



Wrestling Meeting Folder

2021-2022

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The following rules changes were recommended by the NFHS Wrestling Committee during its April 2-3 meeting held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All recommendations were approved by the NFHS Board of Directors. All rule changes appear in rulebook order and take effect with the 2021-22 season unless otherwise noted.

Representation 1-4-3

Wrestlers may compete in up to six matches per day during a tournament being conducted by the state high school association as a qualifying tournament for the state tournaments or the championships themselves. The previous 5 match per day limit still applies for regular season competition.

This change was enacted as a result of a successful experiment by the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. Increasing the number of matches from five to six would allow postseason tournaments with more than eight competitors in a weight class to complete the tournament in one day. In many cases, this change would eliminate the need for schools to stay overnight to participate in respective state qualifying tournaments and state championship events.

Since this exception would only allow six matches per day to be wrestled in the postseason qualifying tournament or state championship event, the impact on the total number of matches that an individual wrestles in an entire season would be minimal.

Situation: Wrestler A competes in their sixth match during the (a) state association's championship tournament, or (b) Hometown High School's holiday tournament.

Ruling: It would be permitted in (a), but not (b). Wrestlers may compete in a sixth match in a postseason tournament, not a regular season tournament.

Weight Classifications 4-4-1a and b

Chart A

Girls (Weight Class Options)		
12 Weight Classes	13 Weight Classes	14 Weight Classes
100 lbs.	100 lbs.	100 lbs.
107 lbs.	106 lbs.	105 lbs.
114 lbs.	112 lbs.	110 lbs.
120 lbs.	118 lbs.	115 lbs.
126 lbs.	124 lbs.	120 lbs.
132 lbs.	130 lbs.	125 lbs.
138 lbs.	136 lbs.	130 lbs.
145 lbs.	142 lbs.	135 lbs.
152 lbs.	148 lbs.	140 lbs.
165 lbs.	155 lbs.	145 lbs.
185 lbs.	170 lbs.	155 lbs.
235 lbs.	190 lbs.	170 lbs.
	235 lbs.	190 lbs.
		235 lbs.

Chart B

Boys (Weight Class Options)		
12 Weight Classes	13 Weight Classes	14 Weight Classes
108 lbs.	107 lbs.	106 lbs.
116 lbs.	114 lbs.	113 lbs.
124 lbs.	121 lbs.	120 lbs.
131 lbs.	127 lbs.	126 lbs.
138 lbs.	133 lbs.	132 lbs.
145 lbs.	139 lbs.	138 lbs.
152 lbs.	145 lbs.	144 lbs.
160 lbs.	152 lbs.	150 lbs.
170 lbs.	160 lbs.	157 lbs.
190 lbs.	172 lbs.	165 lbs.
215 lbs.	189 lbs.	175 lbs.
285 lbs.	215 lbs.	190 lbs.
	285 lbs.	215 lbs.
		285 lbs.

Effective with the 2023-24 season, state associations may choose one set of weight classes (See charts A and B) for both girls' and boys' competition. The landmark change marks the first time that girls wrestling will have standardized weight classes on a national level. The change also marks the first time that state associations will have a choice in the number of weight classes.

State associations must select one of the three sets (12, 13 or 14) of weight classes for girls (Chart A) and one of the three sets (12, 13 or 14) for boys (Chart B). States cannot adopt all three sets and cannot switch back and forth during the season. Additionally, state associations may not adopt one set of weight classes for one group or competition and another for a different division or class of schools.

Previous surveys have indicated a varying number of weight classes that states wanted, so the committee attempted to meet the needs of as many people as possible. With more state associations sponsoring girls wrestling and holding state championships for girls, the committee believed it was time to establish uniform weight classifications for girls.

The recommended weights were established based upon more than 215,000 assessments from the National Wrestling Coaches Association.

Situation 1: ABC state association wants to utilize 14 weight classes for boys wrestling and 12 weight classes for girls in the state. Is this permitted by NFHS rules?

Ruling 1: Yes. Under NFHS rules, states may adopt one number of weight classes for boys wrestling and another for girls as the needs (based on participation numbers) for boys and girls may be different.

Situation 2: ABC state association wants to utilize 14 weight classes for Division I boys wrestling schools but use 12 weight classes for Division II boys wrestling schools. Is this permitted by NFHS rules?

Ruling 2: No. States may only adopt one set of weight classes for boys and one for girls.

In NYS the following 13 weight classes will be in effect for the 2021-2022 season;

102, 110, 118, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 160, 172, 189, 215, 285. On December 25th a 2 lb. growth allowance will be added to each weight class. Additional information is available in the Wrestling Interpretation Handbook 2020-2022 (Green Book).

Weighing In 4-5-7

Wrestlers are no longer required to exclusively wear low-cut socks during weigh-ins. Any style of socks can be worn while weighing in.

Situation: Wrestler A enters the weigh-in area wearing (a) low-cut socks, (b) crew-length socks, or (c) no socks.

Ruling: Legal in (a), (b) and (c). Socks are not required to be worn but can be any style, if worn.

Interpreter's Note: In the 2021-2022 Casebook and Manual on page 23, it states "any socks below the knee are acceptable". In NYS there is no below the knee requirement. Socks will be treated as special equipment as specified in the Rules Book.

Bad Time 5-1-1e

In an editorial change the committee removed subsection e which read "on the next restart after the opponent receives a two-point stalling penalty." The committee believed that since action is stopped immediately on the fourth stalling warning, sub-article (e) - was no longer needed.

Interpreter's Note: This deletion may not have been necessary. Even though the possibility of a bad time scenario has been reduced, it has not been completely eliminated.

Example: Wrestler A has been warned and penalized twice for stalling violations. While in the offensive position, Wrestler A is penalized for a two-point stalling violation and the match is stopped as required by the Rules Book; however, the Referee fails to give the choice of position to the opponent and restarts the match.

Ruling: This would be a bad time situation and would be covered by Rule 5-1-1.

Head, Neck and Cervical Time-Out

5-1-3f (NEW), 5-28-3, 5-28-6, 6-4-3,
8-2-4b-1, and 2, 8-2-6, 8-2-9

In a major change prompted by risk minimization, a separate 5-minute time out has been established for the onsite appropriate health-care professional to evaluate potential head and neck injuries involving the head, neck and/or cervical column areas (HNC).

There is now a separate injury time-out for injuries that concern the head and neck involving the cervical column and/or nervous system that is not connected to any other time out, including blood, injury, recovery, or referee's time. When HNC time is used, the time used does not impact any other time allowances.

A second use of HNC time during the match will cause the wrestler to default the match. If HNC time occurs during bad time, the HNC time-out will not be voided. Coaching is permitted during injury time, blood time, recovery time and HNC time. Up to two team attendants and any number of health care professionals may attend to either wrestler.

Interpreter's Note: The following are the five types of time outs in high school wrestling, injury time, blood time, recovery time, a Referee's time out and HNC time out. Coaching will be permitted during any of the five-time outs.

HNC time outs have been added to the list of things that are not eliminated during bad time. There are now 6 things that are not eliminated during bad time, flagrant misconduct, unsportsmanlike conduct, illegal holds and maneuvers, unnecessary roughness, blood time and HNC time outs.

HNC time extensions will not be given to extend a recovery time-out. Recovery time is limited to two minutes per occurrence.

When the match is stopped for injury and the referee determines scoring, including near fall, would have been successful, the referee will charge the timeout and award the applicable points to the non-injured wrestler.

The five-minute time extension will only be granted to the appropriate health-care professional. In the absence of an appropriate health-care professional (physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant or certified athletic trainer) all injuries to the head and neck involving the cervical column and/or nervous system will be treated the same as any other injury two timeouts or a minute and a half cumulative.

The past rule limiting the number of people who could be on the mat during a time-out to no more than 3 people (2 coaches and 1 medical attendant) has been modified. This rule now allows for 2 coaches and as many health-care professionals as necessary.

Situation: The match is stopped for an injury time-out, at the one-minute mark the coach requests the onsite health-care professional to evaluate their wrestler. The AHCP requests the additional time to do a HNC evaluation.

Ruling: Because one minute of time-out has been used the AHCP would have four more minutes to complete the evaluation and the wrestler's 1 ½ minutes of injury time would be reinstated.

If the AHCP is not be immediately available, the Referee will turn off the injury clock until the AHCP arrives at matside to evaluate the injured wrestler at which time the HNC time clock will be restarted, and the amount of time previously consumed will be deducted from the five minutes of HNC time as stated above.

Rule 8-2-1: When a match is stopped for an injury, including HNC, during an imminent scoring situation and the Referee determines that scoring (takedown, reversal, escape, nearfall) would have been successful if the wrestling had continued. The Referee shall charge an injury timeout, or if appropriate an HNC timeout, to the injured contestant and award applicable points to the non-injured wrestler.

Situation: If during an HNC timeout, injury timeout or recovery time, the injured contestant begins to bleed, the Referee will stop the HNC, injury time or recovery time clock and put the injured wrestler on blood time. Once the bleeding has been controlled the HNC, injury or recovery time clock will be restarted from where it was stopped when the bleeding began. Even though the clock was started on two separate occasions it will only be counted as one HNC, injury or recovery timeout. During any timeout situation treating blood will always take precedence.

Choice of Position 6-3-1

A minor change to rule 6-3-1 clarified choice of position at the end of the first period is not affected by multiple forfeits during a dual meet.

“The winner of the toss will choose the odd or even numbered weight classes listed consecutively. This choice is not altered incase of fall, default, forfeit(s) or disqualification.

The change is, the (s) was added to forfeit to emphasize that in the event of multiple forfeits the choice is still not altered.

2021-22 Wrestling Points of Emphasis

The NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee and the NFHS Board of Directors believes there are areas of interscholastic wrestling that need to be addressed and given special attention. These areas of concern are often cyclical, some areas need more attention than others, and that is why they might appear in the rules book for consecutive editions. These concerns are identified as "Points of Emphasis." For the 2021-22 high school wrestling season, attention is being called to: boys and girls weight classes, head/neck/ cervical column and/or nervous system timeout and better understanding stalling in the Ultimate Tiebreaker. When a topic is included in the Points of Emphasis, these topics are important enough to reinforce throughout the academic year because they are not being given the proper attention needed.

Boys and Girls weight classification cover under previous rule changes above.

HNC Timeout covered under previous rule changes above.

Stalling During The Ultimate Tiebreaker

The ultimate tie breaker presents a different format when it comes to stalling. The referee should take into account that the offensive wrestler does not have to score to win, and can win by controlling the defensive wrestler for 30 seconds. If the defensive wrestler scores the match is concluded. This could be by an escape, reversal or through a penalty point(s). If the offensive wrestler scores the match is also concluded. If neither wrestler scores, the offensive wrestler will be awarded one point and declared the winner.

To ensure that the offensive wrestler does not take advantage of the 30 seconds by just grabbing onto a body part(s) and holding on, a stalemate should be called immediately. After determining that the offensive wrestler has grabbed onto a body part(s) solely in an effort to prevent the defensive wrestler from scoring, the offensive wrestler will only be given one quick stalemate. Following the quick stalemate wrestling will resume from the offensive starting position on the mat; if the offensive wrestler uses any tactic designed to "freeze wrestling" or any of the tactics listed below stalling shall be called. The obligation to attempt to secure a fall goes away during the ultimate tiebreaker but the offensive wrestler is still obligated to wrestle.

If the offensive wrestler immediately grasps an ankle and is simply hanging on or drops to both ankles (watch for locked hands), jumps into a side head lock with no attempt to improve or lifts the opponent off the mat with no attempt to bring them back down, one quick stalemate will be called. If the offensive wrestler continues any of these or similar maneuvers, stalling will be called.

If the offensive wrestler is holding a leg in the air from a standing position or is in a rear standing position, they must attempt to return their opponent to the mat just as they would in the regulation match. However, the first time this situation occurs in the ultimate tiebreaker a stalemate will be called, whereas had this situation occurred during regulation it would not be a stalemate it would be a stalling violation. In NYS we will treat the above situation the same as we treat other positions where the offensive wrestler is simply holding on to a body part to prevent their opponent from scoring.

2021-2022 Case Book 9-1-8 situation B, covers this situation. When the Referee recognizes that the offensive wrestler is not attempting to return their opponent to the mat a stalemate should be called immediately. If the Referee determines that this tactic is being used to stall again, stalling should be called and penalized accordingly.

Note: Once the offensive wrestler successfully returns their opponent to the mat there is no obligation to attempt to pin. It is acceptable to ride their opponent and remain parallel. Controlled wrestling examples would include but not be limited to cradle, arm bar, chicken wing, spiral ride, half nelson, two on one, heal to the butt, leg rides etc. There is no obligation to come out to the side and get off the opponent's hips. (2015-16 NFHS Pre-Season Guide)

Flashback to 2020-2021 Rule Changes:

Weigh-in Rules Change

Several rules regarding weigh-ins were added or revised through action by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee in 2020.

The weigh-in procedure was altered through a combination of changes in Rule 4.

Rule 4-1-1c, Now requires female wrestlers wearing a one-piece singlet and/or a form fitted compression shirt to wear a suitable undergarment that completely covers their breast and minimizes the risk of exposure. (Sports Bra)

Rule 4-5-7 was rewritten to require that a legal uniform be worn during weigh-in and that no additional weight allowance be granted. An additional clause prohibiting shoes and ear guards during weigh-in was also written into 4-5-7.

This rule change also allowed for any gender to conduct the weigh-ins.

Note: All wrestlers must wear a suitable undergarment that covers the groin and buttocks regardless of uniform style.

Technical Violation if Shoe Comes Off

Rule 4-1-3 NFHS 2020-2021 Wrestling Rules Book has been updated to include an interpretation from last year specifying the penalty for a shoe coming off during competition. In order to curtail participants from intentionally lacing their shoes too loosely to cause a stoppage in the action and potentially thwart an opponent's scoring opportunity, a technical violation will be called, appropriate point(s) awarded, and the injury clock will be started to correct the situation.

In reporting to the scorer's table properly equipped to wrestle, it is assumed that the shoes are laced to the top as the manufacturer intended. A wrestling shoe that is properly laced will not come off. Some wrestlers do not lace to the top or loosely lace shoes so that they easily come off during the match. This causes match delay and often causes the loss of scoring opportunity by the opposing wrestler. Instead of a takedown or maintaining control, opposing wrestlers are left with a shoe in their hands.

When a shoe comes off, the match will be stopped with some exceptions such as Rule 8-1-2d, in a pinning situation, to penalize a defensive wrestler. When the situation has concluded, the referee shall stop the match, signal and verbally announce the infraction and award points earned. If the shoe comes off while the opponent is attempting to score the referee will allow the match to continue until the scoring attempt is completed or until it becomes obvious that the scoring attempt will be unsuccessful.

If the shoe comes off during an attempted reversal or takedown where the wrestler with the missing shoe goes directly to their back the match will continue until the pinning situation has concluded. (On their back is defined as the shoulders or scapula breaking 90 degrees.)

Note: The wrestler whose shoe comes off can never benefit and the opponent shall never lose an opportunity to score.

Example: During a pinning situation the offensive wrestler has earned a 3 point nearfall and the shoe of the defensive wrestler comes off, wrestling will continue. If the defensive wrestler fights off their back and the pinning situation has concluded the referee will stop the match, award a 4 point nearfall (5-11-2i "Scream Rule") penalize for the technical violation and charge the defensive wrestler with an injury timeout to correct the situation. Any time the defensive wrestler commits an infraction during a pinning situation, that wrestler cannot score any offensive points until the match has been stopped.

Logos 4-1-4

Effective July 1, 2022, 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/reference, promotional or *advocacy references* shall be allowed on the wrestling ear guards.

The NFHS has determined that ear guards displaying Super Hero symbols and college logos will not be allowed.

An additional rule change was adopted but was never discussed at the annual NFHS interpretation meeting. In the 2019-2020 Case Book page 18, 4.3.1 situation D, stated that it is permissible to have stick-ons placed on the wrestler's ear guards as long as they do not relate to something that is unsportsmanlike.

In the 2020-2021 and 2021 2022 Case Books Rule 4.3.1 Situation D, states that stickers are not allowed on the ear guards and that commemorative stickers can be allowed if approved by the state association

The above regulations for ear guards in high school wrestling will not take effect until July 1, 2022.

Hair Rules

There is no longer a hair length rule.

Rule 4-2-1 previously stated that a wrestler's hair could not "extend below the top of an ordinary shirt collar in the back, below earlobe level on the sides or below the eyebrows in the front".

Those confinements, along with the requirement that a hair cover be used for hair that exceeded said limitations, were deleted. Long hair does not pose a risk to either wrestler, nor does it create a disadvantage for the opponents of wrestlers with long hair. Allowing wrestlers to wear their hair the way they want to during competition eliminates a potential unnecessary participation barrier.

While the hair-length restriction has been removed, wrestlers must still be clean shaven with sideburns trimmed no lower than earlobe level. A neatly trimmed mustache that does not extend below the line of the lower lip shall be permissible. Physical hair treatment items that are hard and or abrasive such as beads, bobby pins, barrettes, pins, hair clips etc. shall not be permitted. A legal hair control device such as rubber band(s), yarn or ribbon shall be secured not to come out readily during wrestling.

Wearing a legal hair cover that is attached to the ear guard is still an option.

Rule 5-29-1: Added pulling an opponent's hair to the list of unnecessary roughness, with the stipulation that this does not include hair that is caught in a legal maneuver including but not limited to: a headlock, cradle, half nelson, etc.

Rule 7-3-1: Clarified the application of a technical violation while a wrestler is attempting to flee.

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. There can be no technical violation for fleeing the mat if nearfall or takedown points have been earned.

Rule 8-1-4: Was changed to require the match be stopped when awarding a 2 point stalling penalty regardless of position.

Rule 8-2-9: Added when a match is stopped for an injury during an imminent scoring situation and the Referee determines that scoring would have been successful if the wrestling had continued. The Referee shall charge the injury timeout to the injured contestant and award the applicable points to the non-injured wrestler, including nearfall points.