

NFHS Wrestling Rules Changes 2007-08

1-1-2a - NEW

A random draw for championship final matches for an individual tournament, regular season and/or state high school championship series, may be used for competition. **Rationale:** This rule change allows a random draw for championship final matches in individual tournaments conducted during the year. This would create a more consistent format for individuals to go along with team tournaments.

3-1-1

The referee's uniform consists of a short sleeve knit shirt, with alternating black and white 1-inch stripes, or gray with black pinstripes, or an event provided shirt common to all referees at that event...

Rationale: This change would allow referees and states another option for their referee's uniform in wrestling. The gray shirt with black pinstripes has been allowed by other sports organizations in wrestling, and has been well received by the fans, coaches, and referees.

4-2-3

If a participant is suspected by the referee or coach of having a communicable skin disease or any other condition that makes participation appear inadvisable, the coach shall provide current written documentation, as defined by the NFHS or the state associations, from a physician stating that the suspected disease or condition is not communicable and that the athlete's participation would not be harmful to any opponent... **Rationale:** This rule change would help clarify the current rule in that the current written documentation from a physician needs to be on an approved form from either the NFHS or a state association.

4-2-5 - NEW

Each contestant who has braces or has a special orthodontic device on their teeth, shall be required to wear a tooth and mouth protector. A tooth and mouth protector (intraoral) which shall include an occlusal (protecting and separating the biting surfaces) and a labial (protecting the teeth and supporting structures) portion and covers the teeth and all areas of the braces or special orthodontic device with adequate thickness. This would include upper and lower teeth if devices are present on both. It is recommended the protector be properly fitted and:

1. Constructed from a model made from an impression of the individual's teeth and braces or special orthodontic device.
2. Constructed and fitted to the individual by impressing the teeth and braces or special orthodontic device into the tooth and mouth protector itself.

Rationale: The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee feels that it would be in the best interest from a safety perspective that if a wrestler does have braces, or wears a special orthodontic device on their teeth, they should be covered to protect their opponent from injury when coming in contact with the mouth and teeth. Coaches have expressed concern about frequent stoppage of matches because of blood time-out secondary to brace-inflicted wounds.

5-20-5a - NEW

Prior to assuming an offensive starting position, the offensive wrestler may signal to the referee the neutral position. The defensive wrestler is awarded an escape, and wrestling begins from the neutral position.

Rationale: This rule change would now allow the offensive wrestler another choice from the offensive starting position.

5-31-1

Coaches and Team Personnel. Unsportsmanlike conduct of coaches and other team personnel is any act which becomes abusive or interferes with the orderly progress of the match. These acts may occur prior to, during or after a match. This includes violations of the bench decorum rule (7-5-2), taunting, acts of disrespect, or those actions which incite negative reaction by others. The offender shall be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct in accordance with the Penalty Chart. The head coach shall be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct if wrestlers report to the scorer's table not in proper uniform, not properly groomed, not properly equipped or not ready to

wrestle. Exception: The head coach shall not be penalized when a wrestler reports to the scorer's table with shoe laces that are not properly secured. **Rationale:** This rule change now gives rules support for a penalty that reflects the intent behind Rule 1-2-7, which requires the head coach to verify their wrestlers are in proper uniform, properly groomed, properly equipped and ready to wrestle. It does not penalize the head coach when their wrestlers have improperly secured shoe laces.

6-4-4

The coach of the contestant or the contestant has the prerogative to default a match in progress or during an injury time-out by informing the referee. Any coach of the contestant or the contestant has the prerogative to default a match to the opponent at any time by informing the referee. **Rationale:** This rule change allows a coach or a wrestler to default a match to his opponent at any time. Requiring a wrestler injured by illegal action, who wished to default, to return to wrestling prior to the expiration of recovery time in order to be able to default is undesirable and in some cases an unsafe situation.

6-6-4a1, 5a1

Any error, other than Bad Time (Art. 1) ...must be corrected prior to the wrestler/coach leaving the mat area. Errors by the timekeeper, scorer or referee must be corrected prior to the offended contestant leaving the mat area if additional wrestling is necessary. If additional wrestling is not necessary, the error may be corrected as long as the offended contestant or coach remains in the mat area. **Rationale:** The previous rule was intended to simplify the process for correction of errors, but instead, it created confusion. This rule change will now allow the referee to correct an error as long as the wrestler or coach remains in the mat area.

8-2-1a-h

An injured or ill contestant is entitled to a maximum injury time-out of 1 1/2 minutes which is cumulative throughout the match, including overtime periods. There is a limit of two injury time-outs which may be permitted in any match, provided the total time does not exceed 1 1/2 minutes. If a second injury time-out is taken during a regulation period, the opponent shall have the choice of top, bottom or neutral position for the restart. (The up, down or neutral position shall be chosen). **EXCEPTIONS:** During the tiebreaker, only the top, bottom or defer options are available. a. if the second injury time-out is taken at the conclusion occurs at the end of the first period, the opponent shall have the choice at the start of the second and third periods; b. if the second injury time-out is taken at the conclusion of the second period, the opponent shall have the choice at the start of the third period; c. if the second injury time-out is taken at the conclusion of the third period, the opponent shall have the choice of any one of the three starting positions at the beginning of the sudden victory period; d. if the second injury time-out is taken any time during the sudden victory period, the opponent shall have the choice of top, bottom or neutral position on the restart; e. if the second injury time-out is taken at the conclusion of the sudden victory period, the opponent shall have the choice of either top or bottom position at the start of both 30-second tiebreaker periods. f. if the second injury time-out is taken at the conclusion of the first 30-second tiebreaker period, the opponent shall have the choice of either top or bottom at the start of the second 30-second tiebreaker period. g. if the second injury time-out occurs at the conclusion of the second 30-second tiebreaker period, the opponent shall have the choice of top or bottom at the start of the ultimate tiebreaker period. h. if the second injury time-out occurs during either of the 30-second tiebreaker periods or during the ultimate tiebreaker period, the opponent shall have the choice of top or bottom on the restart. A third injury time-out shall terminate the match. The opponent shall be declared the winner by default. **Rationale:** This rule change helps to clarify the exact procedure to follow when administering the second injury time-out. Limiting a wrestler to 1 1/2 minutes of injury time and two injury time-outs has been successful in reducing the number of unnecessary time-outs. Allowing an opponent the choice of position for all remaining periods, both regulation and overtime is too harsh a penalty. This may cause injured wrestlers to decline necessary and needed injury time which is counter to the NFHS philosophy that safety comes first.