



Wrestling Meeting Folder 2011-2012

Steve Dalberth, New York State Rules Interpreter

New Sections Define Competitions

Three new sections of the NFHS Wrestling Rules Book will better define rules for multi-team dual meets and team-formatted tournaments. The new sections will appear as Rules 1-3-1 through 3.

Previously, the rules book addressed only dual meets and individually bracketed tournaments. Definitions for individually bracketed tournaments, dual-meet / team-formatted tournaments and combination tournaments will be contained in Rule 1-3.

"In recent years, high school wrestling has moved from dual meets and individually bracketed tournaments to tournaments incorporating a dual-meet/ team format. To keep up with this movement the rules committee did propose 18 changes to the rules book, and approximately two-thirds of those changes resulted from incorporating the new dual-meet/ team format rules," said Dale Pleimann, chair of the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee.

Article 1 of the new section provides a general definition of individually bracketed tournaments. Individually bracketed tournaments are a series of matches in each of the NFHS weight classes in which each member of the team advances independently on the bracket based on that individual's results.

Article 2 provides a general definition of dual-meet or team-formatted tournaments. Dual-meet or team-formatted tournaments are a series of matches in each of the NFHS weight classes in which advancement and/or results are based upon the team's collective results.

Article 3 provides a general definition of tournaments that combine both a dual meet or team format with an individually bracketed format. Combination tournaments are a series of matches in each of the NFHS weight classes in which individuals initially move from round to round as a team (pools) or advance based on team results culminating in the wrestlers placement on an individual bracket with advancement from that point based on individual results.

Boundary Line Now Inbounds

The wrestling area will become slightly larger starting with the 2011-12 season thanks to a change approved by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee.

Rule 2-1-3 now makes the boundary line inbounds, thus expanding the wrestling area. Previously, wrestlers were out of bounds if they were touching any part of the 2-inch-wide line which marks the wrestling area.

Unchanged are other facets of the rule regarding the mat. At the center of the mat there shall be a 10-foot circle, indicated by a 2-inch line.

When the area enclosed by the 10-foot circle and the inbounds area of the mat are of contrasting colors, the 2-inch line may be omitted.

Referees' Responsibilities Extend Beyond Meet

A change to Rule 3-1-3 gives meet referees the opportunity to complete required reports or other administrative duties even though their jurisdiction is over.

Under the new rule, the meet referee(s) maintain administrative responsibilities for the meet through the completion of any required reports or correspondence in response to any action occurring while the referee(s) have jurisdiction. State associations may intercede in the event of unusual incidents after the referee(s), jurisdiction has ended or in the event that a meet is terminated prior to the conclusion of the regulation meet.

The change codifies existing and historical interpretations. It clarifies that administrative duties for meet referee(s) may need to continue after the meet to document actions which occur during the meet. This revision illustrates the difference between the meet referee(s)' jurisdiction during the meet and other administrative responsibilities such as submitting specific reports after the meet.

In addition, the change would clarify that state associations may continue to develop and implement policies that allow for review of unusual incidents that occur while the meet referee(s) have jurisdiction or after the meet.

Situation: During a dual meet, the coach receives a flagrant misconduct.

Ruling: The meet referees' administrative responsibilities such as submitting reports extend after the meet. Meet referees must then adhere to the state association policy with regard to the filing of post-meet reports.

Rule 3-1-13 Clarification

The location of the referee during injury, blood or recovery time-outs has been clarified. This rule now reads during injury, blood or recovery time-outs, the referee should be in a position to monitor the appropriate clock and wrestlers. The referee should notify the coach and / or wrestler at the one minute mark and the 30 second mark as to the amount of time remaining.

Weight Classes Revised

When wrestling competition begins this season, there will still be 14 weight classes. But for the first time in 23 years, the weight classes will change from those of the previous season.

At its annual meeting in Indianapolis in April, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Wrestling Rules Committee approved an upward shift of the weight classes, beginning with the 103-pound class moving to 106 pounds, which resulted in new weights for 10 of the 14 classes.

The 14 weight classes approved by the committee for 2011-12 are as follows: 106 (pounds), 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 160, 170, 182, 195, 220 and 285. Three middle weight classes - 145, 152 and 160 - were retained, although they are 7-8-9 in order now rather than 8-9-10. The heaviest weight class (285 pounds) remains unchanged as well.

"The change in weight classes resulted from a three-to-four year process utilizing data from the National Wrestling Coaches Association (NWCA) Optimal Performance Calculator," said Dale Pleimann, chair of the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee and former assistant executive director of the Missouri State High School Activities Association. "The rules committee was able to analyze data from almost 200,000 wrestlers across the country, with the goal to create weight classes that have approximately seven percent of the wrestlers in each weight class.

"Throughout the process, each state association was kept completely informed and was provided multiple opportunities for input," Pleimann added. "The results of the last survey of each state association indicated that the majority of states favored a change, and the committee listened and acted accordingly."

The last wholesale shift in weight classes occurred in 1988, when the lowest weight class was increased from 98 to 103 pounds. The only other changes since then were in 2002, when the number of classes went from 13 to 14 and the 215-pound weight class became mandatory, and in 2006, when the 275-pound class was increased to 285 pounds.

New York State Interpretation:

The following 15 weight classes are required for all dual meets and tournaments;

99, 106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 160, 170, 182, 195, 220, and 285.

A two pound growth allowance will be added on December 25th.

Minimum Weights:

Beginning in 2011-12: Minimum weights are required for all 7th and 8th graders and **MUST** be met and **RECORDED** at the matside weigh-in. **If they do not make the minimum weight at the morning honor weigh-in, the morning weight should not be recorded.** A wrestler must weigh in **excess of 91** for the 99 lb. weight class, **96** for the 106, **185** for 220, and **210** for 285. The minimum weight must be exceeded at the matside weigh-in for the match to count toward the 50% rule. If the minimum was only exceeded at the honor weigh-in, they are not eligible. **9th thru 12th graders do not have to make minimum weights.** (Program of Wrestling)

Rule Clarifies Disqualification

Modified wording in Rule 6-2-2 will clarify a specific disqualification situation.

In dual-meet competition, the wrestlers must be ready to go to the scorer's table immediately when called by the referee. The wrestler to be sent to the scorer's table first, who then cannot be withdrawn or replaced without being disqualified and the weight class being awarded to the other wrestler by disqualification if there is one, shall be determined by the pre-meet disk toss. Once the second wrestler has properly reported to the scorer's table in proper sequence, as determined by the pre-meet disk toss, neither can be withdrawn or replaced without disqualification and the weight class awarded by disqualification

Previous rules book language stated that a match starts when an eligible wrestler reports to the scorer's table.

If that happened and that wrestler was disqualified, it was recorded as a forfeit, which conflicted with other rules book language. The revised language eliminates that conflict in terminology.

Situation 1: For a dual meet, both coaches weigh in two wrestlers for the 126-pound class and two wrestlers for the 132-pound class. At the completion of the 120-pound class, one of B's wrestlers, who is qualified for the 126-pound class, reports to the scorer's table. The team that is required to send a wrestler to the scorer's table first sends A. As soon as A reports to the scorer's table, the coach of School B recalls B1 and sends B2 to the scorer's table. Is this permissible?

Ruling: Yes.

The team that was determined by the pre-meet disk toss to send its wrestler to the scorer's table first is restricted and cannot be withdrawn or replaced without being disqualified. However, once both wrestlers have properly reported to the scorer's table **in proper sequence neither can be withdrawn or replaced without disqualification.**

Situation 2: In a dual meet, the visiting team is required to send its 195-pound wrestler to the scorer's table first. The coach of the home team sends a wrestler to the scorer's table prior to the visiting wrestler going to the table. Once the visiting wrestler appears at the table, is it permissible for the home team to change wrestlers?

Ruling: The rule alternates between home and visitor as to which wrestler is required to report to the scorer's table first. However, if the wrong team sends the correct wrestler to the scorer's table, but it is not required to be sent first, there is no penalty. Once the correct wrestlers have reported to the scorer's table, in the correct sequence, then neither wrestler can be withdrawn or replaced without being disqualified.

Figure 4 Around Head Now Illegal

A third type of the Figure 4 will be considered an illegal hold / maneuver in the 2011-12 wrestling season.

The NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee voted to amend **Rule 7-1-5R**, adding the Figure 4 around the head (See PlayPics A and B) to the existing rule that banned the Figure 4 around the body or both legs.

"This move was being used by high school wrestlers more and more on the head, so to minimize the risk of injury, the committee voted to outlaw the Figure 4 on the head as well as around the body and both legs," said Bob Colgate, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Wrestling Rules Committee.

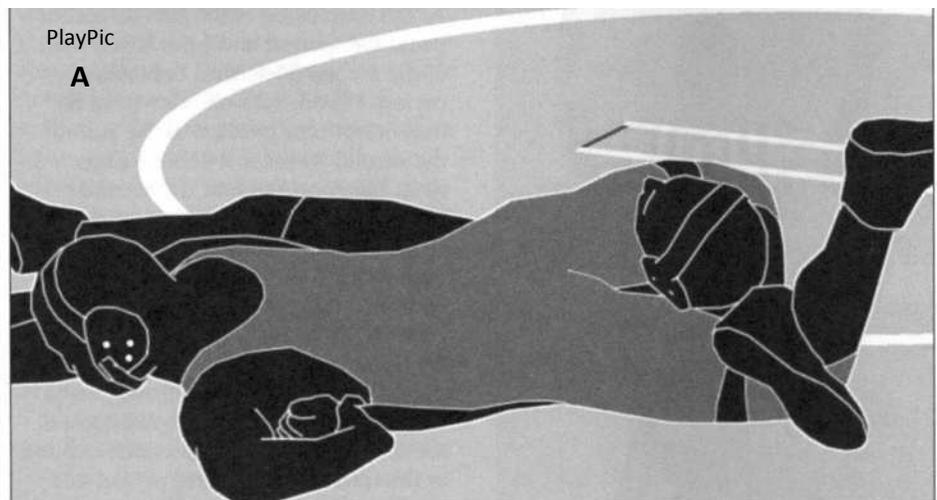
As with other illegal holds or maneuvers, there is no warning for a contestant applying the Figure 4 around the head. The first and second illegal holds or maneuvers result in one point being awarded to the opponent. The third instance results in a two-point penalty and the fourth infraction results in disqualification.

Situation 1: Wrestler A has control and is attempting a fall with a Figure 4 of the head, but in attempting to apply the Figure 4, Wrestler A's foot comes up to his midcalf and the Figure 4 is not completed. Would this be considered a violation?

Ruling: The Figure 4 around the head is an illegal hold/maneuver. If the foot is placed at midcalf as described in this situation, it would be a straight head scissor which is also an illegal hold/ maneuver.

Situation 2: If a Figure 4 of the body or the head is applied by one of the wrestlers while they are in a neutral position, is this a technical violation by the application of the Figure 4?

Ruling: No. The Figure 4 is an illegal hold/ maneuver whenever it is applied to the body, both legs or the head of the opponent.



No Loss of Choice After Second Injury Time-Out

The addition of Rule 8-2-1c to the NFHS Wrestling Rules Book eliminates a possible inequity regarding choice of position following a second injury time-out.

If the second injury time-out is taken at the conclusion of the second period and the opponent already has the choice at the beginning of the third period the opponent would then have the added choice at the first restart after the beginning of the third period

"Previously, at the end of the second period and before the third period, Wrestler A takes his or her second injury time-out, which now gives the choice to Wrestler B," said Bob Colgate, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee. "However, it's already Wrestler B's choice by virtue of the original flip of the disk. Therefore, Wrestler B gains no advantage or benefit from Wrestler A's second injury time-out. With this change, Wrestler B would now have his or her choice at the first restart after the beginning of the third period."

Situation:

These following 11 Rulings (a-k), will illustrate the options an opponent has after the second injury time-out has been taken. Each ruling starts with Wrestler A always taking his/ her second injury time-out; allowing Wrestler B the choice. The progression will start from the first period of the regulation match through the entire overtime periods, including the 30-second Ultimate Tiebreaker.

Rulings:

- (a) During the first period, Wrestler B's choice would either be (top, bottom or neutral) position on the restart as defer is not an option;
- (b) At the completion of the first period and prior to the start of the second period, Wrestler B would have choice at the start of both the second and third periods of (top, bottom or neutral) position. This would either be during a dual meet with Wrestler B already having choice, or during a tournament with a flip of disc to determine choice;
- (c) At the conclusion of the second period and before the start of the third period. Wrestler B already has his/her choice at the beginning of the third period. Fifteen seconds into the third period, the wrestlers go out-of-bounds. Wrestler B gets his/her choice prior to the restart;
- (d) Anytime during either the second or third periods, Wrestler B would have choice (top, bottom or neutral) position on the restart;
- (e) At the completion of the third period of regulation and prior to the start of the one-minute sudden victory period, Wrestler B would have the choice of (top, bottom or neutral) position at the beginning of the sudden victory period;
- (f) During the one-minute sudden victory period, Wrestler B's choice would be (top, bottom or neutral) position on the restart;

(g) At the conclusion of the one-minute sudden victory period and prior to the start of first 30-second tiebreaker period, Wrestler B would have choice at the start of both 30-second tiebreaker periods of (top or bottom) position;

(h) During either of the 30-second tiebreaker periods, Wrestler B would have choice of (top or bottom) position on the restart, i.e., if Wrestler B chose down and escaped before Wrestler A used his / her second injury timeout and before the completion of that 30-second tiebreaker period, Wrestler B's choice would be the same as above;

(i) At the conclusion of the first 30-second tiebreaker period and prior to the start of the second 30-second tiebreaker period, Wrestler B's choice would be (top or bottom) position at the start of the second 30-second tiebreaker period;

(j) At the conclusion of the second 30-second tiebreaker period, and prior to the start of the 30-second ultimate tiebreaker period, Wrestler B's choice would be (top or bottom) position to start the ultimate tiebreaker period;

(k) During the 30-second ultimate tiebreaker period, Wrestler B's choice would be (top or bottom) position on the restart, i.e., with 27 seconds expired in the ultimate tiebreaker period and Wrestler A is on top as offense and takes his/her second injury time-out, Wrestler B could then choose to take top and ride Wrestler A out for the remaining three seconds to win the match.

Rule 11 Created; Covers Dual-Meet/Team-Formatted Tournaments

The 2011-12 NFHS Wrestling Rules Book will be slightly thicker than those of previous years thanks to the addition of **Rule 11**. The new material is devoted to situations related to dual-meet and team-formatted tournaments.

The new material is presented in rules book order:

Rule 11-1-1: Event administration is responsible for establishing weigh-in times within the guidelines prescribed in Rule 4-5. If, however, there is a difference in the time that teams begin competition, weigh-ins for the teams starting later may be adjusted in relation to the later starting time.

The committee believes that teams that have a later starting time should be allowed to weigh-in in relation to their starting time.

Rule 11-1-2: Failure to verify entries by a stipulated deadline or by the completion of weigh-ins for that team shall result in disqualification from a tournament. If a stipulated deadline has not been predetermined, the deadline shall be the completion of weigh-ins for each team.

The new rule stems from the committee's belief that teams that have a later starting time should be allowed to weigh-in in relation to their starting time. Thus their deadline to verify entries should be consistent with their weigh-in time if teams are allowed to weigh-in at different times.

Rule 11-1-3: All uncontested weight classes in a team's line-up due to not having a wrestler entered in that weight class shall be recorded as forfeits.

In dual-meet/ team-formatted tournaments, team points will be scored as in dual meets. Therefore an uncontested weight class will be scored as a forfeit the same as in dual meets.

Rule 11-1-4: In a Dual-Meet/Team-Formatted Tournament that does not evolve into an Individually Bracketed Tournament and/ or does not reward individual accomplishments; more than one wrestler in a weight class may be weighed in by a team and substitutions from one dual meet to the next are permissible and/ or a wrestler who weighs in for one weight class may be shifted to the next highest weight class, provided it is not more than one weight class above that for which the actual weight qualifies that wrestler

The committee agreed that in dual-meet/ team-formatted tournaments without an individual component and individual awards, there is no reason not to treat these similar to dual meets.

Rule 11-1-5: Appearing ready to wrestle on the mat, defeat due to injury, disqualifications and failure to make weight each day of the tournament apply the same as in Rules 10-2-2, 10-2-3, 10-2-6 and 10-2-7.

Rule 11-2-1: In Dual-Meet/Team-Formatted Tournaments, scoring is based upon the results of each individual match as in Rule 9-2-1.

The change was approved because the committee believes team scoring in a Dual-Meet/Team-Formatted Tournament should be the same as in a dual meet.

Rule 11-2-2: In Dual-Meet/Team- Formatted Tournaments, flagrant misconduct by a contestant results in disqualification on first offense, a deduction of 3 team points and removal from the premises immediately for the duration of the event. The contestant is eliminated from further competition for the remainder of the tournament and no team points can be earned in the current round; however, team points earned in previous rounds are not lost.

The rule was approved based on the committee's belief that deducting team points earned in previous rounds could adversely affect advancement in brackets that had already taken place.

Rule 11-2-3: If teams have identical scores, the team tie-breaking system found in **Rule 9-2-2** shall be used to determine the winner in order to determine which team advances in the bracket.

The tie-breaking system used to determine the winner in a dual meet should also be used to determine a winner in a Dual-Meet/Team-Formatted Tournament when one team has to advance in the bracket.

Situation 1: At a dual-meet tournament, Team A weighs in two wrestlers in the 126-pound weight class, with actual weight of 124 pounds for both wrestlers. May one of the two 126 pound wrestlers represent their team in the 132-pound weight class in a dual meet that day?

Ruling: In a dual- meet/ team-formatted tournament that does not evolve into an individually bracketed tournament and/ or does not reward individual accomplishments, more than one wrestler in a weight class may be weighed in by a team and substitutions from one dual meet to the next are permissible, and/ or a wrestler who weighs in for one weight class may be shifted to the next highest weight class, provided it is not more than one weight class above that for which the actual weight qualifies that wrestler. Either of the 126 pound wrestlers may represent their team in either the 126- pound or 132-pound weight class during the dual-meet tournament.

Situation 2: A wrestler defaults a match in a dual-meet / team-formatted tournament. Is he / she eligible to wrestle in the next match that day?

Ruling: The wrestler is eligible to wrestle in the team's next match that day.

Situation 3: Is team scoring in a dual-meet / team-formatted tournament scored the same as in an individual dual meet?

Ruling: Team scoring in a dual- meet/ team-formatted tournament is the same as in an individual dual meet.

Situation 4: In the third round of the first day of a two day dual-meet/ team- formatted tournament, Wrestler A pins his opponent, earning six points for his team. After the end-of-match procedure, he commits a flagrant misconduct act.

Ruling: Wrestler A is disqualified from the tournament and removed immediately from the premises as stated in Rule 8-1-6 and the wrestler cannot wrestle that day or the next. Three points are deducted from Wrestler A:s team points for this dual meet. Additionally, the 6 team points he earned are also deducted. The team points Wrestler A earned in the prior dual meets are not removed since doing so, could affect the outcome of the prior dual meets and teams have already advanced according to those results.

Situation 5: In the second round of a one day dual-meet/team-formatted tournament, after the last match of the dual meet and after the referee has signed the scorebook, Wrestler A commits an act that is deemed flagrant misconduct.

Ruling: Wrestler A is disqualified from the tournament and removed immediately from the premises as stated in Rule 8-1-6. The team points Wrestler A earned in the prior dual meets are not removed since doing so, could affect the outcome of the prior dual meets and teams have already advanced according to those results. No team points are deducted since the dual meet has concluded and is considered a prior round.

Editorial Changes Approved

In addition to rules changes, the wording in a number of rules were altered to provide clarity. The most important editorial changes follow.

A new **Rule 1-1-3** states that each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, allow an otherwise illegal piece of equipment, create risk to the athlete/ others or place opponents at a disadvantage.

Rules 1-1-1 through 1-1-4 as well as **Rules 1-2-1 through 1-2-2** were edited and re-numbered to better delineate the definitions of a match and dual meet.

Videotaping or filming is authorized unless prohibited by the state high school association. Any videotaping or filming for the purpose of reviewing during competition, however, is prohibited. That appears as **Rule 1-1-4**. By relocating this rule to **Rule 1**, this will eliminate the confusion that some individuals thought that since this rule appeared in **Rule 10** under Conduct of Tournaments it was only permissible to videotape or film during tournaments and not during dual meets.

Rule 1-3-4 Random draw was clarified for a dual meet.

Rule 1-3-5 Random draw was clarified for tournament.

The ability of a competitor to shift to a different weight class was clarified in **Rule 1-4-5**. A wrestler who makes weight for one weight class may be shifted to next higher weight class, provided it is not more than one weight class above that for which the actual weight qualifies. The exact weight of all contestants shall be recorded and submitted to the official scorer.

Rule 3-1-12 Now reads; the referee has the authority to rule promptly, and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules.

Rules 4-2-3, 4-2-4 and 10-2-4 The phrase "appropriate health-care professional" replaces "physician" In New York State an "appropriate Health-care professional" is defined as a Physician, Physician Assistant or a Nurse Practitioner.

Rule 4-3-1, It is noted that any protective equipment which is hard and/ or abrasive must be covered and properly padded **with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than 1/2-inch thick**.

Rule 5-15-1 Inbounds; Contestants are considered to be inbounds if the supporting parts of either wrestler are inside **or on** the boundary line.

A change to **Rule 5-19-5** regarding offensive starting position adds the passage, "The offensive wrestler is not to place a foot or a knee on the mat between the opponent's feet or legs, nor straddle the opponent."

The Penalty Chart under "Flagrant Misconduct - Contestants" will have the following addition: In dual-meet competition, any team points earned shall be negated.

Rule 5-25-2 Added the word **wrestler's**.

Rule 8-1-2c Added for **stalling or a technical violation** when the defensive wrestler is on his/her feet.

Rule 10-1-1 This authorization applies to Rule 10 **and 11** only.

Photos

#6 caption should read; A fall or near fall is scored when any part of **both** scapula are inbounds and the shoulders are outside the boundary line.

#11 was added to illustrate the out of bounds rule change.

#58 was added to show a legal head pry. **Note:** the same interpretation applies to a reinforced cross face.

#84 added the words **the head** to the existing photo.

#88 the caption has been changed. The language now references a wrestler and an opponent. Rather than a Offensive and a Defensive wrestler.

Rules Book Correction

Rule 5-18 Out of bounds. Now reads out of bounds occurs when a supporting part of both wrestlers is **on/or** beyond the boundary line. We must delete **on/or** due to Rule change under 2-1-3.

Important Clarification of Rule 4-1-4 and 4-1-5.

Which requires the uniform to be worn as intended/designed by the manufacturer; the following should be considered.

The ear guards must meet the requirement of Rule 4-1-4; Adequate ear protection, no injury hazard to the opponent; and an adjustable locking device to prevent it from coming off or turning on the wrestler's head.

The ear guards shall be worn as intended/designed by the manufacturer.

Uniform Shall be Worn as Intended/Designed by the
Manufacturer Rule 4-1-5



ILLEGAL



ILLEGAL

The wrestling ear guards are to be worn as intended/designed by the manufacturer and tape on the ear guards is not allowed by rule.



Flashback: 2010-11 Rule Changes

While current-season rule changes receive a deserve amount of attention, it is easy to forget the changes that were implemented the previous season.

Here is a review of changes approved by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee for 2010-11 that still apply for 2011-12.

Legal starting position (5-19-9)

The process for an offensive wrestler to assume a legal starting position was simplified. The step-by-step procedure for restarting the match that had appeared in the book was eliminated as it was deemed confusing. The rule reads, "The referee shall direct the offensive wrestler to assume a legal starting position once the defensive wrestler is stationary in a legal starting position. Once the offensive wrestler has assumed a legal starting position and is stationary, the referee shall verbally say 'Set' and then pause momentarily, before starting wrestling."

Concussions (8-2-4)

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 removed immediately from the match and shall not return to competition until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.

Each state association is to determine who qualifies as an appropriate health-care professional.

A companion editorial change was also made (Rule 8-2-5). A designated, on-site, appropriate health-care professional who determines a wrestler should not participate shall not be overruled.

Illegal hold/maneuver (7-1-5x)

The "rear-standing, double-knee kickback" was added to the list of illegal holds / maneuvers. The move occurs when, from a standing position, a wrestler behind his/her opponent drives both feet into the back of the opponent's knees.

Weigh-in attire (4-5-7)

The rules were amended to clarify what constitutes a "suitable undergarment." Male and female contestants will be required to wear a suitable undergarment that completely covers the buttocks and the groin area. In addition, female contestants must wear a suitable undergarment that also covers their breasts. NHFS 2011-2012 Case book and Manual page 23 gives examples of suitable undergarments for females as a T-shirt or sports bra.

Editorial changes

In addition to approving changes to rules in 2010-11, the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee adopted modifications that clarify the language of existing rules.

- Grasping of clothing, mat or ear guards by a contestant to gain or prevent an escape, reversal, takedown, near fall or fall is a technical violation. The second reference to mat or ear guards did not appear in the previous rule, nor did near fall.
- For clarity and consistency throughout the book, the phrases "official" and "assistant official" were changed to "referee" and "assistant referee" and the word "maneuver" is added to "illegal holds" and "potentially dangerous holds."
- Any contestant failing to make weight during the weigh-in period shall be ineligible for that weight class. That contestant may wrestle in the weight class his / her actual weight qualifies the contestant or in the next higher weight class as long as either of these weight classes are permitted by the contestant's individual weight loss plan on that given date.
- Either the contestant or the contestant's coach may opt to default a match to the opponent at any time prior to the conclusion of wrestling by informing the referee.
- Regarding the ultimate tiebreaker, if the score is tied at the end of the two 30-second tiebreakers, the choice of position for the ultimate tiebreaker will be granted to the wrestler who scored the first point(s) in the first three periods of the match. The wrestler whose opponent has received an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty at any time during the match will have the choice of position. The unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will supersede the first points scored in the regulation match.
- During a time-out for injury, no more than two team attendants and appropriate health-care professionals shall be permitted on the mat with either wrestler. That wording appears in Rule 8-2-6.

Points of Emphasis

NHFS is providing an online course on the subject of concussions in sports. It is available at no cost to users. Once you have finished, you will be added to the data base as have completed the course. The name of the individual completing the course will appear in the “Coaching search” feature as having completed this course along with any other courses completed at www.nhfslearn.com. This course takes approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Concussions, Communicable Diseases, Injury Time-Outs, Coach/Referee Conference

In addition to rules and editorial changes, the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee develops Points of Emphasis. These are areas of the sport that demand special attention and should be read and understood by all involved in wrestling.

Concussion Recognition and Management

The understanding of sports related concussions has evolved dramatically in recent years. We have learned that young athletes are particularly vulnerable to the effects of concussion. Although once considered little more than a minor "ding" on the head, we now understand that a concussion has the potential to result in short and long- term changes in brain function, or in some cases, even death.

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. It occurs when the brain is rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. What may appear to be only a mild jolt or blow to the head or body can result in a concussion.

"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." The common signs, symptoms and behaviors of concussed athletes may be found in Appendix B of the 2011-12 NFHS Wrestling Rules Book.

Given that concussed athletes often show a variety of signs, symptoms or behaviors of concussion, the NFHS SMAC strongly believes that referees must be empowered to immediately stop the competition, and start injury or recovery time, thus protecting these contestants from potential further injury. Continued participation in any sport following a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, as well as increased risk for further injury to the brain, and in some cases, death.

Neither referees, nor coaches, are expected to "diagnose" a concussion, as that is the job of a medical professional. Referees must use their best judgment again in observing the signs, symptoms and behaviors of a concussion, but are not being asked to render what could be perceived to be a medical opinion. The wellbeing of the athlete is of paramount concern during any athletic contest.

Referees, coaches and administrators must make all efforts to ensure that concussed contestants do not continue to participate.

The referee is not responsible for the on-the-mat evaluation or management of the contestant after injury or recovery time has been started. The responsibility of further evaluating and managing the athlete with a possible concussion falls upon the head coach, appropriate health-care professional or other individual designated by school administrators. If the mat-side appropriate health-care professional (if present) determines that the contestant HAS NOT suffered a concussion, the contestant may return to competition, if injury or recovery time has not expired. If there is no appropriate health-care professional available to evaluate the contestant, the contestant SHOULD NOT be allowed by the head coach to return to competition. Please see the "NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports" at www.nfhs.org for further information.

The referee does not need written permission for an athlete to return to competition nor does the referee need to verify the credentials of the appropriate health-care professional. Ensuring compliance with the Suggested Management Guidelines is a health and safety issue and should be the responsibility of the head coach and school administration, NOT the wrestling referee.

Suggested Concussion Management

1. No athlete should return to play (RTP) or practice on the same day of a concussion.
2. Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional that day.
3. Any athlete with a concussion should be medically cleared by an appropriate health-care professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
4. After medical clearance, RTP should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms.

The suggested guidelines for concussion management fall outside the realm of meet management, but are clearly a health and safety issue for coaches and administrators. These guidelines should also be applied to practices. The position of the NFHS SMAC is that no athlete should return to competition or practice on that same day after suffering a concussion. Studies have shown medical professionals that the brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in such a short time.

The definition of "appropriate health-care professional" must be determined by each member state association and / or school district with respect to state laws and local preferences. Such individuals should be knowledgeable in the evaluation and management of sports-related concussions and may, depending on controlling law, include MDs, DOs, nurse practitioners, physicians' assistants, neuropsychologists and certified athletic trainers.

If an athlete returns to activity before he or she has fully healed from a concussion, there is a risk for a repeat concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain has a chance to recover from the first concussion can slow recovery or increase the chance for long-term problems. In rare cases, a repeat concussion can result in severe swelling and bleeding in the brain that can be fatal.

If you suspect that a participant has a concussion, follow the "Heads Up" 4-step Action Plan:

1. Remove the athlete from play.
2. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.
3. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them information on concussion.
4. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health-care professional says they are symptom-free and gives the okay to return to activity.

Although rare, there are some situations in which you may need to call 911 and activate the Emergency Medical System (EMS). The following circumstances are medical emergencies:

1. Any time an athlete has a loss of consciousness of any duration. While loss of consciousness is not required for a concussion to occur, it may indicate more serious brain injury.
2. If an athlete exhibits any of the following: decreasing level of consciousness, looks very drowsy or cannot be awakened, if there is difficulty getting their attention, irregularity in breathing, severe or worsening headaches, persistent vomiting, or any seizures.

The signs, symptoms, and behaviors of a concussion are not always apparent immediately after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body and may develop over a few hours. An athlete should be observed following a suspected concussion and should never be left alone.

Athletes must know that they should never try to "tough out" a suspected concussion.

Teammates, parents and coaches should never encourage an athlete to "play through" the symptoms of a concussion. In addition, there should never be an attribution of bravery to athletes who do play despite having concussion symptoms and the risks of such behavior must be emphasized.

For further details, please see the "NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports" at www.nfhs.org.

Communicable Diseases Communicable skin conditions are a major concern in wrestling and with ~

MRSA and Herpes Gladiatorum outbreaks recently, the concern is greater than ever. If a participant has a suspected skin condition, NFHS rules require current, written documentation from an appropriate health-care professional stating the athlete's participation would not be harmful to an opponent. The NFHS has developed a form that can be used for that documentation and several state associations have adopted that form for use in their state. Regardless of the form used, it is imperative that ALL coaches perform routine skin checks of their wrestlers and require any wrestlers with a suspect condition to seek medical attention and treatment. It is also imperative that ALL referees perform skin checks as part of their pre-meet duties prior to EVERY meet. If there is a suspect condition, the wrestler, or coach MUST present the proper clearance form at the weigh-in for the dual meet or tournament, if the wrestler is to be allowed to compete. One of the keys in preventing the spread of communicable skin conditions is coaches and referees fulfilling their responsibilities professionally. It is, however, only one of the keys.

The other, equally important key is proper prevention. While prevention can be complicated, it requires that a few basic steps be taken by ALL involved in the sport.

- Educate coaches, athletes and parents about communicable skin conditions and how they are spread.
- Clean wrestling mats daily with a solution of 1:100 bleach and water or an appropriate commercial cleaner.
- Maintain proper ventilation in the wrestling room to prevent the build-up of heat and humidity.
- Clean all workout gear (including towels, clothing, headgear, shoes, knee pads, etc.) after each practice.

- Require each wrestler to shower after each practice with an antibacterial soap. Do not share bars of soap. Use individual soap dispensers.
- Perform daily skin checks to ensure early recognition of potential communicable skin conditions.
- Refrain from sharing razors or other personal hygiene supplies.

It is a coach's professional responsibility to insure that skin clearance forms presented by his or her wrestlers are legitimate and reflect the athlete's true condition. Coaches and referees are vital elements in controlling communicable skin diseases. Coaches and referees must err on the side of what is best for the health of all involved in the sport when dealing with communicable skin diseases.

Referees are the last line of defense in keeping wrestlers with communicable skin diseases off the mat. Their own safety is at stake. Coaches must realize that referees would not be placed in a position to make difficult participation decisions as often if coaches did their jobs. Covering an active infection does not meet the requirements of the skin lesion rule, this includes practice. Cold sores are considered a skin lesion and are subject to the communicable skin disease rules.

Injury Time-Outs

An injured or ill contestant is entitled to a maximum injury time-out of 1-1/2 minutes which is cumulative throughout the match

Time required to treat a pre-existing medical condition or illness is also counted as injury time. There is a limit of two injury time-outs in a wrestling match.

There seems to be an increasing amount of misuse of injury time by contestants and coaches. Wrestling is a sport that has no time-outs for resting or coaching.

Injury time-outs are only permitted when an injury or illness occurs. In the last several years, there have been entirely too many time-outs taken when an individual is primarily looking for a rest and is not injured. Conditioning is a vital aspect of wrestling and when injury time is misused, it eliminates an advantage that a wrestler has from being in top condition. Taking an injury time-out for a non-injury situation is unethical.

Coach/Referee Conference

Rule 6-6-6 provides that when a coach believes that a referee has misapplied a rule, or disagrees with a referee's judgment, the coach may approach the scorer's table, request the match be stopped (when there is no significant action) and discuss the matter with the referee directly in front of the scorer's table.

This rule recognizes that a coach has a right to request a meeting with the referee and the referee must grant that request. There are several important provisions of this rule:

1. The match is not to be stopped during significant action.
2. The meeting is to take place in front of the scorer's table. The referee should not discuss rulings or calls with a coach during the match, except as provided by this rule.
3. The wrestlers are to return to the ten-foot circle while the meeting is being conducted.
4. Only the coach requesting the meeting is to be at the table. The opposing coach is restricted to his team bench or the seating at the corner of the mat. If the opposing coach also requests a meeting, he is subject to Rule 6-6-6. The referee should never meet with both coaches at the same time if there is an application of rule complaint or disagreement concerning judgment.
5. If there is a legitimate question concerning the correct score and a coach (or coaches) request clarification of the score, Rule 6-6-6 is not invoked.
6. If an assistant referee is being utilized, the head referee may meet with the assistant referee to discuss the disagreement. This meeting should take place away from the scorer's table and outside of the hearing of the coaches or wrestlers. It is the decision of the head referee to discuss the situation with an assistant referee. A coach cannot require a consultation with the assistant referee. The assistant referee should not participate in the meeting with the coach, except at the request of the head referee as noted above. Only the head referee is to discuss complaints with the coaches. The assistant referee should never discuss complaints with the coaches during a match.
7. Conduct of coaches which becomes unsportsmanlike or abusive during the discussion must be penalized as unsportsmanlike conduct. It is also unsportsmanlike conduct for a coach to address the referee regarding a misapplied rule or disagreeing with a referee's judgment from the team bench or the corner of the mat.
8. The referee should efficiently handle the discussion and resume the match. Extended discussions or arguments should not be allowed. The referee is to meet these situations with consistency and in the spirit of the rules. If the referee determines that a rule has been misapplied, the necessary adjustments are to be made, an explanation made to the opposing coach, and wrestling resumed immediately. If there is no error, or if the referee determines that the coach is questioning the judgment of the referee, the coaching staff is to be penalized in accordance with the penalty chart.

The first occurrence is penalized as a warning. The second occurrence results in the deduction of a team point. The third occurrence results in the deduction of two team points and the removal of the head coach from the premises for the remainder of the dual meet, or the remainder of the day in a tournament. In a multiple-dual tournament, the removal is for the remainder of the day. The penalties are cumulative for the duration of a dual meet or the day of a tournament. In a multiple-dual tournament, the penalties are cumulative for the day. In a tournament, including a multiple-day tournament, the penalty sequence starts anew each day.

As a result of this year's Rules changes it will be necessary to make the following editorial changes to the 2010-2012 New York State Wrestling Interpretation Handbook.

Page 2, at the end of the paragraph which begin with "Note" please add a wrestler who earns a forfeit does not have to wait 45 minutes. (Executive Committee approved in December 2010)

Page 3, at the top of the page the penalty for exceeding the maximum number of points will now be charged against the individual wrestler not the entire team.

Page 8, Change the 15 weight classes to correspond with this year's rule change.

Page 9, Change the minimum weights to in excess of 91 for the 99 weight class, 96 for 106, 185 for 220, 210 for 285 also add 9th through 12th graders do not have to make minimum weights.

It should be noted that all page references to the Program of Wrestling are no longer accurate do to that publication being updated.

Any references to weight classes or growth allowances must be adjusted to correspond with the new weight classes however the principles of growth allowances do to consecutive days of competition remind the same.