

Parents,

Our preseason has come to a close and I am sure the guys are glad to be trading in the running shoes for the wrestling shoes. It was a difficult offseason for most of the guys and for the most part they embraced very well. This sport and more importantly this journey called life, requires us to get out of our comfort zone. That was the goal of preseason! Getting out of this comfort zone and the present effort it requires gives us a chance to attain a future prize.

I want you to know that our coaching staff and myself consider it a great privilege to have the opportunity to continue the molding process of your son. There are many different personalities, strengths, weaknesses, and obstacles when you have an army this large, but we take a lot of pride in keeping the end in mind when it comes to their lives.

I have three children of my own whom most of you have met or will meet throughout this year. The love we have for our own children is unparalleled. I realize that many of you have invested countless hours and lot's of money to provide the best opportunities for your son to be successful. We want to build on that foundation in every young mans life.

As the season approaches I want you to simply understand where we are coming from in our decision making for this program. Often times the unconditional love I have for my kids can be blinding and hinder me from seeing the whole picture. I want to help each of us keep in mind the big picture as we embrace this journey together. Our aim is to maximize the potential of each and every one of these young men.

1. Team is our priority: I know that wrestling is an individual sport but I am charged with leading the program. Our decisions will reflect that mentality and our decisions will be made with this in mind. This affects items such as who the starters are, travel, punishment for violating team rules, etc.
2. Progress is the goal: We often say that it's all about the journey but when the journey isn't fitting into our plans it's easy to question and become negative. I fight this on a daily basis. You are your sons' greatest advocate. In the difficult times simply encourage them to press on. I want to put the 14 best guys on the mat and sometimes it's not as easy to determine as I would like.
3. Wrestle Offs will be only a small component of selecting our starters: We will have wrestle offs throughout the year to help get an idea of who our starters might be. These matches will not be the only criteria in determining our starting line up. We are looking for guys we can count on and that want to be accountable. As we move through the year we will look at training, academics, weight management, competitive success, attitude, and more. The wrestle off is only a piece of our selection process. The best way position yourself as the starter will be to do right things with effort day in and day out and take advantage of every chance you get.

4. We will not make all the right decisions: It is impossible to make the right decisions because what's right for one kid isn't right for the other. I can assure you that we will make the best decision possible based on the information we have at the time. Good information is the key to good decision making so these decisions will include academics, strength training, our staff and whomever else we believe could guide us the best possible answer.  
From experience I can tell you that I have regretted some decisions I thought were best after the fact. It's life and hindsight is always better vision. I just want you to be confident that we take each decision seriously and are diligent to determine the best solution.
5. This journey will impact the rest of their lives: I love coaching wrestling but more importantly I love coaching people. There will be good times, tough times, great times, and even times that seem like they will never end. No matter the scenario we want this journey to positively impact the rest of their lives.

With all this in mind, I ask that before you call, question or doubt the process as we move forward that you would simply put yourself in our shoes. I will assure you that I will do the same for you.

This is going to be a great year and we have several guys who could be standing on the podium wherever it may be. On February 26<sup>th</sup>. We are better together so let's go make something great happen.

Patriot Strong,

Coach Harris