

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WRESTLER

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As the seemingly endless and grueling practice draws to a close, he sits center mat huddled with his teammates in the practice room where temperatures are near unbearable, and the coach speaks.

“One more day and you get to put all your hard work on the line, one day to see why you have chosen to work so hard and grind so long, one day and you can see why the sacrifice you have chosen is so rewarding.” A team chant and to the scales they go. He lost four pounds in that practice and still put on his work out clothes again to shed more weight before the night concludes.

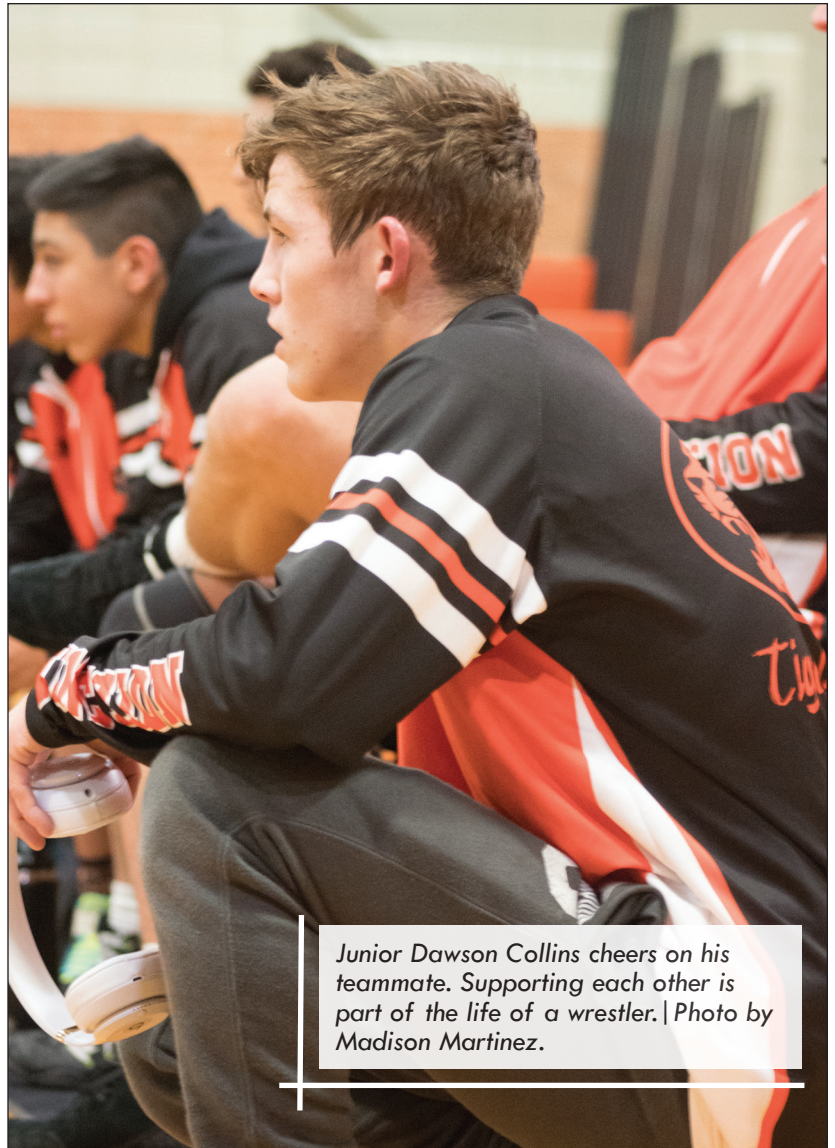
Running and drilling with a few teammates the questions and doubts can feel overwhelming. *“I am starving and so weak, one more lap, I have lost so much weight,”* one more shot, no one even comes to watch, one more push up. Not for adulation or fame do wrestlers choose this grueling sport, but because it requires the ultimate sacrifice and commitment to excel.

“Wrestling is a whole new level of difficulty. In order to excel in wrestling you have to have the endurance in your heart,” senior Hunter Tobiasson said.

Home and showered he will again step on the scale and determine the miniscule amount of food and water he can have, a small cup of high protein vegetables, a small glass of water, and then again to the scale. With little satisfaction to his craving hunger, like other students, he studies and finishes homework.

In his bed his eyes closed, the nerves and anxiety of his upcoming matches weigh heavy in his mind. He listens to the words of the motivational speaker Eric Thomas, “... when you want to succeed as bad as you want to breathe, then you will be successful.” He drifts off to sleep.

Slowly, tired, he silences the alarm and rises to his feet at 5 a.m. He steps on the scale then into his work out gear. Eminem is blaring in his ear “... sometimes you just feel tired, feel weak, ... you feel like you just want to give up, you gotta search with bein’ you, you gotta find that inner strength.” The rope hums and whistles, 45 minutes, and the sweat is dripping from his face and his clothes are soaked. On the scale, a smile means he can have a single scrambled egg and a sip of water, then off to school.



Junior Dawson Collins cheers on his teammate. Supporting each other is part of the life of a wrestler. | Photo by Madison Martinez.

The day seems like an eternity and his focus is absent as his thoughts are clearly drifting in and out of wrestling matches. Have I done enough or all I can do, did I put enough mat time, am I ready for this moment?

The warm up is complete. The coach told the wrestlers to rise up and put everything they have worked for on the line. Leave nothing. He bows his head in prayer, slowly walks to the center and puts his foot on the line. Alone in an epic battle of skill and conditioning that only culminated tonight, was years and thousands of hours in the making. As he said “it’s not the six minutes it’s what you do in those six minutes.” The final whistle blows, a hand shake, and his hand is raised. That single moment of gratification is worth everything... a day in the life.

“The day in the life of a wrestler is not an easy thing. You have to go an extra mile, it is one step above an average sport. You have to watch what you eat. If you have more weight to lose after practice, no matter how tired you are you have to go to the gym,” junior Dawson Collins said.

Upcoming Matches:

1/30- Grand Junction vs. Central High School @Central High School (6 p.m.)

2/9- Grand Junction TRI vs. Durango High School @ GJHS (9 a.m.)

2/9- Grand Junction TRI vs. Fruita Monument @GJHS (11:30 a.m.)