

**THE OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
APPROVED WRESTLING OFFICIATING MECHANICS &
PROCEDURES MANUAL
2021-2022 SEASON**



**Tenth Edition
Created by Jim Vreeland
Edited by Toby Dunlap**

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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 explanation 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 follow strict mechanics and accepted procedures that all Ohio wrestling referees must abide by.

Ohio scholastic wrestling referees are a team. Each team member must strive for consistency. 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 permitting the use of the illustrations set forth on pages 45 to 48 of this manual.

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The tenth edition of the MECHANICS & PROCEDURES MANUAL (The Green Book) is dedicated to Ohio's scholastic **WRESTLING OFFICIALS** who work hard on behalf of the Ohio wrestling community, particularly during these unprecedented times. Contact the OHSAA Office at 614.267.2502 or Toby Dunlap, Director of Officiating Development, at 440-487-6308 concerning questions or suggestions 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 – the athlete’s safety is paramount.
 - Ohio’s middle school level consists of 7th & 8th grade athletes. Sixth graders and under are prohibited from competition at the middle school level.

PRE-MEET DUTIES

- Confirm your officiating assignment at least 5-days before the scheduled event with the A.D. of the hiring school.
- 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/weigh-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 on page 39 of this Manual)

- The OHSAA has adopted the NFHS 14 weight class option for the 2021-2022 season (a year earlier than required by NFHS Rule 4-4-1).
- May weigh in with socks & require all participants to present any special equipment at the weigh-in.
- During the pre-meet duties 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** for potential skin conditions.
 - **The referee** is the **last line of defense** to mitigate the spread of any contagious skin condition.
 - Skin forms must be the **original form signed by a physician**
 - A photocopy 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 an electronic copy on a tablet, iPhone, or 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 over.
 - ❖ **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 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 designated on-site physician.
- If an MD or DO stipulates the athlete may wrestle if it is covered, ask “is the condition contagious?”
 - NFHS does not allow a contagious skin condition to be covered to wrestle.
 - 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 when 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 present in the weigh-in room.
- Officials must be consistent in enforcing the suspected skin condition protocol.

The Ohio High School Athletic Association, as recommended by its Joint Advisory Committee on Sports Medicine, has adopted the policy to require a physician, defined as a medical doctor (MD) or doctor of osteopathy (DO), as the authorized person 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 OHSA approved Short Notice Dermatologist Practice as identified on the list found on the link below are eligible to sign the skin form and return the student to participation.

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

SPECIAL ACCOMODATIOINS FROM OHSA:

- Special needs may require the OHSA to issue an accommodation letter to allow special accommodation(s) for some athletes to participate. The **coach must present the official** with the accommodation letter prior to weigh-in.
 - 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.
 - The official simply needs to follow the specific directions set forth in the accommodation letter.
 - The OHSA issued special accommodation letter is valid only for the sport season in session.
- **Begin the inspection of contestants,**
 - Remember the inspection is to make sure the wrestlers comply with a set of grooming, health and safety standards promulgated by the NFHS/OHSA.
 - These health standards ensure that contestants, referees, tappers, etc. all have a safe environment in which to participate.
 - Inspect the athletes before the coach/trainer does any taping.
 - 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.

- Inspect the scalp (do not touch the athlete) as skin conditions may be obscured by the hair.
- D. Ask the wrestler 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 (e.g., grooming issues) that does not satisfactorily meet with your approval, tell the wrestler that he/she cannot compete until the issue is remedied.
- It is recommended that the weigh master place a capital M(mustache), N(nails), or S(shave), next to the name/weight class of a wrestler who does not pass the grooming inspection.

NOTE: With the 2020-2021 NHFS 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 that does not extend below the lower lip 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 a valid skin form indicating that his/her wrestler is free of any contagious skin conditions, the referee must tell the coach and wrestler that he/she will not be allowed to compete in the match.
 - All referees should take the necessary time to familiarize themselves with the characteristics of skin problems. Today’s wrestling referee should be familiar with the signs of potential ringworm, impetigo, shingles, scabies, herpes, MRSA, and staph conditions.
 - 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 not permit a wrestler to compete merely because the condition is covered. The 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. Socks may be worn but may not be removed (once on the scale) as a means of making weight.

- All contestants must wear an appropriate undergarment(s) that completely covers the groin and buttocks during competition. For females this 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, so all coaches have a verified weigh-in record for weight 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. 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 are a separate process than weigh-ins. They may be conducted before or after weigh-ins at the referee's discretion.

Special Equipment, Braces: Safety for the opponent is of 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 4-3-6**). 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.
- 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 protection sleeve may not be 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" pad relative to 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 at least five (5) feet of fringe protection mat around the competition area.

- While on the floor, remember to review timer and scorekeeper (home and visitor) duties with the respective table worker staff.
 - 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.
 - It is important to emphasize "checks and balances" between the timer, the home team scorer (official scorer) and the visiting scorer. Confirm running match score and cumulative team score during and following each match with one another.

Note: Not only should the table workers keep electronic devices 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.

LOCKER ROOM VISIT/TALK

- This needs to be 3 to 5-minute process. You get one chance at a first impression. Do not give a dissertation (keep it 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 table, it is important to visit each team in their 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/her team is legally equipped and ready to compete, for example:
 1. The wrestlers are all wearing a legal under garments.
 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.
 - 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 and interpretations.

CAPTAINS/COIN TOSS/REPORTING TO THE MAT

- 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 the 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 165-weight class is next to check-in, inadvertently the 175-weight class wrestler appears to wrestle. This out of weight class sequence and the wrestler must be withdrawn (without consequence).

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 (no football stance).
- Both wrestlers must be stationary until the whistle sounds (no rolling starts).

Start of the Match:

- Make sure wrestlers are in proper position and stationary.
- 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 takedowns 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.
 - Anticipate change of position.
 - Do not chase the action; stop and let the action come back to you.
 - Sometimes moving counter to the wrestlers' rotation is more effective.
 - 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.
- When awarding points ensure that your arm is situated straight above your head. Rotate your hand so that the point(s) awarded are clearly visible from all angles.

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 the wrestlers beyond the boundary line - safety first.
- Call out-of-bounds by the letter of the rule and be consistent from call to call.
 - Use proper hand mechanics w/ simultaneous whistle.
- Always keep safety in mind.
 - Be ready to reposition yourself to protect wrestlers heading out-of-bounds.
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - Hip-Toss and throws, especially to the back w/ shoulder(s)/scapulae 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:
 - Defensive wrestler is sitting on mat with attacking wrestler's arms locked around both thighs (crotch-lock, waist-lock, double under hook).
 - When control is gained verbalize the awarded points.

- Likewise, verbalize no control w/proper signal mechanics if scramble remains neutral.
- Anticipate the action to stay ahead of it.
- You may have to circle in the opposite direction to catch-up to the action.
- Being in proper position to see the action is of paramount importance. A proper call cannot be made unless you see the action.

Assistant Referee (AR):

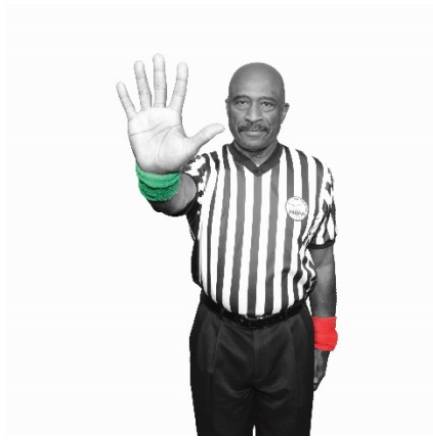
- First on & last off of the mat, be active, and assist with **the same latitude of mobility as the referee.**
- Match referee always passes on inside path when crossing, **AR no closer** than the referee.
- Mirror the referee w/the freedom to be completely mobile around mat. **(Approximately 180° opposite).**
- **AR** has freedom to move to seek the best position to complement the head official (**HO**) making calls.
- **AR** should move and be in position to be the extra pair of eyes when and where they are needed.
- Lower your 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** to make your statement.
- If the **AR** questions a situation, the **HO** should call a conference at the appropriate time.
 - 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 match time. Make sure the clock starts and stops on the referee's whistle.
- Police the designated coaches' area.
- Assist the referee with injury, recovery, blood, and HNC 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

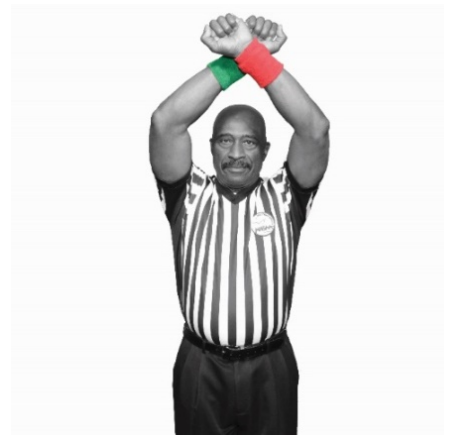
The following hand signals are the only approved signal mechanics that shall be used by the referee during a match. It is imperative that the officers of each local association review these mechanics with their membership during the local association meetings. **Only authorized mechanic signals shall be utilized. The NFHS approved signals are the means in which the referee communicates with contestants, coaches, table workers and spectators.**



STARTING MATCH



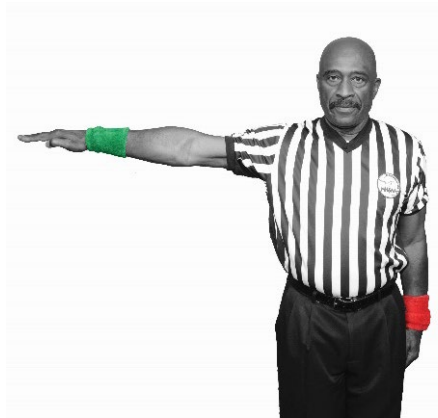
STOPPING THE MATCH



TIME-OUT



UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS



UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT



WRESTLER IN CONTROL



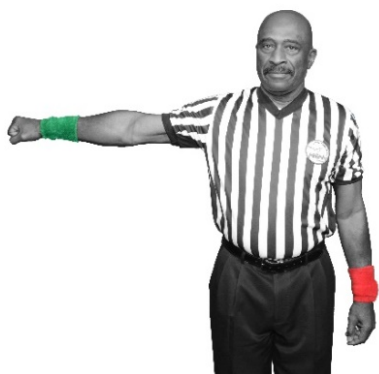
AWARDING POINTS (L / R HAND)



STALLING (L / R HAND)



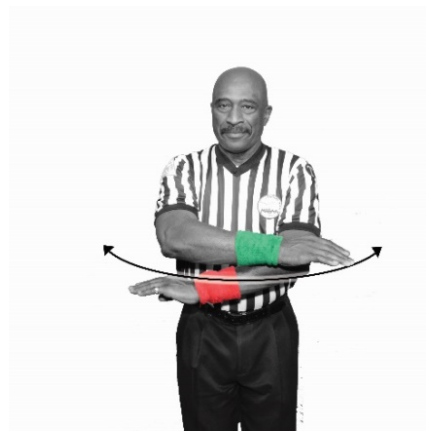
CAUTION (L / R HAND)



COACH MISCONDUCT



**DEFAULT-TECH FALL,
DISQUALIFICATION**



DEFER CHOICE



FLAGRANT MISCONDUCT



ILLEGAL HOLD



NO CONTROL



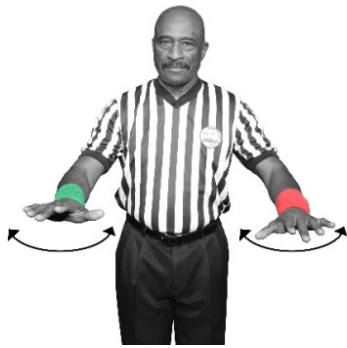
**LOCKED HANDS-GRASPING
CLOTHING**



NEAR FALL (L/R HAND)



NEUTRAL



NO CONTROL



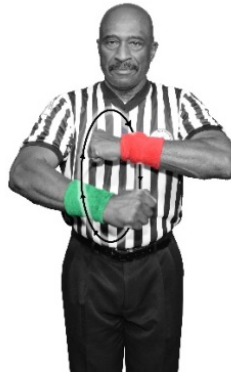
OUT-OF-BOUNDS



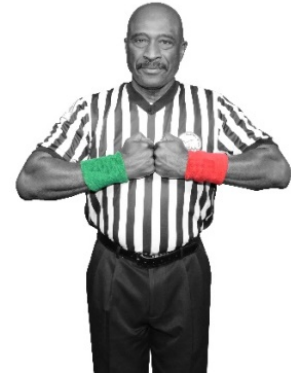
POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS



TECHNICAL VIOLATION



REVERSAL



STALEMATE

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 FOR 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, before he/she gets set it is possible the wrestler having choice to change his/her mind for a different choice.
- However, once the bottom wrestler is set, it is a warning for stalling to change the choice.

Start of the Referee's Position:

- First and foremost, the referee's hand movement to start the action 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 you are causing the problem.
- Be stationary and vary your whistle cadence.

Setting in the Referee's Position (12 o'clock references the heads of wrestlers):

- The referee should be situated 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 head referee will want the **AR** positioned to observe the palm on navel, knee on hip and back feet.
- If the head referee is at 2 o'clock, the **AR** will be at 8 o'clock (or 4 o'clock & 10 o'clock).
- **AR** will view the clock for both starts and stops.

Movement as Wrestling Continues:

- After the start and throughout mat wrestling, the official should be positioned primarily at the head & shoulders of the wrestlers (suggestion - be situated 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 head referee may move closer to the action to stop potentially dangerous holds and not miss near falls.
- Vary the 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.
 - 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.
 - 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).
 - If an assistant is involved, he/she should be in position to observe that action.
 - 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.
 - Referee should move to the best position to observe the action while protecting the wrestlers if they approach the boundary line.
 - 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.
 - 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.
- As the wrestlers move toward the boundary line, the **HO** and the **AR** should pinch closer together to herd them in.

Based on the 2018-19 NFHS out-of-bounds near fall criteria, the following shall be Ohio’s protocol.

- Since the NFHS rules committee’s intent was to allow near fall scoring on or beyond the out-of-bounds line similar to scoring a takedown, an escape, or a reversal as follows:
 - 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.
 - Wrestling is stopped if the attacking wrestler lifts his opponent off of the mat with a double leg, then steps out-of-bounds beyond the boundary line (the pair of wrestlers are both considered out-of-bounds).
- Accordingly, Ohio’s interpretation of the out-of-bounds near fall is the following:
 - If the out-of-bounds wrestler is in near fall, wrestling will continue when both knees of the attacking wrestler are in-bounds and are on the mat or off of the mat. In this scenario the toes, heels of the attacking wrestler may be the supporting points.
 - If one knee of the attacking wrestler is in-bounds supporting his weight with the other knee off of the mat and that toe is on mat, wrestling will continue.
 - Wrestling shall be stopped, and the wrestlers deemed to be out-of-bounds when the knees are lifted off the mat, and pass beyond the boundary line.
 - Wrestlers are in-bounds when two supporting points of either wrestler are in-bounds or one supporting point of each wrestler is in-bounds.

Note: It is necessary to be consistent with scoring on the boundary line for takedowns, escapes and reversals and NF. Officials 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 boundary line, makes common sense and follows the intent of the rule and the committee’s reasoning for the new near fall scoring rules beyond the boundary line. (See Illustrations on pages 45 and 46, 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 confident 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 **HO** should always call the match as though he/she has no **AR**.
 - The **HO** should not confer with the **AR** before the call.
 - Make the call and confer with the **AR** for a second opinion.
- 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 consider 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 **HO** 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 timing correction on the clock that is necessary.
- The **AR** may count down four, three, two, one - time! (Especially if no taper is present).
- The **AR must help “catch”/protect the wrestlers from injury, e.g., going into the table, clock tower, a wall/stage, etc.**

Note: The **AR** should not traverse across the center of the mat to get back into the action. Always use a circuitous route (around or near the boundary line). **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 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, “one thousand-one, one thousand-two, one thousand-three, one thousand-four, one 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, table personnel, and fans.
 - The advantage to this is your doing two things at once, this allows everyone around to see, hear and understand what you are doing, and where you in the count 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.
- When looking for NF or counting NF points, the referee should be in the prone position (lying flat or on the side) on the mat. The optics are bad when the referee is on the knees, head down with the rear end situated higher than the head.

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 the defensive wrestler back to the stomach with the arm still bared - it’s the same hold. Once the offensive wrestler lets go of the arm and allows the defensive wrestler to base out, clear the arm, and 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 to indicate no back exposure.
- 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 **AR's** job is to keep everything clean “up top”.
 - The **HO** 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 did it become illegal by the action of the bottom man doing something to make it illegal, or did the top man overtly make it illegal. The **HO** 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 **HO** 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.
- Do not ignore "tapping out" as this may be the only way that the wrestler can convey that he/she is in distress.

A COACH MUST BE 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 go to the following link:
<https://ohsaa.org/concussionresources>
- Ohio Law (ORC 3313.539 and ORC3314.03) stipulates the appropriate education necessary for all sports officials.
- For a suspected concussion or a head injury:
 - **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.
 - **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:
 - A coach or referee **MUST** remove a student athlete exhibiting signs of a concussion and head injury from practice or competition.
 - 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.
 - Prohibits an athlete from returning to play on the same day as he/she was removed from practice or competition.
- All OHSA 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.
 - NFHS Associations Concussion in Sports - What you Need to Know: <http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=38000>
 - 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 -
 - **The student-athlete may not return to competition the same day.**
 - The student-athlete may only return to practice and/or competition after being assessed by an **AHCP** with written approval from an **AHCP**.
- The OHSA has provided the referee's concussion report form on-line at OHSA.org.

BLOOD, INJURY, AND RECOVERY TIME

BLOOD TIME:

- Blood time has a total accumulative time of five-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 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 is not deducted 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 spent. 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.
- If a wrestler is bleeding as a result of an illegal hold, unnecessary roughness, or an unsportsmanlike act and the bleeding is not stopped by the time the 5-minute blood clock expires, the offended wrestler is declared the winner.
- 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 and the bleeding is stopped within the 5-minute blood time allotment, but the offended wrestler is still injured (e.g., possible broken nose).

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 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.

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.
 - 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.
 - 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 requires a third time out for any injury, he/she would automatically default the match to the opponent.

EXAMPLE: During the 30-second ride-out ultimate 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.

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 Signals and Mechanics for Injury, Blood and Recovery Time:



START: INJURY TIME



START: RECOVERY TIME



START: BLOOD TIME



STOP: BLOOD/INJURY/RECOVERY

Mechanics of the Injury, Blood and Recovery Time:

The mechanics will vary on these three situations depending on what caused 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 declared 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

Hand Signal and Mechanics HNC Time:



The HNC protocol was first introduced by the NFHS for implementation during the 2019-2020 season. In the course of the last couple of seasons, NFHS HNC protocol has been under constant refinement in terms of improving the protocol, and this season is no exception. The NFHS Wrestling Rules have been significantly re-written to reconcile HNC protocol with other the time outs available to the referee for stopping the match. A separate HNC time-out has been added to the four other time-outs (i.e., blood, injury, recovery, and official's time-out) available to the referee. An outline of the salient provisions of the amended HNC protocol follows:

- First and foremost, if the referee observes signs, symptoms, and behaviors consistent with a concussion NFHS rules and Ohio law require that the match be immediately terminated, and the contestant shall be removed from further competition. In this situation HNC protocol does not come into play.
- If an appropriate health-care professional (physician or certified athletic trainer) is present at the venue, the referee may call an HNC time-out if a potential HNC problem is suspected so that the afflicted wrestler can be evaluated.
- The duration of the HNC time-out is a maximum of 5-minutes. Elapsed HNC time must be recorded in the scorebook or on the bout sheet).
- After the HNC evaluation, the afflicted wrestler is required to prepare without delay for continuation (if cleared by the appropriate health care professional) or default the match (if held-back by the appropriate health care professional).
- A designated, on-site meet, appropriate health care professional who determines that a wrestler should not participate, shall not be overruled.
- Coaching is allowed during a HNC time-out.
- A second HNC time-out in the same match requires the wrestler to default the match.

- If an appropriate health-care professional is not present at the venue and the referee suspects a potential HNC injury, the situation will be covered under Rule 8-2-4a (the match shall be terminated, and the contestant removed from further competition if signs, symptoms, and behaviors consistent with a concussion are observed by the referee). Otherwise, regular injury time is charged.
- If a contestant is injured as a result of an illegal hold/ maneuver, unnecessary roughness, unsportsmanlike conduct during the match or the result of a false start (by the opponent) in the neutral position, the wrestler is entitled to two-minutes of recovery time, which is not deducted from the injured wrestler's injury time allowance, nor shall it constitute an HNC timeout. The HNC time-out is not connected to recovery time.
- When HNC injury time occurs during bad time, the HNC time used will not be voided.

STALLING

General Guidelines

The most difficult aspect of wrestling is to understand stalling. The official must develop a philosophy that will guide him/her 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 objectively 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:

- It is stalling when wrestler backs off of 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 immediately attempt to secure a takedown to 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 legs 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. The following are 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 through experience 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.**

FLEEING/TECHNICAL VIOLATION

Webster defines fleeing as "...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 points being scored by the opponent is a technical violation. Both wrestlers should make every effort to remain in-bounds. **Penalty points shall not be awarded for fleeing the mat in situations where a takedown attempt has been successful, or 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 regardless of being placed in jeopardy.
 - The wrestler's proximity to the boundary line must be considered with the fleeing the mat call.
 - 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 being scored upon 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 to avoid being scored upon.
- 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 to avoid being taken down. **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 being taken down by a double leg attack from **wrestler A**. **If wrestler A is successful in scoring the takedown, there is no penalty to Wrestler B.**

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 to prevent the escape.
- **Wrestler A** simply begins driving **wrestler B** forward. **Wrestler B** tries to turn to stay in-bounds to execute a switch, but **wrestler A** continues to drive his opponent off the mat to prevent a reversal or an escape.

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 beyond the boundary 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 boundary 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 an imminent scoring situation.
- 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 near fall 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, shall not 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.

First: If the bite occurs in a place where the defensive wrestler may have bitten himself/herself, the official must see the biting action.

- Just seeing a cross face doesn't necessarily mean the defensive wrestler was bitten.
- The official should see the clamping action of the jaws during the bite.
- If the referee sees the **defensive wrestler bite himself/herself** and that wrestler shows the referee the teeth marks, it is unsportsmanlike conduct on the defensive wrestler.

Second: 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.”

- 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.
- The bitten wrestler must inform and show the referee the bite marks when it occurs.
- 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.
- 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.
- The impression of a bite should be the teeth marks left after the clamping of the bite occurs.
- There may be bleeding and/or bruising around the bitten area.
- This all verifies the bite, and now comes the difficult part. Informing the coach and wrestler.
- 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.

Third: Once the referee is absolutely sure of the biting incident, it is important to handle this situation without delay.

- 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.
- He/she needs to exhibit self-confidence, and, in a prompt firm manner, make the flagrant misconduct call.
- 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.
- 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.
 - Look in the OHSAA Official's handbook and the report form is found on OHSAA.org web site.

- **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.
 - 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.
- 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 SITUATIONS

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."
 - **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 requires a safe and healthy environment for young athletes, and each state association fosters and upholds the strong concern for the safe participation for all student-athletes.
- The most important act for a wrestling referee is stopping potentially dangerous holds and maneuvers before they reach the dangerous state.
 - 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 up to the referee to recognize situations that can cause serious injury.
- It is important for the referee to anticipate body movement and position and have the ability to sense or recognize potentially dangerous situations as the wrestlers place themselves in hundreds of awkward positions during a match.
- The referee must constantly position and re-position himself/herself to have the very best line of vision to view the overall action.
 - This allows the wrestling referee to execute 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.
- The referee that walks around a pair of wrestlers showing 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 while not stopping the match is an invitation for disaster.
- The referee's first reaction should be to firmly blow the whistle while stepping in to stop the action.
- After a short explanation of what was dangerous, the match will promptly be restarted.
- **NFHS Rule** stipulates 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 can be seriously injured and taken to the hospital by the rescue squad. Later, it is learned that the injured wrestler requires 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 rehabilitation after the surgical procedure.
 - The situation could have been avoided if the referee blew his/her whistle several seconds sooner.
 - If referees are going to make a mistake, err on the side of safety.
 - Allowing a situation to continue to allow a wrestler to 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 entrust wrestling referees with the fair and unbiased oversight of their son's and daughter's matches, as well as for their safety and well-being.
- Referees should protect the wrestlers from:
 - Hitting the wall,
 - Landing on the floor,
 - Being tossed into the scorer's table or the clock tower,
 - From injury due to the unorthodox maneuvers that entangle the competitors.
- Using the potentially dangerous stoppage can save months of pain and family heartache.
- **The HO and the AR must always protect the wrestlers.**

STALEMATE

Webster Defines the term Stalemate As "...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 actual stalemate situation, the athletes should be permitted to wrestle their way out of the situation.
- It is employed 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 could influence the outcome of the match.
- Mixed signals are given when contradictory calls are made, i.e., a stalling call made immediately after a stalemate call – this is bad mechanics. 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 engaged in a situation that prevents improvement in position without jeopardizing safety, loss of position, or giving up a score.
- If both wrestlers are locked in a position where mutual attempts to improve would result in conceding a score to the opponent forcing both wrestlers to maintain the position.
- The referee should allow the athletes to compete, wrestle their way through the match, and recognize the point where the mutual improvement of position is no longer possible.
 - Recognize that the stoppage of action is due to their respective positions being impeded in a manner that prevents improvement.
 - Pause a moment to evaluate the situation. Once you recognize that both positions cannot improve without jeopardizing being scored upon, safety, or loss of position, blow the whistle to stop the match, give the proper mechanic signals (stop the match signal followed by the stalemate signal).
 - Verbally communicate with the table and wrestlers then restart the match.

Recognize stalemate situations 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 as a stalemate and return the wrestlers to center.

COACH'S 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 a 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 who controls the situation.
 - If a coach requests a conference, the process starts by instructing the wrestlers to stay inside the 10-foot center circle.
 - If a wrestler(s) leaves the 10' circle it is unsportsmanlike conduct - make the call
2. Walk to the scorer's table to meet with the coach. The conference can only be held with a coach who was actually sitting in the coaches' area (tournament) or team bench (dual meet).
 - While approaching 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 directly in the eyes, and **DON'T SAY A WORD!**
 - Listen to what the coach wishes to discuss – **A good communicator is a good listener!**
 - Part of defusing a potentially heated situation, is not to put fuel on the fire (e.g., 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 statement may be enough to defuse a potentially hot situation).
 - As you listen, formulate, and deliver a calm, clear, concise response to the coach's question.
 - Especially the criteria or the rule you applied to make the call.
 - Do not let this become a question-and-answer session.
 - Keep the discussion brief

- If a misapplication of a rule occurred make the appropriate correction, thank the coach and request that he/she returns to the coach's area (tournament) or team bench (dual meet)
- If no misapplication of a rule occurred or if your judgement was questioned, thank the coach, and inform him/her of the warning (or requisite penalty) for misconduct (assessed on the head coach). Then request him/her to return to the coach's corner (tournament) or team bench (dual meet).
- Instruct the scorer to record a warning (or requisite penalty) on the head coach.
- If during the exchange, or at the conclusion he/she is acting in an unsportsmanlike manner it is important to assess an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty (on the offender) and deduct the requisite team point.
- 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 which must be conducted at the table. It is incumbent upon the official to grant a conference request and listen to 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 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 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 being removed from the event for the remainder of the day.
- It is the responsibility of every referee not to allow coaches to overrun the scorer's table with time-wasting questions. By consistently applying the warning for misconduct rule, 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.
- Referees need to manage these 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 occur.
- Listen to the veteran officials describe situations they have encountered and learn from them.
- Learning will be a life-long process, so remember to "absorb" something from everyone.

CORRECTION OF ERRORS

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

- Rule 6 breaks errors into three basic elements:
 - Bad time (see Rule 5-1-1)
 - Dual meet scoring errors by the referee, timekeeper, or official scorer, and
 - Tournament scoring errors by the referee, timekeeper, or official scorer.
 - Each has its own conditions that must be adhered to when considering the correction of 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.
- NO REWRESTLING IS NECESSARY.

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.
 - 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, blood time, and HNC injury 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
NHC is not accounted for in the acronym
- 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” and HNC injury time, 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 would 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.

Dual meet scoring errors by the referee or official scorer

Match Score

- Errors by the timekeeper, official scorer or referee must be corrected prior to the offended wrestler leaving the mat area and before the start of the next match on that mat if additional wrestling **is necessary**.
- If additional wrestling **is not necessary**, the error may be corrected as long as the offended wrestler or coach remains in the mat area after the match has concluded and before the start of the next match on that mat.
- Errors involving the computation of match score must be corrected within 30-minutes after the conclusion of the dual meet. If the error requires additional wrestling, it must be corrected prior to the next match.
 - A computational error is when a wrestler’s or team’s score is incorrectly added together.

Team Score

- Errors involving the recording or computation of team scores must be corrected within 30-minutes of the conclusion of the dual meet.
 - A recording error is one in which the correct points and/or designated scoring symbol was erroneously entered on the scorebook or bout sheet, e.g., a 3-point NF is erroneously recorded as a 2-point NF.

Tournament scoring errors by the referee or official scorer

Match Score

- Errors by the timekeeper, official scorer or referee must be corrected prior to the offended wrestler leaving the mat area and before the start of the next match on that mat if additional wrestling **is necessary**.
 - Mat Area is defined as the wrestling mat plus the space of at least 10 feet surrounding the mat.
- If additional wrestling **is not necessary**, the error may be corrected as long as the offended wrestler or coach remains in the mat area after the match has concluded and before the start of the next match on that mat.
- Errors involving the computation of match score must be corrected prior to the next match in which either wrestler competes. If the error necessitates additional wrestling, it must be corrected prior to the offended wrestler leaving the mat area and prior to the start of the next match on that mat.
- Team Score
- Errors involving the recording or computation of team scores must be corrected within 30-minutes of the official posting of team scores.

Note: It is incumbent upon the head coach to know the team scores at the conclusion of a tournament. It is the responsibility of the head coach to report any point discrepancy within the 30-minute time frame following the conclusion of the tournament.

EJECTION AND EJECTION REPORT PROTOCOL

A flagrant misconduct penalty or two unsportsmanlike conduct penalties administered to a coach, a wrestler (not competing in a match) and other team personnel come with significant consequences. The attendant penalties include team point deductions, the forfeiture of earned team points and contest ejections mandated by NFHS rules. Furthermore, the OHSAA imposes additional contest ineligibility penalties barring participation in a defined number of future competition events. If the ejection penalty is for fighting the OHSAA contest ineligibility penalty becomes more stringent. Given the seriousness of such penalties, it is incumbent upon all officials to become intimately familiar with the NFHS rules that govern flagrant misconduct and unsportsmanlike conduct acts, as well as the reporting requirements to the OHSAA office so the penalties can be adjudicated in an expeditious manner.

Unsportsmanlike conduct and flagrant misconduct penalties imposed on coaches and other team personnel are defined by NFHS Rules 7-5-3 and 7-5-5, respectively. Unsportsmanlike conduct of contestants during a match is defined (partially) under NFHS Rule 7-4-2 and the penalty administration is set forth in NFHS Rule 8-1-3. The forgoing penalties are administered in accordance with the Penalty Chart below.

	Rule	Warning	1 st Penalty	2 nd Penalty	3 rd Penalty	4 th Penalty
Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Contestants During a Match ¹	7-4-2, 8-1-3	No	1 Match pt.	1 Match pt.	2 Match pts.	Disqualification
Unsportsmanlike Conduct – Contestants (not during match), Coaches and Other Team Personnel	7-4-2, 7-5-3, 8-1-4	No	Deduct 1 Team pt.	Remove from premises immediately on second penalty and deduct 2 team pts. Removal is for the remainder of the event, day/dual meet or tournament.		
Flagrant Misconduct - Contestants	7-4-3, 8-1-6	No	Disqualify on first offense, deduct 3 team pts. and remove from premises immediately for the duration of the event. Contestant is eliminated from further competition for the remainder of a dual meet, multiple school event or tournament and no team points can be earned in an individual tournament. In dual meet competition, any team points earned shall be negated.			
Flagrant Misconduct – Coaches and Other Team Personnel	7-5-5, 8-1-6	No	Remove from premises immediately on first offense and deduct 3 team pts. Removal is for the dual meet, remainder of a multiple school event or tournament.			

¹Rule 5-17-2: "A match begins when the proper wrestler reports to the scorer's table in dual matches and tournaments until the conclusion of wrestling. The conclusion of wrestling occurs when the time expires at the end of the third period, when the overtime ends, or when a fall technical fall, disqualification or default occurs".

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Note that an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty administered to a contestant during a match is managed differently than an unsportsmanlike penalty imposed prior to or after the conclusion of a match. The definition of a match is set forth in NFHS Rule 5-17-2. In general, an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty imposed on a contestant during a match is progressively penalized in accordance with the penalty chart as a match point, while an unsportsmanlike penalty imposed prior to or after the conclusion of a match is penalized as a team point(s).

- Administering a 4th penalty during a match for unsportsmanlike conduct or a combination of penalties including unsportsmanlike conduct during a match results in a disqualification from the match and does not result in a deduction of team points, earned team points or an ejection from the contest and removal from the premises. A wrestler disqualified from a match due to penalty chart progression is still eligible to compete in a multiple school event or tournament competition.
- Continuing acts of unsportsmanlike conduct or unnecessary roughness during a match may be construed by the referee as flagrant misconduct.
- The administration of two unsportsmanlike conduct penalties to a contestant (outside of a match), other team personnel or a coach results in the deduction of one team point on the first offense and 2 team points and removal from the premises for the remainder of the event, day/dual meet, or tournament on the second offense.

Flagrant Misconduct

Contestants - Disqualify on first offense, deduct 3 team points. and remove from premises for the duration of the event. Contestant is eliminated from further competition for the remainder of a dual meet, multiple school event or tournament and all earned team points are forfeited in an individual tournament. In dual meet competition, any team points earned shall be negated.

Coaches and Other Team Personnel - Remove from premises on the first offense and deduct 3 team points. Removal is for the dual meet, remainder of a multiple school event or tournament.

Ejection Protocol

Contestants and other student-athletes who are penalized for flagrant misconduct or twice for unsportsmanlike conduct (not during a match) are to be removed from the premises only if there is an authorized school representative available to supervise the ejected contestant/student-athlete. Otherwise, the offending contestant/student-athlete must remain with the team under the direct supervision of the head coach.

If a head coach is penalized for flagrant misconduct or twice for unsportsmanlike conduct resulting in removal from the premises and no other authorized school representative is available to supervise the team, the event shall be terminated and the team whose coach was removed forfeits to the opponent.

Tournament managers, site administrators and other referees at the event have no authority to rescind or modify the consequences attendant to an ejection penalty. The penalizing official cannot rescind the penalty.

OHSAA Ejection Reporting Protocol

For the OHSAA to expeditiously adjudicate the disposition of an ejection penalty, it is imperative for the penalizing official to timely file a Game Report.

The OHSAA Ejection Reporting Protocol is set forth in the Handbook for Officials Section IX(3)(A.-F.) (see page 20 of the 2020-2021 edition). The following bullets are pertinent to the protocol.

- Officials **must** file a Game Report within **48 hours** of the ejection with the OHSAA office.
 - Communicate with the offender's principal or athletic director no later than the first school day following the ejection to apprise the administrator of the circumstances that led to the ejection.
 - Submit the Game Report electronically via the myOHSAA portal.
 - In the upper right-hand corner of the Dashboard click on "Official". On the left-hand menu side of the page scroll down to "Submit New Game Report" and open. Populate the appropriate fields (the "Report Topic" from the drop-down menu is: "Ejection"). In the

"Details" text box describe the situation that led to the ejection. Report the facts and not conjecture. In your description of the situation **be detailed as possible** and **quote the appropriate NFHS Rules citation(s)** supporting the ejection.

- If the ejection was the result of fighting, please specify. The definition of fighting is found in the OHSAA General Sports Regulations and is defined as follows: "Fighting is any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage a player or non-player in a combative manner unrelated to the sport. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact." An ejection for fighting carries additional contest ineligibility ramifications.
- Upon clicking the submit button, the school A.D. and OHSAA will automatically be sent copies of the Game Report.
- Response notifications will be sent to the relevant parties once the protocol has been completed.
- The OHSAA may contact the official who filed the Game Report if additional information is needed.
- Failure to file the ejection report may result in a fine.

Do not discuss potential OHSAA imposed contest ineligibility penalties with coaches or school administrators. Contest ineligibility penalties are administered solely by the OHSAA office. Refer all questions relating to contest ineligibility penalties to the OHSAA office.

In addition to ejection reporting, the Game Report portal is used to report concussions, suspected concussions, facility commendations/deficiencies, injury issues **and commendations relating to good sportsmanship**.

Officials are encouraged to file Game Reports that acknowledge acts of good sportsmanship.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

On and off the mat during course of the season be professional, be courteous, and be vigilant. It is incumbent upon all of us to set a good example for the student-athletes with whom we will interact with 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. We 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. We must be consistent in enforcing sportsmanship norms from the opening handshake to the final whistle. On one hand our 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 our most important functions is to be a positive role model to the athletes we serve. By working to promote and acknowledge good sportsmanship, we will be a constructive influence on the participating athletes.

The Top Ten List for Success (pages 48 and 49, courtesy of the NFHS) generalizes what we can all do to become masters of our craft.

NFHS MEDICAL RELEASE FORM **FOR WRESTLER TO PARTICIPATE WITH SKIN LESION(S)**

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) who 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 AN EFFECTIVE 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.

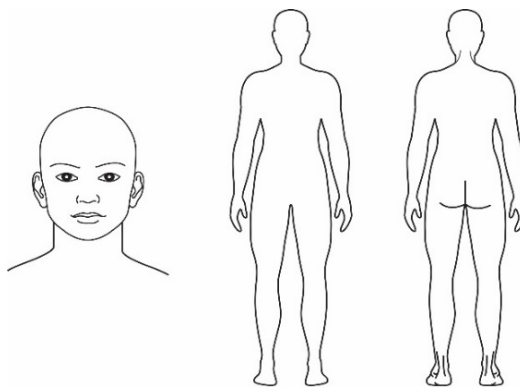
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): 24 hours of topical or oral medication and no discharge.

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 OHSA 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.



2021-2022
Out-of-Bounds & Supporting Point
Interpretation from NFHS & Rule Book Support

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 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 considered to be in-bounds if a total of two 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 touching 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 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.

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).”

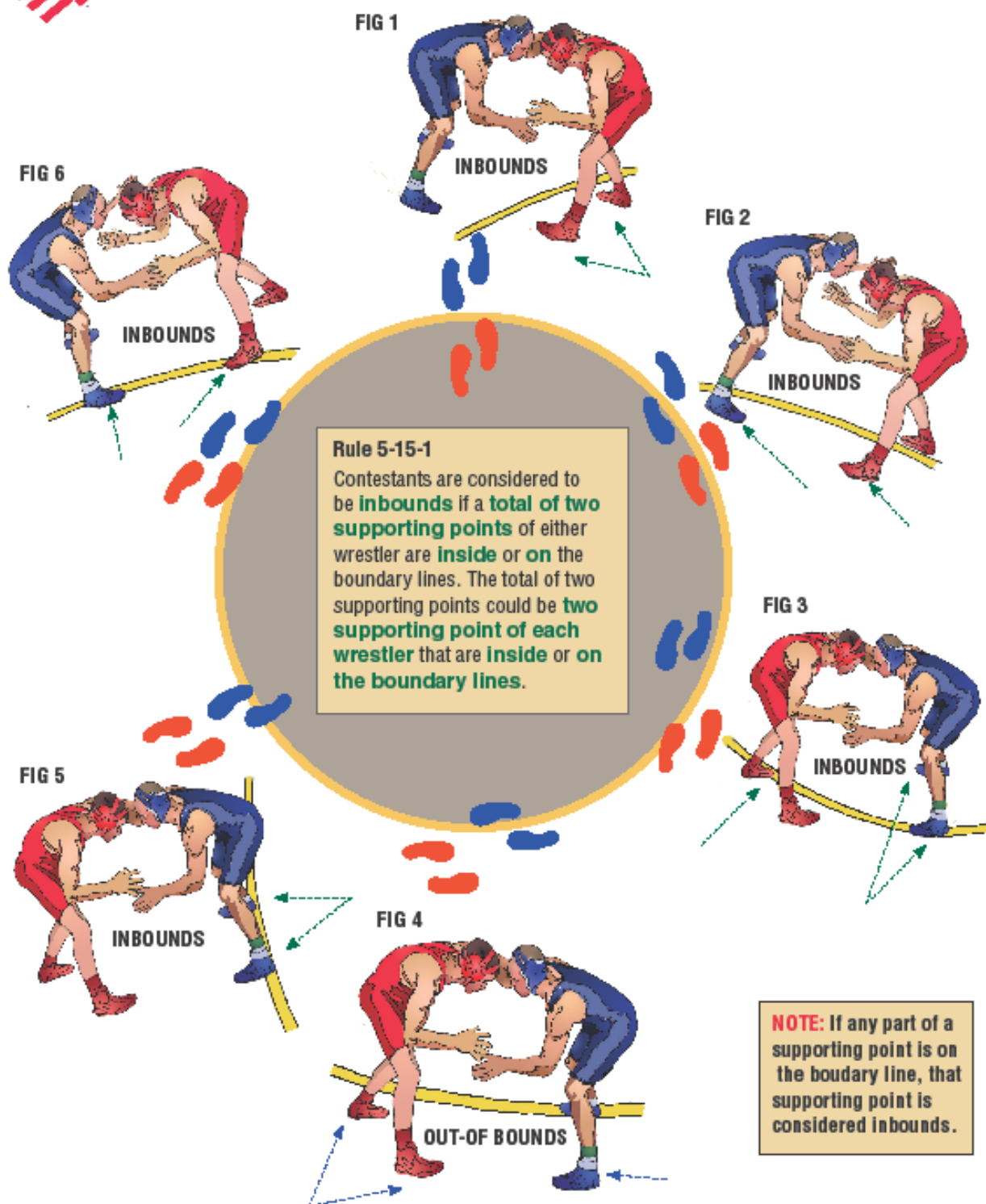
NFHS Rule 5-25-3 - “In awarding a takedown at the edge of the mat, control must be established while a total of two supporting points of either wrestler are in-bounds. The total of two supporting points could be two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler that are inbounds 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.”

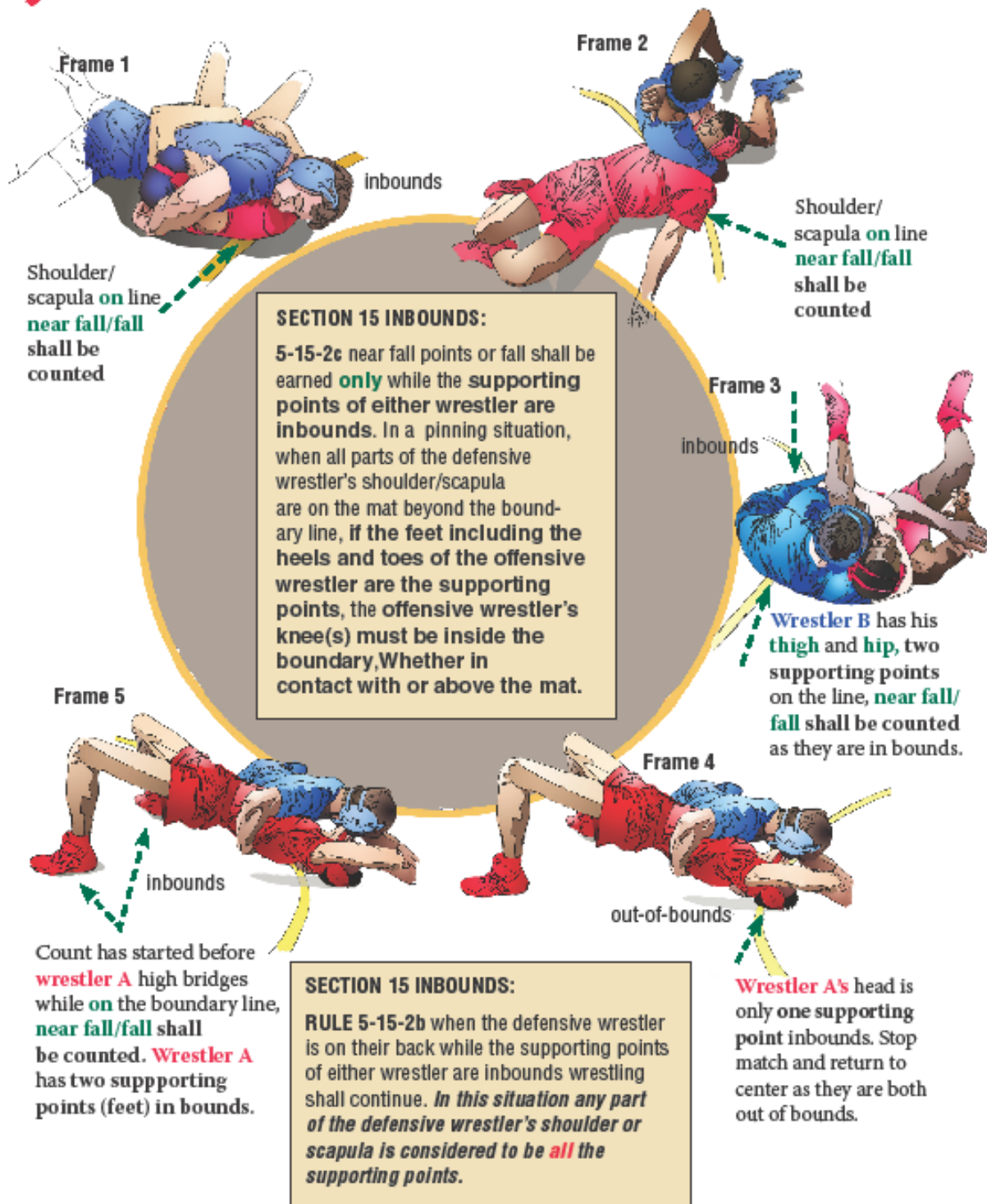


Supporting Points from the Neutral Position





Supporting Points in Near Fall





A WRESTLING OFFICIAL'S TOP TEN LIST FOR SUCCESS

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

A WRESTLING OFFICIAL'S TOP TEN LIST FOR SUCCESS

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.

WHO TO CONTACT?

All matters that involve OHSAA administrative questions, such as but not limited to, the weight management program, participation point limitations, sectional, district and state tournament regulations, student-athlete eligibility, state tournament series seeding, disciplinary actions following game ejections, etc. shall be directed to the attention of Tyler Brooks, OHSAA Senior Manager of Officiating and Sport Administration (tbrooks@ohsaa.org).

Any matter that relates to NFHS and OHSAA wrestling rules interpretation should be directed to one of the following:

Toby Dunlap, OHSAA Director of Officiating Development (toby.dunlap@lubrizol.com; 440-487-6306).

Ray Anthony, OHSAA State Rules Interpreter (ctfire210@aol.com, 440-552-5372).

Dick Loewenstine, OHSAA State Rules Interpreter (rloewenstine1@gmail.com, 513-293-2777).

Jim Vreeland, OHSAA State Rules Interpreter (vree66@gmail.com, 419-707-1133).

Under no circumstance shall an official respond to a question relating to OHSAA administrative issues. When in doubt, direct the question to an SRI or the DOD who in-turn will ensure that in is placed with the proper authority within the OHSAA Administrative Office.