

To: OHSAA Wrestling School ADs and Head Coaches

Fr: Tyler Brooks, Director of Officiating & Sport Management

Re: November Wrestling Update – Part 2

1 – Protocol for New “HNC Rule”

We have created a protocol document to address the questions that have arisen from the change to NFHS Rule 8-2-4 regarding head, neck and cervical column injuries (HNC). Please review this document with your school’s athletic trainer as well as any other medical personnel that will be providing health-care coverage during your regular season events:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Officiating/dod/Wrestling/2019-20/HNCProtocol.pdf>

2 – Bulletin Addressing Shoes

Please review this bulletin from wrestling Director of Officiating Development Toby Dunlap to all wrestling officials regarding the change to NFHS Rule 4-1-3:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Officiating/dod/Wrestling/2019-20/OfficiatingBulletin11072019.pdf>

3 – Reviewing Changes to Hair and Hair Control Items

To conform to the hair rule (Rule 4-2-1) the hair cannot: 1) extend below an ordinary shirt collar (polo shirt-type collar) in the back; 2) extend below the bottom of the ear lobes on the sides, and 3) extend below the eyebrows in the front.

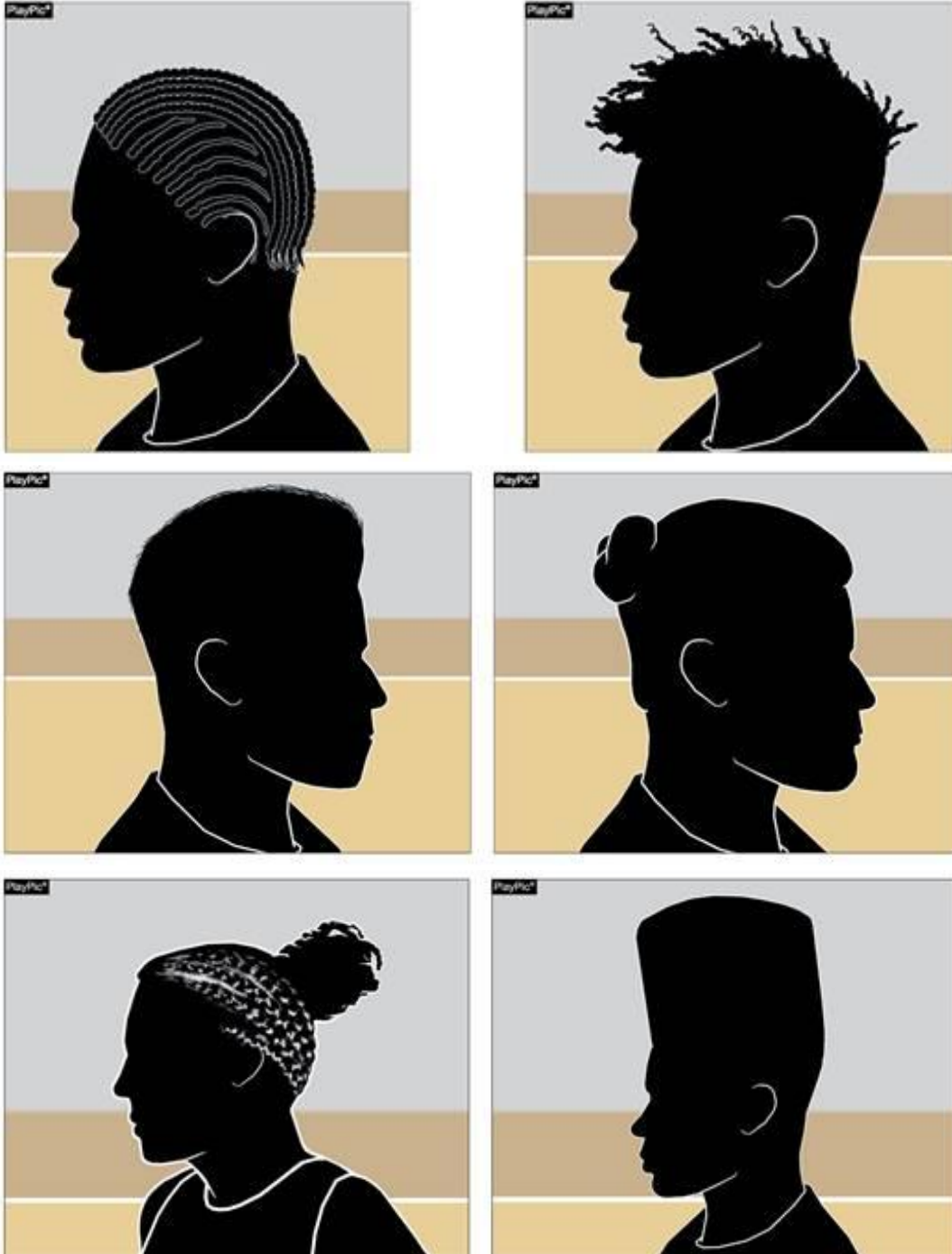
If the hair is longer than allowed by the foregoing hair rule, a wrestler has a couple of options: 1) secure the hair underneath a legal hair cover so that the hair rule is complied with (as in the past); or 2) secure the hair to comply with the hair rule by employing legal hair control devices so that hair does not come out readily (e.g., rubber bands, etc.). Any hair securing means that is abrasive or hard (clips, pins, beads, barrettes, etc.) are not permitted and are illegal.

As set forth above, hair extending below a normal shirt collar in the back and/or below the bottom of the earlobes on the side does not conform to the rule and must either be contained by a legal hair cover or secured by a legal hair control device such that the hair conforms to the rule.



In PlayPic A above, the ponytail extends below a normal shirt collar and is illegal. As shown in PlayPic B, the ponytail is secured by a legal securing means in a bun to comply with the hair rule (the hair style no longer extends below a normal shirt collar) and is legal.

In addition, braids and cornrows are legal as long as the style meets the requirements of the hair rule. The following illustrations exemplify legal hair styles.



These styles are legal because they do not extend: 1) below an ordinary shirt collar in the back; 2) below the bottom of the ear lobes on the sides, and 3) below the eyebrows in the front.

If a wrestler's hair that extends below the eyebrows is combed back over the top of the head during skin check and does not extend past eyebrows or shoulders (Note: shirt collar in the back and earlobes on the sides), is he/she good to wrestle without a hair cover? Initially, the described hair style would comply with the rule. However, the style is not secured. During the course of wrestling the hair will inevitably come "undone" so as to not comply with the rule. The first time this occurs the referee will permit the wrestler to "fix" the hair to conform to the rule. On the second occurrence, the wrestler will be permitted to "fix" the hair but will be warned that an injury timeout will be implemented on all subsequent "hair fix occurrences." Burning injury timeouts for non-injury events may have dire consequences for the wrestler. On the second injury timeout, the opponent has the choice of position, and on the third injury timeout the match is defaulted. The advice is to insist that wrestlers use a hair cover or a legal hair control device to secure the hair to conform to the rule.

As athletic administrators, coaches and officials, let's work together to resolve these issues and comply with the hair and hair control regulations **PRIOR TO THE MATCH** to so that our student-athletes have the opportunity to gain the benefits of participation in interscholastic wrestling!



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