

Pass It On®...

To Stay or Run?

The courageous story of a collegiate wrestler who fought a grizzly bear to save a friend. With thanks to the Cowboy State Daily.

There's a saying in the West that when things get tough, you have to cowboy up. In Wyoming, the history of cowboys braving the elements to sustain ranches during subzero weather, and fixing things on their own in the harsh landscape, is ingrained in the people. They are as independent as they are loyal; hardened physically by their labors, they still harbor hearts as big as the Wyoming sky.

In Powell, Wyoming, you'll find a tight group of college wrestlers. After practice one autumn morning, four of them went out into the wilderness to collect the antlers shed by deer and elk. The group split into pairs to conduct their treasure hunt.

Five miles into the wilderness, Brady Lowry was attacked by a grizzly bear. The huge bear knocked him off a small ledge, breaking his arm in the attack. It happened so fast he didn't have time to reach for his bear spray.

Teammate Kendell Cummings, who was a short distance away, charged the bear, trying to distract him.

"I grabbed and yanked him hard by the ear," Cummings said. The bear turned from Lowry, reared up and attacked Cummings, swiftly knocking him to the ground. "I could hear when his teeth would hit my skull, I could feel when he'd bite down on my bones."

The bear eventually left, and Cummings stood up, blood pouring from open wounds on his face and arms. He called to his teammate. "I think the bear heard me. It kind of circled around and got me again." Cummings lay stunned and bleeding until the bear left again.

After several minutes, he got up and found Lowry, and the two bloodied young men began the arduous journey down the mountain. In the immediate aftermath of the attack, adrenaline dissipated their pain. But hiking down the steep and rocky slope soon became agonizing. Lowry used his cell phone to call their other two teammates,

who met them on the trail. Cummings and Lowry were fading from loss of blood, so Orrin Jackson and August Harrison carried their teammates on their backs down the mountain to meet the Search and Rescue team that Jackson had arranged along the way.

After a cold, bumpy ATV ride, they were rushed to the hospital, and both underwent multiple surgeries. It wasn't long before the rest of their Northwest Trapper teammates joined them in Billings, Montana, staying for two days and two nights until Cummings and Lowry were in the clear.

Lowry was emotional about the experience, and grateful that his friend and teammate had saved his life. "That's what the wrestling team does — we go to hell and back with each other. We aren't going to let one of us go down without helping."

As the late autumn sun gives way to the crystallized afternoon air a week later in Wyoming, two intrepid wrestlers know it will take months to recover from their life-threatening injuries. But they also plan on returning to the team as soon as possible, maybe as soon as this season.

Courage... [PassItOn.com](https://www.passiton.com)

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