

2014-15 NFHS RULE CHANGES

Bad Time Rule Expanded

The NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee expanded **Rule 5-1-1** regarding bad time to include more situations. In addition to previous language, the committee agreed that bad time is wrestled with the wrestlers in the wrong position or the wrong wrestler being given choice of position "at the start of the second 30-second tiebreaker" or "at the start of the ultimate tiebreaker."

The previous definition did not include situations where the wrong wrestler was given choice of position at the start of the second 30-second tiebreaker or the start of the ultimate tiebreaker.

Bad time is also wrestled with the wrestlers in the wrong position or the wrong wrestler being given choice of position at the start of the third period, after opponent has taken his/her second injury time-out or on the next restart after opponent receives a two- point stalling penalty.

Situation: In a dual meet, (a) Wrestler A was supposed to have choice of position at the start of the second 30-second tiebreaker, but the opponent was given the choice of position instead and it was brought to the attention of the referee 20 seconds into the second 30-second tiebreaker; or (b) Wrestler A was supposed to have the choice of position to start the ultimate tiebreaker, but the opponent was given the choice of position instead and it was brought to the attention of the referee 20 seconds into the ultimate tiebreaker. Ruling:

In both (a) and (b), bad time would be applied as Wrestler A was not given the choice of position to start either the second 30-second tiebreaker or the ultimate tiebreaker. All points earned during bad time are canceled. Following corrections made and a rest of one minute, the second 30-second tiebreaker or the ultimate tiebreaker will be re-wrestled.

Wrestler Advancement in a bracket Clarified

10-2-9 If two wrestlers in the championship bracket simultaneously cannot continue the match due to both being disqualified for stalling or having their injury or blood time elapse and the score is tied at the time of termination the wrestler who scored the first point(s) in the match (first three periods, or either of the two 30-second tie breakers) will continue in the consolation bracket. If no points were scored, neither wrestler will continue.

Legal Hair Cover Rule Takes Effect for the 2014-15 Wrestling Season

Rules 4-2-1 and 4-3-1a in the NFHS Wrestling Rules Book note that if a legal hair cover is worn by a wrestler, it shall be attached to the ear guards. The intent of the rule change is to help maintain continuous action during competition.

Situation: A wrestler in the 126- pound class reports to the weigh-in with hair longer than allowed by rule.

Ruling: If an individual has hair longer than allowed by rule it must be contained in a legal hair cover that is attached to the ear guards. The wrestler opting to wear a legal hair cover must wear it to the weigh-in procedure and be checked for grooming with it on. The legal hair cover must be removed prior to the wrestler stepping on the scale to be weighed.

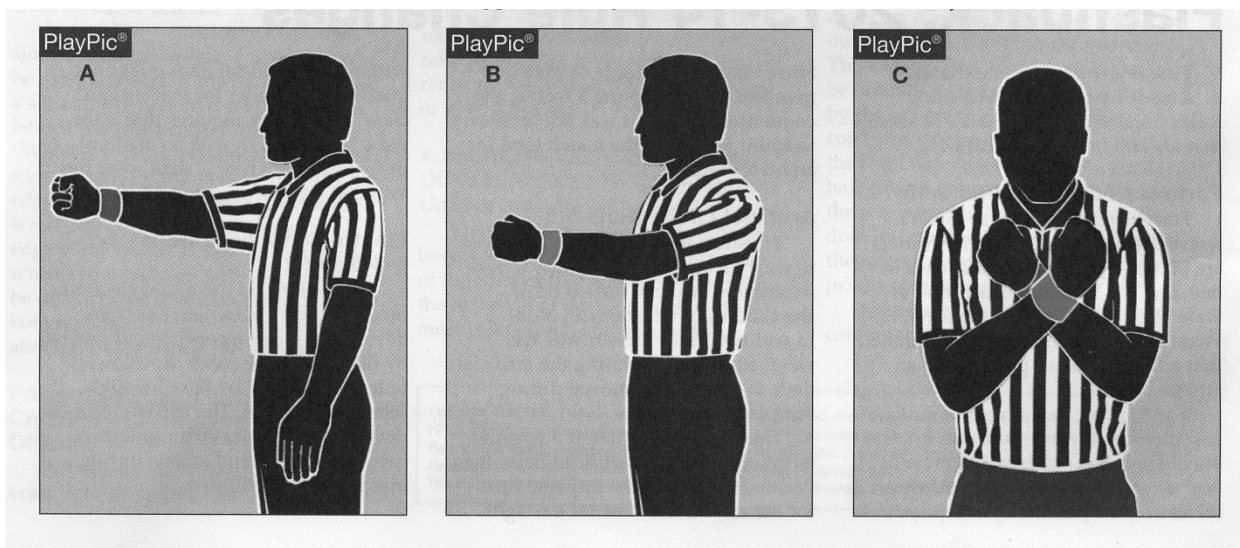
The legal hair cover shall be attached to the ear guards. It must also be of a solid material and be nonabrasive. A silk-type water polo cap could be used (if attached to the ear guards), but a rubberized cap would not be permissible because it would be abrasive. A bandanna type cover would be illegal also. If the hair becomes uncovered during competition, a referee's time-out may be declared for the purpose of correcting the situation that has become illegal through use. The correction of legal equipment is covered under Rule 3-1-5 and referees should use the same guidelines here as they would for any other legal equipment that becomes inoperative during competition.

New Signals Added to Signal Chart

The NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee approved addition of two new signals for referees (Numbers 26 and 27).

To indicate unnecessary roughness, the referee extends the fist straight out with the elbow not bent and the hand in a fist. Which arm is used depends on which wrestler is being penalized (PlayPics A and B).

If a match ends in a default, technical fall or disqualification, the referee crosses the arms in front of the chest, as seen in PlayPic C.



2014-15 Points of Emphasis

The following points of emphasis have been identified for the 2014-15 wrestling season.

Avoiding Wrestling And Encouraging Wrestling In Center Of Mat

Going out of the wrestling area by either wrestler or forcing an opponent out of the wrestling area at any time as a means of avoiding wrestling is a technical violation (Rule 7-3-1). There are many occasions when this happens and no call is made or a wrestler is called for stalling when the appropriate call would be a technical violation for fleeing the mat. There can be no technical violation of fleeing the mat if near-fall points have been earned.

One common scenario that occurs is often initiated from the offensive/ defensive starting position in the center of the mat when both wrestlers work their way to their feet and the action goes out of bounds. It can be difficult to determine if the offensive wrestler is pushing the defensive wrestler out of bounds, if the defensive wrestler is running out of bounds to make it look like the offensive wrestler is pushing him/her out, or if it is aggressive action by both wrestlers. Another common scenario is when one wrestler has a single leg in the air near the out-of- bounds line, and the other wrestler tries to jump or spin out of the situation and ends up out of bounds.

In the above situations as well as similar situations where a wrestler may be using the edge of the mat to get out of a situation, judgment is required by the referee with the primary question being "Was the wrestler wrestling aggressively and trying to stay in bounds or using the edge of the mat as a means to avoiding wrestling?" If he/she was using the edge of the mat as a means of avoiding wrestling, a technical violation should be called. Good wrestling action requires both wrestlers to make an honest attempt to stay within the wrestling area.

Preventing False Starts From Creating Injuries – Preventive Officiating

Preventive officiating must be on every referee's mind. One area of concern is injuries that occur during false starts from the neutral position. To avoid such injuries, the referee should stretch his/her arm(s) out between and parallel to the starting lines before blowing the whistle. By doing so, the referee can block either wrestler who false starts prior to the whistle, thus reducing the potential for injury to one or both wrestlers.

Authority / Responsibility of the Off-Mat Referee To call Flagrant/Unsportsmanlike Conduct

The jurisdiction time of the referee begins when he/she arrives at the site of the competition and concludes with the approval of the scorebook in dual- meet competition and after signing the bout sheet after the last match in tournament competition.

In either dual meets or individual tournaments, when a referee is not on the mat working, he/she still has jurisdiction in the mat area and responsibility for enforcing NFHS wrestling rules associated with the mat area. The referee on the mat is responsible for his/her match, but other referees involved in the competition should offer assistance in the mat area when necessary. Referees are reminded that just because they are not officiating a match, they still have responsibilities for enforcement of rules that extend beyond officiating a match.

Cleaning Wrestling Mats And Wrestling Equipment

Communicable diseases are a major concern in the sport of wrestling. It is imperative that ALL schools continually use best practices to control the spread of communicable diseases. A major aid in preventing the spread of communicable disease is to properly clean all wrestling mats and wrestling equipment.

Practice and competition wrestling mats must be cleaned prior to practicing or competing on them. An effective disinfectant is a solution of 1:100 chlorine bleach and water (1/4 cup chlorine bleach to each gallon of water, or 1 tablespoon of chlorine bleach to each quart of water). There is no advantage of using a stronger chlorine bleach and water solution than what is recommended above. Commercial disinfectant products are also available.

When cleaning wrestling mats, it is beneficial to walk backwards in an effort to minimize contamination from the shoes of the individual who is cleaning the wrestling mat. Be sure that any product used states that it is effective against viruses, fungi and bacteria. Typically, the label will state the cleaner is bactericidal, fungicidal and virucidal. Please follow the label directions closely for the best effectiveness.

Several items should be kept at mat- side to effectively deal with blood or other body fluids, including disposable towels and/or gauze pads, spray bottles containing a 1:100 chlorine bleach and water solution or a commercially prepared disinfectant solution. Protective gloves and disposable plastic bags must also be readily available to clean up blood or bodily fluids.

Likewise, it is imperative to clean all wrestling equipment daily. All workout gear should be cleaned after each practice. This includes towels, clothing, headgear, shoes, knee pads and any bags used to transport this equipment. In addition to cleaning wrestling equipment and wrestling mats properly, a few basic steps must be taken by all involved in the sport in order to minimize the risk of spreading communicable diseases.

- Educate coaches, athletes, referees and parents about communicable skin conditions and how they are spread.
- Maintain proper ventilation in the wrestling room to prevent the build-up of heat and humidity.
- Emphasize to the athletes the importance of showering immediately after each practice and competition with antibacterial soap.
- Wash all workout clothing and personal gear after each practice.
- Perform daily skin checks to ensure early recognition of potential communicable skin conditions. Athletes cannot be allowed to practice or compete if an active infection is suspected, even if the infection is covered.
- Do not share towels or personal hygiene products (razors) with others. • Refrain from full body (chest, arms, abdomen) cosmetic shaving.

Communicable diseases are preventable. Following these steps can certainly decrease the chance that these communicable diseases will be spread among the athletes in the wrestling room and/ or during competition.

OTHER KEY POINTS

Observing Headlocks

Front headlocks, as well as all headlocks, have been legal as long as an arm or leg is included. Referees have always been encouraged to look closely at all headlock situations.

However, there has been growing concern over the way some competitors have been using that particular hold that may temporarily cause loss of consciousness for their opponent. **Rule 7** speaks, in no uncertain terms, about cautioning competitors and instructing referees to be very cautious when utilizing and officiating those situations.

Wrestlers are admonished not to: Apply any hold/maneuver with pressure exerted over the opponent's mouth, nose, throat or neck that restricts breathing or circulation and turn a potentially dangerous hold/maneuver into an illegal hold/ maneuver.

The rule also states that wrestlers should know the dangers of holds/ maneuvers. There is an obligation placed on the coach not to teach or condone a hold or move that may injure either wrestler. In wrestling, as well as other sports, pain is involved with participation. However, there is a difference between inflicting pain and inflicting injury. It is not ethically acceptable to teach or use a hold/ move that has a risk of injury, which sometimes may cause permanent damage. There is no place in wrestling for that.

Referees must:

- Recognize and anticipate any hold/maneuver, especially a front headlock, as it can become illegal - quickly;
- Stop any hold/maneuver that becomes illegal immediately;
- Utilize the "potentially dangerous hold/maneuver" call to protect the wrestler and as always "err on the side of safety" when it comes to a wrestler's health;
- In front headlock situations, move to a position where the pressure can be seen; and
- Not let the hold/maneuver run without additional action taking place. That only allows the offensive wrestler more time to tighten the hold/maneuver and greatly increase the potential for injury.

The following are clues that referees and coaches might use to evaluate the front headlock situation. If the defensive wrestler demonstrates redness in the face, being up on the toes to avoid pressure and a trapped arm being limp.

Anyone of those clues should give rise to a concern that pressure is being applied and the action should more than likely cease.

Again, a front headlock situation is not a hold/maneuver that needs to run for a period of time. The offensive wrestler needs to continue with action beyond the lock up and progress with the attempt at a take down or other control.

Inspect Special Equipment

The referee must examine any special equipment. If that equipment does not permit normal movement of the joints or would prevent the opponent from applying normal holds/maneuvers, the equipment shall not be permitted.

If the equipment is hard and/or abrasive, it must be covered and properly padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than 1/2-inch thick. All parts of a pad must fit snug against the wrestler's body. Loose pads are prohibited.

Any contestant reporting to the scorer's table not properly equipped or not ready to wrestle is a technical violation. A wrestler with greasy substance on the body or uniform, improper grooming, objectionable pads and braces, illegal equipment, illegal uniform or any equipment that is detected as being illegal after the match has started shall be disqualified if not removed or corrected within the 1-1/2 minute injury time.

INTERPRETERS NOTE:

Many times coaches will request permission for a wrestler to compete while wearing a cast, this will not be allowed. Casts are typically hard and abrasive and if covered with the appropriate 1/2" thick slow recovery foam padding becomes far too bulky to apply normal holds. In addition a cast would not permit normal movement of the joints.

Flashback: 2013-14 Rule Changes

Here is a review of rule changes made by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee for the 2013-14 season that are still in effect for 2014-15.

Forfeits (Rules 1-4-3 and 5-13)

Forfeits no longer count toward a wrestler's daily match limit. Wrestlers are limited by rule to five matches in one day. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Wrestling Rules Committee determined that a forfeit did not pose risk to an athlete.

The limit on the number of matches permitted in anyone calendar day was established as a safeguard to prevent any wrestler from undo fatigue, thus increasing the possibility of injury.

Since there is no fatigue or exertion involved with accepting a forfeit, the committee felt that it was not necessary to count forfeits in the match total for any wrestler.

Artificial Limbs (Rule 4-5-9)

Wrestlers who have been approved to wear an artificial limb must weigh- in with the artificial limb if he or she chooses to wrestle with it on.

In addition, once the wrestler has weighed in while wearing the artificial limb, it cannot be removed during competition.

The concern was that if a wrestler weighed-in with an artificial limb, then decided to remove the artificial limb for the match, the wrestler's weight without the artificial limb might not qualify the wrestler for that weight class. The change requires that if the wrestler weighs-in with an artificial limb, then the wrestler shall wear the artificial limb when competing.

Electronic Devices (Rules 1-1-3, 4-3-6 and 10-1-2)

Restrictions on the use of electronic recording were loosened. Electronic devices for video recording and review by the wrestler or coach are allowed unless prohibited by the state high school association. The use of electronic devices that enables communication between a coach and athlete during a match is still prohibited.

Changes to the New York State Wrestling Interpretation Handbook

Pg. 3 Clarified wrestling twice in a dual meet. Only one match can count for team scoring the other can only be an exhibition match.

Pg. 3 Removed information regarding the 50% rule.

Pg. 5 Added note: New officials should be strongly encouraged to wear the green arm band on their right wrist to be consistent with the National Federation.

Pg. 6 Officials pre-match techniques item 4, get coach verification that all wrestlers will be in proper uniform, properly groomed, properly equipped and ready to wrestle. We added including shoes that are adequately secured so they do not come off or come untied during competition.

Pg. 8 Also added to Rule 4-1-3, if during competition a shoe comes off, it is obvious that the shoe was not adequately secured as specified in the rule; therefore, a technical violation will be assessed and an injury time out will be charged to correct it.

Pg. 8 The use of a “tapper” to inform the referee when time has expired has been authorized in New York. The rule number in your handbook is incorrect it should be 3-2-2i.

Pg. 9 Rule 4-1-1, to the list of items of uniform apparel effected by National Federation Rule limiting the number and size of manufactures logos/trademark/reference we added “or any other undergarment that extends beyond the inseam of a one piece uniform”.

Interpreters Note, the garment must also be tight fitting, single color and not extend beyond the knee.

Removed entire section on penalties for allowing unauthorized pounds and the section dealing with the 50% rule.

A complete description of both of these items can be found in the Wrestling Program Booklet.

Removed Rule 5-17-2, the definition of a match. The New York State Wrestling Committee has decided to follow the National Federation Definition which reads “A match begins when the proper wrestler reports to the scorer’s table in dual matches and tournaments until the conclusion of wrestling. The conclusion of wrestling occurs when the time expires at the end of the third period, when the overtime ends, or when a fall, technical fall, disqualification or a default occurs.” As a result of this rule change it was necessary to remove the paragraph, which read any illegal hold, unnecessary roughness or unsportsmanlike conduct (match point type) can be called after the buzzer up until the end of match procedure and Rule 7-1-1, removed a slam may be called after the buzzer i.e. any time after the match.

Pg. 26 A note was added to the section dealing with a figure four. Occasionally, when an offensive wrestler is applying a body scissors the actions of the defensive wrestler forces the foot off the calf into a figure four position. When this occurs the offensive wrestler should not be penalized, this should be considered potentially dangerous.

Pg. 31-32 Rule 7-4-2 lists failure to keep shoulder straps up while on the mat as unsportsmanlike conduct. In NYS in dual meets a penalty will be called if the straps are down while any part of the wrestler is on the mat. If the wrestler is completely off the mat on the hardwood floor, the straps can be dropped without penalty. As it is common in both individual and dual meet tournaments to have mats together and coaches chairs on the mats, NYS Wrestling Committee felt that wrestlers should not be penalized for taking shoulder straps down while in their corners dressing before or after their match. In tournaments a penalty will be called if the straps are down while any part of the wrestler is inside the minimum 28 foot circle. If the wrestler is completely outside the circle, the straps can be dropped without penalty. (NYSWC 2014)

Pg. 36 Stalling in the advantage position, added “if the defensive wrestler is broken down off their base”, and the leg is trapped at less than a 45 degree angle from heel to buttock we will apply the 5 second automatic stalling criteria.

Rule 5-1-1 and 6-1-1 dealing with bad time removed paragraph which read, “not all bad time has to be re-wrestled or deleted. Never take away legitimate points earned by the wrestler who was at the disadvantage”, also deleted situations and rulings. New York will now follow the rules for bad time as described in the National Federation Rules Book and Case Book.

We removed Rule 4-5-6 “a contestant is considered to be on the bracket when making weight at the weigh-in”. National Federation Rule 4-5-6 states “a contestant representing a school in an individually bracketed tournament shall be named by weight class prior to the conclusion of the weigh-in”.

Rule 10 add when is a wrestler officially entered into a tournament? The answer is somewhat complicated with a number of variables please refer to the Wrestling Program Booklet which covers this very effectively.

Modified Wrestling Game Rules changed last sentence under item 1. It said as much as “8 lbs.” and now reads as much as “6 lbs.”