

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL EVENTS

Coach, Parent, & Wrestler Rules Guidelines

Mat Area Guidelines

- TWO coaches per corner (must have coach band), seated or kneeling (no standing) on the outside corners of the wrestling surface closest to the head table. Keep area clear in front of scoring table.
- Additional team members and adults (including photographers, managers, on-deck wrestlers) must be OFF THE MAT and not in the chair area. Remain behind (not even with) the scoring table.

Competition Guidelines

- Age Groups 6 & 8: 1 – 1 – 1; Age Groups 10, 12 & 15: 1.5 – 1.5 – 1.5.
- Age Group 18: 1.5 – 1.5 – 1.5; Open Division: 1.5 – 1.5 – 1.5.
- Special Needs: If your wrestler needs accommodations for physical or other reasons, please alert the Head Table, Head Official, and each referee before a match begins.
- Consolation Bracket: 1st period is shortened by 30 seconds, including the placement matches.
- Overtime: 1-minute sudden victory on the feet; if no score, two 30-second tie-breakers wrestled to conclusion (flip for choice: top, bottom, defer). If still no score, go to final 30-second ultimate tie-breaker: first to score in match has choice; if no score, flip disc for choice of top or bottom. If top person rides out, s/he wins; if bottom person scores, match is terminated at time of score.
 - Note: While officials are advised to not call stalling during overtime, always verbally encourage action and improvement. Call a stalemate quicker and with greater frequency to provide maximum scoring opportunity.
- Rest Period: A 15-minute break between matches will be honored, unless BOTH coaches and BOTH competitors agree. Those who choose to double-bracket do not get a 15-minute break.
- Number of Matches: There is no set limit on the # of competitions in which a wrestler may compete.
- True Second Matches: If the 3rd-place competitor has not previously wrestled the 2nd-place finisher, there will be an additional head-to-head match, which may take place immediately after the finals.

Competitor Guidelines

- Headgear is required in all age groups up through 18-&-Under. Unless designated otherwise at a tournament site, the use of headgear in the Open Division will be optional.
- Singlets are encouraged in order to facilitate wrestling and to improve the ability to see shoulders.
- Shoelaces must be securely fastened (Velcro / tape) prior to entering the mat area. If properly secured prior to the match, injury time-out will not be charged if the laces come undone, unless it is a reoccurring situation.
- Mouthpieces are strongly encouraged (but not required) for safety and to prevent injury.
- Hair: Facial hair or head hair must be closely shaven or have enough growth as to not be abrasive stubble. No hair cover is required for long hair; hair adjustment should be done between periods.
- Good sportsmanship before, during, and after a match is expected of athletes and coaches. If you have a situation which cannot be resolved at the mat through warning or penalty, consult with the Head Official before issuing a more significant penalty.

Coach – Parent Guidelines

- Safety and respect come first and foremost!
- Child abuse, disorderly conduct, abusive language, etc., will not be tolerated.
- Coaches and parents must respect the authority and decisions of the officials and table workers. Only the official will be allowed to address the timer and scorer.
- Remind coaches that if they wish to speak about a rule interpretation, they need to approach the table – not have a dialogue from their seat. Judgment calls may not be questioned.
- Report coaches who do not respond to reason, or who are consistently out of line, so that the Head Table and Head Official are aware of any history when following up with these coaches. Our preference is to work toward resolution first before we consider a team penalty or banishment.

Table Protocol (for those working tables)

- Monitor and guide the table workers when you are not working a mat.
- Consult with your table to place leg bands on both the current wrestlers as well as the ones on deck.
- If either or both competitors are not present and do not respond to a matside call, then report the missing wrestler(s) via “Chat,” and immediately proceed to the next match. Missing wrestler(s) must report by the end of next match AND after a minimum of two announcements by the Head Table.
- If a coach is not present, call for him via Chat; if long wait, hold wrestlers and begin the next match.
- Wrestlers in the 15-&-Under and older age brackets may elect to compete without a coach.
- Verify the score at the end of each period. Once the next period begins or the match ends, the scoring may only be corrected if no additional wrestling is necessary.
- Make sure the winner confirms his or her name prior to the scorer recording the match result.
- If a coach protest cannot be resolved with the official, call for the head official. Do NOT continue with the match. Make sure both coaches and competitors remain on the mat.
- Once a match is concluded and both wrestlers have left the wrestling area, all results are final.

Boundaries

New NFHS rules allow the offensive wrestler to score nearfalls and earn a pin as long as two supporting points of either wrestler remain inbounds. However, due to smaller mats with less protection area, officials will make an effort to stop action before it runs through an adjoining mat or into the scoring table. Safety first: action will only be allowed to continue if it does not put one or both wrestlers at risk of injury.

1. The principle is to keep action moving, while encouraging wrestlers to improve their position. An official will be active and remain verbal: “work in,” “center,” “continue,” “improve,” “action.”
2. CONTINUE: If action is on an inside boundary bordering another mat, that action on the mat that may result in points or a pin should be allowed to continue as long as possible barring any interference or until the period ends.
3. STOP & RESTART IN MIDDLE: If wrestlers on one mat are on their feet, and they are approaching two wrestlers on the mat, official will blow the whistle to return to the center.
4. STOP TO PROTECT: If the wrestlers’ actions are carrying them toward the mat table or floor, the wrestlers will be whistled to stop before encountering obstacles.

Rules Protocol

1. VERBAL COMMUNICATION: With youth wrestlers, it important for all involved to teach them to be active. Helpful commands from the official will include: ACTION – WORK – IMPROVE – CENTER – STAY IN – KEEP WRESTLING – KEEP IT LEGAL. If your wrestler hears these words, respond!
2. POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS / ILLEGAL HOLDS: Our competitors come from a great variety of wrestling backgrounds, levels of experience, and differences in physical attributes, as well as diverse areas of the country where rule interpretations may differ from our own. Therefore, we have emphasized that officials check – and double-check – any hold involving a limb or head. Where necessary, ref will be in position to stop a hold prior to pushing it to the point of injury or illegality.
3. INJURY / BLOOD / RECOVERY TIME: time for injury (1:30), recovery (2:00), and blood (5:00) are viewed more as guidelines than as limitations. We will be as flexible as the situation may warrant.
 - a. When a young wrestler cries out during a nearfall situation, it is within the official’s judgment to assess whether it is a safety concern. We will stop wrestling if the hold may result in injury. If wrestling is allowed to continue, we will carefully monitor the situation.
 - b. If wrestling is stopped when criteria is met, an additional point will be granted in addition to earned nearfall points, unless stopped for a potentially dangerous or offensive illegal hold.
 - c. Monitor injury and blood time within the principle of returning the wrestler to action as soon as safely possible, while limiting the possibility of further injury or action stoppage.
 - d. Where a trainer’s assistance is required, the injury/blood clock will begin once the trainer arrives. When the trained professional has been called to the scene, s/he will make the final determination as to when or if wrestling will continue.
 - e. Coaches clean up the blood and body fluids of their wrestler. Officials will indicate fluids on the mat to the coach, so that clean-up begins immediately, while the trainer is attending to athlete. Blood time stops when bleeding has ceased and wrestler/mat are being cleaned.
 - f. If a ref takes a “crying/screaming” athlete off his/her back but finds there is no apparent injury, back points earned will be scored + 1 for unsportsmanlike conduct. Rule 5-11-2-i.

4. **CONCUSSION PROTOCOL:** In the event of an evident head injury, we will immediately stop the action. The coach/parent will be asked to check out his/her athlete, but the final call will be up to the official and/or the trainer.
 - a. If the official has any concern about the athlete's ability to continue safely, he will call for a trainer to make a determination before wrestling is allowed to continue.
 - b. If there is still any doubt as to an athlete's safety, and no trainer is available, we will consult with the Head Official to make a decision regarding the athlete's return to action.
 - c. In either circumstance, if the match has been allowed to continue, the official may still terminate a contest if there are continuing concerns for a wrestler's safety, if there are visible signs of struggle or trauma, or if there is any reoccurrence of any head injury.
5. **STALLING:** Not attempting to score or repeatedly preventing scoring without an offensive move are the antithesis of active wrestling. We will verbally encourage wrestlers to demonstrate activity; we will penalize if warnings are not heeded. As youth periods are short, stalling may be called sooner.
6. **FLEEING:** Leaving the wrestling area under attack without an attempt to circle or stay on the mat. Fleeing can also be called at the boundary line for pushing an opponent off the mat or not returning him from the feet. NFHS rulebook states 3 times: "wrestlers should make every attempt to stay in the 10-foot circle."
7. **CAUTIONS:** False Starts – Always caution. Mat Positioning, 12-&Under and Below – Early rounds: correct first time, then penalize. Medal rounds: follow procedure. 15-&Under Up: Follow procedure.

Principle & Spirit of Competition – A Perspective on Officiating

Given the nature of this open tournament and the youth age groups we serve, it is important to remember the principle of maintaining the integrity of the sport and spirit of the meet. Therefore, in certain situations, officials may lean toward principle over rule.

With the younger kids we are teachers as much as guides and enforcers, a give-and-take situation which may initially require more guidance and patience, especially with regard to keeping holds legal and when starting or restarting the action. We recognize that brief verbal explanations, verbalizing all calls, as well as words such as "action" / "center" / "improve" are always helpful but even more so with this age group. We will make our best effort to remain patient, positive, and professional at all times.

We will maintain the principle in your mind when assessing the rules. For example, the single and double arm bars are legal when used properly, yet they are always potentially dangerous. Therefore, proactive officials are encouraged to verbalize warnings ("keep it legal," "careful," "watch that") throughout the execution of the move. Because the offensive wrestler has earned the position of advantage, we will do our best to monitor the situation while ensuring that he safely and successfully executes his hold. At the same time, officials are also empowered, where necessary and after warnings have been issued, to stop a hold from endangering the opponent.

As the experience and age increase, factor in the progression of the tournament day and the level of competition – especially in championship quarterfinals and semi-finals as well as all placement matches – our officiating will progress accordingly to more closely mirror higher level competition protocol. Just the same, the best response to a situation may vary as the circumstances within a bout evolve.

Differing age groups will bring their own challenge, but we remain aware of the impact of vast differences in strength, ability, or experience within an age group. As the experience and age level advance, compounded by the more competitive rounds in the tournament, the expectations of the athletes and coaches rise in similar measure. – Bill X. Barron, RMN Head Official