclement Weather

Since our wrestling season is during the winter months, from time to time, we may cancel a tournament or practice. Cancellations are decided by the host schools. If a contest is not canceled, yet you do not feel it is safe to be on the road, go with your judgment. If the Anoka-Hennepin School District cancels school or evening activities, consider practice canceled as we will not have access to the building.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your coaches or youth representatives.