



# Football to Wrestling

## Let The Pros Tell You



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## **Influence of Wrestling in the NFL**

- 10 Hall of Fame Football Players
- 43 Multiple Pro-Bowlers
- 60 Individual State Championships
- 13 NCAA Wrestling Championships
- 3 Heisman Trophy Winners Wrestled
- 14 1st Round Draft Picks Wrestled
- 23 RB's / 20 LB's / 2 QB's / 66 Lineman / 6 DB's / 1 K / 54 NP



# The Coaches Perspective



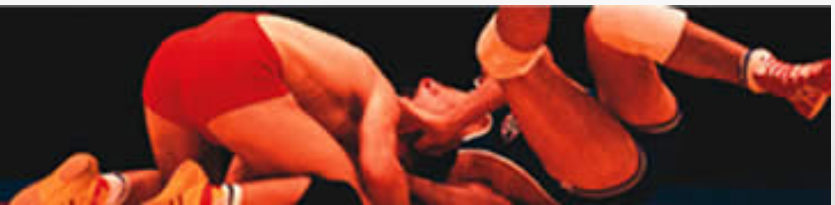
- “I draft wrestlers because they are tough, I have never had a problem with a wrestler.” - Joe Gibbs, Hall of fame Football Coach



- "I would have all of my Offensive Lineman wrestle if I could."- John Madden, Hall of Fame Football Coach



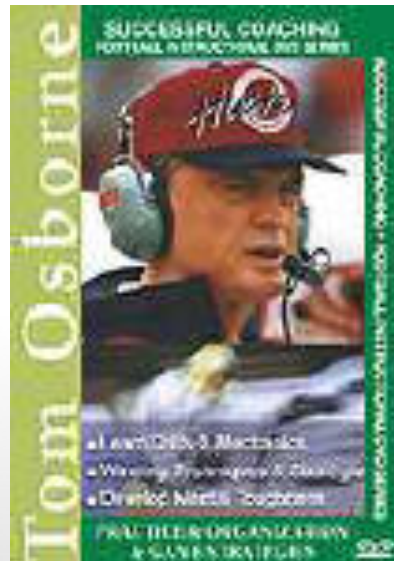
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# The Coaches Perspective



- “I love wrestlers, they are tough and they make great football players.” Mike Stoops, National Championship Football Coach - University of Oklahoma.



- “Wrestlers make coaching football easy, they have balance, coordination, and as a coaching staff we know they’re tough.” - Tom Osborne - College Hall of Fame Football Coach - University of Nebraska



# Pros With Wrestling Background

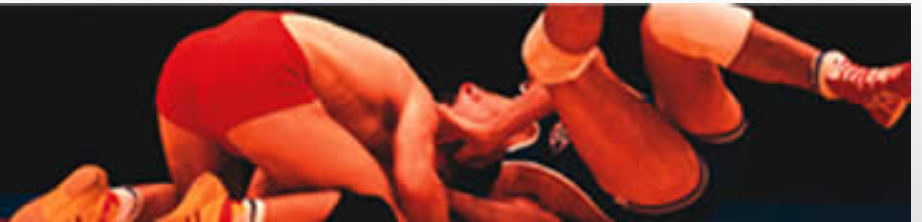
- Ray Lewis - The Football Player
  - Seven-time Pro Bowler
  - 2-time NFL Defensive Player of the Year
  - Super Bowl XXXV MVP
  - Arguably the greatest LB and 1 of the best players in NFL history.
- Ray Lewis- The Wrestler
  - Florida native
  - Florida State 4A Wrestling Champion - 189 lb. weight class
  - Credits wrestling as the training ground for his prolific football career.
- Stephan Neal - The Football Player
  - 28 years old, was originally
  - Signed by the Patriots as an undrafted free agent on July 23, 2001.
  - The 6-foot-4-inch, 305-pound offensive lineman has played in 34 career games with 31 starts.
  - Recorded the longest current consecutive starts streak on the Patriots offensive line.
- Stephan Neal - The Wrestler
  - San Diego native
  - Did not play football in college and instead was a championship wrestler at Cal State-Bakersfield.
  - He compiled a 156-10 record and won two NCAA Division I titles.
  - In 1999, Neal won the Dan Hodge Award - known as the Heisman Trophy of wrestling - following a year in which he won the U.S. Freestyle Championship, the Pan-American Games title and the World Championships.

# Just A Few More Names

Lincoln "Drew" Hodgdon, C, Houston Texans - CA State Champ	Roddy White, WR, Atlanta Falcons - 2x SC State Champ 1st Round Pick	Mike Patterson, DT, Philadelphia Eagles 1st Round Pick	Rhonde Barber, SS, Tampa Bay Buccaneers	Tiki Barber, RB, New York Giants	Roger Craig*, RB, San Francisco 49'ers
Curley Culp*, DL, Kansas City Chiefs NCAA Champ	Larry Czonka**, RB, Miami Dolphins	Carl Edwards, San Diego Chargers 3x MD State Champ	Jim Everett, QB, New Orleans Saints	Bo Jackson*, RB, Oakland Raiders	Ronnie Lott**, DB, San Francisco 49ers
Jim Nance, FB, New England Patriots NCAA Champ	Lorenzo Neal, FB, Tennessee Titans - NCAA Champ	Chuck Noll, Pittsburgh Steelers PA State Champ	Warren Sapp*, DT Tampa Bay Buccaneers FL State Champ	Cory Schlesinger, LB, Detroit Lions - NE State Champ	Steve Sefter, DT, Philadelphia Eagles, 2x PA State Champ & NCAA All-American
Bruce Smith**, DE, Washington Redskins	Adam Vinatieri*, K, New England Patriots	Charles White*, HB, Los Angeles Rams	Randy White*, DT, Dallas Cowboys	Jim Thorpe**, HB, New York Giants	Ricky Williams*, RB, Miami Dolphins



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# Hall Of Famers Who Wrestled



**Ronnie Lott**



**Larry Czonka**



**Jim Thorpe**



**Chuck Noll**



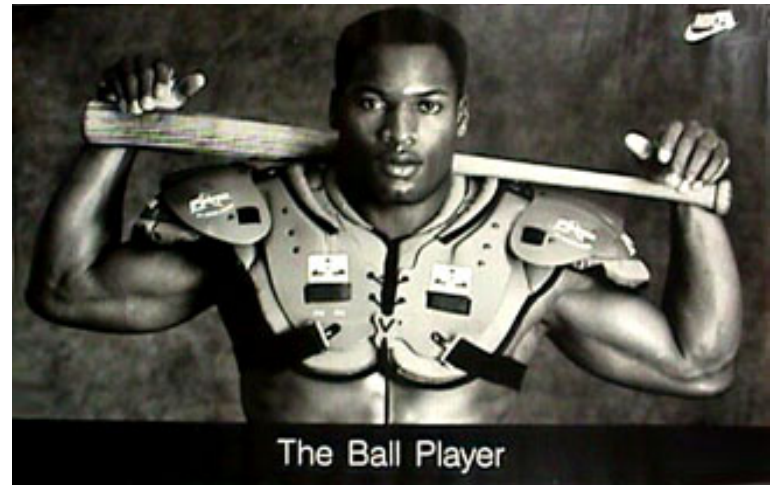
# Multiple Pro-Bowlers Who Wrestled



34



**Teddy Bruschi**  
**Ricky Williams**



**Bo Jackson**  
**Chad Hennings**





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## Crossover Skills:

- Many of the positions and skills are absolutely transferable between both sports
- Some of those skills include but are not limited to footwork, hand-eye coordination, mental toughness, explosive movements, and balance
- Learning the ability to beat the man in front of you can not be ignored.



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## Crossover Skills:



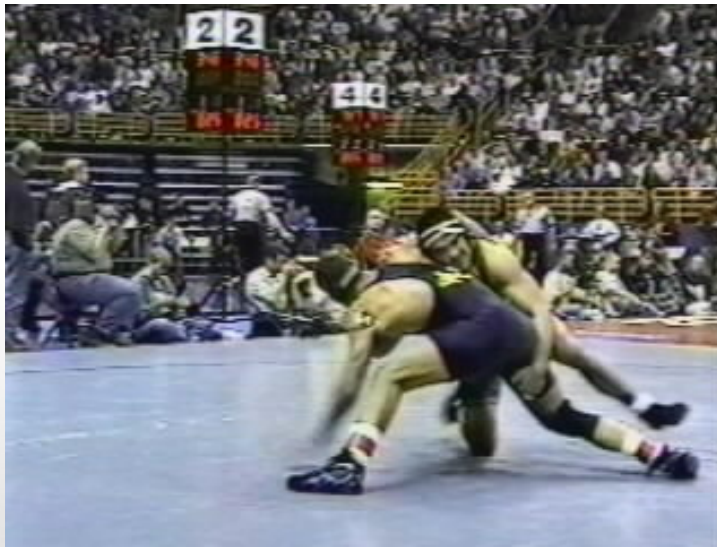




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## Crossover Skills:

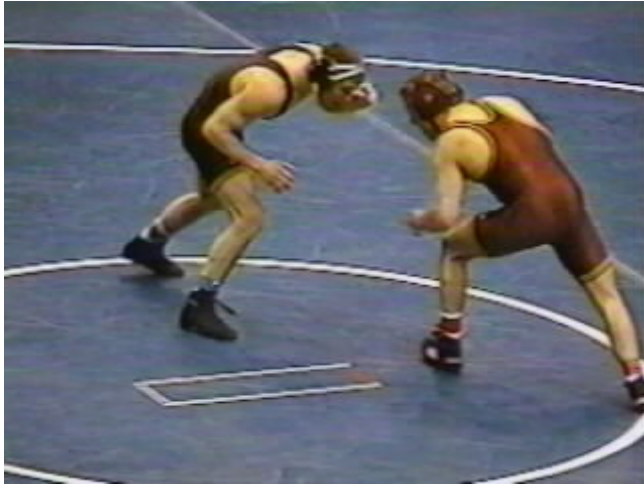




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## Crossover Skills:



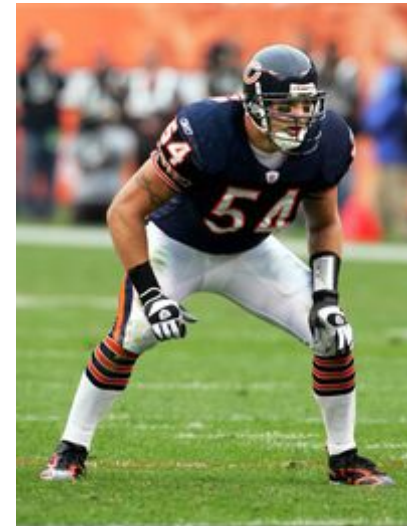




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## Crossover Skills:



Getty Images



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## A Look at The Numbers

- 32 Professional Football Teams
- 65 Man Rosters
- 2080 Professional Football Players
- 185 Wrestlers in the NFL
- 11.24% of the NFL has a wrestling background
- 5% of the Hall of Fame inductee's



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# The Link Cannot Be Dismissed

- The relationship between wrestling and football is real.
- There are too many legends in both sports who have proved it.
- Hall of fame football coaches and players espouse the benefits of wrestling for football players.
- Good wrestlers can make a good football team great!