



“PREVENTATIVE” WRESTLING IN GRECO-ROMAN STYLE

Milorad Dokmanac¹, Momir Petkovic², Dragan Doder³, Valdemar Stajer¹

¹ Faculty of Sport and Tourism, University of Novi Sad, Serbia, ² Coach USA Wrestling National Team and Olympic Champion in Montreal 1976.

³ Provincial Institute of Sports of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Serbiaž
dokmanac@fila-wrestling.com MPetkovic@USAWrestling.org

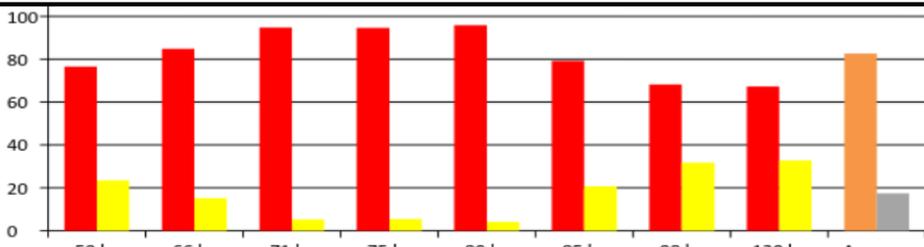
Introduction, Relevance and Definition of the Problem: Throughout the last 10 years, Greco-Roman wrestling has had a major problem as a result of the systematic destruction of aggressive self-focused point scoring. This negative effect is demonstrated more and more everyday through the execution of how wrestling tactics and strategies are taught by coaches, enacted by wrestlers, and officiated by judges. This defensive style of wrestling prevents the presentation of wrestling techniques, which is in direct correlation with lower scoring of technical points per minute of the wrestling match. As a result of lower technical points being scored, judges have now been given the role of deciding the winner of the match rather than the wrestlers competing. This concentration on stopping an opponent from scoring, rather than aggressively pursuing individual opportunities for technical action is demonstrated primarily by a wrestler continually holding fingers or wrists in the standing position and by lowering the position of the head. From here on described as "preventative" wrestling. In order to demonstrate the significant impact of holding fingers/ wrists has on a wrestling match, an analysis of all Gold medal matches of the 2015 European Games in Azerbaijan was performed and quantified the amount of match time spent in normal contact, without contact, and contact made by holding fingers/wrists. **Research objective:** The aim of this analysis is to demonstrate how this "preventative" style of wrestling (holding fingers/wrists in a standing position) has a negative impact on the execution of self-focused, action oriented wrestling techniques in the Greco-Roman style. **Research methods:** The basic method that was applied in this analysis consists in measuring the time in seconds of each final match.

Table 1. Overview of Action in standing and parterre position in seconds (All matches lasted 6 minutes)

Category/kg	Seconds in Standing Position	Holding fingers (%)	Without contact %	Normal Contact %
59 kg	319	62.70	13.79	23.51
66 kg	331	80.06	4.83	15.11
71 kg	307	83.06	11.73	5.21
75 kg	317	85.81	8.83	5.36
80 kg	317	82.34	13.56	4.10
85 kg	295	73.22	6.10	20.68
98 kg	330	63.94	4.24	31.82
130 kg	248	64.11	3.23	32.66
Ave Total	308	74.41	8.29	17.31

Finals from European Games in Greco Roman Style – What Type of Contact in Standing?

Percent of Time Spent in Preventative Wrestling ■ Percent of Time in Normal Contact ■



The data illustrates how the style of Greco-Roman wrestling now concentrates on trying to **prevent** an opponent from scoring rather than the wrestler focusing on what he can actively do to score points, offensively and counter-offensively. Data shows that 83% of match time has no technical points scored as a result of **preventative** wrestling (holding fingers/wrists/ blocking with the head). Consequently, this leaves only 17% of the match time (on average 52 seconds) to execute scoring techniques in the standing position.

Table 2. Review of technical points in the standing and parterre position and the average number of points per minute of the match.

Category/kg	Technical Points in Standing Position	Caution Points in Standing	Points Par-terre position	Total Points	Points/min
59 kg		1	2	3	0.83
66 kg	1	2		3	0.83
71 kg	1	1	4	6	1.67
75 kg		1	5	6	1.67
80 kg		2		2	0.56
85 kg		1	4	5	1.39
98 kg	4			4	1.11
130 kg		2	2	4	1.11
TOTAL	6	10	17	33	Ave= 1.15
TOTAL %	18.2%	30.3%	51.5%		

The data in Table-2 is devastating. Only 6 technical points were scored from the standing position in the combined eight finals matches (1 point was surrendered to a challenge). Those 6 points contributed to being only 18% of the total technical points scored in the finals matches. While 30% of the points awarded were derived from cautions,

wherein a wrestler who did not attempt a technical action was rewarded with 1 point! This data is detrimental to the sport of Greco-Roman wrestling. The average number of technical points per minute of the match is 1.15. In three of the eight finals matches the average was less than 1.0 technical point per minute. At the European Championships U-23 in Poland this year, the wrestling matches took place under the new rules (free of parterre positions) and the average points per one minute of the match was 1.97. This is a prime example of how proper rules and enforcement of those rules encourages wrestlers to actively seek opportunities to score in the standing position, and in turn, provides a more interesting and exciting competition. An overview of the

duration of the match in standing and parterre position show that most of the match is held in a standing position (85.56%). **Basic wrestling position in the Greco-Roman style:** The pictures above illustrate today's wrestling in the Greco-Roman style here are some examples of the preventative wrestling that dominates.

Taping of the fingers: This picture to the right best explains how the wrestlers are preparing their fingers to provide an advantage in order to attack the opponent's fingers.

The position of the head in Greco-Roman wrestling: Another example of "preventative" wrestling is when one wrestler lowers their head. Again, this tactic aims at stopping an opponent from scoring, as opposed to each wrestler focusing on what they can actively do to score offensively or counter-offensively. **Conclusions:** As a result of this data it can be concluded that low scoring from the standing position is to be expected when only 17% of the total match time is available for these techniques to be performed. In freestyle wrestling it is still possible to attack the legs or even use the legs to attack while fingers or wrists are being held, but with many of the techniques used in Greco-Roman, a free hand must be available as the hands and arms are the sole

components in execution of technique. **Recommendations:** Restrict keeping fingers and wrist for more than 2 - 3 seconds in the standing position. In the event that a wrestler violates this rule; the first case is followed by a warning (attention); by repeating rule violations a point can be given for the prevention of the wrestling (passivity and one technical point to the opponent. without caution), and so on each time when wrestler makes a rule violation. It is also suggested that we educate our officials as to the nature of our sport- throws from feet to back to score takedowns, and to eliminate the negative tactics that prevent these technical aspects from occurring. This suggestion encourages chest to chest wrestling with both wrestlers' heads up and discourages the grabbing of fingers, pushing away from opponents to avoid contact, and blocking with shoulders, forearms and elbows.

