

An Olympic Champion's Point of View

A Heart for Competition

By Ben Peterson with Ethan Bosch,
Olympic Champion

Attending the NCAA Division I National Championship in St. Louis and both the Wisconsin High School and Grade School State Tournaments allows me to see the premier wrestling events of the nation and my state each year. The competition at each of these events is intense and extremely exciting, and the contact with past, current, and up-and-coming champions is very rewarding. I look forward to these events each season.

Here are some notes and observations from my recent trips as a wrestling fan:

Technical trends. There was plenty of good technique, but there were some examples of poor technique that I saw more than once (and at every level!). We'll be working with our campers to correct these trends this summer at Camp of Champs:

- *Pushing a single.* Some wrestlers are getting in on single legs, and then failing to pull the single in and finish. Instead, they end up pushing with it, and most often going out of bounds - a wasted opportunity!
- *Not continuing to sprawl.* Some wrestlers are defending shots well with a good sprawl to start, but then allowing their opponents to finish. Just because you've sprawled doesn't mean your work is finished! Keep sprawling, and don't plant your leg. You may not win the takedown, but at least you'll get out of bounds and prevent your opponent from getting it.
- *Shooting straight in.* Too many wrestlers are relying on their athleticism and straight-on shooting. We need to focus on our set-ups, getting angles, and

"swinging the door open" with arm drags and two-on-ones.

Thank you Mike Chapman, Bryan Van Kley and *W.I.N. Magazine* for the Memorabilia Show in St. Louis. It's a grand arena to meet people who love wrestling, and a wonderful opportunity to mingle and make connections with wrestling businesses and past legends of the sport.

The NCAA is the key wrestling promotion event and premier showcase of our sport in the U.S. Fans came from all over the country, and the total attendance for the weekend was nearly 100,000.

I noticed that many high school and club coaches attend the NCAA's. It's like

Dan LeClere (North Lin) beat Klint Kersten (Logan-Magnolia) 2-0 Semi-Finals. LeClere became a 4x champion. Photo by John Johnson.

