



IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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November 18, 2013

TO: ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, HEAD WRESTLING COACHES, AND OFFICIALS
(Athletic Directors and Head Coaches, please forward this information for ALL of your wrestling coaches, grades 7-12.)

RE: THE UPCOMING WRESTLING SEASON

Dear Athletic Directors, Head Wrestling Coaches, and Officials:

As many of you know, I usually start or end this letter with some philosophy about education-based athletics. Because many of the items in this letter relate to safety and conduct, I am going to let those issues stand on their own. Safety and conduct are part of the philosophy of education-based athletics.

There are a large number of important items in this letter. Please read all of them!

Concussions

- A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function.
- Most concussions do NOT result in loss of consciousness (being knocked out).
- Adolescent student-athletes are particularly vulnerable to the effects of concussion.
- Even a “ding” or “bell ringer” can result in a minor concussion and cause changes in short- and long-term brain function.
- Neither officials, nor coaches, are expected to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of a licensed health-care provider (*Physician, Physician’s Assistant, Chiropractor, Nurse, Physical Therapist, and Athletic Trainer*), according to Iowa Code 280.13C.
- Officials, coaches, and administrators are expected to make efforts to ensure that student-athletes with signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion do not continue to participate until receiving written clearance from a licensed health-care provider (*Physician, Physician’s Assistant, Chiropractor, Nurse, Physical Therapist, and Athletic Trainer*).
- Any student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as **loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems**) shall immediately be removed from **participation** and shall not return until he has received written clearance from a licensed health care provider (*Physician, Physician’s Assistant, Chiropractor, Nurse, Physical Therapist, and Athletic Trainer*). (*During interscholastic wrestling competition, “shall immediately be removed” means injury or recovery time is started and the student-athlete is removed if not cleared within the specified time.*)
- Iowa law requires a student’s coach who observes signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or brain injury, during any kind of participation, i.e. practices, scrimmages, contests, etc., to remove the student from participation immediately and the student shall not return until **the coach, or school’s**

designated representative, receives written clearance to return from a licensed health care provider. (*During interscholastic wrestling competition, “shall immediately be removed” means injury or recovery time is started and the student-athlete is removed if not cleared within the specified time.*)

- Iowa law requires an official who observes signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or brain injury, during scrimmages, contests, etc., to remove the student from participation immediately and that official, or a **designated contest official at the contest/event, must receive the written clearance to return** from a licensed health care provider before the student can return to participation in that contest/event, including an event that takes place over multiple days. (*During interscholastic wrestling competition, “shall immediately be removed” means injury or recovery time is started and the student-athlete is removed if not cleared within the specified time.*) If a student is removed on the first day of a 2-day day tournament, they cannot return to the second day of the tournament unless they have written clearance.

Click below for common concussion signs and symptoms observed by coaches and contest officials.

http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Common_Concussion_Symptoms_Observed_110413.pdf

Click below for common concussion signs and symptoms reported by the injured student-athlete.

http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Common_Concussion_Symptoms_Reported_110413.pdf

Coach Misconduct

Coach misconduct is an Iowa point of emphasis this year. We have found that officials and coaches often have different interpretations of the rule and its application. **If the coach misconduct rule is going to be applied consistently, officials and coaches need to have a similar understanding of the rule, its interpretation and application. Coaches and officials also need to have a DESIRE TO WORK TOGETHER in order for the coach misconduct rule to applied consistently.**

There are three common scenarios regarding the coach misconduct rule. #1) The official who is too strict and does not allow a coach to approach the scorer’s table for any reason without calling coach misconduct. **#2) The official who is too lenient** and allows a coach to violate the misconduct rule with no penalty at all. **#3) The official who allows a coach to approach the scorer’s table to ask for a simple rule clarification or discuss a correctable error with no penalty, unless the coach misconduct rules are violated.** Being too strict (#1) is a disservice to coaches because the rules allow coaches to ask for a rule clarification or discuss a correctable error at the scorer’s table. Being too lenient (#2) is a disservice to the rules and other officials because it allows coaches to violate the rules with no consequence. It also causes concern for officials who correctly enforce the rule, because when the coach misconduct rule is not enforced in one meet, but is in the next, coaches become upset at the official correctly enforcing the rule. **Our goal is to get officials and coaches with a similar understanding of the rule: that being, coaches are allowed to**

approach the scorer's table to ask the head referee for a simple rule clarification or discuss a correctable error with no penalty. If a coach questions judgment or is wrong about the application of a rule, the coach misconduct rules must be enforced.

The bullet points below are from the rules meeting and should help everyone gain a common understanding of the rule.

- **It IS PERMISSIBLE for a coach to approach the scorer's table to cordially ask the head referee for a rules clarification or discuss a correctable error** with no coach misconduct warning/penalty as long as the coach returns to his seat with no further argument or complaint.
- **Coach misconduct occurs (against the head coach) when any coach improperly questions the head referee at the scorer's table. Improperly questioning the referee means the coach questions the application of a rule and there was no misapplication (*the coach was wrong*); or, the coach questions the official's judgment. Coach misconduct must be called whenever either of these two situations occurs.**
- When a coach questions a referee from anywhere other than at the scorer's table it is NOT coach misconduct, but it could be unsportsmanlike conduct if the referee believes it violates rule 7-5-3.
- **Unsportsmanlike conduct** occurs when a coach directs negative comments at an official, berates an official, taunts an official, approaches the mat and not the scorer's table, to ask for a rule clarification, interferes with the orderly progress of the match, violates the bench decorum rule, or tries to incite negative behaviors from others. Depending on the severity of the actions of the coach, these actions could be considered flagrant misconduct.
- By rule, **no warning is required before penalizing unsportsmanlike conduct.** However, in the spirit of **preventive officiating**, it can be appropriate for an official to give a coach a subtle signal that their behavior will no longer be tolerated. If the poor behavior continues, the coach should expect a consequence – unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct.
- If a coaching staff repeatedly comes to the scorer's table for a conference with the referee during a match, or a meet, the referee does have the authority to decline the conference and indicate to the coach to return to his seat.

Officials should discuss coach misconduct with coaches before every meet in an effort to help everyone understand the spirit and intent of the rule.

Below is a link to the coach misconduct PowerPoint slides from the wrestling rules meeting.

http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Misconduct_WR_131.pdf

Weigh-ins at Team Advancement Tournaments

(HERE IS AN IMPORTANT NFHS INTERPRETATION CHANGE!) In team-advancement tournaments that do not evolve into individually-bracketed events and there are no individual awards, more than one wrestler may weigh-in at each weight class. All wrestlers must weigh in each day of the multiple-day event **AND they must weigh-in at the same weight class each day of the event.** **NOTE: A wrestler is**

only eligible for two weight classes during a multiple-day, team-advancement tournament.

NFHS Situation 11.1.4C - In a two-day team advancement tournament that does not evolve into an individually bracketed tournament and/or does not reward individual accomplishments, the coach plans to use Wrestler A in the 113-pound weight class the first day of competition and in the 120-pound weight class the second day of competition. Can Wrestler A weigh-in at the 113-pound weight class the first day and weigh-in at the 120-pound weight class the second day?

RULING: No. A wrestler must weigh-in in the same weight class each day of a multiple-day tournament. However, in this type of tournament, once Wrestler A made weight the second day at the 113-pound weight class, it would be permissible for Wrestler A to wrestle in the 120-pound weight class.

Stalling

There two specific stalling situations I would like to address. The only time the rules provide for a five-second count to determine stalling is when the heel of the defensive wrestler is held to his buttocks for more than five seconds after he is broken down to the mat.

Here is an example: Wrestler A is in the advantage position. A grasps the far leg of B and brings the heel to the buttocks in an attempt to break B back down to the mat. B's heel is held in continuous contact with the buttocks for more than five (5) seconds before he is broken down to the mat. If the referee believes A is making an honest attempt to break B down to the mat, it is not stalling. Once B is broken down to the mat, if A continues to hold the heel to the buttocks for longer than five (5) seconds it is stalling according to rule 5.24.4b. Once a wrestler is broken down, the referee should begin a silent five-second count immediately. If the heel is held to the buttocks for more than five seconds after the wrestler is broken down, the wrestler in the advantage position shall be called for stalling.

Also, if the defensive wrestler gets to his feet and the offensive wrestler is attempting to take him back down to the mat, it is not stalling on the offensive wrestler as long as the referee believes he is making an honest attempt to take the defensive wrestler back down to the mat. There is no defined time during which the offensive wrestler must take the defensive wrestler back to the mat.

Important 2013-14 Dates for Schools and Officials

- First practice: Monday, November 18, 2013
- First competition: Monday, December 2, 2013
- Class 1A & 2A Sectional Tournaments: Saturday, February 8, 2014
- Class 1A & 2A Regional Dual Meets: Tuesday, February 11, 2014
- Class 3A Regional Dual Team Meet: Wednesday, February 12, 2014
- Class 1A, 2A & 3A District Tournaments: Saturday, February 15, 2014
- State Dual Team Wrestling Tournament: Wednesday, February 19, 2014
- State Wrestling Tournament: Thursday - Saturday, February 20-22, 2014

Wrestling information can be found at the following link –

<http://www.iahsaa.org/category/wrestling/>

VERY Important Dates for Officials

- Monday, December 2, 2013 is a **VERY** important date for officials. The following **MUST** be completed by the end of the day, December 2:
 - Schedules and Tournament Request Forms
 - Wrestling Rules Exam Passed
 - Wrestling Rules Meeting viewed or attended via the IWCOA convention
- **Officials MUST submit 2013-14 sportsmanship ratings** on-line by the end of the day, Monday, February 24, 2014 to be eligible for post-season competition in 2015.

IHSAA Regular Season Winter Sports Manual

Below is a link to the wrestling section of the winter sports manual. Athletic directors and coaches, please this information to be sure you are in compliance with all IHSAA rules.

http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/IHSAA_WinterManual_2013_14_Wrestling.pdf

Mandatory Reporting of Dual Meet Scores

Based on a recommendation from the Wrestling Coaches Advisory Committee, all wrestling schools are mandated to enter **varsity** dual meet match and team scores into the NWCA OPC that is also used to monitor all aspects of the weight management program. **Varsity dual meet individual and team scores must be entered by 3:00 P.M. on Monday, December 16, Monday, January 13, and Friday, January 31.** All **varsity** dual meets through the previous Saturday of each reporting date need to be included. The penalty for failure to report on time is:

- **First offense**, a letter/e-mail sent to the school's head wrestling coach, with a copy to the athletic director, from the IHSAA sport administrator giving 3 days to comply with the mandate;
- **Second offense**, a letter to the school's athletic director, with a copy to the principal and superintendent, from the IHSAA executive director, giving 3 days to comply with the mandate;
- **Third offense**, IHSAA will withhold **ALL** of the school's post-season wrestling expense allowances (sectionals – state wrestling).

Eligible Weight Classes and Scale Allowance

The on-line weight management system will indicate which two weight classes a wrestler is eligible to weigh-in for each week according to their descent plan. **If a wrestler's Minimum Wrestling Weight for a given week is 145.5#, he is eligible to weigh-in for the 152# and 160# weight classes that week.** If a scale allowance is given for consecutive days of competition or weather postponements, that does **NOT** change the wrestler's two eligible weight classes. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE IS THIS WRESTLER ELIGIBLE TO WEIGH-IN FOR THE 145# WEIGHT CLASS DURING THE WEEK INDICATED.**

Here is a link to the 2013-14 NFHS Rules changes -

<http://www.nfhs.org/content.aspx?id=9460>

Ejections

Any coach or student-athlete disqualified from an interscholastic contest by contest officials for flagrant, violent, or verbal misconduct will be ineligible for the remainder of the day, and the next regularly scheduled contest at that level of competition, and all contests/meets/dates in the interim at any level including IHSAA postseason tournaments, in addition to any other penalties the IHSAA or the school may assess.

In addition to the ineligibility, any coach ejected from an IHSAA sanctioned sport in grades 7-12 will be required to take the NFHS on-line course titled, “Teaching and Modeling Behavior.” The coach must view this course, and the certificate of course completion must be emailed or faxed to the IHSAA office (515-432-2961), before he or she is able to return to coach an interscholastic contest. The cost of the course will be the responsibility of the individual coach. This mandate is in addition to the penalty stated above.

In addition to the ineligibility, any student-athlete ejected from an IHSAA sanctioned sport in grades 7-12 will be required to take an on-line course called “Sportsmanship- It’s Up to You.” The student must view this course, and the certificate of course completion must be sent to the IHSAA office, prior to the student participating in another interscholastic contest. There is no cost for this course. The Athletic Director of the ejected student will receive information on how the student can view this on-line course and how to submit the certificate of completion to the Athletic Association. This mandate is in addition to the penalty stated above.

Sincerely,



Alan Beste
Assistant Executive Director
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Links:

Blood Borne Pathogens Procedures:
<http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Blood1.pdf>

NFHS Signal Chart
http://www.iahsaa.org/wrestling/NFHS/13_14_Signals.pdf

NFHS Wrestling Scorers & Timers Instructions
http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Wrestling_Scorers_Timers_Instructions.pdf

NFHS Wrestling Interpretations
<http://www.nfhs.org/content.aspx?id=9916>