

OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
APPROVED WRESTLING OFFICIATING
MECHANICS, POSITIONING & PROCEDURES
2012-13 SEASON



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August 1, 2012

“The Green Book”

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Thanks to Vince, Stamatis and Lyle for their leadership in the early years as much of our wrestling procedures were developed. Also, a sincere thank you to Henry Zaborniak & his support staff at the OHSAA office. This initial GREEN BOOK will evolve and improve with the continued suggestions & assistance from the local association members. Lastly, thank you to the members who assisted with the development of this new MECHANICS, POSITIONING & PROCEDURES MANUAL.

OHIO WRESTLING OFFICIALS

MECHANICS, POSITIONING & PROCEDURES MANUAL

“THE GREEN BOOK”

PRE - MEET DUTIES

- Appear at event site dressed appropriately.
 - **The referee has jurisdiction over the event once he/she arrives at the site.**
 - Shirt and tie is nice if coming directly from the work place,
 - But raggedy jeans with holes do not set the correct tone.
- Immediately find the Athletic Director / Wrestling Coach.
 - First introduce yourself. **Example:** “Good evening, I’m the wrestling referee for 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 to give yourself enough time to find your locker facility, and get into uniform.
 - Begin your duties as a professional, properly dressed, with your warm up jacket on begins to send the appropriate message to everyone about your conduct and ability.
 - The referee’s responsibilities begin by conducting the random draw (new for 2012-13).
 - It is recommended the official ask the visiting coach to make the selection.
 - The random draw weight class is also the beginning weight class to weigh-in.
- The wrestling referee has four necessary pieces of equipment; lanyard & whistle, red & green wristbands, a random draw kit and a colored flip disc. It may also be advisable to carry a spare whistle in your warm up jacket pocket.

WEIGH-INS & HEALTH CHECK

- During the pre-meet process it is important to ask the coaches several questions.
 - First, ask if they have any valid physician’s notes for any contestants who have a suspicious skin condition.
 - Remember, skin note must be the original signed by a physician (no Xerox copies)
 - It must be on the approved skin form, not on his/her Rx pad or stationary
 - And, be within the 10 day time limit.
- As the inspection process begins always be aware of the skin while looking at the other aspects.
- Read the doctor’s note carefully, and check the dates he/she has stipulated the wrestler may return to competition.
- Many coaches carry their notes to every match, not knowing the referee, and how each may perceive the skin problem.
- Begin the inspection of contestants,
 - Get in the same rhythm or pattern as you move through the line-ups.
 - Remember the inspection is to make sure the wrestlers comply with a set of health and safety standards set forth by the NFHS.
 - These health standards are to ensure all the contestants, including the referees, tapers, etc. all have a safe environment in which to compete.
 - Inspect the athletes before the coach / trainer does any taping.
 - Suggested pattern of inspection;
 - A. Check fingernails,

- B. Check the contestant's length of hair,
 - Shirt collar length, eyebrows & side burns
 - Growth of the beard,
 - Mustache,
 - Shaved heads,
 - Look around the front and side of the face & forehead,
 - And, check under the chin to look in the neck region.
 - C. Continue the skin inspection by thoroughly scanning down the length of the body.
 - D. Raise the wrestler's arms to examine the sides of the body, under the armpits, and the underside of the arms.
 - E. With the front inspection complete, spin the contestant around to begin the rear side inspection. Start at the top, begin with the hair, and check the length in the back. Be satisfied it would not hang over a normal shirt collar.
 - F. Continue the skin inspection by looking carefully around the back of the neck, down across the shoulders through the lower back, and completing the inspection with a close look at the back of the knees.
- When you find any part of the contestant inspection process that does not satisfactorily meet with your approval, promptly ask the wrestler to "clip the nails, get a shave, trim the hair length, or clean up the mustache."
 - A suggestion is to have the person recording the actual weights place a capital M(mustache), N(nails), S(shave), or T(trim hair) next to the name / weight class of any wrestler who does not completely meet the health inspection.

NOTE: Remember, a participant may have long hair, and choose to wear an approved hair cap. The hair cap is considered a piece of special equipment, and is not allowed to be abrasive. The individual referee at the start of each event must approve it. The wrestler may also need to wear a hair cap if his clean-shaven head has stubble growth that may be considered abrasive. Along the same lines, a contestant may choose to wear a face mask if he has facial hair which may be a religious rite.

- When a contestant has a suspicious skin condition, it is important to meet 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 referees last weekend didn't say anything about it", and the list continues. Suggestions to handle possible contagious skin problems.
 - Don't make statements 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 recognize a possible suspicious 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, and the referee looks out for all. If the coach cannot present proof his wrestler is clean of any contagious skin fungus, virus, staph infection, etc., the referee must tell the coach and wrestler he/she will not be allowed to compete in tonight's match.
 - All referees should take the necessary time to familiarize themselves with the characteristics of all skin problems. Today's wrestling referee should know the signs and symptoms of each; ringworm, impetigo, shingles, scabies, and staph to name the most frequently seen.
- Upon completion of the weigh-ins, the referee should sign the weigh-in sheet for verification.
- Remind the coaches of a change in rule 9-2-2f, which are the NFHS criteria in the event of a tie match at the conclusion a dual meet. The tie-breaker criteria is now an official part of the rule book

NOTE: There are a growing number of female wrestlers competing with wrestling programs at all levels. The same rules apply to all wrestlers, that is, first make weight, and second pass the health and safety check. The National Federation has adopted a rule that the same gender sex performs the weigh-in and skin check. Therefore, the referee will need to ask a female (preferably from each school) to check the female wrestler's weight (secretary, mom, etc.). Next, they will also need to check for possible skin problems. Give the ladies the necessary instructions, and trust their efforts applying the same rules to the female wrestler that you have applied to the young men. The referee may check the exposed areas.

INSPECT THE WRESTLING AREA

- After the conclusion of weigh-ins the meet referee should walk the wrestling mat and inspect the mat and markings.
- Also inspect distance/proximity and relationship to the team benches, the scorer's table and the wrestling area.
- Make sure there is five (5) feet of fringe protection mat around the competition area.
- While on the floor, remember to discuss with the timer and both the home and visiting score keepers their duties and any necessary directions.
 - Important not to let anyone interfere with the team at the table. They must not be distracted.
 - Support the team at the table ... they can make the match much easier.

PRE-MATCH LOCKER ROOM TALK

- After inspecting the wrestling area, and talking with the team at the table, it is important to visit each team in the locker room to set down a few ground rules. This begins by asking the coach if his team is ready to wrestle tonight. When the coach replies "yes", he is telling you his team is legal and ready to compete with regards to a few respects.
 1. Contestants are all wearing a legal under garment.
 2. Any taping is legal and will allow normal legal holds & full range of motion.
 3. Uniforms and shoes are legal; shoelaces are properly secured, and laced above the ankle.
 4. Headgear and kneepads are legal, and unadorned.
- Asking the coach if his team is ready to wrestle does not minimize the referee's responsibilities of doing a good job with the pre-match instructions.
- This is the final time and place to impress the teams with who is in charge of the match, and that your knowledge of the sport of wrestling will be unbiasedly imparted during the evenings contest.
- The pre-match instructions to the wrestlers / coaches prior to the start of the match may include, but not limited to the following;
 - Ask to see any taping, wrapping, or braces that might worn by any contestants. It is the referee's responsibility to inspect and approve all specials equipment; this includes headgear, facemasks, hair caps, tape jobs, braces, etc.
 - Ask if anyone uses an inhaler for an asthma condition.
 - It is necessary to discuss proper handshake, taunting, and other unsportsmanlike matters. Basically discuss sportsmanship along with your expectations.
 - Then take some time to discuss illegal holds, and potentially dangerous as far as you feel it relates to headlocks, guillotines, arm bars, etc.
 - Remind the wrestlers they are to wrestle aggressively for six minutes, and work in the center of the circle.

- Remind all contestants of three basic commands “Center - Action - Contact”
- Ask if there are any questions and wish the team good luck tonight.
- Re-check any wrestlers who did not pass the health inspection during the weigh-in.
- The entire locker room visit and instructions to the athletes may only take 4-6 minutes, or as long as 10 minutes. It is recommended all referees start each wrestling season doing a better than average job with the explanations to the teams. It is felt we make the end of the season easier for each other if we take the extra time at the beginning of the season.
- There are always a few new rules changes that need to be better explained, and there might be some questions that need to be cleared up.

CAPTAINS / COIN TOSS

- In the center of the mat, meet with the team captains.
 - Remind them they are to assist the coach with sportsmanship from the team bench.
 - Ask a visiting captain to call the color of the disc in the air.
 - Winner of the disc toss has choice of even or odd matches, with the first match determined by the random draw.
 - Good luck and get on with the match.
- Several closing thoughts to keep in mind as you continue to develop and sharpen your skills as a wrestling referee; the referee has jurisdiction from the moment he / she pulls into the parking lot, to the signing of the official score book at the conclusion of the last match.
- The referee is considered the expert, and has full authority at the wrestling match. Every referee must read / study the National Federation Rule Book, the Case Manual and other publications on a regular basis. Every referee should become 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.

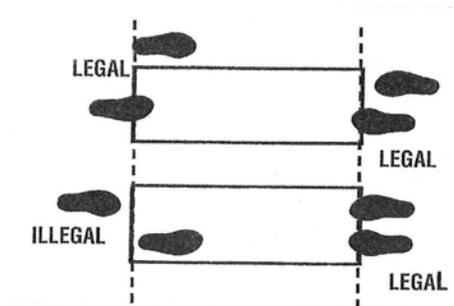
Reporting to the Mat:

- Make sure that the correct wrestlers have reported for check-in at the scorer’s table.
- Double check 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-match handshake.

Referee Mechanics in Neutral Situations

Wrestler’s Position in Neutral Start:

- Both wrestlers must place one foot on the respective starting line and the other foot on or behind the line or the line extended.
- Hands and/or foreheads cannot touch.
- Wrestlers must be standing on two points, a hand down on the mat is not allowed.
- 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 (see above). This is better observed from a slight distance.
- Once a proper neutral starting position is established move in and situate yourself close-in with at least an arm placed between both wrestlers. Referee should be facing the scorer's table.
 - Make eye contact with the time keeper.
 - 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 insure that the clock has properly started.
- Always keep both wrestlers in your line of sight as you back out.

Neutral Standing Position:

- Situate yourself so that you are far enough away from the wrestling to observe the action and to not interfere with sudden changes in position, but close enough to immediately reposition yourself to stop potentially dangerous and illegal maneuvers.
- Know how various takedowns finish so you know where to position yourself stay out of the way and to observe control as it is established.
- Always situate yourself so that you are centered and able to look between both wrestlers as they face each other.
 - Anticipate position.
 - Do not chase the action.
 - 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:
 - Defensive wrestler has no means to catch himself if taken to the mat - potentially dangerous (both arms tied-up).
 - Pressure against the neck, throat, and carotid artery.
 - Head slap.
 - Hands in the eyes.
 - Illegal finger pry.
 - Hand or arm blocking the nose or mouth.
 - Illegal head locks (position yourself to observe the attacking wrestler's arms/hands).
 - Figure-four/head scissors.
 - Double arm bar from the front.
 - Illegal chin whip/neck wrench.
 - Snap-back from the rear standing position.
 - Double knee kick-out from the rear standing position.

- 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 without eye contact with the scorers or coaches.

Boundary Line:

- On or near the boundary line, the referee should be in a position to observe the location of the supporting points of each wrestler. Straddling the line is one position, and getting perpendicular to the wrestlers also affords the referee a greater opportunity to catch on the O-B line.
- Call out of bounds by the letter of the rule and be consistent from call to call.
- 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.
- On feet-in takedowns award the earned points before sounding your whistle.
- Be patient, do not overly anticipate an out of bounds situation occurring. Bite your whistle until you are sure a situation finishes out of bounds.
 - Hip-Toss.
 - Throws, especially to the back where the shoulder(s)/scapulae are in near fall criteria and the only supporting part(s) in bounds.
- The referee may verbally request that both wrestlers “work center” (discuss in pre-meet).
- 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 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 defensive wrestler cannot lift or elevate a takedown can be awarded
 - When control is gained verbalize awarded points.
- Be in position to observe that a legal cross face is maintained.
 - May have to re-position to the front of the action to observe:
 - If cross face is legal (not covering the mouth or not being used to punish).
 - Potential biting situation by defensive wrestler.
- Be in position to observe that a whizzer is neutralizing the attacking wrestler.
 - May have to re-position to the front or back of the action to observe restraining pressure.
 - Be aware of hip-to-hip situations w/ a step over leg lace
 - With three control points for a takedown
- Anticipate the action to stay ahead of it. You may have to circle in the opposite direction to catch-up to the action.

Assistant Referee (AR):

- First on and last off of the mat.
- Be as active and assist with the same latitude of mobility as the referee.
- Mirror the referee (180° opposite). Change levels and look underneath in tie-up and head lock situations.

- Bring infractions to the referee's immediate attention. Cover the front side (when action rotates towards you) and wait for the referee to catch up to the action before rotating 180°.
- Be responsible for the time. Make sure the clock starts and stops on the referee's whistle.
- Police the designated coaches' area.
- Assist the referee with injury, recovery and blood time protocol (discuss specific responsibilities before the match).
- On boundary situations, be in position to insure the safety of the wrestlers going out of bounds.
- Be immediately available to give your opinion on a situation when asked by the referee.
- Never be afraid to voice an opinion to the referee when you disagree with a call or ruling.
- Support the referee when a close but correct call is made.
- Never communicate with a coach. Direct the coach to the referee.
- Be in position to watch the clock w/ wrestlers in your field of vision during the last 10 seconds of the period.

Mechanic Hand Signals

The following hand signals are the only approved hand mechanics that should be used during the referee executing his/her job on the mat. Officers review these mechanics during your local association meetings.



Starting the Match



Stopping the Match



Time Out



Illegal Hold or
Unnecessary Roughness



Neutral Position



No Control



Out-of-Bound



Coach Misconduct



Indicates Control



Defer Choice



Potentially Dangerous



Stalemate



Reversal



Caution-False Start or
Incorrect Starting Procedure



Stalling



Interlocking Hands or
Grasping Clothing



Technical Violation



Near-Fall: 2, 3 or 4 Points



Awarding Points



Unsportsmanlike Conduct



Flagrant Misconduct

Referee Mechanics in Mat Wrestling Situations

Start of the Referee's Position:

- First and foremost the hand movement should be simple and simultaneous with the whistle.
- As with other hand signals, the hand motion is for the table, coaches, and fans.
- Hit the whistle hard and loud!
- If your matches have an inordinate number of false starts, it is possibly the official causing the problem.

Setting in the Referee's Position:

- The referee should be at an angle (right or left of center) to the wrestlers. If the wrestler's are 12 o'clock, the referee should be at 2 or 10 o'clock. He/she should typically be opposite the "near side".
- The referee should stand (may lower level to view the palm) and move sides four or five feet from wrestlers.
 - This gives the referee the ability to see the placement of the offensive wrestler's head in the mid-line, the palm on the navel, the palm on the elbow, and the back foot.
 - Do not be out on the edge of the circle...that is too far away!
- The referee may have a difficult view of the near side back foot, but by moving sides he/she can make sure it too is legal.
- In an environment with multiple mats (many whistles), the referee may want to take a position away from other whistles.
- As per NFHS rule book, the defensive wrestler gets in position and "set" first, then the referee will direct the offensive wrestler to "mount", and gives the offensive wrestler the "set" command.
- Remember a brief pause momentarily before the referee give a simultaneous hand signal and whistle start.
 - Do not allow the top wrestler to rock the bottom wrestler off his base.
 - This would be a caution.
- The referee should be stationary and ever vigilant to observe rolling and false starts.

Working with an Assistant:

- The referee will want the assistant positioned to observe the palm on naval and back feet.
- If the referee is at 2 o'clock, the assistant will be at 8 o'clock.

Movement as Wrestling Continues:

- After the start and throughout the mat wrestling, the official wants to be primarily at the head /shoulders of the wrestlers, four to five feet from the wrestlers.
- As the offensive wrestler breaks his opponent down and applies bars, wings, power halves or comes closer to near falls, the referee may want to move closer to be in position to stop potentially dangerous situations and/or not to miss near falls.
- In other words, vary distance from wrestlers depending on situation. The referee should be in a position to block or stop potentially dangerous situations BEFORE they become illegal.

When the defensive man comes to his feet:

- As the defensive wrestler makes it to his/her feet, the referee should come to the front of the wrestling once again.
- The referee should pay particular attention to hand control and fingers.
 - Should the top man not begin to attempt to return defensive wrestler to the mat, as per rule, he will be called for stalling. Key word is attempt.
 - If the offensive man is attempting to return his opponent to the mat he is not stalling! We do not stop match when making the stalling call in this situation.
- In a rear standing position, the referee must anticipate the offensive man throwing his opponent 180 degrees, and 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 man's arm or arms are barred, locked to his side, or in any other way the defensive man is rendered unable to protect himself 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 man's fall. It helps on any lift, to use a command of "keep it legal".

On the out of bound line:

- The referee will still be at the head/shoulder side of wrestlers, but focus will shift to supporting points (shoulders, buttocks, knees, and feet, to determine in or out of bounds).
- Still vary closeness to wrestlers based on the situation.
 - While protecting the out of bounds,
 - The referee should visually scan the wrestlers and down the line.
- When the wrestlers are facing the boundary on mat or standing position, the referee should be positioned on the boundary to "herd" the wrestlers to the center using commands of "center, center".
- Make sure the command is loud and forceful.
 - While returning to the center the referee should walk between the wrestlers, never in front of the pair. The referee may anticipate a stalling, or fleeing call.

The Assistant Referee (AR):

- The referee should clearly identify his/her expectations of the **AR**.
- The **AR** must be aggressive enough to point out when he/she disagrees with the referee, but passive enough to know the call is the ultimate responsibility of the referee.
- The referee should always call the match as though he/she has no **AR**.
 - The referee should not confer with the **AR** before the call.
- Generally, a conference happens after a call, away from the coaches and wrestlers.
 - The conference is brief and to the point.
 - Both the officials offer their points of view.
 - First priority is to get it right, then follow procedure with respect to mechanics.
 - If a disagreement exists, the Head Referee 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 a position to identify illegal holds, technical violations, potentially dangerous situations, and scoring maneuvers that go away from the referee.
- The **AR** should notify the referee immediately of illegal or unsafe situation. It is up to the referee to stop the match should it become necessary.
- The **AR** is responsible for the timing and the clock.
 - The **AR** should have a direct line to see the clock start and stop on the whistle.
 - The **AR** should assist with any correction on the clock that is necessary.
- The **AR** should count down four, three, two, one ... time!

Referee Mechanics in Near Fall 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 near fall.
 - Maintain a silent count while getting down on the mat if the scapulae are in criteria.
 - Do not place or reach a hand under the scapulae of the defensive wrestler.
- The referee may need to move off to one side or the other.
 - Look for the fall underneath, while also looking at action happening around the face, hands in the face, eyes, etc.

From the MAT:

- As action is happening, start lowering your body, get in a ready position to see the near fall coming.
 - The referee must anticipate wrestling skills, to move into position.
- Once criteria is met, give a clear precise, verbal count, “thousand one, thousand two, thousand three, thousand four, thousand five”, along with a simultaneous half swipe motion with your hand. Bend at the elbow; bring it into the chest and then out.
- Verbal count is critical for defensive wrestler.
 - The advantage to this is your doing two things at once, this allows everyone around to see and understand what you are doing, and where you in the process.
 - This also slows down your count to a true five seconds.

- It also allows you an out. If there is not a full swipe of the arm, tell the coach you didn't have a full two seconds, therefore no points.
- The referee should be down on the mat when the near fall happens.

Anticipating a Tilt:

- Ready yourself to be able to move to where the back will be exposed.
- The referee should be on the mat at this point.
- Anticipate the tilt being applied to be at the head of the defensive wrestler looking for near fall.
 - 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). Reason for this is the offensive wrestler may roll him back to his stomach, it's the same hold. Once the offensive wrestler lets go of the arm and allows the defensive wrestler to base out, clear his arm, and can defend himself. The referee can 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, once in a while he may pull his opponent over the top of himself, possibly pinning himself. Don't stop the count; just keep an eye on the exposed offensive man.
- **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. These are not approved NFHS hand signals, and are a form of coaching.

Assistant Referee (AR) in Near Fall Situations:

- Once a near fall situation occurs the **AR** should remain standing, hopefully over the top of the action.
 - The job as the **AR** is to keep everything clean "up top".
 - The head referee should be on the mat looking underneath the back of the defensive wrestler being pinned.
- The **AR** job is to keep hands out of the face.
 - 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". Then the decision becomes if it became illegal by the bottom man doing something to make it illegal, or the top man made it illegal. Then the head referee will make the correct call.
- Also, the **AR** should be watching the clock: two advantages to do so.
 - First; to see if there is either two seconds or more on the clock, or
 - Second; if five seconds or more is on the clock.
 - If not he can help determine how many back points should be awarded.
 - This also helps with the "fall call" If the referee had the fall before the clock was out.
- The **AR** counts down from "four, three, two, one", then makes a crossing signal above his head with his arms, this lets everyone know, time is out! (as previously discussed w/ referee prior to event)
 - No other scoring can occur now.
 - The **AR** you should work 180 degrees from the head referee.
 - 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.

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) can attend the wrestler.
 - **NFHS RULE 8.2. Art. 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 immediately removed from the match and shall not return to competition until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.
 - **NFHS RULE 8.2. Art. 5** ... “A designated, on-site appropriate health-care professional who determined a wrestler should not participate, shall not be overruled.”
- The OHSAA has now provided several necessary forms to record a concussion stoppage and medical release back to competition.
 - A referee report form
 - The AHCP same day return to competition form

What is a concussion?

- 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.
 - Athletes with continued concussion symptoms are at significant risk for recurrent, cumulative and even catastrophic consequences of a second concussive injury.
- 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.

Signs, Symptoms & Behaviors

- | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| • Headache | fogginess | difficulty concentrating |
| • Confused | nausea | slowed thought process |
| • Blurred vision | loss of memory | lack of energy |
| • Poor balance | dizziness | sensitive to light/sounds |
| • Loss of consciousness | clumsy | slow /slurred speech |
- The OHSAA has approved as the appropriate health-care professional any one of three professionals; **an MD, a DO or a licensed ATC.**
 - 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.
 - The position of the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) is that no athlete should return to competition or practice on that same day after suffering a concussion.
 - Studies have shown the brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in such a short time. If an athlete returns to activity before he/she has fully healed from a concussion, there is a high 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.

- 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, AHCP or other individual designated by the school administrators.
 - If the mat-side AHCP (is 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 AHCP 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 return to competition release form must be completed to return to any competition whether it is the same match or a match in the next round of a tournament or the next dual meet.
- The referee must report the stoppage due to signs, symptoms or behaviors of a suspected concussion.
- The coach is ultimately responsible for the safety of his athletes, and must get the injured athlete seen by the on-site designated AHCP before he/she can return to competition the same day of the suspected concussion.
 - The AHCP must sign the return to competition form and hand it to the coach.
- The referee must mail his report and the release form completed by the AHCP to the OHSAA office after the event.

NOTE: A host school may have two designated on-site AHCP. Medical attention coming out of the stands may assist in an emergency, but is not eligible to complete the medical return to competition release form. It is important for all to be aware of the designated on-site AHCP before competition begins.

Injury, Blood or Recovery Time

Hand Signal and Mechanics for Injury, Blood and Recovery Time:

INJURY TIME:

- The wrestlers are limited to a maximum of two injury time outs totaling a 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 would require a third time out for any injury he/she would automatically default the match to the opponent.

EXAMPLE: During the 30-second ride-out overtime period, and with only seven seconds left on the time clock, **wrestler A** uses his second injury time. **Wrestler B**, the defensive wrestler, will have his/her choice of either top or bottom when the match resumes. He/she may elect the top position to finish the :30 second period to win the ride-out period and the match. Remember; at the conclusion of the :30 second period the offensive wrestler is declared the winner and receives one point for the ride-out.

BLOOD TIME:

- Blood time has a total accumulative time of five minutes (5), with as many stoppages necessary.

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

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. I
- 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.

RECOVERY TIME:

- Recovery time may only follow a penalty point 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 situation, he/she shall be declared 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.
- The injured wrestler may default the match to his opponent prior to the two minute recovery clock expiring.

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 and 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 must be declared the winner by disqualification. To continue this scenario, with this explanation given to the coach of **wrestler B**, he now says “well his kid is undefeated and he 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.” 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 two things may occur; either **wrestler B** continues to wrestle or **wrestler B** wins by disqualification. The wrestler who commits an illegal act, an unnecessary roughness or an unsportsmanlike conduct violation CANNOT be declared the winner.

Hand Signal and Mechanics for Injury, Blood and Recovery Time:



Start the injury clock (1:30)



Stop the injury clock



Start the Blood clock (5:00)



Stop the Blood clock



Start Recovery Clock (2:00)



Stop Recovery clock

Mechanics of the Three Stoppages:

- The mechanics will vary on these three situations depending on what the facilities and host make available to work with.
 - At most levels of competition it is a stop watch the table has 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 stop watch.
 - 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 is hurt".
 - Have the stop watch 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 determined the winner.
 - Except in the case of the recovery time, if the wrestler uses all the recovery time and CANNOT continue, he is the declared winner. The caveat here is that the injured wrestler may default the match prior to the two minute recovery clock expiring.

Better Facilities:

- Some timing technologies will show the stoppage clock on the score board.
 - This is a huge advantage to everyone involved. As the referee makes the announcement and hand signals for time to start.
 - The clock now rolls over for everyone to see the proper time displayed and counts down to zero.
 - As the clock winds down, keep the wrestler and the coach informed as to how much time they have left.
 - If it runs out, make your determination and get moving. If the wrestler says he is fine and ready to go, stop the clock and have the table record the time used.

FLEEING / TECHNICAL VIOLATION

- 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.
 - **RULE 7 - 6 - 1**, in discussing stalling it 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 ...”

- **RULE 7 - 3 - 1**, in discussing technical violations states, “Going out of the wrestling area or forcing an opponent out of the wrestling area, by either wrestler at any time as a means of avoiding wrestling, is a technical violation. Both wrestlers should make every effort to remain in bounds. When the referee feels that either wrestler has failed to make every effort to stay in bounds, the offending wrestler shall be penalized. **Penalty points shall not be awarded in situations where near-fall points are earned.**”
- The rulebook mentions the significance of staying in bounds. “... official’s have the authority to penalize wrestlers and, when they fail to do so, they are, in essence giving his opponent an advantage.” The importance of aggressive wrestling is stressed in both the rulebook 7-3-1 and case manual 7-3-2 A, B, C & D. It states “Both wrestlers should make every effort to remain in bounds.”
 - When the referee feels that either wrestler has failed to make every effort to stay in bounds, the offending wrestler shall be penalized.
 - The rule very clearly states that if a wrestler goes out of the wrestling area or if he forces his opponent out of the wrestling area at any time as a means of avoiding wrestling, it is a technical violation.
 - The rule states that 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.
 - There are too many occasions where wrestlers use the edge of the mat in order to get out of a situation when, in fact, they should be penalized for going out of the wrestling area.”
- All these explanations are quite clear and specific.
- The NFHS gives the referee the authority to make the technical violation call;
 - When a contestant intentionally leaves the wrestling area to avoid aggressive action,
 - To avoid being scored upon,
 - And generally to avoid wrestling.
- Both contestants must make every effort to stay in the circle and compete aggressively.
- This is always the referee’s judgment.
- Listed below are several examples of the technical violation penalty point for fleeing:

NEUTRAL POSITION:

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

OFFENSIVE POSITION:

- During the action of being reversed in a switch, **wrestler A** crawls out of bounds a **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 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 off the mat.

- Or, **wrestler A** simply begins driving **wrestler B** forward. **Wrestler B** tries to turn to stay in bounds, but **wrestler A** continues to drive his opponent off the mat.

DEFENSIVE POSITION:

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

THE REFEREE'S POSITION IS CLEAR:

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

NOTE: It is important to note, if the offensive wrestler earns either a two or three point near fall, or he/she can earn the point for the technical violation if the defensive wrestler bridges off the mat. The offensive wrestler has been recognized and rewarded for his aggressive wrestling skill in earning the near fall points.

FINAL THOUGHT: The technical violation penalty should be made promptly, without hesitation, in the spirit of good sportsmanship for both athletes. The call should be made and explained with eye contact at the scoring table. With the call made in this manner, all can 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.

BITING & FLAGRANT MISCONDUCT

- Biting, or any form of flagrant misconduct, is not to be taken lightly.
- It is the final and ultimate penalty for any wrestler.
- It is the responsibility of every wrestling official to handle the situation promptly and decisively. There are several important aspects the referee must be aware of in every alleged biting incident.
- **First**, if the bite occurs in a place where the defensive wrestler may have bitten himself, 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** and shows the referee the teeth marks, it should be an unsportsmanlike conduct on the defensive wrestler.
- **Second**, the bite must be handled when it occurs. Reference should be made to the NFHS Wrestling Rule Book 7-4-3 and 8-1-6 and the NFHS Wrestling Case Manual, 7.4.3 Situation B, 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 could not have bitten himself in these places.
 - When the referee should look for both the upper and lower sets of teeth marks indented in the flesh of the injured wrestler.
 - 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 the referee handles 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. 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.
- All OHSAA referees are required to file the necessary written report within 48-hours and contact the offending wrestler’s principal 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

- 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.”
 - Rule 7-2-1 it states “Holds are potentially dangerous when a body part is forced to the limit of normal range of movement.”
 - Rule 7-2-2 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.”

- Rule 7-2-4 we read “No contestant should ever be put in a position where they must forfeit a neutral position, a position of advantage or a fall because of an injury or danger to life or limb.”
- The NFHS provides for both the safe and healthy environment for young athletes, and each state association fosters and upholds the strong concern for safe participation for all student-athletes.
- The most important call for a wrestling referee is the proper and timely use of potentially dangerous.
 - Preventing injuries is the most important task for a wrestling referee.
 - Some situations don’t have a name, but none the less they are dangerous and unsafe. It is left to the referee and his experienced judgment to recognize situations that can cause serious injury.
- It is important for the referee to have excellent anticipation, knowledge and recognition of wrestling skills, body movement and the ability to sense the wrestlers in the thousands of positions they find themselves.
- The referee must constantly position and re-position himself/herself to have the very best line of vision to view the greatest amount of action.
 - This allows the wrestling referee to fulfill his/her most important duty;
 - The safety of the contestants.

There are a few important aspects to making a potentially dangerous call:

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

What if the referee does not stop a potentially dangerous situation?

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

STALEMATE

- **NFHS rule book; rule 5 section 24...** “It is a stalemate when contestants are interlocked in a position other than a pinning situation, in which neither wrestler can improve their respective position(s); nor 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. Hands locked repeatedly around one leg of an opponent to prevent scoring are considered stalling.”

Common mistakes:

- It is often called when there is no stalemate present and the athletes need to wrestle their way out of trouble, or
- It is called rather than making a stalling call, which
- May be called too soon or
- Called too late.
- An inappropriate stalemate call is an act in which the referee is interfering in the progress of the match, and thereby could enter into the final outcome.

The proper stalemate call and mechanics:

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

Recognize these positions and promptly make the correct call:

- If the referee hesitates he/she allows time to run off the clock with no significant action.
- The referee also has the latitude to make a stalemate call at the edge of the mat when both wrestlers are not involved in any action to score.
- Then return the wrestlers to the center and re-start the match as if they went out of bounds.

HEAD OFFICIAL & THE TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

- Every wrestling tournament should designate one of the officials as the head referee at the event.
- This should be a regular occurrence at every tournament no matter how large or small.
 - The head official may be one of the senior officials among the team and/or the official with the greatest and highest level of experience.

- The head referee is ultimately in charge to see the rules of the sport are fairly adhered to during the event.
- Being the head referee brings with it several extra responsibilities.
- Some of the duties of the head official may include; skin, health & safety check during the weigh-in procedure, setting the rotation of referees, pairing the referees for the finals and organizing two-manning the championship round.
- A less thought of procedure, but non-the-less very important to the event is to organize a tournament committee.

PURPOSE OF THE TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE:

- A tournament committee serves a variety of functions. We must keep in mind that an official's call during a match or ejection may not be changed or overturned by anyone.
- But, there are some off the mat situations that may need to be deliberated in an effort to be fair to all the contestants and coaches at the tournament.
- A coach has the right to conference with the match official to discuss a call, but also has the right to ask the head official to conference with the tournament committee in certain situations.
- It is the responsibility of the head official to recognize the coach's request to convene the tournament committee is in the best interest of fairness and sportsmanship.
- The head official may either grant or deny the request.
 - If the request does not involve changing a call in a previously wrestled match, the request may be granted, and the coach's situation may then be heard.

ASSEMBLE:

- Like a jury, the tournament committee should be comprised of different groups for the sake of fairness. At the onset of the event the head referee should designate two other officials as possible members of the committee.
- Along with the group of referees,
 - The tournament director (if knowledgeable of the rules of wrestling) and/or
 - A Physician (if the situation involves a medical question) is asked to participate.
- It is necessary to approach three coaches with the same request to assist with the tournament committee.
 - It is important to emphasize that two coaches would be selected if in no way a situation involves his wrestlers or team.
- The tournament committee would then be comprised of five members, and the make-up of the five members is dictated by the nature of the situation.
 - The tournament committee may comprise three members; two referees and the TM
 - It may be two referees, a physician and two coaches.
 - It may be two referees, the tournament director and two coaches. or,
 - It may be three referees and two coaches.
- If the head referee grants the request for the tournament committee to hear a unique situation, it is the ultimate responsibility of the head referee to call the committee together to hear the coach's statement and set the ground rules for the committee.

PROCESS:

- The ground rules are pretty simple and straight forward.
 - In a quiet room away from competition, the head referee needs to spell out how this process will evolve.
 - Introduce the members of the committee, and a brief explanation why the committee has been convened. Next, the offended coach has his chance to present his case.
 - The coach has first opportunity to explain what happened and why he feels something occurred unfairly and the remedy to rectify the wrong that was committed.
 - Following the coach's statements the head referee or the referee involved needs to explain the situation from the wrestling rules side of the situation.
 - This should include an explanation of the rule, the necessity and timeline of the events which led to the application of the rule, and why it was fair for all involved at the tournament for it to have occurred.
 - At the conclusion of each having their opportunity to speak, any committee members may ask any questions they feel are relevant to rendering a fair decision.
 - When questions have concluded, the parties leave the room, and the committee members discuss, then vote to either grant the coach's request or let stand the situation as it had been handled.
 - This discussion is respected, and how members voted is private.
 - The head referee then informs the coach of the committee's decision and the event resumes without any further discussion on the matter.
 - The committee's decision is final. NOTE: the committee cannot hear nor change a referee's call in a match.

FUNCTION:

- Honoring a coach's request to assemble the tournament committee does serve a variety of special needs,
 - First, is to certainly be fair to all competing at the event. This involves both the wrestlers and coaches.
 - By convening the committee we send a message that as referees we will go out of our way and exhaust every avenue to be fair and impartial for the sake of our kids.
 - Second, we involve other coaches so they have a fair say in a unique situation, and the offended coach has his peers on the panel.
 - The adults are all part of the overall educational team. We exhibit fair play in many forms, but none more important than the examples we set which are viewed by the children we reach.
 - Seeing adults work together goes a long way to how our children will resolve issues in their life.
 - This is all part of the benefits our children gain by competing in high school athletics. Another reason to assemble the tournament committee may be to defuse a situation, and do some preventative officiating.

WARN OR PENALIZE THE COACH

**Does the coach get a warning for his actions,
or does he get hit with 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 asks for a conference at the scorer's table to discuss the misapplication of a rule.

- If the coach was correct with his statements and approach to the matter in question, the referee shall make the necessary correction and the match continued without penalty.
- If the official handled the situation correctly, and/or the coach questions the referee's judgment he receives a warning for misconduct.
- This warning is actually on the coaching staff,
- The next misconduct offense will result in a one-point team deduction.
- The third misconduct violation will again result in another two-point team deduction along with the head coach removed from the event for the remainder of the tournament. The NFHS rule book states this clearly in rules 6-6-6, 7-5-4, 8-1-5 and the penalty chart.
- It is the responsibility of every referee to conduct the match so as to not allow coaches to over run the scorer's table with time wasting questions. By applying the warning for misconduct rule promptly, the coaches will not take advantage of your good nature at the table. Although we must honor the coach's request for a conference, do not hesitate to apply the misconduct rule when necessary.
- Any forms of unsportsmanlike conduct or certainly flagrant misconduct are hit with the penalty of point deduction(s) and/or removal immediately.
- There is no warning for these situations. Rules 7-4-2, 7-5-3 and 8-1-4 spell out the unsportsmanlike situations, while rules 7-4-3 and 8-1-6 describe the flagrant acts.
- The referees need to meet these embarrassing situations swiftly, decisively, and in a firm confident manner.
- It is important to learn the rules of the game, study and discuss them in your local meetings. We need to learn the criteria to recognize when these situations begin to appear.
- Listen to the veteran officials describe situations they have encountered during their many years, and learn from each other.
- The learning will be a life-long process, so keep an open mind and remember to learn something from everyone.
- Below are several situational examples that may help in understanding the need to approach table confrontations promptly and in a professional manner.

SITUATION # 1: During the third period of a fast and furious match, **wrestler A** has 12, while **wrestler B** has 11. **Wrestler B** is pushing the action, takes several shots, and hits a takedown on the edge of the mat, but you make a no call and rule them out of bounds. While you are returning to the center of the mat, you notice the coach of **wrestler B** standing at the scorer's table shaking his head with his hand in the air insistent on speaking with you.

- We've all been involved in a variety of different coach's conferences at the scorer's table.
- Some are short and simple, while others require a little more effort and patience.
- How should we handle the coach who comes to the table with his fuse already lit?
- What are a few helpful ways to handle the difficult coach during a heated situation?
 - First, it is important to approach all conferences in the same manner.
 - Don't assume the worst, and expect a screaming coach.
 - You need to handle yourself in a calm, patient controlling manner.
 - Keep in mind you are the official, and the only person in control of the entire situation.
 - Second, instruct the wrestlers to stay inside the 10-foot center circle, and then walk to the scorer's table to meet the coach.
 - While moving to the table it is important to collect your thoughts, and replay the last few moments of the match in your head.
 - When you reach the table, turn and stand so as to keep the wrestlers in your vision.
 - Look the coach direct in the eyes, and don't say a word.....repeat.....DON'T SAY A WORD!
 - Listen to what he has to discuss. Part of defusing a potentially heated situation, is not to put fuel on the fire. By that I mean, don't give him new and more information to argue at you.

- If there is some hesitation, then ask him in a calm, polite, professional manner “Coach, you called me to the table, what can I do for you?”
 - This beginning may be enough to defuse the possible hot situation.
- As you listen, formulate and deliver a calm, clear, concise answer to his question.
- Especially the criteria of the rule you applied to make the decision. Do not let this become a question and answer session.
- Keep it brief, then do one of two things;
 - Thank him and ask him to return to coach’s corner or
 - Thank him, remind him he is not allowed to question judgment, and inform him of the warning for misconduct. Then ask him to return to the coach’s corner and instruct the scorer to record a warning for misconduct on Coach B.
 - Return to the center of the mat and promptly resume the match.

REMEMBER THESE FIVE THOUGHTS.....

1. The coach has the right to a conference and be heard at the table; while you have the duty to grant his request and listen to his questions or concerns.
2. Be approachable then LISTEN..... EXPLAIN..... RESTART THE MATCH.
3. Be polite, professional, confident and consistent.
4. Know this; you distinguish yourself by how you handle the tough ones.
5. Do not tolerate verbal abuse or unsportsmanlike conduct in any form.

SITUATION # 2: Coach of **wrestler A** asks for a conference at the table, so during an out of bounds situation you tell the wrestlers to remain in the center circle. When you get to the table the coach starts telling you there was no takedown, how could there be any control, and that you blew the call. You begin to give him a brief explanation of why there was control, but he continues to argue with you. At this point you thank him for his concern, instruct the table to record a warning for misconduct on **Coach A**, and as you start to return to the center of the mat you hear him say “that’s bullshit”. Now you need to return to the table, with an out stretched arm wearing the color band to match his **wrestler’s** ankle band, instruct the scorer to record an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on the **Coach A** and deduct one team point.

CORRECTABLE ERRORS

- What’s correctable, what isn’t? What’s the procedure? Rule 6-6 addresses these questions.
- First and foremost, Rule 6-6 breaks errors into three basic elements:
 - Bad time,
 - Timekeeping errors, and
 - Scoring errors.
 - Each has its own conditions that must be kept in mind when tackling correctable errors.

Bad Time: (Rule 5-1) is either...

- 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
- 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 exist leading to bad time:

- Those 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 either be deleted or re-wrestled prior to the start of any subsequent period.
 - The wrestlers are to be placed in their proper position and wrestling resumed without delay.
 - All points earned during bad time are cancelled.
 - Although any penalties (technical violations), or injury time that may have occurred during bad time are also cancelled **except**
 - Flagrant misconduct, unsportsmanlike conduct, unnecessary roughness, illegal holds/maneuvers, and blood time.
 - Try this acronym as to what stays in the scorebook: “RIBFUN”
Roughness (as in unnecessary roughness)
Illegal holds
Blood time
Flagrant misconduct
Unsportsmanlike conduct
- It’s also bad time when starting the wrestlers in the wrong position at the **start** of the third period.
- Stop the match and give both wrestlers one-minute rest.
- Except for “RIBFUN”, all points earned are cancelled and the entire third period re-wrestled.

Timekeeping errors occur when either...

- The timekeeper makes an error; or
- The clock fails to start when you indicate time is to begin.

You must make a judgment concerning the amount of time that should have been consumed.

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

Scoring errors can be made by

- The referee, or
- The scorer
- Scoring errors can impact either the match or team score.
- Their correction depends entirely on whether they occur in a dual meet or tournament, and
- Whether it is a recordable or computational error.
- The various remedies under Rule 6.6.4 a. & b.

- A recordable error is one in which the correct points and/or designated scoring symbol was erroneously entered on the scorebook or bout sheet.
- A computational error is when a wrestler's or team's score is incorrectly added together.
- The correction process is handled differently depending on whether it is encountered in a dual meet or tournament.

Dual meet match scoring errors by you, timekeeper, or official scorer:

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

Tournament match scoring errors:

- A recordable error must be corrected prior to the offended wrestler leaving the mat area if additional wrestling is necessary
 - Mat Area: Rule 2.1.5: the wrestling mat plus 10 feet.
- Otherwise, when additional wrestling is **NOT** necessary, the offended wrestler **or** coach must remain in the mat area.
- A computational error must be corrected prior to the next match in which either wrestler competes.
- Again, if additional wrestling is necessary, it must be corrected prior to the **offended wrestler** leaving the mat area.

Dual meet or tournament team scoring errors:

- Recordable or computational errors must be corrected within 30 minutes after the conclusion of the dual meet or tournament.
- There is no question errors create stressful situations for all concerned and could easily turn a competitive match/event into a major distraction.
- Avoiding errors is every referee's goal, but

When they do occur, and given a thorough understanding of Rule 6.6, the referee is able to approach such situations equipped to act quickly and decisively to return everyone's focus back to the ac

THE PENALTY CHART

- There are seven different kinds of penalties that make up the penalty chart.
 - They include **starting violations, technical violations, illegal holds, unnecessary roughness, misconduct, unsportsmanlike conduct, and flagrant misconduct.**
 - Either competitor may be guilty of many of these during a match, while non competitors, coaches and other team personnel may only be guilty of misconduct, unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct.
 - Only coaches may be guilty of a misconduct violation while coaching during a match. This would also include a wrestler assuming the role of a coach in the corner.

- **Misconduct** is only called on a coach whose behavior at the scorer's table warrants first receiving a warning; this is usually for questioning the official's judgment. The second misconduct violation is to deduct one team point, with the third offense being a two point deduction and the head coach removed from the arena.
- **Starting violations** require a caution on the first offense and a caution of the second offense.
 - The third and all subsequent violations continually get a one point penalty given the opponent. A wrestler cannot be disqualified for starting violations. He/she can lose the match by continuous points contributing to a technical fall; 15 point margin
- **Technical violations** include;
 - Clasp hands,
 - Grasping clothing (yours or the opponent's),
 - Grasping head gear or knee pads,
 - Fleeing the mat to avoid being scored upon, and
 - Stalling are all technical violations.
 - Reporting to the scorer's table not properly equipped or not ready to wrestle is also a match point for the technical violation.
 - A stalling penalty is the only other violation that requires a single warning before a penalty point is given up.
- **Illegal holds** may be committed by either wrestler from any of the three basic wrestling positions;
 - Offensive,
 - Defensive and/or
 - Neutral.
 - The list of illegal holds spelled out in the NFHS rule book are so listed to ensure a safe, healthy environment for competition.
 - It is the official's responsibility to work to be in position to recognize dangerous situations, and prevent any injury to either athlete.
- **Some of the illegal holds include;**
 - Hammerlock,
 - Twisting hammerlock,
 - Full nelson,
 - Headlock without an arm encircled above the elbow,
 - Straight head scissors,
 - Any figure four applied to the head or body,
 - Double under hook snap back from a standing position,
 - Twisting knee lock,
 - Front quarter nelson with the chin,
 - Leg block,
 - Neck wrench,
 - Forcing a body part beyond its normal range of movement, and simply...
 - Any skill used to punish or harm the opponent. This is a one point penalty with no warning given.
- **Unnecessary roughness** violations are physical acts that go beyond normal aggressiveness.
 - Examples include (but not limited to);
 - A forceful slap to the face,
 - Gouging/poking the eyes,

- Forceful cross face,
 - A forceful forearm/elbow to the back of the head or neck and
 - A forceful trip to the mat.
 - This is a one point penalty with no warning given.
- **Unsportsmanlike conduct** may be either a physical or nonphysical act and may occur before, during or after the match. Examples include (but are not limited to);
 - Swearing,
 - Taunting or baiting the opponent,
 - Throwing headgear or other equipment,
 - Failure to comply with the end of match procedure,
 - Spitting or clearing a nasal passage on the mat,
 - Repeatedly dropping to a knee to break a clasp hands and
 - Showing displeasure with the official's call.
 - Continual acts of unsportsmanlike conduct may be interpreted as flagrant misconduct on the part of the either wrestler during the match.
 - The penalty during the match follows the penalty chart 'one ... one ... two ... DQ'.
 - A second unsportsmanlike conduct violation during a match may result in a two point team deduction and a removal from the arena.
 - The severity of the situation rests in the judgment of the official.
- The penalty for any non-participating team individual is the following;
 - This is a one team point deduction on the first offense,
 - The second offense brings a two point team deduction and removal from the arena for the remainder of the day.
 - There is no warning given.
- Technical violations, illegal holds, unnecessary roughness and unsportsmanlike conduct all follow the penalty chart 'one...one...two...DQ' for participating wrestlers.
 - That refers to the instance and the penalty for it.
 - The first occurrence is a one point penalty, the second occurrence is another one point penalty, the third occurrence is a two point penalty and the fourth occurrence of any penalty in any combination the violator is disqualified from the match.
 - It is important to recognize that an unnecessary roughness call is a little stronger than an illegal hold call, and an unsportsmanlike conduct call is stronger than an unnecessary roughness call. And, as should be expected, the final penalty and strongest call an official can make is a flagrant misconduct penalty.
- **Flagrant misconduct** will end the match.
 - Flagrant acts may also be physical or nonphysical and may occur before, during or after the match. Some examples of flagrant misconduct include (but are not limited to);
 - Extreme foul language,
 - Kicking, biting,
 - Punching,
 - Head butting,
 - Striking or
 - The use of tobacco products.
 - It is important for all to understand a flagrant misconduct violation is the most severe penalty, and involves a bit of extra work after the event.

- The procedure is almost universal across the nation, with individual states having their slight variation to the procedure.
- **Ohio regulations;**
 - Deduct three team points & in most tournaments forfeit all points earned to that time.
 - The athlete or coach is removed from arena, note: if there is no assistant coach to stay with the flagrant wrestler, then he/she must remain on the team bench next to the coach and stay quiet. Any further problem from him/her the team forfeits the match and is disqualified.
 - The official has 48 hours when school resumes calling the school to notify the administration of the flagrant occurrence & complete an ejection form. A copy gets mailed to the school in question and to the OHSAA office.
 - The school then responds to the OHSAA office with their handling of the athlete or coach. The OHSAA office then sends a copy of the result to the official.
 - The offender is not allowed to participate until an equivalent to the next two points on the school's schedule has been met.

Note: It is important to remember there are only three penalties that require a warning before any points are given up, two on the part of the wrestlers and one on the coach.

- The first is on either participant in any position. Starting violations require the offending wrestler given two warnings before giving up any penalty point(s).
- These warnings are referred to as cautions.
- The second is a warning for stalling on either participant, and again in any position.
- The third is a coaches' warning for misconduct. This can only occur when the coach is coaching and goes to the table to question the official, and does so in an inappropriate manner.

2012-13 ISSUES AND OHIO REGULATIONS

As per NFHS regulations;

- NO tape is permitted on the wrestler's head gear. This includes the head straps, chin strap and/or across the ear guards. The holes in the ear guards must be open. The ear guards are to be worn as the manufacturer intended and/or designed the equipment. **4-1-4 and 4-1-5.** The build-up of foam around the inner rim to protect a cauliflower ear injury is permitted.
- Same day weigh-ins during regular season events along with same gender weigh-ins. A school may be assessed a \$1000 fine for violation of weigh-in policy. **4-5-1 thru 8**
- All contagious skin forms must be presented to the official at the start of weigh-ins; skin notes must be presented on the approved form and must be the original note signed by the Physician. Xerox copies, physician Rx pads, faxed copies and/or typed letters are not accepted. There is no extension of time to present the note. The on-site physician has the last jurisdiction to rule on any possible contagious skin condition. **4-2-4**
- Wrestling shoes are to be laced to the top eyelet, secured tightly on the feet with the laces secured in an acceptable fashion so they do not come loose. Shoes that come off the feet/foot of the wrestler will be assessed a technical violation point and his/her injury time started to correct the problem. Such occurrences will be deemed as the wrestler was not properly equipped and ready to wrestle at the start of the match. **7-3-5**
- Each coach is responsible for the correct team score during dual meets and tournament competition. Errors involving recording or computation of team scores must be corrected within 30 minutes at the conclusion of the dual meet or within 30 minutes after posting of team score in a tournament. **6-6-4, 6-6-5 and special note**

- Coaches are reminded the NFHS rule regarding the number of coaches allowed in the coach's zone is restricted to two individuals. The staff in the corner will get one reminder there may only be two coaches, there after the referee's are instructed to assess an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty as per NFHS and Ohio regulations. **3-2-2**

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:

- Student-athletes may have long hair, but must meet the requirement to keep their long hair under an approved hair cap for the duration of the match. Hair that hangs out the back, front, etc. of the cap is unacceptable and will not be permitted. Correction of the hair cap is the official's time on the first occurrence, but it will be on the athlete's injury time every time after. Wrestlers are advised to wear a cap that is a proper fit so the match is not delayed. **4-2-1**
- Student-athletes may have facial hair based on individual religious beliefs. As with the hair cap, an athlete with facial hair beyond the requirement must wear a full face mask to completely cover the facial hair and it must remain covered. The first occurrence to fix, repair or replace the face mask will be on the official's time. All next occurrences will be assessed to the athlete's injury time. **4-2-1**
- Student-athletes who are required to wear an orthodontic mouth guard for protection with braces must keep the device in their mouth for the duration of the match. A mouth guard dislodged and falls to the mat will be replaced on the official's time on the first occurrence. Continued occurrences will require the use of the athlete's injury time. If the athlete's is to have been deemed to intentionally spit the device out of his/her mouth it will be an immediate unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. **4-2-6**
- Wrestlers are permitted protective eye wear. This may be due to a previous injury, pre-existing visual condition or recommended by an eye specialist. The eye wear must satisfy the existing standards of all special equipment. **4-3-1**