

NY State Mid-Season Interpretation Update

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This information is being provided to help bring clarity to the rules limiting the number and size of manufacturers logo/trademark/reference, promotional or advocacy references allowed on the wrestler's ear guards. In order to enforce this aspect of the rules it is essential to understand not only the specific language in the Rules and Casebooks but also to consider what is in the spirit of the rule as well as the original intent of the Rules Committee.

EAR GUARDS

Item 1: Rule 4-1-2 puts a limit on the number and size of manufacturer's logo/trademark/reference that can appear on each item of uniform apparel, including a legal hair cover and ear guards (1 on each ear cup). An additional note allows for one American flag not to exceed 2" x 3" to be worn or occupy space on each item of uniform apparel. By state association adoption, to allow for special occasions, commemorative or memorial patches not to exceed 4 sq. inches may be worn on the uniform without compromising its integrity.

The ear guards have an additional standard that must be met: promotional or advocacy references are not allowed.

The 2022-2023 Casebook and Manual provide the following situation 4.3.1 situation D: Wrestler A reports to the table and goes to the center of the mat. The official notices that Wrestler A is wearing; (a) non-offensive stickers on the headgear; (b) celebration stickers for pins earned; (c) a commemorative sticker honoring the loss of a loved one.

Ruling: Illegal in (a) and (b). Stickers are not allowed on the head gear. In (c), Commemorative stickers can be allowed if approved by the State Association.

The first part banning promotional items is to eliminate any emblem, symbol, character, or language that could provide any protentional monetary benefit to any company or entity, turning the ear guard into an advertising opportunity.

Note: NFHS editor stated "we don't want high school sports to resemble NASCAR.

The second part dealing with advocacy references is in place to prevent the ear guard from becoming a platform for political, social, or personal commentary and to protect the integrity of high school sports.

One additional area of the rule is that taping is not allowed. The rationale for not allowing tape on the head gear is that the tape could be abrasive, unsanitary, and unsightly.

Note: NYSHPA has provided a wavier to allow for taping the **straps** but not the ear cups.

The rationale for promotional items not being allowed is provided in my earlier NASCAR reference.

Promotional items would include but not be limited to; professional or college sports teams, super heroes, cartoon characters, soft drinks, fast food, local businesses, etc.

Note: This limitation does not apply to special equipment as illustrated in the Casebook and Manuel page 17, 4.3.1 situation E, that allows for adornment on special equipment. As long as the adornment is not intended to taunt or intimidate your opponent.

The last and most difficult to address is the Casebook situation 4.3.1 situation D, that defines stickers as illegal even if non-offensive but does allow commemorative stickers with State Association approval.

It would be beyond the authority of the NYSWOA or any rules interpreter to make ruling of any kind that would make wrestling less safe. However, since the stickers could be allowed with State Association approval it would be fair to assume that the restriction on stickers is philosophical and not safety related.

In the spirit of good sportsmanship the following interpretation will be in effect immediately: If the wrestling ear guard has a sticker(s) the subject matter of which is not covered by the earlier mentioned provision of being a logo/trademark/reference/promotional item or advocacy reference and does not appear to the referee to be unsafe, it or they will be allowed.

Example: The Furman Eagles have a large F, an Eagle, or the words Furman on their ear guard this would not be a violation.

To avoid having officials making calls on the legality of logos on ear guards during a match, the following procedures should be followed:

1. During the pre-meet check, all wrestlers should have the ear guards they will be using and the official will check any markings at that time for legality. The wrestler and coach will be told if the ear guards do not comply and that will be indicated on the weigh in sheet and they will be told that legal ear guards are required when the wrestler reports to the table.
2. The referee should check when the wrestlers report and if a wrestler appears at the table with ear guards that do not comply, the wrestler will be charged with a technical violation and an injury time out for not being properly equipped.
3. Should there be a situation where an improper marking is discovered during a match, there will be no penalty. That would be an error by the referee who did not diligently check prior to the match.

SHOE VIOLATIONS

Item 2: When a shoe violation occurs, the match will not be stopped until there is no significant action. When the referee observes that shoe has come untied or been displaced no signal will be given. Wait until the match has stopped to signal and to penalize. This penalty will always be made while the clock is off. When a situation occurs that creates a fall, technical fall, disqualification, default, or when the time expires at the end of the third period, the end of the two 30 second tie breakers, or the ultimate tiebreaker and a winner has been determined the shoe violation will be disregarded.

Example 1: In the third period with the score tied 6 to 6 (B) already has been penalized with a 2 point stalling call and is in a scramble with (A) attempting a takedown. If (B's) shoe comes off during the scramble and the takedown is successful and the time expires before the significant action has concluded the score would become (B) 8 (A) 6 and the shoe violation disregarded.

In the above scenario after the takedown by (B) if the clock did not expire, there was no longer significant action or the referee stopped the match for any other reason, the takedown would be awarded making the score (B) 8, (A) 6 and now that the clock is off the shoe violation would be enforced, which would be the 5th stalling violation on (B) and (B) would be disqualified in accordance with the penalty chart. (1w-1s-1s-2s-disqualification)

Example 2: In a one-minute sudden victory period while in a scramble for a takedown (B) who has a warning for stalling has a shoe come untied but because of significant action the match is not stopped and (B) completes the takedown.

Ruling: Because the 1 minute is sudden victory the 2-point takedown would be awarded and the shoe violation would be disregarded, making (B) the winner.

If at any time during the sudden victory period there was no longer significant action or the match was stopped for any reason including the end of the period, the one-point stalling penalty against (B) would be awarded and (A) would be the winner.

The original intent of this rule was to eliminate wrestlers delaying the match by having to re-tie or replace a shoe and to prevent them from gaining an undeserved rest period.

The violation does not occur when the laces become undone or the shoe becomes displaced. It occurs when the match is being delayed to re-tie or replace the shoe. Even if the interruption is brief, the penalty will be assessed.