



Michaela Hutchison



Yes, if you didn't yet know, girls do wrestle. There are pockets of high school wrestling communities open exclusively to girls, but the majority of youth and high school wrestling programs have boys and girls wrestling together. I've spoken to many coaches about this phenomenon and opinions are mixed. Some feel that it's ok for boys and girls to wrestle together, while others think it's plain wrong. In an age where the female presence continues to grow in areas traditionally dominated by men, this issue challenges the idea that some activities should be reserved for a single gender.

Danielle Coughlin



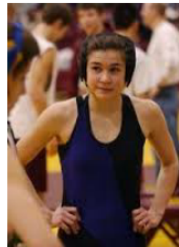
More and more sports that have traditionally attracted men are now involving girls. Baseball and football teams are adding more girls to their rosters. This trend is likely to continue as long as the number of female participants on a team remains too low to fill another roster, or as financial constraints continue to limit school resources.

According to the National Collegiate Wrestling Association:

- 24 colleges now sponsor a varsity wrestling program.
- Women's wrestling is now a recognized Olympic sport.
- California, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Texas, and Washington sponsor a girl's

state high school championship. Texas was the first state to hold an interscholastic state wrestling championship for women.

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The past ten years have seen some dramatic change in the sport of high school wrestling. Let's begin with the trailblazer, Michaela Hutchison, who made history as the first girl in the nation to ever win a high school state wrestling championship. She claimed this title in a mostly boys tournament in 2006. Since then, four other girls have won state championships. Most recently, Destiny Nunez from Arkansas took home the 2015 title in the 106-pound weight class.

Destiny Nunez



This presents a huge opportunity for young women, who traditionally have been compared to other female athletes. By competing in programs where the majority of the participants are boys, they have removed the speculation. When interviewed by Yahoo Sports writer Danielle Elliot, Nunez expressed 'I don't want to be just compared to girls, I want to be compared to good wrestlers.' Lastly, The United States Girls Wrestling Association is urging more states to join California, Hawaii, Tennessee, Texas and

Washington in offering separate high school teams and championships for girls.



So, if your daughter is thinking about giving wrestling a try, keep in mind that she wouldn't be the first!

-Glenn

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