

## The Importance of Freestyle/Greco

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When the high school season is over some kids are looking forward to the break. Others are thinking baseball, track, spring break, etc. Personally I love this time of year because I know it's time to wrestle freestyle and Greco! In this article we'll take a look at just a sampling of the benefits to wrestling freestyle and/or Greco.

I can't stress enough how important spring/summer wrestling is to the development of becoming an elite wrestler. Don't shy away from it or worry about it hurting your folkstyle. In fact, I guarantee it will aid your folkstyle and you will see tremendous gains next winter. So how will it help me, you ask?

The first thought that comes to mind is that it's all mat time. The more time you spend on a wrestling mat, the better you're bound to become. To achieve great things in the sport, you need to fight the fight. In doing so, you will continually learn to adjust your body to different situations, develop strong mat awareness and a general wrestling sense or "feel" that can carry you a long way.

After a long season of folkstyle, freestyle/greco will also give you a fresh look at wrestling. Most of the time you don't cut weight and you're out there wrestling the way it was meant to be...FOR FUN!! With the number of different counters and turns in freestyle, it gets you thinking outside the box and trying techniques/strategies that you might not normally do. The scoring is so much looser it truly is fun to roll, tip, flip, and hopefully throw somebody and score big points. When you first start wrestling freestyle, sometimes you score points without even knowing how you did it. How fun is that!!

From a technical standpoint the emphasis on solid position and hand fighting, especially in greco, will be a huge benefit to you next winter. Wrestling greco really helps to develop your balance, motion, and high level attacks. With the increased stress coaches put on leg attacks, wrestling greco may be your only real chance at attempting your throws and other upper body attacks. When you do toss somebody directly to a fall, you'll be exhilarated and most likely hooked for life! Another major benefit to wrestling freestyle/Greco is the constant emphasis on attacking! You cannot stand around and must be incessantly working to score. If not, you will be called for passivity and give your opponent the opportunity to put you in the down position, therefore giving him an easier chance to score. Maybe those that determine the stalling rules in folkstyle can learn something here? In the top position, you are required to score within a very short time frame or will be returned to your feet. This forces you to be attacking, aggressively working for the turn and will undoubtedly help change the mindset in folkstyle from just riding to going for the fall! Finally, on bottom, you must keep moving and adjust to his pressure to keep from getting turned. This will promote your ability to know your body, the importance of hips, and how to "feel" wrestling, rather than just "doing moves".

One other example of how international style wrestling can help folkstyle is the chance to work with many different coaches and kids. Normally you have your main drill partners and your high school coach running practices. We all know that wrestling with the same person can get boring after a while, so hitting a freestyle club can give you a break from your normal routine. In the spring, you will probably work out with a number of coaches who may do things a little different than your regular coach. This gives you the chance to be exposed to other ways of doing things and the diverse coaching styles that are out there. There is more than one way to skin a cat!

I know I didn't cover all the benefits to wrestling freestyle and Greco in this article, but to be honest, I can't because there are too many to list! Coaches, encourage your kids to get involved with spring/summer wrestling. Kids, get out there and hit the mats. To become a championship wrestler, you'll need to train longer than just November to March. Based on the items discussed above, you have no excuse not to. Make a commitment to become a champion, a student of the sport, and to have fun.

Editor's Note: To learn more about Coach Chertow's Gold Medal Training Camp System and Instructional DVDs, visit [www.kenchertow.com](http://www.kenchertow.com), call 814-466-3466, or e-mail [camps@kenchertow.com](mailto:camps@kenchertow.com).