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How Can We Improve the Sport of Wrestling?

Wrestling stands as one of the most diverse sports that exists throughout many cultures, as it has endured immeasurable transitions and adaptations throughout the years. Modern day wrestling is derived from years of change to the sport. From fighting strategies and training to sport and entertainment, it is obvious that wrestling took part in a journey greater than the sport itself. For this reason, this sport engages a tremendous crowd of participants and followers worldwide, as it encapsulates values and lessons that shape the life of many different people. However, wrestling as a whole is still on an upwards trend, as coverage and participation is on the rise. The evolution of the sport is not yet complete, revealing areas for improvement.

To start, my experience with wrestling proves the sport as something much larger than a mere form of competition. I believe it would be beneficial to expose young wrestlers to the lessons the sport teaches you. For example, being taught to never cut corners in wrestling reinforces the idea of completing everything one does to the best of their ability. Simple, fundamental guidelines from coaches over the years will compile into habits that help young athletes live their lives meaningfully. These ideals provide wrestlers with an outline of how they believe one should complete tasks. Due to wrestling, I attack everything with maximum effort whether it is in school, work, practice, or anything else in my life. This is why I believe wrestling is such an amazing sport. It has given me a standard on how to conduct myself in all aspects of life. The principles applied within the wrestling room are essential in athletics and everyday responsibilities. Youth wrestlers and aspiring, young athletes need to hear this message, as it will attract them to the sport. They will see the payoff in all areas of their life. Furthermore,

continuing to build up youth programs nationwide will increase the depth of rosters in years to come, as well as the number of fans. Younger wrestlers are the future of the sport, and we must continue to grow the number of participants.

Additionally, widening the pool of wrestlers and making it a more inclusive sport is necessary. The past few years, women's wrestling has taken off exponentially. There are opportunities that were never before present. A few states, such as New Jersey, now have a female state tournament. There is also a female division at the Freestyle/Greco national tournament in Fargo, as well. Our world team includes females who compete at the highest level throughout the world, successfully. For a young female athlete, wrestling is now a legitimate option. There are competitions, teams, and even female world champion role models to look up to. It is up to the already established wrestling community to continue pushing for new members. The rest of the wrestling world needs to come together to continue to grow women's wrestling, not only does it help to increase the sports overall number of wrestlers, it further grows opportunities for inclusion.

Coverage is yet another essential factor when growing the popularity and size of a sport. Any wrestler is aware that it is difficult to find live streams and results of even the largest tournaments without tuning into a specific service that must be subscribed to. The lack of accessibility creates a problem in easily bringing it to the average home. More regular television coverage would help to organically grow the popularity of wrestling over time. It is not attractive to a new fan to purchase a subscription in an attempt to acquire more knowledge. Especially, if they just want to try to learn a new sport that is foreign to them. I believe it is impeding the growth significantly. If a major sports network aired an event for a day, thousands

of people would get exposed to the exciting and dynamic sport. A few adjustments to the current airing techniques can significantly impact the amount of people that are able to view wrestling, which ultimately will popularize the sport.

All in all, wrestling has sustained substantial change throughout the evolution of the sport. However, there is further development that can create more opportunity for all parties within the world of wrestling. Youth wrestling must continue to be promoted aggressively, for the future competitors lie within this age group. We have to rely on the coaches to peak the interest of the youth and engage these athletes at a young age. Subsequently, women's wrestling has to receive unwavering support from the wrestling community. There exists great opportunity where males and females can compete alongside each other of all levels and age groups, thus advancing the sport more. Finally, the lack of coverage needs to continue to develop. Exposing people to the grueling, yet fascinating, sport will result in increased support, participation, and interest for wrestling, benefiting all parties.

Personally, I am anxious to view the expansion of wrestling as it progresses while I am simultaneously submerged within it. I view college wrestling as the next step in my journey and recognize the growth that has taken place throughout my many years in the sport. The adversity faced, coupled with the most joyous moments, has created an experience I would not have received in any other sport. Wrestling truly is the highest of highs, as well as the lowest of lows, for it holds more power and lessons than one can grasp in a lifetime. I will forever be grateful for my introduction to wrestling and my progression within the sport that has led me to where I am today.