

The American Greco-Roman Roadmap: A New Blueprint for Olympic Success

To achieve international dominance in Greco-Roman wrestling, the United States must move beyond treating the style as a post-collegiate "add-on." We require a vertically integrated, decentralized, & affordable pipeline that views Greco-Roman as a primary educational pathway. This roadmap, designed from the perspective of an elite performance curriculum architect, leverages existing scholastic infrastructure to move talent from middle school rooms to the Olympic podium.

By Coach Shan AI

1. The "Scholastic Multi-Season" Philosophy: A New Way to Wrestle

The bedrock of this blueprint is the **Scholastic Multi-Season** model. Historically, wrestling has been confined to a single winter window, but by adopting the structural logic of Track & Field + Cross Country, we transform it into a year-round discipline. This shifts Greco-Roman from an expensive "pay-to-play" club activity into a legitimate, school-supported varsity sport.

Comparison: Traditional vs. Multi-Season Scholastic Model

Feature	Traditional Single-Season Model	New Multi-Season Scholastic Model
Season	Winter (Nov–Feb)	Winter (Folkstyle) & Spring (Greco-Roman)
Primary Style	Folkstyle Only	Multi-Discipline (Folkstyle + Greco)
Funding Source	Single Athletic Dept. Line	Shared Scholastic Budget (Track/XC Model)

Athlete Recognition	Single Varsity Letter	Multiple Varsity Letters (Doubled Profile)
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The "So What?" for the Learner By recognizing Greco-Roman as a distinct spring season, schools increase athletic literacy and participation without requiring new facilities. For the athlete, this creates the opportunity to "double up" on varsity letters—effectively doubling their recruitment profile for colleges. This model rides inside an already-funded program by adding a "Greco Specialist" coaching stipend, much like a "throws coach" in track, ensuring the style is protected by professional expertise.

2. Phase 1: The Grassroots Engine (Middle & High School)

We initiate the "Greco Track" by integrating specific technical blocks into existing scholastic rooms. This phase ensures a diverse cohort of **Technical Literacy** long before they reach the senior level.

The 3 Pillars of Scholastic Greco

1. **Fundamentals (Greco Minimum Standard):** We implement a **Tiered Certification Track**. **Level 1** focuses on youth par terre safety & basic body lock mechanics. **Level 2** moves into high school requirements, including **upper-body amplitude, gut wrenches, & counter lifts from par terre**.
2. **Seasonal Periodization:** Following the winter folkstyle championships, the room pivots to the "Spring Greco Season." Training shifts to **body-climb mechanics, par terre counters**, & high-density technical reps.
3. **Assessment Days:** Borrowing from Track & Field, we replace "cut days" with **Placement Days**. Coaches evaluate athletes on explosive upper-body benchmarks rather than discarding talent.

The Power of Placement This model is a critical retention tool. We identify explosive, upper-body dominant athletes—those who may struggle with the leg attacks of folkstyle—and funnel them into the Greco track where their natural "amplitude" & strength allow them to thrive. This keeps more bodies in the program, specifically capturing raw talent from diverse backgrounds that the traditional system often filters out.

3. Reference Models for Success: Borrowing from Gymnastics & Soccer

Because the NCAA Division I system lacks a Greco-Roman varsity structure, we must adopt models that thrive independently of the collegiate funnel.

Comparative Development Models

Criteria	Gymnastics (Club-Centric)	Global Soccer (Academy)	Proposed Greco RTC Hubs
Age of Entry	8–10 (Level 1–5)	9–12 (Youth Academy)	Middle School (U12/U14)
Funding Model	Club Fees & Foundations	Fully Subsidized/Professional	Hub Endowments & USAW
Primary Goal	World/Olympic Pipeline	Professional/Senior National	Olympic Podium/Academic

The Gymnastics Lesson Elite performance cannot wait for the collegiate window. Top gymnasts train **30–40 hours per week**, a volume that a traditional college season cannot accommodate. In our roadmap, the **RTC Hub** acts as the primary engine of development, while college becomes a "parallel off-ramp." This ensures that athletes reach technical maturity on an international timeline, not an academic one.

4. Phase 2: The RTC Hub Network (The Professionalized Bridge)

To avoid the "D1 Folkstyle Arms Race," we anchor 6–7 Regional Training Centers (RTCs) at D2, D3, & NAIA institutions. These locations are strategically selected to capitalize on existing wrestling cultures: **Illinois/Wisconsin, Pennsylvania (Lock Haven), Minnesota, New Jersey, Ohio, & Colorado.**

The RTC Cohort System

- **Scholastic Graduates:** Recent graduates focusing on full Greco technical structures.
- **U20 Development:** Building "Match IQ" & international **tactical pacing**.

- **National-Probable:** Elite contenders focused on senior-level international protocols.

The "Leanne Wong Model" We utilize the **Leanne Wong Model**, allowing athletes to pursue degrees at anchor institutions while maintaining the 30-plus hour training volume required for Olympic success. This balances academic stability with elite craft mastery.

- **Leanne Wong:** An American elite artistic gymnast & multi-time world medalist who competed for the University of Florida Gators. She is also a entrepreneur, pre-med student, & 2X traveling alternate for the U.S. Olympic teams (2020 & 2024).
- **International Success:** Won gold with Team USA at the 2022 & 2023 World Championships, earned the all-around silver medal at the 2021 & 2025 World Championships, & took home floor exercise bronze in 2021.
- **Collegiate Stardom:** Competed for Florida from 2021 to 2025, becoming a decorated 29-time All-American & the 2024 NCAA uneven bars champion.

5. Phase 3: The Domestic Theater & International Immersion

Development requires a consistent, high-stakes competition circuit. We establish a "National Greco-Roman Dual Series" to create fierce hub-vs-hub rivalries that build a domestic culture around the style.

The Immersion Blueprint

Technical growth is an accelerant, not a bonus. We implement a "Spring Break" exchange: sending our U17 and U20 teams to European hubs (Bulgaria, Austria, or Hungary) to face a higher technical ceiling, while hosting foreign clubs in our U.S. hubs to cross-pollinate technical cues.

All hubs operate under a **National Coaching Academy**. This ensures that from a middle schooler in New Jersey to a Senior National Team member in Colorado, all athletes & coaches speak the same technical language—standardizing cues for gut wrench defense & throws.

6. The Flag Football Precedent: Expanding Scholarships & Inclusion

The rapid rise of flag football proves that scholastic growth triggers institutional action. By building participation, we force the hand of collegiate sanctioning.

The Institutional Ladder

1. **High School Sanctioning:** Reaching the **100-team threshold** (as seen in Pennsylvania) triggers state recognition.
2. **Collegiate Adoption:** "Emerging Sport" status unlocks NCAA roster spots & scholarships.
3. **Title IX Compliance:** Greco-Roman provides a low-cost, high-engagement solution for schools to balance athletic opportunities.

7. Solving the Affordability Crisis: The Talent Endowment Fund

To become a global power, we must eliminate "Pay-to-Play" barriers that filter out the grittiest talent in our communities.

- **Talent Endowment Funds:** Direct grants for gear & travel, modeled after the USA Gymnastics Foundation.
- **Sliding-Scale Fees:** Hub access adjusted based on household income to ensure merit-based entry.
- **Corporate Sponsorships:** Securing long-term partners to subsidize the elite training of "National-Probable" cohorts.
- **School-Based Funding:** Leveraging the existing HS budget to provide free, local entry points for youth.

The Ultimate Goal: Parental wealth must never be the deciding factor in who reaches the Olympic podium. Access must be universal for the talented & the disciplined.

8. Conclusion: The Pathway to the Podium

Greco-Roman is a specialized craft that requires a lifelong educational vehicle. By integrating the style into our schools & regional hubs, we provide a clear, uninterrupted pipeline from the first head-lock to the Olympic Apex.

Athlete Roadmap Checklist

- [] **Middle School:** Master GMS Level 1 (Pummeling, Posture, Hips).

- [] **High School:** Earn a second varsity letter in the Spring Greco Season.
- [] **Certification:** Pass the GMS Level 2 Technical Trial (Throws & Gut Wrenches).
- [] **Assessment:** Earn a "Training Membership" at a Regional Hub (e.g., Lock Haven or NJ RTC).
- [] **RTC Cohort:** Join a specialized U20 or National-Probable training group.
- [] **Immersion:** Complete an international "Spring Break" technical exchange.
- [] **Olympic Apex:** Transition into the Senior National Team ecosystem.

This blueprint turns structural voids into a resilient national advantage. By beginning early, training affordably, & speaking a unified technical language, the American Greco-Roman wrestler will finally claim their place atop the world stage.

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