

2012 AND 2013 WRESTLING MAJOR RULES CHANGES

The following list of rules changes were accepted by the NCAA Wrestling Committee at their recent annual meeting and were approved by the Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) and the Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports Committee (CSMAS). These changes will be incorporated into the 2012 and 2013 Wrestling Rules and Interpretations Book.

Rule 1.16 Videotaping. Videotapes shall not be used in dual meets to make corrections. However, a flagrant misconduct call may be reviewed by the referee for accuracy if official mat-side video is available as determined by the host institution before the beginning of competition. The review shall take place before the beginning of the next match. The decision to review video rests solely with the referee.

RATIONALE: Allows the referee the prerogative to review the official video to affirm that a flagrant misconduct violation was correctly called.

Rule 2.1.1 Starting Neutral Position. The match will start with both contestants standing opposite each other with their lead foot on the green or red area of the starting lines and their other foot even with or behind the lead foot. In the neutral position, neither wrestler has control. When the referee sounds the whistle, the wrestlers assume the starting position, the referee says, “set” and sounds the whistle then the wrestlers will begin wrestling.

RATIONALE: Addition of the verbal command “set” before the referee blows the whistle when wrestling is started in the neutral position.

Rule 2.1.4 Additional Offensive Starting Positions.

2.1.4.1 Granting an Escape. Prior to assuming an offensive starting position, the offensive wrestler may signal to the referee the neutral position. The defensive wrestler is awarded an escape, and wrestling begins from the neutral position.

2.1.4.2 Optional Starting Position. (As in book now as Rule 2.1.4.)

RATIONALE: Allows the offensive wrestler to signal for a neutral position start. With this change, the rule agrees with the NFHS rule.

Rule 3.12 Breaking Team Ties in Dual-Meets and Team-Advancement Tournaments. When two teams finish in a tie in a dual meet or a team advancement tournament, the following shall be applied to determine a winner:

3.12.1 Greater number of victories.

Note: Forfeits, defaults and disqualifications count only toward total number of victories.

3.12.2 Combined total of falls and technical falls.

3.12.3 Total match points.

3.12.4 First take down.

One team point shall be awarded to the team winning by criteria. The method of recording the score in breaking team ties shall be the score followed by the number of criteria that broke the tie (for example, Team A 17, Team B 16, criterion 3.12.2). ~~In regular-season dual-meet competition, team ties shall not be broken.~~

RATIONALE: Simplifies the tie-breaker criteria for team-advancement tournaments and establishes it for dual meets. Conference tournaments will benefit by using the simplified criteria to determine the winner when ties occur.

~~***Rule 3.17.6 Failure to Make Weight.*** Any contestant who fails to make weight for each day of a tournament shall forfeit all points previously earned, be ineligible for further competition and shall not place in the tournament, except as covered in Rule 3.21.~~

RATIONALE: This rule, which was in place before the weight management program was created, is outdated and no longer necessary.

Rule 3.22 Error Review Request. At individual advancement tournaments, a coach may request a review only of recording points, timing, match results or procedural errors. A coach shall inform the official scorer who will inform the referee of the coach's intent to request a video review at the end of the match before the bout sheet is removed from the scorer's table. The referee may or may not grant a review. If granted, the review shall use only the official mat-side video. The official video shall be designated before the meet begins by the tournament director. (See Rule 3.4.) For timing and scoring reviews, the official video should include a clear view of the time and score. (For dual meets, see Rule 1.16.)

RATIONALE: Error review option replaces protest option and allows mat-side video review at referee's discretion.

Rule 5.4.2 Unsportsmanlike Conduct. [Third paragraph] Unsportsmanlike conduct before, during or after a match by coaches, athletic trainers, managers, physicians and noncompeting wrestlers will follow the sequence of penalties listed in the Penalty Table. The referee shall signal the infraction then inform the offending coach, the scorekeeper and the meet announcer of the one team-point deduction.

RATIONALE: Addition of referee's administrative sequence to be carried out when issuing an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

Rule 5.6 Flagrant Misconduct.

Rule 5.6.1 Prematch, Match or Postmatch Period. [Second paragraph] In addition, that contestant will not be credited with points earned before the incident, nor receive placement points or an individual tournament award. Other contestants will remain in their respective positions. In dual-team advancement tournaments, the flagrant misconduct penalty points are only deducted for the session in which the offense occurred.

RATIONALE: Clarification that penalty points for a flagrant misconduct violation are deducted only for the session in which the act was committed (does not include previous sessions).

Rule 5.6 Flagrant Misconduct.

Rule 5.6.1 Prematch, Match or Postmatch Period. [Sixth paragraph] In triangular, quadrangular, individual-advancement tournaments or similar dual-team advancement events tournaments, an individual(s) penalized for flagrant misconduct shall be disqualified and removed from the premises for the duration of the event, including multiple-day competitions. "Premises" is defined as the building in which the event takes place. The table scorer is required to inform the head coach that a team member, who must be identified by name, has been charged with a flagrant misconduct violation.

The referee may review mat-side video for flagrant misconduct; when there is a review, it shall occur before the bout sheet leaves the table. (For flagrant misconduct review in dual meets, see Rule 1.16.)

RATIONALE: Referee may select to review video for conclusive evidence to support flagrant misconduct violation.

Rule 5.6 Flagrant Misconduct.

Rule 5.6.1 Prematch, Match or Postmatch Period. [Third paragraph] A wrestler, coach or institutional representative who commits an act of flagrant misconduct shall be suspended from participating in the team's subsequent event. If flagrant misconduct occurs during the last event

of the season, the suspension carries over to the first event of the next season. The referee shall alert the National Coordinator of Officials as soon after the match as possible that a flagrant misconduct violation occurred. (For medical personnel, see Rule 5.6.2.)

Rule 5.6.2 Institutional Representative. If the offender is a member of the team's medical staff other than the competing and noncompeting wrestlers, the penalty shall be the deduction of one team point and the head coach offender shall be removed from the premises for the duration of the event, including multiple-day events, and the head coach shall be suspended from participating in the team's subsequent event. The member of the team's medical staff shall continue to serve the team's medical needs.

RATIONALE: Addition of a penalty for a flagrant misconduct violation issued to an institutional representative (same as for a student-athlete, except medical personnel).

Rule 5.9 Potentially Dangerous. Any hold that forces a limb to the limit of the normal range of motion, and other holds or situations that ~~will~~ may cause injury, are potentially dangerous and ~~shall~~ may be stopped by the referee. When "potentially dangerous" is called, no penalty points shall be awarded. The match is resumed in the neutral or starting position on the mat as determined by the position held at the time the match was stopped.

RATIONALE: This change will allow wrestling to continue when an offensive wrestler is using a legal hold. Currently the defensive wrestler is often given a restart when action is stopped prematurely as potentially dangerous when an offensive wrestler applies a legal hold and the defensive wrestler indicates discomfort.

Rule 5.10 Stalling. [Current language deleted.]

Rule 5.10.1 Initiating Action. Action is to be maintained throughout the match by the contestants staying near the center of the mat and wrestling aggressively in all positions (top, bottom or neutral). Stalling is defined as one or both wrestlers attempting to avoid wrestling action as an offensive or defensive strategy. When a referee recognizes stalling, the first violation will be a warning, the second and subsequent violations will be a one point award to the opponent. A "double stalling" violation is given when both wrestlers fail to initiate an offense. (See Penalty Table for sequence of penalties.)

Rule 5.10.2 Neutral Position Stalling. Each wrestler must attempt to work toward the center of the mat and maintain an attack to secure a takedown, regardless of the time or score of the match. Stalling in the neutral position is defined as follows:

- Continually backing away from the opponent without creating offensive action.
- Near the edge of the wrestling area, a wrestler shall not step out of bounds unless it is to sprawl from an opponent's takedown attempt or when interlocked in wrestling. Therefore, a wrestler shall be called for stalling if kicking out from a lower leg hold when this action results in the defending wrestler going out of the wrestling area.
- Fleeing or attempting to flee the wrestling area as a means of avoiding being scored upon.

Rule 5.10.3 Other Position Stalling. Offensive and defensive wrestlers shall make an attempt to sustain active wrestling and remain in the circle. The offensive and defensive stalling positions include:

- The offensive wrestler does not aggressively attempt to break down the opponent.
- Either wrestler pushing their opponent out of bounds to prevent scoring.
- The offensive wrestler grasping the defensive wrestler's leg(s) with both hands or arms, unless such action is designed to break down the opponent for the purpose of securing a fall or to prevent an escape or reversal.

- Repeatedly grasping or interlocking hands around a leg without attempting an offensive move.
- The defensive wrestler must initiate action to escape or reverse the opponent.
- Repeatedly applying the legs while in the rear-standing position is stalling.

With the defensive wrestler in a standing position, the offensive wrestler is allowed reaction time to attempt to bring the opponent back to the mat.

Rule 5.10.4 Stalling by Delaying Match. Delaying the match—such as straggling back from out of bounds or unnecessarily changing or adjusting equipment—shall be penalized as stalling.

RATIONALE: The list of actions and stalling tactics that avoid wrestling action define stalling; fleeing is an attempt by a wrestler to avoid wrestling action and is considered to be a form of stalling. The penalty for stalling was adjusted to help ensure that referees will call it when it occurs.

Rule 6.1.1 Injury Timeout. An injured or ill contestant may be awarded timeout up to a maximum of 1½ minutes, which is cumulative throughout the match, including overtime periods. After the first non bleeding injury timeout taken by a wrestler, the non injured wrestler is given the choice of top, bottom or neutral position on the restart.

After the second non bleeding injury timeout taken by a wrestler at any time, the non injured wrestler is awarded one point ~~granted the choice of top, bottom or neutral position on the restart.~~ ~~If the second timeout is taken at the conclusion of the first period, the non injured wrestler will have the choice at the start of the second and third periods.~~ ~~If the second timeout is taken at the end of the second period, the opponent will have the choice at the start of the third period.~~

If the second non bleeding injury timeout is taken at the conclusion of the third period, the opponent would shall have the choice of any one of the three starting positions at the beginning of the sudden victory period. (See Rule 3.11.1.) be awarded one point at the beginning of the sudden victory period and the match is concluded, and is scored as a win in the sudden victory period (refer to Rule 4.2). In a similar manner, if the second non bleeding timeout is taken any time during the sudden-victory period, the opponent ~~will receive the choice of starting position when the match is restarted.~~ shall be awarded one point and the match is concluded.

If the second timeout is taken at the conclusion of the sudden-victory period, the opponent shall ~~receive~~ be awarded one point at the beginning of the first tie-breaker period ~~the choice of either top or bottom position at the beginning of the first tiebreaker period.~~

If the second timeout occurs at the conclusion of the first tiebreaker period, the opponent shall be awarded one point at the beginning of the second tie-breaker period ~~have the choice of either top or bottom position in the second tiebreaker period.~~ ~~If the second timeout occurs during either of the tiebreaker periods, the opponent shall have the choice of top or bottom when the match is restarted.~~

A third non bleeding injury timeout will terminate the match. The non injured wrestler shall be declared the winner by default.

RATIONALE: The Wrestling Committee identified a significant trend where wrestlers use the first injury time out as a strategy to avoid wrestling action or being scored on. While the rule book notes that action is unethical, the current rule does not dissuade wrestlers from using it as a tactic to gain a competitive advantage.

The committee still supports the current position that only a referee may call a timeout and has the prerogative to stop a match to determine the presence of an injury. This rule change is not intended to change how referees make the determination of an injury.

Rule 6.1.5 Bleeding Timeout. [Addition] Note: Saturated is defined as soaked with moisture or drenched. If blood has penetrated through a garment to the skin or can be transferred to another player or referee, the garment is saturated. The same saturation criteria should be applied to a player's personal equipment (headgear, knee brace, etc.).

RATIONALE: Addition of note to current rule to define “saturated” as requested by NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports.

Rule 7.1.1 Registration. The referee enhancement program is under review to improve and enrich it, which requires budget approval that is currently underway. New language will include approved enhancements. The proposal will include the following ideas: 1) creation of a regional structure to support the National Coordinator of Officials; 2) live web-stream option for required clinic attendance; 3) annual rules DVD presentations delivered to three specific audiences (coaches, assessors and referees); and 4) a more comprehensive test with a higher score stipulated for postseason assignments.

RATIONALE: A proposal with financial implications to the staff budget will be reviewed for approval on the committee's May 3, 2011, conference call. Desired effects are: 1) support team for National Coordinator; 2) referees able to attend fall clinic virtually; 3) rules DVD presentation improvements; DVDs available to specific audiences; and 4) availability of quizzes throughout the season plus a more substantial exam to assess referees' rule knowledge.

Rule 7.3 Jurisdiction Time and Responsibility. For any dual competition, the same referee will be maintained as the lead official throughout that meet. An assistant referee, if used, will not rotate in as the head official.

RATIONALE: This addition to the current rule excludes an assistant referee from being rotated to the head referee position.

Rule 8.1.4 Non Registered Tournaments. All wrestlers whose names appear on an institution's roster are prohibited from competing at non NCAA registered tournaments.

RATIONALE: Ensures that wrestlers follow weight-management guidelines while competing in tournament competition, including open tournaments.

Rule 8.3.1 Establishing a Weight Class.

8.3.1 Establishing a Weight Class. All wrestlers whose names appear on an institution's roster shall comply with weight-management regulations (for example, wrestlers competing in open competition) and certify using Section I of the NCAA Wrestling Weight-Management Program. (See Rule 8.3.2.) Each institution's assessor shall conduct an initial weight assessment of its student-athletes not sooner than the first official day of classes in the fall semester, trimester or quarter and not later than the first official practice (144-day calendar in Divisions I and II, and 19 weeks in Division III per NCAA Bylaw 17). An exception is granted to any institution whose classes start after the application of NCAA Bylaw 17. During the initial weight assessment, a wrestler's minimum wrestling weight class for the season shall be determined. The Assessor shall enter all assessment data into the OPC system within five days of conducting the assessment. Any data not entered within five days of collection will be invalid and the student-athlete must be reassessed. The final assessment of each individual on the institution's roster shall be confirmed by the assessor and head coach before the start of the team's first official practice. If an individual's assessment is not completed before the team's first day of practice, that individual cannot practice with the team until the assessment is completed and confirmed.

RATIONALE: Allotting the assessor a five-day window to enter all assessment data after conducting the assessment is necessary to ensure the student-athlete receives their weight-loss plan in a timely manner in order to follow it to get to their lowest allowable weight.

Rule 9.2 Failure to Make Weight. Any contestant failing to make weight at the designated time shall be ineligible for that weight class. For dual meets, a forfeit shall be scored and team points awarded to the opponent. In individual advancement tournaments, a forfeit shall be awarded to the opponent and points for the forfeit and advancement shall be scored or the tournament bracket redrawn. Once brackets have been drawn and the deadline for a withdrawal has lapsed, the bracket is considered closed and all entries are declared as final. Any subsequent withdrawal shall result in the match being recorded as a forfeit. For contestants failing to make weight for subsequent weigh ins, a forfeit shall be awarded to the opponent and points for the forfeit and advancement shall be scored. ~~In addition, a contestant who fails to make weight on the second or subsequent day(s) of a tournament shall forfeit all points previously earned.~~ (See Rules 2.18, 3.17.4 and 4.4.1.)

RATIONALE: This rule was originally written before the weight management program, and the change reflects the appropriate penalty for failure to make weight and clarification for final declaration of contestants.

Rule 9.3.1 Prohibited Practices and Substances. The use of laxatives, emetics, excessive food and fluid restriction, self-induced vomiting, hot rooms, hot boxes, saunas, and steam rooms is prohibited for any purpose. The use of diuretics (e.g., water pills) at any time is prohibited by NCAA legislation for all sports. Regardless of purpose, the use of vapor-impermeable suits (for example, rubber or rubberized nylon) or any similar devices used solely for dehydration is prohibited. Artificial means of rehydration (that is, intravenous hydration) are also prohibited to allow participation and use of such is a violation of weight-management rules. Violators of these rules shall be suspended for the competition(s) for which the weigh-in is intended. A second violation would result in suspension for the remainder of the season. For additional information, refer to the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook available online at NCAA.org/health-safety.

RATIONALE: Addition to current rule as requested by NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports.