

# 500

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How can we improve the sport of wrestling?

Throughout my wrestling career, I have observed many things that could be changed for the better. The one major thing that I believe should be changed is the addition of a third division for both individual and team duals. A concern throughout the state of Pennsylvania in the wrestling community, is that there is a great reduction in the amount of participants involved in wrestling and also the increase amount of forfeits within the weight classes themselves. By adding an additional division, this could help to balance the talent level into three divisions instead of two. This could also help the sport of wrestling to grow and lead to allowing more kids to have a greater success both individually and as a team.

Although many people believe wrestling does not need any changes, I disagree. If we add a third division, four more teams will earn a state medal. It will also give another 112 student athletes another opportunity to earn a state medal. Many people disagree with this idea, because they think too many kids would receive state medals. The goal in the sport of wrestling is to teach young men life lessons and for them to have success, and this change would help to give more individuals and teams more success.

Many people say that Pennsylvania is most likely the toughest and competitive wrestling state in the country. There are many kids that train year round and could place at any other state tournament, but come up short every year, a lot of times due to the simple fact of the limited number of opportunities. The majority of other sports in Pennsylvania have six division. If we add a third division, this would give more opportunities to wrestlers and they would have a better opportunity for success. It could also lead to more kids coming out to join wrestling because of

the success and goals they see their peers achieving, as well as bringing more families and community members into our sport.

The third division would give smaller schools a chance to succeed. At this point, there are programs that are on the rise, but tend to lower their chances of success in the postseason due to the limited opportunities for them. The third division would allow more of an opportunity for a greater amount of individual and team success. Many schools currently receive little to no support or recognition for their wrestling team and program. If a school starts to see success, the community and school will start to support the program more. When a small town has success in a sport, the gymnasium becomes packed full for every match. For example, my high school team has been down for several years and hasn't seen much success for quite a while. This season, we began to shock some teams. We won a lot of our matches, and we became an enjoyable team to watch. About halfway through the season, our entire gymnasium was filled. We gave the community something to be proud of and something to talk about. People couldn't wait for the next match.

To conclude, I believe the addition of another division is what the sport of wrestling needs and would prove to be very beneficial for the sport of wrestling, the schools, the communities but most importantly, the wrestlers. We need fans and people supporting our sport. Wrestling, in my opinion, is the hardest sport in the world. It takes much hard work, determination and lots of dedication. These young men dedicate their lives to this sport and they truly deserve more credit. Therefore, I believe we should add a third division to the sport of wrestling, giving more opportunities for success.

*Bledy R. Vile*