

Coaching the Person Before the Wrestler

The greatest coaches understand that they're not simply developing wrestlers.

They're developing people.

Every practice is an opportunity to teach far more than takedowns, escapes, and pinning combinations. It's an opportunity to teach discipline, accountability, resilience, humility, respect, and perseverance—qualities that will serve athletes long after their wrestling careers have ended.

Championships eventually fade.

Character lasts forever.

It's easy to become consumed with wins and losses, but the most influential coaches recognize that success should never come at the expense of personal development. A wrestler who becomes a champion but lacks integrity, respect, or accountability has only experienced part of what the sport was meant to teach.

Athletes are always watching.

They notice how coaches respond to adversity, handle mistakes, treat officials, communicate with parents, and interact with other coaches. Those daily examples often leave a greater impression than any technique taught during practice.

Great coaches also understand that every athlete is different.

Some need confidence.

Some need accountability.

Some need patience.

Others need to be challenged.

The best coaches don't simply teach wrestling the same way to every athlete—they learn how to reach each individual while holding everyone to the same high standards.

Years from now, very few athletes will remember every drill they completed or every match they wrestled.

They will remember the coach who believed in them.

The coach who challenged them.

The coach who taught them to become a better person.

Because the greatest legacy a coach can leave isn't measured by the number of champions they produce.

It's measured by the quality of the people they help shape.

Coach the wrestler.

But never forget to coach the person first.