

SPORT-SPECIFIC TRAINING GUIDE SERIES

WRESTLING

Needs analysis, key performance indicators, periodization, and full sample programming for the NSAA wrestling season — built on the Husker Power principles and the NSC periodization framework.

6 min

CONTINUOUS LIVE TIME PER MATCH — THE GRIND EVERY REP OF THIS GUIDE IS BUILT AROUND

2

LIFTS PER WEEK IN SEASON

36+

WEEKS OF OFF-SEASON RUNWAY BETWEEN STATE FINALS AND WEIGHT-MANAGEMENT TESTING

THE SPORT-SPECIFIC GUIDE SERIES

HOW THIS GUIDE WORKS

This is the second release in the NSC Sport-Specific Guide Series, following the same four-part structure established in the Football guide so a coach can move between sports without relearning the format. Every guide in the series carries the same four sections, cross-referenced against the same NSC Periodization Framework and NSC Exercise Database.

1. NEEDS ANALYSIS

What the sport actually demands of the body — movement patterns by weight-class tier, the energy system the sport is really contested in, and the injury profile that should drive durability work.

2. POTENTIAL KPIS

The testing battery that tells you whether the program is working, plus development benchmarks by training level and weight tier, and when in the year to test.

3. PERIODIZATION

How the training year maps onto the sport's actual competitive calendar — phase by phase, with the volume and intensity targets pulled from the NSC Periodization Framework.

4. EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

Full sample weeks for off-season, pre-season, and in-season — real exercises pulled from the NSC Exercise Database, ready to hand to a coach.

SOURCING

This guide is built on the NSC Periodization Framework (Bompa & Haff, Zatsiorsky & Kraemer, Fleck & Kraemer), the 10 Husker Power Principles, and the NSC Exercise Database. KPI benchmark figures in Section 2 are NSC program targets set for developmental planning purposes — not verified external population norms. Recalibrate them against your own roster's baseline testing before using them to make roster decisions.

WRESTLING SNAPSHOT

CATEGORY	DETAIL
Governing body	NSAA — sanctioned separately for boys and girls, each with its own classes and state championship.
Classifications	Boys: Classes A, B, C, D. Girls: Classes A, B.
Weight classes	Boys: 14 classes, 106–285 lbs. Girls: 14 classes, 100–235 lbs.
Season window	NSAA weight-management testing begins Nov 9; practice begins Nov 16; regular season runs December–February with weekly duals and weekend tournaments. Girls state championships mid-February, boys state championships immediately after.
Off-season length	Roughly 36+ weeks between state finals and the first weight-management testing date — the longest true off-season of any NSAA winter sport.
Roster composition	An individual, weight-class sport — a 106 lb freshman and a 285 lb senior heavyweight train under the same roof, same day.
Contact	Live grappling combat sport; continuous close-contact effort, throws, and positional control — regulated by the NSAA Weight Management Program (hydration and body-composition assessment).

1. NEEDS ANALYSIS

WHAT WRESTLING DEMANDS

Wrestling doesn't have positions — it has weight classes, and what a kid needs in the weight room changes a lot between 106 lbs and heavyweight. Train the base every weight class needs first, then split the rest by tier.

MOVEMENT DEMANDS BY WEIGHT TIER

TIER	APPROX. RANGE	PRIMARY PHYSICAL QUALITIES	MOVEMENT SIGNATURE
Lower Weight	Boys 106–138 / Girls 100–130	Quickness, flexibility, relative strength (strength-to-bodyweight ratio), scrambling speed	High-tempo, high-volume scrambling; rapid direction changes on the mat; wins and loses matches in transition
Middle Weight	Boys 144–175 / Girls 135–155	Balanced power and quickness; the most technically diverse tier	Blends scrambling with sustained tie-up strength; equally comfortable in space or in a control position
Upper Weight / Heavyweight	Boys 190–285 / Girls 170–235	Raw strength, starting strength, positional control	Fewer high-velocity scrambles; higher force demands in ties, collar-and-elbow, and top-position control

HUSKER POWER CROSS-REFERENCE

Every weight tier trains on the same 10 principles — multi-joint, ground-based, three-dimensional, explosive, progressively overloaded. Dose and emphasis change by tier; the system doesn't. A 106-pounder and a heavyweight both squat, hinge, push, pull, and carry. The lighter wrestler just does more of it fast, and the heavyweight does more of it heavy.

PHYSICAL QUALITY PRIORITY (ALL WEIGHT CLASSES)

1. Relative strength — strength per pound of bodyweight, not absolute strength. Weight class caps bodyweight, so the training goal is force output the scale doesn't punish.
2. Grip & forearm strength-endurance — every tie-up, wrist-fight, and mat return runs through the hands. Undertrained in most HS programs relative to how often it decides a match.
3. Explosive hip extension — the engine behind the penetration step, the stand-up, and every throw.
4. Repeated-effort anaerobic capacity — the ability to sustain high output across six continuous minutes, then reproduce it multiple times on a tournament day.
5. Neck & cervical strength — bridging under an opponent's weight is both a core defensive skill and a durability requirement. Build it on purpose; don't assume the mat builds it for you.

1. NEEDS ANALYSIS, CONTINUED

ENERGY SYSTEMS & DURABILITY

ENERGY SYSTEM DEMAND

A varsity match is three continuous 2-minute periods — six minutes of live time with only brief breaks between periods. Football works in 4–6 second bursts; wrestling doesn't stop. It's a mix of high-output scrambling and sustained isometric control that sits mostly in the lactic-anaerobic zone, with aerobic conditioning working in the background to speed recovery within and between matches.

THE COMMON MISTAKE

Tournament days can run six-plus hours, so it's tempting to condition wrestlers like distance runners. Don't. NFHS rules allow up to six matches in a single day, and each one is its own six-minute high-lactate effort with unpredictable rest in between. Build conditioning out of match-simulation intervals — hard efforts with incomplete recovery, clustered the way a bracket actually unfolds — instead of steady-state running.

INJURY PROFILE & DURABILITY PRIORITIES

COMMON INJURY	MECHANISM	DURABILITY PRIORITY
Shoulder (AC joint, labrum, dislocation)	Throws, cross-face pressure, sprawling onto an outstretched arm	Rotator cuff & scapular strength (face pull, external rotation, band pull-apart) programmed year-round, not just GPP
Knee (MCL, meniscus)	Awkward stance angles, an opponent's weight driving into a planted or bent knee	Single-leg stability work, eccentric strength, landing/base mechanics
Neck / cervical spine	Bridging under load to avoid a pin, repeated compressive stress	Dedicated, progressive neck strength training (flexion/extension) — not left to the mat to build on its own
Core & low back strain	Off-balance scrambling, sustained isometric control positions	Anti-rotation and anti-extension core bracing trained in all three planes
Weight-cycle related illness & fatigue	Rapid or repeated weight loss to make class	S&C's role is to support performance inside a safe, NSAA-certified weight class — not to help an athlete cut faster. Reinforce the Weight Management Program's hydration and body-composition safeguards rather than working around them.

POPULATION NOTE

BOYS' & GIRLS' WRESTLING — BOTH NSAA-SANCTIONED

NSAA sanctions wrestling separately for boys (Classes A/B/C/D, weight classes 106–285 lbs) and girls (Classes A/B, weight classes 100–235 lbs), each with its own state championship. The needs-analysis and durability priorities above apply to both populations equally — wrestling is wrestling.

Two things are worth watching when programming for both: girls' weight classes top out lower than boys' (235 vs. 285 lbs), so don't just copy the boys' upper-tier benchmarks onto a girls' roster. And because girls' wrestling is newer in a lot of programs, expect a wider range of training age on a girls' roster than a boys' roster in the same grade — set the testing calendar's baseline window around the athletes actually in the room, not an assumed starting point.

2. POTENTIAL KPIS

TESTING BATTERY

Test what actually matters for this sport, not a generic combine list. Every test below ties back to a quality from Section 1, and every strength number should be read relative to bodyweight, not on its own.

QUALITY	TEST	WHY IT'S ON THE LIST	WHEN TO TEST
Relative strength (lower)	Trap Bar Deadlift or Back Squat, 1–3RM relative to bodyweight	The foundational quality every weight class needs relative to its own bodyweight cap	End of GPP, end of SPP
Relative strength (upper)	Bench Press 1–3RM (relative) or Pull-Up max reps	Upper-body control in ties and on mat return; pull-up reps are the better proxy at lighter weight classes	End of GPP, end of SPP
Grip / forearm endurance	Farmer's Carry, max distance or time at a bodyweight-relative load	Every exchange on the mat starts and ends with grip	All three windows
Explosive hip power (vertical)	Vertical Jump	Stand-up power and general lower-body rate of force development	All three windows
Explosive hip power (horizontal)	Broad Jump	Penetration-step power; the closest jump-test analog to a shot	All three windows
Repeated-effort capacity	6 × 2-minute match-simulation circuit	Mirrors the sport's actual work:rest demand across a tournament day, not a generic shuttle time	Pre-season; spot check in-season
Positional core endurance	Front Plank or weighted carry, hold to failure	Control-position durability under sustained load	End of GPP
Neck strength	Iron Neck or manual-resistance flexion/extension load	Direct durability marker for bridging — and the one quality most programs never test at all	End of GPP, end of SPP

TEST THE WEIGHT CLASS, NOT JUST THE ROSTER

A full battery on every wrestler every window is a half-day event you don't have time for in-season. The three tests every wrestler always gets: vertical jump, grip endurance, and their primary strength lift — measured relative to bodyweight. Layer in the match-simulation circuit and neck-strength check only at the off-season and pre-season windows.

2. POTENTIAL KPIS, CONTINUED

DEVELOPMENT BENCHMARKS & TESTING CALENDAR

The ranges below are NSC program targets — developmental benchmarks to aim a training level toward, organized by the NSC Exercise Database's four training-age levels. They are not verified population norms, and they are not identical for boys' and girls' rosters — reset them against your own athletes' baseline testing before using them for roster decisions.

LOWER WEIGHT

TEST	L1 — BEGINNER (<1YR)	L2 — INTERMEDIATE (1–2YR)	L3 — ADVANCED (2–3YR)	L4 — ELITE (>3YR)
Back Squat / Trap Bar DL (1RM, relative)	1.1–1.3 × BW	1.4–1.6 × BW	1.7–2.0 × BW	>2.0 × BW
Bench Press (1RM, relative)	0.8–0.9 × BW	1.0–1.1 × BW	1.2–1.4 × BW	>1.4 × BW
Pull-Up (max reps)	6–8	9–12	13–17	>17
Vertical Jump	17–20"	20–24"	24–28"	>28"
Broad Jump	6.2–7.2'	7.2–8.0'	8.0–8.7'	>8.7'
Farmer's Carry (relative load, distance)	0.5×BW, 40yd	0.75×BW, 40yd	1.0×BW, 40yd	>1.0×BW, 60yd

MIDDLE WEIGHT

TEST	L1 — BEGINNER (<1YR)	L2 — INTERMEDIATE (1–2YR)	L3 — ADVANCED (2–3YR)	L4 — ELITE (>3YR)
Back Squat / Trap Bar DL (1RM, relative)	1.0–1.2 × BW	1.3–1.5 × BW	1.6–1.9 × BW	>2.0 × BW
Bench Press (1RM, relative)	0.75–0.85 × BW	0.95–1.05 × BW	1.15–1.3 × BW	>1.3 × BW
Pull-Up (max reps)	5–7	8–11	12–16	>16
Vertical Jump	16–19"	19–23"	23–27"	>27"
Broad Jump	6.0–7.0'	7.0–7.8'	7.8–8.5'	>8.5'
Farmer's Carry (relative load, distance)	0.5×BW, 40yd	0.75×BW, 40yd	1.0×BW, 40yd	>1.0×BW, 60yd

UPPER WEIGHT / HEAVYWEIGHT

TEST	L1 — BEGINNER (<1YR)	L2 — INTERMEDIATE (1–2YR)	L3 — ADVANCED (2–3YR)	L4 — ELITE (>3YR)
Back Squat / Trap Bar DL (1RM, relative)	0.9–1.1 × BW	1.2–1.4 × BW	1.5–1.7 × BW	>1.8 × BW
Bench Press (1RM, relative)	0.7–0.8 × BW	0.9–1.0 × BW	1.1–1.3 × BW	>1.3 × BW
Pull-Up (max reps)	4–6	7–10	11–14	>14
Vertical Jump	13–16"	16–19"	19–23"	>23"
Broad Jump	5.3–6.2'	6.2–7.0'	7.0–7.7'	>7.7'
Farmer's Carry (relative load, distance)	0.4×BW, 40yd	0.6×BW, 40yd	0.8×BW, 40yd	>0.8×BW, 60yd

TESTING CALENDAR

WINDOW	TIMING	PURPOSE
Baseline	Start of Off-Season GPP (mid-March)	Establish starting point after a full season of competition and weight management; identify what needs rebuilding
Progress Check	End of Off-Season SPP (late August)	Confirm strength gains transferred; adjust the fall power/conditioning block based on results
Readiness	Weight-Management Testing window (Nov 9) / Practice start (Nov 16)	Final pre-season numbers; informs weight-class conversations and identifies athletes needing modified load
Spot Check (optional)	Mid-season	Vertical jump and grip endurance only — low fatigue-cost markers to flag athletes trending toward overuse or an unsustainable weight cut

3. PERIODIZATION

THE WRESTLING ANNUAL CALENDAR

Wrestling's season ends in mid-to-late February and its next practice doesn't start until mid-November — a 36-plus week off-season, the longest runway of any NSAA winter sport. The annual plan below anchors the NSC Periodization Framework's five-phase model (GPP → SPP → Pre-Competition → Competition → Transition) to wrestling's actual competitive calendar.

PHASE	WINDOW	DURATION	VOL %	INT %	FOCUS
Transition	Late Feb – mid Mar	~3 wks	30%	50%	Active recovery, shoulder/neck rehab, controlled return to normal eating after a season of weight management.
Off-Season GPP	Mid Mar – early Jun	~11 wks	70–82%	60–70%	Work capacity, hypertrophy, movement literacy, rebuild tissue tolerance after a grinding season.
Off-Season SPP	Early Jun – late Aug	~12 wks	65–74%	72–80%	Maximum strength, Olympic-lift development, grip and neck strength build.
Pre-Comp	Early Sep – early Nov	~9 wks	45–55%	80–88%	Power peak, match-simulation conditioning introduced as technical practice volume rises.
Pre-Season	Nov 9 – early Dec	3–4 wks	40–45%	80–85%	Weight-class certification, technical ramp-up, volume taper into the first competition.
Competition	Early Dec – late Feb (duals, tournaments, state)	~11 wks	30–45%	75–80%	2x/week maintenance around a heavy weekly competition schedule; taper into state.

THE SINGLE BIGGEST PERIODIZATION ERROR IN HS WRESTLING

Treating grip and neck training as extras instead of programming them. They decay like any other trained quality — and by Week 1 of the season it's too late to build them from scratch. Put both in every off-season and pre-season week instead of bolting them on once practice starts.

3. PERIODIZATION, CONTINUED

PHASE DETAIL & LOADING RULES

PHASE	PRIMARY OUTCOME	REP RANGE	SETS	REST	COACHING NOTES
GPP	Hypertrophy / Work Capacity	8–15	3–4	60–90s	3–4x/week; build the grip and neck-strength base every subsequent phase depends on
SPP	Maximum Strength	4–8	4–5	2–3min	Introduce/refine Olympic-lift variations; carries and neck work move to heavier relative loads
Pre-Comp	Power / Repeated-Effort Capacity	1–5	4–6	3–5min	Intensification: drop volume, raise load; match-simulation conditioning enters the weekly plan
Competition	Strength Maintenance	2–5	2–3	3–4min	2x/week is the floor; schedule around weigh-ins (see below), not just around practice
Transition	Recovery / Flexibility	N/A	2	Full	No barbell max work; bodyweight, mobility, and active recovery only

THE HEAVY-LIGHT LOADING WAVE

Alternate a heavy session with a light session across every phase — within the week and across the mesocycle — per Husker Power Principle #8. Use a 3:1 or 4:1 wave: three or four weeks of climbing load, then a deload week at 40–60% of the prior week's volume. Deloads are how supercompensation actually happens (Zatsiorsky & Kraemer), not time off from training. Skip them on a roster that's also cutting weight, and fatigue compounds fast.

RESIDUAL TRAINING EFFECTS

Per Zatsiorsky & Kraemer, maximum strength has a long residual (~30 days) — it survives weeks without direct work. Power and grip/neck endurance decay faster. This is why the in-season maintenance program (Section 4) keeps a dedicated explosive/power exposure and never drops grip or neck work entirely.

LIFT TIMING & WEIGH-INS

Schedule the heaviest lifting day away from weigh-in day and any water-cut window. Heavy eccentric work or a new max-effort lift while an athlete is rehydrating or refueling is a bad idea, plain and simple — let the NSAA weight-management schedule set the lifting calendar, not the other way around.

4. EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

OFF-SEASON (GPP) — SAMPLE WEEK

4-day explosive/strength split, alternating a heavy day with a light day for each quality across the week — the Heavy-Light Loading Wave (Section 3) applied to GPP. Scale load to the athlete's training level. The % column is a percentage of a recent 1RM (or working max) — use it as a starting point and adjust to the bar speed you see that day.

MONDAY — EXPLOSIVE (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Rack Clean	3 × 5	70%
2	Push Press	3 × 5	70%
3	Side MB Toss	3 × 5e	—
4	DB Row	3 × 10e	—
5	Farmer's Carry	3 × 40yd	—
6	Neck Flexion / Extension	3 × 15	—

TUESDAY — STRENGTH (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	3 × 10	60%
2	RDL	3 × 10	60%
3	Incline	3 × 10	60%
4	Pull-Ups	3 × 10	—
5	Front Plank	3 × 45s	—

THURSDAY — EXPLOSIVE (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Rack Clean	3 × 5	65%
2	Push Press	3 × 5	65%
3	Side MB Toss	3 × 5e	—
4	DB Row	3 × 10e	—
5	Farmer's Carry	3 × 40yd	—
6	Neck Flexion / Extension	3 × 15	—

FRIDAY — STRENGTH (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	3 × 10	70%
2	RDL	3 × 10	70%
3	Bench	3 × 10	70%
4	Pull-Ups	3 × 10	—
5	Farmer's Carry	3 × 40yd	—

WEIGHT-TIER ADJUSTMENT

Lower Weight: bias toward the higher end of each rep range at faster bar speed — scrambling speed is their currency, even inside a hypertrophy block. Upper Weight / Heavyweight: bias toward the heaviest load each rep range allows — absolute strength and positional control are their #1 priority.

4. EXAMPLE PROGRAMS, CONTINUED

LATE OFF-SEASON (SPP) — SAMPLE WEEK

4-day explosive/strength split carried over from GPP, now in the SPP block (Section 3): reps drop, load rises, and Olympic-lift variations replace their GPP-tier equivalents to build maximum strength and power. Grip and neck work move to heavier relative loads.

MONDAY — EXPLOSIVE (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Hang Clean	3 × 3	80%
2	Power Press	3 × 3	78%
3	Side MB Toss	3 × 3e	—
4	DB Row	3 × 6e	—
5	Weighted Farmer's Carry	3 × 40yd	—
6	Neck Flexion / Extension	3 × 15	—

TUESDAY — STRENGTH (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	3 × 5	75%
2	Clean Deadlift	3 × 5	75%
3	Incline	3 × 5	75%
4	Weighted Pull-Ups	3 × 5	—
5	Copenhagen Plank	3 × 20s/side	—

THURSDAY — EXPLOSIVE (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Hang Clean	3 × 3	75%
2	Power Press	3 × 3	73%
3	Side MB Toss	3 × 3e	—
4	DB Row	3 × 6e	—
5	Weighted Farmer's Carry	3 × 40yd	—
6	Neck Flexion / Extension	3 × 15	—

FRIDAY — STRENGTH (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS * REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	3 × 5	80%
2	Clean Deadlift	3 × 5	80%
3	Bench	3 × 5	80%
4	Weighted Pull-Ups	3 × 5	—
5	Weighted Farmer's Carry	3 × 40yd	—

WHY THE LIFTS CHANGED FROM GPP

Hang Clean and Power Press replace Rack Clean and Push Press as Olympic-lift competency develops (Section 3); Clean Deadlift builds the pull position under the same bar-speed emphasis as the heavy lower day. Farmer's Carry and neck work stay in every session — they don't get phased out, only loaded up.

4. EXAMPLE PROGRAMS, CONTINUED

PRE-SEASON — SAMPLE WEEK

4-day heavy/light split carried into Pre-Season, wave-loaded (e.g. 4/3/2) so bar speed and CNS readiness stay high while technical practice volume rises and weight-class certification approaches. RAMP opens every session.

MONDAY — EXPLOSIVE (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Power Clean	4 / 3 / 2	75/80/85%
2	Push Jerk	4 / 3 / 2	73/78/83%
3	Side MB Toss	3 × 3e	—
4	DB Row	3 × 5e	—
5	Neck Flexion / Extension	3 × 10	—

TUESDAY — STRENGTH (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	5 / 4 / 3	75/80/85%
2	DB Walking Lunge	3 × 5e	—
3	Incline	5 / 4 / 3	73/78/83%
4	Farmer's Carry	3 × 40yd	—

THURSDAY — EXPLOSIVE (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Power Clean	4 / 3 / 2	70/75/80%
2	Push Jerk	4 / 3 / 2	68/73/78%
3	Side MB Toss	3 × 3e	—
4	DB Row	3 × 5e	—
5	Neck Flexion / Extension	3 × 10	—

FRIDAY — STRENGTH (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	5 / 4 / 3	78/83/88%
2	DB Walking Lunge	3 × 5e	—
3	Bench	5 / 4 / 3	76/81/86%
4	Farmer's Carry	3 × 40yd	—

CUT VOLUME, NOT INTENSITY — AND WATCH THE SCALE

Total lifting volume should still drop from the SPP peak even though session count holds at 4/week — each session is short (4–5 movements) and the week alternates a heavy day with a light day so no single day compounds with weight-management testing (Nov 9) or the demands of a new practice schedule (Nov 16). Trim these numbers further, not up, if a certification cut is in progress that week.

4. EXAMPLE PROGRAMS, CONTINUED

IN-SEASON — SAMPLE WEEK

2-day maintenance template, spaced across the week around the competition schedule. Wrestling's weekly rhythm — a dual or two plus a weekend tournament — means the exact days move team to team; what stays fixed is the heavy/light split and keeping both days away from weigh-ins.

DAY 1 — STRENGTH DAY

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	3 × 3	80%
2	Weighted Pull-Ups	2 × 5	—
3	Bench	3 × 3	80%
4	Nordic Hamstring Curl	2 × 6	—
5	Farmer's Carry	2 × 40yd	—
—	Cool-Down Stretch Series	5 min	—

Target session time: 35–40 minutes.

DAY 2 — EXPLOSIVE / POWER DAY

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Hang Clean	3 × 2	78%
2	Push Jerk	3 × 2	75%
3	Neck Flexion / Extension	2 × 10	—

Target session time: 20–25 minutes — short and sharp, never the reason an athlete misses weight.

LIFTING AROUND WEIGH-INS

Place the heavier of the two days as far from weigh-in/competition day as the schedule allows. Never introduce a new max-effort lift or heavy eccentric work while an athlete is actively cutting or rehydrating — the goal in-season is to preserve what the off-season built, not to test it.

THE IN-SEASON FLOOR

Two sessions per week is the floor, not a target to shrink further when the dual/tournament schedule gets heavy. Below two sessions, the strength and grip/neck durability built across 36+ weeks of off-season start eroding by mid-season — exactly when the bracket gets hardest.

THE WRAP

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ Weight class, not position. Lower, middle, and upper-weight wrestlers share the same 10 Husker Power principles but need different dosing — faster and higher-rep for lighter classes, heavier for upper weights.
- ▶ Wrestling is continuous, not bursty. Six minutes of near-continuous lactic-anaerobic effort per match, repeated up to six times on a tournament day — condition with match-simulation intervals, not distance running.
- ▶ The 36-week off-season is the asset. Split it into a true GPP block and a true SPP block, and build grip and neck strength on purpose — the mat won't build them for you.
- ▶ Everything that matters is relative to bodyweight. Test and benchmark strength per pound, not absolute numbers — weight class caps the scale, not the training goal.
- ▶ Let the weight-management calendar set the lifting calendar. Schedule heavy days away from weigh-ins and water cuts — never test a new max effort while an athlete is cutting or rehydrating.
- ▶ In-season, two sessions per week is the floor. Keep a dedicated explosive/power exposure and never drop grip or neck work entirely.
- ▶ Respect the deload. A 3:1 or 4:1 heavy-light wave isn't optional recovery on a roster that's also managing weight — it's how the adaptation from the preceding weeks actually gets banked.

"Robust, strong, athletic — in that order. A fast athlete who cannot stay healthy is a liability."

BUILT BY NEBRASKA STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

This is the second release in the NSC Sport-Specific Guide Series. Every guide follows the same four-part structure — Needs Analysis, Potential KPIs, Periodization, and Example Programs — cross-referenced against the NSC Periodization Framework and NSC Exercise Database. Questions, feedback, or want a sport prioritized next? Visit nebraskasc.com.