FAQ

Q. Who will my child be wrestling with?  
A.  At practices, our coaching staff tries to make sure your child will wrestle with the kids closest to his or her weight/ability. In tournaments, your child will wrestle within his or her age group and usually within +/- 5lbs of his or her weight based on that morning's weigh-ins.   
  
Q. Do you have girls that wrestle?  
A.  Yes, we have had numerous female wrestlers over the years. The sport of wrestling for females is gaining popularity each year. So much so, that girls have an opportunity to wrestle in an all-female tournament for a girl's state championship at the end of the year.  However, for most of the season, all wrestlers wrestle kids in their age/weight division regardless of gender. Girls are required to wear a hair cap in tournaments and should wear a "sports bra".  
  
Q. Will my child get hurt?  
A. Serious injuries are uncommon in our sport however, wrestling is a contact sport that can lead to your child will be banged up, bruised and sore on occasion, this is normal. The coaching staff does everything possible to prevent serious injuries.  
  
Q. Will my child get 'funny' ears many wrestlers get?  
A. The headgear that is required in tournaments works to prevent 'cauliflower ear', our wrestlers are required to wear them at all times during practice and while on the mat.  
  
Q. What should I expect from the first season?  
A. Your child should return home from practice very tired. The coaches attempt to teach all the children various techniques, moves, and mental preparation at each practice. As mentioned before, wrestling is a physical sport, yet extremely rewarding.  Our coaches understand and maintain the philosophy that to be successful in life and on the mat hard work must be exerted.  While winning is fun and rewarding, success is not only defined by wins and losses.  Many times our most successful wrestlers had a difficult time in the early stages of their career.  Our coaching staff is extremely encouraging while helping kids find that inner drive to overcome the challenges they face, which in turn prepares children for an opportunity to learn in every situation.  
  
Q. How will my child do in the tournaments?  
A. Generally, first-year wrestlers don't win too many matches, some of them will, but many have to work hard to earn their first victory. Some tournaments try to match wrestlers with similar records, so be patient, with hard work your child will start winning. As mentioned above, success isn’t defined by wins and losses alone, our coaches always do their best to assess each wrestler at every tournament in order best help them learn from each tournament to improve throughout the season.  
  
Q. Other sports my child does are very careful to not be too competitive at the younger ages is this a competitive sport?  
A. Competition is a natural part of this sport.  Our philosophy isn’t based on winning and losing, however, we do believe that competition can be healthy and a great learning lesson for children. In wrestling, like in many sports, a losing wrestler can still have wrestled a great match. You can't win them all. There is no way to wrestle without being competitive.    
  
Q. Can anyone join?  
A. While most of our members will end up attending South Walton High School, we accept memberships from any and all surrounding areas.   
  
Q. One of the most frequently asked question by athletes is "Do I have to wear a singlet"?  
A. During practice, wrestlers wear shorts and t-shirts. During tournaments, wrestlers remain in their warm up and club t-shirt until it is time for them to step on the mat.  Singlets are only worn during competitions, and then only for a few minutes during the wrestling match. Wrestlers generally do not walk around wearing just their singlet  
  
Q. Are wrestlers required or expected to lose weight?  
A. No!  There is no weight cutting in youth wrestling programs. It's true that weight cutting does exist at the high school and collegiate levels, but there are quite a few public misconceptions.  Furthermore, state and national governing bodies, such as USA wrestling, now prohibit any form of rapid or unsafe weight loss. Some parents automatically associate wrestling with excessive, out-of-control weight loss, akin to anorexia and bulimia.  In reality, the opposite is true - wrestlers gain control of their body weight and body composition, and are able to set and achieve reasonable goals with respect to muscle mass, fat percentage and body weight.  We find that in wrestling, it is a good time to explain how healthy eating can have an impact on performance, or to discuss the difference between healthy foods and "junk foods".  
  
Q. How much time do I have to commit to being a wrestler?  
A. SoWal Elite holds practice 3 times per week.  It is up to you how often you practice. However the more "mat time" a wrestler dedicates themselves to, the better they will be during competition.  In terms of wrestling tournaments, wrestlers do not have to attend every meet - although we encourage athletes to attend as many as possible.  Tournament days are time consuming.  Wresters will typically attend a tournament from 8am- 3pm.   
  
Q. How does wrestling compare with team sports such as soccer, baseball and basketball?  
A. Wrestling is considered an individual sport, but includes many of the benefits of team sports.  Wrestling differs from most team sports in that during competition, athletes must rely entirely on their own individual abilities for success.  Those that dedicate the time and effort will eventually achieve at a level directly proportionate to the investment they have made. Similarities between these sports exist in that teammates still depend on each other in team competition. Team victories in meets and tournaments are determined by the number of individual victories, and the extent to which each match was won or lost.  The greater number of wrestlers winning their individual matches, the higher the wrestling team as a whole will place in a tournament. Other team sports may be better of developing interactive play-to-player skills such as passing and blocking, but wrestling can offer benefits that other team sports lack. The individual nature of the sport provides an outstanding opportunity for young athletes to develop a sense of responsibility and self esteem while learning the relationship between effort and achievement.  Wrestlers also develop an appreciation and respect for teammates that have been through the same challenges, and a strong sense of belonging and camaraderie with teammates and other wrestlers.  
  
Q. Is wrestling a dangerous sport?  
A. Several studies have been conducted in recent years that show wrestling to be safer than many more common sports including football, ice hockey and gymnastics.  Most notable in these reports is wrestling's low percentage of serious, permanent and life-threatening injury in relation to other sports. A quote from USA Wrestling Club has the following to say about the risk of injury in wrestling: "Wrestling is a contact sport and injuries will occur. As would be expected, wrestling has more injuries than tennis and swimming, but most injuries are minor, consisting of sprains and strains. Wrestling has fewer serious injuries than football, basketball or ice hockey. There is a lesser chance of getting seriously hurt when wrestling than when riding in a car, skateboarding or riding a dirt bike."  
  
Q. Is wrestling good for self-defense?  
A. Yes, very much so.  Wrestling is unique in that it can be very aggressive without being violent.  The objective is not to destroy or harm one's opponent, but to outmaneuver them and to gain control. Involvement in wrestling is a great way to build confidence and the ability to defend one's self, without resorting to the violent tactics inherent in most other forms of self-defense.