



WRESTLING/GRAPPLING Post- Games Report

I. Overview of sport and scheduling

- Following divisions/events were offered for registration:
 - Freestyle Wrestling, Men's and Women's. Three age groups in each: Open, Masters, and Veterans.
 - Grappling, Men's and Women's. Three age groups in each: Open, Masters, and Veterans.

- Have the divisions been well chosen? (with regard to the filling of each division)
 - Yes, we will keep these divisions for GG10 as well.

- When did the tournament take place? (qualifying round, medal round)
 - Freestyle Wrestling: Tuesday, August 12th. All rounds 10:30 AM – 4:30 PM
 - Grappling: Wednesday August 13th, All Rounds. 11AM – 4PM

 - Tournament in Wrestling went as planned, and ended on time. We did include a 1.5 hour break that was too long, and that we will avoid in future GG tournaments.
 - Tournament in Grappling ended on time, but started about one hour late while we worked with the Officials and went over rules for competitors. (Note this was the first ever Gay Games Grappling Tournament.)

- Has the tournament been on schedule (all the time)?
 - As per notes above, tournaments were on schedule overall.

- Special occurrences, if there have been any
 - We had one major injury, a broken ankle, in the Freestyle wrestling tournament. This delayed us about 30 minutes. Response from medical staff was good; paramedics took nearly 30 minutes to get there though. Wrestling continued on the other mat shortly after the injury.

II. Key achievements and challenges

Key Achievements:

- Medical staff was excellent overall. Prepared people that knew the events they were supporting. We need to suggest to Paris that they do the same thing. Example: Doctors and med staff on site from wrestling had supported CaseWestern wrestling

events before. The doctor at the Grappling was a purple belt in Jiu Jitsu, etc. Staff did a good job responding as well.

- We really changed attitudes of folks that we interacted with and got them to really support our mission of WWB. Examples: Kenny Johnson from Bolt Wrestling, Mark Hawald from Case Western, Grappling Officials from USA sports Jiu Jitsu, Wrestling Officials from OH-USAW.
- Volunteers were really nice, and there were plenty of them.
- Decent spectator pool. It's good to have wrestling/grappling near other events to build support.
- The Grappling and Wrestling officials were very supportive of our rule modifications to keep folks safe and ensure a good positive event. This includes pairings by weight, skill and age, and modifying certain FILA Rules to eliminate dangerous moves.

Key Challenges:

- Paramedics took a while to respond to the ankle injury because other events were going at the same time. Suggest to GG organizers that we are careful about which events are concurrent, i.e. don't have high risk injury sports going on at the same time.
- Note to Paris : Look for volunteers who are interested in the sports that they volunteer for. Helps with engagement and allows them to be more effective. WWB and Paris Lutte should be allowed by Paris GG10 Steering to name specific volunteers to the event and credential them, to help with specific tasks during GG10 Wrestling and Grappling.
- WWB should target more folks we know for volunteers at the next GG, to help with technical things like scoring, Weigh-Ins, Pairings, etc.
- The start times in the GG9 program did not match with the times we actually started competition. We should list the COMPETITION start times for the spectators in the program and website, and specify separate report times for competitors. We had a lot of spectators who had to wait around.
- Start marketing earlier for higher participation levels at GG10.
- Not enough female competitors. Market this better for GG10. Start outreach now.

III. Structure of Committee/ Persons involved

- Board/ Staff
 - WWB Board Organized both Freestyle Wrestling and Grappling Tournaments, and specified rules
 - GG9 Staff was excellent
 - Rob Smitherman, Chris Kohuth: very good preparation and communication prior to and during the Games. Very few issues during the Games due to great preparation.
 - One Site Staff: George Brown. Did a very nice job with his team. Very responsive. Venue was great.

- Case Western Facilities Staff: Brian and his folks were very good, very easy to work with. Helped with last minute requests such as an additional scoreboard.
- Persons directly employed
 - WWB did not employ anyone directly for this event. GG9 staff took care of planning, and the Facilities portion of the event, and secured great event officials from Wrestling and Grappling governing bodies.
- Volunteers
 - Volunteers were plentiful, and very friendly and willing to help. I wish we had more for them to do. In the future, WWB will have more planned items for volunteers to help with.
 - We would encourage volunteers with experience or interest in Wrestling/Grappling to be recruited by the Host committee in the future as they may be able to help us with more technical things like scoring, etc.
 - WWB will be more prepared in future Gay Games to give other specific tasks to the Volunteers.
 - WWB and Paris Lutte should be able to name specific volunteers to Wrestling and Grappling that have experience in these sports. They should be credentialed in advance like other volunteers.
- Officials
 - Officials for Wrestling and Grappling were excellent. Friendly, instructive, easy to work with. Really GREAT experience here. Very positive.
 - Ohio USA Wrestling officials were great. They were very engaged and professional, but made competitors feel comfortable.
 - USA Sports Jiu Jitsu Officials were very instructive, and very good. They provided some great demos.
- Number of working group members
 - We got great support from the Athletic Department at Case Western
 - Thank you to community members who came to support Wrestling and Grappling, many of whom we did not know prior to the Games.
- IV. Registration / Participants
- Participants altogether
 - Wrestling: 59
 - Grappling: 27
 - **TOTAL: 86**
- Number of teams: **TEN.** Sydney, Los Angeles, San Fran, Switzerland, UK, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Minneapolis, Columbus, and a number of independents from all over.
- Gender breakdown = number of women's and men's teams
 - This is an area of opportunity. We only had two female participants out of the 86 competitors.

V. Communication with Participants

- Way of communication

- Communication from GG9 was good in letting participants know of the general structure for GG9, including opening and closing ceremonies and significant events.
- WWB was responsible for communications about the Wrestling and Grappling events, including registration and event logistics.
- Frequency of communication
 - We believe communication to participants was adequate and clear.
 - In the future, we will begin marketing and communicating to potential participants early on to increase future registration numbers.

VI. Venue

- Facilities (e.g. courts, bleachers)
 - Great facilities.
 - Great facilities staff, both with Case Western and with GG9. Thanks very much to George Brown, Rob Smitherman and Chris Kohuth (GG9) and Brian from Case Western.
- Advantages and maybe disadvantages of the venues:
 - Advantages: Excellent facility for wrestling and grappling. Great space, air conditioned, good mats, great spectator area, access to lockers and showers, access to other spectator events in the same building.
 - Disadvantages: We were a little ways away from food service location for competitors and spectators. We had vending only at the Veale Center.

VII. Equipment

- E.g. number of balls, vests, scorebooks, timing system, sound system
 - Equipment was great overall. We could have used one more audio system as a backup for the other mat had we run two mats. That should be considered in the future.
 - Scoreboards: Needed more than 1 scoreboard ahead of time to be able to run two mats. Needed overhead scoring, plus a scoreboard for each official's table.

VII. Contractor/ Vendor Services

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VIII. Ticket issues (if any)

N/A

IX. Sponsorship/Outside support

- Sponsors especially connected to this tournament: NONE
 - We would like to get sponsors for future GG Tournaments (Wrestling or Sports Equipment, food/beverages sponsors.)

X. Competition Results/ Recommendations

- Budget issues/ recommendations: Add additional budget to GG10 to pay fees associated with experts for the Rules and Technique Clinics. Budget around \$2,000.

- Volunteers: Recruit volunteers with experience or interest in Wrestling and Grappling to help with technical tasks such as scoring, etc.
- Scheduling
 - Scheduling at the beginning of the GG9 Event is preferred, as it was during Cleveland. That allows more participants to attend opening ceremonies and competition if their schedules only allow attending for a few days.
 - Schedule an event like Wrestling and Grappling so that other sports where injuries can occur are not going on at the same time. This will help with scheduling of medical personnel.

XI. Participant response/ Summary

- Did the tournament go down well with the participants?
 - Yes. We got great feedback. We heard from a number of participants that this event exceeded expectations.
- Was the tournament successful? (Comparison to events in the past)
 - Yes, it was well-run and ended on time. Participation levels were decent. Participants enjoyed the event.
- Why was it successful, why perhaps not?
 - Successful due to good organization, shared sense of our mission, and outreach to prepare for the tournaments.

Making suggestions for improvement for the next games

- Suggestions have been included throughout this document, but the key suggestions for future games are:
 - 1) Early Marketing to Potential Participants
 - 2) Early involvement by the tournament organizers on tournament details to secure a desirable venue with qualified officials. E.g.: A venue where Wrestling and grappling competitions take place, with Tournament-approved mats, equipment, spectator stands, air-conditioning, showers and locker rooms, athlete area, warm-up area, and close by food and snacks.
 - 3) Add line items to the budget for:
 - a. Officials for both Grappling and Wrestling (Estimated \$100-\$150 US per official per day, 6 officials minimum for wrestling, 4 minimum for grappling)
 - b. Clinician, Skills and Rules Clinic Budget:
 - i. Budget \$2,500 - \$3,000 US for clinic “Headliners”...clinic teachers that bring in registration numbers, and a speaker for athletes.
 - ii. Budget Min \$1500 US Rules/Clinic day, which ensures that competitors safety and reduces injuries. This also improves communication and understanding of the event rules, which minimizes conflict during the competitions.

- 4) Early communication with the venue, the hosts, the participants, and the officials.
E.g.....pre-meetings and walk-throughs with the venue, GG Staff, Officials, etc.
- 5) Insurance: Must be handled well in advance, in writing.
 - a. Ensure that all Americans have their USAW membership cards in case of injury. Europeans should have FILA licenses.
 - b. Ensure ALL competitors sign a waiver of liability prior to competition. (Form was already sent to Paris Lutte.)
 - c. Ensure that ALL Competitors are specifically insured under the insurance policy for GG10, regardless of country, for added protection.
- 6) Separate branding of Wrestling AND Grappling Events for GG10 to note the two separate events and tournaments. This will encourage higher participation rates as well.
- 7) Share pictures and video from GG9 to potential GG10 participants
- 8) ***The pairing process for matches can be very challenging unless we have access to registration data very early on, minimum one month in advance to start.*** This is because WWB pairs according to weight, age, and skill level to ensure that UMEs happen correctly, but also so injuries are minimized.
- 9) Specify specific times for medal ceremony, and who will give the medals, in advance.
E.g. 4:30 PM @ Gymnasium, with Kurt and Shamey from GG Board, etc. Specify duties for medal awards, and pictures to specific persons.
- 10) Higher participation rates from women by marketing early and often to Women's grappling and wrestling organizations.
- 11) Start event (Clinic) Sunday to improve participation, as this will help minimize the time that competitors must take off from work.

Submitted by: Wrestlers Without Borders Chris Lorefice, Chair

Email: Lorefice@hotmail.com +1-818-679-3608. www.wrestlerswob.com