

USA Wrestling announces Grappling World Team Trials Qualifying Series

Contributed by USA Wrestling
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Beginning in May, USA Wrestling will begin to host a series of 12 qualifiers to determine the field for the 2008 USA Wrestling Grappling World Team Trials.

These USA Wrestling sanctioned qualifiers will identify the best Grapplers in the United States, and give them an opportunity to try out for the 2008 U.S. Grappling World Team, which will compete at the Grappling World Championships in Lucerne, Switzerland on December 20-21.

The USA Wrestling Grappling World Team Trials Qualifying Series will run from May through August, and will be placed in strategic locations around the country. The series has been designed to increase the participation level from last year, and encourage the nation's best athletes to try out for the U.S. Team.

USA Wrestling has yet to determine the site and date for the 2008 U.S. Grappling World Team Trials, but it is expected to be held in September 2008. Visit TheMat.com and read the next issue of USA Wrestler for the final details on the date and location for the U.S. Grappling World Team Trials.

"USA Wrestling is excited to bring this series of competitive World Team Trials Qualifying events to the Grappling community," said Jason Townsend, USA Wrestling's Manager of Developing Wrestling Styles. "We expect the nation's best Grappling athletes to attend these events, for a chance to make the U.S. World Team. Anybody who has competed in Grappling, wrestling, Jiu-jitsu or other martial arts should attend these outstanding events."

In order to qualify for the 2008 U.S. Grappling World Team Trials, which is for Senior-level athletes, men must place in the top four in their weight class and women must place in the top three of their weight class. Returning 2007 U.S. World Team Trials champions automatically qualify for the 2008 U.S. World Team Trials.

USA Wrestling started a Grappling program in 2007, after the international wrestling federation FILA recognized the sport as a form of wrestling. A series of qualifiers were held, and the U.S. Grappling World Team Trials were held alongside the wrestling trials events in Las Vegas, Nev.

The U.S. World Team, sponsored by No Limits MMA, traveled to Antalya, Turkey and has a historic performance, coming home with all nine gold medals from the 2007 FILA World Wrestling Games.

FILA has announced that the Grappling World Championships will be held separately from other styles of wrestling, in a historic event set for Dec. 20-21 in Lucerne, Switzerland.

“It is our intention for Grappling to have its own independent World Championships which will spotlight this new style,” said Jean-Francois Court, Executive Director of the FILA World Grappling Committee. “Last year, we used the World Wrestling Games as our de facto World Championships because of the time constraints we faced in organizing the event. So, this will be our first World Championships where Grappling is on its own.”

Several of the nation’s top Grappling teams have already committed to taking part in the process of entering the Grappling World Team Trials Qualifying Series.

“I look forward to Cobra Kai Jiu-jitsu competing in these events,” said Grappling legend Marc Laimon. “We expect to improve on last years’ performance and really plan to step up our training to prepare specifically for these events. I want to dominate the World Team Trials and get my guys on the World Team and make the trip to Switzerland and come back with some gold medals.”

Events will be held in California, Colorado, Maryland, Texas, New York, Virginia, Illinois, Florida, Nevada, Hawaii and Oregon. The first and the final qualifying events will be hosted at No Limits MMA, USA Wrestling’s National Training Center for Grappling and Sombo.

All athletes must have a USA Wrestling membership and be U.S. citizens to be eligible to compete in the Grappling World Team Trials Qualifying Series as well as the U.S. Grappling World Team Trials. You can purchase a USA Wrestling membership on www.themat.com.

Athletes can pre-register and pay their \$50 entry fee for these Qualifying events at www.TrackWrestling.com starting April 14th. On-site late registration will cost \$75, so all are encouraged to pre-register.

For more information on the 2008 World Team Trials Qualifying Series contact Jason Townsend at (719) 598-8181 or jtownsend@usawrestling.org

USA Wrestling’s Grappling World Team Trials Qualifying Series

Saturday, May 10

Southern California Regional Qualifier, No Limits MMA, Irvine, CA

Contact: Chris Carlino at (714) 334-9257

E-mail: chriscarlino@mac.com

Saturday, May 17

Rocky Mountain Regional Qualifier, Massari Arena, Pueblo, CO

Contact: Troy Rutz at (303) 815-2306

E-mail: troy.rutz@dcsdk12.org

Sunday, May 18

Mason Dixon Regional Qualifier, Rising Sun High School, North East, MD

Contact: Will Townsend at (757)450-7469

E-mail: vausagrappling@yahoo.com

Saturday, May 31

Southern Plains Regional Qualifier, Dollamur Sport Surfaces, Fort Worth, TX

Contact: Scott Templeton at (888) 628-7655

E-mail: scott@dollamur.com

Saturday, May 31

Northeast Regional Qualifier, Phoenix High School, Phoenix, NY

Contact: Gene Mills at 315 652-7922

E-mail: pin2win@genemills.com

Saturday, June 7

Middle Atlantic Regional Qualifier, Phoebus High School, Hampton, VA

Contact: Will Townsend at (757) 450-7469

E-mail: vausagrappling@yahoo.com

Saturday, June 21

Midwest Regional Qualifier, Wright College, Chicago, IL

Contact: Joe Manzello at (630) 495-9717

E-mail: jmanzello@theolympiancentre.com

Saturday, June 28

Southeast Regional Qualifier, River Ridge Middle School, New Port Richey, FL

Contact: Russ Schenk at (727) 992-7229

E-mail: rschenk@pasco.k12.fl.us

Saturday, June 28

Southwest Regional Qualifier, Throwdown Training Facility, Las Vegas, NV

Contact: Scott Bieri at (702) 340-0484

E-mail: scott@ckjj.com

Sunday, July 13

Hawaiian Islands Regional Qualifier, Neal S. Blaisdell Center, Honolulu, HI

Contact: Bryan Sanders at (808) 688-3962

E-mail: bdshawaii@hotmail.com

Saturday, July 19

Northwest Regional Qualifier, Parkrose High School, Portland, OR

Contact: Scott McKendry at (503) 661-4134

E-mail: scottm@tqmma.com

Saturday, August 23

Last Chance Qualifier, No Limits MMA, Irvine, CA

Contact: Chris Carlino at (714) 334-9257

E-mail: chriscarlino@mac.com