



IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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November 17, 2014

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:

Being involved in education-based athletics, **we have a great opportunity to teach and model professionalism, sportsmanship, & character.** Unfortunately, on a regular basis we read or hear allegations about high school athletes being involved in harassment and bullying. Such behavior, at any level of sport, is unacceptable. **It is the responsibility of athletic administrators and coaches (every coach) to ensure that no hazing or bullying practices take place at any time, or any place, within your program. Your approach to this subject must be simple and straightforward – hazing and bullying will NOT be tolerated in your program!** This must be clearly communicated through words and actions so it does not happen “on your watch”.

Athletic Directors and Head coaches, I encourage you to address this issue proactively and in a timely manner, which means now, as the season begins! Head coaches, keep a close watch on your program and work with your captains and assistant coaches to ensure they are serving as the positive role models we expect them to be. Empower them to police behaviors and report unacceptable behaviors to you.

Officials, every time you step on the mat use it as an opportunity to teach character and respect for others. You do that by expecting good behavior of everyone associated with a school’s wrestling program and accepting nothing less than respect.

We have a great opportunity to teach and model professionalism, sportsmanship, & character. If we do anything less, shame on us.

Concussions

Click below for the concussion management and return to participation protocol for all sports.

http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Concussion_Management_Protocol_WITH_RTP_051414.pdf

Here is specific information regarding what the Iowa Code requires when a coach or official remove a wrestler from participation.

Wrestling Coach Removal:

When a student’s coach removes a student from any kind of participation due to observing signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or brain injury

the student shall not return until designated school personnel have received written clearance to return from a licensed health care provider as defined in Iowa Code 280.13C.

Wrestling Official Removal:

1. If a contest official removes a student with signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or brain injury from participation, the head contest referee, or his/her designee, must receive written clearance from a licensed health care provider as defined in Iowa Code 280.13C before the student can return to participation in that contest/event.
2. For dual meets, clearance to return shall be presented to the head contest referee before the match resumes. Injury time is NOT extended for a student with signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or brain injury.
3. For one-day events when the head contest referee may change during the event (multi-dual meets & tournaments), written clearance to return shall be presented to the head contest referee, or his/her designee, before the student participates again that day. The designee may be the host administrator, head event official, designated on-site licensed medical professional, etc. The student's coach, or other school-designated representative, is responsible for providing the written clearance to return to head contest referee, or his/her designee. The head contest referee, or designee, will then notify the other contest officials that written clearance to return has been received.
4. For multiple day events when the head contest referee may change during the event, the head contest referee on the day the student was removed will make a verbal report about the injury to the tournament manager. The tournament manager will be responsible to report the incident to the referee(s) of the contest(s) in which the student may participate on subsequent days of the event. The referee(s) of future contests during this event must receive written clearance from a licensed health care provider as defined in Iowa Code 280.13C before the student can return to participation.

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

2014-15 NFHS Rules Changes

Rule 4.2.1 – Remember, beginning this **season legal hair coverings MUST be attached to the ear guards**. The intent of this rule change is to keep the hair coverings on the head! Below are two photos. One showing the legal hair covering attached over the ear guards and one showing it attached under the ear guards. Both are legal, but

placing the legal hair covering over the ear guards usually does a better job of keeping it on the head. Coaches, if you have a wrestler who will be wearing a legal hair covering be sure it is worn in such a way that it stays on the head and does not create unnecessary match stoppages. Officials, if a wrestler is wearing a legal hair covering attached under the ear guards and it keeps coming off, have the wrestler make an adjustment so there are fewer match stoppages.



Remember, **no tape is permitted on the ear guards or hair coverings**. The ear guards and legal hair cover do not need to be made by the same manufacturer, but neither can be altered from the way it was manufactured. *(Just a reminder, while most shoes have a cover or pouch for the laces, it is acceptable to tape shoe laces so they do not come untied.)*

Rule 5.1.1 & 6.6.2 – Bad time now includes wrestlers in the wrong position or the wrong wrestler given the choice of position at the start of the second 30-second tiebreaker and the start of the ultimate tiebreaker. When bad time occurs at the start of the 3rd period, start of the second 30-second tiebreaker, or the start of the ultimate tiebreaker, corrections will be made, the wrestlers given a rest of one minute, and the period shall be re-wrestled. The one-minute rest includes the time used to correct the error. In other situations when there is bad time, and if the amount of bad time can be determined by the referee, bad time shall be deleted and/or properly re-wrestled without delay *(no one-minute rest period)*.

Rule 10.2.9 Individually Bracketed Tournament Entries

If two wrestlers in the championship bracket simultaneously cannot continue the match due to both being disqualified for stalling or having their injury or blood time elapse, the wrestler who is leading on points at the time the match is terminated will continue in the consolation bracket. Additional wording for 2014-15, if the match is tied at the time of termination, the wrestler who scored the first point(s) in the match (first three periods, or first or second 30-second tiebreaker) will continue in the consolation bracket. If no points were scored, neither wrestler will continue.

Click below for the 2014-15 NFHS Rules Changes and Points of Emphasis
<http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/2014-15-NFHS-Wrestling-Rules-Changes.pdf>

Required Safety Mat Area Surrounding Wrestling Mats During Competition

NFHS rule 2-1-2 states, "The wrestling area of the mat shall be a circular area a minimum of 28 feet in diameter. **Surrounding and secured to the wrestling area of the mat shall be a safety mat area of approximately 5 feet wide.**" This means **there shall be approximately 5 feet of safety mat area from the out of bounds circle to the nearest obstacle, i.e., bleachers, walls, gym floor, tables, chairs, etc.** The wording "approximately 5 feet" is used because as mats age they may shrink, which could reduce the safety mat area slightly. The wording is NOT meant to allow less than 5 feet of safety area because the gym is too small for the number of mats being used.

*** 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

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

Multiple Day Event Weigh-ins

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. A wrestler is only eligible for two weight classes during a multiple-day, team-advancement tournament, and those two weight classes are determined at the first day weigh-in and cannot change during the remainder of the event.

Situation #1: In a two-day multiple-day team event, the coach plans to use Wrestler A on the first day of competition and Wrestler B on the second day in the 106-pound weight class. Since Wrestler B will not compete on day 1 but only on day 2, is it permissible for Wrestler B to weigh-in only on day 2?

RULING: No. For a wrestler to be eligible to compete on the second day of a tournament, he/she must have made weight the first day of the tournament and then must make weight the second day. Wrestler A, who is not competing the second day, would not have to make weigh-in the second day of the event.

COMMENT: 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. A wrestler is only eligible for two weight classes during a multiple-day event, and those two weight classes are determined at the first day weigh-in and cannot change during the remainder of the event.

Situation #2: In a two-day multiple-day team event, 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 event, 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.

Stalemate vs. Stalling

Stalemate vs. Stalling is an IHSA point of emphasis for the 2014-15 wrestling season. Making this a point of emphasis is not an attempt to have officials call stalling more or less often, but to give officials and coaches the same guidelines on the rules related to stalemates and stalling. While the final decision lies in the judgment of the referee, it is our hope these guidelines will provide more consistency in these two calls.

Rule 5-23 (**Stalemate**) states, "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); or 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 is considered stalling."

Rule 5-24 (**Stalling**) 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 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 action**. **It is the responsibility of contestants, coaches, and referees to avoid the use of stalling** tactics or allowing the use thereof. This shall be demonstrated by those responsible, with strict enforcement by referees."

* **Coaches are responsible** to teach an aggressive style of wrestling, whether in the top, bottom or neutral position.

* **Wrestlers are responsible** for creating action, avoiding the use of stalling tactics, and making honest attempts to wrestle aggressively, whether in the top, bottom or neutral position.

* **Officials are responsible** for being firm in enforcing the letter and the spirit of the rule and consistently penalize any stalling infraction.

* **In summary**, if coaches do not accept responsibility for teaching aggressive wrestling and wrestlers do not accept responsibility for wrestling aggressively, the official is responsible for penalizing the lack of aggressiveness.

Reminder regarding rule 5-23-4: 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 **while he is broken down on the mat**. This is a silent, not visual count.

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 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, regardless of the amount of time that has gone by. Once B is broken down on 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.

In addition, 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. If the defensive wrestler has good agility, balance, is a good 'hand fighter', etc. it may take some time for the offensive wrestler to break him back down to the mat, if the defensive wrestler does not get an escape or reversal first. There is no defined time during which the offensive wrestler must take the defensive wrestler back to the mat.

Below is a link to help coaches and officials better understand stalemates vs. stalling.

http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Stalemate_Stalling_Slides_2014.pdf

Coach Misconduct

Here is a brief description of last year's coach misconduct point of emphasis. Coaches **may** request a conference with the referee to ask for a rule clarification or discuss a correctable error.

Coach misconduct on the HEAD COACH occurs when any coach goes to the scorer's table and:

- **questions the application of a rule and there was no misapplication; or,**
- **questions an official's judgment.**

Remember, coach misconduct is ALWAYS charged to the head coach, regardless of which coach violates the rule. The penalties for coach misconduct are listed on the penalty chart in the rule book.

When a coach questions a referee from anywhere, other than at the scorer's table it is NOT coach misconduct. It could be called unsportsmanlike conduct if the referee believes it violates rule 7-5-3. Coaches directing negative comments at an official, berating an official from their seat, or approaching the mat to ask for a rule clarification is NOT coach misconduct, but could be unsportsmanlike conduct if the referee feels it interferes with the orderly progress of the match, violates the bench decorum rule, is taunting, is disrespectful, or could incite negative behaviors from others.

Everyone needs to understand that an official's main focus is what happens within the wrestling circle, but when their attention is drawn away from the action in the circle by the behavior of team personnel, coaches should fully expect a penalty to follow!

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 2013 wrestling rules meeting.

[http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Misconduct WR 131.pdf](http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Misconduct_WR_131.pdf)

Important 2014-15 Dates for Schools and Officials

- First practice: Monday, November 17, 2014
- First competition: Monday, December 1, 2014
- Class 1A & 2A Sectional Tournaments: Saturday, February 7, 2015
- Class 1A & 2A Regional Dual Meets: Tuesday, February 10, 2015
- Class 3A Regional Dual Team Meet: Wednesday, February 11, 2015
- Class 1A, 2A & 3A District Tournaments: Saturday, February 14, 2015
- State Dual Team Wrestling Tournament: Wednesday, February 18, 2015
- State Wrestling Tournament: Thursday - Saturday, February 19-21, 2015

Complete wrestling information can be found at the following link –

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

VERY Important Dates for Officials

- Monday, December 1, 2014 is a **VERY** important date for officials. The following **MUST** be completed by 4:00pm, December 1:
 - Schedules and Tournament Request Forms
 - Wrestling Rules Exam Passed
 - Wrestling Rules Meeting viewed or attended via the IWCOA convention
- **Officials MUST submit 2014-15 sportsmanship ratings** on-line by 4:00pm, Monday, February 23, 2015 to be eligible for post-season competition in 2016.

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/2014/11/2014_2015_Wrestling_Manual_WEB.pdf

TrackWrestling

The wrestling coaches' advisory committee recommended, and the Board approved, the following:

1. Live TrackWrestling scoring shall be used for all varsity dual meets, including dual meet tournaments, and is recommended for all 9-12 dual meets. Using live TrackWrestling will capture all stats from the meets for all wrestlers. The host school is responsible for coordinating the use of TrackWrestling at dual meets with the competing schools. That does not mean the host school is responsible for providing

the laptops, iPads and personnel to run TrackWrestling, but the host school is responsible for contacting the competing schools to communicate how live scoring will occur. In a multi-dual event, if the host school assumes all responsibilities for live scoring, but is not competing in a dual taking place, one of the competing teams will need to log into their TrackWrestling account so the host school's TrackWrestling operators can access the meet.

2. If TrackWrestling is not used for live scoring during individually bracketed varsity tournaments, the minimum requirement is that all match scores must be entered into TrackWrestling by each team. The easiest thing to do is use TrackWrestling to run the entire tournament, but I know some will be hesitant to do that because of the cost and lack of trained personnel. For tournaments with 224 wrestlers, or less, the use of TrackWrestling costs a maximum of \$150. I know that is an additional cost, but somewhere in the not too distant future using TrackWrestling will be a requirement, so this season would be a good time to have people practice with the system. Regarding lack of trained personnel, we have learned at the state tournament that even our veteran scorers and timers can learn something new! If workers practice with TrackWrestling they will realize it is user friendly.

ALL varsity individual and team scores must be entered into TrackWrestling by 3:00 PM on Monday, December 15, Monday, January 19, and Monday, February 2. All 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).

Individually Bracketed Tournament Team Scoring

Be sure to review Rule 9-2-3 for scoring of regular season individually bracketed tournaments. It is NOT the same as scoring for 1A/2A sectionals and 3A districts. The biggest difference is that **during regular season individually bracketed tournaments a wrestler who receives a bye in the first round does NOT receive any advancement points unless they win their next match.**

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.**

Communicable Conditions

Communicable diseases continue to be a major concern in wrestling. It is imperative that coaches, wrestlers, officials, and school administrators use best practices to control the spread of communicable diseases. The link to NFHS Rules Changes and Points for Emphasis on page 4 of this document provides excellent information on cleaning mats. Here are a couple of points I would like to emphasize:

- A major aid in preventing the spread of communicable disease is properly cleaning all wrestling mats and wrestling equipment on a regular basis. Cleaning mats before and during tournaments will reduce the risk of spreading communicable diseases and is great PR with the spectators! If at all possible, take the time between rounds to clean the mats.
- The people you designate to clean blood from the mats and wrestlers need to wear disposable gloves and use disposable wipes. Not doing so is not acceptable. Remind those cleaning blood from wrestlers that clean gloves are required each time.
- Below are links to IHSAA Blood Borne Pathogens Procedures and the IHSAA Wrestling Skin Condition Report. The IHSAA Wrestling Skin Condition Report has been updated with the assistance of health-care providers. The updated form: 1) has a silhouette of the face to make identification of the location of the condition by health-care providers easier, 2) provides health-care providers with information on how to care for the most common communicable skin conditions, and, 3) includes an earliest date of return. All of these items are included for the safety of all wrestlers.

If you have any questions about the contents of this letter or any other wrestling related question, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Alan Beste
Associate Director
<abeste@iahsaa.org>

Links:

Blood Borne Pathogens Procedures

<http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Blood1.pdf>

IHSAA Wrestling Skin Condition Report

<http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/WR-Skin-Condition-Report-0614.pdf>

NFHS Signal Chart – (Please note the new signals for ‘Unnecessary Roughness’ and ‘Default/Technical Fall/Disqualification’)

<http://www.nfhs.org/media/885665/2014-15-wrestling-referee-signals.pdf>

NFHS Wrestling Scorers & Timers Instructions

http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Wrestling_Scorers_Timers_Instructions.pdf