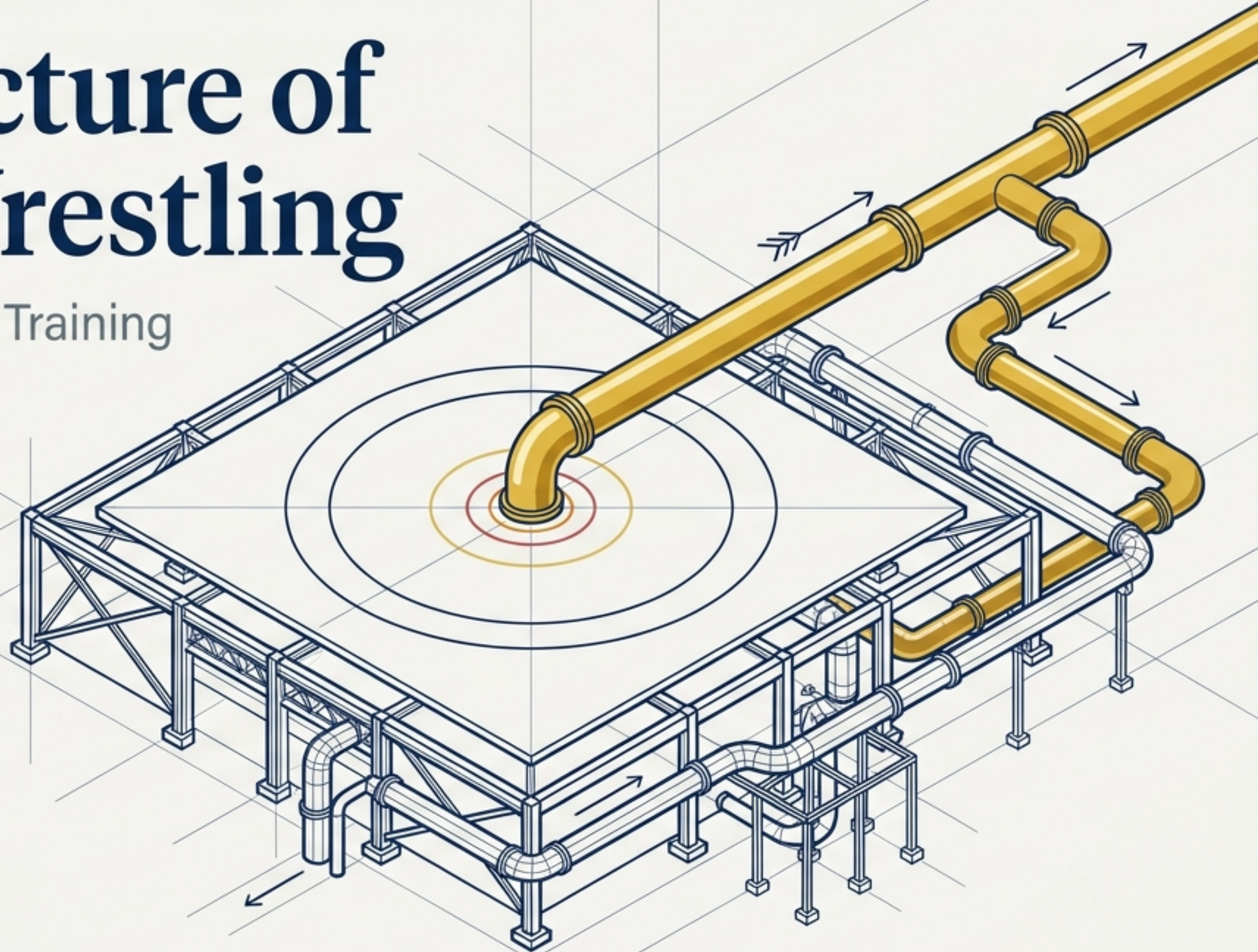


The Architecture of American Wrestling

Structural Incentives, Regional Training Centers, and the Impending Collapse of the Greco-Roman Pipeline



The College Season

October–March

NCAA
Folkstyle

The Summer Circuit

May–August

International
Freestyle &
Greco-Roman

The RTC
Framework
(Est. 2009)

The Mission

Built to unify the American wrestling community and support elite athletic development.

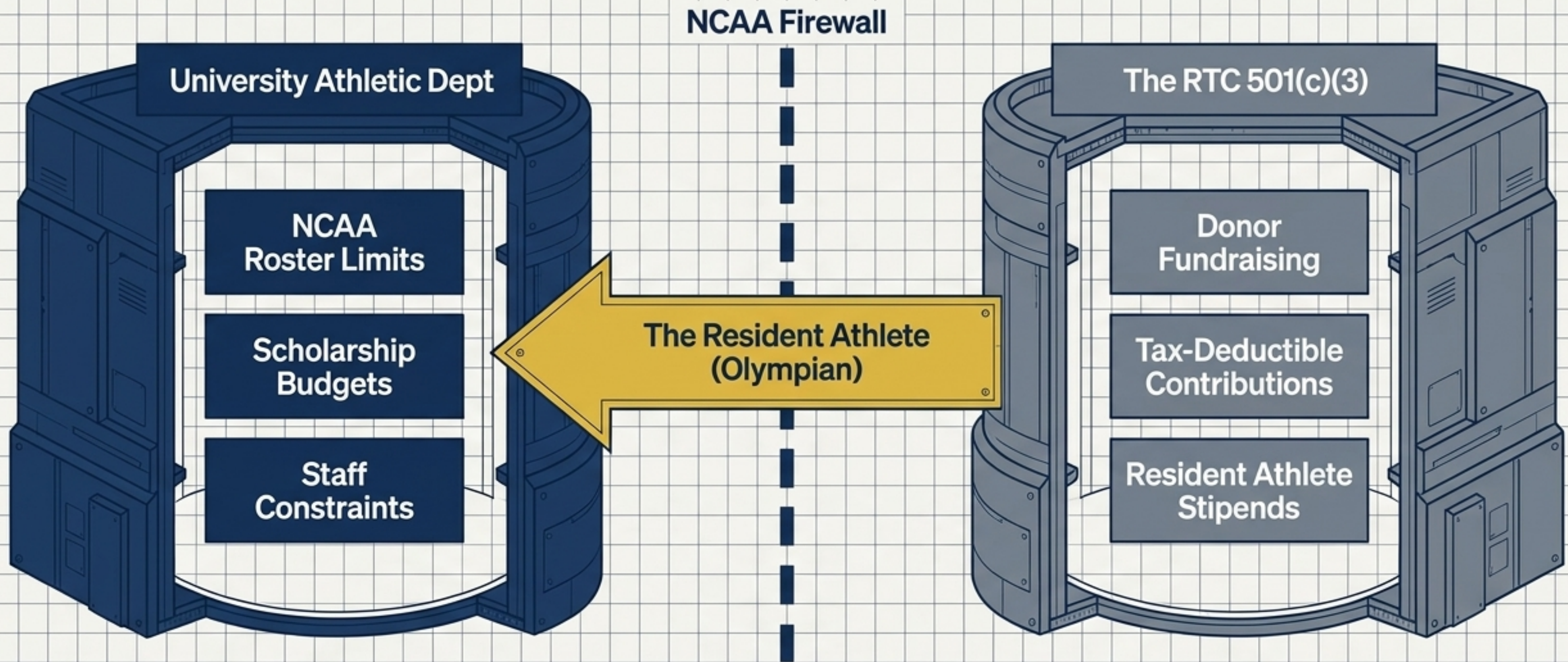
The Mechanism

USA Wrestling-sanctioned hubs providing year-round access to elite coaches, high-level partners, and world-class facilities.

The Goal

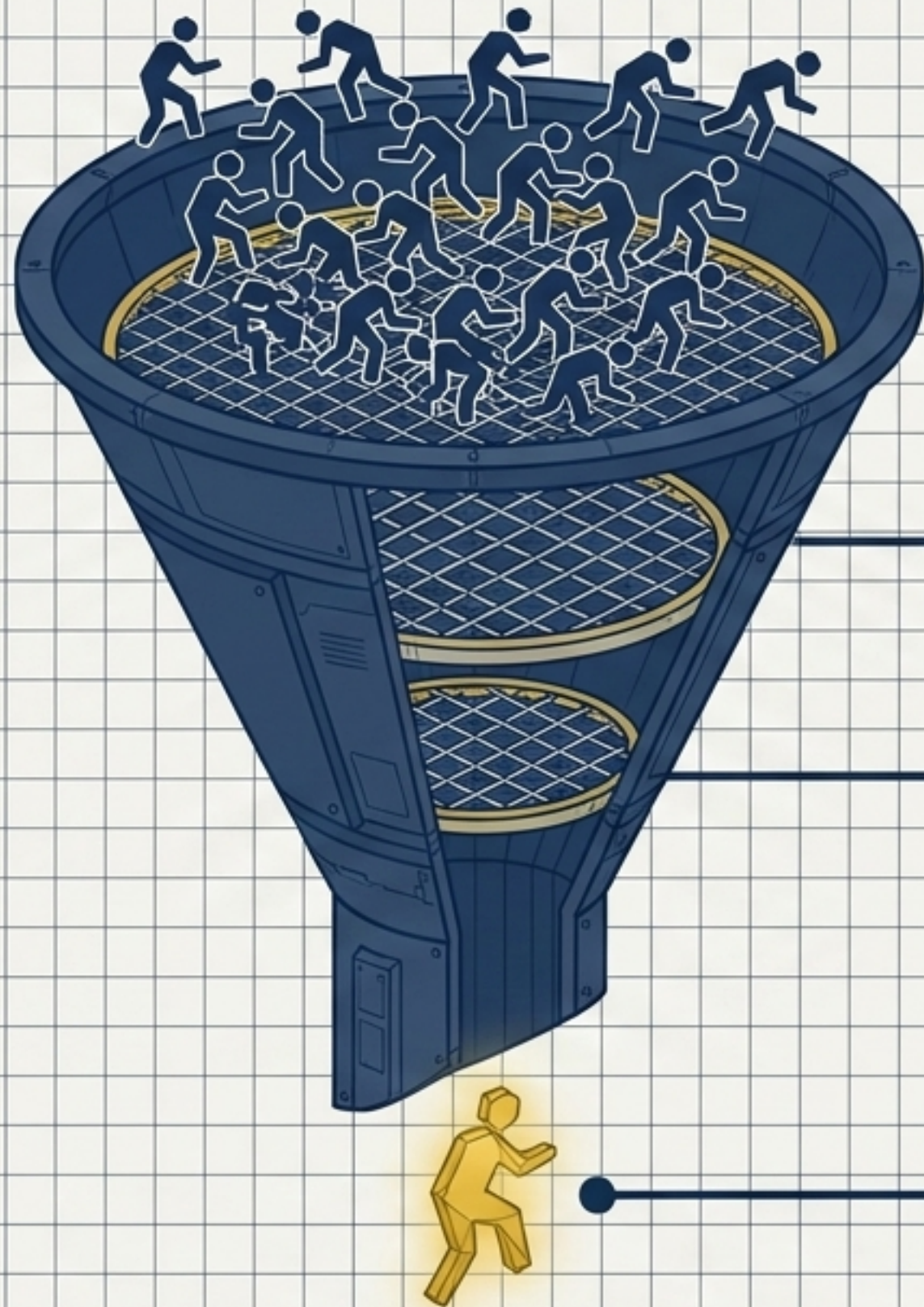
Ensure top competitors do not have to move abroad or quit the sport to make a living post-college.

The 501(c)(3) Firewall



Takeaway: RTCs allow collegiate programs to embed world-class post-collegiate training partners directly into their practice rooms without impacting NCAA roster limits or athletic department payrolls.

The Eligibility Filter



Layer 1: The Foundation.

Must hold a current USA Wrestling card.

Layer 2: The Proximity Rule.

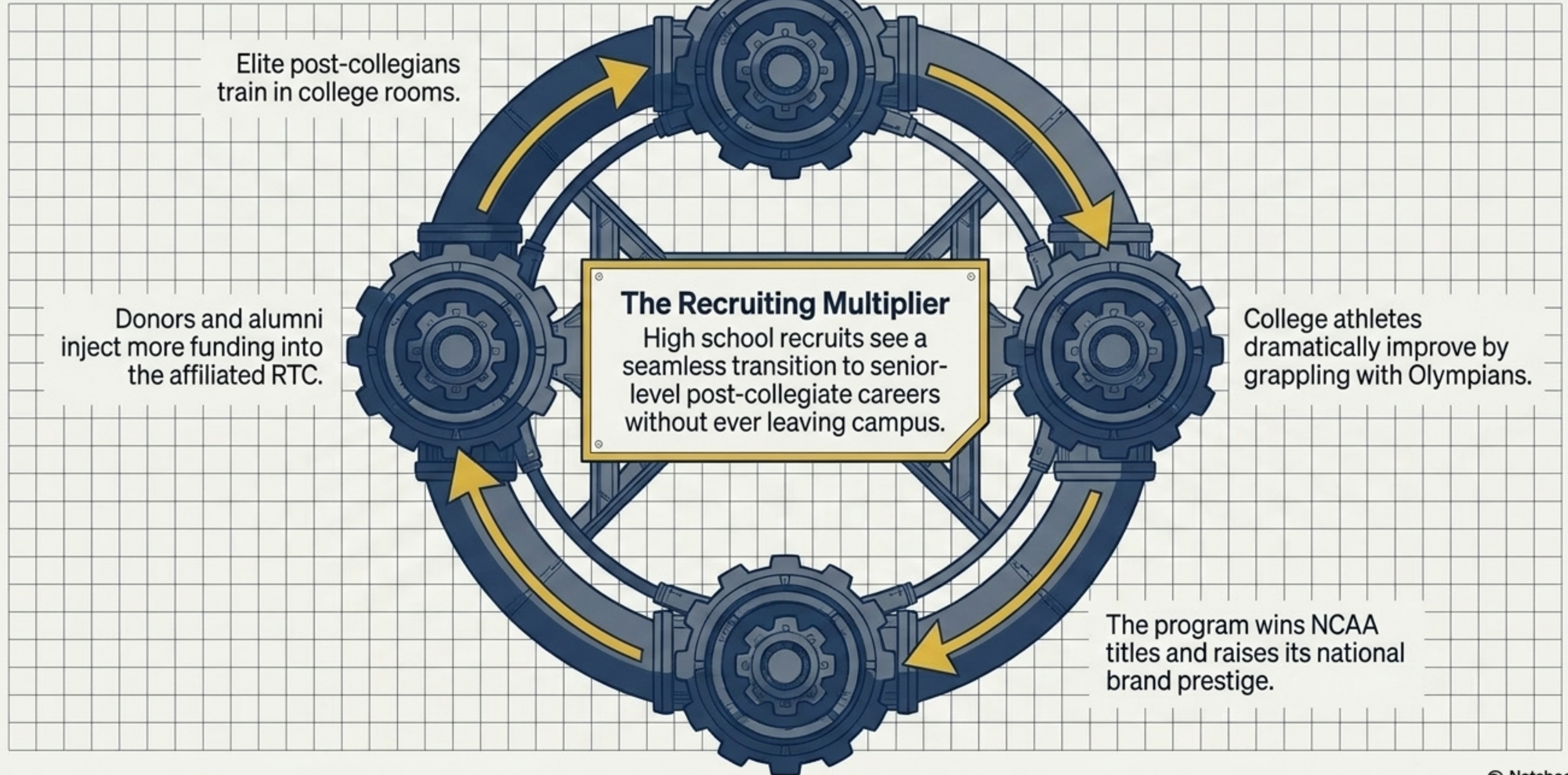
Must reside within a 250-mile radius of the RTC practice location (exemptions available).

Layer 3: The Performance Threshold.

Must meet strict criteria: Winning a match at Senior World/Olympic Trials, or placing top-8 at USAW Senior Opens, U23 Nationals, or Junior Nationals.

The Output: A concentrated pool of highly driven, elite athletes ready for international competition.

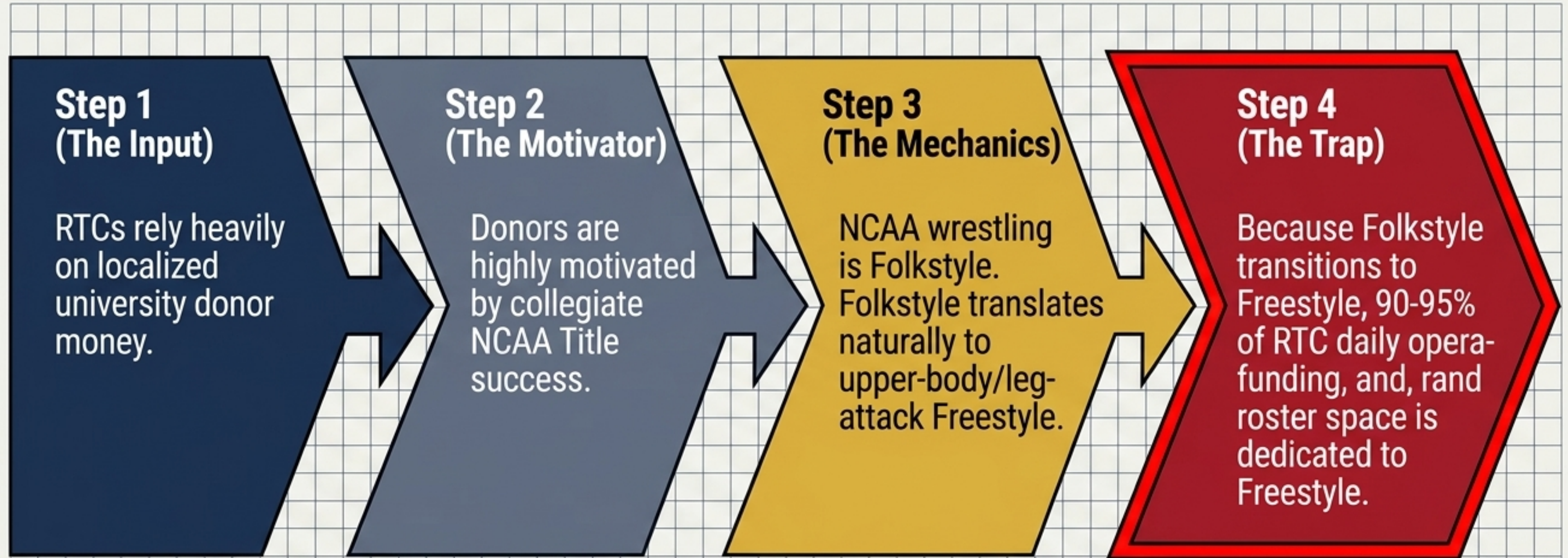
The Ecosystem Flywheel



The RTC Resource Divide

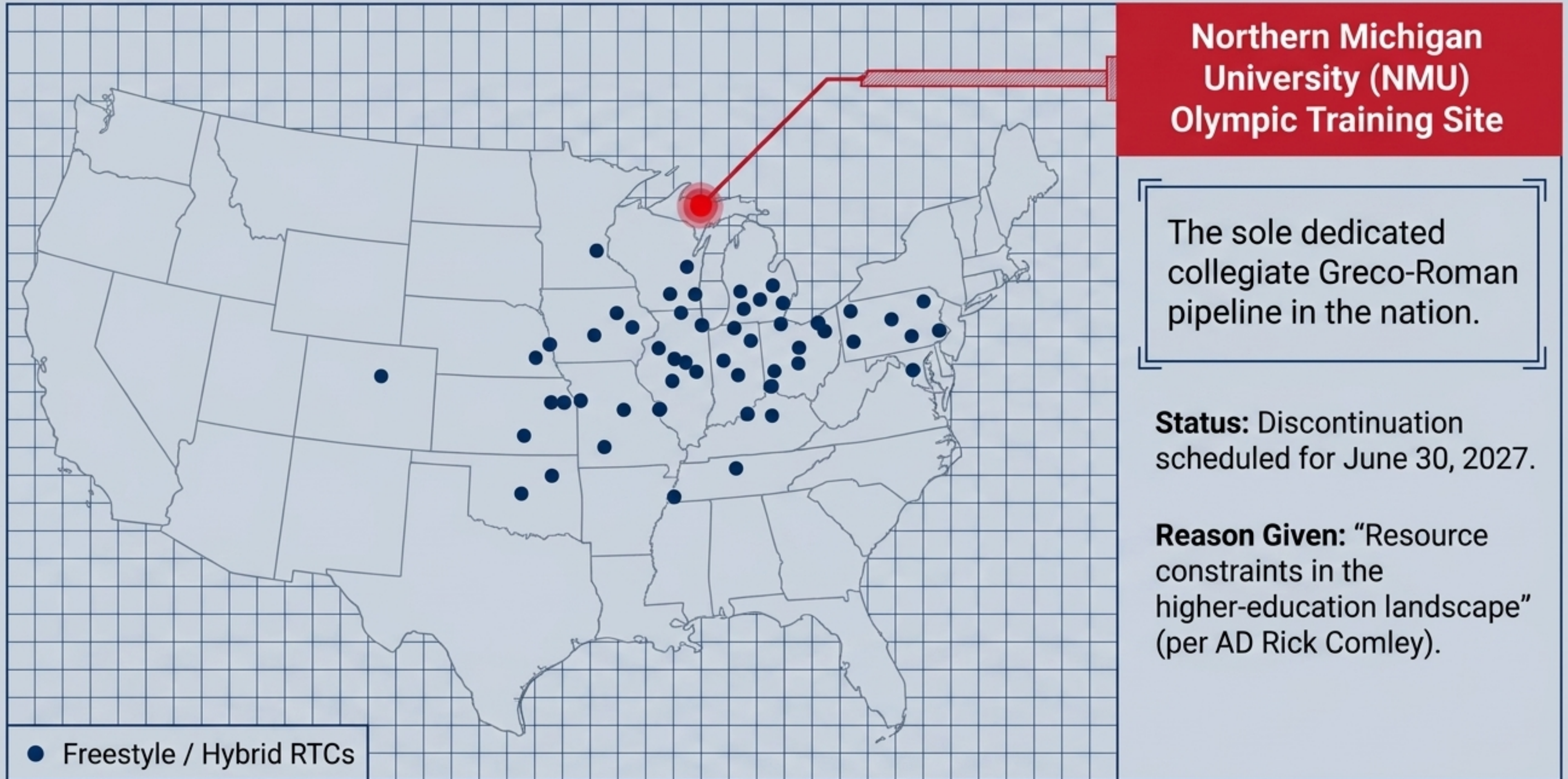
	The D1 Heavyweights (e.g., Nittany Lion WC, Cowboy RTC, Nebraska WTC)	The Underserved Majority (e.g., D3 Wabash Little Giants RTC, D2 Northern State Wolves WC)
Primary Goal	International dominance and NCAA recruiting.	Regional competitive balance, youth development, institutional integration.
Athlete Compensation	Full-time stipends & elite travel support for resident Olympians.	Non-existent or highly limited.
Typical Roster Focus	Senior-level athletes and top-tier collegiate starters.	Geographic retention, local high school/club athletes.
Funding Source	Massive donor bases, corporate sponsorships.	Local club dues, modest regional fundraisers.

The Incentive Trap



Core Insight: The RTC system financially incentivizes the domestic abandonment of Greco-Roman. To fund an RTC, you must win in the NCAA; to win in the NCAA, you must invest in Freestyle.

The Greco-Roman Extinction Dashboard



Ground Zero of the Greco Collapse: NMU

Historical Legacy

Designated as an Olympic training center in 1985 (originally hosted 29 Olympic sports). Greco-Roman is the final surviving sport on campus.

Current Scale

33 elite athletes on the 2025-26 roster.

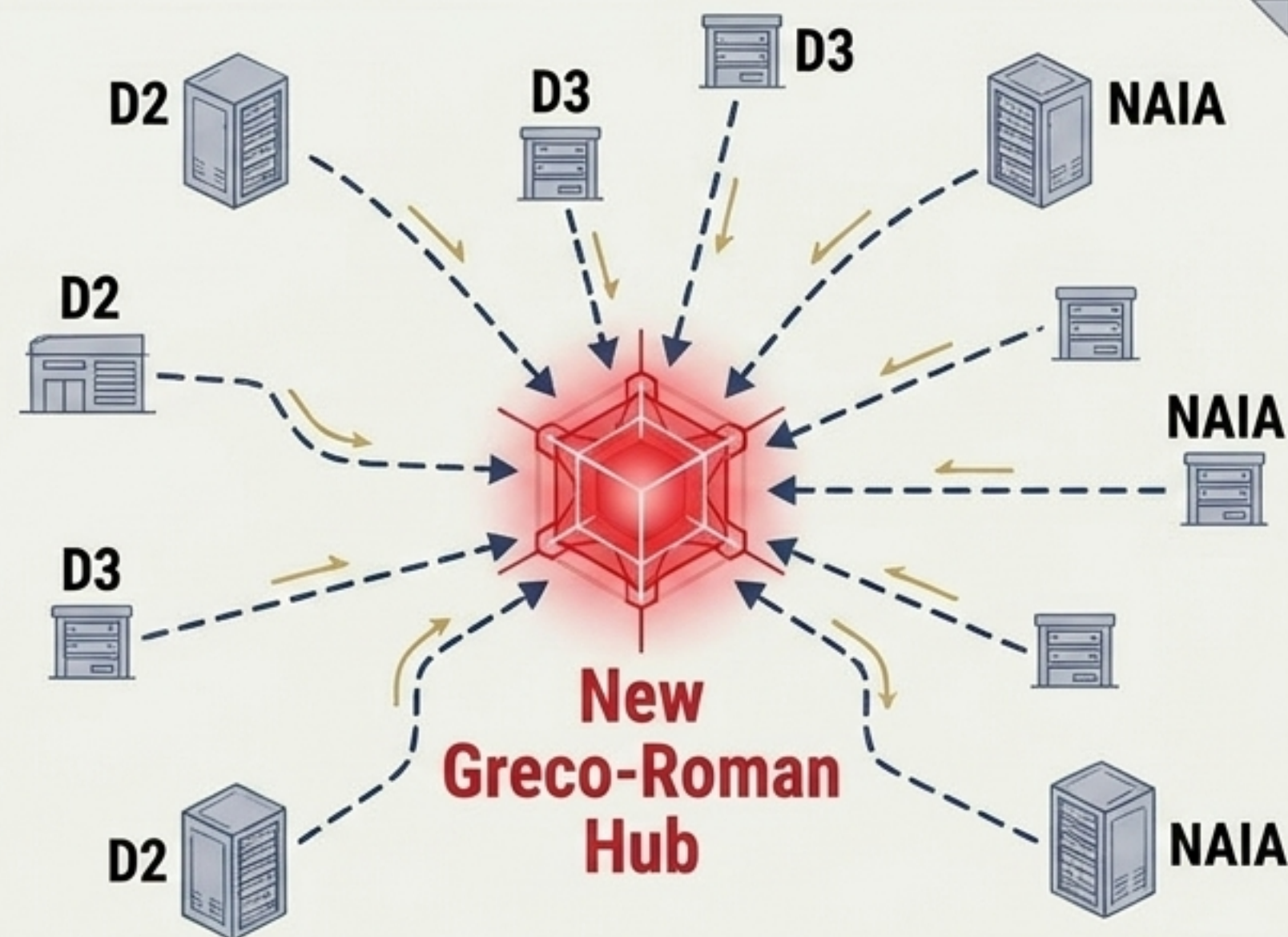
Recent Success

Led by Head Coach Andy Bisek. Produced Payton Jacobson. Both men won USA Wrestling's 2025 Coach and Athlete of the Year honors.

TERMINATED

Key Takeaway: The United States is not losing an underperforming program; it is actively decommissioning its most successful dedicated Greco-Roman incubator due to systemic resource constraints.

Untapped Potential: A Strategic Realignment



- The **survival** of the American Greco-Roman pipeline relies on leveraging the underserved RTC infrastructure at the D2, D3, and NAIA levels (e.g., Northern State, Wabash, Simpson).
- **Freed from the pressure of D1 Freestyle arms races**, lower-division RTCs present the only scalable, nationwide framework capable of replacing the NMU pipeline before the 2027 collapse.