

Uniform and Equipment Changes

Items that wrestlers wear under their uniforms drew attention from the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee this year. As a result, three rules were amended.

In **Rules 4-1-1a and 4-1-1c** NOTE, a suitable undergarment, which completely covers the buttocks and groin area, shall be worn under a one-piece singlet. Any undergarment worn under the one-piece singlet which extends beyond the inseam shall be tight-fitting and shall not extend below the knee. Female contestants wearing a one-piece singlet shall also wear a form-fitted compression suitable undergarment that completely covers their breasts.

That rule reinforces the importance of how wrestlers should be required to be properly attired on the mat during competition, regardless of gender.

A change to **Rule 4-1-1b** mandates that a suitable undergarment, which completely covers the buttocks and groin area, shall be worn under shorts designed for wrestling and compression shorts. The change fills a gap in the rules that did not specify a requirement for what a wrestler wears under shorts that are designed for wrestling and a compression short. Light colored or white singlets become transparent if an undergarment is not worn underneath. That created a modesty concern that athletes were revealing more than is appropriate.

Rule 4-5-7; At weigh in, female contestants shall wear a suitable form fitted compression undergarment that completely covers their breasts. That is addressed in **Rule 4-5-7**. By adding additional language to minimize the risk of exposure, it is the expectation that the suitable undergarment should provide coverage and support during competition. A compression shirt or sports bra is recommended.

Rule 4-1-3: Wrestlers shall wear light heelless wrestling shoes, reaching above the ankles, **if laces are visible, they shall be secured in an acceptable fashion. If the shoelaces come undone, the penalty would be an automatic stalling call.**

Note: An acceptable secure fashion could be double knotting of the laces. If the laces become unsecured from the locking device and visible, there is no penalty. If the laces become untied, stalling will be called. If a shoe comes off during competition, this will be considered not being properly secured and stalling will be called. NYS Officials disregard Rule 4-1-3 on page 8 of the Green Book. This is no longer accurate.

Rule 4-1-4

Under a change to Rule 4-1-4, any manufacturer's logo/trademark/ reference that appears on the wrestling ear guards, including legal hair covering, can be no more than 2-1 /4 square inches with no dimension more than 2-1/4 inches. Such item may appear no more than once on ear guards. No additional manufacturer's logo/trademark or promotional reference shall be allowed on the wrestling ear guard.

Rule 4-3-5; Wrestlers may not wear wristbands, sweatbands, bicep bands or leg or arm sleeves during a match that do not contain a pad. The committee decided there is no purpose or function for use of a leg or arm sleeve that does not contain a pad for protection.

Modification to Hair Rule

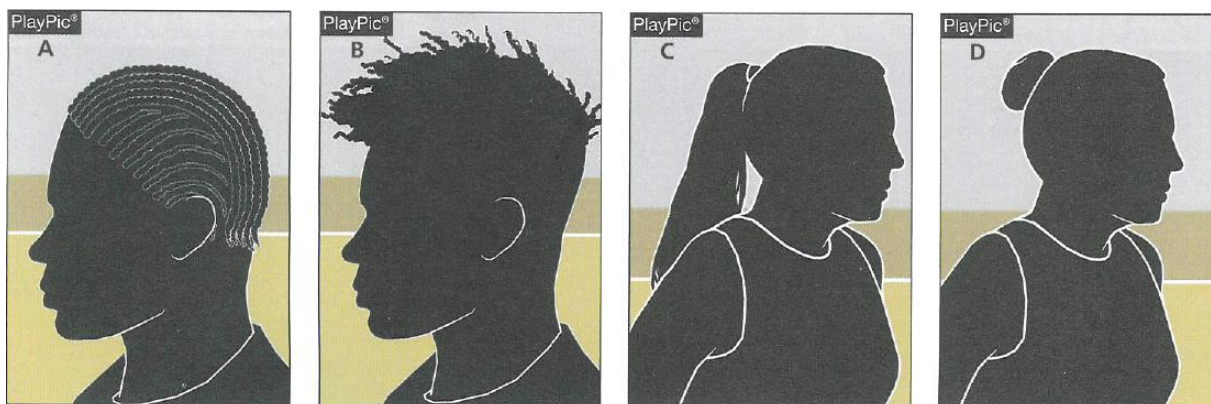
Changes to NFHS wrestling **Rule 4-2-1** will make it easier to determine what hair styles are legal. Under the revised language, hair shall not extend below the top of an ordinary shirt collar in the back. On the sides, the hair shall not extend below earlobe level. In the front, the hair shall not extend below the eyebrows.

The terms "well groomed" and "natural state" have been deleted as it was deemed extremely subjective and there is no standard to meet such an arbitrary expectation. Hair that is manipulated poses no threat to either wrestler. It is neither abrasive nor cumbersome.

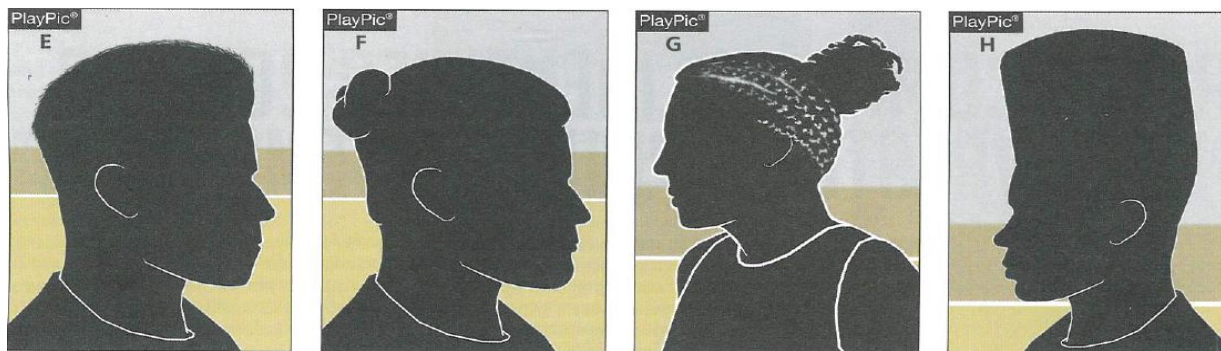
If an individual has hair longer than allowed by rule, it shall be contained in a cover so that the hair rule is satisfied.

The rule includes hair items that may not be worn. Physical hair treatment items that are hard and or abrasive such as (beads, bobby pins, barrettes, pins, hair clips, etc. or any other hair control device) shall not be permitted. Legal hair-control devices such as rubber band(s) shall be secured 'so as not to come out readily during wrestling.

Hair that is manipulated poses no threat to either wrestler. It is neither abrasive nor cumbersome.



The hair in PlayPics A and B is legal. If hair is longer than allowed (PlayPic C), a legal hair-controlled device such as a rubber band shall be secured so as not to come out readily during wrestling (PlayPic D).



The hair in PlayPic E is legal. A legal hair-controlled device such as a rubber band shall be secured so as not to come out readily during wrestling (PlayPic F). If hair is longer than allowed, a legal hair-controlled device such as a rubber band shall be secured so as not to come out readily during wrestling (PlayPic G). The hair in PlayPic H is legal. Rubber bands, hair ribbons and yarn would be acceptable hair control devices.

Definition of a Takedown

Rule 5-25-2: A takedown shall be awarded when one or both knees of the defensive wrestler are touching the mat beyond reaction time or when the defensive wrestler's legs or torso are controlled, and the **wrestler's hand(s) touch the mat beyond reaction time.**

The NHFS rule is not the college rule, that if the hands touch the mat, you immediately score a takedown. Whenever the hands touch the mat, they are considered supporting points. The term "the majority of the wrestler's weight" has been removed from the rules book, but the requirement for reaction time must still be met.

Fleeing is a Technical Violation

Rule 7-3-1; going out of the wrestling area or forcing an opponent out of the wrestling area by either wrestler at any time as a means of avoiding **an imminent scoring situation**, is a technical violation for **fleeing the mat**. Both wrestlers should make every effort to remain inbounds. When the referee feels that either wrestler has failed to make every effort to stay inbounds **during an imminent scoring situation**, the offending wrestler shall be penalized for **fleeing the mat**.

There can be no technical violation for fleeing the mat if near-fall points have been earned.

Referees will no longer have to decide whether a contestant who flees the mat is guilty of a technical violation or of stalling, which are similar types of action. A change to Rule 7-3-1 clarifies that when the referee feels that either wrestler has failed to make every effort to stay inbounds during an imminent scoring situation, the offending wrestler shall be penalized for fleeing the mat.

Fleeing is an automatic point while stalling may be a warning on the first violation and a point on the second violation. With the change, the referee may apply the technical violation call of fleeing when the action is related specifically to a scoring situation. All other types of leaving the wrestling area as a means of avoiding wrestling will fall under the rule of stalling.

Change clarifies that intentionally going off the mat or forcing the opponent off the mat to **avoid wrestling** would be **stalling**.

If the fleeing occurred to **avoid being scored upon**, it would be considered a **technical violation**.

The committee believes that technical violation has been underutilized for years, and it is hoped the change will give officials the tools and the confidence to distinguish between it and stalling.

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Stalling Rules Modified

Stalling has been removed from the progressive penalty chart and will be penalized separately.

Rule 8-1-4, the first penalty for stalling will be a warning.

Second and third penalty will be one match point each

Fourth Penalty will be 2 match points and choice of position on the next restart

Fifth offense for stalling will result in disqualification.

Note: Disqualification due to stalling does not eliminate a contestant from further competition in tournaments.

By removing stalling from the progressive penalty sequence, officials will be able to penalize wrestlers more freely without complicating the matter when it is combined with other penalties. This will allow officials more freedom to call stalling earlier, more consistently and without hesitation when they feel it is warranted."

The penalty chart has been edited to reflect this change.

Head-Neck-Concussion Time Added

Rule 8-2-4; In an ongoing effort to minimize the risk of injury in high school wrestling, additional time will be given to evaluate head and neck injuries when an appropriate health-care professional is present at a match.

In addition to the 1-1/2 minutes of injury time allotted for each wrestler, an appropriate health-care professional will have a maximum of five minutes to evaluate injuries to the head and neck involving the cervical column and/ or nervous systems. At that point, the wrestler would have to continue or default the match. The revision in injury time in **Rule 8-2-4** was approved by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee at its April 3-5 meeting in Indianapolis. All recommendations were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

A second injury to the head and neck involving cervical column and/or central nervous system in the same match shall require the wrestler to default the match. If an appropriate health-care professional is not present, all injuries to the head and neck would be covered by the same timeframe as all other injuries. When the five minutes expire, the athlete would be required to prepare without delay for continuation or default the match.

When the new provision is used in an injury time out, it **will** count as one of the two injury time outs allowed for the athlete, but the time consumed for the injury will in no way affect time used, or available, for other types of injuries. Using any part of the five minutes is equivalent to using all of it; the time cannot be "banked."

If the appropriate health care professional decides the athlete may continue, the coach may overrule that decision. But the opposite is not true; the coach may not overrule the health care professional's decision that the athlete may not continue.

In the case of a wrestler exhibiting signs of a concussion, the individual would be removed from the match and could not return to competition in the absence of an appropriate health-care professional.

In the absence of an appropriate health care professional, all injuries to the head and neck involving the head, neck, and/or cervical column will be covered in 1-1/2 minutes like all other injuries.

It is not up to the official to determine if the additional time is needed. It is part of the official's job to meet with the appropriate health care provider prior to competition to make sure he or she understands the rule and how it should be applied.

In order to alert timers that the rule is in force, a new signal has been adopted. As seen in the PlayPic below, the referee places a fist against the forehead.



Rule 9-2-2f; An additional item was added to the dual meet tie-breaking system. Letter "f" the team giving up the least amount of forfeits has been added to the list of criteria. The remaining criteria will all move down a letter.

Flashback 2018-19 Rule Changes

Rule 4-5-7; Contestants may wear low-cut socks during weigh-ins that cannot be removed or added if the wrestler does not make weight.

Rule 5-15 and 5-18; Contestants are considered to be inbounds, if a total of two supporting points of either wrestler are inside or on the boundary lines. The total of two supporting points could be two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler that are inside or on the boundary lines.

When down on the mat, the usual points of support are the knee(s), the side of the thigh, the buttocks, the hand(s) and the head.

Supporting points are the parts of the body touching the wrestling area (see exception) which may or may not bear the wrestler's weight, other than those parts with which the wrestler is holding the opponent. That means referees no longer have to make a judgment on where the majority of the weight is being supported any combination of two supporting points means the wrestlers are inbounds. The removal of "majority of weight" will aid the referee in focusing on inbounds and out of bounds, rather than trying to make a judgment on where the majority of the weight is being supported. (Exception; The foot, heel or toes cannot be considered supporting parts when the wrestlers are down on the mat. In these situations consider the knees to be the supporting parts, whether they are on the mat or above the mat.)

When the defensive wrestler is on their back any part of a their shoulder or scapula is considered to be all the supporting points, whether they are on the mat or above the mat. Not the head, hands or feet.

Wrestling shall continue as long as a total of two supporting points of either wrestler are inside of or on the boundary lines. The total of two supporting points could be two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler that remain inbounds. If there is no action at the edge of the mat and one wrestler is out of bounds, the referee may stop the match.

When there is no longer a total of two supporting points of either wrestler on or inside the boundary line, wrestling shall be stopped, and wrestlers returned to the center of the mat and started according to the position of each at the time they went out of bounds.

Rule 8-2-2; A false start from the neutral position which results in an injury to a wrestler's opponent such that the opponent cannot continue after the expiration of recovery time the injured contestant shall be awarded the match by default, the same as an injury caused by an illegal hold/maneuver, unnecessary roughness, or unsportsmanlike conduct during the match.

Rule 7-1-5q; The back bow is illegal by application. (Illustration 83)

Rule 7-1-5y; The Nelson Cradle is an illegal hold/maneuver. It is a combination made up of a half nelson on one side with a locked cradle from around the neck with the far side knee. The crotch of the knee acts as the other arm (arm pit) to complete the full nelson pressure on the neck and throat. (Illustration 108)

The action occurring on the lower spine as the knee is brought up near the head is dangerous. When the move is finished the offensive wrestler can either roll it over or draw it backward, which is very painful to the defensive wrestler's neck and body.

Rule 7-4-2; In addition to repeatedly dropping to one knee to break locked hands, it is unsportsmanlike conduct to repeatedly drop to one hand to break locked hands.

End of Match Procedure

The end-of-match procedure is a sportsmanship act and also a means of recognizing the winner of the contest. When a match ends in a fall, the referee calls the contestants to the center of the mat, has them shake hands, and then raises the arm of the winner. If the match is not determined by fall, the referee may direct the contestants to remain in the ten-foot circle so that he/she can verify the final score. Once the score is verified, the referee will return to the center of the mat, direct the contestants to shake hands and then raise the arm of the winner. In either case, the manner of the handshake shall be in the form of a firm, traditional and respectful handshake and free of displays of unsportsmanlike behavior.

Unsportsmanlike behaviors could include but, are not limited to any form of taunting of the opponent or spectators, as well as acts of excessive celebration or displeasure with the outcome of the match. It is imperative that coaches instruct their wrestlers to offer a firm handshake and to provide a respectful acknowledgement of their opponents. Fist bumps, high fives, hand slaps, etc., are not acceptable. Referees need to be aware that unsportsmanlike conduct is to be penalized whenever it occurs regardless of the circumstances.

Off Mat Referee Must Call Unsportsmanlike Conduct

The jurisdiction time of the referee begins when he or 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 or 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.

Unsportsmanlike Penalty May Determine Advancement

Rule 10-2-9, if two wrestlers in the championship bracket simultaneously cannot continue a match and the score is tied, the wrestler whose opponent has received an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty at any time during the match will continue in the consolation round.

If neither wrestler received an unsportsmanlike penalty, the wrestler who scored the first point(s) in the match (first 3 periods, or first or second 30 second tiebreaker) will continue in the consolation bracket or if no points were scored, neither wrestler will continue.

The criterion was implemented to emphasize sportsmanship during competition.

HEADLOCKS

Front headlocks, as well as all headlocks, have been legal as long as an arm or leg is encircled. 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 or maneuver with pressure exerted over the opponent's mouth, nose, throat or neck that restricts breathing or circulation.
- Turn a potentially dangerous hold or maneuver into an illegal hold or maneuver. The rule also states that wrestlers should know the dangers of hold or maneuver. There is an obligation placed on the coach not to teach or condone a hold or move that may injure either wrestler.

Wrestling moves and maneuvers executed properly and legally increase an athlete's chance at victory. 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 for that in wrestling.

Referees must:

- Recognize and anticipate any hold or maneuver, especially a front headlock, as it can become illegal quickly;
- Stop any hold or maneuver that becomes illegal immediately; Exception, 8-1-2d, penalizing the defensive wrestler during a pinning situation.
- Utilize the potentially dangerous hold or maneuver call without hesitation to protect the wrestler. If a mistake is made, it is far better to "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 or maneuver run without additional action taking place. That only allows the offensive wrestler more time to tighten the hold or 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;
- A trapped arm being limp.

Any one 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 or 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 takedown or other control. Watch for stalemates when the wrestler defending the headlock controls their opponent's elbow.

Program of Wrestling

PROCEDURE FOR WEIGH INS AND 50% RULE WHEN:

1. A wrestler is declared ineligible by a referee because of a skin condition. When a referee determines that a wrestler is ineligible to participate due skin issue, the official and the coach will notify the opposing coach prior to the start of the dual meet and the name of the wrestler shall be crossed off the team's weigh in sheet. 50% Rule: The weigh in will not count. The ineligible wrestler shall not participate in the warmups or introductions

Clarification: For a wrestler to be eligible to wrestle JV or Varsity, they must be skin checked by either the JV or Varsity official. If they are not checked off on the weigh-in sheet, they would be declared an ineligible wrestler.

For sections that wrestle JV prior to Varsity (where a separate JV ref is being used), the coach shall be required to make two separate copies of the weigh-in sheet (one for the JV ref's pre-meet check, and one for the Varsity ref's pre-meet check). When the pre-meet meeting is concluded, both sheets should be sent to the scorer's table. So long as a wrestler was checked off by the JV ref, they are eligible to wrestle in the Varsity meet. They do not have to be checked by both the JV and Varsity official. All officials should indicate on the weigh-in sheets any wrestler that had a proper skin form that was accepted.

Changes to the Green Book

Rule 4-1-3, page 8; Delete the 2nd paragraph "if during competition a shoe comes off, it is obvious that the shoe was adequately secured as specified in the rule; therefore, a technical violation will be assessed, and an injury timeout will be charged to correct it."

Beginning 2019-20 season to be consistent with the rule change to 4-1-3 which states if laces are visible, they shall be secured in an acceptable fashion. If the shoelaces come undone, the penalty would be an automatic stalling call.

The automatic stalling call will also apply to shoes that come off during competition.

Game Conditions

Page 45, Item 3; No contestant (or team) can accumulate more than 3 points per week. Change "3 points" to 4 points per week.