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Restraining Control to Establish a Takedown

There is some confusion about what constitutes restraining control relative to edge of mat takedowns. Some officials are awarding a takedown if the ankles are wrapped-up, while others are requiring the knees (or above) to be wrapped-up before awarding a takedown.

We all need to be on the same page and call this consistently.

Rule 5-25-3 reads: “In awarding a takedown at the edge of the mat, control must be established while a total of two supporting points of either wrestler are inbounds. The total of two supporting points could be two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler that are inbounds or while at least the feet of the scoring contestant finish down on the mat inbounds” (underlining added).

The key to establishing control over an opponent is demonstrating the ability to restrain the opponent. Merely wrapping the arms around both ankles (Illustration A, Frame 1) is not considered restraining control as the defending wrestler can kick-out or hip-heist and throw-in a deep whizzer (Illustration B, Frames 2 & 3). However, restraining control can be established by wrapping the arms around both knees or above both knees (Illustration B, Frame 1).

In Illustration A, Frame 2, wrestling may continue since two supporting points (both knees of the attacking wrestler) are inside the boundary line. Consequently, the attacking wrestler can work to secure a takedown. In Illustration A, Frame 2 and Illustration B, Frame 2, if the attacking wrestler can elevate both legs a takedown may be awarded.

What is Inbounds/Out of Bounds?

Over the years the wrestling area has been incrementally expanded by redefining the placement of supporting points relative to the boundary line. Rule 5-15-1 states in-part: “Contestants are considered to be inbounds if a total of two supporting points of either wrestler are inside or on the boundary lines...” (underlining added).

If any portion of a supporting point is on the boundary line even though a portion of the same supporting point is outside of the boundary line, that supporting point is inbounds. Illustration C, Frames 1 & 2 show inbounds situations and Illustration C, Frame 3 shows an out of bounds situation.

Many thanks to Steve Long for his artistry in preparing these illustrations.

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