

Wow, what a year it has been! We have been through high highs and low lows. We brought home some hardware and we have slain some giants. I consulted our Head Coach Emeritus from his winter training camp in Florida and he could not recall that we had ever beaten New Lothrop or Eaton Rapids and definitely not in the same year. New Lothrop only lost 3 times all year, once to us, once to Pinconning (who we beat by 25) and then to back to back State Champion Hudson (a team we lost to by 3) in the state semi-finals. Six teams we faced made that trip to the cereal city and we beat two of them. But as Coach Weber would say we faced a little adversity. From the classroom to the operating room, from the kissing disease to the funk, we saw a little of everything. Four Hornets to the Palace and many more to places they had never been before. Some who met their goals and some who came up just a little short, I would still mark this down as a very successful season. We all learned, we all got better, we became a family and we all became a little more prepared for whatever lies ahead. That leads me to what I really want to talk tonight...

## Position

That is what it is really all about. Ours is a sport that is totally and completely about position. If you were able to always stay in perfect position you could never lose, no one could ever score on you. If you slip into bad position things can be over before you realize what happened. Guys, when it comes to the things we need to compete at a high level the people in this room and many others are always working to get you in that perfect position to go with the best. They work very hard so all you have to worry about is taking care of your position in the classroom and on the mat.

Your coaches invest a great deal of time studying, planning and implementing effective strategies to guide you to a win. They work to help you workout and be in peak condition when you are trying to hold your position. They teach you those perfect positions and they agonize when you get out position on the mat, in the classroom or in your personal lives. They work to help you overcome the adversity that is a part of nearly everything that you do. They work to keep our program in

a position to be one that others are always concerned with and for those things you should be grateful.

The three Ks, Coach Weber's chicas, the girls; call them what you want but they have held their position for 4 years and that is a long time when you are riding on a school bus full of heathens. Kelly, Kristen and Kacie you have also invested your time in making sure our position is right. Sometimes you were the only ones that really knew the score and you made sure that the official knew it too. Boys, thank the girls for their help in keeping our team in position to succeed and girls remember, your perfect position is in the seat right behind Coach Weber, because he knows his heathens.

The Sponsors and Boosters also work on keeping you in great position. They write the checks and make the donations that keep you well equipped. When it's time for the Classic or the Post-Season the faithful and the alumni slip right into the positions that run the tournaments. They do it because they know how good it feels to be in the proper position. Thank them for helping you maintain your position.

Your parents are the absolute best when it comes to keeping you where you belong. If you drift too far from that comfortable place perfect position puts you in, don't worry they are lurking in the shadows to put you back in your place and remember that they do it with love. They get up at 5:00 am to get you to the school for the early Saturday bus. They log miles and miles getting you after practice and following you across the state. They make sure you have the special things to keep you on weight and as healthy as you can be. But mostly they are the ones that are always in the perfect position to love you unconditionally. It doesn't matter, win or lose, they are there for you. Position yourselves close to them tonight and give them a hug and thank them for being in the perfect position to support you.

Now guys it is time to talk about you.

Freshmen, this first year is maybe the most important when you look at it in terms of position. You moved from the top rung in middle school back to the

bottom. You thought you had the perfect position figured out and then you had to start all over again. It is all just like the beginning of a match. You are on your feet and facing an unknown opponent but if you think about your stance you are in a pretty safe place. Your feet solid, maybe you set-up square or maybe you lead a leg. Your knees are flexed and your weight is a little forward on the balls of your feet. Bent slightly at the waist, head up, elbows in and hands are in front, you are ready to go. It is time to focus on the task in front of you, another guy who thinks he too is in perfect position and you both have the same goal, to move the other out of position. It is simple as that, it is the essence of the sport, your job is to move the other man out of position. For once you have him out of his perfect position then you can work the set-up, notice I said set-up, not takedown. The takedown is the easy part, single, double, firemen's they all share one thing, the set-up is where the magic is. If you have a really great set-up the takedown just happens and for you to be the most successful at wrestling, school and life you have to put yourself in the perfect position to move your obstacles into that great set-up. The lesson is if you put in the time and are willing to step into the danger zone you will begin to find those great set-ups that will move you ahead on your journey as long as you maintain that perfect position.

Sophomores, just when you began to get comfortable with positions and set-ups you discover that there is a problem, by the rules of our mat game you are intentionally put in a bad position, on your hands and knees, your opponent draped over you with a good grip on your arm and waist. Not exactly perfect position and a lot like life, just when you think that you have it figured out somebody lays a new rule on you that changes the whole game. But in life as on the mat you have to find your way back to that perfect position. You have to explode to your feet, stepping up while you grope for those hands and cut your hips around or switching hard to put yourself in the advantage position. Sit out, Peterson, Granby, whatever it takes to put you in control. Another life lesson, no matter the situation you face you have to fight for position and control and then you will be on the way to controlling your future.

Juniors you have begun to find that control and you find yourselves starting in that position of advantage. You have been in the fight and you know the feeling

of being out of position and out of control. Now it is your turn to control the action, break them to the mat and start working toward are ultimate goal of our game. You are getting ready for the total domination of the pinfall. One hand in the armpit and the other on their thigh as us spiral them to the mat, chop the arm, lift the ankle and knee them in the butt. Whatever it takes to put them nearer to the worst position in wrestling and a life lesson sneaks in again. Sometimes after you gain a little advantage in position it is time to flatten the things that are in your way. All of you are moving into that advantage position and Paul you took a big step in flattening those things that lie ahead, congratulations on moving to the Finals and seeing things from a place you had never been before.

Seniors this is it. You have held your position and now you are at a distinct advantage. You have turned that man to his back and you are ready to accept the ultimate award in our game, the pin. The hours have been invested, the sacrifices have been made and in some way you have all gone to places you have never been before. While they sometimes they may not be exactly the places that you wished to go, be sure that they were a good places none the less. They are the places that you will look back on and you will smile more that you will frown, because in your heart you know after the journey down that road we have all traveled together everything else in life will be at least a little easier.

Over the last couple of weeks as our time together as a team drew to a close I thought of how I will remember each of you:

The take down was nothing special, probably a double leg, but the finish with a half nelson led to the biggest smile I have ever captured on the mat. Ryan your time with us was short but the vision of that smile will always accompany my thoughts of you.

Next I see big men being flung into the air from a variety of positions, flair doubles, high singles, chin whips and many many more. Then the finish, a head and arm with just the tip of your tongue sticking out. Reggie you brought us many thrills once the yearly negotiations were closed and coach got him into the wrestling room. When I see big boys fly I will think of Reggie.

Then there is a head-up double. You always looked up so hard that you must know the ceiling tile in gyms all across Michigan. Finish it off with a tight bundle and Ben you found that you liked our mat game. The first I knew of you was when Coach said we have a new transfer from Ohio, I thought super, there is great wrestling in Ohio, then he told me you were a gymnast and I thought well at least he'll be flexible. Well Ben you have proven yourself to be very flexible, from a freshmen starting on the varsity after being a wrestler for only 3 weeks to a senior leader capable of winning the big match you were a guy we could count on the give it you all, but I am still waiting to see your floor exercise. Whenever I see someone looking toward the sky I will remember you.

An arm-drag double to a cross-face cradle. Think what could have happened if we had figured out that you need a bagel for breakfast before your senior season. Isaac you are most deservedly the most improved wrestler this year, maybe the biggest single year improvement I have ever witnessed. You gave us four years of hard work and dedication, you learned and you grew. You went from 1-9 as a freshman to 24-19 as a senior and you pulled out some big ones, well done young man. Issac whenever I see dimensional lumber I will think of you. They said practicing with you was like wrestling a 2 x 4, you wouldn't bend. As you travel the road ahead don't bend and you will always find your way, just be sure and stop for breakfast.

Why is he leading that leg so much? Whoops, takedown for 2! Whys is he letting him tripod up so easy? Whoops, spladle! Justin you are the only guy in the room who has consistently turned poor position into an advantage, maybe even an art form. I watched you score from positions that have turned Coach Weber's hair white. Maybe you wrestle so well from "bad" positions because of all of the trouble you have had getting your place on the mat. From a bum knee to a stack of middle weights and finally a case of mono things did not always work out in your favor but you persevered. You worked hard and made your teammates work harder. You could be counted on and you finally got to the big dance. You should be proud because I know the rest of us are. Whenever I see scoring from what we'll call an "interesting position" my thoughts will turn to you. Our sport

has brought out great qualities in you and I know that as you face the adversity that life always brings you will always find a way to score.

We ask what's he doing? The answer is always the series. You know the series don't you? The takedown may change, slide double, knee tap single, head in the hole, but the rest is most always the same. Cheap tilt, bundle, cradle. Ian you have been most entertaining both on the mat and off. Thrilling wins, crushing defeats and then I saw you rise from the dead and finish your career on terms that made it much easier. You may have knocked heads with Coach Weber on occasion but you always yielded to his guidance and along the way amassed more matches than any other Hornet in history. You strapped up 223 times and won 179 to put you at number 4 on the all time wins list. Your note as a second grader inspired a high school team and your career as a Hornet will inspire other wrestlers for years to come. Whenever I see someone struggling on the bottom and finally making their escape I will think of your and whenever I seem to have lost something I will think I wonder where Ian put that.

There is the shot heard 'round the world, the moon shot, lots of guys are looking for their shot but around here we talked about the shot from Webberville. It came from halfway across the mat but as time passed the shot got tighter and more varied but event to the end sometimes that was the shot. There were also high single legs, the front headlock to a head in the whole, arm drags, elbow passes and many more. Often they were finished with double wings or a head lever. More than half the time it ended in a fall. Two hundred and one wins against only 19 losses, number 3 all time, the most wins in a single season at 61 and 3 times All-State. Aaron you have left a lasting legacy on the mat but perhaps more importantly in the classroom earning Academic All-State honors for 2010. You absorbed all of things we had to offer and you always held your position. Be proud of what you accomplished but never settle. There are great things to come as you go forward and when I see a Champion I will think of you because you were a great example of the thing a champion should be. I may also have thoughts of you whenever I smell a little skunky aroma.

Seniors I hope that you can remember back to your freshman season when I told you about Coach Beazey's 4 rules of wrestling. Let's think about them now:

1. "There is more than one way to do everything." That is certainly the truth and you have all found many ways to accomplish your goals.
2. "If you sharply focus on doing all of the little pieces correctly when you put them together the picture suddenly becomes crystal clear." You have found that if you perfect each little step of anything it suddenly comes into sharp focus allowing you to see exactly what needs to be done.
3. "When it is time to eat, eat. When it is time to sleep, sleep. And when it is time to work, work with all of your heart." You have all given so much of your hearts that I know you have this one figured out.
4. "You don't have to go to OZ." You already possess all of the qualities you could wish for. You all possess the smarts, the courage and the hearts of champions.

Guys I believe we coaches have done our jobs and I believe we have put you in the perfect position to turn the page to the next chapter. Maybe you need to go to Oz after all, there is a brightly colored world out there to see and it is time to move back to the bottom, set your feet, square your shoulders, lower your level and be ready, for the next whistle is about to blow.