

3rd Annual Stanford Wrestling Coaches & Leaders Clinic

Being innovative & working smarter at the high school level

Deciding on your team's internal operating system, creating a culture of self-reliance, and using software to make it stick.

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Block 2 · 10:45 AM – 12:15 PM · Kissick Auditorium (Room 02) · Saturday, September 12, 2026

Four decisions that give you your time back

01

Communication

Information architecture and building a team that is self-reliant.

02

Attendance & logistics

Gear, weight, video, practice planning — one system, good data.

03

Booster payments

Modernizing the money stack without the district red tape.

04

AI

Does it even matter?
Hot and cold takes.

Pick the smallest number of tools that covers all of this. Every extra system is another place your team forgets to look.

Screenshots throughout use WrestlingIQ, but the ideas apply to whatever software you use.

What does “working smarter” actually mean?

-  **Save time on admin tasks**
70+% of all customers coming to WrestlingIQ rank this as their #1 goal.
-  **Create a shared culture of expectations**
You don't scale if you keep answering the same questions over and over—and it will make you miserable.
-  **Spend more time on the parts you like**
Coaching, cheering, being in the room. That's the whole point of being involved in wrestling.

It is not about buying more software. It is about deciding on your team's information architecture and sticking with the plan consistently.



01

Communication

Get everyone on the same page, moving in the same direction.

The hardest, most frustrating part of running a team



It's always happening

Practice changes, weigh-ins, rides, forms, tournaments, the one parent who missed it.



It's one of the biggest parts of running a team

Whether the coach does it themselves or creates a system for others to operate, information architecture matters.

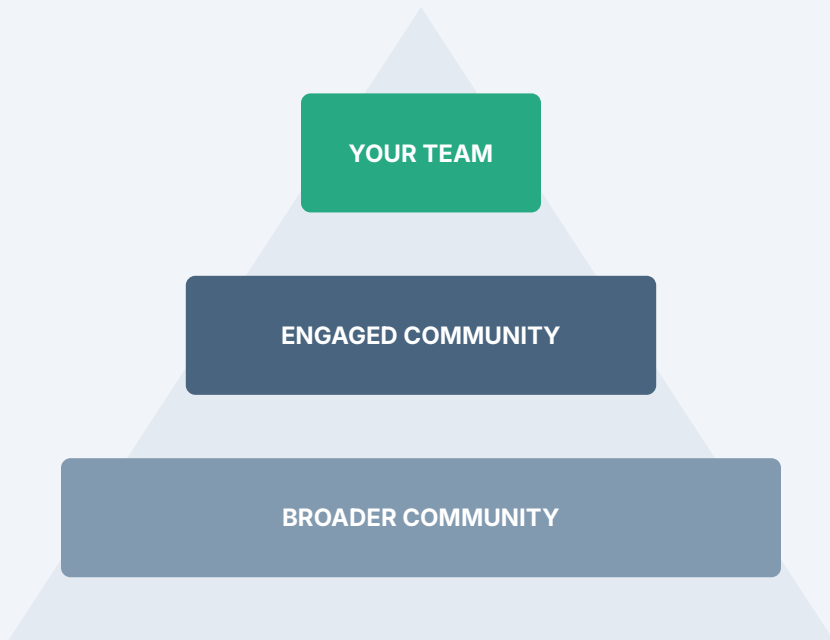


Done well, everything downstream gets easier

If people don't know what's happening they can't support you well.

Get everyone on the same page, moving in the same direction.

Not every message belongs in the same place



WrestlingIQ - Team messaging app

Your current roster and their parents. Fast, direct, and the only place high-schoolers reliably look.



Email, newsletter, your website

Alumni, core fans, extended family, admin, school board.
Common newsletter mistake - use plain text, not graphics



Social media (and local press)

Celebrate the team! This is where social shines, and where you keep it positive.

Getting the top tier right with team messaging

WHO SEES IT

Parent vs. wrestler settings

Decide deliberately who receives what. Some messages are for athletes, some are for the adults, some are for both.

COMPLIANCE

SafeSport & district rules

Configure official-communication settings so every coach-to-athlete message is visible and on the record.

PRECISION

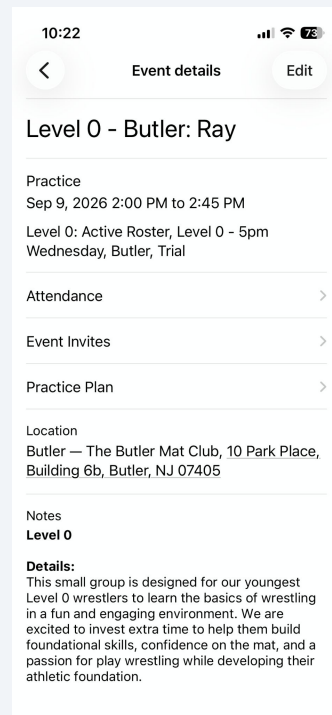
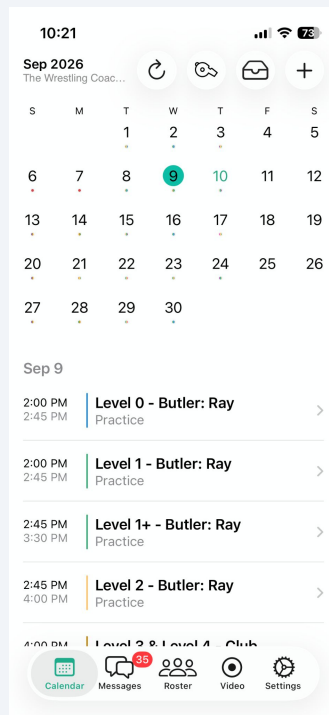
Roster-synced groups

Groups that update themselves when the roster changes. Send to only the people who need to know.

If a message can be shared, make it shareable. A link to the calendar beats a paragraph retyped four times in four places. We'll go deep on this in a second.

Set up a team calendar

- **One calendar, kept current**
If it isn't on the calendar, it isn't happening. No exceptions, all season.
- **Notes on every event**
Use a template: address, what to bring, expectations, who, absence policy, etc
- **Roster linkage**
Let families filter to "my kid's schedule" instead of reading everyone's.
- **Color coding and filters**
Varsity, JV, girls, open mat — visible at a glance if your system supports it.



Creating a culture of self-reliance

Answering the question yourself is faster today and more expensive every day after.

-  **Redirect, don't answer**
Every time you answer what the calendar already says, you teach people not to check it.
-  **Give your staff the script**
Same words from every coach, every time. Consistency is what makes it land.
-  **Put the reference material somewhere permanent**
A team documents section beats re-explaining the same five things every August.

"Hey there — please see the team calendar for full details. We work hard to keep that up to date and it'll always be your best source of info."

Say it kindly, but say it every time.

How often, and to whom

THE RISK

Over-communicating

Too many messages and people stop reading any of them. The important one gets lost in the noise.

ANOTHER RISK

Under-communicating

Nobody ever quit a program because they were too well informed. If you must err, err loud.



Be succinct



Point to shared resources



Target the right people

The rule: it is better to over-communicate than under-communicate, but keep your messages short with full details found elsewhere (aka the calendar).

The fix for noise isn't fewer messages — it's tighter segmentation. Send less to more people, and more to the few who need it.

Control the behavior in official team messaging

Turn off sending permissions for everyone

This cuts down on messaging fatigue

Create sub groups for parent planning

Curate the group if parent to parent planning is helpful

Roster linkage

Segmentation is hard without automation

Create a celebrations channel (maybe)

Honestly? This is what social media and your newsletter are for, not team messaging.

The screenshot shows a form for creating a messaging group. The 'Group Name' field contains 'Varsity Parents'. The 'Group Purpose' field contains 'Communication to the parents from the coaching staff for varsity wrestlers'. Under 'Who should be able to send messages within the group?', the 'Only coaches and admins' option is selected. A 'Back' link is visible. Under 'Which rosters should the messaging group sync with?', 'Varsity' is selected in a dropdown menu. Below this is a search bar for rosters. Under 'Who gets added from each roster?', the 'Parents only' option is selected.

Group Name e.g. rides, varsity travel team, tournament help, etc
Varsity Parents

Group Purpose e.g. "Used by parents and coaches to organize rides for tournaments."
Communication to the parents from the coaching staff for varsity wrestlers

Who should be able to send messages within the group?
☐ Everyone
☒ Only coaches and admins

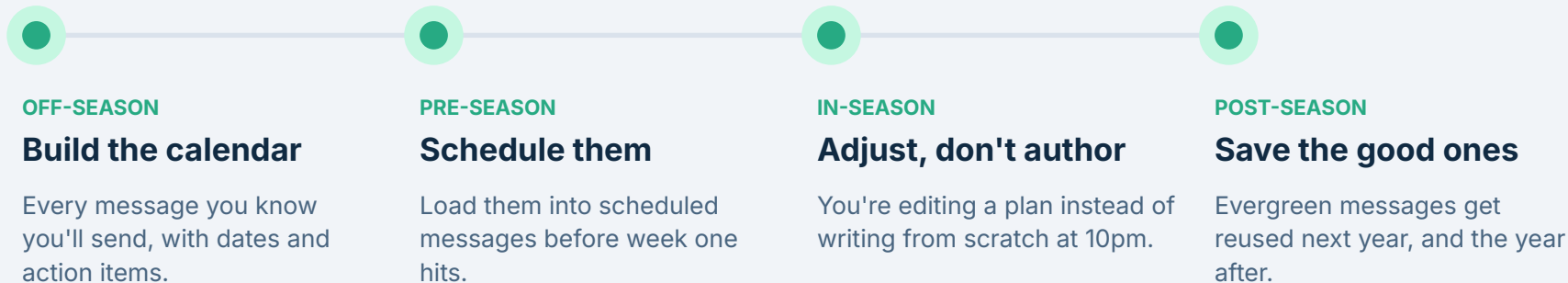
← Back

Which rosters should the messaging group sync with?
Varsity x

Q Type the name of a roster...

Who gets added from each roster?
We'll keep this group in sync as roster membership changes.
☐ Wrestlers and their parents
☐ Wrestlers only
☒ Parents only

Pre-load the season before the season



Messages worth writing once and re-using forever:

First practice details · What to bring to the first competition · Resources for first-time parents · Weigh-in procedure · Post-season banquet

Keep one source of truth

One home for past messages
Last year's version is the fastest first draft you'll ever get.

One home for common messages
The five things you explain every single season, written well, once.

Stored where the next coach can find it
A team document library outlives any one person's inbox.

New Reference Document

Document Title
Yearly Message Templates

What kind of document is this?

☐ Liability form
Parents sign once per wrestler at registration.

☐ Required signature
Each coach, parent, or wrestler signs for themselves — e.g. code of conduct or concussion form. Users cannot use WrestlingQ until they've signed.

☒ Reference document
No signature needed — handouts, rules, schedules, etc.
Compare liability vs. required signature [CF](#)

Visibility
☐ Everyone on the team
☒ Coaches only
Hide this document from parents and wrestlers.

Content

See this document for our commonly used templates year over year.

1. Season begins information packet
2. Template for event notes on the calendar (practices and tournaments)
3. Common reply for challenging parents (no side coaching team guidelines)

Create Reference Document

TIP
If you already have a document, copy and paste the text into the WrestlingQ document editor.
Adding your file as an attachment won't show the content to users. See the document preview below.

Document Preview | Mobile Browser

Yearly Message Templates

See this document for our commonly used templates year over year.

1. Season begins information packet
2. Template for event notes on the calendar (practices and tournaments)
3. Common reply for challenging parents (no side coaching team guidelines)

The test: if you got hit by a bus in December, could your assistant run the program's communication from what's written down?

The athletic director's perspective

ASK

What do you actually need from me?

Format, frequency, and which system. Ask once, then automate it.

ASK

What makes your job harder?

Usually it's surprises. Most AD friction is an information-timing problem.

ASK

What are the district rules?

Official communication, records retention, and who is allowed to message athletes.

The goal: communicate in a way that makes your wrestlers, your parents, your AD, and your broader community all feel safe.



02

Attendance & team logistics

Tracking data without losing your mind.

Garbage in, garbage out

Attendance data is only worth having if the process that produces it is boring and identical every day.

STEP 1

Self check-in at the kiosk

Wrestlers check themselves in as they walk in the door. Add weight capture here if you track it — one stop, one habit.

STEP 2

Roll call during warm-ups

A manager or coach verifies the list while warm-ups run, and explicitly marks absent anyone who isn't there.

The explicit absent mark is the part everyone skips — and it's the part that makes every report downstream trustworthy.

What the data is actually for



Reporting to your AD

If they require a separate system, ask them for the specific features you need.



"Who hasn't shown up in a week?"

That one report is the whole reason to collect this. Ask for it by name.



Checking in on kids who are drifting

Attendance is an early-warning system before it's a compliance record.

Level 1 Practice

6:00 PM, FRI AUG 7

CHECKED-IN: 1
TRIAL: 0
DROP-IN: 0

Wrestler	Details	Roster	Status
 Ava Elite	178 lbs / 10 yo	Unknown	● On the Mat 

The rest of the operating system

EQUIPMENT

Gear checkouts

Who has the singlet, the headgear, the warm-up — and did it come back in March.

DEVELOPMENT

Video + stats

Match recordings, timestamps, clips, and scouting your next opponent.

PLANNING

Practice planning

Most useful in the first weeks of the season, when the plan is still forming.

Tracking gear checkouts

Use private properties on the profile

Singlet number, headgear, warm-up size — attached to the wrestler, not a clipboard.

Coaches see it, families don't

Private fields keep internal notes internal while staying on the athlete record.

Pull the roster report at end of season

One export tells you exactly what's outstanding and who to ask.

Private wrestler registration questions are only visible to coaches

If you need guardians to enter/edit information about their wrestlers, use public registration questions instead.

Gear Checked Out

Warm-up #

Free text entry

Uniform #

Free text entry

+ Add question

Video + stats: habits of effective programs

CAPTURE

Assign it to someone

Managers record by default. Let parents and wrestlers record too — more angles, more matches, zero cost.

REVIEW

Smart timestamps

Jump straight to the scramble instead of scrubbing through six minutes to find it.

SHARE

Cut clips on the web player

Build highlight reels from match recordings. Show them at practice, send them to YouTube, send them to college coaches.

SCOUTING

Study the opponent

The same library that develops your wrestlers tells you what's coming at the next dual.

Practice planning: be honest about the tool

WHERE IT HELPS

The first few weeks

When the season's structure is still forming, writing the plan down forces the decisions you're avoiding.

WHERE IT HELPS

Handing off the room

An assistant can run practice from a written plan. They cannot run it from your memory.

WHERE IT DOESN'T

Mid-season, veteran staff

By January most staffs plan in their heads and in the hallway. Forcing software here usually adds friction.

Every tool has a season where it earns its keep. Knowing when to stop using one is part of running a good system.



03

Booster payments

Modernizing your payments stack.

What you can run through one system

RECURRING

Fundraisers

Team-wide campaigns with a page you can send anywhere.

EVENTS

Ticketed events

Team BBQ, banquet, alumni duals — collect before, not at the door.

MERCH

Spirit stores

Shirts and gear without a parent fronting the money.

GIVING

Donation pages

A standing link for alumni and local businesses, live year-round.

Booster accounts give you a source of funds you have more control over. Work with your AD to ensure this process is running smoothly and you can collect funds online.

The screenshot shows a donation interface for 'California RTC'. At the top is a dark red header with the text 'Donate to California RTC'. Below this are two tabs: 'One-time' and 'Monthly', with 'Monthly' being the active selection. Under the 'Monthly' tab, there are three buttons for recurring amounts: '\$25 /mo', '\$50 /mo', and '\$100 /mo'. Below these, there is a button for '\$250 /mo' and a text input field labeled 'Other amount'. At the bottom of the form is a large dark red button labeled 'Donate'. Below the button, small text states 'Your donations are tax deductible! EIN: 20-4753346' and 'Powered by WrestlingIQ'.



04

AI — is the future now?

How to think about it, and how not to.

How to think about AI

-  **A thinking partner where you already have expertise**
It's useful when you can tell whether the answer is any good. That's the whole test.
-  **It's software you use as leverage — not a genie**
Even when it feels like one. Leverage multiplies your judgment; it doesn't supply it.
-  **Wrestling is a human thing**
Remove the unnecessary drudge work of running a team. Do not remove the parts that make it worth doing.
-  **Read the room in your community**
Some parents and ADs have strong feelings. Know where yours sit before you lean in.
-  **Role model the effort**
If you can't be bothered to put the work in, your wrestlers won't either.

Common mistakes

MISTAKE

No context

You know your program, your district and your kids. The model knows none of it until you tell it.

MISTAKE

No source material

Ask it to work from your documents and cite them, rather than from whatever it half-remembers.

MISTAKE

No verification

If you can't check the output, you shouldn't be using it for that job yet.

What does AI and tattoos have in common?

Where it earns its keep — and where it doesn't

GOOD USE CASES

Anything with a defined output the AI can check itself against, or that is very well known.

- Analyzing a data set
- "Find every online tournament near us"
- Formatting documents and video

BE CAREFUL

Anywhere the output is your voice, or nobody can verify it before it ships.

- Written messages to your team
- Anything a parent will read as you
- Yet another graphic everyone knows is slop

YOUR TURN

Talk it through

Find two or three people near you. Ten minutes.

QUESTION 1

What are you using today?

List every system your program touches. Where does the same information live in two places?

QUESTION 2

What could you delete?

Which tool would nobody miss, and what would it take to consolidate it this season?

QUESTION 3

What's your one script?

Write the sentence you'll use all season to redirect people back to the calendar.

Come back with one thing you'll change before your first practice.



05

Q&A - Thank you!