

flushing the GI tract.

**Friday:** Today you should consume your water and food based on how much you weigh. Continue with bars, shakes, meats and nuts for calories. Now, you will be right around the weight you need for weigh-ins. After practice on Friday or the night before the competition, water should be cut out immediately after practice.

The wrestler may be overweight and that's OK! You should lose about two to three pounds alone in water weight overnight. For example, a Cincinnati Functional Fitness wrestler weighed 169 pounds on Thursday night, only a day and a half before a tournament. He cut his water consumption on Friday and dropped to 159 pounds for weigh-ins while eating a light dinner the night before!

Do not worry if you are overweight, it is simply water that is shortly going to be flushed out if you stay true to the diet. It is important to cut water consumption Friday after practice because that's where the weight drop comes from.

The reason is simple, our bodies have adapted to being in a diuretic state from the constant water consumption and low sodium intake. Since the body is unaware of the cessation of water, it continues to flush the system which in-turn leads to the drop in weight.

### After Weigh-ins

Immediately after weigh-ins we have our wrestlers drink Pedalyte to restore electrolytes and to quickly hydrate them.

At Cincinnati Functional Fitness, we use a very similar diet plan which helps our wrestlers reach their potential on the mat. The diet is part of their discipline, and it's an integral component to a wrestler's training regimen. We stick to lean meats, vegetables and salads with olive oil. Also, we ensure their sodium intake is low in order for their body to release the water out of their system.

If we don't continually drink water our body releases ADH (Anti-Diuretic Hormone) signaling the body to retain water because of the decrease in urination. We have our wrestlers drink a half gallon of water every day along with a half gallon of Pedalyte.



(Scott Goodmaster photo)

**A.J. Kowal performs a heavy set of deadlifts for five reps during his in-season program in order to stay strong and injury resistant.**

The Pedalyte is filled with many electrolytes such as sodium and potassium, that are lost through urination and sweating. Pedalyte ensures we avoid hyponatremia (electrolyte imbalance). Electrolytes are essential to ensure proper muscle function. We stay away from fully loaded sugary sports drinks which can cause cramping, bloating and diarrhea.

At CFF, our wrestlers are well fed, they have energy, and they are hydrated, which is evident on and off the mat. We want to avoid starvation at all costs! In my experience, I've seen great wrestlers who are cutting a lot of weight via starvation and dehydration, go from dominating early in the season to ending the season in a disappointment. Don't let this be you!

Strength and conditioning is paramount for wrestlers who are cutting weight. Those who aren't dedicating an hour to maintaining their strength will become run down, weak, injury prone and exhausted physically and mentally.

At CFF, we keep our wrestlers strong and powerful throughout the arduous season by completing a one-hour session once a week. We have found this hour in the gym has been optimal for maintaining strength and power during the season. Staying consistent in the gym during the season keeps our wrestlers injury resistant, flexible, strong, explosive and energized.

The in-season program they follow has a strict focus on strength and power, using heavy weight and low repetitions (5+5 reps). All too often I see coaches stick their wrestlers on a hypertrophy program (8-15 reps) during season which aims to build muscle.

Wrestlers aren't going to build muscle during season! The physical demands the season places on the body simply do not allow for optimal recovery which is needed during a hypertrophy program, therefore, stick to strength and power!

One traditional exercise we love to use is the deadlift for total body strength. One minute after the traditional lift, we choose an explosive exercise that mimics the traditional lift with a more functional movement (sprawl to a jump). The minute of rest allows for energy levels to restore, ensuring that maximum effort is set forth on the explosive movement.

As for conditioning, we use little to no conditioning in-season because our wrestlers get copious amounts during practice; however if they aren't conditioning enough in practice we like to use Versa Climber sprints or AirDyne Bike sprints to increase their conditioning levels. ■