

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

Five Changes Made in High School Wrestling Rules

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bob Colgate

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (May 12, 2009) – Five new rules changes for the 2009-10 wrestling season were approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Wrestling Rules Committee at its annual meeting last month in Indianapolis. These changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

“The main focus of the changes was clarifying some rules dealing with tournaments,” said Bob Colgate, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Wrestling Rules Committee. “One of the changes also dealt with improving sportsmanship, which is always a high priority with all NFHS rules.”

Two steps were added in Rule 5-20-5 Note to clarify the offensive starting position. As a part of the steps to assume the offensive starting position, the offensive wrestler’s head must be on or above the opponent’s spinal column, and both wrestlers must become stationary. The referee still must pause momentarily before blowing the whistle.

In Rule 9-2-2b and c, two new tie-breaker options for dual-meet competitions have been added as well. First, “The team whose opposing wrestlers or team personnel have been penalized the greater number of team point deductions shall be declared the winner.” Second, “The team whose opposing wrestlers were penalized the greater number of match points for unsportsmanlike conduct during a match shall be declared the winner.”

Colgate said this change eliminates the possibility of a team that has been penalized the greater number of points for coaches misconduct or any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct winning a dual meet in the event of a tie.

In Rule 1-2-1, the committee added: "In individually bracketed tournaments, the contestant representing a school shall be named by weight class prior to the conclusion of the weigh-in and no substitution is allowed after the conclusion of the weigh-in." The rule previously contradicted two other rules (4-5-6 and 10-2-1), but now all three guidelines are in concurrence.

The committee clarified, in Rule 4-2-3, that if a designated, on-site meet physician is present, he or she may examine a wrestler for communicable skin disease or any other condition, either immediately prior to or immediately after the weigh-in.

Another rule change provides tournament administrators the option to weigh-in by either weight class or teams to help with the organization at tournaments. The revised Rule 4-5-3 adds the following language: "Tournament weigh-in may proceed by team(s) with the lowest weight class to the highest and end immediately upon the completion of the highest weight class."

The 2009-10 points of emphasis include excessive celebrations; awarding near-fall points; legalities of scissors, draping scissors and Figure 4; and communicable disease.

Wrestling is the sixth-most popular sport for boys at the high school level with 259,688 participants, according to the 2007-08 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey. In addition, there were an additional 5,527 girls nationwide who participated in wrestling in 2007-08.

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This press release was written by Paige Flynn, a spring semester intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department and a sophomore at Butler (Indiana) University.

About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and Rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing Rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches nearly 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including almost 7.5 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; serves as

the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org.

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