

BASIC WRESTLING FUNDAMENTALS
PREPARED BY
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Introduction

I've tried to make sure that every step no matter how small was included in the following instructions. I think if you and a partner went through each step point by point, or a coach/observer reads the instructions to you and a workout partner, you'll be able to figure out how to do each move fairly quickly. This written instruction was originally intended for use as a script for videotaping of instruction of these moves. This material was planned to make sure the clinician covered every point clearly and thoroughly.

A successful wrestler needs to master only a couple of leg attack takedowns, and escape or reversal, a ride/breakdown, and one pinning combination. However, in order to master this small number of moves will require drilling regularly all of the possible setups, counters, and finishes. It has been my observation that the world-class wrestlers spend the majority of their time drilling the moves to perfection, and don't really wrestle 'live' that much. Of course during their careers they have wrestled "live" so much that most things are second nature to them.

The following are the ten things that I believe are essential to become a champion.

1. Be academically eligible. If you are you aren't allowed to compete you can't be a champion no matter how good you are.
2. Be strong enough to not be over-powered by any opponent. It isn't necessary to be the strongest wrestler, but it helps. You need enough upper body strength to neutralize your strongest opponent's attempts to over power you.
3. Be in as good or better condition than any of your opponents. Being able to wrestle as hard the last 10 seconds of the match as the first 10 seconds is very important Countless numbers of matches in the NCAA tournament have been settled by someone getting a takedown or escape just before time ran out.
4. Have a superior leg attack defense. The highest percentage takedowns are leg attacks i.e. single leg, double leg, high crotch, Ankle pick, inside and outside fireman's carry. If you can stop all of the takedown attempts of any opponent you can wrestle more aggressively.
5. Have a superior defense on bottom. You cannot get ridden for more than 15 seconds if you want to be a successful college wrestler. A inside leg standup is probably the most common escape used at the college level. You also can't let your opponent break you down or turn you for a nearfall or pin.
6. Master a leg attack series. A single leg or double leg takedown should be the first takedown you master.
7. Master a breakdown/ride. It is important to be able to control your opponent on the mat. In many cases it will be necessary to win by 1 point. In college riding time frequently determines who wins the match.
8. Master a pinning combination series. Half nelsons, cradles, chicken wings, etc. You need to know how to set up your opponent so he'll fall into a pin hold before he realizes it.
9. There will be times when there is less than one minute left in a match and you are trailing by 3 or more points. In these situations a leg takedown isn't going to win the match for you, it will only make the score closer. You need a 5-point move from the down and neutral position in these situations. This is when it is time to pull something out of your "bag of tricks". It will be a move that is fundamentally sound, but is not frequently seen by most wrestlers.

10. Last, but certainly not least is mental toughness. In my opinion wrestling is 90 percent mental. The successful wrestlers in college or at the world level are pretty equal in terms of technical skills. Occasionally there will be one superior athlete compared to the others. However, it usually comes down to the wrestler who wants to win the most that determines the outcome of a match. I've seen wrestlers who weren't as good as athletes as other wrestlers, but they found ways to win. A wrestling match is a test of "wills", if you keep constant pressure on your opponent throughout the entire match eventually almost all of them will give up at some point, because they are exhausted physically and/or mentally.

In the following section are a Glossary of Wrestling Terms. I have found out over the years that a move called by one name in a certain area of the country will have a different name in another part of the country. By providing these terms with definitions hopefully it will prevent confusion as to what I meant.

GLOSSARY OF WRESTLING TERMINOLOGY

The following terms are commonly used in wrestling. The understanding of the meaning of these Terms will aid you immensely when listening for instructions from your coaches in practices and in a match.

1. Position - This term referees to your position in relation to your opponent. Being in a good defensive position is the most important skill in wrestling. Getting your opponent out of a good defensive position is the one thing that must first be accomplished to penetrate into your opponent. In wrestling there are three positions when beginning action in a match.
2. Neutral - Both opponents' are facing each other, without either being in control.
3. Bottom/Down - You are under your opponent and he is in control of you. If you gain the neutral position, then you have "escaped". If you gain the Advantage/Top position then you have "reversed" your opponent. You may pin your opponent from this position by scoring a "defensive fall" no near fall or reversal points are awarded, but the match is ended.
4. Advantage/Top - You are on top and in control of your opponent. In "folkstyle" wrestling this is the only time points are awarded. A defensive wrestler must score and "escape" or "reversal" in order to score points, except for illegal holds or for stalling.
2. Head Position - The relation of your head to your opponent's.
 - A. Head to Head - Your fore head is in the same position as your opponent's. Your head may or may not be touching depending upon the situation. This head position is the primary defensive position when in the neutral position.
 - B. Ear-to-Ear - This is a common position error by beginning or unskilled wrestlers. If you are in a position where your ear is nest to your opponent's you cannot block a penetration attempt by using your head.
 - C. Head in Chest - The most preferred head position for executing a penetration attempt into your opponent is to have your head in the middle of your opponent's chest. If you can't get it in the middle, then getting on his pectoral muscle on either side is the next most preferable head position.
 - D. Head in Neck or Temple - This position allows you to block your opponent from penetrating through you. It also allows you to execute moves such as high single legs, and pinch headlocks.
 - G. Head Up - With very rare exceptions your will always want your head up so that you can look directly ahead.
 - H. Head Down - This means your face or your opponent's face is looking down towards the mat.
 - F. Head and Shoulder Lead - This means getting the head and shoulder farther forward than the lead knee. This extension/violation of position is needed to execute most offensive takedowns from the neutral position.
2. Hip Position - The ability to use your hips correctly and to take the opponent's ability to use his hips is one of the major reasons for success or failure in wrestling. The hips and thighs are the most powerful parts of your body. If you can drive forward or backward with your hips you can move your

opponent out of a good defensive position. All lifting in wrestling should be done with your hips and thighs, not your back.

- A. Hips Down - You cannot be a successful defensive or offensive wrestler if your hips are up. This means your knees are bent, and directly under your shoulders.
 - B. Create an Angle - This means having your hips in a position where you can drive your hips forward and across your opponent's hips.
 - C. Drive Across His Hips - Once you've created the angle, now you can move forward drive your hips across your opponent's. This will make him move sideways. If you are in the neutral position and have blocked his opposite foot or knee he should land on his side, making it easy for you to score a takedown. If you are in the top position and drive across his hips, and are pulling his head, far arm, knee or Ankle towards this action should put him on his hip, making it easier to put him on his back.
 - D. Hip Lock - This position is used to execute many upper body throws such as: head locks, whizzers, etc. You place your buttocks in front of the opponent's hip, and pull his upper body forward to execute the throw. By blocking his hips he cannot maintain a good defensive position.
 - E. Hip Heist - In wrestling you will want to "flip" your hips from a pointing down to the mat to pointing up to the ceiling and vice versa. You do this instead of rolling over. If you roll over you will be moving laterally in relation to your opponent and will probably get out of a good offensive/defensive position in doing so.
 - F. Hip Pop - This is an explosion of your hips upward and forward into your opponent. It creates a quick lifting action; this is necessary after the initial penetration of an opponent to finish the takedown attempt.
3. Inside/Near - It will depend upon what position you are in relation to your opponent what Inside/Near means. In most cases these terms are interchangeable.
- A. Inside Position - This generally applies only when you are in the neutral position. It means that your hands and/or elbow are inside your opponent's hand and/or elbows. This is usually the dominant position when in the neutral position.
 - B. Double Inside - Both of your hands/thumbs are inside of your opponent's elbows.
 - C. Near - This means the closest to you. As an example you are in the top position, and your body is located adjacent to the left of your opponent's body: Then his left arm and leg and your right arm and leg are considered near or inside
 - D. Get Inside His Hands - This means you want your hands inside the opponent's hands and still remain in a good defensive stance.
4. Outside/Far - The opposite of Inside/Near Your hands and/or elbows are outside your opponent's hands and/or elbows.
- A. Outside Position - There are certain times when you will want to be in the outside instead of the inside position. Sometimes you will have the inside position on one side and the outside position on the other side.

- B. Overhook/Whizzer - These terms mean the same. Your hands and forearms are hooked over the opponent's upper arm.
 - C. Near Arm - In the neutral position this means the arm, which is closest to you. This occurs only when you or your opponent is in a staggered stance.
5. Stance - Being in a proper stance is essential in wrestling. It most commonly applies to the neutral position, but is also applicable in the bottom and top positions.
 - A. Square Stance - This means that your feet are even in alignment when you are in a standing position.
 - B. Staggered Stance - This means that one leg is farther forward than the other foot.
 - C. Squat Back Stance - A stance used in the down/bottom position in wrestling. Your knees and hands are as close to the lines as possible, with your hips sitting down on your heels.
 - D. Tabletop Stance - A stance used in the bottom position. Thighs are essentially perpendicular to the mat, and your back is parallel to the mat like a "tabletop".
 6. Violation of Position - This can apply to the Neutral, Top, and Bottom positions. There are certain positions, which are correct, and certain positions, which are incorrect, an incorrect position prevents you from defending actions by your opponent. Hence, you want you opponent to violate position to improve your chances of success.
 7. Motion - This usually refers only to the neutral position. Motion means that you keep moving your feet. Most of the time motion means that your move in a circling or lateral direction.
 8. Penetration - This means that your are stepping into your opponent. Many wrestlers mistakenly think they are penetrating by getting their head closer to their opponent without moving their feet. Penetration is accomplished only by stepping forward with a foot and moving your hips forward.
 9. Changing Levels - The changing of levels is lowering your Head & HIPS at the same time. You can accomplish this by bending your knees and/or stepping into your opponent, which will automatically lower your head and hips.
 10. Hand Control - This means that you are holding one or both of your opponent's hands with your hands. It is generally preferable to grab your opponent's hand instead of his wrist. There are occasions when it is preferable to grab his wrist. When an coach says hand control, he means hand control and not wrist control
 11. Rotate Your Wrist - Most wrestlers in the neutral position make the mistake of grabbing a wrist instead of a hand. When a wrestler grabs your wrist, you can simply cause him to release your wrist by rotating your wrist in the direction of the tip of his thumb.
 12. Elbow-to-Elbow - This is another means of making an opponent of releasing his grip on your wrist. You take the elbow of the same arm your opponent has grabbed hold of a wrist, to the elbow of the arm he is using to grab your wrist.
 13. Post - This means placing a body part to a mat. It will be a head or foot in most cases.
 14. Elbows In - This means to keep your elbows on the same alignment as the sides of your body, it does not necessarily mean that your elbows are against the side of your body.

15. High Leg Over - When you are in the top position, there will be times that you need to turn your hips towards the ceiling temporarily. By stepping one leg over the other and putting your foot to the mat, you are executing a “High Leg Over”.
16. Two on One - This means gripping an opponent’s hand, wrist, or arm with both of your hands.
17. Elevate - When on your back; with your opponent on top of you raise his hips and legs further off of the mat. This can be done by using a neck bridge, hand, legs, and/or feet depending upon where your body is in relation to your opponent. It can be done from the bottom position, or as part of a throw from the neutral position.
18. Bridge - Forming an arch “Bridge” with your back and legs, by supporting your body with only your head and feet on the mat.
19. Under the Near Arm - This term applies only when you are behind or beside your opponent. With your outside/far arm reach under his near arm.
20. Chop - This usually means to pull the opponent’s near elbow towards the mat.
21. Step and Slide - This is how you move your feet in a circle or laterally. You step sideways with one foot (this is a small step usually 6” to 1’, you then slide your other foot to keep an even distance between your feet.
22. One Step Back Then Circle - When in the neutral position and in a tie up, an opponent will push into you. You take one step backward to maintain your balance then, step and slide in a circular pattern away from his pressure.
23. Back Heel - This can be done from the neutral and top position. In the neutral position it means stepping your foot outside and placing it behind the opponent’s foot. In the top position this usually occurs with your opponent in a standing position, with you standing behind him with your hands locked around his waist. You place one of your feet behind his heel, and then pull him over the foot you’ve blocked.
24. Limp Arm - This is a method to release an opponent’s overhook/whizzer when you are in the neutral or top position.
25. Get His Head Under You - This means place your opponent’s head under your chest.
26. Back Pressure - This means driving your back into your opponent’s chest.
27. Chest-to-Chest - This means placing your chest against your opponent’s when he’s in his back at approximately a 90-degree angle.
28. Push - Pull - This is a means of getting an opponent to push into you, thereby creating a head and shoulder lead.
29. Dictates the Action - This means you are moving your opponent, you are wrestling aggressively by trying to score a takedown, escape, reversal, or near fall depending upon your position.
30. Circle to the Trail Leg - When you are in the neutral position and your opponent is in a staggered stance, a good defensive action is to be in a square stance and circle towards his trail leg. This will prevent him from being able to shoot a leg takedown attempt directly into you, unless he moves his trail foot.
31. Head in the Hip - This usually applies only to a near side cradle. You place your head into the front of your opponent’s hip nearest you.

32. Rip Back - This means you take the opponent's head backwards over his hips by rolling over your own when you are at a 90-degree angle to the opponent.
33. Underhook - A form of tie up in the neutral position. You drive your hand and forearm inside your opponent's arm, and raise your hand and forearm up under the opponent's shoulder.
34. Undercup - A means of controlling an opponent when you are in the top position. From behind you reach under your opponent's shoulder and grasp the front of his shoulders from behind.
35. Cutback - When in the bottom/down position you turn your inside shoulder and head under the opponent's near shoulder.
36. Crossleg - This means' reaching under the opponent's chest/stomach and grabbing the knee/calf of the far leg.
37. Crossface - This will drive the opponent's head away from you, by pushing his head with you're the bicep portion of your upper arm to the side of his head. This is used typically to counter leg takedown attempts, and on top to apply a crossface or far side cradle.
38. Crossface Him Towards You - A normal crossface will drive the opponent's head away from you, by pushing his head with you're the bicep portion of your upper arm to the side of his head. When executing a chicken-wing as a part of the setup to turn him you will crossface your opponent towards your.
39. Drag - To pull your opponent's arm towards you.
40. Swisher - To swing your feet away (like a windshield wiper blade action) from your body when in a squat back or tabletop stance.
41. Pick up an Ankle - This applies when you are on top and behind your opponent. You reach under and grab the part of his foot where the shoelaces are and lift it upward.
42. Belly Down - This means put your belly so it faces or is on the mat.
43. Cut Him Loose - This means let your opponent go when you are in the top position. Your coach may want you to do this for the following reasons:
 - A. You are about to be reversed, therefore let him go and give up only 1 point.
 - B. You are about to be called for stalling because you can't break your opponent down. This action will save a penalty point, which you may be able to make up by scoring a takedown. If you don't let him go you'll be penalized, then if he escaped he has scored 2 points instead of the one you gave up when you "cut him loose."
 - C. A coach may decide that you are better off to take your opponent down and let him go, and repeat the process, rather than trying to ride him.
44. Base - This applies only to the bottom position. It means your body is being supported by your arms and legs that you are not broken down onto your stomach.
45. Drive Back Over Your Hips - This applies when you are in the down position. Many times when you are broken down from your base, the best way to rebuild your base is to drive your weight back towards your hips and into the opponent.
46. Walk Your Fingers Forward - When in the top or bottom position, you want to improve your position, but cannot freely move your hand forward because of your opponent's action do the

following: Place your palm down on the mat, keep your elbow nest to your side, and begin pulling your arm forward by walking your fingers forward and grasping the mat with your fingertips.

47. Trap - To hold a part of the opponent's body with part of your body. You may "trap" or squeeze his head with your knees, trap an arm by squeezing your elbow to your side, etc.
48. Parallel - This means your body is on the same alignment as your opponent's body.
49. Get 90-degrees - This means to create a right angle to your opponent with your body. This is especially important when applying a pinning combination, which requires you to be chest-to-chest to your opponent.
50. Flanker - When in the top position this means you take a foot and calf of your leg and place it inside your opponent's leg. If you use your outside leg it is an outside flanker, which is the most commonly used type of flanker. If you use the inside leg, it is usually because the opponent stepped over your near leg.
51. Double Top Stretcher - You overhook both of your opponent's legs below the knees while in a chest-to-chest position. Many high school wrestlers refer to this as a "Saturday Night Ride".
52. Keep You Heel to Your Butt - This is applicable when you have an outside flanker or double top stretcher on your opponent. By doing this you will force your hips into your opponent and will keep his hips on the mat.
53. Daylight - This refers to the distance between you and your opponent. Defensively you want to create daylight; offensively you want to eliminate daylight.
54. Cover Down - This typically refers to eliminating daylight when you score a takedown or reversal. You want to eliminate any distance (daylight) between you and your opponent.
55. Turn the Corner - This means going from a head-to-head alignment to a 90-degree or less angle to your opponent. It means you will wind up to one side of the opponent.
56. Setup - Create a motion or action by the opponent, which will allow you to attempt a takedown while the opponent is not in a good defensive position.
57. Finish - To complete the action you initiated.
58. Back Door - To go between the opponent's legs from in front until you are behind him.
59. Block - To keep a certain part of the opponent's body from moving. Example, blocking the opponent's foot, and driving or pulling his body over that foot will cause him to lose his balance.
60. Roll Your Shoulders In - Instead of having an erect posture with your shoulders back, you will want to "roll" both shoulders in, this will allow you more easily keep your elbows in, and it creates a more relaxed stance.
61. Whizzer - This is the same as an overhook of the opponent arm from the front or when you are parallel to him.
62. Straight-line Defense - This mean's you keep your body on the same alignment as the opponent's, only your body is above his body. This is a means of stopping his penetration on a leg takedown attempt. Hopefully you will be able to stop his penetration, get him extended, and score a takedown by getting behind him.

63. Reverse Crossface - You use the tricep (backside of your upper arm) to push the opponent's head towards or away from you.
64. Drive Him Over His Ear - When you apply a half nelson or chicken wing pinning combination, in most cases you will need to drive the opponent's arm from one side of his body to the other side. You generally want to drive your weight towards the "ear" of the opponent, which is the farthest from you. This is about a 30-degree angle from the alignment of his body.
65. Pinch Head Lock - Secure and underhook with one arm, and grab the opponent's head in a "collar tie" lock your hands together, place your forehead in the opponent's temple. After doing this simply drive him down to the mat and onto his back.
66. Keep Your Hip On Top - When you have one leg in, you need to have your hip higher than the opponent's or, he can easily put you on your hip and reverse you.

BACKGROUND AND PHILOSOPHY

Since my involvement in the sport since 1960 I've been fortunate to have been coached by, trained with, or coached with several individuals who've had considerable success during their wrestling and coaching careers. A brief overview of the qualifications of these individuals will provide you some insight on who influenced my philosophy, and development of my wrestling skills.

Bob Williams was my high school coach in Kansas. He wrestled for Ed Gallagher at Oklahoma State in the late 1930s, placing 3rd at 177 pounds. We were taught a lot of two on one breakdowns, and were very proficient at pinning with half nelsons, chicken wings, and near side cradles. Our team was not very slick on our feet, knowing how to do double and single legs, and fireman's carries. We were extremely tough down on the mat. Our high school opened my sophomore year; we had only 3 wrestlers with previous high school experience. Our first year we were 2-8 in dual meets. The next year we were 8-2 in dual meets losing only to the No.2 team in state twice. We finished 5th in state our second year, and were 6th the next year.

Len Kauffman was my teammate on the Fort Wolters, Texas team I coached in 1968-1969. Len was 2nd and 3rd in the NCAA tournaments at Oregon State. He won two AAU national open freestyle championships in 1964 and 1969. In 1964 the only world tournament he participated in the placed 4th losing 3rd place on the last criteria of weighing more at the end of the match. Len led the nation in pins his junior and senior years with approximately 25 pins each year. According to Len approximately 90 percent of his pins were from using a nearside cradle.

Tommy Evans was the first head coach I worked for at the University of Oklahoma. Tommy is one of the most decorated wrestlers in U. S. history. Tommy was 2nd as sophomore, 1st as a junior and senior, being selected the outstanding wrestler of the NCAA tournament the two years he won. His only loss in college was the NCAA finals as a sophomore. After his junior year he placed second in the Olympics at 147 pounds, taking the defending champion down 7 times, but was not awarded the victory. He was the head coach of the 1960 and 1963 NCAA championship teams. He was selected as the head coach of the 1968 U.S. Olympic freestyle wrestling team. Tommy was one of the first five inductees to the National Wrestling Hall of Fame located in Stillwater, Oklahoma

Port Robertson was the assistant athletic director at the University of Oklahoma when I was an assistant Port was the head wrestling coach from 1947-1959 and 1962. He built the University of Oklahoma into a perennial national power. He was selected as one of the second five members inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. His teams won the 1950, 1951, and 1957 NCAA tournaments. He coached Tommy Evans, Danny Hedge, and Stan Abel who are all members of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. Port teams were known for their pinning ability, his teams hold the highest pinning percentage of any coach in NCAA history. As an example Danny Hodge in three Big 7 (now Big 8) pinned every opponent in three years. In 1956 he pinned all but one wrestler he faced that year. Port was extremely skilled in recruiting athletes who had not won a state title and turning them into NCAA champions. Stan Abel and Duwane Miller wrestled at Putnam City, the highest either finished was 3rd in state. Stan won 2 titles and Duwane 1 title at OU. I spent any free time I had at OU talking to Port about the mental aspects of wrestling. Port believed the following:

1. If you could be an opponent by 5 or more points, you were superior enough a wrestler to pin him.
2. It is easier to pin a good wrestler than it is to beat him, because the only place a good wrestler is not familiar with is being on his back.

3. Every move must be learned to both sides. In pinning it is extremely important to be able to change off from one combination to another, and from side to side.
4. Port felt the most important thing to learn about a move was why it wouldn't work. He made sure that each wrestler drilled each move perfectly. He stated many wrestlers don't know why a move works. He made sure they understood why you did every component of a move in a certain way.
5. You need to be in better condition than your opponent in order to wear him down physically and mentally. Many wrestlers will give up late in a match when they are and behind.

Wayne Wells was the other student assistant for Tommy Evans in my first year at OU. Wayne was 1971 World and 1972 Olympic champion at 163 pounds in freestyle, and captain of the Olympic Freestyle Wrestling team. Member of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. He was a three-time all-American and NCAA champion. Wayne always stressed putting the man on his side when applying pinning combination. He always made sure that there was no "daylight" in a pinning combination before he put the opponent onto his back to pin him. He was particularly noted for his "high in the thigh" flanker and power half combination. This was his favorite pinning combination in international competition.

Stan Abel was the head coach at Oklahoma from 1973 through 1992, producing 16 NCAA champions including Gary Breece (4-time all-American), Rod Kilgore (2-time champ, 4-time all-American), Dave (NCAA, World & Olympic Champion) and Mark Schultz (3-time NCAA Champ, 2-time World Champ, and Olympic Champ) both members of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame, Andre Metzger (2-time NCAA Champ, 2nd in World), and Melvin Douglas (2-time NCAA champ, World Champ). Although known for his takedown skills, Stan's teams were always skilled at mat wrestling especially at escapes and riding. Stan was considered to be one of the best technicians/clinicians in the world, particularly on single leg takedown. Stan is a member of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Mickey Martin was a 2-time NCAA champion at OU 1962-1963. He was voted the outstanding wrestler in 1963 when he defeated Bobby Douglas. Mickey was the coach at Norman High when I was at OU. Mickey was noted for his mastery of the Bar Arm Ride Series.

Duwane Miller was the 1961 NCAA champion at 123 pounds at OU, defeating Masaaki Hatta. Duwane was a high school and college teammate of Stan Abel's. I helped Duwane at Kapaun-MtCarmel Catholic Prep High School in Wichita. Duwane had taken over as head coach in 1973-1974; the team went 1-4-2 in dual meets and 4th in state with 2 state champs including one freshman with no previous experience. Kapaun-MtCarmel had never finished higher than 20th in state before and had only two state champs in the approximately 20 years the school was open. I began helping as a volunteer coach at Kapaun-MtCarmel in the fall of 1974 after leaving OU. For the next 4 years we won 3 City league championships, 3 class 3A state championships, the only 2 Grand State Championships ever held in Kansas, and were undefeated in dual meets. Kapaun-MtCarmel competed each year in the Perry, Oklahoma tournament (One of the toughest invitational tournaments in Oklahoma, some teams have had kids win more state championships, than Perry tournaments) taking 2nd or 3rd every year. Duwane coached for 13 years before retiring with 8 state championships and 2 grand state championships, and a 114 dual meet winning streak. He was selected the National High School Wrestling Coach of the Year in 1978 by Scholastic Wrestling News (now Wrestling USA).

Duwane stressed pinning as much as Port Robertson did. His teams were very adept with the bar arm series, and their ability to change off. He also taught "trick" moves which are fundamentally sound, but which were not commonly used at the high school level. Duwane claimed that many of his wrestlers reached the state finals by pinning a better wrestler with a trick move.

Almost everything I teach I learned from these outstanding wrestlers and coaches. My philosophy is derived from what they did as wrestlers and coaches. I've had success with the same philosophy. I find that when I coach a wrestler at the high school level, who doesn't have any previous experience it takes 3 years before he can become a dominant pinner. The major problems are not being able to change off automatically, getting into to big a hurry in putting the opponent on his back, and not getting a pin hold tight.

If a wrestler cannot take you down and cannot ride you, he cannot beat you. The best he can do is tie you. Therefore, even though I stress breakdowns, rides, and pinning, I make sure my wrestlers can get up from bottom against anyone. I'm proud of the fact that the five wrestlers I worked with in Scottsdale during the freestyle season and summers were very successful in escaping or reversing their opponents. By their senior years none were ever ridden for an entire period by anyone.

In the early years of a wrestlers career they commonly make errors regarding position. As a result they are frequently taken down from the neutral position, or are reversed if on top. Therefore, I spend almost equal time of escapes and reversals in their early years. Being proficient at reversals keeps the younger inexperienced wrestler in a match against someone who is skilled at takedowns. By being confident in his ability to score a reversal a wrestler is not afraid to be aggressive on his feet or on top, since he knows he can make up for the mistake.

Younger wrestlers will go into matches lacking confidence against a more experienced opponent. As the match goes on they find that they can compete with them, but unless they know how to pin will wind up losing a close match. If they are taught to pin, they may be losing in a match, but do not lose confidence because they know they can end the match with a fall. I like to use the following examples of what pinning can do for you.

Wade Schalles was trailing 11-0 against Mark Lieberman in the 180.5-pound Olympic trials finals in 1980 and won by a fall. Jim Preston was a wrestler who I coached at Saguaro his freshman year, and during the spring & summer thereafter. Jim made more big comebacks than any high school wrestler I've ever seen. As a junior he was trailing 10-0 in the middle of the 2nd period, wound up losing 12-10, and had his opponent in a tight pin hold as time ran out. His opponent went on to win the state championship. That spring he was trailing 9-0 with about 10 seconds to go, with his opponent stalling and pinned him. In the Asics Junior Nationals he was down 9-0 to Brett Lawrence a 4-time state champ from Idaho who was ranked as the No.3 senior in high school at 125 pounds. Jim pinned him with his "cement roll". The next year in the quarter finals of the 4A state tournament he was trailing 6-0 at the end of the first period (got caught in a headlock during a scramble), and 11-3 in the second period. He came back to tie up the match, and won it in overtime 13-11.

I don't want my wrestlers to feel they can't win a match if the other wrestler gets the lead. I want them to always look for the opportunity to put their opponent on his back from any position. Thus, even if the made several mistakes, or are wrestling a superior opponent, that opponent needs to only make one mistake that will allow them to put him on his back an pin him to win the match. As a result they wrestle aggressively, knowing they can win even when they are losing by a large margin. It only takes a couple of come backs from a deficit of 5 or more points to win by a pin, for them to develop the attitude they can beat anybody. I want them to feel if they lost, "they weren't beaten, they just ran out of time".

NEUTRAL POSITION BASIC WRESTLING SKILLS

In a match between two very skilled wrestlers the majority of the match will be wrestled in the neutral position. The reason being that both wrestlers has mastered the ability to escape quickly from any opponent. Therefore, if you desire to become a top-notch wrestler you must become very proficient in wrestling in the neutral position. The following are the basic skills that need to be mastered by the beginning level wrestler.

Stance - You cannot be successful in the neutral position without the ability to stay in a good defensive stance at all times. This requires constant practice and conditioning. It is very tiring to stay in a crouched position for extended periods of time.

The lack of conditioning needed to be able to maintain a good defensive stance late in a match, is why many wrestlers lose matches in the last 30 seconds by giving up a takedown. The basic components of a good defensive stance are as follows.

1. **Square Stance** - Stand with your feet approximately shoulder width apart. If you have a short and stocky build, then your feet may need to be slightly less than shoulder width apart. Conversely if you are tall and slender, you may need a stance where your feet are slightly more than shoulder width apart. This position is called a "Square Stance"
Staggered Stance - You do everything as in Step 1 above, except one foot is placed 6" to 18" behind the lead foot. The trail foot needs to be placed at about a 45-degree angle from your lead foot which is pointing directly ahead. It is important to learn how to quickly to change from a "Square" to a "Staggered" stance and vice-versa quickly.
2. Squat down until your hands are at your knees. This is the position you need to be able to maintain for long periods. Your weight should be on the "balls" of your feet, with your heels barely touching the mat. You will need to practice walking and step-sliding around in this position for several minutes daily on your own. John Smith 6- time world champion used to spend 30 minutes to 1-hour each evening on his own just working on maintaining and moving in a good low-crouching stance.
3. Roll your shoulders in, this will bring your elbows together, and help you be in a relaxed condition.
4. Place one hand low (slightly above your knee) and one hand high (about chest level). This will prevent your opponent from popping both hands up or snapping both hands down at the same time. It is also acceptable to wrestle with both hands even, with your forearms parallel to the mat. You will want your thumbs pointed upward if you do this, otherwise you will not be able to keep your elbows in.
5. Your head should be in the center of your stance and looking straight ahead. Don't cock your head to one side, or place your head over one foot. These are positions create a head & shoulder lead which is a major violation of position.
6. You need to keep your elbows "in" so that if you bring your elbows back they would be against your side.
7. You want your hands away from your body, but with your elbows still bent. This allows you to maintain distance between your opponent's head and chest from your head and chest, which is a vital thing for a good defensive wrestler.

Motion - Once you have developed a good stance, the next most important thing is to be able to move easily in your stance. When you move laterally or in a circular motion, you should be in a "square stance".

When you move forward or backward you will need to be in a “staggered stance”. It is important to keep moving constantly during a match. The movements do not have to be quick or large, small slow movements will be sufficient in most cases. By constantly moving you are making sure that an opponent does not catch you “flat-footed”. Constant motion requires that your opponent keeps moving also or you will have moved him out of a good defensive position. Motion allows you to create angles from which it is easy to attack your opponent’s legs. Motion also will cause an opponent to violate his position occasionally in his attempts to maintain a good defensive position. Proper motion is accomplished by doing the following.

1. Step & Slide - It is important in wrestling to take small steps usually no longer than 1-foot in any direction. Longer steps than this will cause you to be out of a good stance, which will prevent you from defending a leg attack by a skilled wrestler. From a “Square” stance step approximately 6” to 1’ to the right, then slide your other foot immediately the same distance needed to maintain an constant “split” between your feet. Now move to the left in the same manner. Now practice changing directions quickly. The two biggest problems inexperienced wrestlers have are.
 - A. Bringing their feet together.
 - B. Standing up too straight, not staying in a good crouching position.
2. Stepping Forward - When you want to move into your opponent, you do it by moving your feet, not by leaning into him with your upper body, or standing up straight. Step forward about 1-foot, then move your trail foot forward placing it at a 45-degree angle from your front foot To continue moving into your opponent repeat this process. **DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES PUSH INFO YOUR OPPONENT WITH YOUR CHEST AHEAD OF YOUR FEET.**
3. Moving Backwards - There will be times when you will want to move away from your opponent, or pull him towards you, and times when he will push you backwards. In these cases step backward 6” to 18” depending upon the situation. **YOU NEVER TAKE TWO STEPS BACKWARD!** If you take 2 steps backward you will be out of a good defensive stance, and your momentum is away from your opponent, which will prevent you from driving back into him if he shoots a leg takedown. After the step backwards you want to move laterally, or circle away from the opponent. **Always circle towards the trail leg of your opponent.**

Position - Once you have learned how to maintain a proper stance and to move continuously in a good stance, you need to learn what are the correct positions in the neutral position. Prior to this section we have talked position in relation to your opponent without a tie-up. Very few wrestlers are quick enough to be able to take down good wrestlers without utilizing a tie-up. It is necessary to know what positions are the most superior in the neutral position, so that you can try to stay in these positions and keep your opponent out of them. As a general rule an inside position is superior to an outside position. However, a skilled wrestler can have an outside position and beat a less skilled wrestler who has the inside position on a regular basis.

Head Position - The best defensive position is to have a head-to head alignment with your opponent. Your head can be even with or below his head, but generally not above it the head is the first line of defense against an offensive takedown attempt by your opponent. If he cannot get past your head, he will be unable to successfully penetrate into or through you. The following head positions are acceptable in the neutral position.

Head to Head - You are facing your opponent and your foreheads are opposite of each other’s, they do not have to be touching. This is the basic defensive head position. You do not attack from this position.

Head in the Middle of Opponents Chest - Preferably this is combined with a double inside tie-up. This position allows you to shoot moves to either side, and prevents the opponent from penetrating into you. If he attempts to snap you down you are close enough to him to easily attack his legs.

Head on Pectoral Muscle of Opponent's Chest - If your opponent will not let you get your head in the middle, this is the next best alternative. You still have an excellent defensive position. If you have an inside tie-up on the side opposite your head. From this position it is relatively easy to penetrate through your opponent on the side your head is on. It will require some circular motion to allow you to penetrate on the opposite side in most cases.

Head in Opponent's Neck - When in this position you have created an angle from the outside in which will allow you to attack across the opponent's hips. The head in the neck prevents him from penetrating into you, and from getting a head to head defensive position.

Head in Opponent's Temple - Typically this is use when using an underhook or Russian 2-on-1 tie-up on the same side. By placing your forehead against his temple it will make him attempt to move away from you, making it easier for your to attack into him, without him driving back into you as a counter to your attack.

The following are the head positions that you **NEVER WANT TO BE IN THE NEUTRAL POSITION**:

Ear to Ear - This is the position that is most common among even some successful high school wrestlers. If you are in an ear-to-ear position, your head has ceased being your first line of defense. All your opponent has to do now to penetrate into or through you is to get past your elbow on the side opposite of your head.

Head Down - You do not ever in the neutral position with your face looking down at the mat; unless you have elbow control and your head is under the opponent's chest for an attempt at a High Crotch takedown. By doing so the back of your neck is parallel to the mat This will make it very easy for your opponent to snap your head downward and forward. This snap down action will make you come out of your stance on your feet and fall onto your knees. Your opponent will be able to place his weight on the back of your head, neck; and shoulders. If he is successful in accomplishing this he has a superior ability to move and change levels, whereas you have lost that ability. Head snaps are the easiest takedown to score in wrestling against an inexperienced opponent

Head on the Mat - About the only acceptable time to place your head on the mat is when you have a chest-to-chest pinning combination on your opponent If your head is on the mat; all your opponent has to do to score a takedown is post it to the mat and circle behind you. Even worse, he can post your head to the mat; and easily lift your buttocks in the air over your head putting you on your back for an easy nearfall or pin. A wrestler, who puts his head on the mat voluntarily, is a wrestler who has quit!

Preferred Tie-up Positions

Inside Position - If your thumbs are in the armpits of your opponent; even though your elbows are outside his, you have the inside position. Having the inside position means "Your arms and/or hands are inside, the opponents elbows". This is the superior position in wrestling. Having a double inside position makes it impossible for your opponent to penetrate into you. By having the double inside position your elbows are "in" which makes it easier to "push and pull" your opponent. Bearhugs are one of the very earliest holds beginning wrestlers learn to use from a double inside position. Having the inside position allows you to "lift" an opponent onto his toes or sometimes completely off of his feet. The double inside

position will prevent your opponent from penetrating into you and changing levels. A beginning wrestler needs to learn first the following double inside tie up:

1. You need to be in a head-to head position, close enough to your opponent that your hands are even with his.
2. Place your hands inside your opponents with your elbows bent and “in”.
3. Reach up with both hands and place your thumbs into the armpits of your opponent

If you have done the 3 preceding steps correctly, your hands and elbows will be inside your opponent’s elbows and you will be in a head-to head-defensive position. Now you can push your opponent backward by taking small steps forward. This will usually create the basic violation of position we want to the opponent to make, a “Head and Shoulder” lead.

Violations of Position - Previously we have talked only of head positions in the neutral position. Now we want to cover violations of position, which may or may not be combined with a violation of correct head position.

1. **Head and Shoulder Lead** - This violation of position occurs when the opponent’s head and shoulder are farther forward than the opponent’s knees. This violation will cause the following to happen:
 2. The hips raise up, which destroys the low center of gravity there is in a good stance.
 3. The weight on the feet shifts from the balls of the feet forward to the toes.
 4. The wrestler can no longer easily backup, circle, change levels, or penetrates into his opponent because his hips are no longer under his shoulders. This is the one violation position you must be able to make your opponents to make if you are to be a dominant at leg takedown and head snaps.
5. **Elbows “out”** - You cannot be a successful wrestler with your elbows away from your body. All basic takedowns such as single legs, double legs, duckunders, high crotches, and fireman’s carries are easy to execute if the opponent does not keep his elbows in.
6. **Arms Straight** - You need to keep your elbows bent almost all of the time, with very few exceptions in all positions on the mat. If your arms are straight you are not in position to “push” or “pull” your opponent. After your head and hands, the forearms & elbows are the next line of defense against leg takedown. You need to use your forearms & elbows to block your opponent’s chest when he tries to penetrate into you. If your arms are straight, it means your opponent can easily attack your legs if he gets past your head and hands.
7. **Both Hands Up** - This means both of your hands are above your elbows and knees. This violation of position will make it very easy for your opponent to change levels and penetrate into you with a leg takedown.
8. **Both Hands Down** - By having both hands down you can prevent the opponent from penetrating into you. However, he can create a “head and shoulder lead” by simply quickly pulling both of your hands towards the mat.
9. **Legs Straight** - Many wrestlers stand with their legs straight and back bent over, because the mistakenly think they are keeping their opponent farther away from their legs. What they fail to realize is once the opponent gets past your elbows he has a clear shot into your legs, and you will be unable to drive your weight down and into your opponent

10. Back Bent –You want your back fairly straight and usually less than parallel to the mat if your back is bent; you are not in position to lift anything heavy. If your back is bent so that it is parallel to the mat, it is very easy for your opponent to place his weight on the back of your head, neck and shoulders. This will make it easy for him to pull you to the mat; lock up a front headlock or front headchancer. If you wrestle in this position the match won't last very long against a good wrestler.
11. Crossing Your Feet - This was covered previously in the stance and motion areas. The crossing of your feet destroys your ability to change levels and directions, penetrate, and drive into your opponent. Plus, if your opponent gets his arms locked around both Ankles there is really no defense to avoid from being taken down.

HAND CONTROL - This is perhaps the single skill lacking in more high school wrestlers, even very successful ones in Arizona. At the college level you must master this skill to be successful. Dan Gable had the Iowa wrestling team spend approximately 30 minutes daily just on “hand fighting” for position.

- A. Hand Control is not Wrist Control - If you grab an opponent’s hand he cannot easily release his hand from your grip. If an opponent grabs your wrist it is very easy to release your wrist from his grip, and to use that action as a setup to a takedown. However, if you do not make an opponent release his grip on your wrist he can be very effective in using this tie-up to improve his position and score a takedown against you. So, for that reason the first things in Hand Control that needs to be learned are how to make an opponent let go of your wrist
- B. Opponent Grabs Your Right or Left Wrist With His Opposite Hand With His Thumb Pointed Upward - There are several simple ways to accomplish this. All of them cause the same thing to happen, your wrist rotates towards the tip of your opponent’s thumb.
1. Rotate your wrist towards the opponent thumb by driving downward and towards the middle of your opponent.
 2. Take your elbow to his elbow.
 3. Pull back your elbow and take a penetration step into the opponent.
- C. Opponent Grabs Your Right or Left Wrist With His Opposite Hand With His Thumb Pointed Downward - The important thing about this wrist tie-up by the opponent is that he cannot keep his “elbow” in because of his grip on your wrist.
1. Rotate your wrist towards the opponent’s thumb by throwing your hand away from your body
 2. Step into your opponent with your outside foot, or execute a Knee-Dip with your inside foot. This action will help setup a Duckunder or High Crotch Takedown.
 3. Pull back your elbow and take a penetration step into the opponent
- D. Opponent Grabs Both of Your Wrists - This is a position where whoever acts or reacts first wins. Pull both elbows back quickly along your sides, and at the same time step into and between your opponent’s legs. This will cause him to release your wrists as you pull him over your shoulders. Once your wrists have been released, grab behind both of his knees for a double leg takedown. The preceding maneuver is called a “Drag-Double”.
- E. Opponent Grabs One Wrist With Both Hands – From this position you do not want to pull backward as it will cause you to come out of a good stance, and be open for an ankle pick. What you want to do are the following steps.
1. Take your free hand over his forearm closest to you.
 2. Step into the opponent with the foot on the same side as your free hand.
 3. Apply an underhook to your opponent to the same side as your free hand.
 4. Get your hips under your shoulders.
 5. Lift up with the underhook, which will pull that hand off of your wrist.

6. Maintain the underhook and grab the opponent's hand you just forced off of your wrist, with your other hand. From this position there is an endless variety of takedown, which can be executed.

One, two or both of the following things should be done in each case where an opponent grabbed one or both of your wrists.

1. You stepped into the opponent
2. You rotated your wrist towards the opponent's tip of the opponent's thumb.

Opponent Grabs Your Head - When an opponent applies a "collar" tie up, **BEFORE YOU DRAW ANOTHER BREATH OF AIR, MAKE SURE YOU CONTROL YOUR OPPONENT'S ELBOW**

There are several methods of accomplishing this. There are 4 generally recognized ways of doing this. At the beginning level we will teach only 2 methods, which are as follows:

1. Take your hand under and inside the opponent's elbow, drive your thumb into the opponent's armpit. Step into the opponent at the same time so that you can keep your elbow bent
2. Russian 2 on 1 - This is a tie-up we want our beginning wrestlers to master. This is one of the easiest ways to gain this tie-up.
 - A. Take your hand on the opposite side of the neck your opponent has placed his hand, and grab his wrist.
 - B. Pull the wrist towards you, and across your body.
 - C. Step the foot opposite of the hand you used to grab the opponent's wrist (If you grab with left hand, step with your right foot), near the opponent's foot
 - D. Overhook the opponent's upper arm with your free hand, pulling it tight against your chest.
 - E. Pull his wrist tight against your hip/stomach on the opposite side.
 - F. Apply pressure downward and forward with your shoulder and chest on your opponent's arm.

Opponent's Grabs Your Elbow - There are four generally accepted ways to make an opponent release his grip on your elbow. At the beginning level we want to teach the two following methods.

1. Do the same steps as you would in Step 1 above to control the elbow in the "Collar" tie-up by an opponent
2. Snap-Drag - This is an excellent method to release an opponent's grip on your elbow, and to make him move out of a good defensive position. This move is accomplished by doing the following steps.
 - A. Pull your elbow back; and take your hand inside his forearm.
 - B. Chop down on the inside of his elbow joint with the heel of your hand.
 - C. With your other hand reach across your body and hook the inside of his upper arm.
 - D. Step into the opponent with the foot on the same side as the arm you just hooked the upper arm with.
 - E. "Drag" the opponent towards you.
 - F. Step around to his side with your trail foot.
 - G. From this position there are a variety of take downs, which can be executed.

Opponent Gets a Double Inside Tie-up - You want to immediately get your opponent out of this dominant position! This can be accomplished by several methods. We want to teach the two following methods at the beginning level.

1. Rotate your hands and forearms inside and under your opponent's elbows. Drive your thumbs into his armpits gaining a Double Inside Tie-up.
2. Take both hands and place them palms up, and quickly pop up the opponent's forearms. At the same time take a penetration step into your opponent and attempt a bearhug or double-leg takedown.

Opponent Gets a Single Inside Tie-up - Do the same thing as in Step 1 above, only to just one side. Or, apply a Russian 2-on-1 in the same manner as you did to control the elbow in the "collar" tie-up.

Opponent Gets a Russian 2-on-1 Tie-up - There are several methods to accomplish this. At the beginning level we want to use only the "Chicken Claw" which is done using the following steps.

1. Take your free hand and place it thumb down, with the tip of your thumb planted firmly against the base of your opponent's neck.
2. Squeeze your thumb and fingers together, without bending them into a fist.
3. Circle away from your opponent into a head-to-head position.
4. Pull your arm free from your opponent's grip.
5. Get in a good defensive stance.

Opponent Gets a Single Underhook - There are a variety of ways to counter a underhook tie-up. At the beginning level we want to use the following methods.

Russian 2-on-1

1. Grab the opponent's elbow; squeeze in inward towards your side.
2. With your free hand reach across your body and grab the opponent's wrist
3. Apply a Russian 2-on-1 tie-up

Pummel for an Underhook

1. Rotate your hand and forearm over your opponent's.
2. Drive your hand (make a fist, so you won't jamb a finger) under the opponent's shoulder.
3. Place your head into the pectoral muscle of your opponent on the opposite side.

You need to learn to do each of the preceding AUTOMATICALLY TO EITHER SIDE if you don't react automatically, your opponent can use these tie-ups to score an offensive takedown. **IF YOU REACT CORRECTLY AUTOMATICALLY YOU WILL BE ABLE TO SCORE A TAKEDOWN OF THE SETUP CAUSED BY YOUR REACTION, OR YOU WILL BE IN A TIE-UP THAT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO COUNTER QUICKLY.**

CHANGING LEVELS AND PENETRATION

These are two different basic skills. However, the both can be accomplished at the same time in most instances by taking a penetration step: Drop Step, Knee Dip, or Step-In. By stepping into your opponent your hips will lower causing your center of gravity to lower (changing levels), and you will decrease the distance between your opponent and yourself at the same time.

The first penetration step is the “Step-In” this is performed simply by stepping 1’ to 18” into the opponent with either your inside or outside foot. Several variables will determine which foot you step with. A Duckunder and certain types of High-Crotches are executed by stepping into the opponent with your outside foot A Bearhug or Head in the Middle-Double Leg are usually accomplished by stepping in with the inside foot. An Inside-Trip can be executed by stepping into the opponent with either foot in between his feet. A Back-Heel Trip is executed from the neutral position by stepping with your outside foot. Typically, in these cases you were in a “Square” stance and quickly changed to a “Staggered” stance by stepping into your opponent. Thus, you need to be “light” on your feet at all times, and constantly moving your feet, in order to 1) take advantage of opportunities to penetrate into your opponent and 2) avoid the opponent successfully executing a penetration step into you.

At the beginning level the Drop Step must be mastered before you can successfully attack your opponents legs without being in a tie-up position and/or shooting a takedown at or below your opponents knees.

Drop Step - This term is used assuming you are in a “Square” stance. If you are in a “Staggered” stance the “Drop” portion doesn’t need to be done. However, if you are in a “Staggered” stance you can only step forward with your lead foot, whereas in the “Square” stance you can step forward with either foot As a result your offensive options have doubled by using a “Square” stance.

1. Drop one foot backwards approximately 6” to 12” planting the instep of your foot onto the mat at about a 45-degree angle from your other foot This will lower your center of gravity, and provide you with a foundation to drive off from with your other foot with an explosive step towards your opponent.
2. Step forward with your other foot 12” to 18” directly forward. As you step forward reach out with both of your hands, keeping your “elbows” in. This duplicates the action of reaching for your opponent’s leg.
3. The knee of your trail leg may or may not have touched the mat when you stepped forward. In either case you quickly want to step forward with your trail foot, by swinging it away and forward. **DO NOT DRAG OR SLIDE IT FORWARD** You do not want to be on both knees, unless your opponent has forced you into that position by driving his weight forward and down onto your shoulders and head.
4. When you step forward with your trail foot you should be in a “Square” stance or in a very slightly “Staggered” Stance when you finish that step. You do not want to step forward of your lead foot, only back to even with it.
5. At the same time you step forward with your trail foot, you want top your elbows back along your side. This simulates pulling the opponent’s leg to you.
6. Resume the correct positions for the “Square” stance repeat the same process to the other side.

You first must learn how to do this move correctly. Once you have accomplished that increase your speed. The faster you can CORRECTLY execute a Drop-Step the more successful you will be in

attempting single and double leg takedown. These two types of takedown are the most frequently used takedown at the NCAA and World Championship levels.

Head Roll and Snap - These moves serve as ways to take an opponent down, counter his leg takedown attempt, and sets up your takedown attempts, particularly the double leg. This move is executed as follows.

1. Secure a Double-Inside tie-up, make sure your elbows are in and that your forearms are blocking your opponent's chest if he attempts to penetrate into you.
2. Drive him backward by taking 6" to 12" steps until you have created a "Head and Shoulder" lead.
3. Release one of the bicep ties, moving it behind the opponent's head for a "Collar" tie.
4. Rotate your thumb of the other hand from the armpit to behind the tricep of your opponent's arm.
5. Step backwards with the foot on the same side as the "Collar" tie was applied, until the knee touches the mat. If your right hand is back of the opponent's head, step backwards with your right foot. This action will start your weight moving down and backward, and will help pull your opponent towards you.

The following can be done 2 different ways, depending upon what you want to accomplish.

6A. Pull the bicep and collar tie-up towards you and under the shoulder on the side you have the collar tie. This will turn the opponent away from you, giving you an angle across his hips. If you are successful in taking him to his knees with this action attempt to do the following.

- A. Release the bicep and collar tie-up
- B. Pivot on your trail knee around toward the side of the opponent nearest you.
- C. Reach under the near arm, with the hand that was used for the collar tie
- D. Grab the opponent's far arm at or above the elbow.
- E. With your other hand reach behind the opponent's near thigh, grasp it high in the crotch.
- F. Pull both hands towards you.
- G. Drive your chest into the opponent's near rib cage.
- H. Pull your opponent onto his back. When you do this take him towards his far shoulder since he cannot post his hand to block you. If you drive straight across he can step his far leg outward away from his body to stop your effort
- I. Apply a reverse half nelson and pin him.

6B. Pull the bicep and collar tie-up directly to you and downward. This should place the opponent on his hands and knees directly in front or slightly underneath you. From this position you want to do the following.

- A. Apply chest pressure on the back of his neck and shoulders.
- B. With the same hand that had the collar tie, reach over his head and grab his chin.
- C. With the same hand that had the bicep tie, reach behind the elbow, and pull it upward and towards the outside of your ribcage.
- D. From this position you can apply a Front Headlock

FRONT HEADLOCK SERIES

The use of the Front Headlock as both a defensive and offensive move has revolutionized wrestling in the U.S. over the past 25 years. If you are going to become an elite level wrestler you must learn how to use and defend all of the things that can be used in the Front Headlock Series. At the beginning level, we want you to be able to lock it up properly, execute a roll to a Cement Roll, Near Side and/or Cross Leg Cradle, Knee Tap, and to “Run the Front Headlock”, and Shrug. As you progress to more advanced levels additional things that can be done from a Front Headlock will be taught.

The Front Headlock can be applied and executed when the opponent is in a standing or kneeling position. Must always be on your feet not your knees during all parts of this series. If you are on your knees you are susceptible to the Knee Tap, which would probably put you on your back.

Locking Up the Front Headlock

Most frequently your opponent will be on his hands and knees when you lockup this hold. However, you will want to make sure you do the same things if he is in a standing position. Assuming your opponent is on his hands and knees you apply the hold in this manner. Place your chest and shoulders on the back of your opponent’s back and head. This will prevent him from coming to his feet. Use the following steps to lock up this hold.

1. “Pounce” on the back of your opponent’s back and head with your chest and shoulders.
2. Reach around his head and reach underneath and grab the chin, forcing it downward as much as possible.
3. With your other hand grab behind the elbow on the opposite side.
4. Pull the elbow upward off of the mat to along the side of your ribcage.
5. If you have been successful in doing Step No. 4 proceed with the following steps. If you were not successful you will have to change off to another technique of the front Headlock Series.
6. Release the elbow and quickly slide your elbow behind the opponent’s elbow, squeeze the elbow towards the opponent head.
7. When your hand on the opposite side reaches near your hand on the chin, release the chin and lock your hands directly under the chin.
8. At this point check to see if the bottom of your chest is on the back of the opponent head. If not reposition your weight so that this is accomplished
9. Now squeeze your elbows together. You should hear the opponent “gurgling” because his air supply and blood supply to the brain has been significantly decreased

You can “pass out” an opponent with this hold at times. The hold is not illegal, but it is illegal to “pass him out”. If this occurs the referee will give him recovery time, and you will resume wrestling. We want you to change off to another hold after he starts to “gurgle” and before he “passes out”.

Running the Front Headlock

If you were unsuccessful in locking up the Front Headlock, you still have a Front Head & Arm tie-up, which is a very strong tie-up position, which will allow you to control your opponent indefinitely. In order to “run” the Front Headlock perform the following steps.

1. Perform Steps 1 through 4 above.
2. You want to throw the elbow and head away from you towards the side you have hold of the opponent’s chin.
3. The elbow of your opponent needs to be thrown under your chest.
4. As you throw the elbow and head away from you, release the chin and elbow.
5. Spin to the nearside of the opponent.
6. Reach under the near arm with the hand that was on the opponent’s head; grab the far arm at or above the elbow.
7. Take your free hand and reach behind the opponent through his crotch.
8. Pull both hands to you and drive your chest into the opponent’s ribcage.
9. Apply chest pressure putting him onto his back.

Knee Tap

1. Perform Steps 1 through 4 in Locking up the Front Headlock
2. Take the hand from the opponent’s chin; drive it under the opponent’s chest until your hand is palm down on the opponent’s far knee. You will probably have to lower your shoulder to slightly under the opponent’s ribcage to accomplish this.
3. Pull the elbow up and towards you.
4. At the same time drive your chest onto the opponent’s chest
5. Push the far knee you have your hand on towards you.
6. When the opponent is going onto his back, release the hand from the knee.
7. Move the hand from the knee to an underhook position of the arm on the opposite side.
8. Apply chest-to-chest pressure to keep the opponent on his back for nearfall points.
9. Apply a headlock and wrap the opponent around you for the pin.

Cement Roll

1. Perform Steps 1 through 9 in Locking up the Front Headlock
2. Raise the opponent’s head farther up from the mat approximately 1’ to 2’ if possible.
3. Keep chest/belly pressure on the opponent’s neck, shoulders, and back of his head, This will keep him in a “head and shoulder lead”.
4. Step one foot underneath the other, and roll to your back. You can roll the opponent in either direction.
5. Once you are on your back, stop the roll.

6. Release the arm, and thread that hand into an underhook position on the arm you just released.
7. Now roll the opposite direction until the opponent is on his back.
8. Now pin him with the Front Head Chancer you have applied on him.
9. If you can't pin him with this, step over his near and far legs, and overhook his far leg behind the knee with your inside leg. Immediately overhook the other leg in the same manner with your other leg.
10. Bring your heels of your feet towards your buttocks, and drive your pelvis into the chest of the opponent. Make sure you keep your head up. This will put his chin into his chest even tighter, making it impossible for him to bridge, and easier for the referee to see that his shoulders are down on the mat

Near Side and/or Crossleg Cradles

These are the same move, except for one difference. With the Nearside Cradle you lock up the leg closest to you. On the Crossleg Cradle you reach underneath the opponent's stomach and grab the back of the far knee or calf.

Nearside Cradle

1. Grab the opponent in a "front head" position.
2. Place your head towards the along the opponent's ribcage, so that part of your head extends past his chest
3. Start "running" on your toes to the side of your overhook in the "Front head position".
4. Pull his head down and towards you.
5. Push up and into the opponent's chest/ribcage with your head. He now should at this point be falling towards his opposite hip.
6. If you have a front headlock, release the arm, and reach for the near knee. If you can grab behind it, pull it towards your, not forward.
7. Move your head from his ribcage to in front of his hip.
8. Continue pulling his head and knee towards you, until you are able to lock your hands together.
9. Finish the Nearside Cradle for the pin.

Cross leg Cradle

1. Perform Steps I through 5 above.
2. Release the overhook, and reach for the near knee. Since you couldn't reach it, probably because he "mulekicked" it backwards, continue driving in the same direction. Reach underneath his stomach and grab behind the far knee.
3. Perform Steps 6 and 7 above.
4. Finish the Crossleg Cradle for the pin.

Single Leg Series

The single leg is the most commonly used takedown in wrestling at all levels. A single leg takedown can be High, Medium, or Low-level attacks. Each of these is defined/described briefly as follows.

High Single - You will typically be in a tie-up such as a Russian 2-on-1 or an underhook prior to attacking the leg. You will have already penetrated into the opponent by the means of a tie-up. Once you are near the leg, you simply lower your hips and grab the leg at the knee and pull it upward and towards you. Your knee never touches the mat in a High Single Leg takedown. If a penetration step is required the Step-In is used.

Medium (mid) Level - This takedown can be executed with or without a tie-up. Drop Step or Step-In penetration step is used depending upon your distance from the opponent Your hand should be placed behind the knee, with your fingers hooking around the “cords” which are on the back side of the knee. Your trail knee may hit the mat during the process of completing the Drop Step. This is ok; but you should bring up knee back up as soon as it hit the mat (the reaction should be like you landed on a sharp tack).

Low Level - You will have your trail knee either on the mat or very close to it (6” to 1’). You will be in a “Staggered” stance with a longer than normal split 18” to 24” between your front and rear feet You will not take a penetration step into the opponent Instead you will drop down on one knee, and probably post your hand on the same side to the mat to provide support/balance. To attack, you will move your weight forward rolling your lead knee to the mat You want to place your outside hand on the mat approximately 6” behind the heel of your opponent’s foot. Your head will be inside of his foot at the same height as his ankle, and your shoulder will be placed against his shin.

There are a few simple rules that must be followed in order for you to be successful using the single leg takedown.

1. Your head always goes to the inside of the leg your are attacking
2. Always attack the leg with a straight-ahead penetration step.
3. Your angle to your opponent will be either head-to-head, or from the outside at a 45-90 degree angle to the opponent.
4. Always touch the opponent before you execute a penetration step. This accomplishes two very important things.
 - A. It makes sure you are close enough to the opponent, so that you will not get overly extended by the time you reach the opponent’s leg.
 - B. Touching the opponent helps set him up, by distracting him, and perhaps causing him to move out of a good defensive position.

Lock your hands so that your hand around the outside of the opponent’s leg is pointed down. When locking your hands together, keep your thumbs next to your index finger, and then lock your hands together at a 90-degree angle

There are several ways to get yourself into position where you can attempt to secure a High Single Leg. At the beginning level we want you to use the Russian 2-on-1 tie-up as your primary means of setting up the takedown attempt. You can also use an underhook tie-up to attack with a High Single Leg using similar steps as listed below.

1. Secure a Russian 2-on-1 tie-up.
2. Step behind the heel of the opponent’s near foot. This will prevent him from stepping backward away from your attack.

3. Release the overhook, and “Squat Down” lowering your hips enough so that you can place your free hand behind the opponent’s knee.
4. Reach around the knee far enough that your hand is on the inside of the opponent’s knee.
5. Pull the knee towards you, placing his leg between your knees/thighs.
6. Release your opponent’s wrist, and lock hands with your inside hand palm up.
7. Put your forehead into the opponent’s ribcage just below his arm pit At this point you are ready to do a variety of finishes.

High Double Legs

There are two basic ways to attack with a high double leg. The first way is to attack across the opponent’s hips from a Russian 2-on-1 tie-up. The second method is a Head in the Middle of the Chest attack. Each is described below:

High Double Leg from Russian 2-on-1 Tie-up

1. This is very similar to a High Single Leg from the Russian 2-on-1 tie-up with a few variations.
2. Secure a Russian 2-on-1 tie-up. Step behind the heel of the opponent’s near foot. This will prevent him from stepping backward away from your attack.
3. Release the overhook, and “Squat Down” lowering your hips enough so that you can place your free hand behind the opponent’s knee.
4. Reach around the knee far enough that your hand is on the inside of the opponent’s knee.
5. Pull the knee towards you, placing his leg between your knees/thighs.
6. Take the opponent’s wrist, which you still have, a hold of to his far knee. If you release it earlier he will be able to apply a Whizzer.
7. Once you have his wrist positioned near his far knee, release it, and reach around the front to the outside of his knee.
8. Drive your hips across the opponent’s hips.
9. At the same time you are driving across the opponent’s hips, pull both knees towards you.
10. As the opponent falls to his side, hook your foot around his ankle of the near leg.
11. Post both of your hands to the mat on each side of the opponent’s body.
12. Drive your chest down onto the opponent.

Russian 2 on 1 Tie-up Double Leg Counter to “Chicken Claw”

1. Many wrestlers will place their free hand on the side of your head, or your neck when you apply a Russian 2 on 1 tie-up, as a means of countering you.
2. When this happens you must take the forearm of the opponent, which you have tied up, across and above the elbow of his free arm. This will require your to circle to a approximately a head-to-head alignment with your opponent. Release the wrist of your opponent and push the opponent’s elbow of the arm that is applying the “chicken-claw” upward.
3. Once Step 2 is accomplished, immediately step into your opponent on a double leg attack.

Head in the Middle High Double Leg This takedown is most frequently started from having a double inside position, with your thumbs in the opponent's armpits, and your head in his chest just below his chin. This takedown is executed as follows.

1. Driving the opponent quickly backward, until he starts to stand up straight and his weight is going towards his heels.
2. Release your double inside position
3. Drop your hips slightly
4. Place both of your hands behind the opponent's knees.
5. Continue to drive into the opponent, with your forehead pushing against the opponent's chest.
6. Pull both knees towards you.
7. As the opponent falls to his back, place both hands in a double-post position at about a 45-degree angle from the opponent.
8. Lower your chest onto the opponent's
9. Apply a double-top stretcher or inside flanker to the opponent's legs. In either case you will bring your foot towards your buttocks once you have hooked one or both of the opponent's legs.

Mid Level Single Leg Setups As you progress in your wrestling career, you will need to master a large variety of setups for any takedown series. There are probably more setups, which can be used to set up a single leg than any other takedown. For the beginning wrestler we are going to use only 3 setups. Once these are mastered more setups will be added to your repertoire.

These setups are designed to get the opponent to come out of a good defensive position.

Popping Opponent's Chest with Heel of Outside Hand

1. Hit the opponent's chest with the heel of your outside hand you will force him to raise up, which will create an opening for your shot.
2. By hitting his chest it assures that you are within arm's length of the opponent and are not too far away, which is a common mistake among many wrestlers even those at the intermediate skill level.

Tapping Inside of Opponent's Near Knee You always want to shoot for the lead leg of your opponent. However if you are both in a staggered stance, and your stances "mirror" each other the opponent's lead foot will be on the wrong side for a single leg takedown attempt. This setup is designed to force him into sprawling that foot back even with his other foot.

1. Take the hand, which is over your lead foot (assuming a staggered stance) and tap the inside of the opponent's knee on the other side.
2. Immediately after touching the opponent's knee, execute a drop step attack to the leg on the opposite side. Circle to an Outside Angle.

You want to if possible to shoot a takedown across the opponent's hips. This will make it easier to finish the takedown since he cannot drive his hips into you, without moving his feet

1. From a "square" stance circle around your opponent, but keeping within an "arms-length" of the opponent
2. Attempt to create an angle where the opponent is no longer in a head-to-head alignment.

3. Once you have created an angle, which places you to the left front or right front of the opponent, execute a drop step into the opponent.

Single Leg Finishes

The higher up you can take an opponent's foot, the greater your chances of successfully completing the takedown. The ability to take the opponent's foot up will depend upon what you and the opponent do. It is very important to keep your head up. So that your opponent cannot put weight on the back of your neck and shoulders. At the beginning level of wrestling we want you to learn 2-3 finishes for a single leg from three different elevations: 1) foot of opponent is secured in your armpit, 2) You are on your feet, with his knee encircled by your arms, and 3) when you are down on the mat. The preceding order is also the order of preference that you want to be in to finish a single leg takedown. The finishes we want you to learn at each elevation are as follows.

Opponent's foot secured under your armpit

1. Foot Sweep/Trip
2. Pull down on inside of opponent's thigh
3. Karate Chop

Opponent's knee encircle by your arms and both you and the opponent are in a standing position

4. Run the Pipe
5. Block Front of Opposite Thigh and run behind
6. Heel Pick

You are down on the mat, on one or two knees.

7. Back Heel trip & double post
8. Bow and Arrow to a high single leg finish
9. Loose Arm
10. Hip to Hip
11. Back Door
12. Switch from a Single to a Double Leg
13. Sucker Drag

High Level Finishes

The most frequent position will be to place the opponent's foot under your inside or outside shoulder. It is usually preferable to place it under the outside shoulder. Once you have the foot in your armpit, you will want to wrap the arm on that side around and under the opponent's ankle/shin. Apply pressure upward with your forearm, this will cause him some discomfort. This discomfort will cause him to try and keep his weight up to relieve the pressure on that shin.

Foot Sweep/Trip

A Sweep is when you use the instep of your outside foot to force the opponent's foot forward, by taking your foot similar to a "Soccer style kick or sweeping action from behind the opponent's foot. It is important that you have him bouncing on that foot, trying to keep the weight off of it. A Trip is when you take your foot and place it behind his other foot, and then take your heel back towards you. The individual steps are as follows

1. You want to create a wider than normal "split" in your opponent's stance, causing him to lose some of his ability to maintain his balance. Stepping backward and putting more pressure upward on his ankle accomplish this.
2. Once you have created this wider "split" now step back into him quickly and apply a Foot Sweep or Trip.

Pull Down on Inside of Thigh

This is applied when you have the opponent's foot under your inside armpit. When you have an opponent's foot up under a shoulder there is nothing supporting the hip on that side of the opponent. To take him down, you simply need to enough force downward on the hip or thigh to force him to lower his hip.

1. Keep pressure up on the opponent's ankle. This will prevent him from bending his knee of the other leg.
2. Step backwards and in a circling motion to create the wider "split".
3. Take your free hand and place it on the inside of the opponent's thigh of the leg you have up off of the mat. Place the hand palm down and as near his hip joint as possible.
4. Pull down on the thigh with your hand
5. At the same time continue to step backwards but in a circling motion, until his hip goes to the mat
6. Cover down by putting your chest down onto the opponent's.
7. Pull the opponent's ankle towards his own head.
8. If you can get his foot near the head, put your other hand behind his head as you would for a reverse half-nelson. Then lock your hands together for a farside cradle.

Karate Chop

This finish is used when the opponent's foot is under the outside armpit.

1. Do steps 1 and 2 as you would above.
2. Step back towards your opponent, taking your free hand an slapping in along the side of the opponent's head which is farthest away from your body.
3. Pull the opponent's head to the side towards you.
4. Do steps 6 through 8 above.

Medium Single Finishes

This is the elevation where most high-level single leg takedown, will windup when you have very good opponent.

Run the Pipe

1. You want your arms straight with your hands overlapping on the opponent's calf. This prevents the opponent from grabbing your wrists and pulling you up to his hips. You also can put pressure upward on his calf as you circle which will help cause him to fall on his rear end.
2. Where and how you lock your hands is very important. Place both hands palm down, with the hand that comes in from in front of the leg being placed directly underneath your other hand. Both hands should be at about the middle or lower half of your opponent's calf. You should be "squatting down" with your head up when you do this. By taking this position it will be almost impossible for your opponent to reach down and grab your wrist.
3. Step backward and away from the opponent's leg you have up off the mat. As you do this you should be exerting pressure on your opponent's calf which will pull it towards you between your legs.
4. While moving in a backward & circling motion apply weight with your inside shoulder down onto the front of the opponent's hip. Your head may move to the outside of his hip while doing this, which is okay.
5. Cover down dropping your chest onto the opponent.

Blocking the Opposite Thigh This finish is used when the opponent's foot is between your legs.

1. Step over the opponent's leg, so that both of your legs are to the outside of his leg.
2. Unlock your hands, and slide the inside hand up quickly to the ankle and hook your hand underneath the shin.
3. Take your other hand from behind the knee to in front of the lower thigh (just above the knee) of the opposite leg. Place your palm so that it faces towards the opponent's thigh.
4. Run in a circling motion behind the opponent.
5. Pull up the opponent's ankle towards your armpit.
6. Keep circling until your other hand prevents the opponent from stepping forward and therefore losing his balance.
7. The opponent eventually should put his hands to the mat to keep from falling headfirst to the mat.
8. Cover down for the takedown.

Heel Pick This is used when the opponent puts his foot outside of your outside leg.

1. Rotate your outside arm towards the opponent, until your elbow joint is behind his knee.
2. Unlock your hands, curl your outside forearm around the leg towards you to keep it trapped.
3. Take your free hand underneath the opponent's leg at the knee.
4. Grasp the bottom of the opponent's foot with your hand at a 90-degree angle across the front of the heel/instep.
5. Pull the foot quickly towards you.
6. Move in a circling manner backwards and away from the opponent's foot you just pulled towards you. (Like "Running the Pipe")
7. Cover down applying chest pressure on the opponent as quickly as possible.

Back Heel Trip This finish can be used for both single and double legs. There are minor variations when used as a double leg finish. This finish is used when the opponent has sprawled as a counter, and you can get up off of your knees, but cannot lift his leg up for a medium or high-level finish.

1. Your outside hand should be behind the opponent's near knee in a "fishhook" position.
2. Post your inside hand to the mat, keep this arm as straight as possible. Keep your outside knee off of the mat.
3. Your head should be in front of the opponent's near hip.
4. Step up with your outside foot and place it behind the opponent's ankle. This may take more than one step. However, he can't go backward faster than you can go forward. Eventually his foot will be close enough for you to step behind, or you will have driven him off of the mat. Once you have hooked his foot he cannot move it backwards.
5. Drive your chest & shoulders as hard as you can into his hips, this will drive his hips backwards over his foot, which you have trapped.
6. Post both of your hands to the mat at a 45-degree angle away from your body. The inside hand goes between your opponent's legs on a single leg, and outside on a double leg. Make sure the elbow is kept "in" when you place it between the opponent legs.
7. Keep the leg hooked and slide your chest pressure forward onto his chest He probably will react quickly and turn belly-down, but look try this cover-down as it will give you some quick nearfall points.

Bow and Arrow This finish is used when you have been able to lock your hands around the opponent's knee, but his weight has forced you to remain on your knees.

1. Pull the opponent's knee to your chest
2. Unlock your hands, and slide your outside hand down and wrap it around his leg. Your hand should be on the front of his shin.
3. Post your inside hand to the mat, keeping your head up and inside of his hip. Place your outside foot on the mat, and get your outside knee off of the mat.
4. Pull your outside hand upward, this will make him shift his weight to his outside foot. By doing this you have prevented him from applying downward force with a whizzer and his inside hip onto your neck and shoulder.
5. Standup and quickly jerk his Ankle up under one of your armpits.
6. Execute a high-level single leg finish that is most appropriate.

Loose Arm There will be times when you are able to get your outside hand behind the opponent's knee, but cannot lock your hands to pull the leg to your chest

1. Post your inside hand to the mat
2. Step your outside foot behind the opponent's foot/ankle
3. Turn your outside hip to his inside hip.
4. Turn the palm of what is now your inside hand palm up.

5. Pull your inside elbow forward, with your hand following along your side. This action will take away your opponent's support, if he has applied a whizzer.
6. Your opponent should fall face down to the mat.
7. Cover down for the takedown.

Note: The Limp Arm is accomplished by doing the same things, only in the Limp Arm your arm is across the opponent's back and he has a whizzer applied.

Hip to Hip This is most effective when you have been able to lock your hands around the opponent's knee, but cannot get up off of your knees, and cannot slide your hand down to execute the Bow and Arrow. The opponent will have sprawled and applied a whizzer.

1. Pull the knee to your chest.
2. Unlock your hands and post your inside hand to the mat. Keep your outside hand on the opponent's leg at or below the knee.
3. Begin moving your hips towards the opponent's hip nearest you.
4. Each time you move your hips make sure you also move your posted hand so that it is directly under your outside shoulder. It may take 4-5 small separate moves until you get hip-to-hip.
5. Once you are hip-to-hip step over his near leg with your inside knee.
6. Drive your inside shoulder forward into the back of the thigh of this knee. It should force him forward and reduce the effectiveness of his whizzer.
7. Continue moving your hips around and behind the opponent, until you have stepped over the inside leg with both knees. He may have fallen down from his base, however a good wrestler will have continued to fight against your finish.
8. Once you have stepped over the inside leg with both knees, take your hand that is around his knee and move it over and grab his other ankle.
9. Pull the ankle towards you, and drive your shoulders forward into the back of the opponent's thighs. This should drive him off of his base.

Back Door This is most effective when you have shot a low or medium level single leg, and the opponent's chest is over your shoulders.

1. Post your inside hand to the mat, keep your other hand behind the knee of the opponent's inside leg.
2. Slide your knees forward so that your hips are under your shoulders. Your feet should be laces down and overlapping in order to prevent the opponent from grabbing a foot or both feet as a counter.
3. Place your head against the middle of his buttocks
4. Slide your hips towards his feet, and drive the back of your head into his buttocks. **Your Hips Must Be Between His Thighs. Not Under His Hips**
5. Step up with your leg, which is farthest from the leg you are holding with one hand behind the knee.
6. Once you stand up, he should be putting his hands to the mat, in order to prevent his face from smashing into the mat.
7. Cover down from behind for the takedown.

Switch From a Single to a Double Leg

There will be times when the opponent shifts his weight to the side that you attacked for a single leg. His hips will be too low for you to execute a back door finish. However, because the opponent's weight is shifted directly to one side, you will be able to move your head upward and towards the opponent's far hip.

1. Post your hand to the mat, keep your other hand around the opponent's knee.
2. Place your trail foot on the mat
3. Move your head from inside the opponent's near hip to outside the far hip.
4. Pull his knee you have hold of underneath his chest/stomach.
5. Grab his other leg with your hand that has been posted to the mat
6. Drive your head across his hips as you shift your weight from underneath the opponent to outside the opponent
7. Cover down for the takedown.

Sucker Drag the opponent can use this to counter a double underhook when you both are on your knees, or he has applied a front headlock. In this position the opponent was successful in keeping you from grabbing hold of a leg.

1. Grab both of the elbows of your opponent's squeeze them inward.
2. Release one elbow and reach underneath your chest and grasp the hand/wrist of the arm under your other armpit.
3. Pull that hand out and place it on your hip on the opposite side.
4. Release your hand that is on his hand/wrist and hook his tricep of the same arm.
5. Pull the arm towards you.
6. At the same time you drag his arm forward to hip-to hip on that side of the opponent
7. Take your hand from the elbow and reach between his legs, high-in-the-thigh.
8. Take your other hand and reach underneath his chest and grab the far arm at or above the elbow.
9. Pull both of your elbows towards your sides, and drive your chest into the opponent's ribcage.
10. Apply a reverse half-nelson and go for the pin.

COUNTERS TO LEG ATTACKS

Being in proper defensive position-stance and in motion is the best defense against leg attacks. Most coaches teach, and it is the natural reaction of a young wrestler to sprawl when the opponent shoots a leg takedown attempt against him. The finishes covered previously for single and double legs will counter a sprawl by the opponent. Therefore, we don't teach a "sprawl" the way it is most commonly used.

However, when an opponent does shoot a low and mid-level single or double leg, or high crotch the following general principles must be adhered to.

Low Level Leg Attack Counters

1. If your opponent “shoots” a low level takedown without being in a tie-up, the best method to counter is to step up and forward with the foot that your opponent is shooting towards. You need to step up about 1 foot in order to make sure your foot is higher than his hand.
2. Now step forward, and then step forward with your other foot.
3. If you are not in contact with your opponent, make a 180-degree turn, and prepare to “pounce” on top of your opponent if he still is on his hands and knees.
4. If your opponent grabs your foot, turn your back to him, kick your foot into him, and then yank it away as quickly as you can.
5. If you haven’t succeeded in getting your foot free from your opponent, you need to sit down on the opponent, and post his head to the mat with one hand. Keep your other foot as far away from your opponent as possible. You can’t let him come into you, or get his head up off the mat. All you’re trying to do is achieve a “stalemate” call by the referee.

Counter to Mid Level Leg Attacks

1. Lower your hips and drive them forward into the opponent to stop his momentum towards you. Both Port Robertson and Myron Roderick (3-time NCAA champ, Head coach of 7 NCAA championship teams at Oklahoma State) are in complete agreement on this. This is best accomplished by stepping into the opponent. By stepping into the opponent you also will prevent him from being able to change levels as much as he had anticipated.
2. Force the head down to mat If his head is on the mat he cannot score a takedown until he gets his head up off of the mat. Posting his head to the mat will stop his ability to move into or around you.
3. Attempt to create extensions by the opponent. If you can get his arms, and/or legs extended, and his head and shoulders forward of his knees you have put him in a position where it will make it hard for him to explode or exert force into you.
4. Always make him carry as much weight of yours as possible. This will make him tired, and will pay off later in the match.
5. Stay square to the opponent, this means your body and his stay in the same alignment, with your body higher than his. You do not want him to be able to create an angle where he can attack across your hips.
6. If you can put his head on the mat, then it is ok to move from a square position, to one where you can create an angle to attack across his hips.

At the beginning level we want you to learn how to use a hiplock, whizzer, Whizzer & underhook combination, double overhook, quarter nelson, and butt drag. Our primary means of counter offense will be the Front Headlock and Whizzer series. At this level we want you to learn how to do the following moves once you have a front headlock applied: running the front head & arm, cement roll, and change off to a nearside or crossleg cradle. These counters and counter offense moves are described as follows.

Hiplock Any time your hip is in front of the opponent’s hip, and your tie-up allows you to pull your opponent’s upper body forward or sideways, and the opponent cannot move his hip to prevent you from executing the move you have a “hiplock”. A hiplock can occur in a standing or kneeling position. It

requires turning your back to the opponent to apply a hiplock. The most common way to apply a hiplock is by the following method.

1. Step into the opponent with one foot. You want the toe of this foot to be about even with the opponents toe
2. Pivot on the toe of that foot so you are now facing in the essentially the same direction as the opponent.
3. Perform a “backstep” by bringing what was your trail foot and is now your lead foot next to your other foot. This step is performed at the same time your are performing step 2.

Underhook & Overhook (Whizzer) Combination This tie-up will be used with the hiplock to take the opponent from his feet directly to his back.

1. As the opponent steps in towards you for a medium to high single or double leg underhook the lead shoulder of your opponent (Shoulder nearest to you).
2. Reach across with your other hand and grab the opponent’s far elbow, or overhook the far arm above the elbow with your free hand.
3. Apply a hiplock.
4. Pull the forward and down with your overhook with an underhook on the nearside.
5. Pull forward and upward with the underhook.
6. “Sag” your hips down and forward.
7. Slide your feet away from the opponent until your have approximately a 90-degree angle with his body.
8. Get into a chest-to-chest position, and apply chest pressure.
9. Keep the overhook tight

Underhook Throw-by

1. Drive your hand (make a fist so you won’t jamb a finger) between opponent side and upper arm.
2. Step into opponent with the foot on the same side as the under hook (right hand & right foot).
3. Inside of your elbow joint should be directly under opponent’s armpit.
4. Pull opponent’s shoulder forward and away from you with the underhook.
5. If you don’t have any other tie-up, turn your hips parallel to the opponent’s
6. Throw your fist forward.
7. Cover down on opponent for the takedown.

Double Overhook This tie-up will be used with the hiplock to take the opponent from his feet directly to his back.

1. As the opponent steps in towards you for a medium to high single or double leg overhook the lead shoulder of your opponent (Shoulder nearest to you).

2. Reach across with your other hand and grab the opponent's far elbow, or overhook the far arm above the elbow with your free hand.
3. Apply a hiplock.
4. Pull the forward and down with your far overhook
5. Pull forward and upward with the near overhook.
6. "Sag" your hips down and forward, by sitting out to the front.
7. Slide your feet away from the opponent until you have approximately a 90-degree angle with his body.
8. Get into a chest-to-chest position, and apply chest pressure.
9. Keep the overhooks tight and lock your hands together, with them placed on opponent's sternum.

Quarter Nelson This is a change off from the Whizzer (Overhook)

1. With your free hand push the opponent's head towards the mat. If possible post it to the mat.
2. Thread the hand of your arm with which you have a Whizzer applied, and grab the wrist of your other hand.
3. Apply all of your weight downward on the back of the opponent's neck. This should place his forehead on the mat, and cause him to let go of your leg.
4. Start walking to the side opposite of your Whizzer, keeping your weight on the opponent's neck
5. Slide your hand from your wrist to the back of the opponent's neck
6. Remove your hand, which was originally on the back of opponent's neck, and grasp the inside of the ankle on the side you have walked towards.
7. Continue to walk in the same direction and slide your hand from the back to around the neck into a reverse half- nelson position.
8. Cover down with chest pressure for the nearfall and pin.

Front Headlock This is used when you cannot post the opponent's head to the mat with a quarter-nelson, or you win up on your hands and knees facing your opponent in a "scramble" situation.

1. Drive your chest onto the back of the opponent's shoulder and head.
2. Reach around opponent's head and grasp his chin.
3. With your other hand grasp behind the opponent's elbow on the other side.
4. Slide your forearm to just above the elbow of the arm you have grasped.
5. Slide your hands together and lock your hands together at a 90-degree angle under the opponent's chin.
6. Squeeze your elbows to your side, the opponent's arm, should be trapped near your side and off of the mat.

Cement Roll

1. Raise opponent's head up off of the mat.
2. Step one foot under the other. It doesn't matter which direction, you can go either way.
3. Roll towards your back stop with your head facing the ceiling.
4. Release the front headlock. Move your hand from over the arm to under the arm, and grasp opponent's chin with your other hand.
5. Now roll in the other direction to drive opponent onto his back
6. Squeeze the elbow of the arm around opponent's head to your side.
7. Apply pressure onto opponent from a chest-to-chest position.

Running the Front Headlock This is used when you cannot lock up a front headlock or roll him with a front headlock.

1. Grasp opponent's chin and elbow of arm on opposite side.
2. Pull elbow up to your side.
3. Throw opponent's elbow and head under your shoulder on the opposite side.

Nearside and Crossleg Cradles If you can "turn the corner" with a front headlock, the opponent's near knee, and in some cases his far knee will be close enough for you to grab while continuing to hold onto his head with your other hand.

1. Put your head against the opponent's ribcage, with your head closer to his chest than his back
2. Run on your toes attempting to create a 90-degree or less angle to the opponent's body.
3. As you are running on your toes, pull the opponent's head down and towards you.
4. Push up on the opponent's ribcage with your head as you are "turning the corner".
5. If you are completely successful in steps 1-4 above, the opponent will roll onto his far hip.
6. After you've "turned the corner", release the front headlock, but keep your hand around his head and grab his chin.
7. Grab behind his near knee with your free hand, and pull it towards you, not towards his head. This will probably put him on his far hip.
8. Place your head in front of his near hip.
9. Now drive with your head, as you pull your hands together to lock up the cradle.

If he "mulekicks his near leg back when you reach for it, simply reach underneath his stomach and grab behind his far knee. Do steps 7-9 to finish locking up the Crossleg Cradle.

BOTTOM POSITION WRESTLING SKILLS

BOTTOM POSITION

A wrestler's physical build, arm and leg strength, quickness and explosiveness will determine which type of stance he should use on bottom. Wrestler's who have a stocky muscular build, and can explode quickly should typically use a "squat back" stance. Wrestlers who are tall and slender, without significant arm and leg strength, and quickness are better suited for using the "table-top" stance. Both stances allow the bottom wrestler to create back pressure against the top wrestler, but by different methods. There are both high percentage escapes and reversals, which can be used from either stance.

When in the down position, it is important to make the top man react to you. Instead of him dictating the action. This can be achieved by doing the following:

1. Maintaining a good base, if broken down you must build a new base as soon as possible.
2. You want to maintain a good defensive position on bottom which includes:
 - A. Headup
 - B. Elbows in, you want to maintain an inside the elbows position.
 - C. Hips under your shoulders as much as possible
 - D. Legs and feet need to form a triangular shaped base
 - E. You need to try and keep your opponent directly behind you, unless you are in the process of executing an escape or reversal. This makes it difficult for him to drive across your hips.
 - F. Whenever possible exert "back pressure" into your opponent, thereby forcing him to work on top, we don't want him to be able to rest.
 - G. Don't reach back for the opponent's head on the near side, this open's you for a double-double pinning combination
 - H. Don't lay on your side or one hip, you have no power in this position. This is the position a good "pinner" will want you in.
3. Get hand control, immediately if on bottom, this will prevent your opponent from applying many pinning combinations.
4. If you wind up on bottom as a result of an opponent taking you down or reversing you, hitting an explosive move such as a shear standup will probably not be easily executed. In these cases an outside leg standup, switch, gizoni, or a roll of some type will probably have a greater chance of success. You must continually try to score an escape or reverse. We want the top man to have no opportunity to break you down and apply a pinning combination. We want him to be called for stalling on top, or force him to let you go because he's afraid of being reversed or called for stalling.

The following are the key points that I attempt to teach each wrestler for the following stances and positions.

Squat Back Stance

1. Toes tucked under, you want to prepare like you are going to explode out of the starting blocks in a track meet.

2. Knees shoulder width apart or slightly wider. I like to create a triangular base on bottom in this stance. Knees should be as close to the rear line as legally possible.
3. Hands need to be placed as close to the front line as possible, directly under your shoulders.
4. Elbows need to be slightly bent, and near your thighs. Heels of your hands should be dug into the mat.
5. Your rear end should be lower than your shoulders.
6. Head up looking forward at the referee.

By being in this position it will help you accomplish or prevent the following actions.

1. Your opponent will not be able to apply chest pressure onto your back. Therefore, it will make it difficult for him to prevent you from exploding upward on the whistle.
2. By keeping your elbows bent and in you are in a position to push your back into your opponent.
3. By keeping your elbows bent and in, it makes it difficult for your opponent to get his far arm under your near arm.

The first move I want a wrestler to learn on bottom when using the squat back stance is an inside leg standup. The most commonly used are the shear and backslap stand-ups. I prefer to start with the shear standup, and add the back slap after they have mastered the shear standup.

Shear Standup

1. On the whistle the bottom man needs to do several things essentially simultaneously.
 - A. Step up and forward with his inside foot to directly in front of where his inside hand was placed on the mat.
 - B. Drive your inside elbow back into your opponent's chest, creating "daylight".
 - C. With your far hand grab the hand (not the wrist!) placed on your stomach by your opponent.
 - D. Drive your back into your opponent's chest forcing him backwards if possible.
 - E. Your hips should be down, and you should be in a staggered stance by this time, with your inside it being your lead foot.

At this point you have option of using several finishes. It will depend upon the score and time left in a match as to which finish you will want to use.

Assuming you only need an escape, and do not need a takedown immediately, I prefer the following finish.

1. Take the opponent's hand and place it where your outside back pocket would be if your were wearing jeans.
2. Step your trail leg behind your lead leg, while keeping hand control.
3. Turn and face your opponent, creating maximum distance, then you release his hand.

If you need an escape and a quick takedown late in a match I prefer the following

1. Take Your opponent's hand away and forward from your waist.
2. Step behind your trail leg with your lead leg, forcing your inside shoulder under your opponent's.

3. At this point release your opponent's hand, and immediately attempt a high double leg takedown. Hopefully, the official will award an escape and a takedown, since you gained a neutral position before shooting the takedown. Sometimes you get this call and sometimes you don't. It can be worthwhile to discuss this with a referee prior to a match occurring, usually during a break.

Posting Over the Ankle One of the more commonly used techniques to prevent an opponent from escaping is to pick up an ankle. Most commonly it will be the outside Ankle, but schools such as Sunnyside will pick up the inside ankle. In either case, you can escape by posting over the Ankle.

1. When you hit an inside leg standup, and your opponent grabs your outside Ankle you will need to automatically stop the standup and post over the Ankle. Your signal will be when you go for hand control of the hand placed on your stomach in the referee's position will be on your outside Ankle over 90 percent of the time.
2. Reach back and grab your opponent's wrist/hand (it really doesn't matter, just do it quickly!).
3. If you have placed your inside foot out in front as the start of a standup, switch from having your inside knee up, to having it down, by turning towards your outside foot.
4. Push the heel of your outside foot down to the mat. Do not try to step forward with your foot to accomplish this. You must place almost all of your weight over this foot
5. Now push your back into your opponent's chest forcing him back.
6. Place your head in the "Saddle" of his shoulder and neck.
7. Take his hand off your ankle and place it on the mat.
8. Execute a "hip heist" just as you would in a pivot sit out.
9. Drive your hips backward over your feet as quickly as possible, gaining your escape.

Gizoni

This is a move developed by Anthony Gizoni, 2-time NCAA champion and Outstanding Wrestler from Waynesburg State, PA, and perfected by Port Robertson who named the move after Anthony Gizoni. Anthony Gizoni won the NCAA tournament without scoring an offensive takedown, he would deliberately let people take him down, and then reverse them with this move. This move can be used to reverse your opponent any time he reaches over your near arm and is close to parallel to your body. It is also an effective means of countering and reversing or escaping a chicken wing.

1. You need to get your body directly under your opponent, in a very compact squat back stance, but with your toes flat on the mat.
2. Your elbows need to be tight against your sides to prevent your opponent from reaching under either arm.
3. In many cases your opponent will reach over the near arm, or you can force him to reach over it by driving your arm back under and hooking it in the crook of your elbow. If the opponent is directly behind you "Crab Ride" type position, you can force under either arm.
4. Once you have the arm hooked, you want to raise up your upper body.
5. Throw your hand over your head, which will pull your opponent's upper body across your upper body at a 45-degree angle.
6. Post your other hand to the mat for support.

7. Throw both of your feet out as far as possible under your shoulder of the arm with which you hooked your opponent's arm. This will normally place you on your hip.
8. Continue backing the rest of your body towards your feet, until you are once again in a squat back stance, and are completely out from under your opponent.
9. At this point you want to drive back into your opponent reaching under his near arm and grabbing his far arm (you'll need to lower your outside shoulder so that it goes under his chest), and grabbing the inside of his near thigh, with your near arm.
10. Pull with both arms, driving forward applying chest pressure, driving the opponent onto his back.
11. You will wind up in a reverse half-nelson pinning combination.

Table Top Stance At first glance this stance looks like it would be easy to break the bottom man down. However, it is a very powerful position for the following reason. It creates an extension of the top wrestler's arms and legs in order for him to get into a legal starting position, if he likes to be up on the inside knee. You need to alert the official to check for the opponent placing his feet between your wrestler's feet in the top starting position. I've seen young wrestlers almost be disqualified for illegal starting positions when we used a tabletop stance. Usually by the time a wrestler is penalized 1,1, then 2 and is facing disqualification his coach will have him use the "freestyle" start and let the bottom man up.

1. Place hands in front of the front line.
2. Place your knees in a position so that your thighs are essentially 90 degrees to the mat. Your knees will be fairly close together, but not touching.
3. Your back will be essentially parallel to the mat (like a table top).
4. Head up looking forward looking directly at the referee.
5. Heels of your hands should be firmly pressed in the mat. This will aid you in pushing back into your opponent.

Pivot Sit out

This move is very effective for the wrestler who lacks the explosiveness needed to hit an inside leg standup.

1. On the whistle you want to simultaneously;
 - A. Swing your feet away from your opponent (windshield wiper action)
 - B. Push back as hard as you can with your arms forcing your back into your opponent
2. Drive the inside "cheek" of your butt onto the mat.
3. Roll your hips slightly until equal weight is on both "cheeks"
4. Plant both feet firmly and drive back into your opponent, you must maintain back pressure at all times.
5. Tilt your head back into the "saddle" of the neck and shoulder on one side of your opponent.
6. Gain hand control of the arm on the opposite side of where your head is by using both hands. Most commonly he will double under cup your shoulders, or place his hands inside your thighs.
7. Post this hand to the mat, maintaining control with your hand on that side.

8. At this point raise your hips up about 6" to 12" off the mat.
9. Now you want to "hip heist" and shear away the opponent's other arm.
10. To "hip heist" step your leg that is on the same side as your head under your other leg.
11. As the same time you want to drive the elbow of the arm on the same side tight along your side, trying to drive it inside your opponent's forearm. This will "shear away" his arm from your body.
12. Drive your hips back over your feet as quickly as possible. This will create a significant amount of distance between you and your opponent. This distance will make it impossible for him to follow you around.

Note: The Swisher Standup is executed in the same manner, except you do not drive your hips down to the mat. Instead you drive them straight back towards the opponent. The Swisher Standup is very good for kids with a knee injury, because it takes a strain off of the knee, yet lets them execute a quick standup.

Switch I learned this switch from Rod Kilgore who was a 3-time state champ in Oklahoma and a 4-time all-American, 2-time NCAA champ at OU. This was one the two switches Rod used, the other being a standing switch. These were the only two bottom moves he ever used in 4 years at OU. Even Wade Schalles (over 600 pins in 800 matches) wouldn't attempt to ride Rod, as he said he'll put you on your back with that switch of his, I'll take my chances with him on my feet.

1. On the whistle raise both knees up about 2"-6"
2. Swing your hips into your opponent as hard as possible. This should force him to let go of your near arm and post his hand to keep his balance.
3. Step your inside foot out as far as possible away from your opponent. This will prevent him from stepping over your inside leg.
4. Hook behind his knee with your far hand
5. Turn towards your opponent and pull yourself around to him.
6. As you reverse him make sure your shoulder doesn't go much higher than his hips. This will help prevent him from re-switching you.
7. Once you know he can't re-switch you, drive forward with your chest onto your opponent's chest.
8. Use your outside hand to grab his far knee, pull it up and towards you. This will keep the opponent from building a base; probably keep him on his side.
9. If you have managed to keep him on his side with his back exposed to the mat, apply a half nelson and pin him.

I feel a key point of this move is raising the knees up off the mat. I think it does the following things.

1. The opponent probably thinks you are going to set up a Granby Roll, since it is usually executing by raising up in a similar manner.
2. The Granby Roll takes advantage of the top man chopping down the near arm and exerting chest pressure onto the bottom man's back.
3. Because of the fear of being hit with a Granby Roll the top man doesn't chop down the near arm or exert chest pressure onto the bottom man.

4. Because the top man doesn't attempt to break you down, he is not doing anything to prevent you from executing the switch.
 - A. After a wrestler becomes proficient in executing this move, I want to add the Granby Roll to his repertoire. This switch and the Granby Roll are moves, which complement each other. A wrestler with advanced skills will be able to hit one of these moves depending upon what the man on top does.

Standing Switches I teach two different standing switches. The first I learned from Ray Miller (4-time AA, 1x NCAAchamp), which will score an escape or reversal, very quickly when the top man is just trying to hold on until the end of the period. The second I learned from Rod Kilgore (4-time AA, 2-time NCAA champ) which takes a little longer to setup, but is so subtle that your opponent does not realize he is in danger until it is too late. This switch will put your opponent on his back for an easy near-fall or pin most of the time.

In both cases you have reached a standing position and your opponent has his hands locked around your waist. In executing these standing switches you seemingly violate almost all of the fundamental rules pertaining to position and hand control. However, I never saw either wrestler ever ridden for over 30 seconds by any opponent in their 4 years in college, against the top wrestlers in the country.

Ray Miller Standing Switch

1. You need to "give up" your hips need to be near your opponent without much daylight between you and your opponent.
2. Your upper body needs to be essentially parallel to the mat.
3. You need to be start running forward, pulling your opponent along with you towards the edge of the mat.
4. Upon reaching near the edge of the mat, dive forward, and then turn away from him.
5. His momentum is going towards the edge of the mat, while you have changed yours back towards the center.
6. Hook the inside of his knee and execute the switch.
7. If this move didn't work you should be near the out of bounds line and can probably getting a fresh start by being out of bounds.

Rod Kilgore Standing Switch

1. Execute an outside leg standup, but not in an explosive manner.
2. Keep both hands down to block your opponent's knees, to prevent him from "bumping" you up for a breakdown.
3. Have your upper body essentially parallel to the mat and leaning forward.
4. Walk forward about 3 steps, so your opponent is not in position to lift you, and your are creating the forward momentum you'll need to make this move work.
5. As you are walking forward, no longer block one of your opponent's knees; this will let him step close to your trail leg.
6. When his foot gets near your trail leg, you want to step your foot backwards, with the toe pointing down, wrap your foot around his ankle, with your toe behind his heel.

7. Grab hold of the wrist on the same side as the leg you've just hooked.
8. Shift your hip on that side forward and away from your opponent, creating between a 45 to a 90 degree angle with your opponent.
9. Sit that hip to the mat as quickly as possible
10. At the same time pull the opponent's wrist on that side towards your other hip. This will create a rolling action by your opponent.
11. As you hit the mat reach for the inside of your opponent's knee or lower, and pull it towards the opponent's head.
12. At this point your opponent should be on his back, with you lying on top of his chest at approximately a 90-degree angle. You should still have hold of the opponent's wrist and opposite leg. You may be able to exert enough pressure to pin him from this position or at least score near-fall points since he has virtually no mobility.
13. If you were not able to pull his ankle to a point near his head, execute a "hip heist" and go "chest to chest" at a 90-degree angle and apply a half nelson.

This move works for the following reasons

1. The opponent doesn't feel like you are attempting to execute a move. He has a false sense of security feeling you aren't trying to break free from him.
2. Once you have his Ankle hooked with your foot, you have locked his foot in position, which prevents him from moving his base.
3. By sitting down to the mat away from your opponent and pulling his arm across your body, you are pulling him off of his base, and he can't move his feet to maintain his balance.
4. You have utilized his momentum and gained hand/wrist control at a point when it was needed.

Each wrestler upon mastering these moves will have one escape, one reversal he can use from the bottom referee's position in either the "squat back" stance or "table top" stance, and two switches he can use for a reversal from a standing position. I don't want to teach any other moves on bottom until they have demonstrated the ability to use the moves from both sides in a live wrestling situation against wrestlers of equal or superior ability. This will take at least 1 or more years. At the 5th to 8th grade levels these are the only moves they should need. I would add a Granby Roll, Peterson, and Side Roll for those wrestlers who've mastered the preceding escapes and reversals.

TOP POSITION WRESTLING SKILLS

TOP POSITION

Philosophy

I have been very successful in developing wrestlers who dominated their opponent's when on top. These same wrestlers were very successful in getting up off bottom. The successful mat wrestler understands what the violations of position are in the both and top positions

The key to controlling the bottom man is controlling his inside hip and shoulder. This can be done by several different methods. If a wrestler can get his hips under his shoulders, he then has the position to explode upwards/forwards "Hip Pop" with his hips, which is a very powerful action in wrestling. You must concentrate on preventing this from happening at all times!

Unless I'm in a "Crab Ride", have a "Double High in the Thigh" leg ride, or am countering a "Pivot Sit out" I do not want to be directly behind the man on bottom. By being parallel to the bottom man it is impossible to drive across the bottom man's hips, which is the easiest way to destroy his base.

I want to be a no less than a 45-degree angle to my opponent and on my toes driving into him with my chest exerting downward pressure on his back, or pressure across his hips until I'm in position to lock up a pinning combination.

I have a long torso for my height, extremely long arms, strong forearms and grip, plus strong legs, but I am usually not as quick as an opponent of the same size. These attributes make the Spiral Ride, Bar Arm Ride, and High the Thigh Leg Rides suited for me. A person who has a short stocky build, and short arms will not be as ideally suited to the same type of breakdowns and rides as I am. Therefore, I do not demand that every wrestler use the same breakdowns and rides. However, they do have to drill them so that they are familiar with them, and learn ways of defending against these moves if an opponent attempts to use them.

By requiring wrestlers to learn all moves to both sides in the top and bottom position, and have everyone drill the same moves on a regular basis, they are familiar with essentially everything that can be done in mat wrestling from both the top and bottom position. If a wrestler is not doing a move correctly it will be discovered in the live wrestling sessions of our practices. Thus, the wrestlers do not gain a false sense of confidence in their abilities.

In only rare cases will we deliberately let the man on bottom up voluntarily. The following are cases are the most common when I will instruct a wrestler to let his man go.

1. We cannot break the man down, and are at risk of being called for stalling.
2. The bottom man has proven his ability to consistently reverse even the most skilled opponents. In many cases directly to their backs.
3. We are behind in a match, with less than a minute left, but more than 30 seconds left and have been unable to turn the man.
4. We are ahead by more than 3 points, don't have any stalling calls, and the man on bottom has nearly reversed us several times, and we are superior to him in the neutral position.

The two primary breakdowns I teach are the Spiral Ride and a Near Arm & Tight Waist. I also frequently teach the following: Near Arm & Far Ankle, Far Arm & Near Leg, Far Knee & Far Ankle, and a Head

Lever. I usually do not teach leg rides until the second year of wrestling for an individual. It usually takes 1 complete year for them to master the fundamentals and “feel” for how to use legs properly.

Spiral Ride

Port Robertson developed this move as a means of getting into a Bar Arm Ride quickly from the referee’s position. This move is very effective in stopping the bottom man from executing an explosive upward move such as a standup on the whistle. It is also a very effective way to defend against the Granby Roll. Stan Abel says that 90 percent of the college coaches don’t know how to do this move correctly. Many coaches, wrestlers, and officials consider this to be a “stall” ride. It wasn’t designed to stall with, but can control the bottom man even if not done correctly. This is why it gets the reputation of being a “stall” ride.

The following are the key points for doing the Spiral Ride correctly.

1. Line up at nearly a 90-degree angle to your opponent with both knees on the mat, and your toes tucked under you. This is very similar to the “squat back” stance.
2. You want your outside shoulder just behind your opponent’s near shoulder, with your head in the middle of the opponent’s back.
3. Place your hand around the opponent’s back with your hand barely touching the opponent’s belly button.
4. Your outside elbow needs to be tucked in near your side; you are going to want to drive it under his inside arm on the whistle.
5. On the whistle you want to do the following things almost simultaneously;
 - A. Drive into your opponent as you are getting off of your knees, exerting as much pressure down and across his inside shoulder as possible.
 - B. Drive your outside arm behind the opponent’s near arm, making a fist with the heel of your fist downward. Place this fist tight against your opponent’s far pectoral muscle, like you are trying to push a nail through his chest. There must be no daylight here!
 - C. Take your hand around the waist and place it as “deep” as possible down the thigh of your opponent’s leg. The reason we make a fist is to prevent the bottom man from gaining “hand control”, by making a fist the best he can do is grab a wrist.
 - D. At this point keep the pressure going down and across the near shoulder of your opponent, but now start running in a circle “spiral” around your outside shoulder which will be driving down and across his inside shoulder. This should accomplish the following:
 1. The outside hip will be pulled over towards the inside hip of the bottom man. Which will force the inside hip to the mat.
 2. When the outside hip comes up the inside elbow will go down to the mat.
 - E. At this point release the your fist from the opponent’s far chest, and grab the hand/wrist (the hand is preferable, but you are doing this extremely fast, and either will work in this case) of the opponent’s near arm. Hold it the mat, DO NOT PULL IT TOWARDS YOU. You may however, pull it up against the opponent’s chest.
 - F. Continue to run in a spiraling action around the opponent’s head, take your hand out of the opponent’s thigh.

- G. This action will force your opponent's inside shoulder forward past his near hand.
- H. At this point you need to do a "high leg over" taking your rear leg under your lead leg. This will force your hip down and backwards towards the opponent.
- I. If your opponent tries to drive his arm backwards along his side so he can rotate out of your grip, at this point you want to grab his wrist with your other hand. Now both of your hands are holding onto his wrist with the thumbs in opposing directions making it impossible to rotate his wrist towards a thumb.
- J. At this point you are now in a Bar Arm Ride.
- K. Now reverse the "High Leg Over" you just executed.
- L. You now keep all of your weight on your feet and the near shoulder of the opponent. Either his hand is under his stomach, or you have both hands on it in opposing directions outside his stomach. This is called a "Base Block"

Frequently, wrestlers who are learning how to do this move do not understand how to make the far hip of the opponent move upward and towards him. They tend to stay where they are and pull the opponent on top of them, and then complain the move doesn't work. To counter this initial learning problem I have them do the following drill, before we do the Spiral Ride as a complete move.

1. Place their hand inside the opponent's far thigh.
2. Pull the opponent's far hip towards them.
3. This action pulls the opponent on top of them.
4. I then explain they must keep moving their hips away from the opponent so this won't happen.
5. Now I have them repeat steps 1 and 2, but have them get on their toes and start running around the opponent's head.
6. Show them that when the far hip comes over the near hip, the inside elbows automatically goes down on the mat.
7. At this point, I have them grab the near wrist/hand and continue to run around the opponent's head without the bottom man trying to resist.

Once they can do this correctly then I have them start drilling the Spiral Ride as described above as a complete move.

In a match if you do not break the man down into a Bar Arm immediately, I suggest you change off to another move. Even if you didn't break him down you were successful in stopping his initial move on bottom. I'll usually do one of the following:

1. Keep the pressure on the opponent, but walk my near leg back next to his leg. Many times he will step over that leg. At which point I will wrap my foot around his shin, giving me an "Inside Flanker", If I accomplish this I then release my far arm from his far thigh and bring it up over and around his head. I then take my outside hand, which was on his far chest up, and grab the elbow of my other arm. I now have a Headlock and Inside Flanker, and which point I roll towards my back, extending my leg upward which is hooked around my opponent's. He is now on his back in a near-fall position.
2. If he fails to fall for the preceding move, I then step over his back and throw in my foot to apply a high in the thigh flanker. At the same time I lock up a "Power Half" on the opposite side.

3. I change directions on the Spiral Ride, and either apply it or;
4. Do not apply any chest pressure, but pull the outside hip towards me. This puts me in position to apply a Half Nelson from the Knees.

Near Arm & Tight Waist

This is probably the most commonly used breakdown/ride in the collegiate style of wrestling. As a result there are several variations. I never want to pull the man on top of me. Unless I already have the pinning combination or roll locked up. The following are the key points, as I prefer to execute this move.

1. Line up at about a 45-degree angle with your head directly down the middle of the opponent's back looking at the opponent.
2. Place your trail foot with the instep down on the mat, far enough behind the opponent so that your knee is behind and not above his rear end.
3. Make sure your outside elbow is tucked in near your side. This helps defend against a Gizoni, and helps in pulling his arm to you with a powerful quick snap.
4. On the whistle drive your knee under his rear end. It may force it forward if you don't get under it, but at least you'll cause him to have problems maintaining a solid base.
5. Take your hand from behind the elbow to in front of the elbow. You don't get your hand past the inside of the front of this elbow. If you do it reduces your ability to pull the opponent's arm to you, and opens you up for a Gizoni
6. At the same time you are chopping down his near arm, you now want to run your hips around to the other side, leaving your knee between his legs.
7. As you go around reach for the arm you've "chopped" down with your other hand. Grab hold of it and pull it towards you. This action will keep him on his side or pull him onto his back.
8. If you are between his legs and he's on his side, start driving his leg that is on the mat towards his head with your leg.
9. If you are successful in initiating this action, then release his arm and reach for his head and pull it towards you.
10. If you have been successful in doing steps 9 and 10 above, you can now apply a "Cross-leg Near Side Cradle".
11. If you lose the leg, go under the arm and apply a half nelson.

Bar Arm Ride Series

Wrestlers at the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State have successfully used this ride since at least 1950. It is a move that Lee Roy Smith taught at ASU. However, he states a wrestler needs several years to fully master it. It is a move that will break a wrestler mentally because it is so hard to escape from. Mickey Martin beat Bobby Douglas utilizing this ride to win the 1963 NCAA championship at 130 pounds and was selected the outstanding wrestler of the tournament as a result of this victory. Bobby told me he simply could not get out of the ride. The beauty of this ride it is one of the most effective rides possible, yet you are generally not in danger of getting called for stalling because of how far forward your

weight is on the opponent. These are the most common situations that will allow you to put your opponent in a position to apply a Bar Arm Ride.

1. Spiral Ride
2. “Bumping the Man Down” with your hands locked around his waist after he’s attempted a standup
3. Getting a 2 on 1 bar arm on a man who is broken down on his stomach. Once this is secure, pin his wrist against his chest/stomach. Then release the hand that is over his back bring it under the opponent’s belly and grab hold of this wrist with this hand. Now both of your hands will be on one wrist with your thumbs pointing in opposite directions. This is what I call a “base block”.
4. In the top position when the bottom man is not attempting to explode upwards, but instead is fighting for hand control. If you can get 2 hands on one arm you can secure a Bar Arm Ride.
5. Granby Roll, if you keep the opponent’s hand placed around your waist there are times when you will come out under and behind the shoulder on his far side. You are in position to apply a “Base Block” or Hammerlock immediately.
6. “Cutback” You execute this similar to a “Peterson” except you do not lock up the opponent’s near leg. Instead you continue to turn until you clear your head from under his far shoulder. This will put you in the same position as some Granby Rolls.

It takes a considerable amount of drilling and attempts to use the Bar Arm Ride during live wrestling sessions in practice before you will become comfortable using this ride. The following are key points to what makes this ride work

1. The key to this ride is pinning the opponent’s inside shoulder to the mat with your elbow across the back of his tricep. The majority of your weight will be on this elbow. It accomplishes two things:
 - A. It makes it virtually impossible for your opponent to build a solid base.
 - B. With almost all of your weight on your elbow, which is on you, opponent’s shoulder will create a very significant amount of “Legal Pain”. Because of the pain being inflicted your opponent will attempt to change his position to lessen the amount of pressure on his shoulder.
2. If you apply the Bar Arm Ride correctly and are patient your opponent will adjust his position, which will allow you to improve your position without much physical effort. You will be “changing off” continuously until your opponent essentially puts himself onto his back.
3. There are two main problems with the Bar Arm Ride for the beginning wrestler;
 2. Keeping the bottom man from rotating his wrist out of your grip when you attempt to apply the Bar Arm.
 3. Keeping the man broke down off his knees after pinning his shoulder to the mat.

The “Base Block” which is where I always start from, this prevents the opponent from rotating his wrist out of your grip. The following steps will place you into a “Base Block” when your opponent is broken down flat on his stomach

1. Hammerlock, - As you drive your weight over the near wrist, your opponent will move his arm backwards along his side in an attempt to rotate out of your grip. At this point in the action you will have only your outside hand on his wrist/hand. To apply the hammerlock do the following steps;

- A. Take your free hand and grab the opponent's wrist as soon as it comes out below his shoulder. Apply the grip with this hand so that your thumb is pointed in the opposing direction of the thumb on your other hand. This will prevent him from rotating his wrist.
- B. At this point your back should be facing away from the opponent. Using both hands take his wrist/hand and place in on the "beltline" of his far hip. Attempt to place his hand as near the mat as possible. Make sure you do not take the arm near a 90 degree or less angle. If you do this you will be penalized for an illegal hold and will have had your ride broken by the referee.

Once you have the Hammerlock securely in place, you have two main options: One is the "Gable" and the second is a face-lift the "Gable will place you into a half nelson & tight waist. The "Face Lift" will place you into a reverse half nelson. I prefer this finish for heavyweights, since you are harder to bridge over from this position. The disadvantage is you can't get this pinning combination as tight.

Many times in the previous situation your opponent will bring his far arm close to his far side. This prevents you from threading through into an underhook position to finish the "Gable" pinning combination. The following step will usually force him to open up his arm on the far side.

- 2. Reverse Crossface As mentioned above the opponent will sometimes keep his arm and hand pinned next to his side. If you move his head away from that side and upward so his ear is going towards his opposite shoulder his elbow will usually move away from his body on the opposite side. The Reverse Crossface is applied as follows.
 - B. Get on top and nearly parallel to your opponent with your chest pressing down on the opponent's back.
 - C. Take your arm which is on the opposite side of the arm he has tucked against his side and reach over and behind his head
 - D. Now take your elbow and tricep and drive it under his chin.
 - E. Continue to pressure with this arm taking his chin upward and towards his shoulder on the side opposite of your arm.

You now have two possible options;

- 1. Take the arm you just applied the reverse crossface with and underhook the other arm of the opponent, reaching around until you can grasp the elbow of his other arm. This assumes you already have a Hammerlock applied. From this position you can now apply the "Gable" pinning combination.
- 2. Once you have created a sufficient amount of pressure to move his head towards his other shoulder, take the forearm of the arm you are applying the reverse crossface with and reach underneath his chin to grab hold of his other elbow.
- 3. At this point now slide your body off to the same side of the arm you have just grabbed.
- 4. Take your other hand and grab hold of the same elbow. Now with both hands continue to pull the elbow towards you, which will put your opponent on his back, with his arms crisscrossed, and you are in a chest-to-chest position on top of him.

If you weren't able to complete either of the two preceding options, your opponent has left you with three other options.

1. Apply the “baseball bat”. With both of your hands on the opponent’s wrist in a grip like that on a baseball bat jerk his wrist straight up into the air along side your ear that is closest to his hips. You should have your front knee near his neck. By jerking this arm straight up it will place him onto his side. Now quickly drop your chest onto him and apply a half nelson pinning combination.
2. Apply the “step over”.
 - A. Pull his arm out of the hammerlock position, and place his wrist on your hip closest to his feet.
 - B. Now step over his back quickly, placing your knee on the mat on his far side. You should now be
 - C. Straddling him, with your knees both on the mat on each side of him.
 - D. Now quickly and almost in a continuous motion after completing the previous step, pivot on your far knee until you are 90-degrees to your opponent in a chest-to-chest position.
 - E. Once your have completed the previous step, apply a reverse half nelson head wrap pinning combination.
3. The third option is pull the arm back under your forward armpit, sink down and apply a reverse half nelson head wrap pinning combination.

If your opponent gets to his knees do not attempt any of the preceding moves unless you break your opponent back down flat on the mat. The next moves are ways to break the opponent down to the mat if he gets to his knees.

1. Snub Ride, -You have your opponent in a Bar Arm Ride, but he crawls up onto his knees attempting to build a base.
 - A. Release your hand nearest his hips and reach through his crotch.
 - B. Get on your toes and drive him forward, pulling his crotch forward until he goes belly down again.
2. Posting Far Ankle to the Mat. This will quickly place him on his side and immobilize him. The following steps will accomplish this move.
 - A. Pin the “bar arm” against the opponent’s chest/stomach, and release your hand nearest the opponent’s feet.
 - B. Reach across with your free hand grab the opponent’s far ankle pull in towards you and post it to the mat. This will put him on his side and temporarily immobilize him. Once you have completed this step you have two options.
 1. Resume your bar arm ride.
 2. Step over the leg nearest your and apply a flanker. Now pull his back towards your for a tilt.

You will in many cases find that when you have applied the Bar Arm Ride that your opponent’s wrist is trapped under his stomach. I frequently put it there deliberately so it is not possible for the opponent to rotate his wrist out of my grip. You have several options from here, the first being the “High Leg Over”, which is accomplished as follows:

1. You want place your front knee near the opponent’s head and shoulder on the side you are riding on.
2. Very quickly step your trail leg over your front leg.

3. At the same time with both hands in a quick jerking motion snap the opponent's wrist out from under his stomach.
4. Take this wrist with the hand facing down to your hip, which is now farthest from the opponent.
5. Apply a Hammerlock as described above.

There will be times when you can't get the opponent's hand out from under his stomach. In these cases you have the option of applying these four holds: Far Side Grasshopper, Near Side Grasshopper, Johnny Jones Tilt, Half Nelson on the Far Side. These are described as follows:

Far Side Grasshopper

If the opponent has posted the hand of his far arm on the mat in an effort to get some of the pressure of his shoulder your elbow is on you can probably apply this hold, which is performed as follows:

1. Take your outside hand and reach across his back hooking under the bicep of the far arm with your hand facing up. Your arm will be at approximately a 90-degree angle to that arm. His elbow will now be up higher than his back with his hand pointed downward. This position resembles that of a grasshopper's leg, from where this name is derived.
2. Once you have the Grasshopper applied you can release the Bar Arm, since you can now control the man without it you now have two options; apply a Double Grasshopper, or shift to the front and apply a Half Nelson. The first option described is the double grasshopper.

Double Grasshopper

1. Now take the hand that was used to get the Bar Arm and hook it under the far arm. Now you have both of your arms hooked with the hands facing upward under the far arm.
2. Now get on both knees, and quickly slide your feet and hips backwards in one quick explosive motion. This will pull the opponent onto his back.
3. Drop your chest down in a chest-to-chest position at a 90-degree angle to your opponent as quickly as possible.
4. Apply a reverse half-nelson pinning combination

Change Off to a Half-Nelson

1. Shift your body around to in front of the opponent.
2. Squeeze the opponent's head between your knees, don't cross your feet. Because then you would have an illegal head scissors
3. Raise your back up so that it is approximately 90-degrees to the mat
4. Jerk the Grasshopper to your chest, this will make the opponent turn onto his side.
5. With your free hand grasp around the upper part of the arm reaching into his armpit holding his arm away from his body.
6. Now shift your body back around to approximately 90-degrees to the opposite side you started on.
7. Reach over his head to apply a half nelson

8. Drop your chest down onto the opponent, with only your chin over his side. At this point you want your hips on the mat, but your weight on your toes. This will put you in a “swayback” position making it impossible for your opponent to elevate your hips/stomach with his hands or leg.
9. Now complete the Half-Nelson & Tight Waist pinning combination

Far Side Half-Nelson

In some instances your opponent will have placed his far arm too far away from your for you to be able to secure a far-side grasshopper. However, his elbow will be up off of the mat. In these cases you can apply a half-nelson to the far side. The following steps need to be performed;

1. Quickly reach your arm across your opponent back under his armpit.
2. Now step over his back keeping your hips down near the mat.
3. Start driving your body forward at a 45-degree angle towards your opponent’s head
4. With your arm reach for the opponent’s head applying the half-nelson
5. Once you have your hand on the back of his head, pull the head towards you.
6. Continue to drive your hand and body over his opposite ear (about 11 o’clock in relation to the top of his head which is 12 o’clock).
7. Complete the Half-Nelson & Tight Waist pinning combination

Near Side Grasshopper

There will be times when the opponent will keep his arm and hand pinned to his far side. In some instances you will not be able to force him to move this away from his arm. In these cases you can apply a near side grasshopper. From a near side grasshopper you can apply a half-nelson & tight waist pinning combination by using one of two different methods:

First Option

1. Apply a “Base Block” on the opponent’s near arm
2. Slide the hand, which was used to apply the bar, arm up to his bicep.
3. Shift your body around to in front of the opponent.
4. Squeeze the opponent’s head between your knees; don’t cross your feet, because then you would have an illegal head scissors.
5. Raise your back up so that it is approximately 90-degrees to the mat
6. Jerk the Grasshopper to your chest, this will make the opponent turn onto his side.
7. With your free hand grasp around the upper part of the arm reaching into his armpit holding his arm away from his body.
8. Now shift your body back around to approximately 90-degrees to the opposite side you started on.
9. Reach over his head to apply a half nelson
10. Drop your chest down onto the opponent, with only your chin over his side. At this point you want your hips on the mat, but your weight on your toes. This will put you in a “swayback” position making it impossible for your opponent to elevate your hips/stomach with his hands or leg.

11. Now complete the Half-Nelson & Tight Waist pinning combination

Second Option

1. Apply a “Base Block” on the opponent’s near arm
2. Slide the hand, which was used to apply the bar, arm up to his bicep. This is a “near side grasshopper”.
3. With your free hand reach under the upper part of the arm and lift the elbow up and across his body. (You now have an underhook).
4. With your hand that applied the grasshopper now reach over his head to apply a half nelson
5. 5. Drop your chest down onto the opponent, with only your chin over his side. At this point you want your hips on the mat, but your weight on your toes. This will put you in a “swayback” position making it impossible for your opponent to elevate your hips/stomach with his hands or leg.
6. 6. Now complete the Half-Nelson & Tight Waist pinning combination

A third option exists from the Near Side Grasshopper; this option is particularly effective against an opponent who continuously crawls to his knees. After breaking him down with a Snub Ride or Posting the Far Ankle to the Mat is to, change off to the Near Side Grasshopper and apply a chest-to-chest headlock by doing the following steps:

1. After applying a Near Side Grasshopper, let the opponent crawl back up to his knees.
2. Grab his near knee with your hand closest to his hips, and “pitch” it over the opponent’s back
3. Release the knee; scoop your far arm under the forearm of your opponent’s far arm.
4. Squeeze the opponent’s forearm and upper arm together with your arm that is under his forearm.
5. Grasp his tricep with the hand of that arm, thereby holding the wrist near his shoulder with one arm.
6. Take your other hand and scoop under his head as you would for a reverse half-nelson.
7. Now squeeze your opponent’s head and trapped arm together into a headlock. You want to get his elbow as tight as possible against the side of his head.
8. You will now have a headlock and will be chest-to-chest at about a 45-degree angle to the opponent for an easy pin.

When wrestling a heavyweight, who is bigger than you are by 20 pounds or more you will have a hard time breaking them down with just the bar arm. They will attempt to maintain a base on their knees, by “squatting back” towards their heels. I have found the following move to be quite effective. It is simply running around the opponent’s head with a “base block” pinned against the opponent’s chest the following are the steps you need to take.

1. Pin the “base block” tight against the opponent’s chest/stomach.
2. Get on your toes and put all of your weight on the opponent’s near shoulder.
3. Now start to walk around the opponent’s head towards the other side. **Make sure you are still doing steps 1 and 2.**

4. Once you are just past halfway around the opponent will start to roll over onto his back. At this point you need to release the “base block” and drop your weight onto the opponent’s chest, and apply a reverse front headlock pinning combination.

There will be times you can’t keep your opponent broken down, and can’t put him in a near fall position with by using one of the preceding moves. The last option is to tilt him to his back. Using the same arm tie-up, but going about it in two different directions can accomplish this. These are described as follows.

1. Pull your opponent’s arm back until it is extended and between his legs.
2. Now with your rear hand reach through his crotch and lock your grip on his wrist you will now have two hands on his wrist with his near leg encircled. Once this is completed you have the following options.
 - A. Pin his near shoulder to the mat, with your elbow, and elevate his hips over his shoulder. You will be placing him in your lap. I find this is much easier than trying to pull him backwards into my lap.
 - B. Get to approximately 90-degrees to the opponent, with your head just past his back.
 1. “Dive” over into a back bridge. Then turn towards your stomach, you should wind up parallel to the opponent and he should be belly down. In freestyle you can do this continuously as many times as you want until you have achieved “technical superiority” i.e. a 10-point lead.

There are additional ways to turn a man over that I usually don’t teach, but some wrestlers like. The first is a “tilt”. Combine a hammerlock and a high in the thigh flanker. You put a leg in on the same side as the arm you have in a hammerlock position. You must keep you belly/chest tight against the opponent’s back when you release your grip on the hammerlock Once you have secured this position apply a “power half-nelson on the other arm. This will force the opponent into a nearfall position. It is unlikely that you will be able to secure a pin with this move, but it an excellent way to score nearfall points.

There are 14 different ways described in the preceding sections of putting your opponent on his back in the preceding descriptions. With practice you may develop some additional ways on your own. In order to master this move you need to work on it continuously until it becomes second nature to you. Once you’ve mastered this series, it is amazing how easy it is to pin even the toughest of opponents.

Near Side Cradle Series

This is the easiest pinning combination to put an opponent into. All that is needed is for the opponent to get a knee and head close together. It can be the near knee or the far knee. When completed a nearside cradle is essentially a half-nelson with a leg. If the opponent was in a “squat back” stance and has raised up his hips slightly there will be sufficient “daylight between his thigh and calf for you to put your arm through. The following are the key points to applying this hold correctly.

1. Grasp the far side of the opponent’s neck with your hand nearest his head
2. Make sure your hip is placed in front of his hip
3. Hook your other hand behind his near knee.
4. Pull his head downward and towards you
5. Drive with your head into his hip; keep it there, it will come out automatically when you have him on his back.
6. Pull his knee up and towards you

7. Once you have him on his hip, continue to pull his head and knee together.
8. Lock your hands as soon as possible, your hands, elbows, and head should be in the following position; Your elbows should be behind his knee and neck, your hands should be firmly planted against his chest, your elbows should be squeezed along your sides, and your head should be in his hip.
9. Now drive forward with your toes, keeping everything locked up as described in step 8, until the opponent goes onto his back.
10. As your head comes out of the hip, post your forehead to the mat
11. Lower your hips down to the mat, but keep your weight on your toes and the opponent's chest

Most coaches incorrectly teach a wrestler to “mulekick” to counter a near side cradle. If you “mulekick” make sure you also drop your inside hip down to the mat. If your opponent “mulekicks” but doesn't lower his inside hip I do the following.

1. On step 3 above, since I can't pull the near knee to me, I now take my hand underneath the opponent's chest and reach through to the far leg, and grasp the back of the calf just below the knee. I now complete steps 4 through 11 above. This creates an even tighter and harder to defend nearside cradle.

Ripback Cradle

One you have a Nearside Cradle locked up many opponent's will step up with their inside foot. Instead of performing Step No. 5 you must now do the following:

1. Take your foot nearest the opponent's head in a “high leg over” your other foot
2. Keep your head in the hip!
3. Now kick your feet over the opponent and drop your hips, you will now be in a chest-to-chest position.

Rip Forward Cradle

Many opponents will be in a tripod position when you have this cradle locked up. There is more than one option. The first is the Rip Forward Cradle. Because his head is lower than his hips you can easily elevate his hips over his head.

1. Keep everything locked up as previously instructed.
2. Pull his head towards the mat
3. Lift up his hips with your hand locked around his near knee
4. Drop your side towards the opponent's head towards the mat
5. Do a “High leg Over” with your rear leg
6. Now kick your feet and hips over the opponent's chest
7. Sink your hips and chest down, and post your head to the mat.

Spadle

This is a particular favorite move that I developed on my own. Since then I've seen Wade Schalles teach the same move in this videotapes. There will be times when you can't put an opponent on his hip or get the nearside cradle locked. DON'T GIVE UP YOUR ATTEMPT TO CRADLE HIM! Do the following:

1. Lift up the near knee of your opponent, placing him towards his other hip
2. Step under that leg with your foot nearest his hips
3. Place your foot on the other side of the calf of his other leg.
4. Scoop that leg to you with your foot
5. Figure 4 that leg with your other foot
6. If you haven't been able to lock up a nearside cradle prior to this, do it now.
7. Now pull both of your opponent's knees along side his ears as you slide your body over his head to in front of it.
8. Once in this position now start pulling his knees apart and towards the mat. This should result in a pin.

Chicken-Wing

This is an excellent way to drive the opponent's arm from one side to the other, using your entire body to force it up and forward which will make him turn onto his back.

1. Overhook his arm above the elbow, when the opponent is belly-down or on his side.
2. Get your forearm in as deep as possible with your palm against his back, preferably to the inside of his shoulder blade.
3. In order to turn him over you need to drive him up onto his far side. This can be accomplished by doing either of the following.
 - A. Grasping his far wrist and pulling it to his side, thereby destroying his ability to post a hand for support.
 - B. Crossface the opponent's head towards you, this will create a significant amount of torque on his neck. This will make him turn down to his far hip.

I prefer step 3b, since it is always available, whereas step 3a sometimes cannot be accomplished.

Assuming we use step 3b do the following:

4. After driving the opponent onto his far hip, place your free hand onto the mat next to his far hip. This will prevent him from sliding his hip away, which he will need to do to get belly down.
5. Walk around the head. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO STEP OVER THE OPPONENT'S BACK!
6. Once your body is in front of his head, take your trail leg under the other leg
7. Now sit-through with your hips
8. Take your hand that is near his hip and bring it over the opponent's chest
9. Turn belly down onto the opponent's chest, KEEP THE CHICKEN WING
10. Now apply a reverse half-nelson
11. Force the back of the opponent's head upward, thereby putting his chin in his chest
12. Make sure all of your weight is on his chest and your toes.

This pinning combination will create so much "legal pain" he won't resist putting his shoulder to the mat. Most wrestlers are surprised to find out you didn't break their arm, because of how tight you have it and

the fact almost all of your weight was driving down on their wrist and chest. Believe me they will look at you with fear after you pinned them.

Turning The Opponent Onto His Back

Many wrestlers do not know how to create the leverage necessary to successfully turn their opponent onto his back. It is important to understand how the human body's muscles (kinesiology) and the skeleton (physics) work. Learning the following principles will make it much easier to turn an opponent onto his back.

1. If you take an opponent's elbow up and around his head when he is on his stomach he will roll over onto his back
2. If you take the opponent's elbow up and back across his back (towards his hip) he will turn over onto his far side.
3. If you pull his far arm to you under and across his chest he will roll onto his back
4. Where the head goes the body will follow. This is why headlocks work!
5. If you post an opponent's head to the mat and he is on his knees, it is very easy to elevate his hips over his head, putting him on his back.
6. Anytime an opponent's head is near a knee he can be cradled.
7. If you take an opponent's upper body down on one side and his lower body upward on the other side he will turn onto his back.

Being a Successful Pinner

Being a successful "pinner" is based upon my experience and observations requires the following:

1. Always look for the opportunity to put your opponent onto his back or side from any position. The recognition of these positions will also make you a better defensive wrestler.
2. You need to work for positions, which will allow you to drive your hips across your opponent's hips.
3. You want to get into positions where you can apply the full force of your body on one arm on the opponent this usually requires you getting away from the opponent's hips. Too often wrestlers stay close to an opponent's hips and attempt to apply a half nelson or chicken-wing. When they do this they are attempting to turn the opponent's entire body over with one arm, which is exactly opposite of what I've described above.
4. At every opportunity place your opponent onto his side. It doesn't matter whether his chest is pointing towards you or away from you. If an opponent is on his back he can explode upward with his hips, plant his feet on the mat, form a bridge, or elevate you with his legs. By putting him on his side you have taken his hips away from him, he can't get up until he is belly down or on his back
5. When you have an opponent on his side it is very easy to tighten up a half nelson, chicken-wing, near and far side cradles because he cannot form a bridge. If he cannot bridge it makes it very easy to pull his head to your side, and to pull his knee or waist to you.

Countering a Half-Nelson

You should know what things would make a half-nelson work, by preventing those from happening you will defeat the hold.

1. Clamp your elbow to your side
2. Look up and away from your opponent
3. Drop your inside hip to the mat.
4. Take your other hand and reach under your chest and grasp the opponent's hand or wrist (whatever is easy to grasp) – Pull his arm away and upward
5. Now drive your back into your opponent and over your hips. Make sure you don't let go of his hand!
If you do let go he can re-apply a half-nelson

If you are in the process of being turned over or have been turned over do the following:

1. Thread your other hand between your chest and the opponent's
2. Go belly down immediately!
3. Execute steps 1 through 5 above.

If you can't turn belly down, you must bridge. Do the following:

1. Plant your feet walk them towards your hips
2. Roll your head forward putting the top of your head on the mat.
3. Place your hand underneath the opponent's stomach, with your forearm perpendicular to the mat
4. Now bridge away from your opponent at a 45-degree angle
5. Elevate his stomach towards his head, and try to push it on over his head at a 45-angle away from his head. It is hard for him to post a hand or his head in this area before you've elevated his hips.

Hopefully you will have bridged him onto his back now apply a reverse front headlock as quickly as possible. If this hasn't been accomplished, keep trying to thread your hand between your and the opponent's chest and go belly down.

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS BRIDGE DIRECTLY TOWARDS THE EDGE OF THE MAT AND GO OUT OF BOUNDS! NOW YOU GET A FRESH START.

Countering a Nearside Cradle

Once a nearside cradle is locked up correctly it is almost impossible to break the locked hands of your opponent. What you need to do is create extensions of his arms, get his head out of your hip, and keep him from elevating your inside hip, ripping it forward or backward. In some cases you will only be able to keep from being turned. The nearside cradle is an excellent ride.

Before Opponent has the Nearside Cradle Locked Up

1. Mulekick, but make sure you lower our inside hip at the same time.
2. Gain hand control, and keep your head up, before you return to a "squat back" stance position.

When the Opponent has the Nearside Cradle Locked Up.

First Option

1. Lower your inside hip down
2. Keep your head down, but about 6” to 1’ above the mat
3. Attempt to execute a switch to the leg nearest you
 - A. Hook his near knee with your inside hand
 - B. Pull it towards you
 - C. Throw your other hand over the opponent’s back
 - D. Turn to a 90-degree angle to your opponent
 - E. Now throw your hand you switched with over the opponent’s neck, in like a freestyle swimming stroke.
 - F. Now lock your hands under the opponent’s far shoulder - “Double-Double”
 - G. Pull the opponent to your chest; place him on the mat for the pin.

Second Option

Performs steps 1 and 2 above. If you cannot reach the opponent’s leg you now want to do the following:

3. Grab hold of the opponent’s locked hands with both of yours; pull the hands away from your body.
4. Now take one hand and push the opponent’s elbow over his head, this gets you out of the cradle.

Third Option

A good cradle man will prevent you from putting your inside hip down to the mat Try the following:

1. Drive your inside elbow back along your side, this may push his head out of your hip.
2. Take your outside arm forward in a “freestyle” swimming stroke
3. Now “swim your other arm forward, attempt to catch your opponent’s neck with the inside of your elbow joint
4. If successful, pull his head towards you.
5. Drive your chest into the opponent, if you thrown him onto his far hip.
6. Lock up a headlock pinning combination.

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS KEEP HAND CONTROL, AND TRY TO GET YOUR INSIDE HIP DOWN TOWARDS THE MAT. IF YOU’RE LUCKY YOU’LL KEEP HIM FROM PINNING YOU, AND LAST THE PERIOD OUT.

Countering a Chicken-Wing

YOU CANNOT LET THE OPPONENT DRIVE YOU ONTO YOUR FAR HIP. NOR YOUR ELBOW UP AND FORWARD. Remember what you need to do to properly execute this move, stop you opponent from accomplishing those things. Do the following:

1. Drop your inside hip down to the mat

2. Squeeze your elbow and hand to your side.
3. Place your hand palm down on the mat.
4. Start digging your hand forward, by pulling with your fingertips into the mat.
5. As you are successful his hand will start to come out of the chicken-wing.
6. Take your other hand reach under your chest and grab hold of his hand.
7. Drive your back over your hips and into your opponent.
8. Go into a "Pivot Sit out" position and execute a Gizoni for the reversal.

YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO EXECUTE ALL OF THE PRECEDING STEPS, BUT DO AS MUCH AS YOU CAN, IT MAY KEEP YOU FROM GETTING PINNED!