THE OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
APPROVED WRESTLING OFFICIATING MECHANICS &
PROCEDURES MANUAL

2020-2021 SEASON

Ninth edition
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“The Green Book”

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ATTENTION

“This mechanics and procedures manual are accepted as standard practice for Ohio high school and junior high school levels.

This mechanics manual is written to provide every Ohio scholastic wrestling referee consistent explanations of the why’s and how’s to institute proper procedures and mechanics while officiating. Our scholastic referees work with young junior high and high school men and women who range in age from about 13 to about 18 years. These young student athletes are at various stages in terms of their physical and psychological development. These attributes play a pivotal role in how our scholastic wrestling officials evaluate every wrestling match.

For a variety of safety reasons, the Ohio High School Athletic Association through their State Rule Interpreters and the Director of Officiating Development adhere to strict mechanics and accepted procedures that all Ohio wrestling referees must follow.

Ohio scholastic wrestling referees are a team. All of us need to be part of the same team. Consistency involves every aspect of the sport and begins with the first weekend of the season.

DO IT RIGHT FROM YOUR FIRST MATCH TO YOUR LAST MATCH OF THE SEASON

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The OHSAA is grateful to the NFHS for the courtesy of allowing the use of the illustrations set forth on pages 44 to 50 of this manual.
The ninth edition of the MECHANICS & PROCEDURE MANUAL is dedicated to all our Wrestling Officials who work hard on behalf of the Ohio scholastic wrestling community. Contact the OHSAA Office @ 614.267.2502 or Toby Dunlap @ 440-487-6308 on questions relating to this manual.
OHIO WRESTLING OFFICIALS MECHANICS, POSITIONING & PROCEDURES
MANUAL

“THE GREEN BOOK”

REFEREE’S UNIFORM

- Required Uniform:
  - The gray pin stripe shirt is completely mandatory.
  - The American flag on the left shoulder with a green OHSAA logo on the left breast area of the shirt.
  - Black full-length trousers, black socks, black officiating shoes and black belt if necessary.
  - Emblems and patches are not permitted on the officiating uniform. Exception: An American flag patch/emblem is optional and, if worn, shall be on the left sleeve approximately two inches below the shoulder with the star field facing to the front.
  - Jewelry shall not be worn except for a wedding band and/or a medical alert necklace or bracelet. A religious medallion which is not visible is permitted. A watch/timing device is permitted only when an official has a duty for timing during the contest and shall be worn under the wrist band.
  - A black warm-up jacket with OWOA logo is required for all varsity officials.
  - Red & green wrist bands, colored flip disc, recommend a black plastic whistle with a black lanyard.
  - The whistle must be loud enough to be heard at large multi-team events. A black plastic pea-less whistle is recommended for use. Every official should carry an extra whistle in his/her jacket.
  - It is imperative that all officials arrive on site appropriately dressed, well-groomed with facial hair neatly trimmed.

FOUR IMPORTANT ISSUES

- Please pay attention to the following:
  - Concussion protocol (ORC 3313.539 and ORC3314.03) - Concussion protocol certificate must be renewed every third year.
  - Contagious skin conditions; Dermatologist’s note.
  - Potentially dangerous calls - an athlete’s safety is paramount.
  - Ohio allows middle school to consist of 7th & 8th grade athletes; 6th graders may not compete.

PRE-MEET DUTIES

- Appear at event site dressed appropriately.
  - The referee has jurisdiction over the event once he/she arrives at the site.
  - Shirt and tie are nice if coming directly from the workplace,
  - Raggedy jeans with holes and T-shirt do not set the correct tone.
- Upon arrival immediately find the Athletic Director/Event Manager/Wrestling Coach.
  - First introduce yourself. Example: “Good evening, I’m the wrestling referee assigned to tonight’s match. Could you please direct me to the locker room to find the Wrestling Coach?
  - The referee should arrive a minimum of one hour prior to the start of the match. You may want to appear at the host school a little earlier, if involved w/weight-ins to give yourself enough time to find the locker facility and get into uniform.
Being properly groomed and dressed, with warm-up jacket on sends the appropriate message that you are a professional and you take your responsibility seriously.

The referee’s responsibilities begin by conducting the random draw to establish weight class order for dual meet events.

It is appropriate for the official ask the visiting coach to make the random draw selection.

The random draw may also be used to establish the first weight class to begin the weigh-in.

- The wrestling referee needs four pieces of equipment; black lanyard & whistle, red & green wristbands, a random draw kit and a colored flip disc. It is also advisable to carry a spare whistle in your warm-up jacket pocket.

- The referee has full authority in overseeing the wrestling match. Every referee must read/study the National Federation Rule Book, the Case Manual and Green Book on a regular basis. Every referee should be comfortable applying the rules based on criteria to support each call.

- Use good judgment and apply sound common sense when necessary. Treat those you meet with respect, dignity and in a well-mannered tone of voice from the moment you enter the building. Act and conduct yourself the way you would like to be treated. Be confident from the beginning, and proud of the job you did as you drive away.

WEIGH-INS & GROOMING CHECK
(Copy of Skin Form is in the Back of this Manual)

- By NFHS rule and Ohio regulation every wrestler must make scratch weight each time he/she drops into a next lower weight class. No extra pounds may be utilized to make scratch, original scratch weight.

- May weigh in with low ankle socks & require all participants to present any special equipment at the weigh-in.

- During the pre-meet process it is important to ask the coaches several questions.
  - Ask if there are any valid physician’s notes for any athletes who have a suspected skin condition.
  - A physician’s note must be on the NFHS approved skin form and be present in the weigh-in room when it is requested.
  - Coach may not take wrestler to the local ER then return with a note.
  - The coach is responsible to check athletes regularly.
  - The referee is the last line of defense to protect from the spread of any contagious skin condition.
  - Skin forms must be the original form signed by a physician
    - A Xerox copy is not acceptable. The form must be signed by a physician (MD or DO). Forms may be signed by a PA or CNP who is associated with an OHSAA approved Short Notice Dermatologist Practice (see OHSAA Wrestling page for approved practices).
    - Do not accept a note on an Rx pad, or letter from a physician.
    - Do not accept a picture copy on a tablet, iPad, etc.
    - The approved NFHS skin form must be properly completed.
    - The note is unacceptable if:
      - the suspected condition appears on places other than those marked on the body pictogram;
      - the suspected condition is still moist, oozing or scabbed;
      - the official has the authority to disqualify the athlete from competition if he/she is uncomfortable with the suspected skin condition.
  - The skin form is valid 10-days from the date of exam. Forms dated outside of this 10-day window are not acceptable.
  - Skin forms diagnosing non-contagious skin conditions (e.g., birthmarks, eczema, psoriasis, etc.) are valid for the entire season.
• If an MD or DO is the designated on-site physician, his/her decision is final over a form. There shall be no argument or disagreement with the on-site designated physician.
  o If an MD or DO stipulates the athlete may wrestle if it is covered, ask “is the condition contagious?”
    o NFHS does not allow a contagious skin condition to be covered to wrestle.
    o If the physician says it may still be contagious, then the wrestler must be disqualified.
• Read the doctor’s note carefully and check the dates he/she has stipulated the wrestler may return to competition, along with the body pictogram.
• Many coaches carry their notes to every match, not knowing the referee, and how each may perceive the skin issue. The physician’s note must be in the weigh-in room.

The Ohio High School Athletic Association as recommended by its Joint Advisory Committee on Sports Medicine has adopted the policy to require that it be a physician, defined as a medical doctor (MD) or doctor of osteopathy (DO) who is authorized to clear a wrestler for continued participation in this sport. In addition, Certified Nurse Practitioners (CNP) or Physician’s Assistants (PA) who work in an OHSAA approved Short Notice Dermatologist Practice as identified on the list found on the link below are eligible to sign this form and return the student to participation.

www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Sports/Wrestling/ApprovedShortNoticeDermatologistPractices.pdf

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FROM OHSAA:
  o Special needs may require the OHSAA to issue an accommodations letter to allow special accommodations for some athletes to participate. The coach must present the official with the accommodations letter prior to weigh-in.
  o Special accommodations may include but not limited to the following: youth ankle monitor, medical devices, medical monitors, prosthetic appliances, as well as accommodations for blind, deaf and transgender wrestlers.
  o The official simply needs to follow the specific directions set forth in the accommodations letter.
  o Any special accommodations letter is valid only for the sport season in session.

• Begin the inspection of contestants,
  o Remember the inspection is to make sure the wrestlers comply with a set of grooming, health and safety standards promulgated by the NFHS/OHSAA.
  o These health standards are to ensure that contestants, referees, tappers, etc. all have a safe environment in which to participate.
  o Inspect the athletes before the coach/trainer does any taping.
  o Suggested order of inspection:
    A. Check fingernails,
    B. Check hair (there is no longer a hair length rule)
      ▪ Mustache
      ▪ Beard
      ▪ Facial stubble
      ▪ Shaved heads (abrasiveness) – may wear an approved hair covering in lieu of shaving the scalp.
    C. Continue the skin inspection by thoroughly scanning down the length of the body.
      ▪ Get in the same rhythm or pattern as you move through the line-up.
      ▪ Look around the front and side of the face & forehead,
      ▪ Check under the chin to look in the back of neck region & hair line,
    D. Ask the wrestle to raise the arms to examine the sides, under the armpits, and the underside of the arms.
E. With the front inspection complete, ask the contestant to spin around to begin the rear side inspection. Start at the top, begin with the hair line to look for possible skin conditions on the scalp.
F. Continue the skin inspection by looking carefully around the back of the neck, across the shoulders through the lower back, and complete the inspection with a close look at the back of the knees.

- When you find any part of the contestant inspection process that does not satisfactorily meet with your approval, tell the wrestler that he/she cannot compete until the issue is remedied.
- It is wise to have an extra person recording the actual weights place a capital M(mustache), N(nails), S(shave), or T(trim hair) next to the name/weight class of a wrestler who does not meet the grooming inspection.

**NOTE:** With the 2020-2021 Rules changes, hair length is no longer restricted. However, a wrestler may choose to wear an approved hair cover or approved hair control devices. As in past practice, the hair cover must be attached to the head gear and shall not be abrasive. A legal hair control device must be made of a material that is soft and flexible. The referee must approve all hair covers and hair control devices prior to competition (at weigh-ins). The restrictions on facial hair have not changed. A contestant may compete with facial hair if a face mask designed for wrestling (must completely cover the facial hair) is worn. A neatly trimmed mustache conforming to Rule 4-2-1 is allowable.

- When a contestant has a suspected skin condition, it is important to address the situation without hesitation, and in a professional manner. Some coaches and the wrestlers will begin to make a variety of statements dismissing the skin problem. “Oh, that’s a mat burn”, “It’s a pimple that I just squeezed”, “That wasn’t there yesterday”, “The referee (last weekend) didn’t say anything about it”, and the list continues. Pointers to handle possible contagious skin situations are as follows:
  - Don’t make statements suggesting what you think the skin condition is - **You are not a physician.**
  - You are the referee, and part of the referee’s responsibility is to identify a suspected contagious skin problem for the safety of all who compete on the mat.
  - It is the coach’s responsibility to look out for the safety of his wrestlers. If a referee suspects that a contagious skin condition is present and a coach cannot present proof that his/her wrestler is free of any contagious skin fungus, bacteria, virus, staph infection, etc., the referee must tell the coach and wrestler that he/she will not be allowed to compete in tonight’s match.
  - All referees should take the necessary time to familiarize themselves with the characteristics of all skin problems. Today’s wrestling referee should know the signs and symptoms of ringworm, impetigo, shingles, scabies, herpes, MRSA and staph.
  - Without an on-site physician, the match referee has the jurisdiction and the authority not to accept a NFHS skin form if it is not properly completed, if it is a copy, written in a letter form, written on a Rx pad, new areas of concern not depicted on the body pictogram on the NFHS skin form, and/or the existing condition appears unsafe for competition.
  - If a physician is present and states a wrestler may compete if a specific skin condition is covered, the official must ask: **“Doctor, in your opinion may this condition still be contagious?”** If his answer is **YES, the official must inform the doctor that NFHS rule does permit a wrestler to compete merely because the condition is covered. That wrestler cannot compete and must be disqualified.**
  - All contestants must weigh-in wearing a legal uniform with appropriate undergarment(s) that completely covers the groin and buttocks. Additionally, female contestants must wear a sports bra or a form-fitted compression undergarment that completely covers the breasts. Low-cut socks may be worn but may not be taken off (once on the scale) as a means of making weight.
  - All contestants must wear an appropriate undergarment(s) during competition. For the young women this also includes a sports bra and/or a form-fitted compression undergarment that completely covers the breasts based on NFHS rule.
Upon completion of the weigh-ins, the referee should sign the weigh-in sheet for verification, so all coaches get a copy for their records to verify certification compliance.

NOTE: There is a growing number of female wrestlers competing with wrestling programs at all levels. The same rules apply to all wrestlers regardless of gender. New NFHS Rule 4-5-7 requires all wrestlers to weigh-in wearing a legal uniform with suitable undergarments. This modification simplifies the weigh-in process by allowing all the competitors (male and female) in the same area to expedite the weigh-in process. The rule modification eliminates the necessity to have an adult female present for separate weigh-ins, skin and grooming checks.

**Special Equipment, Braces:** Safety for the opponent becomes the primary concern.

The rules and regulations with respect to all braces are the same. Itemized below is a list of guidelines and restrictions for evaluating the legality of special equipment including braces. It is important to remember the regulations are as important for the wrestler wearing the brace as much as they are for the opponent. All braces fall under the special equipment rules (4-3-1 thru 6). Often a neoprene sleeve is enough to help knee issue stay snug and keep the knees warm though competition. A neoprene sleeve without a hole in the front (for safety with fingers sliding in) usually will suffice.

For braces that have hinges, carbon fiber parts and metal rods along the sides:

- The wrestler with the brace must have full and complete range of motion with the device.
- The device must be covered and padded with a minimum of one-half inch of resilient foam to return to protection thickness.
- Velcro straps must be covered to prevent fingers from getting caught. A long, tight-fitting neoprene sleeve which covers the complete length of the brace is the best protection for the wearer and the opponent. Any sleeve must be snug fitting on the body, and not be loose or rotate around the limb. The opponent’s grasp must not slip or slide when holding the sleeve.
- The device and added protection sleeve may not be so large and cumbersome so as to impede the opponent from competing fairly. He/she must not be put at a disadvantage.
- Knee devices may not restrict the wrestler from getting set in the bottom position. That is, the device must allow the knees to be parallel to the rear starting line (again not overly cumbersome).
- The match official at each event has the final say as to the legality of all special equipment. All special equipment devices must be shown to the official at the weigh-in.

**Full length leg/arm sleeves are not permitted; they hinder the opponent.** Knee and elbow pads are legal if the containment sleeve extends from approximately mid-thigh to approximately mid-calf or from approximately mid-upper arm to approximately mid-forearm, respectively. As a guideline, the knee/elbow pads may extend approximately 4” above the knee/elbow to approximately 4” below the knee/elbow. The knee/elbow pad itself must be integral (contained within) with the sleeve. The knee/elbow pad may not be a separate “slide over” or “slide under” from the sleeve. **Full length arm and leg sleeves are illegal.**

**INSPECT THE WRESTLING AREA**

- When weigh-ins conclude the meet referee should walk the wrestling mat and inspect the mat and markings.
- Also inspect distance/proximity and relationship to the team benches, the scorer’s table and the wrestling area.
- Make sure there is five (5) feet of fringe protection mat around the competition area.
- While on the floor, remember to review with the timer and the home and visiting team score keepers their duties as well as any necessary directions.
  - Important not to let anyone interfere with the team at the table. They must not be distracted.
Ask all table workers to put their electronic devices away. This includes, but is not limited to the following: cell phones, tablets, iPads, iPods, smart phones, laptop computers, etc. Support the team at the table (emphasize teamwork) - they can make or break the continuity of the match.

Note: Not only should the table workers keep electronic devises put away, that also goes for the officials. It looks inappropriate for a sports official sitting at the table playing cell phone games while all around him/her a scholastic tournament is being contested. The NFHS and OHSAA expect all to pay 100% attention to the task of being an official at the event.

PRE-MATCH LOCKER ROOM VISIT/TALK

- This needs to be 3-5 minutes process. You get one chance at a first impression. Do not give a dissertation (short & sweet).
- This is the final time and place to impress upon the teams with that you are a professional and in-charge of the match.
- After inspecting the wrestling area, and talking with the team at the table, it is important to visit each team in the locker room to set down a few ground rules. This begins by asking the coach if his team is properly equipped and ready to wrestle. When the coach replies “yes”, he/she is acknowledging that he/she is accountable and that his team is legal and ready to compete, for example.
  1. His wrestlers are all wearing a legal under garment.
  2. Any taping is legal and will allow normal legal holds & full range of motion.
  3. Uniforms and shoes are legal, shoelaces are properly secured with all eyelets laced (e.g., secured in a zipper pouch, a Velcro flap, double knotted, taped around the ankle, or individually taped).
  4. There is no pass on the first offense for laces not being secured.
  5. Headgear (may cross straps w/ ear holes open) and kneepads are legal (no loose knee pads)
  6. No tape on head gear or shoes (except to secure shoelaces).
- The pre-match instructions to the wrestlers/coaches prior to the start of the match may include, but is not limited to the following;
  - Remind the wrestlers they are to wrestle aggressively for six minutes, and work in the center circle.
  - Remind all contestants of three basic commands “Center - Action - Contact”
  - Ask if there are any questions and wish the team good luck tonight.
  - We make the end of the season easier for each other if we take the extra time at the beginning of the season to do-it-right!
  - There are always a few new rules changes that occur for the season. The pre-meet visit is a good forum to clear-up questions on new rules implementations.

CAPTAINS/COIN TOSS

- In the center of the mat, meet with the team captains.
- Remind them they are to assist the coach with sportsmanship from the team bench.
- The proper procedure is to ask a visiting captain to call the color of the disc (NFHS 1978-79 “call the coin”).
- Winner of the disc toss has choice of even or odd matches, with the first match determined by the random draw. **Always allow the disc to hit the wrestling mat**.
- Wish the captains Good Luck and start the match.
Reporting to the Mat:
- Make sure that the correct wrestlers have reported for check-in at the scorer’s table.
- Double check to ensure that the proper wrestlers and weight class have reported directly to the center of the mat.
- Make sure that the wrestlers are legally equipped, properly groomed and ready to wrestle.
- Ensure that both wrestlers extend their right hands for a proper pre- and post-match handshake.

Dual Meet Reporting for Competition:
- Based on the disc toss and captains even/odd selection, teams alternate sending their competitor to check-in at the scorer’s table first.
- First to check-in may be critical to the outcome of the dual meet.
  - If the wrong wrestler reports first, he/she may be withdrawn prior to stepping in the 28’ circle.
  - Once a correct wrestler has reported in proper order, if he/she is withdrawn it shall be a forfeit, and that wrestler is eliminated from further competition.
- When the correct wrestler checks-in with the scorer, the opponent may continue to the mat or be withdrawn and replaced with another opponent.
- If either wrestler avoids the check-in at the table and proceeds directly into the 28’ competition circle, he/she has presented himself/herself as the next competitor and may not be withdrawn. The only way the wrestler may be withdrawn is reporting out of sequence. Example: the 160-weight class is next to check-in, inadvertently a 170-weight class wrestler appears to wrestle. This out of weight class sequence wrestler must be withdrawn.

**REFEREE MECHANICS IN NEUTRAL SITUATIONS**

Wrestler’s Position in Neutral Start:
- Both wrestlers must place one foot on their respective starting line and the other foot on or behind the line or the line extended.
- Hands and/or foreheads cannot touch the opponent.
- Wrestlers must be standing on two points, no other body parts touching the mat in front of lead foot.
- Both wrestlers must be stationary until the whistle sounds (no rolling starts).

Start of the Match:
- Make sure wrestlers are in proper position and stationery.
- The referee should step in between the wrestlers with an outstretched arm between the red and green starting lines. Make sure this position does not interfere with the wrestlers, either their view each other or by touching the athletes. The referee should be stationary and facing the scorer’s table.
  - Make eye contact with the timekeeper.
  - Sound your whistle and simultaneously make a visual hand/arm motion to start the match.
- Move out quickly and back your way towards outer boundary line.
- Glance up momentarily to ensure that the clock has properly started.
- Always keep both wrestlers in your line of sight as you back out.
- The whistle should remain in the official’s mouth.

Neutral Standing Position:
- Situate yourself so that you are far enough away from the wrestling to observe the action and not interfere with sudden changes in position.
- Be close enough to immediately reposition yourself to stop potentially dangerous and illegal maneuvers.
• Six to nine (6-9) feet is suggested, find your comfortable zone. A wider range allows greater perspective.
• Know how various tookedowns finish so you know where to position yourself to stay out of the way and to observe control as it is established.
• Always situate yourself to be centered and able to look between both wrestlers as they face each other.
  o Anticipate position.
  o Do not chase the action; stop and let the action come back to you.
  o Sometimes moving counter to the wrestlers’ rotation is more effective.
  o Square yourself to the action.
• Change levels and be mobile in order to be in proper position to observe (bend knees – drop hips).
• It is important to loudly verbalize the award of takedown points to afford the opportunity to the scoring wrestler to release the locked hands without penalty.
• Award points in a confident manner using approved hand signals with eye contact maintained strictly on the athletes. Trust the table team to do their job correctly - focus on the wrestlers.

Boundary Line:
• On or near the boundary line, the referee should be positioned to observe the location of the supporting points of each wrestler. Straddling the line is one position and getting perpendicular to the wrestlers also affords the referee a greater opportunity to catch on the O-B line; safety first.
• Call out-of-bounds by the letter of the rule and be consistent from call to call.
  o Use proper hand mechanics w/ simultaneous whistle.
• Always keep safety in mind.
  o Be ready to reposition yourself to protect wrestlers heading out-of-bounds.
  o May have to sound a pre-mature whistle when safety is a concern.
• When possible, on feet-in takedowns award the earned points before sounding your whistle.
  o Award points in the proper sequence as they occurred.
• Be patient, do not overly anticipate an out-of-bounds situation occurring. Control your whistle until you are sure a situation finishes out-of-bounds.
  o Hip-Toss and throws, especially to the back w/ shoulder(s)/scapulae are in near fall criteria and are the only body part(s) in-bounds.
• The referee may verbally request that both wrestlers “work center” (do not coach with comments).
• If no action is occurring at the boundary line, the official may restart the wrestlers in neutral position.
• Where/when possible, points should be awarded prior to blowing the whistle.

Attacking Wrestler Down on the Mat Scrambling for a Score:
• Position yourself square (perpendicular) to the action:
  o Defensive wrestler is sitting on mat with attacking wrestler’s arms locked around both thighs (crotch-lock, waist-lock, double under hook).
  o When control is gained verbalize the awarded points.
  o Likewise, verbalize no control w/proper mechanic if scramble remains neutral.
  o Anticipate the action to stay ahead of it.
  o You may have to circle in the opposite direction to catch-up to the action.

Assistant Referee (AR):
• First on & last off of the mat, be active, and assist with the same latitude of mobility as the referee.
• Match referee always passes on inside path when crossing, AR no closer than the referee.
• Mirror the referee w/the freedom to be completely mobile around mat. (Approximately 180⁰ opposite).
• AR has freedom to move to seek his/her best position to complement the head official making calls (HO).
• AR should move and be in position to be the extra pair of eyes when and where they are needed.
• Lower level to look underneath in tie-up and head lock situations.
• **Movement** and **communication** should be constant and are the keys for success.
• The AR should not yell across the mat, rather move to circle behind the HO and make your statement
• If the AR questions a situation, he/she should conference at the appropriate time.
  o Conference away from coaches.
• Bring infractions to the referee's immediate attention. Cover the front side (when action rotates towards you) and wait for the referee to catch up to the action before rotating 180°.
• Be responsible for the time. Make sure the clock starts and stops on the referee’s whistle.
• Police the designated coaches’ area.
• Assist the referee with injury, recovery and blood time protocol (discuss responsibilities before the match).
• On boundary situations, be in position to ensure the safety of the wrestlers going out-of-bounds.
• The AR must help “catch”/**protect the wrestlers from injury; Going into the table, a wall/stage, etc.**
• Be immediately available to give your opinion on a situation when asked by the referee.
• Never be afraid to voice an opinion to the HO; the AR may agree, disagree or have no opinion.
• Support the referee when a close but correct call is made.
• Never communicate with a coach. Direct the coach to the HO.
• Be in position to watch the clock w/ wrestlers in your field of vision during the last 10 seconds of the period.
• **Anticipation is essential for the AR.**

**MECHANICS OF HAND SIGNALS**

The following hand signals are the only approved hand mechanics that should be used during the referee executing his/her job on the mat. Officers of each local association must review these mechanics during your local association meetings. **Only authorized approved mechanic signals must be utilized.** The NFHS approved signals are the means in which the referee communicates with contestants, coaches, table workers and spectators

![STARTING MATCH](image)
![STOPPING THE MATCH](image)
![TIME-OUT](image)
UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

WRESTLER IN CONTROL

AWARDING POINTS (L / R HAND)

STALLING (L / R HAND)

CAUTION (L / R HAND)

COACH MISCONDUCT

DEFAULT-TECH FALL-DQ

DEFER CHOICE
Note: Proper mechanics to award the escape point is the following sequence: one-hand one-point in the air, followed with the signal for the neutral position being earned.

**REFEREE MECHANICS IN MAT WRESTLING SITUATIONS**

**Change the Choice of Position:**
- After choice is offered to the correct wrestler, and the bottom wrestler is instructed to get set, it is possible the wrestler may change his/her mind for a different choice.
- Once the bottom wrestler is set, it is a warning for stalling to change choice.

**Start of the Referee’s Position:**
- First and foremost, the hand movement should be simple and simultaneous with the whistle.
- As with other hand signals, the hand motion is also for the table, coaches, and fans.
- Hit the whistle hard and loud!
- If your matches have an inordinate number of false starts, it is possible that the official is causing the problem.
- Be stationary & vary whistle.

**Setting in the Referee’s Position** (12 o’clock references the heads of wrestlers):
- The referee should be at an angle (right or left of center) to the wrestlers. If the wrestlers are at 12 o’clock, the referee should be at 10 or 2 o’clock. He/she should typically be opposite the "near side", or as we say on the open side of the wrestlers.
- The referee should stand (may lower level to view the palm) and move several steps to the open side of the wrestlers.
  - This gives the referee the ability to see the placement of the offensive wrestler’s head on the mid-line, the palm on the navel, the palm on the elbow, and the position of the back foot (which cannot break the plane of the bottom wrestler’s feet).
  - Do not be out on the edge of the circle - that is too far away! (8-10 feet is proper)
- To improve the view of the near side back foot, move sides to make sure that the placement is legal.
- The defensive wrestler gets in position and “set” first, next the referee will direct the offensive wrestler to "cover", once legal and stationary start the match with a simultaneous hand signal and whistle.
- Remember a brief pause before the referee gives a simultaneous hand signal and whistle start.
  - Do not allow the top wrestler to rock the bottom wrestler off his base - caution
• The referee should be stationary and ever vigilant to observe rolling and false starts.

Working with an Assistant:
• The referee will want the assistant positioned to observe the palm on naval, knee on hip and back feet.
• If the mat referee is at 2 o’clock, the assistant will be at 8 o’clock (or 4 o’clock & 10 o’clock).
• Have view of clock for both starts and stops.

Movement as Wrestling Continues:
• After the start and throughout the mat wrestling, the official wants to be primarily at the head & shoulders of the wrestlers, suggested six to nine feet from the wrestlers.
• As the offensive wrestler breaks his opponent down and applies bars, wings, power halves or comes closer to near falls, the referee may move closer to the action to stop potentially dangerous holds and not miss near falls.
• Vary distance from wrestlers depending on situation. The referee should be in a position to block or stop potentially dangerous situations BEFORE they become illegal.

When the defensive man comes to his feet:
• As the defensive wrestler makes it to his/her feet, the referee should come to the head /shoulders of the wrestlers once again.
• The referee should pay particular attention to hand control and fingers.
  o The top man has the responsibility to attempt to return defensive wrestler to the mat. The top wrestler does not necessarily have to be successful in returning the bottom wrestler back to the mat, the key being an honest attempt to do so. Otherwise, if the top wrestler is content with hanging-on and not making an honest attempt to return the bottom wrestler to the mat, stalling shall be called.
  o If the offensive man is attempting to return his/her opponent to the mat, he/she is not stalling! The match is not stopped when making the stalling call in this situation (this call is made on the fly).
• In a rear standing position, the referee must anticipate the offensive man throwing his opponent 180 degrees (be ready to move to that position).
  o If an assistant is involved, he/she should be in position to observe that action.
  o If the defensive wrestler’s arm or arms are barred, locked to the side, or in any other way such that the defensive wrestler is unable to protect himself/herself when coming to the mat, the referee must stop the match as potentially dangerous and be in a position to catch or break the defensive wrestler’s fall. It helps on any lift, to use a command of "keep it legal".

On the boundary line:
• The referee will still be at the head/shoulder side of wrestlers, but focus will shift to supporting point(s) (shoulders, buttocks, knees, and feet, to determine in or out-of-bounds).
• Vary your position relative to the wrestlers based on the situation.
  o Referee should situate to the best position to see the most important action while protecting the wrestlers if they approach the out-of-bounds line.
  o The referee should visually scan the position of the wrestlers relative to the boundary line.
• When the wrestlers are facing the boundary line while on the mat or in the standing position, the referee should be positioned between the boundary line and the wrestlers when possible and urge them to the center using the “center” command.
• Make sure the command is loud and forceful.
  o While returning to the center of the mat from an out-of-bounds stoppage, the referee should walk behind the wrestlers (never in front) to observe sportsmanship or a lack thereof. Never turn your back to the wrestlers.
Based on the new 2018-19 out-of-bounds near fall criteria; the following will be Ohio’s protocol.

- Since the NFHS rule committee’s intent was to allow near fall scoring on the out-of-bounds line like that of scoring a takedown, an escape or a reversal, and
- Since wrestling can continue and a takedown scored with one wrestler standing in-bounds holding a single leg while the opponent is standing on one leg out-of-bounds, and
- If the attacking wrestler lifts his opponent with a double leg, then step out-of-bounds and the pair of wrestlers are both considered out-of-bounds ...
- Then Ohio’s interpretation of the out-of-bounds near fall will be the following;
  - If the out-of-bounds wrestler is in near fall, wrestling will continue when either both knees are in-bounds and may be on the mat or off the mat. The toes, heels may be the supporting points.
  - If one knee is in-bounds supporting his weight with the other knee off the mat and that toe is on mat.
  - Wrestling shall be stopped, and the wrestlers deemed to be out-of-bounds when the knees are lifted off the mat, and pass across the OB line.
  - Wrestlers are in-bounds when two supporting points of either wrestler are in-bounds or one supporting point of each is in-bounds (This is opposite of the past definition of OB).

Note: It is necessary to be consistent with scoring on the out-of-bounds line for takedowns, escapes and reversals and NF. We need to be consistent with supporting points of the offensive wrestler being inbounds or out-of-bounds. The above interpretation is consistent with scoring on the out-of-bounds line, makes common sense and follows the intent of the rule and the committee’s reasoning for the new near fall scoring rules out-of-bounds.

(See Illustrations on pages 47 to 48, courtesy of the NFHS)

The Assistant Referee (AR):

- The AR has only two signals; the “C” for caution/false start violations (Signal 15) or the interlocking hand violation signal (Signal 17).
- Before the meet or individual match, the referee should clearly identify his/her expectations for the AR.
- The AR must be aggressive enough to point out when he/she disagrees with the HO, but passive enough to know the call is the ultimate responsibility of the HO.
- The referee should always call the match as though he/she has no AR.
  - The referee should not confer with the AR before the call.
- Generally, a conference happens after a call, away from the coaches and wrestlers.
  - The conference is brief and to the point.
  - The match referee should receive the opinion of the AR then share his/her thoughts if necessary.
  - Be brief but thorough.
  - Your ultimate priority is to get it right, then follow procedure with respect to mechanics.
  - If a disagreement exists, the HO makes a final decision and the match moves forward.
- The AR should be opposite the referee unless the referee specifies otherwise.
- The AR should always be in position to identify illegal holds, technical violations, potentially dangerous situations, and scoring maneuvers that go away from the HO.
- The AR should notify the referee immediately of illegal or unsafe situation. It is up to the HO to stop the match should it become necessary.
- The AR is responsible for the timing and the clock.
  - The AR should have a direct line to see the clock start and stop on the whistle.
  - The AR should assist with any correction on the clock that is necessary.
- The AR may count down four, three, two, one - time! (Especially if no tapper is present).
- The AR must help “catch”/protect the wrestlers from injury; Going into the table, a wall/stage, etc.

Note: The AR should not traverse across the center of the mat to get back into the action. Anticipation is essential.
REFEREE MECHANICS IN NEAR FALL (NF) SITUATIONS

Directly from the FEET:
- Follow the flow of the action. When the back of the defensive wrestler is exposed, (work to be down on the mat) directly underneath the head of the wrestler on his back, this gives the best vantage position to view both shoulders/scapulae.
- Be in appropriate position ASAP, anticipate takedown directly to NF.
  - Maintain a silent count while getting down on the mat if the scapulae are in criteria.
  - Do not place or reach a hand under the scapulae or shoulders of the defensive wrestler.
- The referee may need to move off to one side or the other.
  - Look underneath, while also looking at action happening around the face, hands in the face, eyes, etc.

From the MAT:
- As action is progressing, start lowering your body, get in a ready position to see the NF coming.
  - The referee must anticipate wrestling skills and move into position.
- Once a NF criterion is met, give a clear precise, verbal and visual count, “thousand-one, thousand-two, thousand-three, thousand-four, thousand-five”. Bend your arm at the elbow, bring it into your chest and then swing out for the visual count signal.
- A verbal count is critical for both wrestlers, while visual signal is important for the coaches, fans and table personnel.
  - The advantage to this is your doing two things at once, this allows everyone around to see and understand what you are doing, and where you in the process.
  - This also slows down your count to a true five seconds.
  - It also allows you an out. If there is not a full swipe of the arm, tell the coach you didn’t have a full two seconds, therefore no points.
- The referee should be down on the mat when the NF happens.

Anticipating a Tilt:
- Ready yourself to be able to move to where the back will be exposed.
- Anticipate the tilt; position yourself at the head of the defensive wrestler ready to see the NF.
  - Start the count once the defensive wrestler is restrained in criteria.
- Once a five-count is attained, put your three fingers down on the mat (holding three points). The reason for this is the offensive wrestler may roll him/her back to his/her stomach, it’s the same hold. Once the offensive wrestler lets go of the arm and allows the defensive wrestler to base out, clear his/her arm, and can defend himself/herself, the referee can then award the points (it may be two points if you only got a two, three, or four count). Keep an eye on the offensive wrestler’s back, occasionally he/she may pull his/her opponent over the top of himself/herself, possibly pinning himself/herself.

DO NOT MAKE UP HAND SIGNALS.
- Never make a hand gesture with fingers and thumb showing how close the back is to the mat.
- Never make a hand signal with a hand straight up and down symbolize a 90-degree angle.
- Never wave a hand back and forth
- These are not approved NFHS hand signals and are a form of coaching.

Assistant Referee (AR) in Near Fall Situations:
- Once a near fall situation occurs the AR should remain standing, hopefully over the top of the action.
  - The job as the AR is to keep everything clean “up top”. 

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The head referee should be on the mat looking underneath the back of the defensive wrestler being pinned.

- The AR’s job is to observe the hands in the face.
  - In an emergency, he/she may remove the fingers from the eyes. Notify the HO.
  - Make sure the defensive wrestler isn’t doing anything illegal, the offensive wrestler isn’t doing anything illegal, or to see if the hold becomes illegal.
  - If it becomes illegal, the AR needs to notify the head referee, “it’s illegal”. The decision is predicated on if it became illegal by the bottom man doing something to make it illegal, or the top man made it illegal. Then the head referee will make the applicable call.

- The AR should be watching the clock:
  - First - to see if there is either two seconds or more on the clock.
  - Second - if five seconds or more is on the clock.
  - If not, the AR can help determine how many back points should be awarded.
  - This also helps with the “fall call” - If the referee had the fall before the clock was out.

- The AR counts down from “four, three, two, one”, then makes a crossing signal above his head with his arms (signal 3), this lets everyone know, time is out!
  - No other scoring can occur when time is out.
  - The AR should work opposite from the HO to see back side action.
  - As the wrestlers get in near fall criteria the AR needs to get closer to the action, working to give himself/herself the best view of the head and face area of the defensive wrestler, and also a view of the clock if that is possible.
  - When the defensive wrestler is violently tapping, the official may read this action as a non-verbal form of a scream in pain, acknowledge the possible injury and handle it as per normal injury stoppage procedure.

**COACH PRESENT TO START A MATCH**

Ohio protocol requires the presence of a coach (school board appointed) for all matches contested between student-athletes: **WE DO NOT WANT OUR OFFICIALS STARTING A WRESTLING MATCH WHERE A STUDENT-ATHLETE IS WITHOUT A COACH - A COACH MUST BE PRESENT.** There are several reasons for this policy.

- Safety! If a wrestler happens to get injured at the opening of the match a coach needs to be present to attend to the injury. Safety and the well-being of the student-athlete is paramount!
- We do not need to create a situation that spurs a potential legal situation. If a wrestler sustains a serious injury the coach’s presence may have prevented or mitigated the injury. We can alleviate and/or mitigate potential problems by ensuring that every wrestler has a coach in the corner.
- The necessity of a coach’s presence is especially important when junior high or first year wrestlers are involved - their coach provides confidence/assurance that they are not out on the mat alone.
- It is contradictory to require coaches to have licensure but then start a match without the coach present.
- We disrespect the student-athlete, school, coach and program when we start a match without a coach present.
- Common sense dictates not to let a young athlete go out on the mat alone. Think of your own son/daughter.
- This is a simple problem to solve. If a wrestler’s coach is on another mat, allow the next match to move up which should allow time for the absent coach to catch-up.
- After all it’s the Fair and Right Thing to Do!

**CONCUSSION PROTOCOL & PROCEDURES**
• The NFHS adopted a concussion rule with respect to safety and stoppage of the match until an Appropriate Health-Care Professional (AHCP) approves his/her safe return. For Concussion Resources click on the following link: https://ohsaa.org/concussionresources

• Ohio Law (ORC 3313.539 and ORC3314.03) stipulates the appropriate education necessary for all sports officials.

• This is for a suspected concussion or a head injury
  o NFHS RULE - “Any contestant who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the match and shall not return to competition until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.
  o NFHS RULE - “A designated, on-site appropriate health-care professional who determined a wrestler should not participate, shall not be overruled.”

• Ohio Law - (ORC 3313.539 and ORC3314.03) requires each sports official to take an approved concussion management course offered by one of the two organizations listed below, and provide the completion certificate if upon request. The law also stipulates:
  o a coach or referee to remove a student athlete exhibiting signs of a concussion and head injury from practice or competition.
  o prohibits a coach or referee from allowing a student athlete to return to practice or competition from which the athlete was removed, or to participate in any other practice or competition from which the coach or referee is responsible, until the athlete has been assessed and cleared by a physician or by any other licensed healthcare provider authorized by the school.
  o prohibits an athlete from returning to play on the same day as he/she was removed from practice or competition.

• All OHSAA licensed officials shall possess either a current Department of Education-issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or show evidence of completing an approved online concussion education course as stipulated in the section entitled Approved Online Concussion Education Courses. This course is valid for three years from the date of completion.
  o Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports On-Line Training Program: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html -
  o The Student-Athlete may not return to competition the same day.
  o The Student-Athlete may only return to practice and/or competition after being assessed by an AHCP with written approval from an AHCP.

• The OHSAA has provided the referee’s concussion report form on-line at OHSAA.org.

**INJURY, BLOOD OR RECOVERY TIME**

**INJURY TIME:**

• The wrestlers are limited to a maximum of two injury time outs totaling 90 seconds.
• The opponent is given choice of position when wrestling resumes after the second injury time out.
  o Giving the opponent choice of position upon the conclusion of the second injury time is a huge deterrent to any form of delaying the match.
  o The opportunity to change the choice of position will occur at any time during the match when the second injury time is taken.
• If a wrestler would require a third time out for any injury, he/she would automatically default the match to the opponent.
EXAMPLE: During the 30-second ride-out overtime period, and with only seven seconds left on the time clock, wrestler **A** uses his second injury time. Wrestler **B**, the defensive wrestler, will have his/her choice of either top or bottom when the match resumes. He/she may elect the top position to finish the :30 second period to win the ride-out period and the match. Remember; at the conclusion of the :30 second period the offensive wrestler is declared the winner and receives one point for the ride-out.

**BLOOD TIME:**
- Blood time has a total accumulative time of five (5) minutes, with as many stoppages necessary.
- The blood clock starts once the referee sees blood from either wrestler in any position, and at any time.
  - The referee signals blood time by touching his/her nose with the appropriate colored arm band.
- Because of the seriousness of blood related problems, the sight of blood takes precedence over all else.
- The new rules regarding near fall situations reward the offensive wrestler if the defensive wrestler starts to bleed or scream.
- The blood clock is **stopped** once the bleeding is **stopped**.
  - The referee should signal the table to stop blood time and record it on the score sheet
  - The referee should then notify both coaches of the amount used.
- Any necessary cleaning of blood from the mat, wrestlers and/or uniforms is time taken by the official and shall not be used from the individual’s five-minute allotment.
- One important point of emphasis to note, an injury time clock cannot be started if the five-minute blood clock is completely taken. Once a wrestler has taken a total elapsed time of five-minutes, and would require further time to stop any bleeding, the match is stopped, and the opponent declared the winner by default ... Although the two-minute recovery clock can be started if the bleeding was caused by an illegal hold, an unnecessary roughness violation or an unsportsmanlike act.

EXAMPLE: Wrestler **A** turns wrestler **B** to his back with a cross face cradle. After one-thousand one, the official notices the nose of wrestler **B** begins to bleed. The referee should stop the match, start the blood clock for wrestler **B** and award wrestler **A** two-point (2) near fall.

EXAMPLE: Wrestler **A** turns wrestler **B** to his back with a cross face cradle. After one-thousand one-thousand two, the referee notices the nose of wrestler **B** begins to bleed. The referee should stop the match, start the blood clock for wrestler **B** and award wrestler **A** three-point (3) near fall.

EXAMPLE: Wrestler **A** turns wrestler **B** to his back with a cross face cradle. After the complete five counts, the referee notices the nose of wrestler **B** begins to bleed. The referee should stop the match, start the blood clock for wrestler **B** and award wrestler **A** four-point (4) near fall.

- It is possible for both wrestlers to be using blood time simultaneously.
- It is also possible for both wrestlers to be using injury time simultaneously.
- It is also possible for a wrestler to go from injury time to blood time, and then back to injury time.
  - If this should occur, the wrestler is only charged with one injury time out. It is the official’s job to be present with the stopwatch and keep track of the amount of time used for each situation. Remember, blood takes precedence and the wrestler may use as many blood time-outs as necessary.
- But, if one is injured and the other is bleeding, only a blood clock is started because blood takes precedence.

**RECOVERY TIME:**
- Recovery time may only follow a penalty for an illegal hold, unnecessary roughness or an unsportsmanlike act.
- Recovery time is a total of two minutes (2) and may only be used immediately following the penalty.
  - Recovery time starts when the referee signals the table with an inverted swirling index finger of the matching arm band hand.
Time shall be stopped and recorded upon the referee’s signal.

- Once the injured wrestler continues to wrestle, he/she may not use any of the unused recovery time.
- The wrestler may use an injury time out once he/she starts to continue the match.
- If the injured wrestler can’t continue due to the injury caused by the penalty, he/she shall be the winner.
- **There are two very important “NO-NOs” related to the recovery time situation.**
  - First, the injured wrestler cannot use injury time immediately following the completed use of his/her recovery time.
  - Second, the injured wrestler cannot re-start the match, and then intentionally stop the match after one second to default to his opponent. There is a procedure to allow that. Read below:
    - The injured wrestler may default the match to his/her opponent prior to the two-minute recovery clock expiring. The official may not volunteer this information because that would be coaching/assisting one of the wrestlers, but he/she may answer a question if the coach asks.

**EXAMPLE:** During the first period wrestler A lifts and slams wrestler B. The official stops the match, starts the recovery clock and awards wrestler B one point for the illegal slam. At the conclusion of the two-minute recovery clock the coach of wrestler B says “my wrestler just needs a little more time and he’ll wrestle. Start the injury clock for him/her and we will only take 20 seconds.” This is incorrect, and the official cannot allow this to occur. The official needs to inform the coach that by rule once the two-minute recovery clock is completely taken, his wrestler must step to the stripe to continue the match or he/she must be declared the winner by disqualification. To continue this scenario, with this explanation given to the coach of wrestler B, he/she now says “well his kid is undefeated, and he/she would have beaten my boy anyway. So, we’ll start the match then you blow the whistle right away to stop it and we’ll default to him/her.” Again, this is incorrect procedure. We teach our young people nothing if we find a way to skirt the rules of the game. Once the illegal situation occurred and the recovery clock was started, only three things may occur; either wrestler B continues to wrestle, wrestler B wins by disqualification or wrestler B graciously defaults prior to the two-minute recovery clock expiring. The wrestler who commits an illegal act, an unnecessary roughness or an unsportsmanlike conduct violation cannot be declared the winner.
Hand Signal and Mechanics for Injury, Blood and Recovery Time:

Mechanics of the Injury, Blood and Recovery Time:
The mechanics will vary on these three situations depending on what facilitates the stoppage.

- At most levels of competition, the table has a stopwatch for the different times.
- Signals on the mat should be directed towards the table using the color for the stoppage time.
- Timer will start the stopwatch.
- The referee should stay in the middle or near the injured wrestler with the stopwatch.
- Stay quiet as to what you saw, only answer questions asked by the medical personal.
- Don’t talk to the coaches or the other wrestler. Silence is your friend here. If you talk to a coach or wrestler it can be misconstrued as favoritism, or worse yet a coach will tell you, “I told you it was illegal, now he/she is hurt”.
- Have the stopwatch brought so you can tell the coach when there is one-minute left, 30 seconds and 15 seconds. At that point a determination must be made, as to the continuation or not. If the wrestler using the time stoppage can NOT continue, his opponent will determine the winner.
- Except in the case of the recovery time, if the wrestler uses all the recovery time and CANNOT continue, he/she is the declared winner. The caveat here is that the injured wrestler may default the match prior to the two-minute recovery clock expiring.
Head/Neck/Cervical (HNC) Injury Time Extension

The HNC protocol was introduced by the NFHS for implementation in the 2019-2020 season. During this inaugural season, many of the NFHS State Association Members were interpreting HNC protocol differently. Consequently, a uniform protocol was not followed at a national level. Accordingly, for the 2020-2021 season the NFHS clarified elements of the rule with the goal of establishing a uniform HNC protocol across all State Associations. The following is a scenario for following proper HNC injury time protocol:

- Referee starts (90 sec.) injury time-out (first time-out).
- After the appropriate health care professional arrives, he/she requests extended time to examine the wrestler.
- Injury time is recorded to that point (this counts as the first injury time-out), then HNC is continued up to the five-minute mark.
- Once the wrestler is cleared to continue, any remaining injury time is available for a subsequent non-HNC second injury time.
- Only one HNC extension is granted to a wrestler during a match. If a second injury occurs to the HNC area, the wrestler must default the match.

HNC Situation A:
- Wrestler A injures his neck, referee starts Injury Time (IT).
- At the 0:20 sec mark the trainer asks for extended time to assess wrestler A.
- The referee instructs the scorer to record 20 sec. to the 1st IT, as the clock continues to run with the remainder of the five minutes available to HNC extended time.
- At the 4:15 mark the trainer clears wrestler A to continue competition. The scorer is instructed to record HNC time has been completed.
- As wrestler A returns to wrestle, he/she kneels and grabs his neck. The referee starts the 2nd IT, the trainer determines that the injury is another HNC. The referee terminates the match with wrestler A defaulting.

HNC Situation B:
- Wrestler B sustains a head injury; referee starts 1st Injury Time (IT). At the 0:35 sec. mark the trainer requests extended time to assess wrestler B.
- The referee instructs the scorer to record 35 sec. to the 1st IT. The clock continues to run with the remainder of the five minutes available to the HNC extended time.
- At the 4:10 mark the trainer clears wrestler B to continue competition. The scorer is instructed to record that HNC time has been completed.
- Wrestler B continues thru the third period and injures her ankle. The referee starts injury time for wrestler B as she has 55 sec. of her 2nd IT remaining.

Note: Review the HNC Flow Chart on page 43. Chart courtesy of Dennie Uhl of the South Shore Wrestling Officials Association. See also NFHS HNC illustrations on pages 44-46 (Courtesy of the NFHS).

STALLING

General Guidelines

The most difficult aspect of wrestling is to understand stalling. The official must develop a philosophy that will assist in all situations. This is where the best referees separate themselves from the good referees.

- Stalling is one of the most subjective calls in wrestling because:
  - No two officials call stalling identically.
  - No two officials recognize stalling within the same time frame.
  - Consistency with calling stalling is tough due to the different dynamics occurring in each match.
The perspective of one coach with his wrestler's best interests in mind is always going to be different from the opposing coach's perspective and from the man in the striped shirt.

- Because of these variables, stalling will always be a controversial call in high school wrestling.
- Each wrestler is required to make an honest attempt to stay within the 10-foot circle and wrestle aggressively regardless of:
  - Position
  - Time of the match
  - Score
- Both wrestlers are equally responsible for initiating and maintaining action.
- A wrestler who is overpowered is not stalling.
- It is the responsibility of coaches, wrestlers and officials to discourage the practice of stalling tactics.
- When stalling is recognized, the offender shall be warned/penalized without hesitation by the official regardless:
  - of Score of the match
  - of Position on the mat
  - of Time in the match
- In order to correctly recognize stalling the official must have intimate knowledge of the sport/wrestling skills, the wrestling rules and how to apply them
- The official must be able to discern when wrestler simply cannot execute and one who chooses not to execute
  - The level of the wrestler’s ability must be considered.
  - Top level wrestlers are better at masking stalling tactics.
- The official must be able to dissect an action or series of actions occurring on the mat and determine if that action(s) is a legitimate attempt to aggressively wrestle or stalling.
- Stalling must be consistently called throughout the match from beginning to end.
  - Officials must develop their own techniques and patterns of consistency to identify and penalize stalling.
  - Stalling is rarely the result of one specific action or maneuver, rather it is the result of a series of blocking, avoiding contact, and delaying maneuvers occurring throughout the match.
  - Aggressive wrestling occurs when a wrestler initiates a maneuver and follows through with an attempt to finish the move.
- Each wrestler is required to make an honest attempt to stay within the 10-foot circle and wrestle aggressively, regardless of position or the time or score of the match. Action is to be maintained throughout the match by the contestants wrestling whether in the top, bottom or neutral position and both contestants are equally responsible for initiating action. It is the responsibility of contestants, coaches and referees to avoid the use of stalling tactics or allowing the use thereof. This shall be demonstrated by those responsible with strict enforcement by referees.

Neutral Stalling Guidelines:

- 2018-19: It is stalling when wrestler backs off the mat, or when either pushes or pulls the opponent off the mat.
  - Allow wrestlers time to set-up takedown attempt(s):
    - Tie-ups
    - Changing levels
    - Maintaining contact
    - Set-ups
    - Pushing/pulling to throw opponent off balance
    - Genuine attempt at takedown within specified time period (30-45 sec.)
  - An honest takedown attempt requires a shot and follow-through
  - Countering a takedown attempt is not stalling unless:
    - Defensive wrestler is content not to improve position
- No efforts at initiating own shot attempts - Who is the aggressor?

- **Neutral stalling tactics:**
  - Circling with no attempt at shot
  - Changing levels with no attempt at shot
  - Feigned shot with no follow through
  - Moving opponent to create angles but no follow through attacks
  - Set-ups with no follow through to take advantage of scoring opportunities
  - Interlocking fingers behind the opponent’s head and blocking with both elbows

- **What to recognize:**
  - From neutral start backing out of the circle w/o making contact w/opponent
  - Continuously avoiding contact with opponent
  - Preventing opponent from returning to or remaining in-bounds
  - Playing the edge of the mat
  - Continuously pushing-pulling w/no shot attempt
  - Repeatedly faking contact w/o follow through
  - Tying-up an opponent with an under hook and wrist control without a follow-through shot
  - Collar tie pushing/pulling no follow through
  - Single or double under hook w/o shot attempt
  - Wrist control (single or double) w/o attempt at a shot or prevent opponent’s shot
  - Blocking with a forearm or head in a tie-up w/no attempt at shot or to prevent opponent’s shot
  - Blocking with head in opponent’s chest w/o action to counter and score
  - Repeatedly grasping or holding a leg w/no attempt at follow-through to improve position
  - Repeatedly grasping or holding a leg to prevent opponent from scoring
  - Elevating a single leg w/o attempt to finish takedown
  - Repeatedly causing a stalemate
  - Standing behind an opponent in control of torso w/o an attempt to finish on the mat
  - Running a 2 on 1 (Russian Tie) w/o an attack attempt
  - Slowly straggling back from OB

**Offensive Stalling:** It is stalling when the contestant in the advantage position does not wrestle aggressively and attempt to secure a fall or earn near fall points. The exception is when the offensive wrestler intentionally releases the opponent in order to thereafter immediately attempt to secure a takedown top earn a technical fall by a 15-point margin.

- **General Guidelines:**
  - Top man must work for fall/near fall - No riding time in high school.
  - Watch for parallel riding (riding hips) w/o an attempt to break down the opponent.
  - Watch for parallel riding with opponent broken down on the mat with no attempt to get perpendicular to work for fall or near fall.
  - Watch for “busy wrestling” meaning that the top man is moving from side to side without really doing anything.
  - Countering the defensive wrestler’s bona fide attempts to escape/reverse (e.g., chain wrestling) is not stalling.

- **General stalling tactics:**
  - Feigning attempts to turn an opponent (e.g., spiral ride w/o getting out to the side and driving on toes or running a half-nelson with opponent broken down w/o getting perpendicular and driving on the toes).
  - Jumping sides with half nelson.
  - Content with hanging on w/no attempt to score.
• **What to look for:**
  - Keeping the leg held to the buttocks for more than 5 seconds (defensive wrestler broken down).
  - Two hands on one or two leg not designed to break the opponent down, secure a fall, or prevent an escape or reversal.
  - Repeated grasping of one or two legs with both hands to break down for the sole purpose of control.
  - Slow hand mount around the waist in top starting position.
  - Repeatedly dropping to one leg when opponent stands up.
  - Deep waist and wrist or ankle w/no attempt to improve.
  - Staying behind an opponent in a rear standing position w/o attempting to return to the mat.
  - Repeatedly using a grapevine and being unable to turn opponent resulting in a stalemate.
  - Repeated use of cross-body ride w/no attempt to improve position.
  - Use of double grapevine for sole purpose of control w/no attempt to improve.
  - Use of cradle w/no attempt to turn.
  - Repeatedly grasping an ankle with no attempt to break opponent down.
  - Running an arm bar with opponent broken down on the mat w/no attempt to improve.
  - Repeatedly grabbing a leg to prevent a switch.
  - Crab ride w/no attempt to improve.
  - Repeatedly throwing in leg (2 times) when defensive wrestler stands up – lifts rudder leg off of mat.

**Defensive Stalling:** To penalize the bottom wrestler for stalling is thought by many to be the hardest to call. You really do know when the bottom wrestler is stalling because each has been there. Let’s point out some common defensive stalling tactics:

- Does the bottom wrestler initiate an escape or reversal?
- When the top wrestler comes off the hips creating space, does the bottom wrestler attempt to take advantage or content to stay there? Does he/she attempt to improve his/her position to try to score?
- Lying on the mat with your elbows tucked into your body beyond normal reaction time. This position gives little chance for the fall.
- Moving only to counter or block the offensive wrestler. This is a tough call to recognize, however the referee must determine if the bottom wrestler is attempting to improve his/her position. The bottom must create action to score. Not initiating action may constitute stalling by his/her blocking the offensive action to turn.
- Grasping the opponent's hands (arms) and just hanging holding.
  - Can you see where this and the tactic mentioned above are similar? When doing this and making no attempt to improve the referee should be thinking stalling.
- Forehead down on the mat, balling up, or continually watching the clock.
- Watching the clock. This is particularly easy when the top wrestler is applying no pressure.
  - Remember looking at the clock is not an automatic stall call, but we should notice the difference in watching the clock and looking at the clock to determine how much time is remaining.
- Repeated locking on to one or both legs when the top wrestler comes out front.
  - Key here is repeated because you always have the option of calling a stalemate in this situation.
- Repeatedly crawling out of the ten-foot circle,
  - To the edge,
  - Out-of-bounds with no attempt to improve his/her position would constitute stalling.
  - This is often used as an attempt to get a breather (catch their wind).
- The defensive wrestler is not stalling if he/she is being overpowered.

Good officiating doesn’t start the first day of an officiating career. Rather it is acquired after many years of time on the mat, watching and learning from the top officials either in person, watching video and/or in meeting discussions. With advanced media we now can watch hours of wrestling to help performance to become a better
referee. Each must sacrifice time and expense to constantly improve officiating skills. Each referee must put in the time and pay their dues to gain the valuable experiences necessary to recognize all wrestling situation. Experience is the best teacher.

**Note:** With the 2020-2021 Rules changes the match **shall be stopped** when a two-point stall penalty is awarded, and the opponent will be given choice of position (Rule 8-1-4). This eliminates the confusion in awarding choice of position on the next match stoppage after the two-point stalling penalty was awarded.

**FLEEING/TECHNICAL VIOLATION**

**Webster defines fleeing** “… 1. To run away or escape from danger, pursuit, unpleasantness, etc. 2. To pass away swiftly; vanish 3. To move rapidly, go swiftly to run away or escape from; to avoid.”

- There is a significant difference between a stalling violation, which is a warning, and fleeing the mat on the first offense. The fleeing violation should be a technical violation penalty point the first time it occurs and called consistently.
  - **NFHS Rule** states, “Each wrestler is required to make an honest attempt to stay within the 10-foot circle and wrestle aggressively, regardless of position or the time or the score of the match. Action is to be maintained throughout the match by the contestants wrestling aggressively whether in the top, bottom or neutral position and both contestants are equally responsible for initiating the action…”
  - **NFHS Rule** states, “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 wrestling, is a technical violation. Both wrestlers should make every effort to remain in-bounds. When the referee feels that either wrestler has failed to make every effort to stay in-bounds, the offending wrestler shall be penalized. **Penalty points shall not be awarded in situations where near-fall points are earned.**”
  - **NFHS Rule** states “... officials have the authority to penalize wrestlers and, when they fail to do so, they are, in essence giving his opponent an advantage.” “Both wrestlers should make every effort to remain in-bounds.
  - The wrestler’s proximity to the OB line must be considered with the fleeing the mat call.
  - When the referee feels that either wrestler has failed to make every effort to stay in-bounds, the offending wrestler shall be penalized.
  - A wrestler goes out of the wrestling area or if he/she forces his/her opponent out of the wrestling area at any time as a means of avoiding wrestling, it is a technical violation.
  - Each wrestler is to wrestle aggressively regardless of the position or the time or the score of the match.
  - Action is to be maintained throughout the match in the offensive, defensive, or neutral positions.

**NEUTRAL POSITION:**

- **Wrestler A** shoots a single leg and lifts **wrestler B**’s leg. **Wrestler B** hooks a whizzer, and then turns to the out-of-bounds circle, hops three or four times and pulls **wrestler A** out-of-bounds.
- Again, **wrestler A** lifts a single leg of **wrestler B**. This time **wrestler B** turns his opponent’s back to the outer edge of the circle and drives him/her straight out-of-bounds. **Wrestler A** is still holding the leg as he/she is being pushed out-of-bounds.
- **Wrestler A**, while attacking from the center of the circle, takes numerous shots. **Wrestler B** continues to back, then eventually backs off the mat to avoid another strong double leg attack from **wrestler A**.

**OFFENSIVE POSITION:**

- During the action of being reversed in a switch, **wrestler A** crawls out-of-bounds as **wrestler B** is arching over the top to turn his hips down to gain control. **Wrestler A** has avoided being scored upon and thinks
he/she is going back to the center of the circle to get a clean start in the referee’s position. Wrestler B may have earned his neutral position along with the penalty.

- Wrestler B hits a stand up and gets to his feet. Wrestler A, standing behind and still in control, lifts wrestler B and takes several steps to walk him/her off the mat.
- Or, wrestler A simply begins driving wrestler B forward. Wrestler B tries to turn to stay in-bounds, but wrestler A continues to drive his opponent off the mat.

DEFENSIVE POSITION:

- Wrestler A gets taken down and is immediately put to his back. As wrestler B is working to secure a half nelson, wrestler A bridges out-of-bounds before the official gets a two-count.
- Wrestler A gets thrown with a lateral drop and is immediately put to his back two, maybe three feet inbounds. As the referee counts ‘one thousand-one’ and flags out one hand count for the near fall, wrestler B bridges and drives himself/herself over the out-of-bounds circle.
- Wrestler A applies a cross body then steps over the top into a double grapevine. As wrestler A starts a power half, wrestler B turns to find the outer circle and crawls out-of-bounds.

THE REFEREE’S POSITION IS CLEAR:

- He/she must be fair, completely unbiased, and evaluate the match based solely on the performance of both athletes.
- The match official is to impartially apply the rules of the sport for both contestants.
- The examples mentioned above illustrate one wrestler using the out-of-bounds circle to avoid wrestling, and specifically to avoid being scored upon.
- A wrestling match involves two contestants, and it is not fair for one athlete to work aggressively in the circle while the other intentionally leaves the mat to avoid competition.
- By not awarding the technical violation penalty point when fleeing the mat occurs the aggressive wrestler is being put at a distinct disadvantage.
- Instead, the attacking wrestler should be recognized and rewarded for his wrestling skill and for carrying the bulk of the action in the match.
- Awarding the penalty point is both the correct and fair call in this situation when one of the wrestlers leaves the mat to avoid giving up a score.

FINAL THOUGHT – SELL THE CALL: The technical violation penalty should be made promptly, without hesitation, in the spirit of good sportsmanship for both athletes. All should understand the referee’s position on the wrestlers leaving the mat to avoid competition. All can see the confidence the referee exhibits while making the call. The athletes can learn from the experience of the competition.

**Note:** With the 2020-2021 Rules changes, the NFHS stipulated that there can be no technical violation for fleeing the mat if NF or takedown points have been earned. In other words, the previously permissible “double jeopardy” of awarding a technical violation point for fleeing the mat in addition to the takedown points earned is no longer an option.

**BITING & FLAGRANT MISCONDUCT**

- Biting, or any form of flagrant misconduct, is not to be taken lightly.
- It is the final and ultimate penalty for any wrestler.
- It is the responsibility of every wrestling official to handle the situation promptly and decisively. There are several important aspects the referee must be aware of in every alleged biting incident.
Firstly: If the bite occurs in a place where the defensive wrestler may have bitten himself/herself, the official must see the biting action.
  o Just seeing a cross face doesn’t necessarily mean the defensive wrestler was bitten.
  o The official should see the clamping action of the jaws during the bite.
  o If the referee sees the **defensive wrestler bite himself/herself** and that wrestler shows the referee the teeth marks, it should be an unsportsmanlike conduct on the defensive wrestler.

Secondly: The biting incident must be promptly handled when it occurs. Reference should be made to the NFHS Wrestling Rule Book, which states, “.... when the referee makes this call, it must be an occurrence that is brought to the referee’s immediate attention.”
  o The wrestler and/or coach can’t wait until the end of the match or sometime thereafter to complain about a bite that took place during the first period.
  o The bitten wrestler must inform and show the referee the bite marks when it occurs.
  o If the wrestler is bitten on his thigh, shoulder, or the back of his leg the official should certainly recognize he/she could not have bitten himself/herself in these places.
  o The referee should look for both the upper and lower sets of teeth marks indented in the flesh of the injured wrestler.
    ▪ Be aware a tooth and mouth protector will not leave teeth marks.
  o The impression of a bite should be the teeth marks left after the clamping of the bite occurs.
  o There may be bleeding and/or bruising around the bitten area.
  o This all verifies the bite, and now comes the difficult part. Informing the coach and wrestler.
  o Please remember the referee should look for the sharp edge impression of the teeth, seeing the entire outline of the teeth may indicate a cross face with the defensive wrestler turning into it.

Thirdly: Once the referee is absolutely sure of the biting incident, it is important to handle this situation without delay.
  o If necessary, show the opposing coach the bite imprint for his satisfaction the correct call was made based on the necessary evidence of the situation.
  o He/she needs to exhibit self-confidence, and, in a prompt firm manner, make the flagrant misconduct call.
  o Remember, the flagrant misconduct violation now carries a three-point team deduction, the immediate removal from the premises, and the loss of all team points earned to that point.
  o All OHSAA referees are required to file the necessary written report within 48-hours and contact the offending wrestler’s principal or school administrator the first school day following the incident, advising them of the flagrant act that resulted with the disqualification.
  o Look in the OHSAA Official’s handbook and the report form is found on OHSAA.org web site.
  o **Suggestion:** get a copy of the bout sheet with the flagrant misconduct penalty recorded on the score sheet and write yourself a memo of the incident.
    o This will be necessary to assist you in completing the state report form of the ejection. It is also advisable to attach a copy of the score sheet to the reports you distribute to the school and the OHSAA office.
  o All referees are responsible and expected to maintain a clean competitive playing field. Unsporting or flagrant acts must be dealt with promptly, decisively and within the spirit of the NFHS rule book.

**POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS**

First and foremost, the health, safety and well-being of our student-athletes is of paramount importance!
  • The Mission Statement in the NFHS wrestling rule book reads in part - “We believe national competition rules promote fair play and minimize risks for student participants.”
    o **NFHS Rule** states “Holds are potentially dangerous when a body part is forced to the limit of normal range of movement.”
NFHS Rule states ... “Potentially dangerous holds include double wrist locks, split scissors, the guillotine, chicken wing, toeholds, front headlocks (all headlocks), or any holds which could cause serious injury. The referee should anticipate the dangers of injury and be in position to block them before the danger point.”

NFHS Rule states “No contestant should ever be put in a position where they must forfeit a neutral position, a position of advantage or a fall because of an injury or danger to life or limb.”

- The NFHS provides for both the safe and healthy environment for young athletes, and each state association fosters and upholds the strong concern for safe participation for all student-athletes.
- The most important call for a wrestling referee is the proper and timely use of potentially dangerous.
  - Preventing injuries is the most important task for a wrestling referee.
  - Some situations don’t have a name, but none the less they are dangerous and unsafe. It is left to the referee and his experienced judgment to recognize situations that can cause serious injury.
- It is important for the referee to have excellent anticipation, knowledge and recognition of wrestling skills, body movement and the ability to sense the wrestlers in the thousands of positions they find themselves.
- The referee must constantly position and re-position himself/herself to have the very best line of vision to view the greatest amount of action.
  - This allows the wrestling referee to fulfill his/her most important duty.
  - The safety of the contestants.

There are a few important aspects to making a potentially dangerous call:
- Make the call promptly when a serious situation is anticipated or seen. Do not hesitate!
- A moment of hesitation may be all the time necessary for a serious injury to occur.
- Worse than hesitating, is the referee that walks around the pair of wrestlers indicating the potentially dangerous signal with one hand behind his/her head while following the wrestlers and pointing to the dangerous situation with the other hand. This is an invitation for disaster.
- The referee’s first reaction should be to blow the whistle and does it firmly while stepping in to touch the wrestlers to stop action.
- After a short explanation of what was dangerous, the wrestlers should be immediately re-started as they were before the potentially dangerous stoppage.
- NFHS Rule provides that a wrestler applying a legal hold/maneuver shall not be penalized when the opponent turns a legal hold into an illegal hold. This situation shall be deemed a potentially dangerous.
- Remember: Call it when you see it, sense it or feel it.

What if the referee does not stop a potentially dangerous situation?
- A wrestler will most likely be seriously injured and can be sent off to the hospital with the rescue squad. Later, it is learned the injured wrestler is having surgery, will miss school, will not be able to participate in a spring sport (or out of athletics for years), and will need several months of painful extensive rehabilitation when the surgery heals.
  - This could have been avoided if the referee blew his/her whistle several seconds sooner.
  - If referees are going to make a mistake, make the mistake on the side of safety.
  - Allowing a situation to continue so a wrestler can possibly earn two points for a near fall is not worth the chance of serious injury, being hospitalized and a young athlete needing surgery?
- Coaches and parents not only entrust wrestling referees with the fair and unbiased evaluation of their athlete’s match, but they are also entrusted with their safety.
- Referees should protect the wrestlers from hitting the wall,
  - Landing on the floor,
  - Being tossed into the scorer’s table, and
  - Especially from injury due to the strange ways they get entangled with each other.
- Using potentially dangerous swiftly can save months of pain and family heartache.
- The HO and the AR must always protect the wrestlers.
**STALEMATE**

**Webster Defines Stalemate** “1. Chess: any situation in which it is impossible for one of the players to move without placing his or her king in check: it results in a draw 2. Any unresolved situation in which further action is impossible or useless; deadlock; draw.”

- **NFHS Rule states** “…It is a stalemate when contestants are interlocked in a position other than a pinning situation, in which either wrestler can improve their respective position(s); or either competitor has the hands locked around one leg of the opponent to prevent scoring. The referee shall, as soon as possible, stop the match and wrestling shall be resumed as for an out-of-bounds. When both hands are locked repeatedly around one leg of an opponent to prevent scoring, it is considered stalling.”

**Common mistakes:**
- It is often called when there is no stalemate present and the athletes need to wrestle their way out, or
- It is called rather than making a stalling call, which is unfair to the non-stalling opponent.
- An inappropriate stalemate call, called too soon or too late, is an act in which the referee is interfering in the progress of the match, and thereby could influence the outcome of the match.
- Mixed signals are given when contradicting mechanics are shown. I.e. a stalling signal after already have given a stalemate call. If a wrestler has created the stalling situation because of repeated stalemates, then simply make the stalling call.

**The proper stalemate call and mechanics:**
- A stalemate occurs when both wrestlers are entwined in such a position that neither athlete can improve his/her position without jeopardizing either his/her own safety for fear of injury, or loss of position thus being scored upon.
- If he/she would let go to try to improve he/she would give up a score to the opponent, therefore by continuing to hold the stalemate position he/she is counter-wrestling and can't let go.
- The referee needs to allow the athletes to compete, wrestle their way through the match and notice the point in time when their continued progress has halted.
  - Recognize the stoppage of action is due to both their respective positions being locked in such a manner that they can’t advance.
  - Pause a moment to make sure of the situation, and once you realize their positions will not improve for fear of jeopardizing themselves.
  - Blow the whistle, give the proper mechanic signal with the closed fists pressed together in front of the chest, and get them to release their grasp.
  - Verbally communicate with the table and wrestlers then restart the match.

**Recognize these positions and promptly make the correct call:**
- If the referee hesitates, he/she allows time to run off the clock with no significant action.
- If there is no action at the edge of the mat and one wrestler is out-of-bounds, the referee may stop the match and return the wrestler to center.
COACH CONFERENCE AT THE TABLE

How should the conference be handled when the coach comes to the table? What are a few helpful ways to handle the difficult coach during a heated situation? The official’s body language speaks volumes.

1. Remember, it is important to approach all conferences in the same manner.
   - Don’t assume the worst and expect a screaming coach.
   - You need to handle yourself in a calm, patient controlling manner.
   - Keep in mind you are the official, and the only person in control of the entire situation.
   - This process starts by instructing the wrestlers to stay inside the 10-foot center circle,
   - If either or both leave the 10’ circle it is unsportsmanlike conduct; make the call

2. Then walk to the scorer’s table to meet the coach, one of whom must have been a coach sitting in the zone.
   - While moving to the table it is important to collect your thoughts and replay the last few moments of the match in your head.
   - When you reach the table, turn and stand open at 90 degrees to keep the wrestlers in your vision.
   - Assume an open body language position to listen to the coach; do not fold arms, etc.
   - Look the coach direct in the eyes, and DON’T SAY A WORD!
   - Listen to what the coach desires to discuss – A good communicator is a good listener!
     - Part of defusing a potentially heated situation, is not to put fuel on the fire.
     - By that we mean, don’t give a coach new and more information to argue with.
     - If there is some hesitation, then ask him/her in a calm, polite, professional manner “Coach, you called me to the table, what can I do for you?”
     - This beginning may be enough to defuse the possible hot situation.
     - As you listen, formulate and deliver a calm, clear, concise answer to his question.
     - Especially the criteria of the rule you applied to make the decision.
     - Do not let this become a question and answer session.
     - Keep it brief, then do one of a few things;
       - Thank him/her and invite him/her to return to coach’s corner or
       - Thank him/her, remind him/her is not allowed to question judgment, and inform him of the warning for misconduct. Then invite him/her to return to the coach’s corner, and
       - Instruct the scorer to record a warning for misconduct on Coach.
     - If during the exchange, or at the conclusion he/she is acting in an unsportsmanlike manner it is important to exercise the unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and deduct the team point,
     - The last resort is a flagrant misconduct call on the coach.
     - Return to the center of the mat and promptly resume the match.

- The AR remains in the 10 ft. circle with the wrestlers.
- The AR also prevents the wrestlers from leaving the circle as instructed.

Remember these six thoughts:
1. The coach has the right to a conference and is heard at the table, while you have the duty to grant his request and listen to his questions or concerns.
2. Be APPROACHABLE … LISTEN … EXPLAIN … THEN RESTART THE MATCH.
3. Be polite, professional, direct, decisive, confident and consistent.
4. Know this - a referee distinguishes himself/herself by how he/she handles the tough ones.
5. Do not tolerate verbal abuse or unsportsmanlike conduct in any form.
6. DO NOT TOUCH THE COACH, respect his space and he/she should respect yours.
The referee must be in control of the match. Do not allow a coach to become an embarrassment or belligerent. Do not allow a coach to harass the scorer’s table and the workers, they are your team; protect them. Only one coach per school may conference at any one time.

**WARN OR PENALIZE THE COACH**

Does the coach get a warning for his actions or is it an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty?

- Although the two may occur together, there is a distinction.
- The **only time a coach gets a warning for his actions** is when he/she asks for a conference at the scorer’s table to discuss the misapplication of a rule, and one of the following occurs:
  - If a coach asserts that a rule has been misapplied and it was determined that the rule was applied correctly.
  - If the official handled the situation correctly, and/or the coach questions the referee’s judgment and he/she receives a warning for misconduct.
  - This warning is on the coaching staff (with the head coach having the ultimate accountability).
  - The next misconduct offense will result in a one-point team deduction.
  - If the coach was correct with his assertion to the matter in question, the referee shall make the necessary correction and the match continued without penalty.
- The third misconduct violation will again result in another two-point team deduction along with the head coach removed from the event for the remainder of the day.
- It is the responsibility of every referee to conduct the match to not allow coaches to overrun the scorer’s table with time wasting questions. By applying the warning for misconduct rule promptly, the coaches will not take advantage of your good nature at the table. Although we must honor the coach’s request for a conference, do not hesitate to apply the misconduct rule when necessary.
- Any form of unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct is assessed with the requisite penalty point deduction(s) and/or removal from the premises. There is no warning for these situations.
- The referees need to meet these embarrassing situations swiftly, and in a firm confident manner.
- It is important to learn the rules of the game, study and discuss them in your local meetings. We need to learn the criteria to recognize when these situations begin to appear.
- Listen to the veteran officials describe situations they have encountered and learn from each other.
- The learning will be a life-long process, so remember to learn something from everyone.
- Below are several situational examples that may help in understanding the need to approach table confrontations promptly and in a professional manner.
- We’ve all been involved in a variety of different coach’s conferences at the scorer’s table. Some are short and simple, while others require a little more effort and patience.
- **How do we handle the coach who comes to the table with a fuse already lit?** Here are a few helpful ways to handle a difficult coach during a heated situation:
  - Firstly: It is important to approach all conferences in the same manner.
    - Don’t assume the worst and expect a screaming coach.
    - You need to handle yourself in a calm, patient controlling manner.
    - Keep in mind you are the official, and the only person in control of the entire situation.
  - Secondly: Instruct the wrestlers to stay inside the 10-foot center circle, and then walk to the scorer’s table to meet the coach.
    - While moving to the table it is important to collect your thoughts and replay the last few moments of the match in your head.
    - When you reach the table, turn and stand to keep the wrestlers in your vision.
    - Look the coach directly in the eyes, and don’t say a word....repeat......DON’T SAY A WORD!
    - Listen to what he/she desires to discuss. Part of defusing a potentially heated situation, is not to put fuel on the fire. By that it is meant, don’t give the coach additional information to use.
If there is some hesitation, then ask him/her in a calm, polite, professional manner “Coach, you called me to the table, what can I do for you?” This may be enough to defuse the possible hot situation.

- As you listen, formulate and deliver a calm, clear, concise answer to the question.
- Especially the criteria of the rule you applied to make the decision. Do not let this become a question and answer session.
- Keep it brief, then do one of two things:
  - Thank him/her and ask him/her to return to coach’s corner or
  - Thank him/her and remind him/her that a coach is not allowed to question judgment and inform him/her of the warning for misconduct. Then ask him/her to return to the coach’s corner and instruct the scorer to record a warning for misconduct on the coach.
- Return to the center of the mat and promptly resume the match.

**CORRECTABLE ERRORS**

What’s correctable, what isn’t? What’s the procedure? Rule 6-6 addresses these questions.

- First and foremost, Rule 6-6 breaks errors into three basic elements:
  - Bad time
  - Timekeeping errors, and
  - Scoring errors.
  - Each has its own conditions that must be adhered to when considering correctable errors.

**Bad Time**: is:

- Time wrestled with the wrestlers in the wrong position; or,
- The wrong wrestler given choice at the start of the third period; or
- The choice of position not given after the second injury time out; or
- After a two-point stalling call; or
- The clock continues to run at the end of the period; or
- The clock continues to run following a violation.
- Other than the start of the third period, addressed below, when encountering bad time, you must first evaluate whether the amount of bad time can be determined.
- If not, it would be deleted. Otherwise, it must be re-wrestled prior to the start of any subsequent period.

**Two other situations relate to bad time but are easily corrected. They include the wrong wrestler being given choice**:

- At the start of the second period, or
- At the start of the first 30-second tiebreaker in overtime.
- Rule 6.6.1 makes it clear on resolving this situation: the opponent may be given choice at the start of the third period or at the start of the second 30-second tiebreaker in overtime.
- NOREWRESTLINGISNECESSARY.

**Following the second injury time out**:

- If the amount of bad time can be determined
  - It must be deleted and re-wrestled prior to the start of any subsequent period.
  - The wrestlers are to be placed in their proper position and wrestling resumed without delay.
  - All points earned during bad time are cancelled.
  - Although any penalties (technical violations), or injury time that may have occurred during bad time are also cancelled **except**:
    - Flagrant misconduct, unsportsmanlike conduct, unnecessary roughness, illegal holds/maneuvers, and blood time.
• Try this acronym as to what stays in the scorebook: “RIBFUN”
  
  Roughness (as in unnecessary roughness)
  Illegal holds
  Blood time
  Flagrant misconduct
  Unsportsmanlike conduct

• It’s also bad time when starting the wrestlers in the wrong position at the start of the third period.
• Stop the match and give both wrestlers one-minute rest.
• Except for “RIBFUN”, all points earned are cancelled and the entire third period re-wrestled.

**Timekeeping errors** occur when either:
• The timekeeper makes an error; or
• The clock fails to start when you indicate time is to begin.

You must make a judgment concerning the amount of time that should have been consumed. Certainly it’s within your authority to consult with the timekeeper, or even the coaches, to get their perspectives on the matter. Ultimately, however, the decision is yours as to the amount of time that needs to be adjusted. As in bad time, timekeeping errors must be adjusted prior to the start of any subsequent period.

**Scoring errors** can be made by
• The referee, or
• The scorer

Scoring errors can impact either the match or team score.
• Their correction depends entirely on whether they occur in a dual meet or tournament, and
• Whether it is a recordable or computational error.
• The various remedies under Rule 6.6.4 a. & b.
  o A recordable error is one in which the correct points and/or designated scoring symbol was erroneously entered on the scorebook or bout sheet.
  o A computational error is when a wrestler’s or team’s score is incorrectly added together.
• The correction process is handled differently depending on whether it is encountered in a dual meet or tournament.

**Dual meet match scoring errors by you, timekeeper, or official scorer:**
• A recordable error necessitating additional wrestling must be corrected prior to the offended contestant leaving the mat area
  o Mat Area: Rule 2.1.5: the wrestling mat plus 10 feet.
• If additional wrestling is not necessary, the error may be corrected as long as the offended contestant or coach remains in the mat area.
• A computational error must be corrected within 30 minutes after the conclusion of the dual meet.
• If the error requires additional wrestling,
  o In the case of creating a tie taking the match into overtime, the error must then be corrected prior to the start of the next match.

**Tournament match scoring errors:**
• A recordable error must be corrected prior to the offended wrestler leaving the mat area if additional wrestling is necessary
  o Mat Area: Rule 2.1.5: the wrestling mat plus 10 feet.
• Otherwise, when additional wrestling is NOT necessary, the offended wrestler or coach must remain in the mat area.
• A computational error must be corrected prior to the next match in whom either wrestler competes.
• Again, if additional wrestling is necessary, it must be corrected prior to the offended wrestler leaving the mat area. The next match is not allowed be started, if the next match is underway the error stands as is.

Dual meet or tournament team scoring errors:
• Rule 6.6.5 a, b Recordable or computational errors must be corrected within 30 minutes after the conclusion of the dual meet or tournament and posting of the official score. This means any discrepancy in computation must be reported to the tournament manager or head score keeper within the 30-minute time frame to give the tournament management the opportunity to check for any errors. If this is done within the 30-minute window the official score is not yet posted until it can be verified.
• There is no question errors create stressful situations for all concerned and could easily turn a competitive match/event into a major distraction.
• Avoiding errors is every referee’s goal, but ...
• When they do occur, and given a thorough understanding of Rule 6.6, the referee is able to approach such situations equipped to act quickly and decisively to return everyone’s focus back to the action. Refer to the tie-breaking criteria for dual competition Rule 9-2-2.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

On and off the mat during course of this season be professional, be courteous, and be vigilant. You are entrusted to set a good example for our student-athletes with whom you will be interacting very closely during the year. Athletics plays a tremendous role in the shaping and development of our student-athletes and encouraging good sporting behavior is an important tool in the developmental toolbox. You are responsible for teaching, supporting and promoting good sportsmanship. Contestants are expected to exhibit proper sporting behavior when engaging with their opponents, opposing coaches, referees and fans alike. You must be consistent in enforcing sportsmanship norms from the opening handshake to the final whistle. On one hand your objective is to encourage and acknowledge acts of good sportsmanship, and on the other, to discourage unsporting behavior and acts by appropriate penalty. One of your most important functions is to be a positive role model to the athletes you serve. By working to promote and acknowledge good sportsmanship, you will be a constructive influence on the participating athletes.

The Top Ten List for Success (pages 49 to 50, courtesy of the NFHS) generalizes what we can all do to become masters of our craft.
The National Federation of State High School State Associations' (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee has developed a medical release form for wrestlers to participate with skin lesion(s) as a suggested model to be considered for adoption in each state. The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) conducted a survey among specialty, academic, public health and primary care physicians and reviewed extensively the literature available on the communicability of various skin lesions at different stages of disease and treatment. No definitive data exists that allow us to absolutely predict when a lesion is no longer shedding organisms that could be transmitted to another wrestler. Another finding from the survey was the significant differences that exist among physicians relating to when they will permit a wrestler to return to participation after having a skin infection. Neither the NFHS nor the NFHS SMAC presumes to dictate to professionals how to practice medicine. Nor is the information on this form meant to establish a standard of care. The NFHS SMAC does feel, however, that the guidelines included on the form represent a summary consensus of the various responses obtained from the survey, from conversations and from the literature. The committee also believes that the components of the form are very relevant to addressing the concerns of coaches, parents, wrestlers and appropriate health-care professionals that led to the research into this subject and to the development of this form.

The Ohio High School Athletic Association as recommended by its Joint Advisory Committee on Sports Medicine has adopted the policy to require that it be a physician, defined as a medical doctor (MD) or doctor of osteopathy (DO) who is authorized to clear a wrestler for continued participation in this sport. In addition, Certified Nurse Practitioners or Physician’s Assistants (PA) work in a dermatology practice as identified on the list found here are eligible to sign this form a return the student to participation. http://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Sports/Wrestling/ApprovedShortNoticeDermatologistPractices.pdf

GOALS FOR ESTABLISHING A WIDELY USED FORM:

1. Protect wrestlers from exposure to communicable skin disorders. Although most of the skin lesions being discussed generally have no major long term consequences and are not life threatening, some do have morbidity associated with them and student-athletes should be protected from contracting skin disorders from other wrestlers or contaminated equipment such as mats.
2. Allow wrestlers to participate as soon as it is reasonably safe for them and for their opponents and/or teammates using the same mat.
3. Establish guidelines to help minimize major differences in management among appropriate health-care professionals who are signing “return to competition forms”. Consistent use of these guidelines should reduce the likelihood wrestlers catching a skin disease from participation and suffering from inequalities as to who can or cannot participate.
4. Provide a basis to support appropriate health-care professional decisions on when a wrestler can or cannot participate. This should help the appropriate health-care professional who may face incredible pressure from many fronts to return a youngster to competition ASAP. This can involve any student athlete who never wins a match or the next state champion with a scholarship pending.

IMPORTANT COMPONENTS FOR ANEFFECTIVE FORM:

1. Each state association needs to determine which appropriate health-care professional can sign off on this form.
2. Inclusion of the applicable NFHS wrestling rule so appropriate health-care professionals will understand that covering a contagious lesion is not an option that is allowed by rule. Covering a non-contagious lesion after adequate therapy to prevent injury to lesion is acceptable.
3. Inclusion of the date and nature of treatment and the earliest date a wrestler can return to participation. This should mitigate the need for a family to incur the expense of additional office visits as occurs when a form must be signed within three days of wrestling as some do.
4. Inclusion of a “bodygram” with front and back views should clearly identify the lesion in question. Using non-black ink to designate skin lesions should result in less confusion or conflict. Also including the number of lesions protects against spread after a visit with an appropriate health-care professional.
5. Inclusion of guidelines for minimum treatment before returning the wrestler to action as discussed above. This should enhance the likelihood that all wrestlers are managed safely and fairly.
6. Inclusion of all the components discussed has the potential to remove the referee from making a medical decision. If a lesion is questioned, the referee’s role could appropriately be only to see if the coach can provide a fully completed medical release form allowing the wrestler to wrestle.
This form may be reproduced, if desired, and can be edited in any way for use by various individuals or organizations. It may also be modified and used for sports other than wrestling. In addition, the NFHS SMAC would welcome comments for inclusion in future versions, as this form will be reviewed yearly, and modified as needed.

National Federation of State High School Associations
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee – OHSAA Joint Advisory Committee on Sports Medicine

MEDICAL RELEASE FOR WRESTLER TO PARTICIPATE WITH SKIN LESION

Name: ______________________________________________________ Date of Exam: ___ / ____ / ___

Diagnosis ___________________

Lesion(s)

Mark Location AND Number of

Location AND Number of Lesion(s) ________________________________________________

Medication(s) Used to Treat Lesion(s): ____________________________________________

Date Treatment Started: ___ / ____ / ___ Time: ___________________

Form Expiration Date for this Lesion (Note on Diagram(s)): ___ / ____ / ___

Earliest Date the Wrestler May Return to Participation: ____ / ____ / ____

Physician (MD, DO) or CNP or PA from approved list Signature __________________________ Office Phone #: __________________

Physician Name/Name of Collaborating Dermatology Practice (Must Be Legible)

__________________________________________________________

Office Address __________________________________________________

Below are some treatment guidelines that suggest MINIMUM TREATMENT before return to wrestling:

Bacterial Diseases (impetigo, boils): To be considered “non-contagious,” all lesions must be scabbed over with no oozing or discharge and no new lesions should have occurred in the preceding 48 hours. Oral antibiotic for 72 hours is considered a minimum to achieve that status. If new lesions continue to develop or drain after 72 hours, MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) should be considered.

Herpetic Lesions (Simplex, fever blisters/cold sores, Zoster, Gladiatorum): To be considered “non-contagious,” all lesions must be scabbed over with no oozing or discharge and no new lesions should have occurred in the preceding 72 hours. For a first episode of Herpes Gladiatorum, wrestlers should be treated and not allowed to compete for a minimum of 10 days. If general body signs and symptoms like fever and swollen lymph nodes are present, that minimum period of treatment before return to wrestling should be extended to 14 days. Recurrent outbreaks require a minimum of 120 hours of oral anti-viral treatment, again so long as no new lesions have developed, and all lesions are scabbed over.

Tinea Lesions (ringworm on scalp or skin): Oral or topical treatment for 72 hours on skin and oral treatment for 14 days on scalp.

Scabies, Head Lice: 24 hours after appropriate topical management.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): 24 hours of topical or oral medication and no discharge.

Molluscum Contagiosum: Upon treatment with curettage and hyfrecator, may wrestle immediately.

Note to Appropriate Health-Care Professionals: Non-contagious lesions do not require treatment prior to return to participation (e.g. eczema, psoriasis, etc.). Please familiarize yourself with NFHS Wrestling Rules 4-2-3, 4-2-4 and 4-2-5 which states:

“ART. 3 ... If a participant is suspected by the referee or coach of having a communicable skin disease or any other condition that makes participation appear inadvisable, the coach shall provide current written documentation as defined by the NFHS or the state associations, from an appropriate health-care professional stating that the suspected disease or condition is not communicable and that the athlete’s participation would not be harmful to any opponent. This document shall be furnished at the weigh-in for the dual meet or tournament. The only exception would be if a designated, on-site meet appropriate health-care professional is present and is able to examine the wrestler either immediately prior to or immediately after the weigh-in. Covering a communicable condition shall not be considered acceptable and does not make the wrestler eligible to participate.”

“ART. 4 ... If a designated on-site meet appropriate health-care professional is present, he/she may overrule the diagnosis of the appropriate health-care professional signing the medical release form for a wrestler to participate or not participate with a particular skin condition.”
“ART. 5 . . . A contestant may have documentation from an appropriate health-care professional only indicating a specific condition such as a birthmark or other non-communicable skin conditions such as psoriasis and eczema, and that documentation is valid for the duration of the season. It is valid with the understanding that a chronic condition could become secondarily infected and may require re-evaluation.”

Once a lesion is considered non-contagious, it may be covered to allow participation.

DISCLAIMER: Neither the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) nor the OHSAA shall be liable or responsible, in any way, for any diagnosis or other evaluation made herein, or exam performed in connection therewith, by the above-named provider, or for any subsequent action taken, in whole or part, in reliance upon the accuracy or veracity of the information provided herein.
To: OHSAA Wrestling Schools & Wrestling Officials  
From: OHSAA Officiating Department  
Subject: Wrestlers with Hepatitis C other blood-borne diseases and body fluids

The subject of OHSAA wrestlers participating with Hepatitis C and other body fluid blood-borne diseases has come to our attention.

Dr. Randy Wroble (Chair of Joint Advisory Committee on Sport Medicine, Medical Director of State Wrestling Tournament) would like to share the following information:

"Hepatitis C is a contagious viral disease. It is blood borne and is not transmitted by close contact or saliva. For wrestling, the risk of transmission would be mitigated by the proper use of the “blood rules” already in place. Further, the OHSAA requires medical clearance and a Hepatitis C issue should be addressed during the Pre-Participation Physical Exam process. So unless the onset is acute, an athlete should not require another “note”. Medically, athletes with Hepatitis C are allowed to participate in contact sports across the board."

The “blood rules” that Dr. Wroble alludes to above, can be found in great detail below:

"OHSAA Blood Clean-up Policy & Procedure"

Ohio’s blood policy has been consistent for many years, and includes the following:

1. On first sight of blood, the wrestling official must stop the match immediately and start the five-minute blood clock for the wrestler who is bleeding.

2. The wrestler is allowed as many blood stoppages as necessary not to exceed the five-minute maximum allowable time.

3. The match official(s) are not to be involved with blood clean-up. They are to monitor the time, ensure the bleeding is stopped, cleaned, and is safe for all to continue the match.

4. The host school of the event is responsible to designate blood clean-up by an approved designated on-site health care professional such as an athletic trainer, EMT, etc.

5. The host school is to provide a number of necessary clean-up items; a plastic lined receptacle bucket to dispose of used cleaning materials. A spray bottle with the approved disinfectant solution, paper towels and rubber gloves should be available and used at each table. Wrestlers are attended to first then all clean-up is the official’s time.

6. Do not let children (youth wrestlers) be the clean-up individual. This is a task for the proper adult to handle.

7. Once the blood is cleaned, the used gloves and paper towels all should be disposed in the plastic lined bucket. The receptacles are disposed and replaced regularly.

8. Blood time is only for time used to stop the bleeding. Any necessary clean-up time is the official’s time.

9. If the bleeding is serious and gets on the uniform of either wrestler, it must be immediately cleaned and diluted out of the uniform.

10. If, in the official’s opinion, it is too heavy to be washed out, the official should direct the wrestler to put on a clean uniform. This may require the coach to bring an extra uniform or for the wrestler to replace his uniform with another teammate. Should the uniform be disqualified from competition, the following procedure will apply: The wrestler with an extra uniform (or with the individual he will exchange), along with the AHCP will have a five minute limit to clean the wrestler and return wearing a legal uniform. Coaches stay with the team.

NOTE: Blood and all other Body Fluids must be cleaned from the skin of the wrestlers immediately.
Rule 5 SECTION 15 IN-BOUNDS

NFHS Rule: 5-10 - “An escape is when the defensive wrestler gains a neutral position and the opponent has lost control, beyond reaction time, while a total of two all the supporting points of either wrestler are in-bounds. The total of two supporting points could be two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler. If there is no action at the edge of the mat, the referee shall stop the match.”

NFHS Rule 5-15-1 - “Contestants are in-bounds if a total of two all the supporting points of either wrestler are inside or on the boundary line. 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 line.”

NFHS Rule 5-15-2 - “Supporting points are the parts of the body within the wrestling area which may or may not bear the wrestler’s weight, other than those parts with which the wrestler is holding the opponent.”

a. When down on the mat, the usual points of support are:
   1. the knee(s)
   2. the side of the thigh
   3. the buttocks
   4. the hand(s)
   5. the head.

b. When the defensive wrestler is on their back while the supporting points of either wrestler are in-bounds wrestling shall continue. In this situation any part of the defensive wrestler’s shoulder or scapula is considered to be all the supporting points.

c. Near-fall points or fall shall be earned only while the supporting points of either wrestler are in-bounds. In a pinning situation, when all parts of the defensive wrestler’s shoulders/scapula are on the mat beyond the boundary line, if the feet including toes and heels of the offensive wrestler are the supporting points, the offensive wrestler’s knee(s) must be inside the boundary, whether in contact with or above the mat.”

NFHS Rule 5-15-3 … “Wrestling shall continue as long as a total of two all the supporting points of either wrestler are inside or on the boundary line. 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, the referee shall stop the match.”

**NFHS Rule 5-18** … “Out-of-bounds occurs when there are no longer two total supporting points inside or on the boundary line. The total of two supporting points could be two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler inside or on the boundary line.”

**Rule 5 SECTION 22 REVERSAL**  
*NFHS Rule 5-22-1* … “It is a reversal when the defensive wrestler comes from underneath and gains control of the opponent, either on the mat or in a rear-standing position, while the total of two supporting points are inside or on the boundary line. Two supporting points could be two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler. If there is no action at the edge of the mat, the referee shall stop the match.”

**NFHS Rule: 5-22-2** … “In awarding a reversal at the edge of the mat, control must be established while the total of two supporting points of each wrestler inside or on the boundary line. The total of two supporting points could be two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler inside or on the boundary line or while at least the feet of the scoring contestant finish down on the mat inbounds.”

**Rule 5 SECTION 25 TAKEDOWN**  
*NFHS Rule 5-25-1*... It is a takedown when, from the neutral position, a wrestler gains control over the opponent down on the mat and 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. When the defensive wrestler’s hand(s) touch the mat it is considered a supporting point(s).”

**NFHS Rule 5-25-3** ... “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 in-bounds. 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.”

**Rule 6 SECTION 4 STOPPING AND STARTING THE MATCH**  
*NFHS Rule 6-4-1* ... “When there are 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. The total of two supporting points could be two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler inside or on the boundary line. If the wrestlers go out-of-bounds in the neutral position, the match shall be resumed with each wrestler at the designated green or red area.”
2020-21 INJURY TIME PROTOCOL
FLOW CHART PROCEDURE
Appropriate Health Care Professional (AHCP)

Injury Occurs/Head, Neck, & Cervical (HNC)

HNC
- AHCP Present
  - 1st Injury TO
  - AHCP asks for time
  - Record INU Time used
  - HNC Time may run up to 5 min.
  - Record "HNC"

Continue
Default

2nd Occurrence to HNC Area
Default

Non-HNC Injury

1st Injury TO
- 1:30 Injury TO
- Record INU time used

2nd Injury TO
- Remaining INU Time
- Opponent Choice

3rd Injury Time Out
Default

Illegal Move, etc.
Recovery Time

Recovery Time-2:00 min.
(Can NOT follow with Injury Time)

Can Continue
Cannot Continue

May default prior to 2 min.
Declared Winner
Head Neck and Cervical (HNC) Protocols

Illustration A-1

**Frame 1:** Two wrestlers shoot simultaneously and bang heads in the first period.

**Frame 2:** Official checks wrestler A and starts his 1st injury time clock.

**Frame 3:** Coach asks for the AHCP for wrestler A. With the injury clock running past one minute the coach is informed the athletic trainer is assisting on another mat across the gym. Injury time runs out at one minute 30 seconds: wrestler A must default. Rule 8-2-4b.1. stipulates normal injury time rules are in effect when an AHCP is unavailable. Rule 5.2.6 & 8-2-1.

Check with your state association for their direction when to begin injury time.

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**Rule 8-2-4 a.** Signs, symptoms & behaviors of concussion

**Rule 8-2-4 b.** Extended injury time protocol: Head, Neck Cervical & Nervous System (HNC)

**Rule 8-2-4 b.1.** Appropriate Health Care Professional (AHCP) unavailable

**Rule 8-2-4 b.2.** (HNC) Injury time extension is granted

**Rule 8-2-4 b.3.** (HNC) second injury occurrence
Frame 4: AHCP arrives at the 1:15 mark of the 1st injury time, the athletic trainer (AT) asks the official for extra time to assess wrestler A. Rule 8-2-4b.2. Requires the AHCP to request extended injury time. The clock may continue to the 5 minute mark for the extended assessment time if necessary.

Frame 5: With the extended HNC time the AT allows wrestler A to return to competition. The scorer is instructed to record the 1st injury time at 1:15, and that HNC time has been completed.

Frame 6: Wrestler A sustains another injury to his head. With 15 seconds of injury time remaining, the athletic trainer requests another extended injury time. Each wrestler is afforded one HNC extended injury time per match. Rule 8-2-4 b.3. states...If a second injury to the HNC area occurs in the same match, the wrestler must default for his/her own safety.
Frame 4: AHCP arrives at the 1:15 mark of the 1st injury time, the athletic trainer (AT) asks the official for extra time to assess wrestler A. Rule 8-2-4b.2. Requires the AHCP to request extended injury time. The clock may continue to the 5 minute mark for the extended assessment time if necessary.

Frame 5: With the extended HNC time the AT allows wrestler A to return to competition. The scorer is instructed to record the 1st injury time at 1:15, and that HNC time has been completed.

Frame 6: In the third period wrestler A sustains an injury to his left knee. This is the wrestler A's 2nd injury, the official starts the wrestler's injury clock for the remainder of his allowable time (:15)
Supporting Points from the Neutral Position

Rule 5-15-1
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 point of each wrestler that are inside or on the boundary lines.

NOTE: If any part of a supporting point is on the boundary line, that supporting point is considered inbounds.
Supporting Points in Near Fall

SECTION 15 INBOUNDS:
5-15-2c near fall points or fall shall be earned only while the supporting points of either wrestler are inbounds. In a pinning situation, when all parts of the defensive wrestler’s shoulder/scapula are on the mat beyond the boundary line, if the feet including the heels and toes of the offensive wrestler are the supporting points, the offensive wrestler’s knee(s) must be inside the boundary, whether in contact with or above the mat.

SECTION 15 INBOUNDS:
RULE 5-15-2b when the defensive wrestler is on their back while the supporting points of either wrestler are inbounds wrestling shall continue. In this situation any part of the defensive wrestler’s shoulder or scapula is considered to be all the supporting points.

Wrestler B has his thigh and hip, two supporting points on the line, near fall/fall shall be counted as they are in bounds.

Wrestler A’s head is only one supporting point inbounds. Stop match and return to center as they are both out of bounds.
1. **PREPARATION:** A lifetime process to apply oneself to constantly learn and improve
   - Be well conditioned: run, bike, swim, etc.
   - Read, Read, Read. Rule book, case manual, all materials you can get your hands on
   - Attend as many meetings and clinics as possible; listen, learn, discuss and network

2. **APPEARANCE**
   - Dress appropriately to and from every event
   - Proper officiating uniform clean, pressed and travel with an extra set
   - Official’s materials include a whistle, wrist bands, flip disc, random draw kit

3. **PRE-MATCH ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES**
   - The weigh-in process
   - The health and safety inspection
   - Inspect all special equipment; either approve or disapprove

4. **TABLE TEAM**
   - Meet w/ table workers, explain signals and duties of each
   - Timer: starts and stops the clock on official’s whistle and simultaneous hand signal
   - Scorer: records points earned, penalties and any blood, injury & recovery time used by each

5. **CLEAN CLEAR MECHANICS**
   - Know and practice all 28 signals, and only approved signals shall be used
   - Especially time yourself for the proper near fall five second count
   - Be prepared to correct the score book with memory of sequence of the scoring events
6. **STARTING POSITIONS**
- Neutral starting position
- Referee’s starting position
- Wrestlers always return to center from out-of-bounds to the same position as they went out

7. **WRESTLING SKILL KNOWLEDGE**
- Have a working knowledge of both offensive and defensive wrestling maneuvers and skills
- Have a sound understanding of body mechanics, how body parts bend and move
- Safe legal maneuvers and especially dangerous maneuvers

8. **FLOW OF MATCH POSITIONING**
- Neutral wrestling: the official should flow w/ match so as to always see between both wrestlers
- Mat wrestling: the official should stay around 12 o’clock to view wrestler’s heads, arms and upper bodies
- Anticipation of wrestling skills to move into proper position promptly and smoothly
- Proper positioning is necessary to protect wrestlers, witness illegal and potentially dangerous

9. **PROFESSIONALISM**
- Meet and treat coaches and athletes and table workers respectfully
- Maintain poise and composure in difficult situations
- Handle the match in an unbiased manner
- An official should be Professional • Polite • Patient • Prompt • Decisive • Direct

10. **CONTINUED SELF DEVELOPMENT**
- Continue to read and re-read rule book and case manual
- It is important to know the rules, apply the rules & understand the intent of the rules
- Find a veteran official to be a mentor. A personal contact for discussion, travel and work together for the first several years.