



WWS HAMMER TOURNAMENTS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many Hammer Tournaments are being held at TOP this winter?

Two. The *Great Gobble Open* is Saturday, December 21 and the *Big Trophy Hunt* is Saturday, February 1.

Who are these tourneys geared for?

Our Hammer Tournaments are for more experienced wrestlers. We've asked local travel teams to stay at home for these events and invite teams from outside of our region. We also encourage other tough, local wrestlers to participate as well.

Since these tourneys are part of our Winter Wrestling Series (WWS), there is another tourney the next day for beginner and novice wrestlers. Wrestlers should NOT participate in both events. We do not want novice wrestlers seeking tougher matches to water down the quality of competition at Hammer Tournaments. Nor do we want tougher wrestlers "beating up" on less experienced wrestlers on the following day. We appreciate coaches and parents respecting this policy.

What are the weight classes and age groups?

Our youth tournaments are for wrestlers of ages 6-14. We use the "Madison System" for determining brackets, so wrestlers do not have to make weight. Parents must provide an accurate weight when registering, and we will verify submitted information at weigh-ins. Ideally, we want wrestlers in the same bracket to be less than 5% difference in weight and within one year of age. However, if necessary, our limits are 10% of weight and 2 year maximum differential (similar to USA Wrestling). Exceptions must be approved by coaches and parents.

Wrestlers will be grouped in round robin or traditional advancement brackets. Our goal is for all wrestlers, whenever possible, to obtain 3 matches (sometimes 4).

How do we register?

We do not open registration well in advance. Wrestlers must sign up during these time windows:

Great Gobbler Open (December 7-17)

Big Trophy Hung (January 18-28)

Late registrations are only accepted if we need wrestlers at a certain weight. If accepted, the family will be notified and there will be a \$20 late fee assessed.

How much do Hammer Tourneys cost?

Individuals can buy a Hammer Pass online for both tourneys for only \$30 (a single tourney is \$19). We also give discounts for "out-of-town" teams of 10 or more wrestlers. Exact discount depends on number

of wrestlers and distance traveled. For discounts, contact Tom Houck at tomh@topofthepodium.org. We do not issue refunds for tournaments.

If your club prefers to pay the registration fee for your wrestlers, we give you a coupon code to distribute to your families. We will then invoice you separately---you can pay by check, Paypal or Venmo before the event.

Do you use your “time slot” approach for Hammer Tournaments?

Yes. After registration closes, we assemble the brackets. Depending on number of registrants, we then give wrestlers a “time slot” in which they will wrestle (e.g., 10-noon). This reduces the amount of time parents must spend at a tourney. We usually announce the time slots two days prior to the event. In general, we start in the morning with younger/lighter wrestlers and progress throughout the day. The start time of the first time slot is determined once we have final numbers but should be 8 or 9 AM.

Are there awards?

At the Great Gobbler Open, medals are given to the top three placers. In contrast, the Big Trophy Hunt follows the tradition of the ancient Olympics. Only the champion receives an award---a very large trophy.

Is there an Admission Fee?

Except for WWS Season Pass holders, there is an admission fee since TOP offers so many amenities and pays scoretable workers. The good news it's only \$5 per adult, \$2 for children (ages 5-17) and a maximum of \$10 per family.

Do Hammer Tournaments count as qualifiers for the TOP Championships in February?

Yes. If wrestlers compete in three eligible events at TOP this winter (including Hammer tourneys, other WWS tourneys, or Dulles Duals), they qualify for The TOP Championships in February. These are special end-of-season tournaments for elementary, middle school, and “Rookie” wrestlers.

How can a parent(s) be a hero for the club?

This is easy----rent our VIP box for the tourney! The price is modest, but you will have comfortable seating, fridge/microwave/live TV, and the best viewing spot of all five mats on the floor. First come-first serve. Contact Tom Houck at tomh@topofthepodium.org for more information.

Is it true wrestlers are introduced with smoke machines and flashing lights?

Yes. This is one of the highlights of our tournaments for both wrestlers and families.

Seriously, is there a movie theater at TOP?

Yes, our 37-seat movie theater, *Crossface Cinema*, is used in various ways at tournaments. Before each time slot, a continuous loop broadcasts information about the day's tournament as well as Tom Houck's “This Week in Wrestling” presentation. Once wrestling begins, kids' movies are shown to occupy siblings.