

Independent Lens' "Girl Wrestler" Follows the Bumpy Journey of 13-Year Old Texas Teen Tara Neal as she Pursues an Untraditional Girls Sport -- Wrestling

Film by Diane Zander

Tara is 13. She likes to hang out with her girlfriends, go to the mall...and wrestle. On her journey to the national championships, she battles critics who think it's wrong for girls to wrestle boys, she struggles with her father's expectations for her performance, and she fights with her own body to control her weight. **GIRL WRESTLER** will air nationally on the

acclaimed PBS series *Independent Lens* on Tuesday, December 14, 2004, at 10 p.m. (check local listings.)

Women's wrestling is in the news this year, when for the first time it was a featured sport in the 2004 Olympic games in Athens, Greece. But for young women interested in pursuing the sport, challenges still abound. **GIRL WRESTLER** follows Tara Neal, a Texas teenager who rocks the

establishment by insisting that girls and boys should be able to wrestle on the same mat. The film follows a crucial period in Tara's wrestling career—the last year that she is allowed to wrestle boys under state guidelines. Once she enters high school, her opportunities to compete will virtually disappear. Because so few girls choose to wrestle, and she won't be allowed to wrestle boys, Tara will have no one to wrestle