The MAT STATS Show

The Moneyball of Wrestling

Be Careful What You Wish For



Episode #59 | Wednesday, November 18, 2026 | 3PM EST

The big news in college sports the last few years has been Revenue Share, NIL, and the House v NCAA Settlement. Many fans of college sports loved these new elements and were all for them. They did not think of the unintended consequences. MatStats deals with the new roster cap rule for schools that opted in to the House Settlement and the effect they have had and could have in the future on college participation numbers.

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Ever	**Wrestling Is The Greatest Sport**

Q *Why do the guys at MatStats do their show?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-3

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

- 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.

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

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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.

- 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.

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

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59-5

MatStats is based on numbers, stats, and analysis. 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.

Q *How did Kelly Powell do in the 2026 NYC Marathon?*

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59-6

Kelly Powell runs the 2026 NYC Marathon in 3:30:03. That is an 8:00.6 per mile pace.



As always, Kelly Powell proves she is by far the best current W&M wrestling athlete.

Kelly has become so big, she has her own fan club. The club includes her husband, Dr Boogs, and two W&M Athletic Hall of Famers, Dr Mark & Julie McLaughlin.



SEGMENT

Number of College Wrestling Teams

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59-7

? Gorms, can you tell the viewers the number of college teams?

? NCAA, NAIA, & NCWA?

? Men & Women?

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

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59-8

As of 10/31/26, there are 805 NCAA, NAIA, & NCWA NCWA teams. 37% are women's teams.

Category	Men	Women	Total
NCAA	293	135	428
NAIA	76	58	134
NCWA	140	103	243
Total 4-Year	**509**	**296**	**805**

SEGMENT

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

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59-9

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

Q *Have there been any recent notable NIL deals?*

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59-10

Even Dogs Are Getting NIL Deals

- The Vols beloved dog, Smokey XII got an NIL deal from the dog food company The Farmer's Dog.
- That is great. However, don’t count on the average athlete of the 551K participants getting an NIL deal or Rev Share.
- Anything involving Football takes priority. Even the mascots.
- Exactly how did Deloitte determine if this was a legitimate deal. Does the Collegiate Sports Commission determine Rev Share for Smokey? Is he eligible if the Cheer Squad is selected for Rev Share by the school?



Smokey XII runs the checkerboards during the Vols 26-10 victory over Bama in 2026.

Q *When will MatStats do a follow Up on their 3-part series, "On A Clear Day, you Can See College Athletics"*

The MAT STATS Show

59-11

MatStats Next Episode Will be to See if the Day is Day is Clear Enough to See College Athletics.

- In Episode 45-47, *"On A Clear Day You Can See College Athletics"* (7/25 – 9/25), MatStats looked at the financial aspect of college sports, NIL, and the House Settlement.
- Colleges have 1 year to give the data to the NCAA. College Fiscal Years usually end 6/30 each year.
- MatStats now has the financials for all Public Colleges ending 6/30/25.
- Our next show will be on this topic once again.
- We do need to wait a year to have the data for the 2025-26 season where the House Settlement and Rev Share was first implemented.

SEGMENT

Episode #59 – Topic

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? What is this month's topic?

? Why is it titled "Be Careful What you Wish For"?

Q *What is this month's topic?*

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59-13

This Month's Topic is the number of Participants in NCAA Sports.

- This month's topic is on the number of participants in NCAA sports in 2025-26 and how the new rule in the House v NCAA settlement affected the participation numbers.
- Part of the House settlement included an infrequently mentioned codicil that requires any school that opts into the settlement to have roster caps for all sports at that school, even if that sport does not get Revenue Share.

Q *Why is the roster cap in the House Settlement? Where did it come from?*

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59-14

The fine print needs to be considered for its potential damaging effects.

- In the classic movie, "*Animal House*", Dean Wermer famously said in his double secret probation speech, "There is a little-known codicil in the Faber College constitution…"
- The Dean's attempt to throw a frat off campus was humorous.
- Sadly the roster cap rule is serious and not funny at all.
- MatStats does not know how the roster cap became part of the House v NCAA settlement.

Q *Where did the title of this show come from?*

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59-15

Be Careful What You Wish For

- This episode is called "*Be careful What You Wish For*" because so many people wanted the athletes to get paid, expand the college football playoffs, and to feel good about be fair to certain athletes.
- What seems to have fallen through the cracks is the roster cap limit and how it has affected athletes that discovered there is no room for them at the Inn.

Q *What is the methodology for this report on participation numbers?*

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59-16

Methodology

- The boys at MatStats get their numbers from the annual NCAA Sports Sponsorship & Participation Report dated 10/22/26.
- Athletes who participate in more than 1 sport are counted for each sport.
- Beginning in 2025-26, the NCAA updated its data to reflect only active NCAA members, numbers are aggregated in sport division not schools' primary division, and only NCAA sports are included.
- On the NCAA annual report, they just use 2026 for the 2025-26 season, etc for this nomenclature.

Q *Why does MatStats concentrate on men's participation numbers?*

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59-17

MatStats has elected to concentrate on Men's participation numbers because our main goal is wrestling. Men's Wrestling has a long-track record.

- MatStats has been following the participation numbers in NCAA sports for years, especially the wrestling numbers.
- Since women's wrestling is so new, we concentrate on men's wrestling that has a long-recorded database.

SEGMENT

NCAA Participation Numbers

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59-18

? Gorms, can you let the viewers know how the participation numbers have changed historically?

? Was there historically growth, decline, or did they remain relatively consistent? consistent?

Q *How does the 2026 NCAA Men's wrestling total participation number rank in history?*

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59-19

5 of the top 10 years for total number of NCAA Men's wrestlers are from the most recent 5 years.

Rank	Year	Total NCAA Wrestlers
1	1972*	9,487
2	**2026****	**9,222**
3	**2025**	**9,056**
4	**2024**	**8,801**
5	1985	8,572
6	1984	8,417
7	1986	8,401
8	**2022**	**8,338**
9	**2023**	**8,309**
10	1983	8,155

* Prior to 1981-82, the NCAA collected participation rates at 5-year intervals and included recreation programs, so it is not directly comparable to numbers after 1981-82.

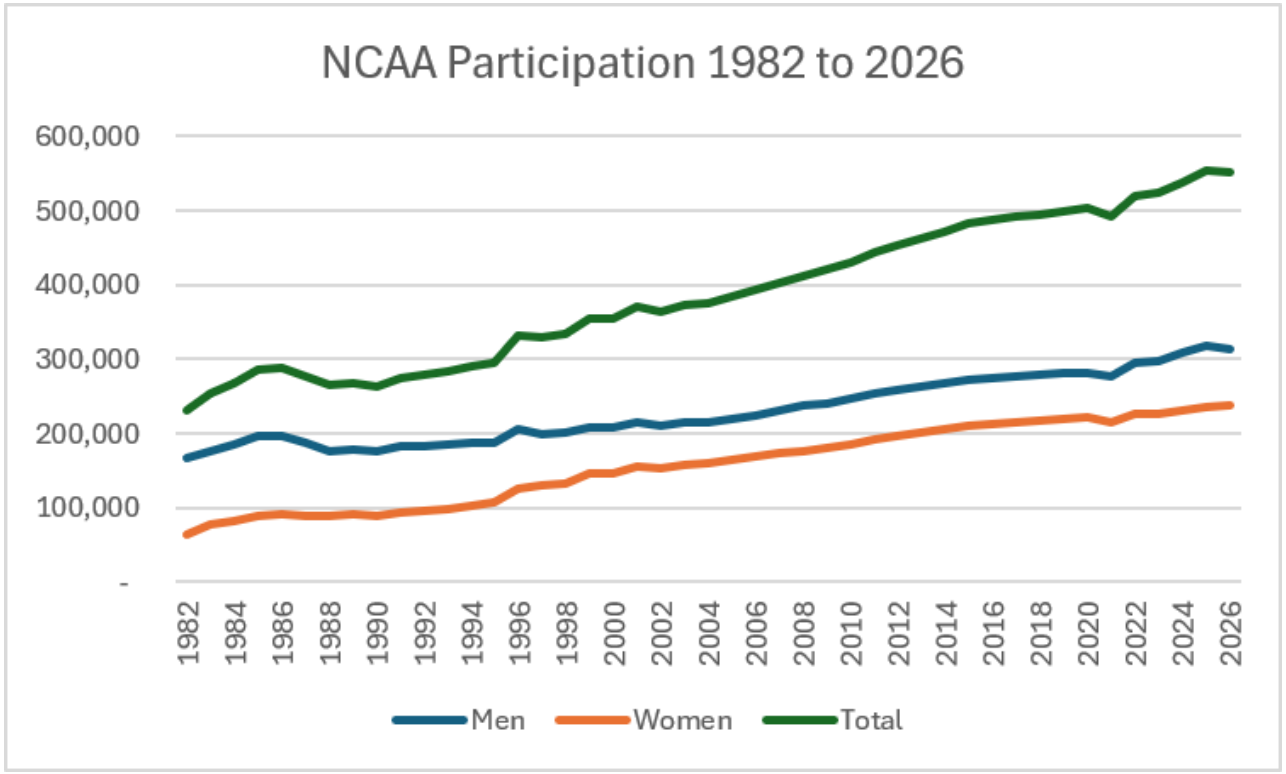
** Starting in 2025-26, the NCAA changed its methodology for participation and team numbers. Only active members are counted.

Q *Can MatStats provide a graph of the total participation for all sports from 1982 to 2026?*

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59-20

NCAA Participation for all sports 1982 to 2026

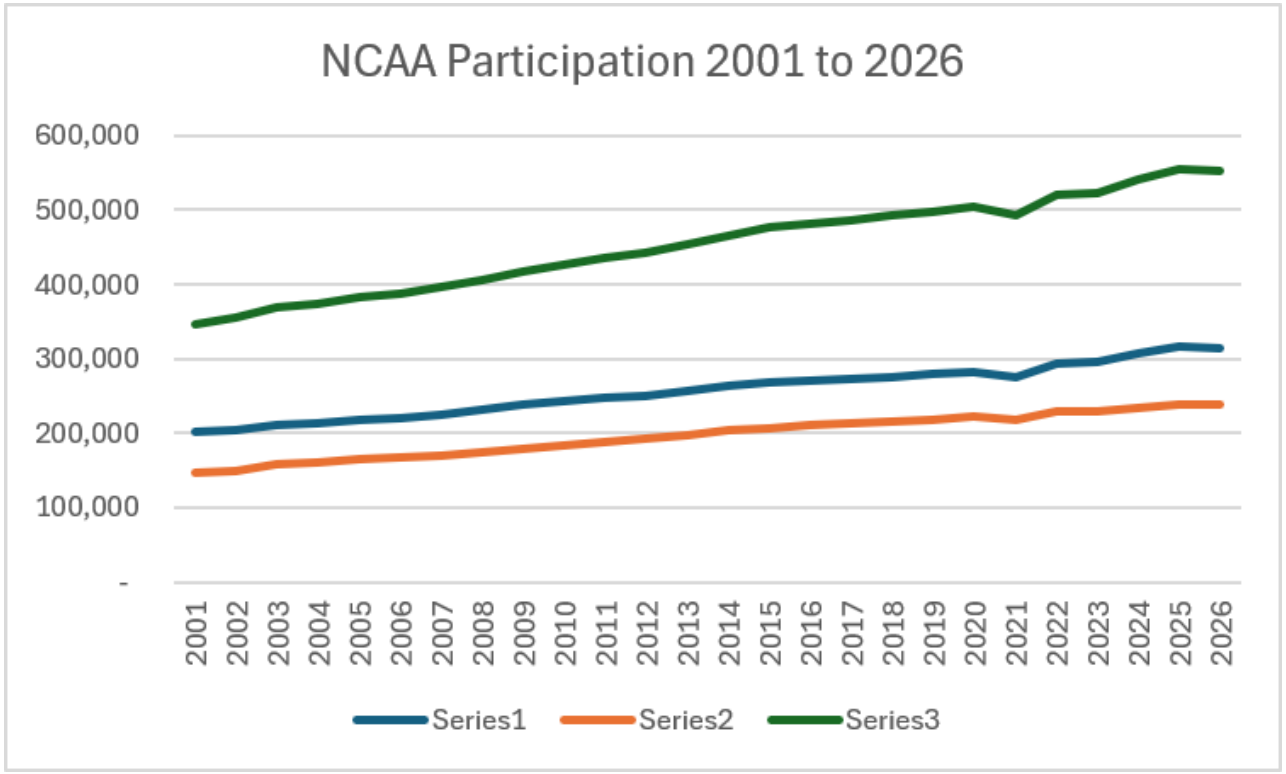


Can MatStats provide a graph of the total participation for all sports from 2001 to 2026?

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59-21

NCAA Participation for all sports 2001 to 2026



Q *How many years this century did the NCAA see a decrease in participation for all sports?*

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59-22

The only 2 years this century that saw a decrease in total participation across all NCAA Sports were 2021 (Covid) & 2026 (Roster Caps).

Year	% Delta Total NCAA Participation All Sports
2001	N/A
2002	2.0%
2003	4.1%
2004	1.3%
2005	2.4%
2006	1.4%
2007	2.1%
2008	2.6%
2009	2.9%
2010	2.0%
2011	2.2%
2012	1.6%
2013	2.3%

Year	% Delta Total NCAA Participation All Sports
2014	2.7%
2015	2.2%
2016	1.1%
2017	1.1%
2018	1.2%
2019	1.2%
2020	1.2%
2021	-2.2%
2022	5.9%
2023	0.5%
2024	3.2%
2025	2.8%
2026	-0.6%

Q *How many years this century did the NCAA see a decrease in participation for D1 sports?*

In NCAA D1 across all sports, the only year with a decrease in total participation was 2026. There is reason to believe the House settlement was worse than Covid for D1 participation.

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Year	% Delta NCAA D1 All Sports
2001	
2002	1.9%
2003	2.8%
2004	0.6%
2005	1.6%
2006	0.2%
2007	1.1%
2008	2.0%
2009	1.3%
2010	1.9%
2011	1.3%
2012	0.7%
2013	2.1%

Year	% Delta NCAA D1 All Sports
2014	1.5%
2015	0.2%
2016	0.6%
2017	0.8%
2018	1.4%
2019	0.6%
2020	0.8%
2021	0.2%
2022	4.8%
2023	1.0%
2024	4.2%
2025	2.3%
2026	-2.7%

SEGMENT

Change in Participation numbers from from 2024-25 to 2025-26

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59-24

? Gorms, can you break down these participation numbers by sport from 2024-25 to 2025-26, the first 26, the first year the roster cap rule took effect?

Q *Can MatStats provide a chart for the NCAA Men number of participants by sport and division in 2025?*

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59-25

2025 NCAA Men's sports participation by division division

Men 2025 NCAA Participation	D1	D2	D3	Total
Baseball	12,930	11,743	16,402	41,075
Basketball	5,902	5,503	7,968	19,373
Cross Country	5,478	4,093	5,745	15,316
Fencing	412	16	236	664
Football		20,660	26,849	47,509
Football (FBS)	19,645			19,645
Football (FCS)	16,096			16,096
Golf	3,045	2,217	3,434	8,696
Gymnastics	251		70	321
Ice Hockey	1,809		2,543	4,352
Lacrosse	4,017	3,572	9,076	16,665
Skiing	148	66	227	441
Soccer	7,127	7,755	13,423	28,305
Swimming and Diving	4,057	1,688	4,386	10,131
Tennis	2,471	1,564	3,374	7,409
Track, Indoor	11,740	8,023	12,072	31,835
Track, Outdoor	12,688	9,289	12,500	34,477
Volleyball	583	652	2,110	3,345
Water Polo	735	138	350	1,223
Wrestling	**2,819**	**2,324**	**3,783**	**8,926**
Total	**111,953**	**79,303**	**124,548**	**315,804**

Q *Can MatStats provide a chart for the NCAA Men number of participants by sport and division in 2026?*

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59-26

2026 NCAA Men's sports participation by division division

Men 2026 NCAA Participation	D1	D2	D3	Total
Baseball	12,174	11,836	16,234	40,244
Basketball	5,696	5,502	7,710	18,908
Cross Country	4,991	4,160	5,672	14,823
Fencing	385	20	230	635
Football		20,862	26,457	47,319
Football (FBS)	19,875			19,875
Football (FCS)	16,494			16,494
Golf	2,852	2,277	3,448	8,577
Gymnastics	239		81	320
Ice Hockey	1,721		2,601	4,322
Lacrosse	3,931	3,663	8,862	16,456
Skiing	139	62	216	417
Soccer	7,109	7,807	13,097	28,013
Swimming and Diving	3,755	1,715	4,264	9,734
Tennis	2,332	1,547	3,366	7,245
Track, Indoor	11,315	8,517	12,312	32,144
Track, Outdoor	12,231	9,685	12,920	34,836
Volleyball	574	741	2,159	3,474
Water Polo	700	132	360	1,192
Wrestling	**2,658**	**2,592**	**3,972**	**9,222**
Total	**109,171**	**81,118**	**123,961**	**314,250**

Q *Can MatStats provide a chart for the NCAA Men number of participants by sport and division change from 2025 to 2026? from 2025 to 2026?*

From 2024-25 to 2025-26, wrestling had the 2nd highest growth growth percentage (+3.32%) of all Men's NCAA Sports across all all divisions.

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Delta NCAA Men' sparticipation 2025 to 2026	D1	D2	D3	Total	Delta Tot %
Baseball	-756	93	-168	-831	-2.02%
Basketball	-206	-1	-258	-465	-2.40%
Cross Country	-487	67	-73	-493	-3.22%
Fencing	-27	4	-6	-29	-4.37%
Football	0	202	-392	-190	-0.40%
Football (FBS)	230	0	0	230	1.17%
Football (FCS)	398	0	0	398	2.47%
Golf	-193	60	14	-119	-1.37%
Gymnastics	-12	0	11	-1	-0.31%
Ice Hockey	-88	0	58	-30	-0.69%
Lacrosse	-86	91	-214	-209	-1.25%
Skiing	-9	-4	-11	-24	-5.44%
Soccer	-18	52	-326	-292	-1.03%
Swimming and Diving	-302	27	-122	-397	-3.92%
Tennis	-139	-17	-8	-164	-2.21%
Track, Indoor	-425	494	240	309	0.97%
Track, Outdoor	-457	396	420	359	1.04%
Volleyball	-9	89	49	129	**3.86%**
Water Polo	-35	-6	10	-31	-2.53%
Wrestling	-161	268	189	296	**3.32%**
Total	**-2,782**	**1,815**	**-587**	**-1,554**	**-0.49%**

Q *How many Men's NCAA D1 sports saw an increase in participation from 2025 to 2026?*

In D1, only Football saw an increase in participation participation from 2024-25 to 2025-26.

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Delta NCAA Men's Participation from 2025 to 2026	D1 delta %
Baseball	-5.85%
Basketball	-3.49%
Cross Country	-8.89%
Fencing	-6.55%
Football	N/A
Football (FBS)	1.17%
Football (FCS)	2.47%
Golf	-6.34%
Gymnastics	-4.78%
Ice Hockey	-4.86%
Lacrosse	-2.14%
Skiing	-6.08%
Soccer	-0.25%
Swimming and Diving	-7.44%
Tennis	-5.63%
Track, Indoor	-3.62%
Track, Outdoor	-3.60%
Volleyball	-1.54%
Water Polo	-4.76%
Wrestling	-5.71%
Total	**-2.48%**

Can MatStats provide a table for all NCAA Men's participants in 2001?

Table for the total number of NCAA men's participants by sport in 2001

The MAT STATS Show

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Men's Sports 2001	Men's Participants All Divisions 2001	Men's Participants D1 2001
Baseball	24,528	9,180
Basketball	14,859	4,825
Cross Country	10,313	4,197
Fencing	605	351
Football	56,131	NA
Football (FBS)	NA	12,845
Football (FCS)	NA	11,541
Golf	7,205	3,053
Gymnastics	326	367
Ice Hockey	3,526	1,588
Lacrosse	6,492	2,314
Skiing	542	165
Soccer	17,155	5,214
Swimming and Diving	7,185	3,549
Tennis	7,127	2,679
Track, Indoor	16,947	8,570
Track, Outdoor	19,990	9,360
Volleyball	899	371
Water Polo	880	534
Wrestling	**5,928**	**2,615**
Total	**200,638**	**83,318**

Q *Can MatStats provide a table for all NCAA Men's participants in 2026?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-30

Table for the total number of NCAA men's participants by sport in 2026

Men's Sports 2026	Men's Participants All Divisions 2026	Men's Participants D1 2026
Baseball	40,244	12,174
Basketball	18,908	5,696
Cross Country	14,823	4,991
Fencing	635	385
Football	83,688	NA
Football (FBS)	NA	19,875
Football (FCS)	NA	16,494
Golf	8,577	2,852
Gymnastics	320	239
Ice Hockey	4,322	1,721
Lacrosse	16,456	3,931
Skiing	417	139
Soccer	28,013	7,109
Swimming and Diving	9,734	3,755
Tennis	7,245	2,332
Track, Indoor	32,144	11,315
Track, Outdoor	34,836	12,231
Volleyball	3,474	574
Water Polo	1,192	700
Wrestling	**9,222**	**2,658**
Total	**314,250**	**109,171**

Q *Can MatStats provide a chart showing the change in NCAA Men's Participation numbers from 2001 to 2026?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-31

Men's NCAA Total Participation grew +56.6% (wrestling mirrored this +55.6%) this century and grew +31.0% in D1.

Men's Sports 2001 to 2026	Delta Men's Participants All Divisions 2001 to 2026	Delta All Divisions %	Delta Men's Participants D1 2001 to 2026	Delta D1 %
Baseball	15,716	64.1%	2,994	32.6%
Basketball	4,049	27.2%	871	18.1%
Cross Country	4,510	43.7%	794	18.9%
Fencing	30	5.0%	34	9.7%
Football	27,557	49.1%	NA	NA
Football (FBS)	NA	NA	7,030	54.7%
Football (FCS)	NA	NA	4,953	42.9%
Golf	1,372	19.0%	(201)	-6.6%
Gymnastics	(6)	-1.8%	(128)	-34.9%
Ice Hockey	796	22.6%	133	8.4%
Lacrosse	9,964	153.5%	1,617	69.9%
Skiing	(125)	-23.1%	(26)	-15.8%
Soccer	10,858	63.3%	1,895	36.3%
Swimming and Diving	2,549	35.5%	206	5.8%
Tennis	118	1.7%	(347)	-13.0%
Track, Indoor	15,197	89.7%	2,745	32.0%
Track, Outdoor	14,846	74.3%	2,871	30.7%
Volleyball	2,575	286.4%	203	54.7%
Water Polo	312	35.5%	166	31.1%
Wrestling	**3,294**	**55.6%**	**43**	**1.6%**
Total	**113,612**	**56.6%**	**25,853**	**31.0%**

SEGMENT

Roster Caps

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59-32

? Gorms, could we shoot into the roster caps for each NCAA Men's Sports and find out what we can learn what we can learn from this?

? Is "Caps" a 4-letter word?

Q *Can MatStats quickly explain the roster cap rule for the viewers?*

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59-33

Quick Summary of the Roster Cap Rule

- If a school opts in to the House v NCAA Settlement they must abide by the new roster cap rules for all sports.
- The attorneys in the House Settlement agreed on roster cap numbers for each NCAA sport. Too bad all these attorneys did not wrestle in college.
- If an athlete was already on the roster before the House settlement in 2024-25, the school can voluntarily grandfather them in and do not count towards the cap, so they can remain on the team for the duration of their eligibility and not be cut.
- The athlete can transfer to another school and keep this exemption.
- The grandfather rule is up to each school. It is voluntary, not mandatory.

Q *Can MatStats provide a chart for the mean roster size for 2025 NCAA Men's by sport and division?*

2025 NCAA Men's mean roster sizes by sport and and division

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59-34

Men 2025 Mean Roster Sizes	D1	D2	D3	Total
Baseball	42.1	47.4	43.3	44.0
Basketball	16.2	18.8	19.6	18.2
Cross Country	16.7	15.9	15.0	15.8
Fencing	18.7	16.0	19.7	19.0
Football		129.1	112.3	119.1
Football (FBS)	146.6			146.6
Football (FCS)	124.8			124.8
Golf	9.9	11.4	11.9	11.0
Gymnastics	20.9		23.3	21.4
Ice Hockey	28.7		29.6	29.2
Lacrosse	52.2	45.8	38.5	42.6
Skiing	13.5	11.0	13.4	13.0
Soccer	33.6	39.0	33.2	34.7
Swimming and Diving	29.6	22.8	19.0	22.9
Tennis	10.2	11.0	11.5	10.9
Track, Indoor	42.1	42.9	39.2	41.1
Track, Outdoor	42.2	41.1	37.5	40.1
Volleyball	20.8	18.1	16.6	17.5
Water Polo	25.3	23.0	20.6	23.5
Wrestling	**35.2**	**33.2**	**30.0**	**32.3**

Q *Can MatStats provide a chart for the mean roster size for 2026 NCAA Men's by sport and division?*

2026 NCAA Men's mean roster sizes by sport and and division

The MAT STATS Show

59-35

Men 2026 NCAA Mean Roster Sizes	D1	D2	D3	Total
Baseball	39.5	47.5	43.2	43.1
Basketball	15.6	18.8	19.2	17.8
Cross Country	15.1	15.9	14.9	15.2
Fencing	17.5	20.0	19.2	18.1
Football		131.2	111.2	119.2
Football (FBS)	146.1			146.1
Football (FCS)	127.9			127.9
Golf	9.2	11.4	12.1	10.8
Gymnastics	19.9		27.0	21.3
Ice Hockey	28.2		29.2	28.8
Lacrosse	51.1	46.4	38.2	42.4
Skiing	12.6	10.3	12.7	12.3
Soccer	33.4	39.4	32.7	34.5
Swimming and Diving	27.6	22.3	18.5	21.9
Tennis	9.8	11.2	11.5	10.9
Track, Indoor	40.0	44.1	39.7	40.9
Track, Outdoor	40.0	41.7	38.3	39.8
Volleyball	18.5	19.0	16.7	17.5
Water Polo	24.1	22.0	21.2	22.9
Wrestling	**33.6**	**36.0**	**30.3**	**32.7**

Q *Where does wrestling rank for percentage growth in Men's participation across all divisions from 2025 to 2026? to 2026?*

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59-36

From 2024-25 to 2025-26, Wrestling had the highest growth rate rate (+1.24%) in average roster size among men's teams across all across all divisions.

Delta	D1	D2	D3	Total	Delta Tot %
Baseball	-2.6	0.1	-0.1	-0.9	-2.05%
Basketball	-0.6	0.0	-0.4	-0.4	-2.20%
Cross Country	-1.6	0.0	-0.1	-0.6	-3.80%
Fencing	-1.2	4.0	-0.5	-0.9	-4.74%
Football	0.0	2.1	-1.1	0.1	0.52%
Football (FBS)	-0.5	0.0	0.0	-0.5	N/A
Football (FCS)	3.1	0.0	0.0	3.1	N/A
Golf	-0.7	0.0	0.2	-0.2	-1.82%
Gymnastics	-1.0	0.0	3.7	-0.1	-0.47%
Ice Hockey	-0.5	0.0	-0.4	-0.4	-1.37%
Lacrosse	-1.1	0.6	-0.3	-0.2	-0.47%
Skiing	-0.9	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7	-5.38%
Soccer	-0.2	0.4	-0.5	-0.2	-0.58%
Swimming and Diving	-2.0	-0.5	-0.5	-1.0	-4.37%
Tennis	-0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.00%
Track, Indoor	-2.1	1.2	0.5	-0.2	-0.49%
Track, Outdoor	-2.2	0.6	0.8	-0.3	-0.75%
Volleyball	-2.3	0.9	0.1	0.0	0.00%
Water Polo	-1.2	-1.0	0.6	-0.6	-2.55%
Wrestling	**-1.6**	**2.8**	**0.3**	**0.4**	**1.24%**

Q *What makes MatStats think the roster cap mandate has affected wrestling?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-37

The roster sizes in NCAA wrestling grew across all levels from 2025 from 2025 to 2026 (+1.24%) but decreased in D1 (-4.55%). Only D1 Only D1 was applicable to the new roster cap rules.

Wrestling Men Mean Roster Sizes	D1	D2	D3	Total
2025	35.2	33.2	30.0	32.3
2026	33.6	36.0	30.3	32.7
Delta %	-4.55%	8.43%	1.00%	1.24%

Q *What year this century did we see the largest decrease in NCAA D1 Men's mean roster size?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-38

The largest decrease in NCAA Men's D1 wrestling roster size (-1.6) was from 2025 to 2026.

Year	Men D1	Delta	Year	Men D1	Delta
2001	30.4		2014	33.0	0.5
2002	29.1	-1.3	2015	33.2	0.2
2003	29.1	0.0	2016	32.9	-0.3
2004	29.8	0.7	2017	32.9	0.0
2005	30.5	0.7	2018	32.3	-0.6
2006	29.6	-0.9	2019	33.1	0.8
2007	29.8	0.2	2020	32.7	-0.4
2008	30.4	0.6	2021	32.4	-0.3
2009	31.1	0.7	2022	34.9	2.5
2010	31.3	0.2	2023	34.5	-0.4
2011	32.1	0.8	2024	34.6	0.1
2012	31.7	-0.4	2025	35.2	0.6
2013	32.5	0.8	2026	33.6	-1.6

Q *What sports are most affected by the new roster caps?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-39

The running sports have the largest cap room after the new roster new roster cap mandates in Men's NCAA D1.

Men 2026 Caps	D1 2026	Caps	Delta
Baseball	39.5	34	-5.5
Basketball	15.6	15	-0.6
Cross Country	15.1	17	1.9
Fencing	17.5	24	6.5
Football			0.0
Football (FBS)	146.1	105	-41.1
Football (FCS)	127.9	105	-22.9
Golf	9.2	9	-0.2
Gymnastics	19.9	20	0.1
Ice Hockey	28.2	26	-2.2
Lacrosse	51.1	48	-3.1
Skiing	12.6	16	3.4
Soccer	33.4	28	-5.4
Swimming and Diving	27.6	30	2.4
Tennis	9.8	10	0.2
Track, Indoor	40.0	45	5.0
Track, Outdoor	40.0	45	5.0
Volleyball	18.5	18	-0.5
Water Polo	24.1	24	-0.1
Wrestling	**33.6**	**30**	**-3.6**

Q *After the grandfather rule runs its course, how many participants could NCAA Men's sports lose?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-40

After the grandfather rule expires, the NCAA Men sports could lose 7,715 participants.

Men's Teams 2026	D1 Teams	Cap Delta	Total Potential loss
Baseball	308	-5.5	-1694.0
Basketball	365	-0.6	-219.0
Cross Country	331	1.9	628.9
Fencing	22	6.5	143.0
Football		0.0	0.0
Football (FBS)	136	-41.1	-5589.6
Football (FCS)	129	-22.9	-2954.1
Golf	311	-0.2	-62.2
Gymnastics	12	0.1	1.2
Ice Hockey	61	-2.2	-134.2
Lacrosse	77	-3.1	-238.7
Skiing	11	3.4	37.4
Soccer	213	-5.4	-1150.2
Swimming and Diving	136	2.4	326.4
Tennis	237	0.2	47.4
Track, Indoor	383	5.0	1915.0
Track, Outdoor	306	5.0	1530.0
Volleyball	31	-0.5	-15.5
Water Polo	29	-0.1	-2.9
Wrestling	**79**	**-3.6**	**-284.4**
Total	**3,077**	**N/A**	**(7,715.5)**

Q *How big of a potential loss could result from the roster cap rule?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-41

The potential loss of -7,716 men's athletes is a -7.07% decrease.

Men's NCAA D1	Participation
D1 Men's Participation 2026	109,171.0
Potential loss Roster Caps	-7,716
Potential % loss men's D1 Participants	-7.07%

Yes Kevin, “Caps” is a 4-letter word

- Yes Kevin, “Caps” is a 4-letter word.
- NWCA & Mike might have 4 letters, but they could be our savior.

SEGMENT

Gorms Summary of Roster Caps

The MAT STATS Show

59-43

? Gorms, can you give the viewers a summary for what you think the new roster cap rule has had on participation numbers?

? We are MatStats, we need a statistician to weigh-in here.

Q *If two variables are correlated, does it prove causation?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-44

Correlation does not Prove Causation

- It is a very common practice and a mistake to try and tie two variables together that might have no effect on each other.
- You can’t draw a conclusion for a correlation to two variables that do not affect each other.
- From 1936 to 2000, the Redskins final game correlated to the Presidential election at +1.0. Yet the winner of the Skins game has no effect on the Presidential election.
- Who even wasted their time figuring this out?

Q *Should we consider the roster cap rule does have causation on the decrease in participation numbers?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-45

Since the first year this century we saw a decrease in male participation in NCAA D1 was 2026 and the first year of the roster cap rule was also 2026, we should analyze this.

- Before we try and tie two variables together, we first need to debate if they might affect each other.
- Then look to see if some stats help this conclusion.
- Reduction of roster caps could influence total participation, but only if the new roster caps are below the previous roster size.

Q *Is there reason to believe that the roster cap rule contributed to decreased NCAA participation?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-46

It is obvious that roster caps could be part of the reason for a decrease in NCAA Participation from 2025 to 2026.

- Since the roster cap and House settlement deal almost exclusively with D1 teams, we only analyze D1 participation numbers.
- Of the 15 men's NCAA sports with the largest number of teams, only the 3 running teams, Swimming, and Tennis have room under the cap. Tennis is only +0.2.
- The history this century has been an increase in D1 participation numbers all years except 2025-26.
- Yes, it is possible to consider NIL and Rev Share play a part in this, but one must consider that the roster cap rule has possibly had an effect.

Q *Does Gorms believe that the roster cap rule has hurt participation rates?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-47

Gorms is very confident that the roster cap rule did result in decreased male participation in NCAA D1 from 2025 to 2026.

- 1) The only year we saw a decrease in all NCAA participation (-2.7%) numbers is 2025-26. This was the first year of the new roster cap rule.
- 2) Only Football saw a D1 increase in participation numbers in 2025-26.
- 3) From 2025 to 2026, we saw a larger decrease in D1 (-2.7%) than across all sports (-0.6%). Since the roster cap rule is almost exclusively at the D1 level, it makes one think the cap rule had a negative effect.
- 4) Only 2 years saw a decrease in participation numbers across all divisions this century. 2021 – Covid & 2026 – House Settlement.
- 5) There is a potential loss of 7,716 athletes or -7.07% once the grandfather rule runs its course.

Q *Did MatStats definitively prove anything about the roster caps rule? Will MatStats do follow up shows?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-48

The One-Year Decrease in Participation Numbers does not prove the cap rule will be horrible for participation numbers, but it sure does show we need to monitor this.

- A one-year decrease is not a large enough window to prove that the roster cap rule will be a disaster.
- But MatStats is so concerned about this we will have an annual follow-up show on it.
- We also need to consider other elements in the House Settlement that could cause this – Rev Share. The implementation of NIL could and most likely also has an effect.
- Eventually you run out of someone else's money.

SEGMENT

Total Teams & Running Sports under the under the Cap

The MAT STATS Show

59-49

- ? Gorms, have we seen an affect on the number of teams in 2025-26?
- ? What happens if we control for the running sports?
- ? How will the new 5-year eligibility rules affect the participation numbers?

Q *Can MatStats provide a chart for the number of 2025 NCAA Men's teams by sport and division?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-50

Number of 2025 NCAA Men's teams by sport and and division.

Men 2025	D1	D2	D3	Total
Baseball	307	248	379	934
Basketball	364	292	406	1,062
Cross Country	329	258	382	969
Fencing	22	1	12	35
Football		160	239	399
Football (FBS)	134			134
Football (FCS)	129			129
Golf	308	195	288	791
Gymnastics	12		3	15
Ice Hockey	63		86	149
Lacrosse	77	78	236	391
Skiing	11	6	17	34
Soccer	212	199	404	815
Swimming and Diving	137	74	231	442
Tennis	242	142	294	678
Track, Indoor	279	187	308	774
Track, Outdoor	301	226	333	860
Volleyball	28	36	127	191
Water Polo	29	6	17	52
Wrestling	80	70	126	276
Total	**3064**	**2178**	**3888**	**9130**

Q *Can MatStats provide a chart for the number of 2026 NCAA Men's teams by sport and division?*

Number of 2026 NCAA Men's teams by sport and and division.

The MAT STATS Show

59-51

Men 2026	D1	D2	D3	Total
Baseball	308	249	376	933
Basketball	365	293	402	1,060
Cross Country	331	262	381	974
Fencing	22	1	12	35
Football		159	238	397
Football (FBS)	136			136
Football (FCS)	129			129
Golf	311	200	286	797
Gymnastics	12		3	15
Ice Hockey	61		89	150
Lacrosse	77	79	232	388
Skiing	11	6	17	34
Soccer	213	198	400	811
Swimming and Diving	136	77	231	444
Tennis	237	138	292	667
Track, Indoor	283	193	310	786
Track, Outdoor	306	232	337	875
Volleyball	31	39	129	199
Water Polo	29	6	17	52
Wrestling	**79**	**72**	**131**	**282**
Total	**3,077**	**2,204**	**3,883**	**9,164**

Q *Where does wrestling rank by growth percentage of NCAA Men's sports across all divisions from 2025 to 2026? to 2026?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-52

On a percentage basis from 2024-25 to 2025-26, Wrestling has the 2nd the 2nd largest growth rate (+2.17%) among NCAA Men's teams across all teams across all divisions.

Delta 2025 to 2026 Men's NCAA Teams	D1	D2	D3	Total	Delta Tot %
Baseball	1	1	-3	-1	-0.11%
Basketball	1	1	-4	-2	-0.19%
Cross Country	2	4	-1	5	0.52%
Fencing	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Football	0	-1	-1	-2	0.00%
Football (FBS)	2	0	0	2	N/A
Football (FCS)	0	0	0	0	N/A
Golf	3	5	-2	6	0.76%
Gymnastics	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Ice Hockey	-2	0	3	1	0.67%
Lacrosse	0	1	-4	-3	-0.77%
Skiing	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Soccer	1	-1	-4	-4	-0.49%
Swimming and Diving	-1	3	0	2	0.45%
Tennis	-5	-4	-2	-11	-1.62%
Track, Indoor	4	6	2	12	1.55%
Track, Outdoor	5	6	4	15	1.74%
Volleyball	3	3	2	8	**4.19%**
Water Polo	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Wrestling	-1	2	5	6	**2.17%**
Total	**13**	**26**	**-5**	**34**	**0.37%**

Q *How big would the potential decrease in participants be if we controlled for the male running sports?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-53

If you control for the male running sports, there is a there is a potential loss of -11,789 athletes or a --14.72% decrease.

Men's NCAA D1	Participation
D1 Part Control for XC, Track In and Out 2026	80,634.0
Potential Roster loss from Caps controlling for XC, Tracks	-11,789.4
Potential Men's D1 loss % controlling for XC & Tracks	-14.62%

Q *How are multi sport athletes counted?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-54

A multi sport athlete is counted for each sport they participate in.

- There have been debates for decades on how to count and treat multi sport athletes.
- If you are a distance runner you can be counted 3X. This doesn't mean the school has 3 athletes, it is all the same person.
- If a school is interested in participation numbers, distance running is the place to get them inexpensively. One person doing 3 sports is less expensive than 3 people doing 1 sport each.

Q *Why was the roster cap rule part of the House Settlement?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-55

MatStats is not sure how the roster cap rule was included in the House Settlement, but it sure seems like a way to reduce expenses.

- MatStats does not know where the House v NCAA got their roster cap numbers.
- We have mentioned several times in the past, that it appears that they were intentionally selected to force schools to cut opportunities. Most likely to reduce costs since the Rev Share and NIL take money away from other athletes.
- The three running sports were assigned a cap that enabled them to add athletes.

Q *How will the new 5-year eligibility rule affect unique participants?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-56

The new 5-year eligibility rule can easily reduce the number of unique participants in many sports.

- Making it even more difficult to create more opportunities for unique participants is the 5-year eligibility rule.
- Since the sports have roster caps, every person that elects to use a 5th year bumps either an incoming freshman or a current team member.
- It might sound great to say, let them all have 5-years, but you are essentially cutting people.

Q *How could the 5-year eligibility rule affect the number of unique wrestlers?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-57

The 5-year eligibility rule could result in -20% less unique wrestlers.

# Years Eligibility	Roster Cap	Unique Athletes per Year
4-year	30	7.5
5-year	30	6.0
Reduction	**NA**	**-20.0%**

Q *What NCAA Men's sports have the most growth from 2025 to 2026. Where does wrestling rank?*

The MAT STATS Show

59-58

94% of the total growth in Men's NCAA teams from 2025 to 2026 2025 to 2026 across all divisions comes from the running sports. sports. Wrestling has the 4th most.

Rank	NCAA Men's Sports All Divisions	Delta from 2025 to 2026
1	Track Outdoor	15
2	Track Indoor	12
3	Volleyball	8
4	Wrestling	6
4	Golf	6
6	Cross Country	5
7	Swimming	2
8	Ice Hockey	1
9	Water Polo	0
9	Fencing	0

Rank	NCAA Men's Sports All Divisions	Delta from 2025 to 2026
9	Gymnastics	0
9	Skiing	0
9	Football	0
14	Baseball	-1
15	Basketball	-2
16	Lacrosse	-3
17	Soccer	-4
18	Tennis	-11
	Total	+34
	Percent Running	94%

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

The MAT STATS Show

59-59

Episode 59 Kev's Notes #1

1	59-6	Kelly Powell ran the 2026 NYC Marathon in 3:30:03, that is an 8:00/mile pace. Even Gorms can't come close to that pace.
2	59-8	There are now 804 college wrestling teams in the NCAA, NAIA, & NCWA. 295 are women's teams or 37%.
3	5-10	NIL has become so ubiquitous that even mascots have deals.
4	59-13	A little talked about component of the House Settlement is that all schools that opt in will need to cap roster spots in all sports at approved levels.
5	59-22	The only 2 years in this century that saw a decrease in NCAA total participation were 2021 & 2026. 2021 was caused by Covid and all evidence points to that roster caps had an effect in 2026.
6	59-27	Most college participation saw a negative growth from 2025 to 2026. Wrestling saw the 2nd largest growth rate 3.32% in this time frame.

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

The MAT STATS Show

59-60

Episode 59 Kev's Notes #2

7	59-37	Total participation in Men's NCAA wrestling grew from 2025 to 2026 but decreased by 4.55% in D1. Only D1 had to deal with the roster cap rule.
8	59-33	Roster cap are being worked will still be worked in over the upcoming 3 years. All college athletes that were in college in 2025 are grandfathered in. As the grandfather rule is fully implemented men's D1 sports could lose 7,700 participants.
9	59-53	When you control for running sports, the potential loss of participants is over 11,000 or a 14.72% decrease.
10	59-57	The new 5-year eligibility rule could result in up to a 20% fewer unique wrestlers on a team. This means that the combination of roster caps and the 5-year eligibility rule will result in significantly fewer college sport opportunities.

The MAT STATS Show

59-61

What is the topic next month (Wednesday 12/16/26 3PM EST)?

The next episode explores the financial financial situation of college athletics.

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.