

Weight Pulling: The Black Eye of Wrestling

By Jack Roller

Water, fats and proteins are lost from the tissues when food restriction and fluid deprivation procedures are followed. Moreover, the proportion between these constituents will change with continued restriction and deprivation. For example, if food restriction is kept at a constant level but the volume of fluid being consumed is decreased, more water will be lost from the tissues of the body than before the fluid restriction occurred. The problem becomes critical during thermal or exercise dehydration, because electrolyte losses will accompany the water losses. Even when one to five hours are allowed for purposes of rehydration after the weigh-in, the balance between fluids and

electrolytes cannot be completely reestablished; in essence, the wrestler remains dehydrated.

Because wrestlers "make weight" by a combination of food restriction, fluid deprivation and dehydration, responsible officials should understand the consequences. The single or combined effect of these practices are generally associated with

- (1) a reduction in muscular strength,
- (2) a decrease in work performance times,
- (3) lower plasma and blood volumes,
- (4) a reduction in cardiac functioning during submaximal work conditions, which is associated with a higher heart rate, smaller stroke volume and reduced cardiac output,
- (5) a lower aerobic capacity, especially with food restriction,

(6) impairment of body temperature regulation,

(7) a decrease in blood flow to the kidney and in the volume of fluid being filtered by the kidney,

(8) a depletion of liver glycogen stores, and

(9) an increase in electrolyte loss.

Because it is possible for these changes to impede normal growth and development there is little physiological or medical justification for the use of weight reduction methods currently followed by many wrestlers.

"Warning"... if you deprive your child from being a kid...no candy...all work constantly complain and criticize...I promise you his wrestling days are numbered. 🏠



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