



# IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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January 4, 2016

**TO: ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, WRESTLING COACHES, AND WRESTLING OFFICIALS**  
**RE: REMINDERS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE WRESTLING SEASON**

Dear Athletic Directors, Wrestling Coaches, and Wrestling Officials:

Happy New Year! I hope you each took time to relax and spend time with your families and friends over the holidays and are ready for the second part of the season.

### **Education-Based Athletics**

It is a crazy time of year and maybe a good time to reflect on how we can serve, rather than how we can be served. It is easier today than ever before to have a self-centered attitude and forget about the importance of teamwork and service to others. In this era of selfies, tweets, and posts it is easy to think that I am the most important person in my world, rather than thinking about all those who selflessly provided opportunities and mentoring along the way.

What if every student-athlete, coach, administrator, fan, official, worker, etc. arrived at every opportunity for participation (contests and practices) with the attitude of how can I help someone else improve today? Those are the people we all want to be surrounded by, but are we one of those people? What makes us stand out in the crowd? Is it our abilities and successes or our selfless giving to make others better? Those are difficult questions to ask ourselves and we may not always like the answers!

So, how do we know if we are selfless givers who make others better? I think that is answered by understanding what we can give or do to make others better. Here are a few ideas:

- \* I can lead by example, even when it would be easy to blend into the crowd and be a follower.
- \* I can give my best effort, even when less than my best would do.
- \* I can set my personal ambitions aside for the betterment of the team, group or organization.
- \* I can have a positive attitude no matter what the circumstances.
- \* I can be a team player regardless of my role with the team, group or organization.
- \* I can celebrate the success of others even if I did not play a role in their success, but I hope I did!

It is a good time to reflect on what are we role modeling to those we come in contact with . especially youth? If we want youth to become less self-centered and more selfless are we walking the talk to help them accomplish that? Remember, people learn by what we do, not what we say!

### **Eligible Weight Classes**

A wrestler's descent plan is a weight loss guide for the wrestler and coach. **The eligible weight classes listed on the weigh-in form are what must be followed by rule.** With that stated, it is still a coach's responsibility to be sure wrestlers are managing and losing weight safely.

**A wrestler can compete at the weight class for which they weigh in and one weight class above that weight class.** *(For individually bracketed tournaments the weight class at which they will compete must be declared to the weigh master before the last 285# wrestler steps off the scale.)*

**Coaches, be sure to place your wrestlers on the proper line on the weigh-in sheets. A wrestler can never weigh in below their lowest eligible weight class for the week.** So a wrestler with a lowest EWC of 152#, but who weighs in at 145# is not eligible to compete on that date because he weighed in at an ineligible weight class.

**A wrestler whose eligible weight classes are 152# and 160#, who is listed on the 160# line, but weighs less than 152# (154# with the growth allowance), has weighed in for the 152# weight class.** If nothing is done, the only weight class at which he can compete is 160# because he can only wrestle one weight class above what his actual scale weight qualifies him, which is 152# and **he cannot compete below where he is listed on the weigh in form.** If this happens, the coach needs to scratch out the 160# weight class for this wrestler on the weigh in form and write in 152# before the form is signed by the opposing coach(es) and/or weigh master so everyone is informed and the wrestler can compete at 152# or 160#.

If this same wrestler is listed on the 152# line and weighs more than 152# (154# with the growth allowance), he is not eligible at the 152# weight class. If this happens, the coach needs to scratch out 152# on the weigh-in form and write in 160# before the weigh-in form is signed by the opposing coach(es) and/or weigh master so everyone is informed and the wrestler can compete at 160# and 170#.

### **Growth Allowance**

**Wrestlers who have made scratch weight at least one time at the lowest weight they intend to compete for the remainder of the season can receive the growth allowance for the remainder of the season.** For example, if a wrestler has made scratch weight at 132#, they receive the growth allowance at either 132# or 138# without losing their certification at 132# or negatively affecting their descent plan. *In addition, they can use the growth allowance at 138# before using it at 132# with no adverse effects.* They can also use the growth allowance to weigh-in at 138#, compete at 145#, and not affect their descent plan. Remember, once a wrestler uses the growth allowance they cannot go below the lowest weight class they have made scratch for to that point.

**Coaches, here are a couple of things to remember regarding the growth allowance and TrackWrestling:**

- 1) **Log into your TrackWrestling account, go to "Roster" and check to be sure the Minimum Weight Class (MWC) for each of your wrestlers is accurate.** You can raise a MWC, but you cannot lower it. The TrackWrestling system will use the MWC

- column to determine which wrestlers can receive the growth allowance after January 1.
- 2) **Be sure your weigh ins for ALL meets have been 'Committed'. If the scale icon next to the competition is green the weigh-in form has been 'Committed'.** If the icon is blue, it has NOT been committed. **If you have forms that have not been committed, be sure to do so.**
  - 3) **Here is how you activate the growth allowance:**
    - a. **If a wrestler has made scratch weight at the MWC listed, when you go to the 'Print' option on a new weigh-in form the "No" under "Growth Allowance" will be in blue, which means it can be changed to "Yes" to allow the growth allowance.** If you do NOT want the wrestler to receive the growth allowance just leave it as ~~No~~ Once the Growth Allowance is changed to ~~Yes~~, the wrestler will receive the growth allowance the remainder of the season and you cannot take it away.
  - 4) **"Light" wrestlers who are wrestling above where they actually weigh-in may benefit from not using the growth allowance because they do not have to weigh the additional two pounds.** For example, **with the growth allowance** in order to be eligible to compete as a 126# wrestler, an individual must weigh in excess of 115# to weigh-in for the 120# weight class and compete at 126#. **Without the growth allowance** the wrestler would need to weigh in excess of 113# to weigh-in for the 120# weight class and compete at 126#.

### **Communicable Skin Condition Checks**

Here are the responsibilities to make the skin check process as smooth as possible for duals or tournaments:

- a) **Coaches must be diligent about performing skin checks on a regular basis,** and especially the day before a meet;
- b) **Athletic Directors should make every attempt to have a designated, on-site meet, appropriate health-care professional present at weigh ins** so the most accurate decision possible can be made about wrestlers with a suspect skin condition;
  - i. **When a designated, on-site meet, appropriate health-care professional is present to conduct skin checks, the intent is that skin checks still occur during the weigh-in period.** If the health-care professional has a limited window of time to complete the skin checks or there are a large number of wrestlers to be checked, the host school's athletic administrator will determine what time skin checks will begin. This time should be communicated with the participating team's athletic administrators and the referees. If at all possible, it should not significantly change the planned arrival time of teams and referees.
- c) **Referees should contact the host school's athletic director and inquire about who will be conducting the skin checks.**
  - i. **If the host school has a designated, on-site meet, appropriate health-care professional** available to conduct the skin checks, then the referee needs to verify that skin checks were performed and determine if any wrestlers were not cleared and are not allowed to compete.
  - ii. **If there is no designated, on-site meet, appropriate health-care professional** available to conduct the skin checks, they continue to be the referee's responsibility. The referee can no longer simply ask the coaches if

they have any skin forms to present the referee. This means **if the referee cannot be present for the weigh ins, the wrestlers will need to return to the locker room or wrestling room, remove their warmups, and take the straps of their singlets down, remove any taping that may have already been done, etc. so the referee can conduct a thorough skin check.**

- d) **Licensed Athletic Trainers (LAT) can assist with skin checks.** If they feel comfortable doing so, they could be of assistance conducting skin checks. At the weigh-ins a LAT could be the person conducting the skin checks (for female LATs the location would be somewhere outside the weigh-in area) if the referee was not able to be there in time or was looking for assistance. The referee would then verify with the LAT that the skin checks had been performed or seek their advice on suspect conditions. **If the LAT examined a wrestler with a suspect skin condition and believes the condition may be communicable the wrestler would either have to present a signed IHSAA Wrestling Skin Condition Report form to the referee allowing him/her to participate or he/she would not be allowed to participate in that meet.** A Licensed Athletic Trainer does not have authority to provide written clearance to a wrestler with a suspect skin condition.
- e) **The IHSAA Wrestling Skin Condition Report Form is the only form permitted for schools in the State of Iowa.** However, out-of-state schools are permitted to bring the form used in their state. Here is a link to the Iowa form .

[http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Skinform\\_REV-Nov2015.pdf](http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Skinform_REV-Nov2015.pdf)

If a coach presents an electronic form that has been scanned onto his mobile device, such as an iPad or phone that is acceptable.

### **Multiple Day Event Weigh-ins and Communicable Skin Conditions**

The question has come up about whether wrestlers who have a suspect skin condition and do not have written clearance on the first day of a multiple day team event are eligible to weigh in on day one so if they are cleared they can compete on day two. The answer is, **yes**, they are eligible to weigh in on the first day, but not to compete, unless cleared by a designated, on-site meet, appropriate health-care professional. The wrestler could receive written clearance to compete on the second day of the event and would be required to weigh in for the same weight class as on day one.

### **Required Safety Mat Area Surrounding Wrestling Mats During Competition**

The safety mat area is required for ALL interscholastic competitions on grades 7-12.

\* If a section of one, or more, mats is removed in order to fit all mats into the gym, the approximate 5 feet safety mat area rule **CANNOT** be ignored.

\* If a mat is rolled part way up a wall, the approximate 5 feet safety mat area rule **CANNOT** be ignored. Even if the wall is padded, there **MUST** be an approximate 5 feet safety mat area from the out of bounds circle to the padded wall.

If this rule is not met, meaning there is not a safety mat area of approximately 5 feet wide secured to and surrounding all mats, competition **CANNOT** be held until there is compliance with the rule. Compliance with this rule is the responsibility of meet management and shall be enforced by the official(s).

Below is a link to a diagram of what is **legal** according to rule 2-1-2.

[http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Safety\\_Mat\\_Area\\_Diagram-Legal\\_102914.pdf](http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Safety_Mat_Area_Diagram-Legal_102914.pdf)

Below is a link to a diagram of what is **illegal** according to rule 2-1-2.

[http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Safety\\_Mat\\_Area\\_Diagram-Illegal\\_102914.pdf](http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Safety_Mat_Area_Diagram-Illegal_102914.pdf)

### **Filling Sub-Varsity Weight Classes**

I understand the desire to get sub-varsity wrestlers matches so they stay interested in the sport, but that still has to be done within NFHS & IHSAA rules. Here is a brief review of some of those rules:

- 1) **Wrestlers must be eligible before competing at the sub-varsity level.** That relates to academics, codes of conduct, communicable skin conditions, etc.
- 2) **Wrestlers must compete at an eligible weight class.** The NFHS has established weight classes for high school competition and those classes **MUST** be followed for ALL 9-12 competition. Not following the established weight classes creates a great deal of liability for the schools and the referee. Referees should not officiate interscholastic matches that do not follow NFHS rules.
- 3) **Wrestlers MUST represent their school** when competing. There is no such thing as %unaffiliated+in interscholastic competition.
- 4) In multi-duals, wrestlers can compete in JV against one team and JV or varsity against another team, in a different dual. They **CANNOT compete more than one time against the same team**, regardless of the level. For example, they cannot compete twice at the JV level against a team, nor can they compete at the JV level and receive a forfeit against the same team at the varsity level.
  - a. Regarding forfeits, **NFHS wrestling rules state the wrestler must report to the mat ready to wrestle in order to receive a forfeit.** That means in uniform and able to wrestle. **Wrestlers who did not pass the skin check cannot receive a forfeit, nor should those who are injured too seriously to compete.**
- 5) There are **NO EXHIBITION matches** between wrestlers who are not eligible under the rules.

### **TrackWrestling Items**

**I want to THANK YOU for the excellent job you have done with the live scoring this year!** Unfortunately, TrackWrestling had nation-wide server issues on Saturday, December 19 that caused all of us anxiety and additional work. I have sent an email to all those hosting a tournament on the 19<sup>th</sup> regarding how to capture the live stats and hope those issues have been resolved.

When using live scoring **please ask your computer operators to be sure they are clicking on the actual statistic such as "takedown", "escape", "near fall", etc. rather than just clicking the +1, +2, +3 buttons.** Clicking +1, +2, +3 buttons keeps the score right on the scoreboard, but does not enter any statistics into the TrackWrestling stats program.

Also, please ask your table workers is to **be sure they are selecting, or typing in when necessary, the correct name of the wrestler when the wrestlers check in at a dual event.** The roster from the line up sheet may not always be accurate because of coaches moving wrestlers around as they strategize to win the meet.

For dual meets, **TrackWrestling has created a place for officials to type in their name(s) at the conclusion of the dual. For individual tournaments it is a bit more challenging.** Each electronic bout sheet has an Add Commentqbox just under the clock that runs on the computer. At the end of the last match in an individual tournament the referee can enter their name in that box. TrackWrestling records the exact time the match ended, but a referee's signature would be a good thing to have.

### **Biting**

Biting was discussed in the online rules meeting and at the IWCOA convention, but let me clarify a little more. Rule 5-2 states, *"Biting is an act of flagrant misconduct; and, on the first occurrence, an individual shall be disqualified from competition."* *"If, in the opinion of the referee, a wrestler bites his opponent, it will be deemed as intentional biting and will be called as flagrant misconduct."* That is the rule, now let me give a little guidance on the interpretation.

- 1) Referees do not have to see biting occur in order to call biting, but any claim of biting must be brought to the attention of the referee immediately.
- 2) If the referee did not see the alleged bite, he/she should look for the presence of bite marks from both the upper and lower teeth. Incidental contact with an opponent's open mouth could result in what appears to be a bite; however, **the presence of both upper and lower teeth marks is more likely to be the result of an intentional bite** than from incidental contact with the teeth.
- 3) **Referees should pay close attention to a cross-face** applied when the mouth is open. **If teeth marks are present after the cross-face is applied to the mouth, the referee should only call biting if he/she believes the wrestler actually bit down on his/her opponent.**
- 4) I am not discouraging biting from being called, however, like any offense that causes a wrestler to be ejected from the contest, the official should be certain of what happened before ejecting the contestant.

Have a great rest of the season and I wish you success in the post-season.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Alan Beste  
Executive Director