

WRESTLING

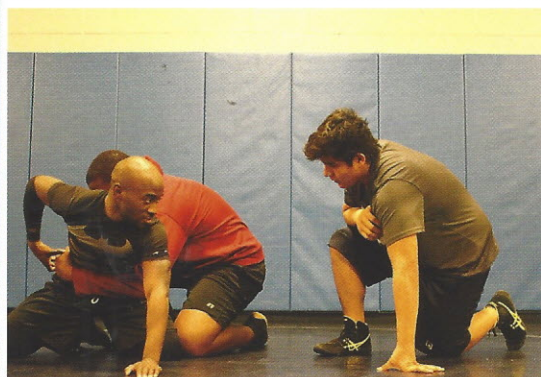


Before the individuals tournament, the team ended practice, like always, with a huddle. "Our strengths," Packy said afterward, "are on our feet, switches, and escapes. That's a reflection of the coach; I've got to do my best to build that confidence."

After a slow start, CCHS's wrestling team showed a unique kind of growth this year. With key wrestlers from previous years retiring, the team's new roster faced an uphill battle. The experience, teammates report, was what led to such a strong sense of brotherhood on the team.

"It's not a great reference," Coach Patrick "Packy" Burke said when asked about his coaching philosophy, "but last year Stall High School showed up wearing sunglasses. The coach said 'We're trying to block out the haters.' Silly, I know, but that's exactly what I'm talking about when I say, 'Today they may not be #1; you may be #1!'"

Here's to our #1 CCHS Wrestlers!



Coach Jaquez demonstrates an escape with Mychael Aiken (12) to Fernando Leyva (10). Leyva lost nearly 100lbs in weight before the season, and had an excellent first-year record.



The team moves one of the massive wrestling mats back into their hall above the auxiliary gym. Maintenance of the mat, uniforms, and hall is shouldered by the whole team.



Terrance Calloway (10, left) practices blocking a cradle with Andrew "Blaine" Cook (9). Cook, known for his speed, has wrestled for 8 years.

One thing obvious in the practice hall is the friendly atmosphere. Despite the seemingly savage turns, tilts, and takedowns, the team always remains supportive. Both healthy criticism and spontaneous grappling are abundant.

Top: Blaine Cook clings to Hunter Preston (12). Hunter, suffering a rib injury, said it was like wrangling a monkey. Bottom: Even the coaches get in on the fun after practice.

