



Wrestling Matters

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Why NY Should Adopt State Regional Tournaments

Part Two

Regional Tournaments Level Playing Field

State's Best Wrestlers Will Have Pathway To State Tournament

Format Will Improve State Tournament Quality

More College Opportunities For New York's Wrestlers

For more than 40 years, most coaches believed many of New York State's best wrestlers were left out of the state championship tournament because of a format that advances a single entry from wildly unequal sectional qualifying tournaments. The addition of wildcards (at-large entries) for this past year's state tournament was not only a welcome change – it actually helped prove the point. Thirty-nine at-large entries who, in previous years would not have been entered in the state tournament, won medals - including eight finalists and two champions. The addition of at-large entries fueled the interest in a format that would allow the state's best athletes to wrestle their way to the state championships no matter where they happened to live. A working group made up of representatives from the NY State Coaches Association and the NYSPHSAA Wrestling Committee believe state regional tournaments with multiple entries would provide such a format.

Instituting multiple-entry state regional tournaments in New York State's playoff system for the state wrestling championship would "level the playing field". By allocating entries based on the number of schools in a section and a region, state regional tournaments would have an equalizing effect on the current playoff structure where currently only one entry advances to the state tournament directly from the section regardless of the number of competitors.

Wrestlers from larger sections and wrestlers from sections with just a few competitors would, in a multiple-entry regional tournament system, have at least similar paths to the state's championship tournament. In addition, the state tournament itself, as a result of fair competition in qualifying tournaments, will likely see an overall improvement in the quality of competition.

Finally, for decades New York's high school wrestlers have been put at a disadvantage when competing for the attention of the nation's college coaches. Unlike the rest of the country where college recruiters have used the state tournament as a reliable gathering place for the state's top wrestling talent, New York's single-entry system is believed to have left many worthy recruiting prospects at the sectional qualifying tournaments - unnoticed. From five-time Division III National Champion Brockport coach Don Murray to Oklahoma University Coach Jack Spates – himself a NYS Champion - college coaches around the country have been troubled by New York's tournament format for many years.