



# IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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November 17, 2015

**TO: ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, HEAD WRESTLING COACHES, AND REFEREES**  
*(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 Referees:

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.

Referees, every time you step on the mat use it as an opportunity to teach character and respect for others. You do that by role modeling great character, expecting good behavior from 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, part of the blame for students' poor behavior is ours.

## **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](http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Concussion_Management_Protocol_WITH_RTP_051414.pdf)

Pages 4 & 8 give specific information regarding what the Iowa Code requires when a coach or referee remove a wrestler from participation.

Click below for common concussion signs and symptoms observed by coaches and referees.  
[http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Common\\_Concussion\\_Symptoms\\_Observed\\_110413.pdf](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](http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Common_Concussion_Symptoms_Reported_110413.pdf)

**IHSAA Concussion Interpretations/Clarifications:**

When a meet/tournament host school has designated a licensed health care provider who, by state law, can provide written clearance for a wrestler to return to participation when there are signs, symptoms or behaviors of a possible concussion, the following courtesy will be given to the licensed health care provider when more than one wrestler with a possible concussion needs attention at the same time. The reason for this courtesy is the licensed health care provider can only provide care to one wrestler at a time, but more than one wrestler needs their expertise. In these rare instances, the referee should declare ~~official~~ time until the licensed health care provider can begin examining the wrestler on their mat. Once the licensed health care provider begins examining the wrestler, the injury or recovery time will begin. **This courtesy is ONLY provided in the case when the referee believes there is a possible concussion AND the host school has designated a licensed health care provider who can provide written clearance to return to participation.** The same courtesy is NOT given to try to find a licensed health care provider in the bleachers. While a licensed health care provider may come out of the bleachers to examine an injured wrestler, if school policy allows it, that examination must take place during the 1 ½-minute injury or 2-minute recovery time if the wrestler is going to continue to wrestle.

**Example #1:** The two wrestlers on mat #1 hit heads and the referee determines both may have the signs, symptoms or behaviors of a possible concussion. The licensed health care provider goes to wrestler ~~A~~ first so injury time is started for that wrestler. The referee uses ~~official~~ time for wrestler ~~B~~ until the licensed health care provider can begin examining him. Once the examination of wrestler ~~B~~ begins, injury time is started. Even if wrestler ~~A~~ is not cleared to continue, wrestler ~~B~~ shall be examined to determine if he will be cleared or not. If one wrestler is cleared to continue and the other is not, the match is over and you have a winner. If neither wrestler is cleared to continue, the match is over and there is no winner.

**Example #2:** The referee on mat #1 determines a wrestler may have the signs, symptoms or behaviors of a possible concussion that was the result of a legal maneuver. The licensed health care provider is examining that wrestler and injury time is started. During that time a wrestler on mat #3 shows the signs, symptoms or behaviors of a concussion that was the result of an illegal maneuver. The referee on mat #3 declares ~~official~~ time until the licensed health care provider can begin examining the wrestler. Once the examination begins recovery time is started.

**Example #3:** The licensed health care provider is on mat #1 examining a wrestler with the signs, symptoms or behaviors of a possible concussion. During that time a wrestler on mat #2 injures his ankle that was the result of a legal maneuver. The referee on mat #2 starts injury time and coach has 1 ½ minutes to determine if the injured wrestler can continue. Because this injury does not require a licensed health care provider to provide written clearance to return injury time is started immediately.

## 2015-16 NFHS MAJOR Rules Changes

### Rule 3-1-4a:

**ART. 4 . . . Before the dual meet begins, the referee shall:**

- a. **perform skin checks or verify skin checks have been performed by a designated, on-site meet, appropriate health-care professional;**

Skin checks were made a separate item in rule 3-1-4 for two reasons:

- 1) To make the necessity of performing skin checks before dual meets more prominent;
- 2) To clarify that skin checks must be performed by the referee or verified by the referee that they were performed by ~~the~~ designated, on-site meet, appropriate health-care professional.

### Rule 3-1-5a:

**ART. 5 . . . Before an individual, combination or team advancement tournament begins each day, the referee shall:**

- a. **perform skin checks or verify that skin checks have been performed** by a designated, on-site meet, appropriate health-care professional;
- b. **inspect contestants** for presence of oils or greasy substances on the body or uniform, rosin, objectionable pads, improper clothing, all jewelry, long fingernails, improper grooming, health and safety measures;
- c. **clarify the rules with coaches and contestants upon request;**
- d. **have the head coach verify that the team is groomed, properly equipped and ready to wrestle**, including shoelaces being secured; and
- e. **review with the scorers and timekeeper**, the signals and procedures to be used.

In the past, the rules were silent on the duties of referees before a tournament each day. Rule 3-1-5 now addresses those duties. Skin checks are the #1 duty each day of a tournament - either performed by the referee or the designated, on-site meet, appropriate health-care professional.

### **IHSAA Skin Check Interpretation/Clarification:**

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;
- c) **Referees should contact the host school's athletic director and inquire about who will be conducting the skin checks.**
  - i. If the athletic director has a designated, on-site meet, appropriate health-care professional available to conduct the skin checks, then all the referee needs to do is verify that skin checks have been performed and determine if any wrestlers have not been 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 it becomes 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 so the referee can conduct skin checks.

*Athletic Directors, if you are asking the head referee, or all referees, to conduct skin checks at weigh ins that begin two hours before a tournament you may want to consider a little additional compensation. I understand the financial constraints of schools, but I also know that an additional \$10-\$15 each to have a referee or two at weigh-ins to conduct skin checks could minimize the risk to all wrestlers, prevents wrestlers from having to return the locker room or wrestling room for the skin check, and would create positive relationships between referees, coaches and wrestlers. This is only a suggestion and not a mandate.*

**The question has come up about Licensed Athletic Trainers (LAT) assisting with skin checks.** While LATs are not listed on the IHSAA Wrestling Skin Condition Report because they are not physicians and cannot prescribe medications, many of them have expertise in identifying communicable skin conditions. If they feel comfortable doing so, they could be of assistance conducting skin checks before a meet. 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.

Rule 4-1-2 Wrestlers Uniform NOTE: **One American flag, not to exceed 2 inches by 3 inches, may be worn or occupy space on each item of uniform apparel, without state association approval.**

#### 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 2015-16 is in bold, **a. the wrestler whose opponent has received an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty at any time during the match will continue in the consolation round;** b. if no unsportsmanlike conduct occurred by either wrestler, 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; or c. if no points were scored, neither wrestler will continue.

Click below for the 2015-16 NFHS Rules Changes and Points of Emphasis  
<http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/2015-16-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 referee(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)

### **Communicable Conditions**

Communicable diseases continue to be a major concern in wrestling. It is imperative that coaches, wrestlers, referees, 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 unacceptable. 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 gives health-care providers the option of anticipating when a wrestler will be ready to**

**return to participation following a communicable skin condition being treated.** This is assuming the wrestler takes the medication as prescribed and healing progresses as it should. However, **if a lesion does not have a dry, firm, adherent crust the wrestler cannot participate on that date and must return to the health-care provider for further care.** If referees are conducting skin checks and the lesion does not appear to be dry, they should have the wrestler take a Kleenex or piece of toilet paper and hold it against the lesion for a few seconds. If the Kleenex or toilet paper is moist, the lesion is not dry and the wrestler may not participate. **Remember, the underlying goal is the health and safety of all wrestlers.**

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

[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)

### **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**

**A wrestler can never weigh in below their MWC.** So a wrestler whose MWC is 152#, but whose weight only qualifies him for the 145# weight class is not eligible to compete because he weighed in at an ineligible weight class.

A contestant cannot wrestle more than one weight class above the class for which their actual weight, at the time of weigh-in, qualifies them. If a wrestler's scale weight qualifies him for the 152# weight class he can compete at 152# or 160#. **If a wrestler whose eligible weight classes are 152# and 160# is listed on the 160# line and he weighs in with the 160# wrestlers, but he weighs less than 152#, he CANNOT compete at 152# because he did not weigh-in with the 152# wrestlers.** The only weight class at which he can compete is 160# because he cannot compete below where he is listed on the weigh in form.

If a wrestler is listed on the 152# line and weighs more than 152#, he is not eligible to compete at the 152# weight class because he did not make weight. **The only weight class at which he can compete is 160# because he can compete one weight class above the class for which his actual weight, at the time of weigh-in, qualifies him.**

### **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 ONLY eligible to weigh-in for the 152# and 160# weight classes that week REGARDLESS OF ANY SCALE ALLOWANCE THAT MAY BE GIVEN FOR CONSECUTIVE DAYS OF COMPETITION OR WEATHER POSTPONEMENTS. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE IS THIS WRESTLER ELIGIBLE TO WEIGH-IN FOR THE 145# WEIGHT CLASS DURING THE WEEK INDICATED.**

The consecutive day scale allowance is optional meaning a wrestler can use it if it is their advantage to do so, but they are not required to use it. So if a wrestler is a light 145-pounder, he only needs to weigh 138.1# to weigh-in at 145# and wrestle at 152#, even if there is a scale allowance.

### **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.

### **Important 2015-16 Dates for Schools and Referees**

- É First practice: Monday, November 16, 2015
- É First competition: Monday, November 30, 2015
- É Class 1A & 2A Sectional Tournaments: Saturday, February 6, 2016
- É Class 1A & 2A Regional Dual Meets: Tuesday, February 9, 2016
- É Class 3A Regional Dual Team Meet: Wednesday, February 10, 2016
- É Class 1A, 2A & 3A District Tournaments: Saturday, February 13, 2016
- É State Dual Team Wrestling Tournament: Wednesday, February 17, 2016
- É State Wrestling Tournament: Thursday - Saturday, February 18-20, 2016

Complete wrestling information can be found at the following link .

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

### **IHSAA Regular Season Winter Sports Manual**

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

[http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/2015\\_WRManual.pdf](http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/2015_WRManual.pdf)

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  
Executive Director

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/2015/05/Wrestling-Skin-Condition-Report-2015-16.pdf>

*NFHS Signal Chart*

<http://www.nfhs.org/media/885665/2015-16-wrestling-referee-signals.pdf>

*NFHS Wrestling Scorers & Timers Instructions*

[http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Wrestling\\_Scorers\\_Timers\\_Instructions.pdf](http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Wrestling_Scorers_Timers_Instructions.pdf)

### **Situations and Interpretations**

**#1:** Choice in the Ultimate Tiebreaker Situation: In the first period wrestler A is penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct and in the second period Wrestler B is penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct. If the match is **scoreless** at the end of the two 30-second tiebreakers, which wrestler will have the choice of position for the ultimate tiebreaker?

**RULING:** Since both wrestlers were penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct, the only way to determine choice in the ultimate tiebreaker is with a flip of the disk.

**#2:** Wrestlers Uniform: During his pre-meet inspection of the wrestlers, the referee notices an undergarment extending below the singlet that:

- a) extends to the mid-calf; b) has a camo or zebra pattern; c) has a Mickey Mouse design embroidered on it.

**RULING:** ALL are illegal. Rule 4.1.1.c states, "Any other undergarments that extends beyond the inseam of a one-piece uniform shall be a **tight-fitting, single solid color, unadorned and shall not extend below the knee.**"