

**USCAA Youth Wrestling Program**  
**RULES AND REGULATIONS**  
(Revised July, 2012) (Approved August 19, 2012)

**Purpose**

The primary purpose of the Upper St. Clair Athletic Association (USCAA) Youth Wrestling Program is to provide the opportunity for children of township residents to learn the fundamental skills of wrestling, and to develop an appreciation for the level of physical fitness that the sport requires. The program secondarily attempts to provide instruction at a level that will allow more advanced youth wrestlers to continue to improve their skills.

**Eligibility**

The program is designed for all Upper St. Clair residents in grades one through six. There are no age cut-off dates for the program. Registration for youth wrestling is held online via the USCAA website (<http://www.uscaasports.org>) or at the township Recreation Center in October. Practices begin the third week of November. The registration form asks that parents provide the wrestler's full name, address, phone number, email address, birth date, grade, approximate weight and height, and years of wrestling experience. The form also asks if the parent has an interest in helping with coaching. There is a brief meeting for all parents the evening of the first practice. The basics of the season are explained, and parents are advised that they will be expected to volunteer to help out at home matches (generally three per year) and dual meets to support the SHYWL (generally two or three smaller venue events per year). The wrestling commissioner is responsible for registration and the parent meeting.

During the year, children may enter local youth wrestling tournaments. For these tournaments, proof of age via a birth certificate is often required. Proof of age is the responsibility of the wrestler and parent to present to tournament officials, and the USCAA Youth Wrestling Program does not ask for or maintain birth certificates.

The wrestling program is a fee-based program. The wrestling commissioner develops a budget for the season and then determines the fee level accordingly. The budget is submitted to the USCAA Board for approval.

**Wrestling Groups**

The wrestling program is designed for two distinct groups: the experienced wrestler and the novice (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year) wrestler. Due to the physical and confrontational nature of the sport, matching up novice and experienced wrestlers is generally avoided. When the pairings are made

for matches, novice wrestlers are matched against other novice wrestlers whenever possible. In some cases, older or more talented novice wrestlers are invited to practice with experienced wrestlers at the coaches' discretion.

There is another subtler group difference in the youth wrestlers: the children that are purely recreational and the somewhat more competitive and wrestling-focused children. The distinction is similar to "rec teams" versus "travel teams" in other sports. In youth wrestling, there is no "travel team", though there are youth tournaments held every weekend around Western Pennsylvania and experienced wrestlers are chosen to participate on the duals team. The USC Youth Wrestling program aims to provide ample opportunities for both of these groups.

### South Hills Youth Wrestling League

The Upper St. Clair Youth Wrestling Program participates in the South Hills Youth Wrestling League (SHYWL), which is comprised of youth wrestling teams from neighboring South Hills communities. THE SHYWL maintains its own Board of Directors and representatives from each participating team with the following purposes:

1. To promote, support, and develop amateur wrestling in the member communities.
2. To foster the ideals of good sportsmanship through participation, competition, and fellowship.
3. To improve the degree of amateur wrestling by providing coaching, facilities, and competition.
4. To cultivate and promote friendly and cordial relationships among member schools.

In addition to scheduling matches with SHYWL teams, the league also runs a "duals" season. Duals are team-oriented wrestling matches in which one wrestler from a team competes against another wrestler from a different team at a prescribed weight. A duals team consists of one wrestler at each of several weights, and a team score is accumulated based on the result of each match. The format is identical to duals competitions held at the Middle and High School levels and affords the experienced youth wrestler an opportunity to gain exposure to this type of competition earlier. Additionally, it fosters a team camaraderie in an often otherwise individual sport.

The SHYWL also runs two end-of-the-year tournaments for novice and experienced wrestlers. These tournaments are limited to SHYWL participating communities and affords the youth wrestler the opportunity to experience a tournament format with fewer wrestlers, which should be a lower pressure introduction to that format.

## **Program Administration**

USCAA appoints a wrestling commissioner. The commissioner's duties include:

- Developing a budget
- Purchase uniforms as needed
- Schedule wrestling room times for practice
- Schedule facilities for home matches
- Advertise for signups
- Hold registration
- Designate coaches
- Ensure coaches are compliant with the USCAA Background Screening Policy
- Schedule matches with other township programs
- Prepare and distribute information to parents regarding weekly matches
- Attend practices and matches
- Coordinate staffing, movement of mats, etc for home matches
- Distribute uniforms
- Attend match meetings
- Distribute tournament information
- Serve as a representative, and possible Board member, on the SHYWL
- Arrange participation in the Area VII tournament
- Schedule coaches to attend practices and matches
- Coordinate information to be posted on Youth Wrestling Web Site
- Provide updates to the USCAA Web Site as appropriate

The commissioner may also appoint an assistant commissioner to assist in the administration of the program. The assistant commissioner may be designated as a USCAA Board of Directors position.

Practices are held in the high school wrestling room Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings and Saturdays at noon. One of the weekly practices is for novice wrestlers exclusively.

All wrestlers are encouraged to attend our team matches throughout the season, both the novice and experienced wrestlers, whether they are more recreational or competitive wrestlers. The team matches usually involve three or four youth wrestling programs and take about 4 to 5 hours on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. During the week, a match meeting is held in advance of the match to pair up similar wrestlers from the different programs. The wrestling commissioner and one

coach usually attend the match meeting. Wrestlers are matched based on age, weight and experience level.

The team also provides a list of tournaments, where at least one USC Youth Wrestling coach will attend, to parents in the beginning of the season. These tournaments are generally more geared to children interested in the more competitive side of wrestling and are for both novice and experienced wrestlers.

The wrestling season culminates with the Pennsylvania Area VII Wrestling Tournament. There is a local and regional qualifier, then the state finals. Participation in this tournament is at the option of the wrestlers. As long as there is a USCAA youth wrestler in the tournament, a coach will be available to assist the parent and wrestler.

The wrestling season runs from late November through early April, though a significant number of children do not compete in any of the tournaments after late March.

### **Referees**

The host township program is responsible for providing referees for the matches. The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association sanctions all referees. For tournaments, referees are provided and included as part of the entry fee. For dual meets, the host school is responsible for providing a referee. For matches, either sanctioned referees or high school varsity wrestlers are used. This provides an opportunity for varsity wrestlers to gain additional experience in the less competitive format.

### **Disciplinary Committee**

The disciplinary committee will consist of the Commissioner, the Head Coach and the assistant commissioner. The committee will resolve any matter relating to wrestler, coach, or fan misconduct before, during or after a match or practice.

The disciplinary committee will determine the appropriate action to be taken against any participant who exhibits unsportsmanlike behavior, whose conduct is detrimental to the purpose and objectives of the program, or is not in compliance with the USCAA Background Screening Policy. Such action could include suspension or ejection from the program. The incident will be brought to the USCAA board for discussion.

## **Coaches**

There is a designated Head Coach for the program. The Head Coach is selected by the commissioner and is submitted to the USCAA Board for approval. There are additional coaches selected by the commissioner and also submitted to the USCAA Board for approval. The Head Coach is generally in charge of the overall practice organization. He is responsible for what is taught at practice, and which coaches are assigned to what practices.

All coaches in the Upper St. Clair Youth Wrestling Program must be appropriately screened in accordance with the USCAA Background Screening Policy.

## **Participants**

Wrestlers are encouraged to wear singlets, headgear, and wrestling shoes at matches. The program does not provide these items, but the commissioner does provide the opportunity to order team singlets at the beginning of the season. Shorts and T-shirts, or practice singlets are to be worn at practice. For wrestlers that do not have wrestling shoes or singlets, we try to hold an equipment swap with our experienced wrestlers bringing in their outgrown shoes and singlets. Clean sneakers are acceptable in the absence of wrestling shoes.

Wrestlers will normally have at least two matches per meet. There are times due to limited wrestlers at certain ages or weights, where we cannot accommodate two matches.

There are no restrictions regarding physical requirements for the wrestler. As this is a contact sport, in a one-on-one environment, good judgment is needed on the part of the parent. Open cuts are not permitted, and casts of any kind are not allowed.

It is very important that all wrestlers wear only clean clothes to wrestling practice and matches, and that they bathe with soap and hot water immediately following practice and matches. Ring worm, skin rashes and other infectious diseases are immediate cause to deny a wrestler a match.