

It's About Time...

Parents and friends, excuse while I talk to my guys and the guys who coached them. This is their night, but you are welcome to listen in.

Your coach just said it best...every second counts.

Not just on the mat but in every thing that you do. From the time you arrive in this world until the time that you leave it...every second counts. When we are young we have the perception that we have all of the time in the world. The days seem endless and an hour is forever. Enjoy this feeling because it will not last. A simple mathematical approach explains it all. When you reach your first birthday a year is 100% of your life, it is all the time that you have ever known. At the age of 15 each year is just short of 7% or at my age each year is little more than 2% of my time here. Now I don't want this to sound like the clock is running too fast, but you can count on the fact that it is always running and ...every second counts.

When you walked through the doors and became a high school student you saw it as a new challenge that was going to last a long time, 4 years, nearly a quarter of your life. You want it to move quickly and you want to reach those milestone ages as quickly as possible, 16, 18, 21. You rush to do the things those magic numbers allow you to do. Sometimes you stretch those boundaries and try and do things that you shouldn't do until more time has passed. You want the freedoms of being an adult yet you still want to be a kid. It's more fun to be a kid and time seems to be not so important.

Being an adult lasts the rest of your life, being a kid is a great part of your life, enjoy it for as long as you can get away with it ...every second counts.

Those seconds count even more in the moments when you are making decisions. A large part of moving from kidhood to adulthood is figuring out how to use those seconds to make the right decisions. Be happy with being at the place you are in time. Most of you will only get one short block of time in which to be the person we are celebrating here tonight. You only get four years to be a high school athlete. In that march of time that is your life those years are just a blip, a blip that can help shape you into being the great people which you are going to become, so make sure...every second counts.

Most of you have just started this journey and I could not be any happier that you decided or were persuaded to play the mat game with us. There is no better place to learn some of the most important lessons for the rest of your life. I know that you found out about self-reliance but I also hope you learned about teamwork. You felt what it was like to push yourself further than you thought you were capable of and I hope you learned how to help a buddy get to the same place you are. You learned lessons in many different qualities that will be a part of your life forever and I hope wrestling has become forever a part of your life. You set your goals and I hope that you reached some of them but I also hope that you didn't reach all of them. You always need to have a goal out there somewhere so that you keep working, pushing and putting in the time because...every second counts.

For the rest of you this journey is moving along a pace that might be a little scary. It was just a little bit ago that you were stepping on that mat to start the journey that we have been talking of and now you can begin to see where the next chapter is going to begin. Your time as a competitive athlete will probably come to a close. I know that you are a little short of some of the goals you set and I know that you are not satisfied. But I also sense that you are even more committed to those goals than you were before. You want to go places you haven't been both for yourself and for your team. Over the next 8 months or so you need to find a little extra of that thing I have been telling you about and use it to focus yourself and guide your team toward those goals. You have to find the time to make it happen and once you find the time use it well...every second counts.

Your parents are also important in this endeavor for they always seem to find some time. Time to get you back and forth to practice, hours to watch you compete and even more time spent in the kitchen and with the washing machine. They use their time to work so that you can play. You get to be a kid for one short part of a long life and your parents make it possible for you enjoy that little bit of time. Appreciate your parents for the things they provide you but mostly enjoy them for the time that they give you...every second counts.

Now that I am officially the oldest guy in the wrestling room (I got Coach Bloom beat by about 6 days) I want to talk about the last group of my guys, the coaches. They are really my guys because I have coached them all in one way or another as they have coached me. The

young guys on the staff, Jeremy Bloom, Brad Simmons, Devin Young and all of the other past wrestlers who find the time to spend with you guys in the room all wrestled on teams I was involved with. Coach Weston and Coach Weber were a part of the magical season when we learned that we weren't there for the show we were there because we were the show and what a show it was. (Going back to the show is always my number one goal) Coach Bloom and I have learned a lot about coaching together, it is hard to count the hours and the miles we have invested in helping others find the path to their goals. That is really what coaching is all about, investing in others. Teaching the lessons and providing the guidance to help others reach their goals. As we moved through the season I had many moments with these guys that did nothing but make me think more highly of them everyday. Jeremy and I talked about how much harder it is to be beside the mat than it is to be on it. Devin confirmed his choice to teach and coach as his profession. Coach Weber, Coach Weston and I have talked for hours about how to manage and guide you guys to places you need to be. This past weekend I saw another of my guys from that championship season, P.J. Mitchell and he told that he never really understood what we meant when we talked about giving back to the sport we love so much. Now he does because he is coaching in Texas and he's getting the great payback that comes with giving yourself and your time. All of us are willing to give every minute we can, so take advantage of the time we offer and never feel funny about asking for more because I think somehow we will always find the time because we know...every second counts.

Remember every decision that you make, even those that only take a second, set the path for your life. We all try and make good decisions and we are all bound to make a few bad ones. If you use that time well the good will far overshadow the bad. Use that second to think before you go to that party where you know you shouldn't be. Think in that second before you press that accelerator pedal to go just a little faster. When it comes to decision making ...every second counts.

Finally use a little time to hug people. Hug your parents, hug your family, hug your friends, hell hug a stranger once in a while, just don't hug the guy who just beat you.

Remember ...every second counts.