

MatStats Episode 29

Wednesday February 21st, 2024, 3PM EST

Too much of a good thing is a good thing.
- Alan Jackson

Episode
29-1

The boys at MatStats study the trends in the number of matches the men's NCAA qualifiers and champions have wrestled over the years. We also see if the best teams agree with Alan Jackson. Finally, we compare wrestling to other NCAA sports in the number of contests.



I Feel Like A Number

Episode
29-2

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

Jenny, Jenny had perhaps the most famous phone number in American history.

867-5309

Episode
29-3

MatStats, MatStats, who can I turn to?
You give me something I could hold on to
I know you think I'm like the others before
Who saw your name and number on the wall.

.....

867-5309

Mat-Stats

Mat-Stats

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.

Episode
29-4

- 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.

MatStats is based on numbers, stats, and analyzing them. It starts with facts not opinions.

Episode
29-5

- MatStats is a numbers show.
- Thus, the name MatStats. Not MatOpinions.
- Gorms was remiss not explaining this from the get-go. Gorms lives in a numbers world and is starting to get the feeling not everyone does lol.
- Feedback from the Tribe alumni during this show has made Gorms realize he needs to address this and try to educate people with numbers. Thank you, Dr. Powell, for one of your texts.

If Gorms does not have any statistical answers, where does he look next? We want answers.

MatStats is a show that revolves around stats, but there is a reason we have balance on the show. Not all answers have a numeric quantifiable component.

Episode
29-6

- Let's have the two on the show that know wrestling weigh in on based their decades around the sport (Jason & Kevin - and at times guests).
- To paraphrase the Ramones - Gormley needs to be sedated.
- Much to the chagrin of Gorms (The Sultan of Stat), not everything can be quantified with a number(s). You can't put a number on why Babe Ruth (The Sultan of Swat) hit 714 HRs, but we can put a number on how many he hit.
- We will provide answers before the conclusion of this show. If it is not in the numbers, we will do our best to provide answers. One thing you learn in MBA school is find an answer. A consultant's answer can not be hiring a blue-ribbon panel. You went to MBA school to be the blue-ribbon panel.

As of 2/4/24, there are **502** men & women’s wrestling teams in the NCAA & NAIA.

Episode
29-7

Category	Men	Women	Total	Most ever Men’s Teams	Year	Most Ever Total Teams	Years
NCAA D1	81	4	85	146	1982	146	1982
NCAA D2	74	32	106	74	2024	106	2024
NCAA D3	129	62	191	149	1982	191	2024
NCAA	284	97	380	363*	1982	382	2023
NAIA	75	45	120			120	2024
4 Year	359	143	502			502	2024

* - Note the NCAA reports 393 men’s teams in 1972, but they do not know how many were club teams.

Where was Gorms when he did the research and wrote this episode?

Gorms was snowed in at the top of a mountain on Rocky Top while he wrote this episode.

Episode
29-8

- All work and no play make Gorms a dull boy.
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- What is the topic of this show?
- This episode deals with how many matches NCAA D1 Men are wrestling per year. What are the trends? Are the number of matches correlated with seeds and weights? We compare the 2023 numbers to past year.
- Let's start with the number of matches wrestled based on seed and weight class.

How do the number of matches before the NCAAs for all qualifiers compare from 2013 & 2023?

The average number of matches for all qualifiers before the NCAAs is **down 2.5%** from 2013 to 2023.

Episode
29-10

Weight	2023 Matches per wrestler before the NCAA's	2013 Matches per wrestler before the NCAA's	% Change from 2013 to 2023
125	29.85	32.27	-8%
133	29.36	28.61	3%
141	30.30	32.18	-6%
149	30.18	28.79	5%
157	31.06	30.97	0%
165	29.61	32.61	-9%
174	29.24	30.33	-4%
184	30.73	30.30	1%
197	29.30	30.09	-3%
285	30.39	31.42	-3%
Total	30.00	30.76	-2.5%

Does your weight class effect the number of bouts you would have before the NCAAs in 2013 & 2023?

Episode
29-11

There is no correlation (+0.13) between weight class and number of matches.

Weight	Total 2013 + 2023 Average matches before NCAAs	Mean 2013 and 2023 Average matches before NCAAs
125	62.12	31.06
133	57.97	28.98
141	62.48	31.24
149	58.97	29.48
157	62.03	31.02
165	62.21	31.11
174	59.58	29.79
184	61.03	30.52
197	59.39	29.70
285	61.82	30.91
Mean	60.76	30.38

There is no correlation between the weight class and number of matches wrestled before the NCAAs in 2013 and 2023.

In wrestling all weights carry the same “weight” for team success.

Unlike football where the QB is by far the most important position.

Yet another reason wrestling is the world’s greatest sport.

Can MatStats show the viewers what weights had the most and least bouts prior to the NCAAs in 2013 & 2023?

In 2023, the weight with the most bouts was 174, the least 157. In 2013 133 had the most and 125 the least.

Episode
29-12

Year	Min Matches/ wrestler (weight)	Mean Matches/ wrestler	Max Matches/ wrestler (weight)
2023	29.24 (174)	30.00	31.06 (157)
2013	28.61(133)	30.76	32.27 (125)

How do the top 12 seeds compare from 2013 to 2023 for average number of bouts?

8 of the top 12 seeds have seen a decrease in the number of bouts wrestled before the NCAAs from 2013 to 2023. The top 3 seeds saw the largest decreases.

Episode
29-13

Seed	2023 Matches/ wrestler before NCAAs	2013 Matches/ wrestler before NCAA's	% +/- from 2013 to 2023
1	25.2	31.2	-19%
2	27.7	27.1	-16%
3	25.8	27.2	-15%
4	32.3	30.0	+3%
5	27.7	28.9	-7%
6	30.2	30.5	+12%
7	28.6	30.3	+3%
8	30.8	28.2	+2%
9	29.3	31.6	-13%
10	27.8	29.6	-11%
11	29.8	31.9	-5%
12	30.5	32.6	-1%

Is there any correlation between seed and number of matches before the NCAAs in 2013? 2023?

There is a moderate negative correlation between seed and ranked number of matches. In layperson's words, the higher the seed (top 12) the less matches they wrestle before the NCAAs.

Episode
29-

Seed	2023 Rank in # matches before NCAA's	2013 Rank in # of matches before NCAA's
1	12	4
2	9	12
3	11	11
4	1	7
5	9	9
6	4	5
7	7	6
8	2	10
9	6	3
10	8	8
11	5	2
12	3	1
Correlation between seed and ranked order of average matches	-0.53	-0.56

Is there a trend in 2023 with the seed and the number of matches they have before the NCAAs?

The is a moderate positive correlation (+0.52) between the seed and number of matches before the 2023 NCAAs.

Episode
29-15

Seed	2023 average matches before NCAAs	Seed	2023 average matches before NCAAs
1	25.2	17	31.1
2	27.7	18	32.8
3	25.8	19	30.3
4	32.3	20	31.4
5	27.7	21	29.9
6	30.2	22	26.9
7	28.6	23	27.7
8	30.8	24	30.1
9	29.3	25	33.7
10	27.8	26	31.4
11	29.8	27	31.3
12	30.5	28	30.9
13	31.6	29	32.6
14	27.3	30	27.1
15	29.9	31	32.3
16	29.8	32	33.5
Correlation	+0.52	33	32.8

How do the number of matches for seeded wrestlers (1-12) compare with unseeded/seeded below 12 compare from 2013 & 2023?

The number of average matches for Seeded (1-12) wrestlers before the NCAAs is **down 3.7%**.
Unseeded/below 12 is **down 1.7%**.

Episode
29-16

Seeds	2023 Matches/ wrestler before NCAA's	2013 Matches/ wrestler before NCAA's	Percent Change from 2013 to 2023
1 to 33	30.00	30.76	-2.5%
1 to 12	28.81	29.93	-3.7%
13 to 33	30.69	31.23	-1.7%

- We are Penn State was the team champion in 2013 & 2023.
- Where does PSU stand in the number of matches, they wrestled in those years compared to other schools?

How does We Are Penn State compare with all qualifiers in the 2013 & 2023 in the average number of matches before the NCAAs?

In 2023 PSU wrestled **16.67%** less than the average qualifier. In 2013 it was **8.33%** below.

Episode
29-18

Year	All qualifiers average #matches before NCAAs	PSU average #matches before NCAAs	% PSU matches below NCAA qualifiers
2023	30.00	25.00	-16.67%
2013	30.76	28.20	-8.33%

How does the 2013 team champ, PSU perform compared to their seeds in the NCAA's?

We are Penn State performs close to their seeds in 2013.

Episode
29-19

Weight 2013 NCAA's	PSU wrestler # matches before 2103 NCAA's	+/- # of matches of that seed w/o PSU	Seed at 2103 NCAA's	Place at 2013 NCAA's or W-L	PSU better (+)/ worse (-) than seed
125	27	-3.3	4	2	+2
133	24	-9.6	12	Blood round	0
141	32	+0.8	US	1-2	0
149	30	-2.1	11	1-2	-6
157	30	+2.0	8	Blood round	-1
165	27	+0.4	2	2	0
174	29	+2.4	2	2	0
184	28	-3.6	1	1	0
197	27	+0.4	2	1	+1
285	28	-3.2	US	0-2	0

How does team champ PSU perform compared to their seeds in the 2023 NCAA's?

We are Penn State over performs based on the seeds in 2023.

Episode
29-20

Weight	PSU wrestler # matches before 2023 NCAA's	+/- # of matches of that seed w/o PSU	Seed at 2023 NCAA's	Place at NCAA's or W-L record	PSU better (+)/ worse (-) than seed
125					
133	21	-4.9	1	2	-1
141	29	-1.3	6	3	+3
149	31	+0.6	12	3	+9
157	26	-1.9	2	2	0
165	24	-8.4	13	0-2	-12
174	24	-1.9	1	1	0
184	18	-9.3	3	2	+1
197	30	+0.8	9	7	+2
285	22	-5.3	3	2	+1

If you control for PSU, does PSU wrestle more or less matches than their comparable seeds in 2013?

In 2013, PSU wrestlers had **5.3%** fewer bouts than the same seeded wrestlers when controlling for PSU.

Episode
29-21

PSU Seeds at NCAA's 2013	Average # Matches w/o PSU before NCAA's 2013	Average # matches w/PSU before NCAA's 2013	PSU # of matches before NCAA's 2013	# PSU wrestlers at that seed NCAA's 2013
1	31.6	31.2	28.0	1
2	26.6	27.1	27.7	3
4	30.3	30.0	27.0	1
8	28.0	28.2	30.0	1
11	32.1	31.9	30.0	1
12	33.6	32.6	24.0	1
Unseeded	31.2	31.2	30.0	2
Weighted mean	29.78	28.73	28.20	10
PSU	# matches	below	Same seed	-5.30%

If you control for PSU, does PSU wrestle more or less matches than their comparable seeds in 2023?

In 2023, PSU wrestlers had **12.3%** fewer bouts than the same seeded wrestlers when controlling for PSU.

Episode
29-22

PSU Seeds 2023 NCAA's	Average # matches w/o PSU before 2023 NCAA's	Average # matches w/PSU before 2023 NCAA's	Average # matches PSU before 2023 NCAA's	# PSU wrestlers at this seed 2023 NCAA's
1	25.87	25.2	22.5	2
2	27.89	27.7	26.0	1
3	27.25	25.8	20.0	2
6	30.33	30.2	29.0	1
9	29.22	29.3	30.0	1
12	30.44	30.5	31.0	1
13	32.44	31.6	24.0	1
Weighted mean	28.51	27.92	25.00	9
PSU	# matches	Below	Same seed	-12.30%

- As a coach, Cael Sanderson team wrestles less matches than the average team.
- When Cael was winning his 4 NCAA titles, did he wrestle less matches than the other NCAA champions?

When Cael Sanderson was in college how did his number of matches compare to other NCAA champions?

Cael Sanderson wrestled 9.8% more matches than the other NCAA champions during his 4-year reign.

Episode
29-24

Year	Cael Sanderson # of Matches	Average # of matches for the other 9 NCAA Champions	% Cael above other 9 Champs
1998-99	39	37.6	+3.7%
1999-00	40	33.8	+18.3%
2000-01	40	35.4	+13.0%
2001-02	40	38.0	+5.3%
Total	39.75	36.2	+9.8%

- PSU biggest competition for the team title is usually Iowa.
- Does Iowa wrestle more or less matches than PSU?
How does Iowa compare with other schools?

Does Iowa also seem to wrestle less bouts per wrestler like PSU?

Since 2017, Iowa has a lower number of matches per wrestler before the start of the NCAA's (Iowa 24.67 - PSU 24.85).

Episode
29-26

Year	PSU	Iowa
2017	27.56	32.56
2018	31.33	27.67
2019	29.56	28.00
2021	14.11	13.10
2022	21.56	23.70
2023	25.00	24.40
Arithmetic Mean	24.85	24.67

- Do we know the trends for the number of matches the NCAA champions wrestled in a season from the past 50 years?

Can MatStats provide the viewers with a history of how many matches the NCAA champions have wrestled over the years.

5-year intervals for the average number of matches the champions had before the NCAAs since 1977.

Episode
29-28

Years	Champions average number of matches before the NCAAs
1977-81	35.5
1982-86	37.5
1987-91	37.8
1992-96	34.5
1997-01	34.7
2002-06	34.9
2007-11	33.2
2012-16	33.6
2017-23 (no 2020 or 2021)	26.4

When did the decrease in the number of matches the champions wrestle before the NCAAs start?

The decrease in the number of matches the NCAA champions wrestle before the tourney started in 2017. The decreased was magnified after Covid.

Episode
29-29

Years	Champions average bouts before NCAAs
2012-16	33.6
2017-19	28.7
2021	15.2
2022	21.8
2023	24.2

2024 will show us if the decrease from Covid has subsided.

Can MatStats give the viewers some specific examples of the recent decrease in the number of bouts an NCAA champion has wrestled in a season.

Some specific examples of the number of matches an NCAA Champion wrestled in a season that are examples of the decrease in number matches.

Episode
29-30

- In 2015 Kyle Snyder wrestled 34 bouts (30-4) and was NCAA runner up.
- The following year, 2016, Snyder wrestled 11 bouts (11-0) on his way to an NCAA title and Olympic Gold Medal.
- In 2019, only Spencer Lee had less than 29 matches. Lee had 26 matches (23-3) and an NCAA title.
- From 2021 to 2023 only Mason Parris had more than 28 bouts. Parris was 33-0 in 2023 when he won the NCAAs.

Can MatStats give the viewers a chart going back in time for the number of matches the NCAA champions had during the season?

The number of matches for the champs increased from the 60's to the 80's. It has recently started to decrease.

Episode
29-31

NCAA Champions, MatStats has final records for	Year	Average number of matches for the NCAA Champs
10	1970	22.70
9	1972	27.00
7	1973	31.71
10	1983	35.00
10	1993	32.60
10	2003	32.50
10	2013	32.90
10	2023	24.20

From 1976 to 2023, MatStats has the final W-L records for all the champs.

In 2022 the average number of matches was 21.8. That is the lowest number not counting 2021 since 1965.

In 1985 the average number of matches for the champs was 44.6. That is the highest ever.

Remember correlation does not prove causation.

Episode
29-32

- Just because there is a moderate positive correlation (+0.52) between seed and number of matches, does not mean if you wrestle less matches, you will be seeded higher.
- Correlation coefficients go from +1 to -1.
- In 2023, the 32nd seed has 33% more bouts than the 1st seed before the NCAAs.
- Wrestlers that have consolation bouts tend to have more bouts than the champions. We showed this in episode # 14 (10/19/22), *“If Not Now, When? If not you, who? Part II”*.
- The next slide repeats the slide from Episode #14 to help the viewers.

What is the average number of bouts by place winner for the tournament?

The average number of bouts by place from 2017-2022.

Episode
29-33

Place	Average Number of Bouts
1	5.00
2	5.00
3	6.36
4	6.56
5	6.86
6	6.88
7	6.28
8	6.50
NPW (25 Wrestlers)	3.14

- So, we now know that the number of matches in a season has decreased in men's D1 wrestling, how does wrestling compare with other sports?
- How does men's D1 Wrestling compare with men's Basketball, Football, and Baseball?

How does wrestling compare with other sports in number of matches/games the last 50 years?

Wrestling has seen a sharp decrease (-25%) in the number of contests for the champions over the last 50 years, while Football (+25%) & Basketball (+27%) have seen large increase, and Baseball (-4%) has held steady.

Episode
29-35

Sport	1973&74 Champs average contests	2017-19 Champs average contests	2022&23 Champs average contests	+/- % 73&74 to 2017-19	+/- % 73&74 to 2022&23
Wrestling	30.67	28.70	23.00	-6%	-25%
Basketball	31.00	39.33	39.50	+27%	+27%
Football	12.00	14.67	15.00	+22%	+25%
Baseball	66.00	70.00	63.50	+6%	-4%

Note - Starting in 2024, football will be up 33% and could be as much as 42% up with the CFP expansion.

NCAA Men’s Basketball Champs 50 years ago, and today.

Episode
29-36

Year	NCAA Basketball Men’s Champion	Record	Games
1973	UCLA	30-0	30
1974	NCSU	31-1	32
2022	Kansas	34-6	40
2023	UConn	31-8	39
Increase	In Number of games from	73&74 to 22&23	27%

Besides the increase in the number of games in basketball the past 50 years, what else has added to the difficulties of the scheduling?

In addition to the increase in the number of basketball games, the travel has become a long windy road.

Episode
29-37

- In 1973 & 74, UCLA and NCSU only had to win 4 games to win the NCAA tourney.
- In 1973, the Pac 8 did not have a conference tourney.
- In 1973 & 74, UCLA and NCSU hosted on campus the first two rounds of the NCAAs.
- In 1974, NCSU only took 6 trips out of NC.
- In 1973, the Pac 8 teams would play two conference games in the same weekend on the road in the same state to reduce travel.
- In 1974, NCSU total miles traveled was 7,278. The Vols traveled 8,998 miles this year for a tourney in Oahu.
- Regionals were really regional. In the 12 years from 1964 to 1975, UCLA won 10 titles. They played 10 different schools in the finals. All 10 were from east of the Mississippi River.

Can MatStats give the viewers their Kev's Notes to review what we just learned on this show?

Episode 29 Kev's Notes #1

Episode
29-38

- 1) The average number of matches for NCAA qualifiers before the NCAAs is down 2.5% from 2013 to 2023. The higher seeds see more of a decrease.
- 2) Comparing 2013 and 2023, the top 12 seeds at the Men's D1 NCAA's have wrestled 3.7% less matches and the unseeded or 13-33 seeds have dropped 1.7%
- 3) PSU wrestled 16.67% less matches than the average qualifier in 2023 and 8.33% less than the average qualifier in 2013. When controlling for the seed, it is -12.3% and 5.3% respectively.
- 4) PSU coach, Cael Sanderson averaged 9.8% more matches than the other 9 NCAA champions in his 4 title runs.
- 5) From 2017 to 2023, Iowa qualifiers for the NCAAs have wrestled slightly fewer matches before the NCAA Championships than We are Penn State (24.67 vs 24.85).

Can MatStats give the viewers their Kev's Notes to review what we just learned on this show?

Episode 29 Kev's Notes #2

Episode
29-39

- 6) Looking back 50 years, in 5-year intervals, the number of matches the NCAA D1 champions wrestled peaked in the late 80's early 90's and has been decreasing ever since.
- 7) The max for NCAA champs matches was in 1985 (44.6), the min since 1965 was 2022 (21.8).
- 8) While NCAA champion wrestlers have seen 25% less matches since the 70's, the money sports (Football & Basketball) have increased their number of games by about 25%.
- 9) In 1973 UCLA won the NCAA D1 Men's Basketball title playing 30 games, in 2023 UConn won while playing 39 games.
- 10) Making Basketball even more difficult is how many more miles the teams travel in 2023 compared to the 1970's.

What is the topic next month (Wednesday 3/15/24 3PM EST)?

Preview to the 2024 NCAA D1 Men's Championships

**Episode
29-40**

- **Tune In Next Month**
 - **Same Mat Time**
 - **Same Mat Channel**
 - **Next months show is a preview to the 2024 NCAA Men's D1 Championships.**
 - **The show is a podcast/video teaser of Jason Bryant's comprehensive "The Guide - 2024 NCAA Division 1 Men's Wrestling Championship Digital Fan Guide."**
 - **Pre-order wrestlingpreviewguide.com**
- Save \$10 on it by using discount code "matstats" at checkout**