

MatStats Episode 20

Wednesday May 17, 2023

You know I'm here for the party.
-Gretchen Wilson

The boys at MatStats offer suggestions on how to better feature the “lost” dual meet and how to draw more fans.

We need to make the dual meet more fun.

We need to co-market/co-brand the dual meet.

The students on campus do not get enough opportunities to see a dual meet. It has become a forgotten part of the sport.



I Feel Like A Number

Episode
20-2

To the fans I'm just a drone
To my wireless service I'm just another phone
I'm just a statistic on a bout sheet
To the teachers I'm just another child
To the IRS I'm just another file
I'm just a correlation on the stat sheet

I feel like a number
I feel like a number
I'm not a number, I'm not a number

Are there any disclaimers MatStats needs to let everyone know about their shows?

The Opinions Expressed on this show do not necessarily reflect any policies or opinions of the NWCA. Also, the MatStats guys do not always agree on all things discussed on their shows.

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- MatStats is a subsidiary of the NWCA but is a separate entity that voices its own opinions on its statistical analysis.
 - MatStats three hosts, Gormley, Bryant, and Hazard are all equally responsible for all the good outcomes. Gormley for the bad feedback.
- Gormley writes the Power Points and selects the topics. Gormley uses the term MatStats often, but many times it is Gormley's opinion alone.
- Gormley does the stats work and then the three hosts & occasionally guests brainstorm about Gormley's findings and ideas.
 - MatStats is designed to have educated thoughts and opinions to help the world's oldest and greatest sport.
- Wrestling is all about settling disagreements. The hosts are too old to settle these disagreements on the mat.
- Sometimes we agree, sometimes we disagree. It makes the world go round.

What does MatStats believe is the most important element needed to improve our sport?

Let's grow the sport!!

Episode
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- Let's incorporate the NWCA Wrestler's in Business Network & use our businesspeople to find a different solution to our small dual meet attendances at substantially all college dual meets.
- In Episode #5 1/19/22, we learned the Business of Wrestlers in Business is Business.
- Let's try something new.
- Let's use the stats at our disposal to see if we might find a solution.

What were the top 10 schools in average (arithmetic mean) attendance for 2022-23?

Iowa led the nation for the 16th straight year in average home meet attendance (14,859)

Episode
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| Rank | College | Average Attendance |
|------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Iowa | 14,859 |
| 2 | Penn State | 9225 |
| 3 | Iowa State | 5287 |
| 4 | Rutgers | 4295 |
| 5 | Oklahoma State | 4068 |
| 6 | Ohio State | 3850 |
| 7 | Virginia Tech | 3138 |
| 8 | Northern Iowa | 2813 |
| 9 | Minnesota | 2787 |
| 10 | Michigan | 2700 |

The Mean attendance is 1716, the median is 779.
This shows it is skewed to the higher figures.

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| Category | Attendance |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Mean Colleges 1-70 in attendance | 1716 |
| Mean Colleges 3-70 (w/o Iowa & PSU) | 1256 |
| Median | 779 |
| % Matches with attendance > 1K | 39% |
| % Total Attendance Iowa & PSU | 30% |

As of 4/25/23,
MatStats only
Has numbers for
70 D1 schools.

The 10 schools
we do not have
will bring down
The mean and
median.

Do the attendance figures include tris & quads?

Tris & Quads are included in the numbers. Only 5 schools (7% of the 70 reporting) had their best attendance at a Tri Or Quad meet.

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- Since only 7% of the colleges with their best attendance figures were tris or quads, MatStats can not say that is the way to go.
- MatStats has no way of determining how many fans stayed through the entire tri or quad.
- Nor does MatStats have figures on the percentage of total home matches that were tri or quads.
- The schools with their best attendance numbers at tris or quads were ranked 35th, 48th, 56th, 63rd, & 66th, so they are not the best drawing schools.
- Of those five schools the best attended tri or quad had 1000 fans. An even and rounded number like that strongly suggest it was an estimate.

Does MatStats have any info on the attendances at the Beauty & Beast dual meets?

Some colleges are pairing dual meets with women's gymnastic meets. 4 of these schools had their best attendance at Beauty & The Beast.

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- Granted there is a small number of B&B meets but having 4 with their best attendance is suggesting a correlation.
- A larger issue could be who the school is wrestling that day or who the gymnasts are competing against.
- An old agent's trick was to claim when his client pitched the attendance was up. But was that due to the pitcher, the hat give away day, the significance of that game, or a combination?
- MatStats can not say what B&B there were, and the attendance might have been lower than the average crowd.
- This is part of our brainstorming to find potential answers.

Can MatStats show any reason to think the B&B concept is working and worth expanding on?

The 4 colleges that had their best attendances at B&B events had staggering increases over their 2nd best attendances.

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| College | B&B Attendance | 2 nd Best crowd | % Over 2 nd best crowd | Opponent |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Iowa State | 8757 | 5754 | 52% | Illini |
| ASU | 3645 | 2947 | 24% | Cal Poly |
| Northern Illinois | 1043 | 543 | 92% | Buffalo |
| Kent | 1014 | 178 | 470% | Clarion |
| Total | 14459 | 9422 | 53% | N/A |

How important is stats research?

Vols 52 Tide 49 Game ending FG for the Vols!

Episode
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- MatStats was at the Vols Spring Football game in 2023.
- There was no announcing after each play.
- MatStats had to explain why this was the case to many fans.
- Vols coach Josh Heupel did some research in previous years.
- Heupel runs a very fast paced offense.
- Heupel's study showed the Umpire that places the ball for play would subconsciously wait for the announcer to finish before placing the ball.
- So Heupel instructed the PA announcer not to say anything when the Vols have the ball.
- Without this research the Vols most likely not have had a chance to kick the game winning FG. They might have won in OT, but stats research helped in leading to a huge win.

There were 58,473 fans at the Orange & White Spring Football game at Neyland in 2023.

Episode
20-11

- This is a crazy number. Many other big time football teams draw large numbers like this.
- It is an intra-squad controlled scrimmage.
- Why do that many people go to Neyland for this?
- It is a party atmosphere. Parties on campus, when did this start?
- MatStats is not advocating alcohol, we are advocating fun.
- Are you listening wrestling fans?

Does the NFL sell a party, or do they just sell the game?

We need to make the dual meet more fun!

Episode
20-12

- About 110 million people watch the Super Bowl each year.
- Substantially the vast majority of these people watch at a house party.
- There were not 110M die hard Chiefs or Eagles (or as we pronounce it in Philly, “Iggles”) at these parties. They were there for the party.

Why does MatStats believe we need to think outside the box?

In 2021-22 there are 79% more NCAA total teams than there was in 1981-82.

Episode
20-13

| Year | # NCAA Teams |
|------------|--------------|
| 1981-82 | 11,025 |
| 2021-22 | 19,769 |
| % Increase | 79% |

What are the trends for college enrollment since 1981-82?

College enrollments has increased by 61% from 1981-82 to 2021-2022.

Episode
20-14

- Because of the creation of less expensive online colleges and the advent of many traditional colleges having more and more online classes, the competition for a student's time is much more competitive than when the Boomers were in college.
- There are almost 8 Million more college students today than there was in 1981-82.
- The students are there we just need to work to attract them.

These changes seem drastic for old school wrestlers, has the NFL and NBA made rule changes to increase fan interest?

The NBA implemented the 3 Point FG and the NFL has changed many rules with pass interference and player safety concerns.

Episode
20-15

- The NBA adopted the 3 Point FG in the 1979-80 season.
- Can you imagine the game now without it?
- The NFL introduced much stricter pass interference rules over the years to help the offenses in hopes to draw more fans.
- The NFL recently passed targeting and other player safety rules. Yes, I agree with these rules.
- The NFL has over the years enforced other player safety rules - stricter roughing the QB, kickers, etc.

Has America's game tried any recent rule changes to help attract fans?

MLB followed MiLB and NCAA Baseball with a pitch clock to speed up the game.

Episode
20-16

- Even America's game is experimenting with rule changes to raw more fans.
- If baseball can implement such a potential sea changing rule, what is preventing wrestling to try a new approach to draw more and new fans?

Why does MatStats think the dual meet is so important?

Team sports with the largest fan bases have an event with one team vs another team.

Episode
20-17

- Football, Basketball, Baseball, & Hockey are the largest attended sports in America.
- Soccer is the largest worldwide.
- Cricket had 1.6 Billion viewers for the 2019 Cricket World Cup.

Could these potential changes hurt our sport?

Why not try something new and different?

Episode
20-18

- If the biggest sports can do this, why can't we try?
- What do we have to lose by trying?
- Wrestling just changed the 3 point near fall to 4 points.
- Wrestling rules have evolved over the years.

What are other changes MatStats would suggest to help fan interest?

MatStats MOV scoring and the proposed 3-point Takedown.

Episode
20-19

- MatStats MOV scoring changes.
- MatStats has discussed in detail the suggestion of changing dual meet and tournament scoring rule to help fans understand the scoring and increasing action.
- In April 2023, the NCAA Wrestling Rules Committee proposed a 3-point Takedown.
- There is also talk about altering the riding time point.

Streaming is a Double-edged Sword.

- The advent of streaming videos has been great for many fans.
- We can now see from the comfort of our living room more wrestling matches in a year than most of us Boomers have ever seen in person in a lifetime.
- On the other side streaming gives all of us a reason not to fight the cold weather and possible January/February snowstorms in northern cities.
- It also is another reason for college students to stay in their dorm and watch the match at their convenience rather than walk/Uber to the match.
- We need additional reasons to see the match in person Now More Than Ever!

What is the biggest change we can make to draw more fans to dual meets?

Make it more fun!!!

Episode
20-21

- Beauty & The Beast in the Big 10
- Inclusive change
- Kids matches at halftime.
- Halftime is a big deal in college football with the pageantry and bands.
- Fun halftimes or side shows pie eating contest, juggling, Nathan's hot dogs.
- Walk through student's crowd before the match a Rocky Balboa affect.
- Two Frat boys or Sorority girls wrestling at halftime.
- Bill Veeck made it fun to come watch a Baseball game with his outside the lines marketing ideas. Did he anger people? Yes. Did he draw more fans? Yes.
- Veeck was known as the P.T. Barnum of Baseball.

What is the easiest solution to put more fans at dual meets?

Include women's dual meets

Episode
20-22

- The easiest way to create excitement and add more fans is to include women's dual meets.
- Women are close to 60% of the enrollment at colleges in 2023.
- The stats from the National Center for Education Statistics shows that 58% of bachelor degrees were awarded to women.

Women are 58% of graduates in 2019-20.

- Percentages of college graduates by sex.
- These percentages have been 50% or higher for women all the way back to 1981.
- The percentage of women has increased over the years.
- The growth has slowed down, but it is not crazy to think one day there will be two women for every man at colleges.
- 67% is a 2-1 ratio.

| Year | % Men | % Women |
|---------|-------|---------|
| 1980-81 | 50% | 50% |
| 1990-91 | 46% | 54% |
| 2000-01 | 43% | 57% |
| 2019-20 | 42% | 58% |

Can MatStats provide other examples in sports where the party trumps the sporting event?

About 500K fans line the streets for the Boston Marathon each year. In 2023, the New England Patriots had 527K for the 8 home games.

Episode
20-24

- The BAA draws almost as many live spectators each year as the New England Patriots draw in total each year.
- The fans for the most part stay for the duration of the race.
- The fans are not just there to see the world class runners.
- It is a party atmosphere.
- The spectators are not that interested in the average runner in BAA, they are there for the party.
- Are you listening wrestling fans?

MatStats names Kelly Powell W&M Wrestling athlete of the Year

Kelly Powell on Commonwealth Avenue nearing the finishing line at the Boston Marathon in 2023.
3:26:56 or 7:54/mile pace.

Episode
20-25



Kelly Plumley Powell W&M BBA '92 & MBA '96.

Married to Dr. Boog Powell W&M BS '92
W&M Wrestling '87-'92. Captain '92.

Kelly is clearly the fastest person in our W&M wrestling Family.

Her BAA time was much faster than our 1st EIWA Champion's BAA best time. Rematch? It wouldn't be close.

Kelly is literally miles ahead of another W&M BBA & MBA Wrestler. No one at MatStats can hang with Kelly.

Kelly's PR is 3:23:26 in Long Beach 2022. She is 53.

There are many huge sporting events where you really can't see the competitors for long in person. Yet they draw huge crowds.

Episode
20-26

- Golf, Running, & Tour de France you can't see much of the participants.
- Tour de France has 12 Million spectators line the street each year to see the bikers fly by them. Perhaps they are there for the party.
- Kentucky Derby is the most exciting 2 minutes in sports. The 150K fans are at Churchill Downs for more than 8 hours for two minutes of racing. They are there for the party.
- Could we do something like this for wrestling? Tris and Quads?
- Why not make the wrestling dual meet more fun.

What would MatStats suggest as the first change?

Move the NCAA D1 Men's Wrestling Championships (and the others) to May.

Episode
20-27

- Why move them?
- We will not compete with March madness.
- We can have outdoor dual meets since the weather is nicer in April & May than January & February.

Where would MatStats suggest we move some dual meets to?

Where could we have the outdoor dual meets to draw new or casual fans?

Episode
20-28

- Before spring football games.
- Before Lacrosse games.
- In a field near frat row. Have an exhibition bout between the 5th and 6th weight classes between two frat guys.
- Have a band for before the match and maybe after and some music between bouts.
- Start fan clubs.
- Give people a reason to come.
- A social before the match.
- Food trucks.

When and where would MatStats suggest we have dual meets?

What possibilities are there to help draw new fans?

Episode
20-29

- The Ohio State vs Michigan before their respective spring games. One year in Ann Arbor the next in Columbus.
- The same with Penn State & Iowa, Okie State & Iowa State, Oklahoma & Mizzou, Pitt & WVA (a real back yard brawl).
- The Ivies do not have spring football, so use Lacrosse games.
- Yes, there will be logistics issues. But we need to iron these issues out.
- Rain, double booking the field, time concerns, etc.
- It would be a school-by-school decision. Arizona State will have less of a weather issue than Harvard.

Minor League Baseball is a Major League when it comes to promotions to draw and entertain fans.

Episode
20-30

- Minor League Baseball (MiLB) drew 47 million fans for their regular season games in 2019.
- The NFL drew 16.67 million fans for their regular season games in 2019.
- Granted there are many more teams and games in MiLB than the NFL, but there were almost 3X as many fans at MiLB games than NFL games in 2019.
- MiLB is family friendly and entertaining both the games and the promotions.
- Like complete idiots MiLB cut a few leagues and many teams in 2021.

Does a dual meet increase the possibility of school pride and rivalries?

It is easier to have school/team/country pride in an event with one team vs another.

Episode
20-31

- The Men's D1 NCAA Championships are by far the biggest draw.
- But it is a 6-session event.
- Each session is larger than Iowa dual meets (About 20K vs 14K).
- What does the average fan get more excited about Michigan vs The Ohio State football game or The Ohio State vs Youngstown State?
- Jason Bryant's suggestion of new and smaller conferences would add to the rivalry element in wrestling.
- MatStats Episode #10, "The renovation of D1 Wrestling Conferences" discusses this at length on the 6/15/22 show.

Market our dual meets with other bigger events or different ways to draw more fans.

Episode
20-32

- Countless events co-market with other events.
- Fast food and movies. You see movies and characters on McDonald's cups, etc.
- Super Bowl Ads are attempts to attach their products to the Super Bowl.

The NFL and NCAA Basketball have fantasy leagues and brackets that help draw fans.

- The advent of fantasy football has become an industry in America.
- There are now so many “office” pools on bracketology for the D1 Men’s NCAA Basketball tournament.
- They have become a cottage industry and have driven huge TV ratings for the sport.
- Many people don’t really care about the NFL games teams outcomes they care about their fantasy teams.
- Are there really that many FAU & San Diego State basketball fans or was it all about your bracket?
- They sporting events have become more fun for more people through these creations.

What schools draw the most fans in college wrestling?

Iowa & PSU draw large crowds, but after that it drops precipitously.

Episode
20-34

- Iowa & PSU drew 30% of all college Men's D1 fans for their home meets in 2022-23.
- Iowa and PSU had 4% of the total home meets in 2022-23
- We need to do something to help bring the other schools' attendances up.
- Part of our problem is that the Men's D1 NCAA Championships are sold out every year and that is what those fans remember and think the wrestling fans pack the gyms all over the place.
- How often do you have to wait for a table at a restaurant on Saturday night? That does not mean they are crowded on Monday 1/2.

Is MatStats asking for help in this brainstorming venture?

We need WIBN members to help MatStats brainstorm on finding solutions.

Episode
20-35

- MatStats wants to hear from WIBN members on how to increase our dual meet attendance.
- Contact us at NWCAMatStats@gmail.com
 - There are no bad ideas.
 - Let's put our collective headgears together!

Episode #20 MatCliff's Notes #1

Episode
20-36

- 1) Make the dual meets More Fun.
- 2) Try something new. Outdoor dual meets.
- 3) Move the NCAA Championships to May.
- 4) Median home meet average (mean) attendance in 2022-23 was 779.
- 5) Streaming is great, but a hinderance for in person attendance.

Episode #20 MatCliff's Notes #2

Episode
20-37

- 6) Iowa & PSU had 30% of all the D1 fans at their home meets.
- 7) Use MatStats MOV scoring so more people could understand it.
- 8) Even the Super Bowl house parties are about fun and not the game itself.
- 9) Beauty & the Beast seems to be a great way to attract more fans.
- 10) There are 79% more NCAA teams across all sports in 2023 over 1982.

What is the top next month (Wednesday 6/21/23 3PM EDT)?

What was the greatest college wrestling team ever? Who is our '27 Yankees?

Episode
20-38

- Tune In Next Month
 - Same Mat Time
 - Same Mat Channel

- Next month's show is to try and settle which team was the greatest Men's NCAA D1 ever.
- Like most of these attempts it solves nothing in many minds.
- It just helps some in bar room arguments with statistical ammunition.