

DRIVEN BY THE MAT

Braxton Wilson's Passion for Wrestling

Samantha Skinner, Staff writer & photographer



Photo provided from Braxton Wilson

Braxton Wilson, a sophomore at Fremont High School, began wrestling in the fourth grade after his coach, Adam Hunnel, suggested he give the sport a try. Since then, Wilson has fallen in love with wrestling and has dedicated himself to improving both physically and mentally.

For the past six years, Wilson has trained consistently by lifting weights, doing cardio and practicing on the mat. He also prioritizes rest to stay in shape. His devotion to wrestling extends beyond conditioning — Wilson is passionate about understanding every aspect of the sport, from maneuvering against opponents to countering moves and attacking offensively. While he enjoys the physical demands, he is equally drawn to the mental toughness wrestling requires.

"I love that it keeps me in such good shape, as well as the stamina and endurance that the training provides," Wilson said. "I love the fact that I'm responsible for my own faults, there's no teammates to blame; it's me vs him: the best man wins."

Two years ago, while attending Fremont Middle School, Wilson traveled to Bulgaria with his wrestling club team, The Best Wrestler. The following year, while attending Cedar Bluffs, he traveled to Estonia. On both occasions, Wilson and 25 other athletes competed as Team USA at one of the largest international wrestling tournaments in Europe.

In addition to competing, the athletes experienced the culture of each country by visiting museums, historical parks and landmarks, as well as trying different foods.

In December 2024, Wilson experienced his first seizure, followed by another in August 2025. Although the seizures did not affect his ability to wrestle long-term, he waited 10 days before returning to the mat after the first incident and three to four days after the second. Since his second seizure, Wilson has been cleared by his neurologist to compete as long as he continues taking his medication.

Despite these challenges, Wilson does not worry about when another seizure might occur. Instead, he places his trust in God, believing that his life is guided by faith. When he steps onto the mat, his focus remains on performing at the highest level he can achieve.

In wrestling, the sport is just as much mental as it is physical.



Photo provided from Braxton Wilson

NEW VOLLEYBALL RULE SPARKS DEBATE

Samantha Skinner, Staff writer & photographer

In the world of sports, the rules help guarantee consistency from game to game; however the rules, though rare, can change and evolve over time. In January 2024, a new double-contact rule was approved, allowing players to touch the ball twice on the second contact. The rule is intended to create longer rallies, continue play and build suspense. The NCAA's rule change has left players with differing opinions about the future of the game.

Sophomore Camryn Brandt, a setter for Fremont High School's varsity volleyball team, is not a fan of the new rule. Brandt said the rule relaxes standards by allowing anyone to set the ball and lowering the overall level of setting and volleyball.

Brandt said setting is a difficult skill that requires a great deal of work. She also said the rule is unfair because referees do not enforce it consistently.

"If all referees enforced the rule consistently, the game would be fairer," Brandt said.

Brandt acknowledged one benefit of the rule is longer rallies and continuous play, as points will not stop due to accidental double contacts. However, she said a drawback is that any player can take the second ball and play it however they choose. Because she has trained under the previous rule for most of her life, Brandt said the change has altered her perspective on the game.

"Even though a new rule was applied, I will continue to work hard and be the best player I can," Brandt said.

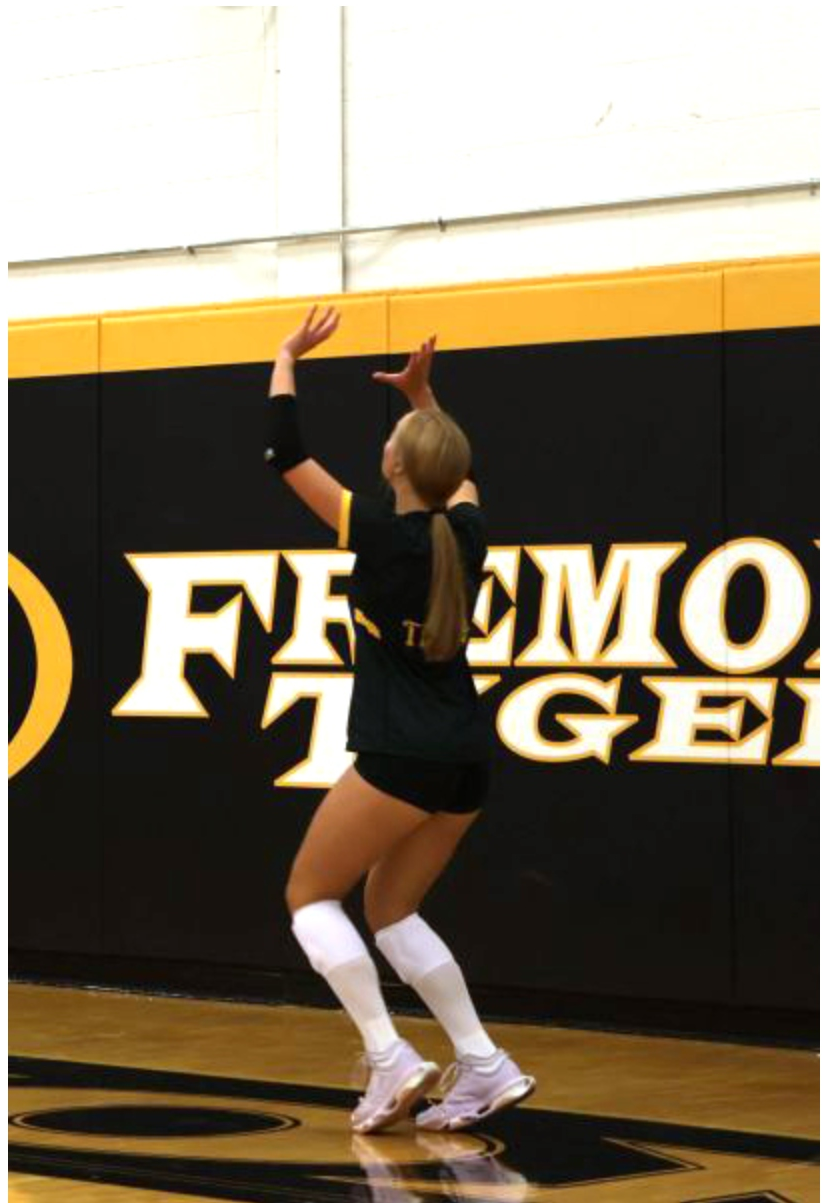


Graphic created using Canva.

During games, Brandt still sets using the old standard. If she accidentally touches the ball twice in one play, she recognizes the mistake immediately and corrects her technique.

Sophomore Alexa Pizarro is a setter for the junior varsity and reserve teams at Fremont High School. She said she is happy with the new rule because if a pass is slightly off and the set is not perfect, it will not count against her team. As long as the ball stays on her side of the net before the third hit, the play continues.

Pizarro said the rule is fair because it helps create longer rallies, but she also believes it could be harmful if players rely only on the rule instead of improving their skills. She said the rule helps players who are not setters feel more confident when taking the second ball.



"I believe making clean, smooth sets is much more important than just depending on the new rule," Pizarro said.

Freshman Saylor Winn is a setter for the freshman and reserve teams at Fremont High School. She said she likes the rule because she knows not every set will be perfect and that mistakes can be corrected during play.

"Not being called for doubling in a game reassures me," Winn said.



Winn said the rule allows non-setters to focus on keeping the rally alive rather than worrying about making a technical mistake. However, she also said some setters might become careless and stop focusing on proper technique.

Winn said she continues to work on her setting skills and uses mistakes as learning opportunities.

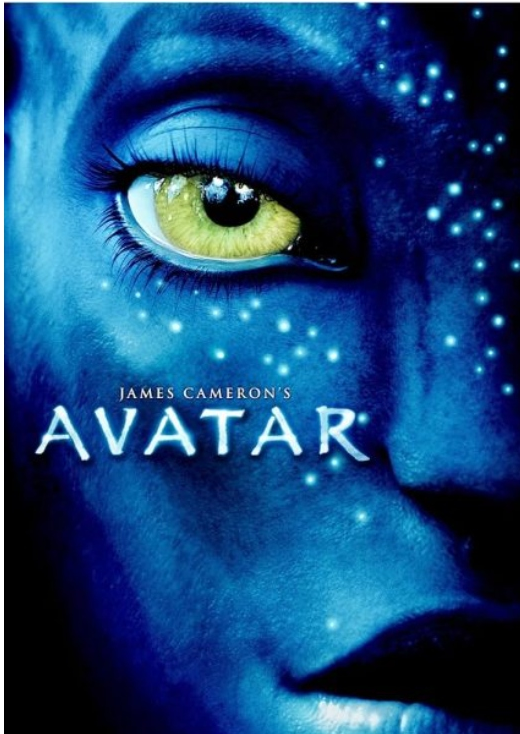
Because of the rule change, players are adjusting their approach while continuing to develop their technique. While perfection may be unattainable, consistent practice and effort remain essential to success in volleyball.



“AVATAR” RETURNS TO PANDORA WITH NEW THREATS IN UPCOMING “FIRE AND ASH”

Samantha Skinner, Staff writer & photographer

Fans



Taken from <https://filmz.dk/trailer-avatar-fire-and-ash>

waited more than a decade for the sequel of Avatar, eager for another chance to explore the beautiful world of Pandora. When *Avatar: The Way of Water* finally arrived, it reignited the franchise's magic and this time, fans won't have to wait nearly as long for the next chapter. But their return to Pandora won't be the same. But with the introduction of the hostile tribe, The Ash People, the stakes grow for Jake, Neytiri, and their family.

December 18, 2009 is when it all began when director James Cameron released the *Avatar* franchise inspired by the science fiction books he loved as a child using them to create his award-winning movie. Since then, the movies have been one of the most recognizable sci-fi films in the world. Taking place on Pandora, where the lives of Na'vi-tall, blue, spiritual beings roam-along with the journey of Jake Sully, a former Marine becoming part of the Na'vi world.

Avatar, introduces Jake Sully (Sam Worthington), arriving on Pandora to take the place of his late brother, Tom, in the Avatar program. During the program, Jake inhabits a Na'vi body and slowly understands the culture of the tribe. Instead of being called Jake Sully by the Na'vi, he earned the name Toruk Makto, also known as Rider of Shadows. Jake's mission was to gain the trust of the Na'vi for the military in order to relocate them to extract unobtainium. This all changes when he falls in love with Neytiri (Zoe Saldana), the chief's daughter, and his loyalty shifts. In the end, he fights along the Na'vi to defend their home ending in a spiritual ritual permanently transferring Jake's consciousness into his Na'vi body under the sacred Tree of Souls.



Photo provided from filmartgallery.com

Avatar: The Way of Water, the second movie premiered on December 16, 2022 was inspired by the sea nomads such as the Bajo Tribe follows Jake and Neytiri as they raise their growing family. When the sky people return seeking revenge, the Sully's are forced to relocate from their forest home to their ocean home. Their journey of Uturu (refuge) brought them to Metkayine, also known as the Reef people, gradually offered Uturu. Struggling to adapt to their ways, the sky people led by Miles Quartich (Stephen Lang) and helper Spider, (Jack Champion) attacked the Reef people trying to draw out the Sully's. Fortunately it didn't work but sadly they killed Ro'a-the spirit sister of the clan leader Ronal (Kate Winslet)-Tulkun and her Calf. The conflict rises as Jake and Neytiri's children are captured leading to a violent battle ending in the heartbreaking death of their oldest child, Neteyam's (Jamie Flatters) funeral under the traditional burial of the Reef People.

Avatar: Fire and Ash, the third movie, will be released on December 19, 2025. Even though the details are limited, this film will focus on the Sully's after Neteyam's passing as well as introducing a new, violent Na'vi tribe the Mangkawn or also known as The Ash People. The

Mangkawn, was shaped into a

violent tribe because of a volcanic eruption that destroyed their homeland and the feeling of being rejected by Eywa. Because of this, they are rumored to be aggressive, hostile, and to be working alongside Miles Quartich. This story will remain in the themes of family, nature, grief, and conflict. There have been rumors that Neteyam will spiritually return from Eywa.

As someone who grew up watching the first *Avatar* movie, I have always loved the world of Pandora because of the beauty, the culture, the colors, and the emotion that is portrayed in the film. When *Avatar: The Way of Water* was released, my love for the movies only increased deeper. I'm excited to see how Jake, Neytiri, and their family are able to heal after Neteyam's passing and how they grow stronger as a family. In this upcoming movie, I hope to see them reconnect with Na'vi tribes, overcoming difficult hardships, and possibly the unison or conflicts of The Ash People. Whatever director James Cameron decides, I will look forward to the return of *Avatar* on Pandora once again.



Photo provided from filmartgallery.com