

Quote of the Year

First I want to talk about wrestling in the off season. Do it. It's not that I want you to be a one sport athlete, I want you all to be three sport players, but I also know what a little extra focus can accomplish. Our state qualifiers all wrestle after the season. Our place winners wrestle at the national level. It makes a difference. The more matches you get the better you become. We can practice diligently but it is competition that makes us improve. Coach Bloom is going to have the room open at the middle school on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:00pm. Stop in and learn a little Freestyle or Greco. I will take anyone who wants to go to Montrose or Clarkston on Mondays and Wednesdays and we'll wrestle a lot of Friday nights in the next couple of months. The Team Michigan qualifier is in Holt in 4 weeks and we will help anyone who wants to try out. Summer wrestling is a great experience, the trip to Fargo is amazing and we would love to have more of our team on that team.

Second I need all of the parents of the underclassmen to get involved in the Wrestling Club. We run a great club and our club runs great tournaments but we need your help to Git'er Done. That golf outing will be here before we know it and we need all of your help to make it successful. That's what pays for summer camp and so much more. Please get involved and make it a big money maker.

As always I have made a little something for each of you, the framed pictures are for you to take home. There is a team picture for Mika, Cora Lynn, and Amanda, thank you for all that you did. Missy we are going to miss you something terrible and we don't want you to forget us. Coach Bennett thanks for the time that you spent in the room and all that you taught us. There are two of the big collage pictures for Coach Strick and Coach Bloom so you remember the times we had with our guys. And as always there are CDs with all of my pictures of the season. This year I added a little something new. When I made the CDs for Team Michigan after the nationals I made a movie of the best photos and it was the most popular part of the CD so I added that to your disk. Let's take a couple of moments and relive some of our "Glory Days".

Now it's time to talk to my team. I really don't want to do this

because of the 'overs'. I told you about them before. I got 'em bad. For those of you who don't know let me tell you about them. The overs are that feeling that you get when something really good comes to an end and you don't want it to end. You want it to keep going but it can't. That feeling is the overs, but I'm really trying to look at it as the end of a really great chapter, so good that you can't wait to get to the next chapter so you can find out what's going to happen and if I know my guys, and I think I know them as well as anyone here, the chapters to come are going to be great.

Now you may have noticed I called you my team. It's not that I'm not willing to share, you belong to all of us. Coach Strick calls you his too and gives you a wealth of wrestling knowledge as he leads this team in its endeavors. Maybe the only guy that has more of a claim on parts of this team is Coach Bloom, he was there when some of you started and he's still there today, as long as you are willing to wait until he arrives. Coach Simmons and Coach Bennett can lay a little claim as well. Most certainly you belong to someone in this room, parents, girlfriends, fans, they can claim you too. But as far as tonight goes you are my team. Seniors it has been four years and I never missed a match and rarely missed a practice. Once I asked Andy Simmons what my job was? He said that's easy, you take care of us. I hope I took good care of all of you. You see you are the first group to come along since I decided that I was worthy of being called a coach. It took me a long time to be comfortable with that and it's some of you that made it possible. For that I am more than pleased. Wrestling is an enormous part of my life but wrestlers are even a bigger part.

You guys know that I love a good quote. I've put them on the board or sent them home on your weekly notes. I hope they have helped to motivate you and to make you think. We talked about the 4 Beasey rules for wrestling. You remember: There is more than one way to do everything, you don't have to go to OZ, if you put all of the small pieces in focus the big picture becomes clear, when it's time to eat, eat, when it's time to sleep, sleep, and when it's time to work, work with all of your heart. Funny how they apply outside of the wrestling world too. If you think you can, or if you think you can't, you're right. If it's to be, it's up to me. Working harder than you. Git'er done. They all seem to apply after the mat season is finished. As I was working on this talk I came across a lot of great quotes from different parts of

the sports world and beyond and I thought I would share the best with you.

There's a fine line between fishing and just standing on the shore like an idiot.

Steven Wright.

Show me a man who is a good loser and I'll show you a man who is playing golf with his boss.

Jim Murray.

Always root for the winner. That way you won't be disappointed.

-Tug McGraw .

He treats us like men. He lets us wear earrings.

-Torrin Polk, University of Houston receiver, on his coach, John Jenkins, 1991

Defensively, I think it's important for us to tackle.

-Karl Mecklenburg, Denver Broncos linebacker, before Super Bowl XXIV.

I'm really happy for Coach and the guys who've been around here for six or seven years, especially our seniors.

-Ohio State quarterback Bob Hoying, after winning a Big Ten title.

Any time Detroit scores more than 100 points and holds the other team below 100 points, they almost always win.

-Doug Collins

[My] career was sputtering until [I] did a 360 and got headed in the right direction.

- NBA star Tracy McGrady, after signing with the Orlando Magic on Thursday.

If at first you don't succeed... So much for skydiving.

Henry Youngman

Now a little more seriously...

**One hundred percent of the shots you don't take don't go in.
Wayne Gretzky**

**My grandfather once told me that there were two kinds of people:
those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to
try to be in the first group; there was much less competition.
Indira Gandhi**

**Far away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not
reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them,
and try to follow where they lead.
Louisa May Alcott**

**Remember this: if you ever think you're too small to be effective --
you've never been in bed with a mosquito.
Anita Roddick**

**Risk more than others think is safe. Care more than others think is
wise. Dream more than others think is practical. Expect more than
others think is possible.
Cadet maxim, West Point Military Academy**

**The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up.
Paul Vale'ry**

**Courage is about doing what you're afraid to do. There can be no
courage unless you're scared."
---Eddie Rickenbacker**

**Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit
there.
---Will Rogers**

**Go the extra mile. It's never crowded.
---Executive Speechwriter Newsletter**

**You can see that all of these things are a part of the things that you
learn on the mat. Wrestling is a sport of self-reliance because you
have no one else to count on, but it is also a great team sport
because I know of no closer group of friends than those who play the**

mat game. You will discover that in the future you will gather with all of friends from your “Glory Days” in high school and almost automatically a group will form. It will be your team and suddenly you are back in a time and place where you played the most individual of sports and you valued your team above all.

Now back to my team. I could say a little about each one of you. I could talk of a pin in Bridgeport that was a first for any Williamston Wrestling team. I could talk of the guy that lost 20% of his body weight because that was where his team needed him. Or I could talk of a guy who would love it if everyone got a pin with a spladle. But I’m not going to talk about those things, you will have your night, tonight is about the other six on my team.

Brian Hickner, even after you decided you didn’t want to play our game anymore something drew you back. It’s been said that wrestling isn’t a sport, it’s a lifestyle, and I guess you needed to be a part of that lifestyle. My quote for you from Theodore Roosevelt, and he said “ The only man who never makes a mistake is the one who never does anything.” You sir decided to do something and for that your team is grateful.

Sarah Bartig, you became a part of my team because someone asked you too. I’m sure your parents never thought of their little girl as a grappler. I know you didn’t spend much time on the mat the past couple of seasons but you were still a part of my team. You rode the miles, shot some video tape, kept some stats, but mostly you were there for your teammates, thank you for being there. Tonight you were back on the playing field and that must feel good. Babe Didrickson Zaharias was probably the greatest female athlete in history, three time All-American in basketball, won all but 12 of the 634 track and field events she entered, won the US and British Amateur and Three LPGA golf titles and struck out Joe DiMaggio. Not bad for a girl. She said "The formula for success is simple: practice and concentration then more practice and more concentration." Sarah you will accomplish great things in your life and I know that wrestling with boys will play a part in those things.

Dusty Stiffler, a unique individual. Always a little hesitant to start the season and always good for some thrills once you did. You are a guy

who a truly wrestled for the team. If it weren't for your buddies you probably would have found something else to do in the winter. But it's good you had those buddies and they are lucky to have you. When I found the quote that I left on the board most of the season the first one I thought of was you. The quote is "When you are wrestling a gorilla you don't stop when you get tired, you stop when the gorilla gets tired." I have seen you get pounded by the gorilla, I have seen you be the gorilla, and I have seen you launch the gorilla through the air. It was always a thrill. Congratulations on being a State Qualifier that is a great accomplishment but mostly thanks for being one of my guys.

Tim Grant I always said you are a stand-up kid. When you got caught doing something you shouldn't be doing you offered up the truth and paid the price. And when you failed to make weight you provided me with your own quote.... "But coach it was taco night." I thought that vein in Coach Louie's neck was going to burst, but at least you were honest. Keep that with you as you go through your life and it will bring you more good than bad. Thanks for being one of my guys.

Now it gets a little hard. The last two guys. The heart of my team, my Captains. But they are so much more than that. They are my friends, my kids, my little brothers. They have become such a part of my life that I will have trouble watching them move on to those next chapters but I am comforted in knowing that this chapter isn't quite through yet. We still have a summer of wrestling to go and then Collegiate careers to follow. Who knows where the path will lead but I am such a part of their families that I will still be a part of their lives. I will watch them graduate, I will dance at their weddings and hold their children and tell them stories about their daddies.

Devin and Jeremy we have been a lot of places and seen a lot of things. We have traveled over 10,000 miles together, we have traveled to or through 8 different states. From Marquette to Louisville. From Pittsburgh to St. Louis to Fargo. We have seen some great wrestling and we have wrestled with the best. Thanks for a great journey.

Devin you are a comeback kid. After what you went through last spring it was amazing that you were on the mat at all. When I saw you

with tubes and hoses running from all those places that we don't want tubes and hoses, I thought wrestling might be just a memory, but you made some different memories. I know the disappointment that you feel but I also know about your strength and that this is just another challenge to get just a little better in everything that you do. Your quote is from Coach Simmons who said "Devin is not happy nor would I be about his semi-final loss but I was talking to Nick on our ride back from the Olympic qualifier about how difficult it is to take 3rd. Much harder than 2nd. It tells you of the character and the heart of that person. It also has you go out as winner and makes it easier to sleep at night, I mean you are talking to a guy that placed 2nd 26 years ago and I still think about it." I'm sure that in 26 years you will still be thinking about it but I also hope you are thinking of all the great times that went along with it. I love 'ya kid.

Jeremy we all know your story. We know you're a great kid, a great son, and a great leader. I love you too. The quote you picked earlier in the season was " I'm not here for the show, I'm here because I am the show" and what a show it was. It lead me to a new quote for tonight and it is the shortest one. Just a couple of words. "Got'er Done!"

There is just one more quote for tonight and it's for all of you...

"Love the game. Love the game for the pure joy of accomplishment. Love the game for everything it can teach you about yourself. Love the game for the feeling of belonging to a group endeavoring to do its best. Love the game for being involved in a team whose members can't wait to see you do your best. Love the game for the challenge of working harder than you ever have at something and then harder than that. Love the game because it takes all team members to give it life. Love the game because at its best, the game tradition will include your contributions. Love the game because you belong to a long line of fine athletes who have loved it. It is now your legacy. Love the game so much that you will pass on your love of the game to another athlete who has seen your dedication, your work, your challenges, your triumphs... and then that athlete will, because of you, love the game."

---Unknown

Thank you for being my team.