

MatStats - The Moneyball of Wrestling
Episode #57
Wednesday July 15th, 2026
3PM EST

Why Does Rice Play Texas?

Episode
57-1

The boys at MatStats explore why college sports are a cultural & social phenomenon and far more than athletic competitions. College sports are unique to America. MatStats believes with every change comes bad with the good. MatStats takes a shot at the effect conference expansion & college football playoffs have on college sports. MatStats also dives into the possibility of making big time college football a Minor League Baseball concept.



In This Episode

Episode
57-2

Episode 57 - 7/15/26 - Why Does Rice Play Texas?

Topic	Slide #		Topic	Slide #
Why we do this	3		Conference Expansion	24
Number of 4-year colleges	6		College Football Playoff Expansion	27
Stats to help you think	9		MiLB Concept for College Football	31
College Business Update	12		Summary	47
Topic	15		Kev's Notes	51
NCAA Championships & Numbers	19		Next Episode	53

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

Episode
57-3

- 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
57-4

- 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 analysis. It starts with facts not opinions.

Episode
57-5

- 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.

Number of College Wrestling Teams

Episode
57-6

- Gorms, can you tell the viewers the number of college teams?
- NCAA, NAIA, NCWA, NJCAA, 3C2A?
- Men & Women?

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

Columbia becomes the first ever Ivy to have women's wrestling!! Keystone becomes first school a MatStats host went to add women's wrestling.

Episode
57-7

Category	Men	Women	Total
NCAA	291	133	424
NAIA	78	57	135
NCWA	125	81	206
Total 4-Year	494	271	765

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.

How many JUCO wrestling teams are there in the USA?

As of 7/2/26, there are 144 Junior College & Community Colleges with wrestling teams.

Episode
57-8

JUCO	Men	Women	Total
NJCAA	67	37	104
3C2A	23	17	40
Total	90	54	144

There are 4 Championships on this level and 5 team champions. The NJCAA has a scholarship team Champion and a non-scholarship team champion on the men's side.

Some wild Stats that surprise people

Episode
57-9

- Gorms, this is a stats show. Give us some examples of where numbers surprise people.
- This could be seen as a preamble to the numbers that might give viewers pause and better understand this episode.

Numbers that surprise us and after a further study they are not shocking.

In the 126th 2026 US Open, Keith Mitchell became the first person to shoot all 4 rounds at even par.

Episode
57-10

- About 9,000 players have played all 4 rounds in the US Open's 126-year history.
- Is it crazy that Keith Mitchell was the first one to shoot exactly par in all 4 rounds?
- Based on the results at the 2026 US Open it is not crazy.
- If you factor in all 154 players stats, it will happen 1 in 12,416. If you use the players that make the cut it would be 1 in 5,801. Controlling for Mitchell 1 in 9,197.

Numbers that don't make sense until you learn the bookkeeping system.

**Only in Soccer does 45'+6' come before 49'
(which is in the 2nd half).**

Episode
57-11

- Go USA Soccer. Good Luck in the 2026 World Cup.
- Gorms has never understood the offside rule in Soccer, he is not alone. At least Gorms understands math.
- Oh wait, math is different in Soccer since you could score a goal at 45'+6' and that comes before a goal scored at 49'.

Updates “*On A Clear Day, You Can See College Athletics.*”

Episode
57-12

- Gorms, could you give us a quick update on some major events that we dealt with in our 3-part series, “*On A Clear Day, You Can See College Athletics.*”

Can you give us an example of the court system being too involved in college sports?

Somehow a Judge thought it was OK to bet on the team you are on and still be eligible.

Episode
57-13

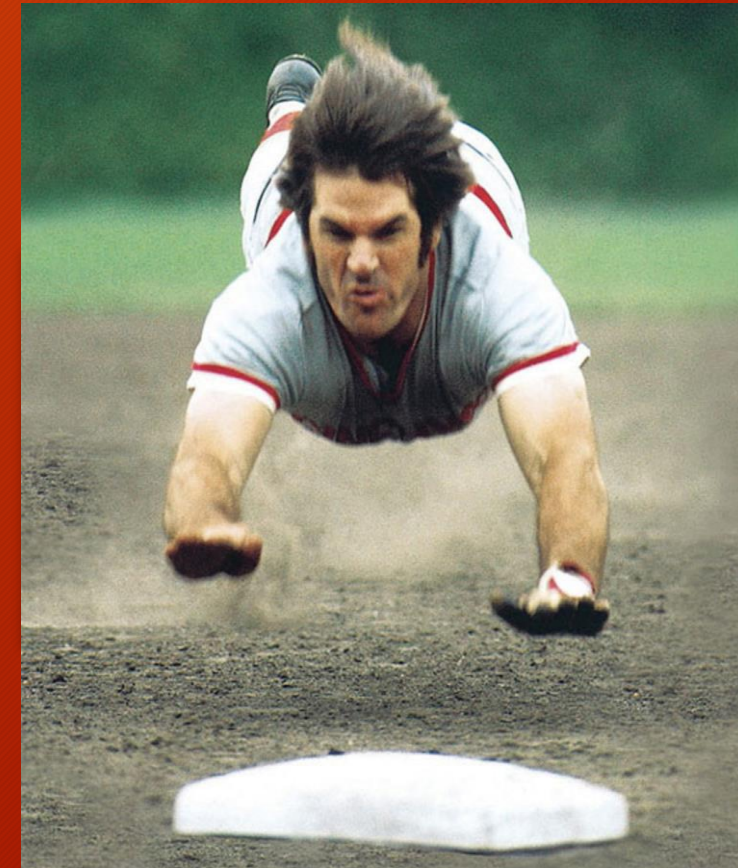
- “Somebody's gambling on a sport they're playing? You don't think something's wrong with that? Just say that to yourself: This guy on my team is gambling on the sport, in the competition, that we're about to go out there and have. Something's wrong with that.”
- - Coach Prime on the Sorsby Gambling Issue

Did anyone come to their senses after the Judge's crazy ruling on the Sorsby gambling issue?

The Big XII, NFL & CFL realized the 1919 Black Sox & Pete Rose left a stain on the game that they don't want any part of.

Episode
57-14

- The Big XII, NFL, & CFL all said no thanks to Sorsby playing after it was discovered he placed thousands of bets including some on his own team.
- There is sign in all MLB locker rooms reminding them gambling on baseball is strictly forbidden.
- Perhaps NCAA sports needs a pic of Pete Rose in every locker room.



Episode # 57 - Topic

Episode
57-15

- What is this month's topic?
- Why is it titled “*Why Does Rice Play Texas*”?

Why are college sports so special?

College Sports are a Cultural and Social Phenomenon and Far More Than Athletic Competitions.

Episode
57-16

- College sports are deeply embedded in the nation's social, cultural, and economic fabric. They reflect American values.
- For students, they are a core part of campus life. For alumni they provide a sense of pride.
- No other country has this imbedded in their way of life.

Why should we risk changing college sports? Will they lose their appeal?

If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Episode
57-17

- For some reason there is a vocal segment of our society that wants to change college sports.
- Will these changes be for the better?

“Why does Rice play Texas” was the question JFK asked in a speech at Rice promoting the space program.

Episode
57-18

- In a speech at Rice University 9/12/62, President Kennedy was explaining why we need to go to the moon. He explained that America chooses to do tough bold things and compared it to Rice playing Texas in Football.
- Texas is a huge well funded state school; Rice, a private school is currently the 2nd smallest 1A football school
- From 1930-61 Rice was 17-15 vs the Horns. Rice tied #1 Texas 14-14 in 1962 a month after JFK’s famous speech. Since then Texas is 46-2 vs Rice. They have not played since 2023. Texas joined the SEC in 2024.

NCAA Championships & Numbers

Episode
57-19

- Gorms, can you give us some stats that show the difference between NCAA Championships and professional sports playoffs?
- Is there anything in the numbers that might make it so special?

Why does having 68 teams in March Madness make it so exciting?

The magic from March Madness is that you have multiple games simultaneously in the early rounds, thus increasing the chances of seeing great finishes.

Episode
57-20

Day	Round of	Games
Monday	68	2
Wednesday	68	2
Thursday	64	16
Friday	64	16
Saturday	32	8
Sunday	32	8
Thursday	16	4
Friday	16	4
Saturday	8	2
Sunday	8	2
Saturday	4	2
Monday	2	1
Total		67

How does the time span for March Madness compare to the NBA Playoffs?

**March Madness has 67 games in 20 days.
The NBA playoffs could last 67 days.**

Episode
57-21

League	# of Days	Series	# of Teams
NCAA	20	Single Elimination	68
NBA	67	Best of 7 (Except for play-in)	20

Can MatStats show the viewers how NCAA Baseball and MLB differ in their playoffs?

NCAA Baseball has 64 teams in 25 days to decide a champion. MLB takes 33 days for 12 teams to crown a champion.

Episode
57-22

League	# Days	Series	# Teams
NCAA	25	Double Elimination	64
MLB	33	Varies by Round	12

The College World Series has been held annually in Omaha, NE since 1950 with 8 teams.
The MLB Baseball World Series is held in 2 cities each year with 2 teams.
Thankfully, it does not make an annual trip to the South Bronx like it used to in the old days.

Does the NCAA Baseball tournament make it easier than MLB on fans and players with travel?

The NCAA Baseball Championships bring multiple teams to the same locations, thereby cutting down on travel and more opportunities to see exciting games.

Episode
57-23

Team	Locations	Travel Trips
Vols 2024	2	1
Rangers 2023	4	7

NCAA has 16 regionals simultaneously and 8 Supers also simultaneously.

Conference Expansion

Episode
57-24

- What are some of the unintended consequences of Conference Expansion?

With conference expansion we no longer have some historic annual rivalries. No sport in America is known for rivalries like College Football.

**Episode
57-25**

- Oklahoma vs Nebraska
- Pitt vs West Virginia (The Backyard Brawl)
- USC (West) vs Notre Dame (Jeweled Shillelagh)
- Vols vs Gators (Vols won 3 of the last 4)
- Iowa vs Iowa State (Cy-Hawk Trophy)
- Oklahoma vs Oklahoma State (Bedlam)
- Oregon vs Oregon State (Civil War)
- Michigan vs Michigan St (Paul Bunyan Trophy)
- The list goes on and on.

Old foes are replaced with new opponents.

Episode
57-26

- It sounds great that Texas is coming to Neyland for the first time ever in 2026. Sounds like an ESPN GameDay location.
- Arch Manning facing off vs his Uncle's Alma Mater.
- But you lose the annual rivalry for the Vols vs the Gators and Dawgs.
- It takes generations of games to build a rivalry; it doesn't happen overnight.

College Football Playoff Expansion

Episode
57-27

- Gorms, the recent expansion of the CFP and talks of more expansion have been a hot item for sports fans in America.
 - Is there any downside to this?
- Are we at a point where big time TV events in select sports are the cart leading the horse?

We are sacrificing the pageantry of college football and making it a TV sport.

Episode
57-28

- College football seems to be the last sport where the regular season still means so much.
- The pageantry of college football includes all weekend tailgates, schedules made long in advance, the bands fanatical students.
- You will not see this in December home playoff games (dorms are closed, cold, and last-minute scheduling), this will hurt the pageantry.
- College Football is primarily an in-person event, the NFL is a made for TV spectacle.

If the playoffs go to 24 teams, will it hurt the Army Navy game?

There is even talk about not having the Army Navy game on its own day.

Episode
57-29

- This is a result of the playoff expansion.
- We might lose the conference Championship games.
- The college academic schedule, recruiting windows, transfer portals do not fit with the playoff expansion.
- It's like a round peg and a square hole.

All of a sudden, the playoff committee tells the fans only games they schedule really matter.

Episode
57-30

- Gorms has no interest in the 13 members of the playoff committee telling Gorms what games matter.
- If the playoffs expand to 24 teams, is someone suggesting that hosting a Group of 5 opponent is more important than the 'Third Saturday in October'?
- Conference Expansion almost cancelled the annual Vols vs Bama game.

Could NCAA Sports Have a Minor League Baseball (MiLB) Concept?

Episode
57-31

- Gorms, many of our fellow W&M alumni we see at the NCAA Men's D1 Championships every year have floated the concept of having big time college sports be like Minor League Baseball.
- Does this idea make any sense?
- Or is it just a bunch of old guys letting the beer talk?

MiLB is a group of professional baseball teams below the MLB level affiliated with MLB teams.

**Episode
57-32**

- MLB has 5 levels of MiLB teams where the players are controlled by the MLB club.
- MLB tries to have regionality with their MiLB affiliates.
- Players can be called up or sent down at the discretion of the parent club.

How many NCAA Football teams are there in 2024-25?

In 2024-25, there were 68 Power 4 (P4) teams, 133 FBS, and 666 in the NCAA.

**Episode
57-33**

NCAA 2024-25	Football Teams	Players	Avg Size
FBS	133	19,497	146.6
FCS	124	15,442	124.5
D2	167	21,644	129.6
D3	242	27,211	112.4
Total	666	83,794	125.8

There are 68 Power 4 football programs - all in the FBS

How many MiLB teams are there affiliated with MLB in 2026?

In 2026, there are 120 MiLB teams affiliated with MLB clubs. 1 team per franchise at each level.

Episode
57-34

MiLB Level	Teams
Low A	30
High A	30
AA	30
AAA	30
Total	120

It seems absurd to think a college team would be beholden to an NFL franchise. Correct?

It is a crazy thought to propose that certain colleges would be tied to specific NFL teams.

Episode
57-35

- If the NFL went to a MiLB concept using college football, how would we decide what school feeds what NFL team?
- Given regionality the Lions & Browns fans might finally make a Super Bowl if Michigan & The Ohio State were their AAA team.
- The Patriots might never make another one since there are no powerhouse college teams in MA.

This sounds like we would have different rules for teams in the same league. Is this a fair assumption?

Would colleges affiliated with NFL and those not affiliated be playing under different rules?

Episode
57-36

- There is no way you balance the 32 NFL teams with the number of NCAA football teams.
- This would produce a league with different rules, cash flows, & different objectives playing in the same league.

Call ups would create an anger on college campuses

Episode
57-37

- If we had a true MiLB concept in college football and team were allowed to call up players think of the potential scenarios.
- The week of the Michigan The Ohio State game, the Browns QB gets hurt and they call up the OSU QB.
- I am sure that would go well with the OSU faithful.
- A player could be called up and miss finals.
- Would a demoted player have to transfer colleges mid semester?

MLB pays the salaries and bonuses of MiLB players.

Episode
57-38

- MLB pays salaries
- MLB pays signing and other bonuses
- MLB pays for facilities and travel costs
- MLB controls the players

How much do MiLB players make in 2025?

Good luck getting an NIL darling to work for MiLB wages.

**Episode
57-39**

Level 2025	Weekly Pay	Year
Rookie	\$ 700	\$ 20,430
Low A	\$ 870	\$ 26,840
High A	\$ 920	\$ 27,940
AA	\$ 1,020	\$ 30,905
AAA	\$ 1,225	\$ 36,950

Have MiLB wages increased recently?

MiLB wages have been raised recently

Episode
57-40

Level	Weekly 2019	Weekly 2021	Weekly 2025
Rookie	\$ 290	\$ 400	\$ 700
Low A	\$ 290	\$ 500	\$ 870
High A	\$ 290	\$ 500	\$ 920
AA	\$ 350	\$ 600	\$ 1,020
AAA	\$ 502	\$ 700	\$ 1,225
Spring	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 650
Off Season	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 650
Off Season Home	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 255

What are the average annual wages for MiLB?

MiLB wages are still difficult to live on

Episode
57-41

Level MiLB	Annual 2019	Annual 2021	Annual 2025
Rookie	\$3,480	\$4,800	\$20,430
Low A	\$6,380	\$11,000	\$26,840
High A	\$6,380	\$11,000	\$27,940
AA	\$7,700	\$13,800	\$30,905
AAA	\$11,044	\$17,500	\$36,950

In 2020, MLB decided to raise MiLB players pay and because they cut 40 MiLB teams.
If college football was a minor league, would the NFL cut some college teams to save money?

What are the perks and benefits like for MiLB?

The perks and benefits are not great in MiLB

Episode
57-42

Perks	2019	2021	2025
In Season Home	none	none	team pays
To home	none	none	team pays
Travel	1 bus	1 bus	2 buses
Meals	none	2/day	2/day
Per diem	25	25	31.5
NIL	Team Keeps	Team keeps	Player keeps
Health	Until released	Until released	2-3 months after release

Where do the NFL draft picks come from?

In 2025, 89.1% of all NFL draft picks came from the P4 schools. All picks came from D1.

**Episode
57-43**

NFL draft 2025	Draft Picks	% Draft Picks
P4	229	89.1%
G5	20	7.8%
FCS	8	3.1%
Total	257	100.0%

Is this an example of what sounds good one minute, sounds crazy another?

Don't base your life decisions on ideas you get in a bar

Episode
57-44

- What sounds great at The Leafe at 2AM on Friday night doesn't all sound good Monday at 9AM.
- Gorms has heard many crazy ideas in his years in the bar business.
- At least they were usually offered by 21-year-old kids after the woman of their dreams left without them.

Why would the decision makers - NFL, Colleges, & Players like this idea?

Episode
57-45

- Why would the NFL every want this concept?
- They would be assuming more expenses.
- Why would colleges?
- They would be giving away control. They paid for the stadiums, etc.
- Why would the players?
- They would make less money and lose the chance to go to the school they prefer. They might also lose the chance to get a degree.

Does Gorms think the MiLB concept would ever work for college football and keep what we love about it?

The Minor League Baseball Concept will never work in NCAA Sports and keep the Americana in College Sports.

Episode
57-46

- If the guy with a brain injury is the voice of reason and warning you about all the pitfalls of becoming a college minor league, perhaps your ideas need to be reconsidered.
- Very ironic that some of the Tribe Group that goes to the NCAA Championships every year want to change college sports.
- If you don't love it the way it is, why do you go to the Nationals every year?

“Any change, even a change for the better, is always accompanied by drawbacks and discomforts.” - English Author Arnold Bennett.

**Episode
57-47**

- **Gorms, could you summarize the drawbacks of changing college sports so drastically.**
- **Are the changes we are making and the proposals for the better?**

Will the huge changes change college sports to something we are not familiar with?

We run the risk of changing college sports to an unrecognizable entity.

Episode
57-48

- The massive changes in college sports might all sound good to the fan at home, but are these changes compatible with the historic traditions that are unique to college sports and have made them a beloved part of American Culture?
- 1) Conference realignment has already knocked out many historic rivalries
- 2) Adding more CFP games is going to drastic dilute the regular season gameday experience.
- 3) College sports can not be the same in a MiLB scenario.

MatStats is concerned what happened to Olympic Sports mainly wrestling with all the new changes.

Episode
57-49

- The NIL/Rev Share era has hastened the realignment of college conferences to the detriment of many sports. Massive TV media rights, the expansion of the CFP, and the need to secure long term financial stability has led to the increasing gerrymandered conference realignment.
- This is especially harmful in sports like wrestling. Stanford's closet ACC rival in wrestling is Pitt which is over 2,600 miles away. A budget buster.
- What may be good for Football and Basketball might not be good for Olympic Sports.

What's MatStats biggest question in all of this?

**Ask yourself this question when you read about
the changes.
How does this effect wrestling?**

**Episode
57-50**

- College sports programs have a finite amount of money.
- All this talk of NIL/Rev Share, etc. might sound great and be great clickbait.
- Ask yourself, “How does it effect wrestling?”

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

Episode 57 Kev's Notes #1

Episode
57-51

- 1) College Sports are uniquely an American tradition.
- 2) 57-10 Keith Mitchell became the person in the 126-year history of the US Open to shoot exactly par every round. Statistically the chances of shooting 4 even par rounds are significantly 0.
- 3) 57-13 In yet another case where the US Court system intruded on College Sports, a Texas judge issued a temporary injunction allowing Brendan Sorsby to play college football in 2026. After a vehement pushback by the NCAA and Big 12, Sorsby dropped his lawsuit. Subsequently, the NFL scathingly rejected his application to the supplemental draft.
- 4) 57-18 President Kennedy asked, "Why does Rice play Texas", comparing it to the seemingly (at the time) impossible task of putting a man on the moon. Interestingly enough Rice tied #1 Texas 14-14 a month after Kennedy's speech.

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

Episode 57 Kev's Notes #2

Episode
57-52

- 5) 57-21 College Basketball & Baseball playoff schedule is way more compressed than the equivalent pro playoff schedule.
- 6) 57-25 An inordinate amount of historic annual rivalries in College Football have been lost due to conference and CFP playoff expansion.
- 7) 57-28 For well over a century college sports have been mainly an in-person fan experience. It is becoming more and more a TV event.
- 8) 57-31 With the advent of NIL and Rev Share money, there are many fans that desire college sports to be a Minor League Baseball concept. Can you imagine a college QB being called up to the NFL during the college's playoff run?
 - 9) 57-45 A lot of college players would take a huge pay cut if it was a MiLB.
- 10) The MiLB concept would never work without destroying college traditions.

What is the topic next month (Wednesday 8/19/26 3PM EST)?

The next episode explores the financial situation of college athletics.

**Episode
57-53**

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

- **The MatStats guys will once again dive into the financial situation of college athletic departments. It is a follow up series to the topic we investigated last summer (2025). This is the first year we will have financial data with the new Revenue Share implementation.**