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METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL**<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>**STAGE-SPECIFIC INTEGRATION OF TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL TRAINING
IN FREESTYLE WRESTLING: A LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK****Bekzod Satipov***PHD, Urgench state university named after**Abu Rayhan Biruni**Urgench, Uzbekistan***ABOUT ARTICLE**

Key words: freestyle wrestling, long-term athlete development, technical-tactical training, skill acquisition, decision-making, coaching methodology.

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Abstract: This paper proposes a stage-specific framework for integrating technical and tactical preparation throughout the long-term development of freestyle wrestlers. The model differentiates between technical literacy, combination building, contextual decision-making, competitive specialisation and selective refinement. Rather than treating technique and tactics as separate blocks, the approach links movement execution to perceptual cues, scoring context, opponent behaviour and fatigue. The framework introduces progression criteria for uncertainty, partner resistance, time pressure and tactical autonomy. Practical indicators for coaching control are presented, including technical reliability, tactical appropriateness, action latency, continuation after defence and transfer to competition. The model is intended for coaches seeking a coherent pathway from youth skill acquisition to elite competitive performance.

Introduction. Long-term preparation in freestyle wrestling is frequently organised around age categories, training volume and physical development, while the internal progression of technical and tactical learning remains less explicit. Yet competition places technique and tactics in inseparable interaction. A technically correct single-leg attack has limited value if it is initiated from an unfavourable distance, at the wrong moment, or without a continuation after the opponent's defence. Conversely, tactical intention cannot be realised

without reliable motor execution. Contemporary studies of elite wrestling confirm that success is associated with the quality of technical-tactical actions, adaptability, decision-making and the capacity to sustain performance under intense physiological demands [1–6].

Problem statement. A common methodological weakness is to separate technical drilling from tactical preparation for too long. In such a system, the athlete first learns actions in predictable conditions and only later is expected to use them independently in competition. This creates a transfer gap: the motor pattern may be stable, but the athlete has insufficient experience recognising when and why it should be used. Match analyses of recent championships show that effective actions are highly dependent on position, scoring value, phase of the bout and opponent behaviour [8, 9]. Therefore, long-term development should progressively increase not only motor complexity but also informational complexity.

Aim. The aim of this study was to develop a methodological framework for stage-specific integration of technical and tactical training in freestyle wrestling across long-term athlete development.

Methods. The study used analysis and synthesis of peer-reviewed literature, comparative interpretation of technical-tactical match analysis, pedagogical modelling and structural-functional design. Evidence concerning physiological requirements, success factors, youth development and recent elite competition trends was used to define progression principles [1–11]. No experimental outcomes were fabricated; the paper presents a methodological model intended for subsequent empirical validation.

Results. The proposed framework contains five developmental stages. Stage 1 is technical literacy. The athlete learns fundamental positions, balance, penetration steps, finishes, defence, basic parterre actions and safe movement mechanics. Tactical content is present but simple: recognise distance, maintain stance, react to a clearly defined cue and understand the basic relationship between attack and defence. The main criterion is reliable execution rather than tactical diversity.

Stage 2 is combination construction. Once isolated actions become sufficiently stable, they are linked into short chains. Training progresses from attack–finish sequences to attack–defence–re-attack structures, changes of direction, transitions from standing to parterre and combinations involving pressure at the edge of the mat. The athlete is no longer rewarded only for completing the first action; continuation becomes a central learning target. This stage creates the functional bridge between technique and tactics.

Stage 3 is contextual decision training. Partner behaviour becomes variable. The wrestler receives a problem rather than a prescribed solution: score within 30 seconds, defend

a narrow lead without passivity, create a takedown from an opponent's left lead, or regain central mat position after being pressured toward the boundary. The coach manipulates constraints—time, score, space, available grips and permitted responses—to stimulate perception-action coupling. Tactical learning therefore emerges from repeated exposure to meaningful competitive problems.

Stage 4 is competitive specialisation. The athlete's individual technical-tactical profile is established. Core attacks, preferred setups, counterattacks, defensive patterns, parterre options and high-risk alternatives are identified through competition video and training observation. The purpose is not to reduce the athlete to a narrow repertoire but to allocate practice time according to competitive value. Recent analyses showing frequent use of two-point actions, single-leg attacks and position-specific scoring support the need for event-relevant practice content [8, 9].

Stage 5 is selective refinement for high performance. At this stage, technical quantity is less important than speed, concealment, variation and resistance to opponent adaptation. Training focuses on creating multiple entries into the same core attack, connecting the preferred action to alternative finishes, and maintaining decision quality under fatigue and psychological pressure. The athlete also develops opponent-specific plans based on scouting, without losing the flexibility to change strategy during the bout.

Progression of uncertainty. Four levels of uncertainty are recommended. Level A is predictable: the partner response is known. Level B is alternative: two responses are possible. Level C is constrained-variable: the partner may choose freely within a defined tactical problem. Level D is open-competitive: only the objective and scoring context are prescribed. Progression to a higher level should depend on technical reliability, not chronological age alone. If execution collapses under Level C, the task should be simplified before additional complexity is added.

Resistance and time pressure. Partner resistance should also progress independently from informational uncertainty. A task can be tactically complex but physically moderate, or physically intense but tactically simple. Separating these variables allows the coach to target the intended adaptation. For younger wrestlers, high-quality decisions should be learned before severe fatigue is imposed. For advanced wrestlers, decision tasks should increasingly be completed after specific high-intensity work because competitive wrestling places substantial aerobic and anaerobic demands on the athlete [1–3, 10, 11].

Pedagogical control. Five indicators are proposed: technical reliability, tactical appropriateness, decision latency, continuation rate and competitive transfer. Technical

reliability reflects whether the action remains mechanically sound. Tactical appropriateness evaluates whether it was the right option for the situation. Decision latency estimates how quickly the athlete initiates a meaningful response. Continuation rate measures whether the athlete can maintain offence after initial defence. Competitive transfer compares training success with actual bout behaviour. These indicators should be tracked using coach observation and video review rather than a single composite score.

Video-assisted reflection. Video is most effective when used as a decision-learning tool rather than a catalogue of errors. After selected episodes, the athlete should identify the cue that triggered the action, explain the intended tactical outcome, describe what the opponent did, and propose an alternative response. This approach encourages explicit tactical awareness while preserving the athlete's autonomy. The coach should avoid turning every review into prescriptive instruction; otherwise, athletes may become dependent on external commands rather than developing self-regulation.

Discussion. The framework is consistent with evidence that elite wrestling requires an integrated set of physical, technical and tactical qualities [1, 4–6]. It also reflects the direction of youth training research that emphasises progressive movement learning and the transfer of technique into competitive activity [7]. The novelty of the model lies in treating uncertainty, resistance, time pressure and tactical autonomy as separate dosage variables. This allows a coach to progress a task precisely instead of simply making sparring harder.

Practical application. A weekly microcycle can include four linked components: technical precision, combination development, constrained tactical sparring and competition-oriented review. The proportions change with stage. Early development favours precision and broad skill exposure; intermediate stages increase combination and decision content; advanced preparation gives greater weight to individual tactical scenarios, opponent modelling and high-intensity transfer. Every four to six weeks, coaches should review the athlete's technical-tactical profile and adjust the balance of these components.

Coaching implications. For implementation, coaches should document not only what was trained but also the level of uncertainty, resistance and decision freedom used in each task. This makes progression visible across months and prevents an athlete from remaining in comfortable, predictable drills. A simple session record can identify the target technique, tactical problem, partner response options, time-score constraint and expected continuation. When these variables are tracked systematically, long-term planning becomes more transparent and the coach can distinguish true tactical development from improvement caused only by repeated familiarity with one exercise.

Conclusion. Technical and tactical preparation in freestyle wrestling should evolve as a unified learning system throughout long-term development. The proposed five-stage framework moves from technical literacy to combination construction, contextual decision-making, competitive specialisation and selective refinement. Progression is controlled through uncertainty, resistance, time pressure and tactical autonomy. The model provides a coherent pathway for reducing the gap between training execution and competitive decision-making and can serve as a basis for future experimental research in youth and elite freestyle wrestlers.

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