



# Howland Mat Cats Wrestler's Handbook

Welcome to the 2017-2018 season of the Howland Mat Cats. **Our program teaches the sport of wrestling, while instilling confidence, sportsmanship, pride and discipline – and to have fun!** Please visit the Howland Mat Cats website at [howlandmatcats.com](http://howlandmatcats.com) for updates and important dates and information.

The Howland Mat Cats program educates kids on fundamentals of wrestling through organized practices that ensure wrestlers grasp the skills safely. Wrestlers learn basic skills such as: stance, motion, takedowns, pinning combinations, escapes and working successfully from both top and bottom positions.

Weight and experience are used to match-up kids for wrestling matches. Every kid will have the opportunity to wrestle as either **varsity** or **all-star**. The top two wrestlers in each weight class will become varsity and wrestle on either the “Howland Black Team” or the “Howland Orange Team” and compete against the other youth wrestling teams on the schedule. All-star wrestlers will be paired up with other all-star wrestlers for the Sunday matches.

## Rules for Wrestlers:

- Attend practice twice per week to wrestle a varsity wrestling position (all wrestlers must weigh-in before each practice as attendance)
- Be on-time to weigh-in for practice and matches (wrestlers will weigh-in one hour before the Sunday match start time)
- Respect coaches, referees, fellow wrestlers and opponents (disruptions will not be tolerated)
- Only wear wrestling shoes during wrestling (not outside); clean headgear and singlets regularly
- Practice good hygiene both before and after wrestling to ensure the health of all wrestlers (inform coaches of any issues before practices or matches)
- Perform to academic ability in school

Only coaches (with approved Concussion training/background checks) and wrestlers are permitted in the wrestling room. *Absolutely no parents or non-Howland Mat Cats children in the wrestling room! Do not coach from the hallway. It is distracting to the team.*



The wrestling facility is owned by Howland School District. Please treat its property respectfully. **NEW RULE: Per the school's request, the hallway must be clear. Wrestler's will put their bags in the locker room and not in the hallway. Doors will be open for the first two weeks of practice for NEW parents to watch. After that time, parents will not be permitted to sit in the hallway and wrestling practices will be closed-door.**

## Weight Classes

**49,52,56,60,64,67,70,73,76,79,82,86,90,95,100,105,110,120,132,150,175** (Ex. 60 lbs. weight class must weigh-in at 60 lbs. or less; weighing-in at 60.1 lbs. would wrestle 64 lbs. weight class)

## Practice Schedule:

- ❖ Mat Cats Practice (all wrestlers) 6-7 p.m. Monday and Thursday  
(Wrestlers with two or more years of experience are required to stay until 7:45 p.m.)
- ❖ Tiger Practice (advanced wrestling practice, by invitation only) 6-7:30 p.m. Tuesday
- ❖ Snow Days – if school is cancelled the day of practice, wrestling practice will be cancelled

## Sunday Matches (Session Times To Be Determined)

Matches begin the first Sunday of December. There is a charge for admission and there is a concession stand available.

All matches take place at Austintown Fitch High School (4560 Falcon Drive, Austintown, OH 44515).  
*Directions: Route 11S to Mahoning Ave., Left on Mahoning Ave., Right onto Idaho Road, Left into the Austintown Fitch High School*

Weigh-ins begin one hour before the session start time. Wrestlers must weigh-in, wearing his/her singlet and socks only, in order to wrestle. Do not weigh-in with shoes or headgear.

All varsity wrestlers must stay until his/her team is finished. If a wrestler must leave early, please let coaches know prior to the start of the varsity match. Leaving early, without prior approval, may result in ineligibility for the next match.

*New Wrestlers: The first Sunday can be overwhelming. Please encourage your kids. Wrestling is a tough sport and it takes a great deal of courage to step out on the mat!*

## Varsity/All-Stars

Every wrestler will wrestle during the Sunday session. Varsity wrestlers will sit with either the Howland Orange Team or Howland Black Team on their respective mat. All-star wrestlers will sit together on the bleachers with the other all-stars until their weight class is called. Coaches will pair up wrestlers by age, weight, grade and experience.

## Wrestle-offs

A “wrestle-off” is a match between two wrestlers in the same weight class during practice. Every week wrestlers will have the chance to “wrestle off” either of the two existing varsity wrestlers for a spot on the varsity line-up. Coaches will ask for “challengers” during practice, followed live wrestling. Normally, whoever wins, wins the varsity spot. If wrestlers are close in skill level, they may be asked to wrestle the best two of three matches. Due to the number of kids in the Howland Mat Cats program and time constraints, there will be a select number of wrestle-offs for weight classes. Other factors including attendance, tardiness, etc. also affect varsity spots.

The Howland Orange Team and Howland Black Team coaches are responsible for all lineup and match-up decisions.

## Sectional Tournament

Wrestlers who have performed the best all season in practice, matches and school will be selected by the Howland Mat Cats coaches. Sectionals, Districts and States are achievements for hard work and great wrestling. Dedication to the sport is the key to qualifying for these tournaments.

## Wrestling Match Scoring

Wrestling matches consist of three one-minute periods. (All-star matches will only be two one-minute periods.) A wrestler wins by either pinning or developing a lead in points by the end of the match. Wrestlers start in either a neutral position, both standing and facing each other, or referee’s position where one wrestler is on his hands and knees, and the other is on top.

Takedown – 2 points (from a neutral position a wrestler is able to bring the other to the mat and gain control)

Escape – 1 point (when the bottom wrestler is able to break free from the top wrestler and revert back to a neutral position)

Reversal – 2 points (when a wrestler on the bottom is able to reverse the control so that the opponent is on the bottom)

Near Fall (back points) – 2 points for 2-4 seconds or 3 points for 5 seconds or longer (awarded when one wrestler comes close to pinning the other)

Pin or Technical Fall (winning by 12 or more points at any time during the match) – Match over

## Volunteer Parents

The Howland Mat Cats program needs energetic and passionate people that can help with practices and matches. We are also looking for assistant coaches for the all-star wrestlers on Sundays in Austintown.

All coaches are required to complete a background check and online concussion training. With completion, coaches must wear badges in order to coach matches, or even be allowed on the wrestling mats. [www.ohioyouth.com](http://www.ohioyouth.com) (under heading "coaches form") AND [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com) (under "courses" tab)

## Open Tournaments

Open wrestling tournaments are not necessarily team or school affiliated. They are for individuals who like to wrestle and compete for more experience. Additional information about these tournaments is available at [ohiotournaments.com](http://ohiotournaments.com).

Typically, these tournaments are set up by weight class and by age. Many of these tournaments offer a "rookie" division for 1-2 year wrestlers only. This is a great way for new wrestlers to compete against kids their own age and experience.

## Questions

If parents or wrestlers have any questions, please talk to the coaches either before or after practice.

### Howland Black Coaches

Greg Mock (330) 240-3757

Jeremy Welker (330) 442-2622

### Howland Orange Coaches

JT Seesholtz (330) 818-5885

Craig Loomis (330) 610-5603

For most individuals, it takes years to develop into a great wrestler. Be positive and encouraging!

"Once you've wrestled, everything else in life is easy."

~Dan Gable