



Waconia Wildcat Football Players & Families:

Do you want to become a better overall football player this offseason and going forward? Consider joining our Youth Wrestling Program through Waconia Wrestling Club!

Why Wrestle?

Did you know that several of the stars on the Waconia H.S Varsity Football Team wrestled at one point in their youth career? Current Wildcat Varsity stars - Max McEnelly, Alex Riley, Anders Rodning, Josh Wagener, Gage Mueller and several others - honed their football skills over the years from the fundamentals they learned through our wrestling program.

All Football Players Should Wrestle! The parallel lessons between wrestling and football cannot be denied. Even if football is your primary sport, spending a year competing with the wrestling team will make you tougher, perfect your positioning, build speed and power, improve your balance, increase your foot speed, build full body strength, as well as make you an aggressive competitor on the field. All positions can benefit from wrestling because wrestling develops strong discipline – the desire to make the sacrifices necessary to become a better athlete and person. Wrestling also creates a winning attitude & mindset – the inner knowledge that you will do your best – win or lose. To put it simply, wrestling is exactly what youth football players should be doing during the football offseason. The physical and psychological demands of the sport apply directly to the football field. The wrestling mat provides more opportunities for up close & personal combat with a guy that you're trying to physically dominate, just as you would attempt to do on the gridiron. As a result, participation in wrestling is especially helpful for young linemen—the fundamentals to succeed on the mat and in the trenches go hand-in-hand.

Wrestling Can Help Make Football Safer: A wrestler learns to feel the strength and weight of an opponent. He learns to take an opponent from his feet to the ground in a controlled manner, how to get inside hand control in a tie up, and to keep his head up—a foundation of USA Football's Heads Up Movement. Wrestling requires incredible endurance, strength, and other physical traits that could lead to safer football play in youth. It acts as a natural transition into contact sports.

Is it too late for me to start wrestling in or 5th-6th grade? Absolutely not. There have been multiple examples over the past 10 years across our youth program of kids starting beyond 5th grade who have ultimately grown into tremendous wrestlers. Garrett Vos (a Waconia H.S. graduate in 2017) started wrestling in 7th grade and went onto become a 3x Minnesota High School State Medalist and a 2x State Champion! Kids that begin wrestling later in their youth careers are able to absorb the techniques of the sport faster than in their younger years and have not developed bad habits relative to technique. The gap between new kids and the competition can be closed with dedication, effort, and a continuous improvement attitude.

Famous Football Players Who've Wrestled: Ray Lewis, Baltimore Ravens, Ronnie Lott, SF 49ers, Brock Lesnar, Minn Vikings, Mike Goff, G, Cincinnati Bengals, Bob Golic, DT, Cleveland Browns, Mike Golic, DE, Philadelphia Eagles, Scottie Graham, RB, Minnesota Vikings, Archie Griffin, HB, Cincinnati Bengals, Steve Wisniewski, Bo Jackson, RB, Oakland Raiders, Alex Karras, Detroit Lions, Kirk Lowdermilk, OL, Minnesota Vikings, Randle McDaniel, G, Minnesota Vikings, Bryant McKinnie, T. Minnesota Vikings, Matt Millen, LB, Oakland Raiders, Jim Nance, FB, New England Patriots, Lorenzo Neal, FB, Tennessee Titans – NCAA Champ, Stephen Neal, OL, New England Patriots – NCAA Champ, Chuck Noll, Pittsburgh Steelers, Jonathan Ogden*, OT, Baltimore Ravens, David Patten, WR, New England Patriots, Jim Plunkett, QB, Oakland Raiders, Willie Roaf, OT, New Orleans Saints, Warren Sapp, DT Tampa Bay Buccaneers – Oakland Raiders, Mark Schlereth, OL, Washington Redskins, Tony Siragusa, DT, Baltimore Ravens, Bruce Smith, DE, Buffalo Bills / Washington Redskins, Jim Thorpe, HB, New York Giants, Adam Vinatieri, K, New England, Ricky Williams, RB, Miami Dolphins, Roddy White, WR, Atlanta Falcons – 2x SC State Champ (First Round Pick), David Pollack, Ronnie Brown, RB, Miami Dolphins, Andrew Tidwell-Neal – MN State Champ, Tristen Wirfs, RT Tampa Bay Buccaneers (State Champ).

Famous NFL & College Coaches Testimonials

- *"I have never seen a good wrestler turn out to be a bad football player." – Kirk Ferentz, National & 2x Conference Coach of the Year, Head Coach for University of Iowa Hawkeyes*
- *"I draft wrestlers because they are tough, I have never had a problem with a wrestler." -Joe Gibbs, Hall of fame Football Coach*
- *"I would have all of my Offensive Lineman wrestle if I could."-John Madden, Hall of Fame Football Coach*
- *"I love wrestlers, they are tough and they make great football players." -Bob Stoops, National Championship Football Coach, Former University of Oklahoma Head Coach*
- *"Wrestlers make coaching football easy, they have balance, coordination, and as a coaching staff we know they're tough." -Tom Osborne, College Hall of Fame Football Coach, University of Nebraska*

How to Sign-Up? Next Steps

- Check out <https://www.waconiawrestling.com> for further details on the upcoming season including practice times, locations and all other information.
- The season begins in mid-November and runs through late January with an extended season through early April.

Contact Us

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We have a tremendous K-12 wrestling tradition program here in Waconia, and we wish to continue the legacy with the next generation of kids and augment the other sports programs. We hope your kid will consider coming out for wrestling this year to have fun, work hard and grow in the sport...and to hopefully further their football career and development as well.