

MatStats - The Moneyball of Wrestling

Episode # 43

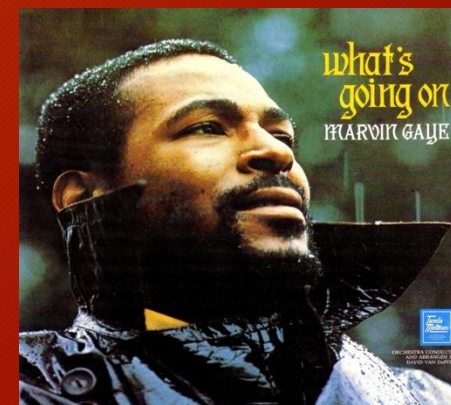
Wednesday April 23, 2025

3PM EST

What's Going On?

Episode
43-1

The MatStats crew looks where we have been and where we are as a table setter for a future show on where we are going and how to be prepared. We analyze historical statistics with attendance at the NCAA Championships, participation numbers at National tournaments, NCAA Men's number of teams and participants.



In This Episode

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Episode 43 - 4/ 16/25 - What's Going On?

| Topic | Slide # | | Topic | Slide # |
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| Why we do this | 3 | | Participation at Nationals | 39 |
| Number of 4-year colleges | 6 | | Number of NCAA Men's Teams | 48 |
| Show Topic | 7 | | Number of NCAA Men's Participants | 51 |
| Recap National Tourneys | 9 | | Summary | |
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| Attendance | 32 | | Next Show | |

The MatStats Show is Here to Create a Library of Statistical Analysis for the NWCA.

Episode
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- Mike Moyer, the Executive Director of the NWCA, approached the MatStats gang to create a library of statistical analysis for the NWCA.
- This is an effort to help grow the sport and educate the wrestlers, coaches, and fans.
- When MatStats was created in 2020 (book) and 2021 (monthly show), there was a serious need for statistical analysis.

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
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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.

How is MatStats different than most shows we see on TV/Internet in today's world?

Episode
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MatStats is based on numbers, stats, and analyzation. It starts with facts not opinions.

- 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.

How many 4-year collegiate teams are there in the 3 wrestling organizations?

As of 4/11/25, there are projected to be 725 wrestling teams at 4-year colleges in 2025-26.

**Episode
43-6**

| Category | Men | Women | Total |
|--------------|-----|-------|-------|
| NCAA | 286 | 113 | 399 |
| NAIA | 74 | 46 | 120 |
| NCWA | 125 | 81 | 206 |
| Total 4-Year | 485 | 240 | 725 |

Note - The NCWA number here does not include 9 trade/juco teams nor the 4 transitioning to the NCAA. It does include the 5 Puerto Rico schools. If we count Canada, we should count PR.

Episode #43 - Show topic.

Episode
43-7

- Can we have a quick preview on the new topic for this episode?

What is the topic for Episode #43?

Episode #43 is a statistical review on where collegiate wrestling was, where it is, & where we might be headed.

Episode
43-8

- We will do a quick review of the 8 National Collegiate wrestling Championships for 4-year colleges.
- Then we will analyze 4 categories to statistically see where we were and where we are.
 - 1) Attendance at the Men's NCAA Championships.
 - 2) The number of participants at the National championships.
 - 3) The number of Men's NCAA Wrestling teams.
 - 4) The number of participants in Men's NCAA Wrestling.

Recap of NCAA Men's D1 & NCWWC Championships.

Episode
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- Can we get a quick summary of the NCAA Men's D1 Championships and the NCWWC Women's Championships (the de facto NCAA)?

Thank You Jason Bryant & Bryan Hazard

Episode
43-10

- Gorms' first feedback from the Men's NCAA D1 Championships is that Jason Bryant & Bryan Hazard are as much a part of my life with the tourney as John Ward & Bill Anderson were a part of my life following Vol football.
- Jason & Bryan are the voice of the sport. Thanks for your hard work and the great job that you do.



How many team points did PSU have in 2025?

Penn State sets the team point record (177).

Episode
43-11

- We Are Penn State set the team points record in 2025 with 177 team points.
- MatStats discussed in past shows and more in this show about the change in placement points and the drastic increase in majors and techs. A lot of this was due to the increase in takedown points.
- Anyway you slice it PSU set the point record.
- Ford Frick put an asterisk on Maris' 61* in 1961. In 1991 baseball removed this asterisk.
- It was horrible there was ever an asterisk on 61.

How many AAs did PSU have?

PSU placed all 10 wrestlers in the top 6!!

**Episode
43-12**

| Place | PSU # of placers |
|-------|------------------|
| 1 | 2 |
| 2 | 1 |
| 3 | 5 |
| 4 | 0 |
| 5 | 1 |
| 6 | 1 |

The 2025 PSU team became the 2nd school with 10 AAs (Minnesota 2001).

What was PSU's individual records in 2025? Overall winning percentage?

PSU had a **0.817** winning percentage!!

Episode
43-13

| Weight | Wins | Losses | Place |
|--------------------|------|--------|--------------|
| 125 | 6 | 1 | 3 |
| 133 | 5 | 2 | 5 |
| 141 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| 149 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| 157 | 6 | 1 | 3 |
| 165 | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| 174 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| 184 | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| 197 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| 285 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| Total | 49 | 11 | 0.817 |
| Total w/o defaults | 49 | 9 | 0.844 |

How good was PSU in 2025?

We Are Penn State!! WOW!!

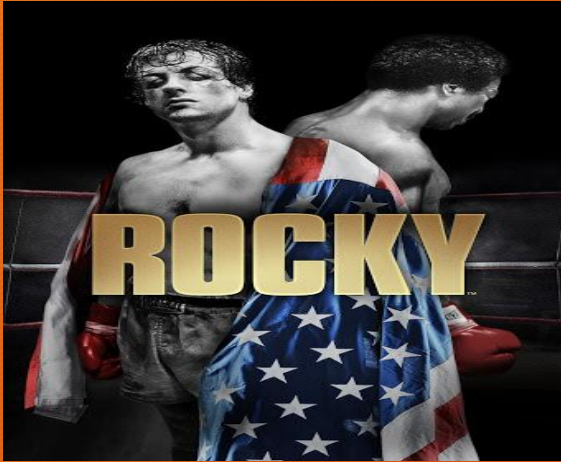
Episode
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- PSU's lowest placement was 6th.
- Kerkvliet defaulted to 6th after losing in the semis.
- Kerkvliet is a 5X All American and defending national champion.
- Josh Barr placed 2nd and had the fewest wins 4 (except Kerkvliet) of all the PSU wrestlers.

What was the most memorable bout in 2025?

It's only fitting there was a Rocky type ending in Philly.

Episode
43-15



Gorms has been to 40 NCAA D1 Men's championships.

I have never seen a more exciting finish to the tourney.

It seems like a Hollywood script.



Can the viewers get a link to the famous Rocky training scenes?

Famous training scene from Rocky

Episode
43-16

- Here is a link for all Rocky fans.
- Scenes from the Philly that Gorms grew up in the 70's.
- <https://youtu.be/keqYyIMrz-k>

Any reason to think the NCAA Men's D1 Championships were a major media event?

The Commander-in-Chief

Episode
43-17



For the first time in history the sitting President attends the NCAA Wrestling tournament.

Who won the team title at the NCWWC in 2025?

Iowa Women win the NCWWC title.

Episode
43-18

- Iowa won the final NCWWC team title.
- In 2025-26 it will be an official NCAA team championship.



Quick Recap of NCAA Men's D2 & D3 and the NAIA Men & Women's Championships.

Episode
43-19

- Let's have a quick recap of NCAA Men's D2 & D3 Championships.
- Also, a summary of the NAIA Men's & Women's Championships.

Nebraska-Kearney (D2) and Wartburg & Johnson & Wales (D3) win team titles.

Episode
43-20

- Nebraska-Kearney won its 5th NCAA Men's D2 title easily outdistancing 2nd place Augustana (SD) 115 to 63.
- Johnson & Wales tied Wartburg for the Men's D3 title. Ithaca in 1994 was the last school other than Augsburg or Wartburg to win the D3 title.

Grand View win Men's NAIA & Life wins the NAIA Women's title.

Episode
43-21

- Grand View won the Men's NAIA title.
- Grand View won its 13th title in 14 seasons Life won in 2021
- Grand View won 6 individual titles, tying the record set in 1981 by Central Oklahoma.
- Life won its first NAIA women's title.

Quick Recap of the NCWA Men's & Women's Championships

Episode
43-22

- Can we get a quick recap of the NCWA Championships?

What teams won the NCWA titles?

Menlo won the Men's D1, Life won the Men's D2, and Tarleton State won the Women's title.

**Episode
43-23**

- **Menlo won the NCWA Men's D1 team title.**
- **Life won the NCWA Men's D2 title.**
- **Tarleton State won the women's NCWA title.**

The NCWA had 751 wrestlers in 2025, making it the largest collegiate national tournament ever.

Episode
43-24

- Menlo transitioning to NCAA D2, so they had to wrestle in the NCWA.
- Menlo had 2 men's teams in the 2025 NCWA.
- Life has NAIA & NCWA men's teams.
- As MatStats reported in a previous Episode, the NCWA had 72 Men's teams that had previously dropped as NCAA or NAIA programs.
- The NCWA helps the growth in our beloved sport.

Gorms was very impressed with the NCWA National Championships.

Episode
43-25

- Kevin Hazard was the first one that got Gorms interested in the NCWA.
- Gorms attended his first NCWA National Tournament in 2025 in Shreveport.
- Jim Guinta and his staff do an amazing job. Thanks for the hospitality.
- The attendance was small, but very comparable to the 1977 Men's NCAA Championships.
- The access to matside was stricter than it was at the NCAA Championships in 1981 at least based on Gorms memory. Memory does play tricks with us.

Glory Days

Episode
43-26

- In Collegiate wrestling, March is the time that our memories are etched in our minds. Just like we remember October in Baseball.
- Memories are an important part, but let's seem some statistical analysis to see when are the true Glory Days.

When were they Glory Days?

Glory Days are different for different perspectives.

Episode
43-27

- It is very difficult to pinpoint what is the Glory days for different sports.
- Most people base this on their own thoughts and perceived memories.
- MatStats is here to try and put some statistical analysis to help the viewers look differently at their perceived memories.

Willie, Mickey, & The Duke

Episode
43-28

- When Gorms did his stats grad thesis on MLB, he did do a lot of research on the supposed glory days of the 1950's.
- Perhaps it was a function of when Gorms was born.
- The famous song "Talkin' Baseball" (Willie, Mickey, & The Duke) added to that perception. It starts with he Whiz Kids had won it. Gorms noticed a lot of references to the Whiz Kids around the NCAA wrestling arena.
- But was the 50's really the Glory Days?

The 4 stats we will be analyzing to see where we were and where we are.

Episode
43-29

- 1) Attendance at NCAA Men's D1 Championships.
- 2) The number of participants at the National Championships.
- 3) The number of NCAA Men's Wrestling teams.
- 4) The number of participants in NCAA wrestling seasons.

Memories can fade and change, numbers do not.

Episode
43-30

- “Big time players make big plays in big time games.”
-Santana Moss
- Great quote by Santana Moss, but no use in statistical analysis.
- Memories can fade and change, and a bad statistician uses bad analysis methods. Both have downsides.

How will MatStats proceed in this episode?

MatStats uses stats and their analysis to help determine where we were and where we are now.

**Episode
43-31**

- Anecdotal stories and memories help make sports a great part of life.
- MatStats uses statistical analysis to help determine the health of our sport by seeing where we were and where are today.
- We will start with attendance at the NCAA Men's Championships.

Attendance

Episode
43-32

- Gorms, let's hear about some stats on the attendance at the Men's NCAA D1 Championships through the years.
- And some examples on how our mind plays tricks with us.

What was a huge reason for 4 franchises increasing their attendance in the 1950's?

Go West MLB, Go West!

Episode
43-33

| Year | Team | Attendance | Year | Team | Attendance | Delta % |
|-------|------------------|------------|-------|------------------|------------|---------|
| 1952 | Boston Braves | 281,278 | 1953 | Milwaukee Braves | 1,826,397 | 549% |
| 1954 | Philly A's | 304,666 | 1955 | KC A's | 1,393,054 | 357% |
| 1957 | Brooklyn Dodgers | 1,028,258 | 1958 | LA Dodgers | 1,845,556 | 79% |
| 1957 | NY Giants | 653,923 | 1958 | SF Giants | 1,272,625 | 95% |
| Total | | 2,268,125 | Total | | 6,337,632 | 179% |

Four MLB owners defied conventional wisdom and moved west and saw great results in attendance.

What is the long-term result in MLB attendance from 1950 to 2024?

Total Attendance in MLB has increased from 17M in 1950 to 71M in 2024!

Episode
43-34

| Year | MLB Total Attendance | Average Attendance Per Game |
|---------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1950 | 17,462,977 | 14,174 |
| 2024 | 71,348,366 | 26,927 |
| % Delta | +308% | +90% |

The annual mean for MLB attendance in the 1950's was 16,507,549.

What was the attendance at NCAAs in the late 70's & early 80's?

The arithmetic mean for NCAA attendance from 1976 to 1981 was 38K or 6.4K/session.

Episode
43-35

| Year | Location | Total Attendance | Average Attendance |
|------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1976 | Tucson, AZ | 17,297 | 2,882 |
| 1978 | College Park, MD | 43,759 | 7,293 |
| 1979 | Ames, IA | 62,809 | 10,468 |
| 1980 | Corvallis, OR | 27,169 | 4,528 |
| 1981 | Princeton, NJ | 41,692 | 6,949 |
| | 5 Year Mean | 38,545 | 6,424 |

Note -
No
Attendance
For 1977
Was
Found.

What was the attendance in Philly for the 2025 NCAA Men's D1 Championships?

**The total attendance in Philly was 109K
and over 18K each session.**

**Episode
43-36**

| 2025 Session | Attendance |
|--------------|------------|
| I | 18,085 |
| II | 18,088 |
| III | 18,091 |
| IV | 18,099 |
| V | 18,806 |
| VI | 18,826 |
| Total | 109,995 |

Yes, Dr. Powell most of these are the same folks every session.

Attendance in 2025 blows away the late 70's and early 80's.

Episode
43-37

- There were more fans on Thursday Session I (18,085) in 2025 than there were the entire tourney in 1976 (17,297).
- The arithmetic mean for the 5 years from 1976 to 1981 was 38,545. In Philly at the first 2 sessions, we had 36,173.
- In the 4 years prior to CoVid (2016-2019) the average attendance at the NCAA Men's D1 Championships was 111,199.
- It is hard to imagine the late 70's and early 80's were the glory days based on attendance.

TV & Streaming

Episode
43-38

- ESPN and having the NCAA D1 Championships on TV is relatively new.
- In 2002, Cael Sanderson was going for his 4th title and an undefeated career. TV moved the Finals to 3:30PM.
- Now we have all 6 sessions on ESPN. TV has not adversely affected attendance at NCAA Men's D1 Championships.
- We can also stream championships.
- The thought of this last century would have been looked at as a crazy wish.

How many participants historically are in the National Collegiate Championships.

Episode
43-39

- March is the best month in collegiate wrestling.
 - Can we see a statistical analysis of the participants at the National Collegiate Wrestling Tournaments in March?

How many wrestlers participated in the 8 national collegiate tournaments in 2025?

9 different schools won team titles.

**Episode
43-40**

| Division | Men Wrestlers | Women Wrestlers | Total Wrestlers | Men Champ | Women Champ |
|----------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|-------------|
| NCAA D1 | 330 | 320 | 650 | PSU | Iowa |
| NCAA D2 | 180 | N/A | 180 | Nebraska -Kearney Wartburg & Johnson & Wales (tie) | |
| NCAA D3 | 210 | N/A | 210 | | |
| NAIA | 280 | 210 | 490 | Grand View | Life |
| NCWA | 555 | 196 | 751 | D1 - Menlo (transitional) D2 - Life (NCWA) | Tarleton |
| Total | 1555 | 726 | 2281 | | |

Only 14.5% of all participants at the Nationals are NCAA Men's D1 athletes.

What was the most impressive statistic from the 8 tourneys that show the health of wrestling?

2,281 participants at wrestling nationals.

Episode
43-41

- The biggest statistic showing the health of our sport from the 3 wrestling organizations that sponsored national championships is there were 2,281 wrestlers participating.
- The first NCAA D1 Championships Gorms went to were in College Park, MD in 1978.
- There were 347 participants in 1978. The thought of women's wrestling was non-existent and there was not much talk of D2, D3, & NAIA men's championships. There was no NCWA at that time.
- Are we in the Camelot days of collegiate wrestling?

How do the number of participants in March's Mat Madness compare from 1980 to 2025?

From 1980 to 2025 we have seen an increase of **+1,108** participants **(+95.4%)** and an increase from 4 national championships to 8.

Episode
43-42

| Division | 1980 | 2025 | Delta # | Delta % |
|----------------------|------|------|--------------|----------------|
| NCAA & NAIA Men | 1173 | 1000 | -173 | -14.70% |
| NCAA & NAIA Women | 0 | 530 | +530 | N/A |
| NCWA Men & Women | 0 | 751 | +751 | N/A |
| Total | 1173 | 2281 | +1108 | +94.50% |

What changes have we seen in the number of participants in the Men's NCAA & NAIA Championships?

We have seen a decrease of **-173 (-14.7%)** participants from 1980 to 2025 in the NCAA & NAIA Men's Championships.

Episode
43-43

| Division | 1980 Participants | 2025 Participants | Delta Participants | Delta Percentage |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| NCAA D1 Men | 353 | 330 | -23 | -6.50% |
| NCAA D2 Men | 196 | 180 | -16 | -8.20% |
| NCAA D3 Men | 296 | 210 | -86 | -29.10% |
| NAIA Men | 328 | 280 | -48 | -14.60% |
| Total Men | 1173 | 1000 | -173 | -14.70% |

We have seen fewer participants in the Men's NCAA D1 Championships, but what about the number of bouts?

Despite their being -23 fewer wrestlers at the Men's NCAA D1 Championships, we saw +138 (+27.5%) more bouts.

Episode
43-44

| Year NCAA D1 Tourney | Championship Matches | Consolation Matches | Total Matches |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| 1980 | 343 | 159 | 502 |
| 2025 | 320 | 320 | 640 |
| Delta # | -23 | +161 | +138 |
| Delta % | -6.7% | +101.3% | +27.5% |

Which do you prefer, more wrestlers or more bouts?

More wrestlers at the Championships or More Matches?

Episode
43-45

- On one hand there are fewer wrestlers in the Men's Championships in 2025 than in the old days.
- But the wrestle back rules have changed, so we now see more matches.
- Which do you prefer when watching the Championships, more wrestlers or more matches?
- Let's look at an extreme example. If we had 64 wrestlers per weight and NO wrestle backs, there would be 630 bouts (currently we have 640).

Is the tradeoff of less NCAA & NAIA men at the championships trumped by the overall increases?

We have more tourneys and more wrestlers, but fewer male competitors in the NCAA & NAIA.

Episode
43-46

- We have a much larger tent in 2025 than we had in 1980.
- However, the part of the tent with the Men's NCAA & NAIA Championships are not quite as crowded.
- In a restaurant owner's terms, the place is more crowded, but the bar area is not as crowded.
- This translates to more success for the restaurant and more satisfied customers.

Where We Came From, Where We Are.

Episode
43-47

- Gorms, we are MatStats.
- Can you give us some statistical analysis of where we once were, and we are now in terms of NCAA Men?

How do the number of NCAA teams in 2023-24 compare with the number of NCAA teams in 1981-82?

The NCAA has seen a decrease in **-21%** of the number of men's teams from 1981-82 to the announced number of teams as of 4/11/25.

Episode
43-48

| NCAA Men | 1981-82 Teams | 2023-24 Teams | Announced 2025 | Percentage Delta |
|----------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| D1 | 146 | 78 | 79 | -46% |
| D2 | 68 | 73 | 74 | +9% |
| D3 | 149 | 124 | 133 | -11% |
| Total | 363 | 275 | 286 | -21% |

How does the number of teams in NCAA Men's compare from 2009-10 to the announce number in 2025?

We have seen an increase of **+32%** in the number of NCAA Men's teams from 2009-10 to the announced number of teams in 2025.

Episode
43-49

| NCAA | 2009-10 Teams | 2023-24 Teams | Announced 2025 | Percent Delta |
|-------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| D1 | 82 | 78 | 79 | -4% |
| D2 | 47 | 72 | 74 | +57% |
| D3 | 88 | 124 | 133 | +51% |
| Total | 217 | 275 | 286 | +32% |

It would be very myopic to just focus on the number of Men's NCAA teams to determine the Glory Days.

Episode
43-50

- There is no question that we have seen a decrease (-21% or 77 teams) in the number of NCAA Men's teams from 1981-82 to 2023-24.
- We have also seen an increase from 2009-10 to 2025 announced teams (+32% or 69 teams).
- If we just use the number of NCAA Men's teams, this is not a good time, however, we have seen the growth of women's wrestling and other championships and organizations.

What has been the change in NCAA participation numbers in wrestling from 1981-82 to 2023-24?

The NCAA Men have seen an **+11%** increase in the number of participants from 1981-82 to 2023-24.

Episode
43-51

| NCAA Men | 1981-82 Participants | 2023-24 Participants | Percentage Delta |
|----------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| D1 | 3,659 | 2,713 | -26% |
| D2 | 1,543 | 2,431 | +58% |
| D3 | 2,712 | 3,657 | +35% |
| Total | 7,914 | 8,801 | +11% |

The NCAA started keeping annual participation records in 1981-82.
The most participants ever in the NCAA was in 2024 with 8,801.

How does the wrestling participation numbers compare to the NCAA overall participation numbers?

From 1981-82 to 2023-24, the overall NCAA Men's participation in all sports numbers grew at **+85%**, while the wrestling growth was only **+11%**.

Episode
43-52

| Division All Sports | 1981-82 Participants | 2023-24 Participants | Delta Participants | Delta Percentage |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| NCAA D1 Men | 73,742 | 105,967 | +32,225 | +44% |
| NCAA D2 Men | 35,548 | 81,101 | +45,553 | +128% |
| NCAA D3 Men | 57,765 | 121,785 | +64,020 | +111% |
| Total Men | 167,055 | 308,853 | +141,798 | +85% |
| NCAA Women | 64,390 | 230,077 | +165,687 | +257% |
| NCAA Total | 231,445 | 538,930 | +307,485 | +133% |

Note - NCAA men's Participation numbers increased by +141,798 from 1982 to 2024.

Can we see participation numbers from 2009-10 to 2023-24?

Men's wrestling has seen a **+37.6%** participation growth from 2009-10 to 2023-24.

Episode
43-53

| NCAA | 2009-10 Participants Men's Wrestling | 2023-24 Participants Men's Wrestling | Percentage Delta |
|---------|---|---|---------------------|
| NCAA D1 | 2,567 | 2,713 | +5.70% |
| NCAA D2 | 1,454 | 2,431 | +67.20% |
| NCAA D3 | 2,376 | 3,657 | +53.90% |
| Total | 6,397 | 8,801 | +37.60% |

How does men's wrestling compare to all men's championships sports growth rate for the same time period?

Wrestling is growing faster **(+37.6%)** than all men's championships sports **(+25.6%)** from 2009-10 to 2023-24.

Episode
43-54

| Division | 2009-10 Participants All Champ Sports | 2023-24 Participants All Champ Sports | Delta % |
|-------------|---|---|--------------|
| NCAA D1 Men | 90,837 | 105,967 | 16.7% |
| NCAA D2 Men | 55,327 | 81,101 | 46.6% |
| NCAA D3 Men | 99,711 | 121,785 | 22.1% |
| Total Men | 245,875 | 308,853 | 25.6% |
| NCAA Women | 184,426 | 230,077 | 24.8% |
| NCAA Total | 430,301 | 538,930 | 25.2% |

Can MatStats provide a chart on the comparative growth rates so the viewers can see it better?

**Men's NCAA wrestling participation is growing
+46.8% faster than all men's NCAA sports from
2009-10 to 2023-24.**

**Episode
43-55**

| Division | 2010 to 2024 All NCAA Champ Sports Participants Growth | 2010 to 2024 Men's Wrestling Participants Growth | Percentage Delta |
|-------------|--|---|---------------------|
| NCAA D1 Men | +16.7% | +5.7% | -65.8% |
| NCAA D2 Men | +46.6% | +67.2% | +44.3% |
| NCAA D3 Men | +22.1% | +53.9% | +143.5% |
| Total Men | +25.6% | +37.6% | +46.8% |
| NCAA Women | +24.8% | | |
| NCAA Total | +25.2% | | |

How does the participation growth rate for wrestling look from 2014-15 to 2023-24?

Men's wrestling participation has grown
(+24.9%) from 2014-15 to 2023-24.

Episode
43-56

| NCAA | 2014-15 Participants Men's Wrestling | 2023-24 Participants Men's Wrestling | Percentage Delta |
|---------|---|---|---------------------|
| NCAA D1 | 2,520 | 2,713 | +7.70% |
| NCAA D2 | 1,912 | 2,431 | +27.10% |
| NCAA D3 | 2,617 | 3,657 | +39.70% |
| Total | 7049 | 8,801 | +24.90% |

How does all NCAA Men's participation growth rate look from 2014-15 to 2023-24?

Men's wrestling grew at **+24.9%**, much better than the overall men's growth rate of all sports **+13.1%**.

Episode
43-57

| Division | 2014-15 Participants All Champ Sports | 2023-24 Participants All Champ Sports | Delta Percentage |
|-------------|---|---|---------------------|
| NCAA D1 Men | 94,200 | 105,967 | +12.5% |
| NCAA D2 Men | 69,370 | 81,101 | +16.9% |
| NCAA D3 Men | 109,491 | 121,785 | +11.2% |
| Total Men | 273,061 | 308,853 | +13.1% |
| NCAA Women | 209,472 | 230,077 | +9.8% |
| NCAA Total | 482,533 | 538,930 | +11.7% |

Can MatStats provide a chart for the viewers to digest this better?

NCAA Men's wrestling is growing **+90% faster than all NCAA Men's sports from 2014-15 to 2023-24.**

**Episode
43-58**

| Division | 2015 to 2024 All NCAA Champ Sports Participation Growth | 2015 to 2024 Men's Wrestling Participation Growth | Percentage Delta |
|-------------|---|---|---------------------|
| NCAA D1 Men | +12.5% | +7.7% | -38.4% |
| NCAA D2 Men | +16.9% | +27.1% | +60.3% |
| NCAA D3 Men | +11.2% | +39.7% | +253.6% |
| Total Men | +13.1% | +24.9% | +90.0% |
| NCAA Women | +9.8% | | |
| NCAA Total | +11.7% | | |

What are the main reasons for this growth recently in Men's Wrestling?

The advent of Women's Wrestling and Mike Moyer (and the NWCA) are the two main reasons for our recent success.

Episode
43-59

- We can not continue as a species without women and men's wrestling would not be thriving without women's wrestling.
- Collegiate wrestling would also not be in this good shape right now without Mike Moyer and the NWCA.

Life University is one of many examples on the growth in our sport.

Episode
43-60

- Hats off to Life President (Robert Scott) & AD (Jayme Pendergast).
- Gorms met Jayme at an NWCA convention.
- Life men came in 2nd in the NAIA. Their NCWA men's team won NCWA D2 title. They are different rosters. Life women won the NAIA title.
- Life has won 24 national titles in their 20 intercollegiate sports with 77 individual national champions.
- Life has 875 undergraduate students.
- As of 2022, Life had an endowment of \$3.48 Million.

That school in Williamsburg, VA is an example of what not to do.

Episode
43-61

- William & Mary was established in 1693, Life in 1974. W&M has about 8.5X the number of undergrads as Life.
- W&M has 4 US Presidents.
- W&M has oldest law school in USA and a prestigious Business School.
- Final Score - Number of wrestling teams at 2025 Nationals - Life 3 W&M 0.
- Gorms wonders if an MBA grad from W&M could do a case study on this and if anyone at W&M would pay attention to it.
- W&M has a \$1.5 Billion endowment they can afford to hire a consultant for this case study.

We are in the Glory Days of collegiate wrestling.

Episode
43-62

- In the 70's & 80's we had more NCAA Men's teams and more participants at the NCAA Men's D1 Championships.
- In 2024 we had more NCAA male wrestlers than in the past "Glory Days" and more matches at the D1 Championships.
- Today we have women and the NCWA and we have a huge demand for tickets to the D1 NCAA Championships.
- Wrestling is much more mainstream than it was 40-50 years ago.
- It might be next to impossible to quantify the Glory Days, but Gorms has been involved in this sport for more than 50 years and thinks we are currently in the Glory Days.

Where are we heading?

Episode
43-63

- Even that wrestling and many other college sports are heading in a great direction, it would be foolish to think we are all going to go in that good direction forever.
- Wrestling did not react well to the changes (legal & others) 40-50 years ago and we suffered as a result.
- Wrestling would be best served if we were proactive with the tsunami of changes coming our way with NIL, transfer, eligibility, and many other factors.
- MatStats will dive into this subject in the coming months.

Episode 43 Kev's Notes #1

Episode
43-64

- 1) Penn State set the record with 177 team points, won 81% of their matches with 10 All Americans. Slide 43-13
 - 2) 2025 was the first time a sitting President attended the NCAA Wrestling Championships. 43-17
- 3) The NCWA had 751 wrestlers in their 2025 National Championships making it the largest national collegiate tourney ever. 43-24
 - 4) Glory Days for different sports are a matter of perspective and perspective can be deceiving. 43-27
- 5) The comparison of attendance numbers from the 50's to now in baseball and from the 70's to current in wrestling is really eye opening. 43-34 & 43-37.

Episode 43 Kev's Notes #2

Episode
43-65

- 6) 9 different schools won national titles in collegiate wrestling in 2025 with 2,281 participants. 43-40
- 7) NCAA has seen a decrease of 21% in the number of teams from 1982 to 2024, but the numbers have increased 32% since the bottoming out in 2010. 43-49
- 8) Wrestling participation growth at the NCAA level has been much lower than men's overall sports since 1982 (+11% vs +85%) but wrestling participation growth has far outpaced (+90%) overall men's sports growth since 2015. 43-58
- 9) The ascendance of Women's Wrestling has been a key factor in changing the trajectory of participation in College wrestling. 43-59
 - 10) Be like Life University, not W&M. 43-61

What is the topic next month (Wednesday 5/21/25 3PM EST)?

The Affect of the 3-point Takedown rule in the Men's NCAA D1 Championships from 2022 to 2025.

**Episode
43-66**

- **Tune In Next Month**
 - **Same Mat Time**
 - **Same Mat Channel**
- **MatStats will do its 2nd annual deep dive into the new 3-point Takedown rule.**
 - **We will analyze how the new rule has affected our sport.**