

Wrestle With the 5 H's

Putting the H's Into

ARE YOUR WRESTLERS members of the 5-H Club? No, not 4-H for head, hands, heart, and health, but 5-H for head, hands, hips, hip-heist, and "Oh, hecks."

The wrestler who learns to use the first four of these H's won't have to say the last too often.

At its best, wrestling is a chain of related events. The use of the head, hands, hips, and hip-heist are "links" in a defensive chain of events.

The top two takedowns in high school and college wrestling are the

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double-leg and the single-leg. To complete a successful double or single, the athlete must shoot in past the defensive man's head and hands and not allow the man's hip action to stop the takedown.

Let's see how defensive chain wrestling can stop takedowns.

The head is the wrestler's first line of takedown defense. He will stop many offensive shots by blocking the opponent's shoulder with his head (Photo 1). Since the offensive man will lower his hip level in order to shoot, it will usually be necessary for the defender to also lower his level as he blocks.

Offensive note: Many takedown shots never have a chance because of poor offensive position prior to the shot. The wrestler will mistakenly rest their head on the opponent's shoulder. Their shots generally won't succeed simply because you cannot shoot through the oppo-

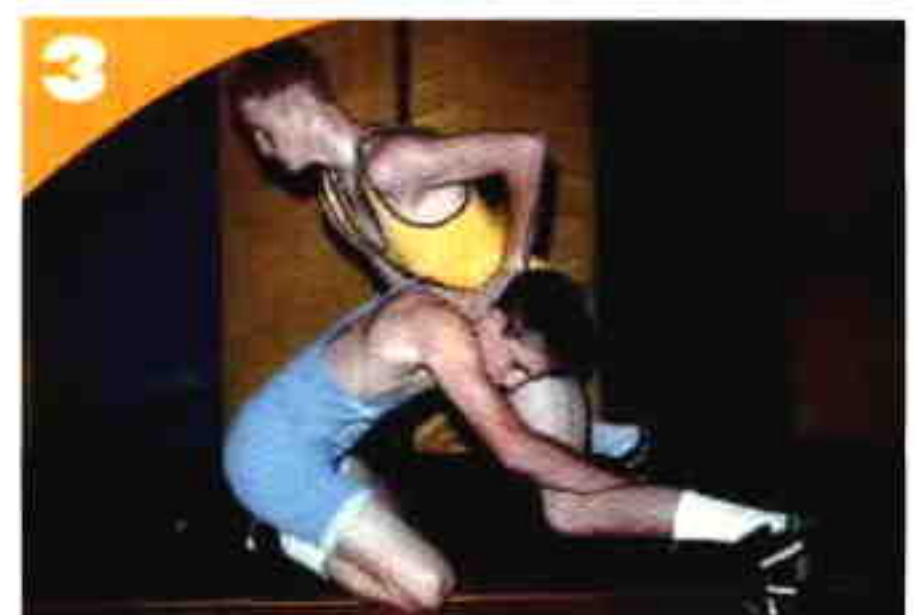
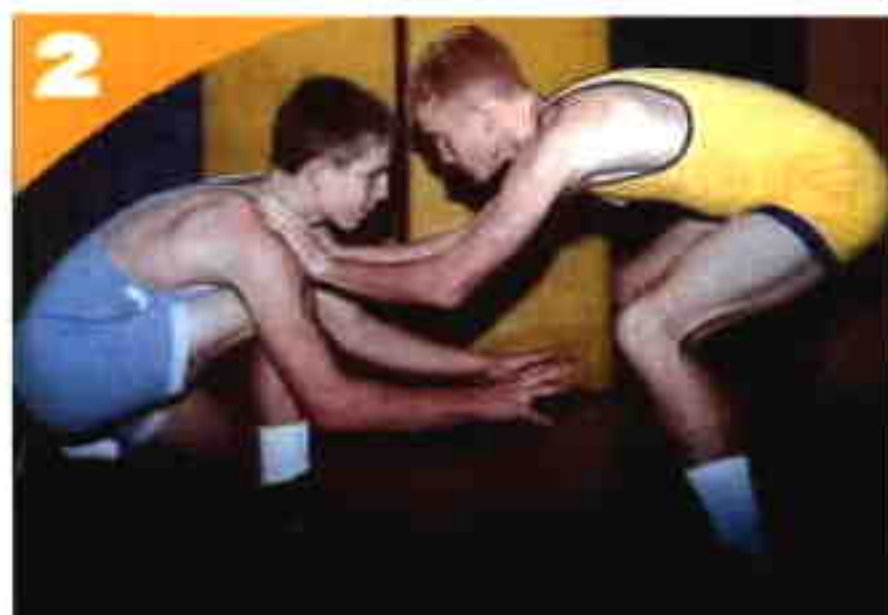
nent's shoulder.

It is a good rule not to allow your nose to lean in past the opponent's ear in the tie-up position. This will make it easier for you to drop below the shoulder when shooting a takedown, instead of running into the shoulder.

The second, and probably most important, line of takedown defense is the hands. Good defense with the hands starts with a good stance: knees bent, head up, elbows in, and hands relaxed just below elbow level.

Many athletes tighten up and the tension brings their hands up higher than elbow level. Whenever we see the hands up too high, we accept it as a sign of surrender! What's more, a tight athlete is a slower and less flexible athlete.

From a good stance (Photo 2) the defensive wrestler can keep his hands between his opponent and his own legs - challenging the offensive man to shoot through his hands and then block the chest or shoulders of the offensive man



Idea of a 5-H Club!

Takedown Defense

with his hands.

The third line of takedown defense is the hips. The hips are the strongest part of the body and, with proper technique, can be used to fight off a takedown. If the offensive wrestler has attacked past the head and hands, the defender's hips should strike the attacker on his way in.

A good athletic stance should be maintained. It will allow the defender to maintain balance while using a whizzer and head pressure (Photo 3) to defeat the takedown.

From this position, the defender can crank his hips toward the attacker's head while simultaneously shoving the head down with his hand.

This will stop the attacker's forward motion and keep him from following through up and in for the takedown.

Many defensive wrestlers actually help their opponent by getting into the "sack of potatoes" position shown in Photo 4. If the defender gets out of his athletic stance by leaning over the attacker's shoulder

and perhaps grabbing the attacker's ankle, he will wind up like a sack of potatoes on the attacker's shoulder and can easily be lifted.

The fourth line of takedown defense is the hip-heist. Referees respect that the whizzer (Photo 5) restricts the offensive wrestler from immediately gaining control and receiving the resulting two-point takedown.

This is a dangerous position to stay in, however, because much delay could lead the defender to his back.

From this position, it is possible to hip-heist back to a safer defensive position (Photo 6). The hip-heist is accomplished (by the defender) by placing all his weight on his free (right) hand and his free (left) foot, heisting his hip off the mat and then kicking his trapped leg back to the safer position shown.

While it is true that "it is better to

have tried and failed, than never to have tried at all," it's also a lot more fun to win than to lose. A wrestler with good defense will always be a wrestler who is tough to beat.

Help your wrestlers have more fun by joining the 5-H Club. You will spend less time hearing them say "Oh, heck!"

Note: The whizzer is executed by overhooking the opponent's arm with your own, as shown in Photos 3, 5, and 6, preventing him from going behind for an immediate takedown. The whizzer also allows the defensive man to "hip in" to stop the attacker's forward progress.

The accompanying photos were shot by Coach Sherman with sophomore Jacob Morgan and junior Chris Harris doing the demonstrating. ■

