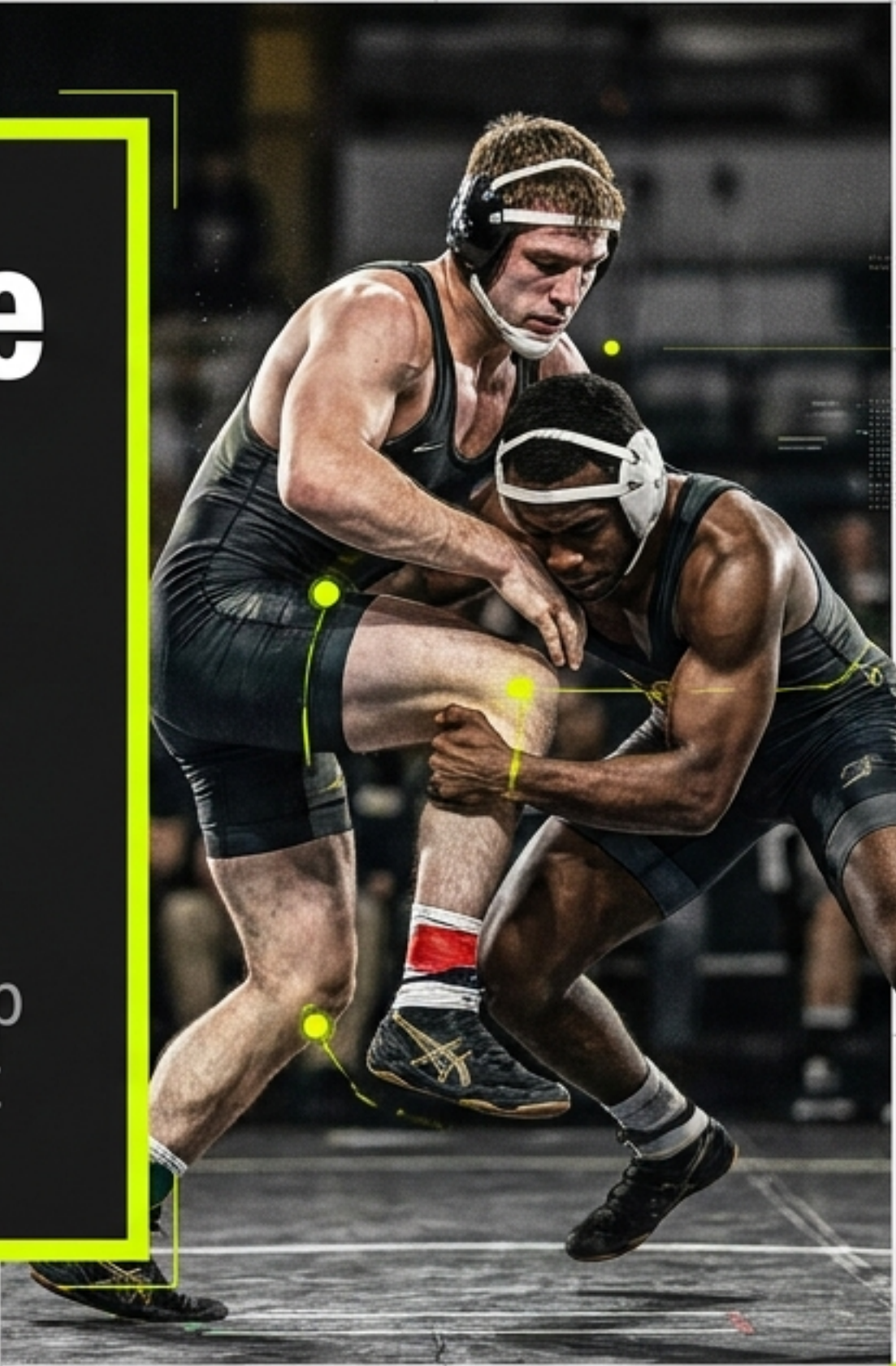
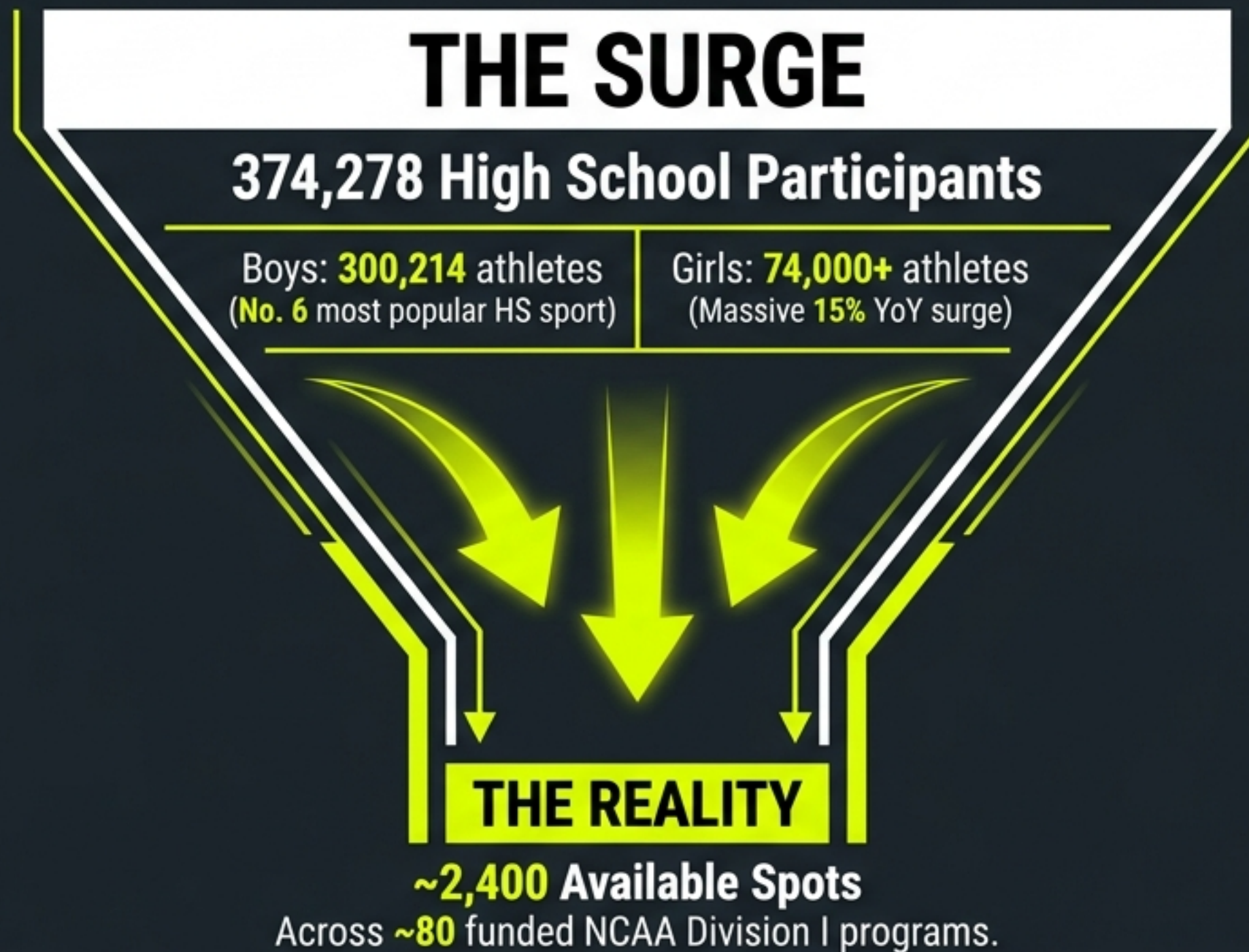




The Collegiate Wrestling Recruitment Playbook v2

Navigating the Opportunity Gap
& Owning Your Path to the Mat

THE SURGE VS. THE REALITY: NCAA D1 WRESTLING FUNNEL



**The math is unforgiving. 99.3% of high school wrestlers must look beyond D1 to continue their careers.
Expanding your target list is a mathematical necessity, not a backup plan.**

THE SQUEEZE: THE NEW DIVISION I REALITY

NCAA HOUSE SETTLEMENT IMPACTS

Expansion to 30 maximum athletic scholarships in D1 appears positive on the surface, but creates a hidden bottleneck.



STRICT 30-MAN ROSTER CAPS

To comply with the settlement, D1 programs are enforcing strict maximum roster sizes.

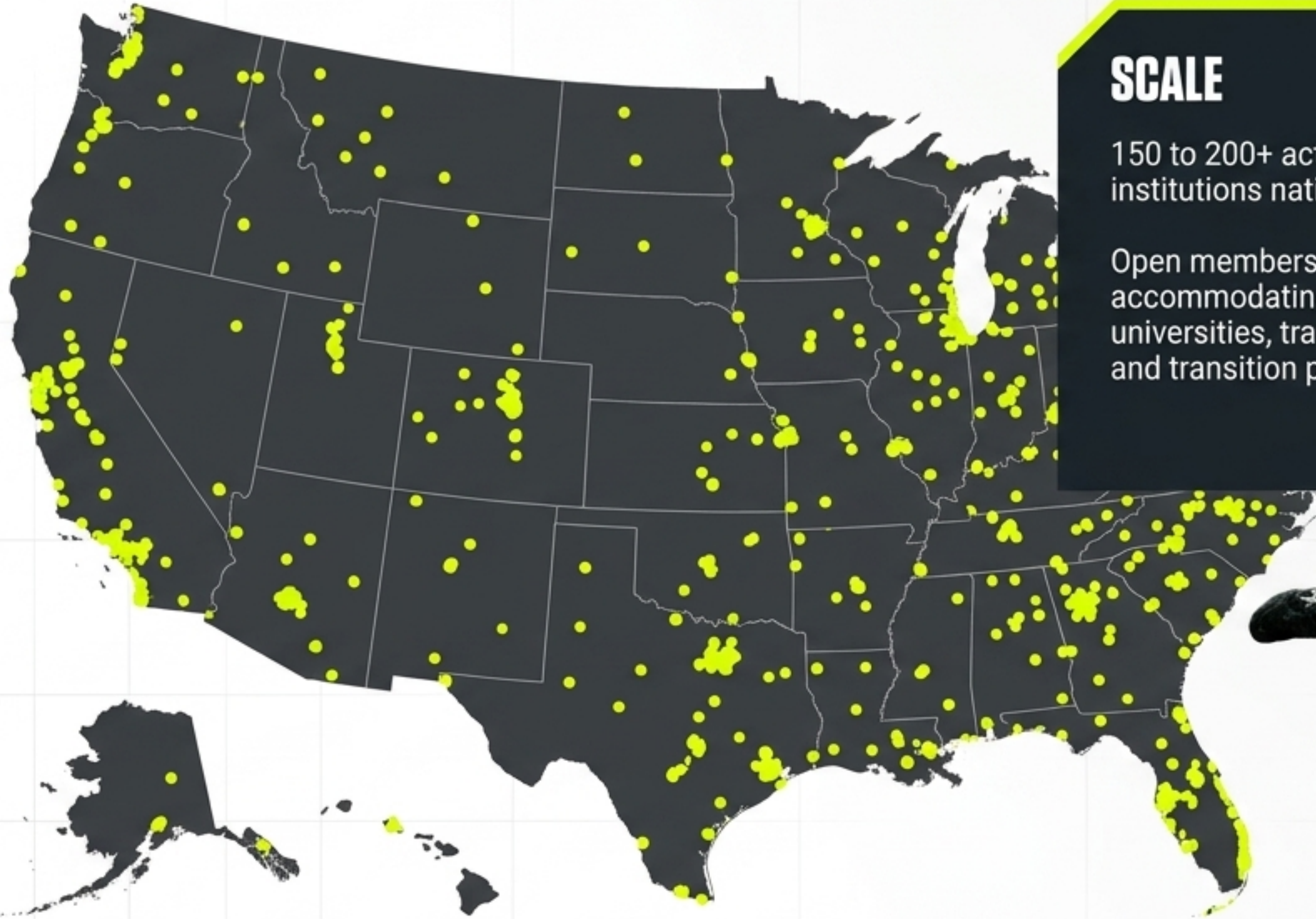
THE DEATH OF THE WALK-ON

Expanding scholarships while capping the roster effectively eliminates the traditional walk-on route. D1 is now exclusively a top-30 or go home environment.

THE STRATEGIC MATRIX: EXPANDING YOUR TARGET PATHWAYS

LEVEL	MAX ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIPS	ROSTER DYNAMICS	TIME COMMITMENT	PRIMARY APPEAL
NCAA D1	Up to 30	Highly exclusive (30-man cap)	Extreme (Year-round)	Highest visibility & resources
NCAA D2	9.0 (Equivalency)	Competitive	High	Solid competition, partial aid stacked with academics
NCAA D3	0 (Need/Academic only)	Varsity-governed	High (Academic balance)	Strong academic prestige
NAIA	~8.0 (Fractional)	Competitive	High	Flexible financial aid packaging
NJCAA	Varies	Developmental	High	Two-year bridge for academics/physical maturity
NCWA	0 (Club/Institution)	Zero-Cut / Inclusive	Balanced (Student-first)	High-growth accessibility & leadership

THE NCWA STRATEGIC CHOICE: THE ENGINE OF GROWTH



SCALE

150 to 200+ active institutions nationwide.

Open membership accommodating 4-year universities, trade schools, and transition programs.

EXPLOSIVE EXPANSION FOR 2025-26

Adding 9 new Men's teams.

Adding 12 new Women's teams.



REDEFINING THE STUDENT-ATHLETE: THE NCWA ADVANTAGE

01. ACADEMIC-FIRST PRIORITY

Designed for rigorous degrees.

Structurally respects the heavy lab and study demands of Engineering, Pre-Med, and hard sciences that frequently clash with 30-hour D1 athletic mandates.

02. IMMEDIATE MAT-TIME

Zero redshirt logging.

Athletes step directly into competitive lineups, gaining the live-match repetitions necessary for true technical mastery rather than sitting behind entrenched starters.

03. REAL-WORLD LEADERSHIP

Student-led program management.

Athletes often drive fundraising, budgeting, travel logistics, and recruitment—building entrepreneurial resumes highly prized by post-graduate employers.



STRUCTURAL INNOVATIONS ON THE MAT

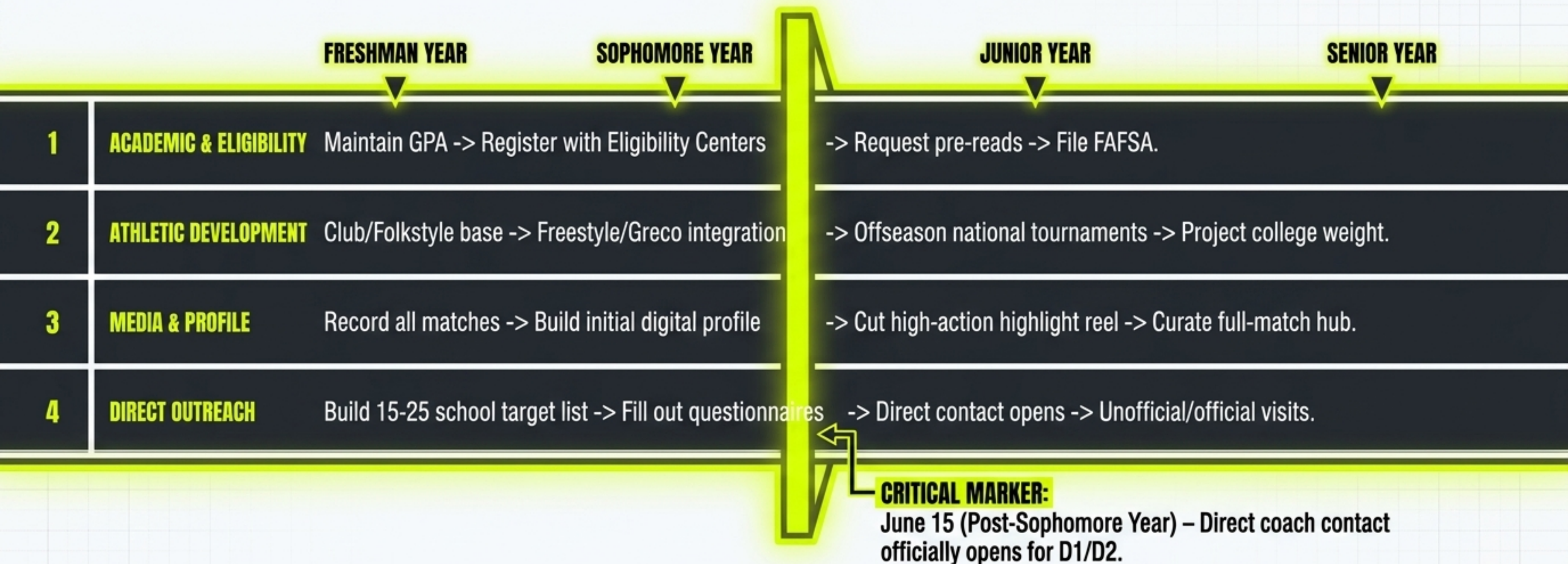
THE 235 LB WEIGHT CLASS

A unique structural modification bridging the dangerous physical gap between 197 lbs and Heavyweight (285 lbs), ensuring safer, more dynamic competition for heavier athletes.

POSTSEASON DEPTH

The Largest Collegiate National Tournament: The NCWA hosts the single largest recognized collegiate national championship in the US. It routinely represents nearly 100 schools and hundreds of athletes in a single, high-intensity environment.

THE 4-YEAR RECRUITING TRACK



Pillar 1: Academic & Eligibility Defense

Core Rule: Grades expand options. Partial athletic scholarships stack with academic aid. A 3.8 GPA recruits infinitely better than a 2.5 GPA with the exact same wrestling resume.



NCAA Division I & II

- Register early at NCAA Eligibility Center.
- Track the strict 16 core-course requirement.
- Maintain a minimum 2.3 GPA (D1) or 2.2 GPA (D2).

NAIA

- Register through PlayNAIA.
- No restrictive high school recruiting calendar—coaches can legally evaluate and talk to you at any time.

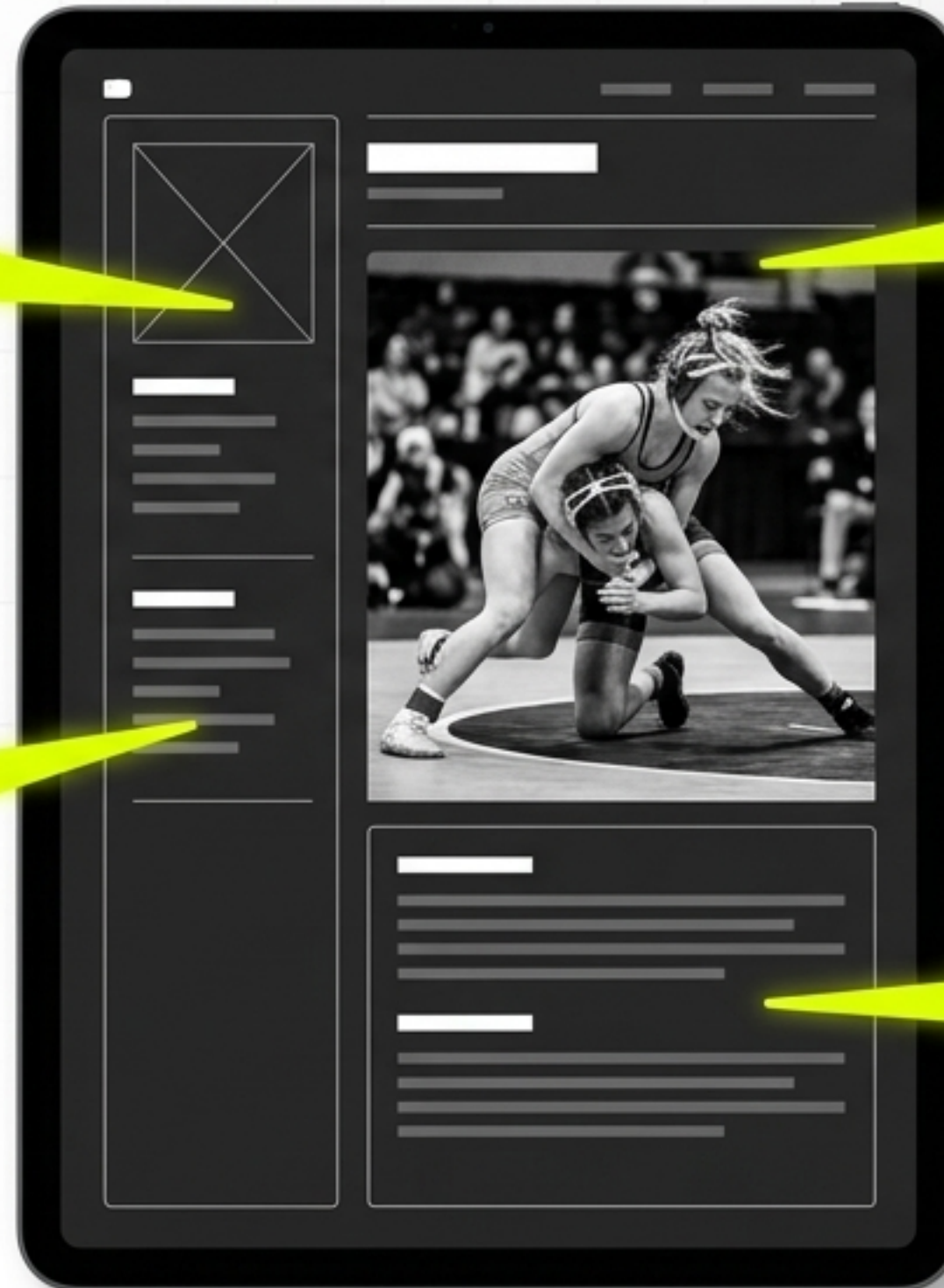
NJCAA

- Track institution-specific eligibility, amateurism status, and high school transcript verification for the two-year route.

Pillar 2: Building the Performance-Intelligence Profile

The Basics: Real Name (matching tournament brackets), Grad Year, High School & Club, Parent Contact, Athlete Phone/Email.

The Metrics: Current Weight AND Projected College Weight, Height, GPA, ACT/SAT, Intended Major.



The Evidence: Direct, click-friendly links to a 3-5 minute highlight video AND a folder of full, unedited matches.

The Resume: State placements, quality wins (not just medals), Fargo/National results, Leadership roles.

Pillar 3: Film That Gets You Recruited

1



NEUTRAL: Show attacks, re-attacks, heavy hand-fighting, and high-level scrambling.

2



TOP: Show mat returns, heavy riding, turns, and transition wrestling.

3



BOTTOM: Show escapes, reversals, pace, and bottom-position urgency.

Do not just show pins against overmatched opponents. Coaches evaluate position wrestling, composure, reactions after mistakes, and competitiveness against high-level opposition.

Pillar 4: Direct Attack (Coach Communication)



Subject: 2028 144 lb Wrestler | Plymouth, Wisconsin | Interested in [College Name]

My name is [Name]... I am interested in [College] because of its Engineering program and Team Culture.

My current GPA is 3.8. Recent accomplishments include [2-3 accurate results]. Link to full match hub: [Link].

I will compete at [Event] on [Date]. I have completed your recruiting questionnaire.

Send Cancel

The Formula:
Highlights grad year, weight, location, and direct interest immediately.

The Hook:
Make it personal and meticulously specific to their institution.

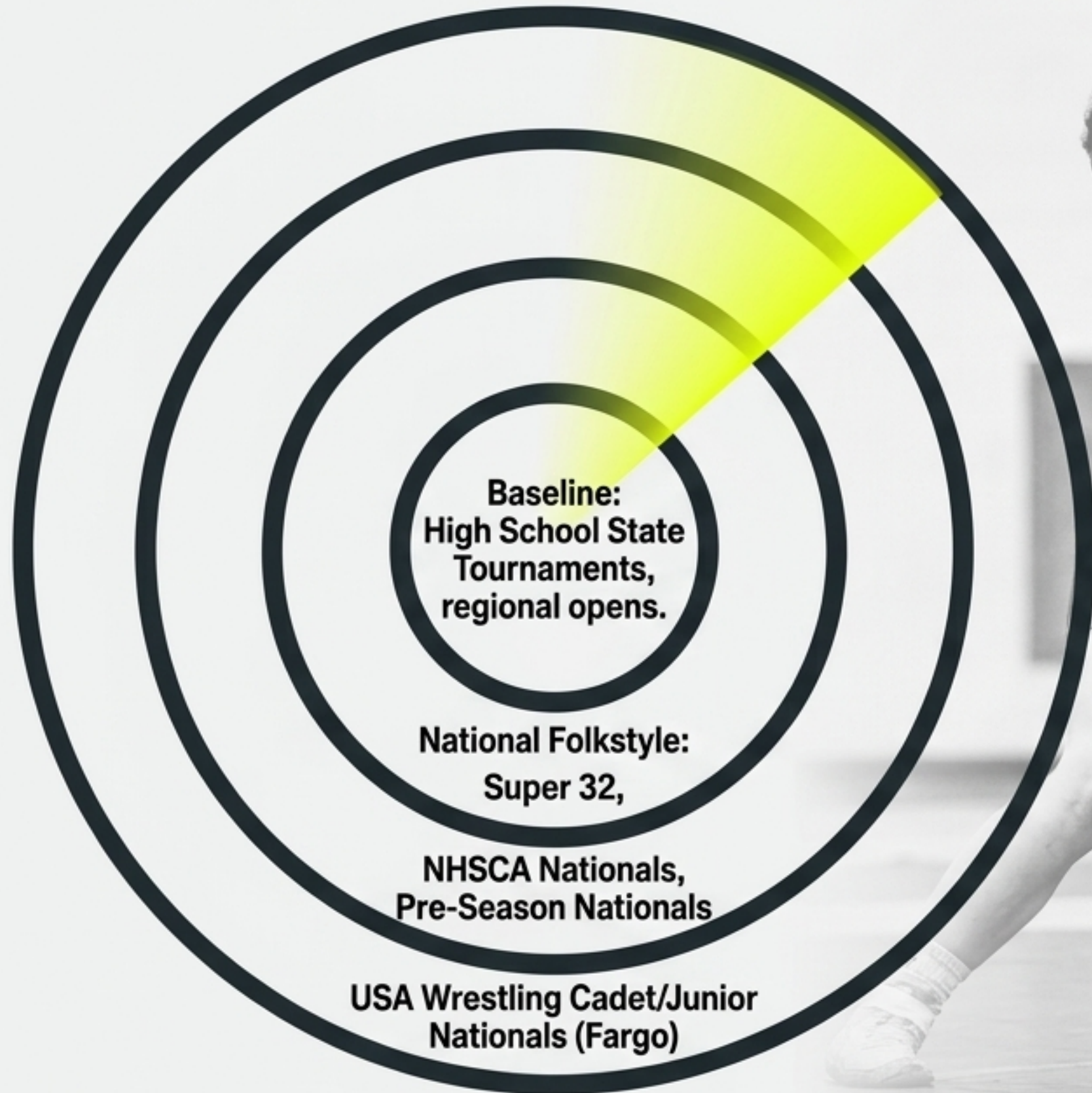
The Stats:
Keep it concise, ruthlessly factual, and provide the video link.

The Call to Action:
Tell them exactly where they can evaluate you next.



RULE: The wrestler must own this process. Parents and coaches support; the athlete executes.

Strategic Competition: Compete Where Evaluation Happens



The Women's Landscape

Women's Wrestling becomes the 91st NCAA Championship sport in March 2026.

Emphasize freestyle training immediately. High school folkstyle is foundational, but college women's programs recruit almost entirely off freestyle experience and results.

The JUCO Bridge: A Planned Developmental Pathway

High School

Academic Readiness

Time to build a robust GPA and fulfill transfer-friendly core credits.

Physical Maturity

Two essential years of strength development and adjusting to college physical intensity.

Financial Flexibility

Lower cost of attendance while proving undeniable value for future 4-year scholarships.

Resume Expansion

Unlocks live match experience against college competition to attract major D1/D2 recruiters later.

4-Year Program



Expand Your Horizon

The math demands it.
Pursue D1, D2, D3,
NAIA, and JUCO
simultaneously.

Embrace the NCWA

Leverage the
fastest-growing
collegiate network for
immediate mat time,
academic priority,
and real-world
leadership.

Defend Your Eligibility

Your GPA is your most
reliable recruiting
tool. Control your
NCAA/NAIA core
courses from freshman
year.

Attack the Outreach

Stop waiting to be
discovered. Build
your performance-
intelligence profile, film
your matches, and
email coaches directly.

Synthesis: Own Your Process

College wrestling is not a lottery ticket; it is a strategic acquisition. Execute the playbook.