

## **Starting a Club**

Usually the formation of a club starts around an individual or a group of individuals who are already involved in wrestling or grappling sports. In some cases, friends, family, onlookers or work colleagues may have shown an interest in the trying out of wrestling/Grapppling at the point where curiosity gets the better of them. Existing wrestlers may feel that there is enough interest in the locality to form a club from the existing and the prospective group. It is now that the work begins

## **Club facilities**

A club can operate at a number of different grappling disciplines such as Freestyle Wrestling, Greco Roman Wrestling, Pankration, Sambo, Grappling or BJJ. The club should have its own training facilities, mats and possibly a supply of club equipment. This aspect of the club is important in developing further and attracting future members. In order to have a base from which to run training sessions (e.g. introduction courses/evenings) and club competitions. At the top of the pyramid would be a club with a fully-fledged facility offering, Mats, changing rooms, showers, meeting rooms, weight lifting training equipment, etc... This is possible when a location is obtained by renting or buying and is the desired situation for most clubs; however finances and acquisition of suitable sites can be difficult. If you are interested in pursuing such a development you should contact the IAWA, the National Lottery, your local County Council and other funding agencies to see what funding may be available.

## **Starting out!**

If you are forming a new club from scratch it is a good idea to start with a small group of members, maybe eight to ten. These numbers are easier to cater for in terms of ratios for training when starting out, but sufficient enough to elect a committee and delegate club duties. If the club is already formed and you are hoping to inject new life into it there are a number of ways in which new members can be attracted:

- Staging of ‘come and try sessions’ for the general public
- Advertising of club activities in local media and social media, word of mouth
- Distribution of a club newsletter through existing members to prospective members
- Your members are the best way to get new people to join!

## **Removing Barriers**

Asking people about their ability and what they can or can't do is a good start, that way you can begin to tune into their needs and make any adaptations that are necessary, if any are in fact necessary

## **Considerations when joining up new members?**

### ***All Members are entitled to:***

- Be safe participating in sporting activities on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability, weight, age and stage of development
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy sport
- Comment and make suggestions in the constructive manner
- Make a complaint in an appropriate way and have it dealt with through an effective complaints procedure
- Be afforded appropriate confidentiality
- Be represented at decision making bodies/meetings within their sports clubs
- Have a voice in the running of their club
- Be listened to

## **What to do at your first meeting/Appoint Officers/Draw up constitution/Register the Club.**

The first official task in the formation of a new club is the holding of General Meeting which in time should become an Annual General Meeting (AGM). At this meeting a title for the club can be decided and more importantly a committee is selected to help with the maintenance and running of the club. The committee members need to be chosen from the future members present, the committee ratified and a club constitution adopted. A list of committee members might be as follows:

*\*Chairperson/President*

*\*Treasurer*

*\*Secretary*

*\*Coaching Team*

*\*Garda Liaison Officer*

In order for a club to be appropriately administered and regulated, it is usual to have a club constitution. This is often a prerequisite of many grant aid bodies and key funding programmes. A club constitution should be a simple document that outlines the functions of the club, procedures for membership, meetings and committees. Having a constitution will help to clarify how the club's procedures should work for all the clubs members. Some clubs in Ireland will have their constitution and membership forms on their websites. You can look at some before drawing up such documents for your own club. The IAWA can also supply generic versions of these documents.

### **Club Affiliation & Individual Membership to the National Governing Body (NGB) and Insurance**

Clubs don't run for free. Annual subscription fees from your members should be set to cover the cost of running the club and to allow for surplus at the end of the year for upgrading and maintaining equipment.

When running your own club, it is important to make sure that you have suitable insurance cover in the case of an accident on your premises while training, competing or for people attending just to spectate. You can get insurance through a company which can sometimes be expensive and difficult to get due to the nature of the sport.

Alternatively, the IAWA as the National Governing Body have specific Insurance on offer to suitable clubs which covers Public Liability and Personal Injury for wrestling and grappling sports clubs.

For affiliated clubs to take advantage of Insurance policies through the IAWA, your club must meet the criteria.

*This a brief outline of requirements for insurance cover. For full information on our insurance policies please email [irishwrestling@outlook.ie](mailto:irishwrestling@outlook.ie)*