



WRESTLING

**Information for
Parents and Fans**

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Dear Parents,

During this wrestling season, your son* will learn a great deal about the art of wrestling. He will learn how to maintain his balance while moving forwards, backwards, and sideways. He will learn how to setup, execute, and finish moves. He will also learn techniques and strategies that will help him win matches. Your son will improve his coordination, increase his endurance, and he will become stronger.

To be a good wrestler, an athlete must not only be physically tough, he must also be mentally tough. During a match, a wrestler cannot rely on anything or anyone else; it is just him and his opponent, one-on-one. The skills and self-discipline that your son will develop through wrestling will be invaluable to him in the years to come.

This booklet is designed to help parents and fans better understand, appreciate, and enjoy the sport of wrestling. We hope that you find this booklet helpful, and that you have a great season!

**We are aware that today there are a number of female wrestlers; however, for the sake of simplicity, we will refer to wrestlers in this booklet as males.*

WEIGHT CLASSIFICATIONS

Weight Classes

High school wrestlers compete in the following weight classes:

103	130	152	215
112	135	160	285
119	140	171	
125	145	189	

Weighing In

Wrestlers weigh in 30-60 minutes before dual meets and 1-2 hours before tournaments. When there are consecutive days of team competition, all wrestlers are granted an additional one pound allowance per day. Contestants cannot wrestle more than one weight class above their weigh-in weight.

Weight Control

State high school associations develop weight control programs that discourage weight reduction and/or wide variations in weight, because this may be harmful to the competitor.

A wrestler is required to establish a certified minimum weight, and he cannot recertify at a lower weight during the season. Without recertifying at a higher weight, a wrestler cannot weigh in more than one weight class above his certified weight. (A two pound growth allowance may be added to each weight class any time after the date of certification).

Each state association shall develop and utilize a weight-management program that includes a specific gravity (hydration) not to exceed 1.025; a body fat assessment no lower than 7% males / 12% females, and a monitored weekly weight loss plan not to exceed 1.5% a week. The National Wrestling Coaches Association has created a web-based weight certification program to assist schools with the administration of this mandate.

Your school's wrestling coach should be able to answer any questions you may have about weight certification.

THE MATCH

The Wrestler's Uniform & Grooming

Wrestlers must wear a close fitting one-piece uniform known as a singlet (with or without tights) and light, heelless shoes that are laced above the ankles. They must also wear protective headgear.

Hair must be above the top of an ordinary shirt collar in the back, and sideburns and hair must be above the bottom of the earlobe. In the front, the hair shall not extend below the eyebrows. While wrestlers must be clean-shaven, a neatly trimmed mustache is permitted. A shaved head can be no more abrasive than a clean-shaven face, or the wrestler must wear a legal hair cover. No jewelry is allowed.

Equipment

Wrestling mats have a 10-foot center circle, a 28-foot circular wrestling area, and 1-4 inches of padding.

The Referee

The referee has full control of the match and his decisions are final. Referees make decisions based on the rules and guidelines found in the *NFHS Wrestling Rules Book*. The referee supervises weigh-ins, and he starts and ends each period. He awards points, issues warnings, and he declares the winner of each match. While the referee oversees all aspects of the match, his primary concern is for the health and safety of the wrestlers.

During the match, the referee indicates which wrestler has the position of advantage (which wrestler is in control) by pointing to him. When a wrestler makes a move for which he is to receive points, the referee holds up fingers to indicate how many points the wrestler is to be awarded. If the wrestler receiving the points is on the home team, the referee holds up the hand with the green wristband. If the wrestler receiving the points is on the visiting team, the referee holds up the hand with the red band. Points are recorded by the official scorer seated at the scorer's table.

During the match, the referee must make sure that the wrestlers stay in-bounds (in the circle). When supporting parts of both wrestlers are out-of-bounds, the referee stops the wrestling, and the wrestlers return to the center of the mat.

The Length of the Match

High school wrestling matches consist of three consecutive 2-minute time periods.* If the score is tied at the end of the third period, there is a 1-minute overtime period, and if necessary, 30-second tiebreakers. The official timekeeper keeps the overall time of the match, and he records the accumulated injury time-outs.

*In tournament consolation matches, the first period may be one minute.

Starting the Match

Wrestlers begin each match on their feet, facing each other. Usually the home wrestler wears a green band around his ankle and the visiting wrestler wears a red band. The wrestlers shake hands, and when the referee blows his whistle, they begin wrestling.

Wrestling Positions

Wrestlers begin each period in the top, bottom, or neutral position. The first period begins with both wrestlers in the neutral position. To begin the second period, a coin toss determines which wrestler gets his choice of starting position. If the home wrestler chooses his starting position second period, the visiting wrestler gets his choice of starting position third period. (The wrestler who wins the second period coin toss has the option of deferring his choice until third period.)

Neutral - The neutral position is one in which neither wrestler has control. In the neutral position, both wrestlers are on their feet, facing each other. The home wrestler has one foot on the green starting line and the visiting wrestler has one foot on the red starting line.

From the neutral position, wrestlers change levels in order to create openings in their opponent's defenses. Wrestlers in this position also try to initiate attacks and score takedowns by using setups like the collar tie, wrist tie, and arm drag.

Defense (bottom wrestler) - If the wrestler is down, then he is the bottom wrestler, and he is in the defensive position (also known as the position of disadvantage). When a wrestler is in the defensive position, he is on his hands and knees in the center of the circle. It is important for a defensive wrestler to control his opponent's hands, and to go for an escape or a reversal as quickly as possible.

Offense (top wrestler) - If a wrestler is up, he is the top wrestler. The top wrestler is in the offensive position, also known as the position of advantage. In the offensive wrestling position, the wrestler is at the right or left side of his opponent, with at least one knee on the mat. The offensive wrestler's chin is on or above the spinal column of his opponent's back, one hand is placed on his opponent's near elbow, and the other hand is placed around his opponent's body.

The offensive wrestler can also position himself on either side or to the rear of his opponent. In this position, the wrestler is able to support all of his weight on both feet, one knee, or both knees. When in this position, the wrestler places his hands on his opponent's back between the neck and waist.

Scoring Points

Throughout the match, wrestlers are awarded points by the referee for the following moves: **takedown, escape, reversal, and near fall**. The points awarded for these moves accumulate throughout the match. (The referee can also award points to a wrestler if his opponent has used an illegal hold or if his opponent is stalling.)

Takedown (2 points) - A takedown occurs when a wrestler, starting from the neutral position, gains control of his opponent on the mat. Takedowns can be accomplished by attacking an opponent's legs and/or upper body. The headlock and the hiplock are examples of upper body attacks. The double leg attack, low single leg attack, high crotch attack, and high single attack are all examples of leg attacks. The fireman's carry is an example of a takedown that combines a leg attack and an upper body attack.

Escape (1 point) - When the wrestler in the defensive position moves to a neutral position, he's awarded one point for an escape. The stand-up, the sitout, and the inside shoulder roll are all examples of escapes. The stand-up is the most commonly used escape.

Reversal (2 points) - The wrestler in the defensive position is awarded 2 points for a reversal when he gains control of his opponent. This can take place while the defensive wrestler is on his feet or while he is on the mat. Wrestlers can sometimes turn an escape into a reversal, as they often do with the Granby roll or the Peterson roll. The switch is probably the most common reversal.

Near Fall (2, 3 or 4 points) - Points for a near fall are awarded when a wrestler has control of his opponent in a near pinning position. This occurs when the defensive wrestler is in one of the following positions: 1) both of his shoulders are restrained four or fewer inches from the mat, 2) one shoulder is touching the mat and the other is held at a forty-five degree angle to the mat, 3) he is in a high bridge or he's supported on both elbows. If the near-fall criteria is met for two seconds, a 2-point near fall is earned; if the near-fall criteria is met for five seconds, a 3-point near fall is earned. (If the defensive wrestler is injured or if bleeding occurs after the 3 point near-fall criteria is met, a 4-point near fall is awarded.)

End of the Match

A match ends when one of the following occurs: 1) a fall (pin), 2) a technical fall, 3) time expires.

Fall (Pin) - A fall (pin) is awarded when a wrestler holds any part of both his opponent's shoulders (or scapulas) to the mat for two consecutive seconds.

Common pinning combinations are 1) the far side cradle (the opponent's head and far knee are clamped together), 2) the near side cradle (the opponent's head and near knee are clamped together), and 3) the half nelson (a wrestler gets his arm under his opponent's arm and up over his neck or head in order to get his opponent turned).

Technical Fall - A technical fall is awarded when a wrestler has a 15 point advantage over his opponent.

Time Expires - If there has not been a fall or a technical fall by the end of the third period, the winner of the match is determined by the number of individual points scored. The wrestler with the most points wins the match by decision. If time expires and there is no winner, an overtime period is added.

Overtime - When the contestants are tied at the end of the regulation match, they wrestle a 1-minute sudden victory overtime period. The wrestlers start in the neutral position, and the wrestler who scores first is declared the winner.

If no winner is declared by the end of the 1-minute overtime, there are two 30-second tiebreakers. If the score still remains tied, a 30-second ultimate tiebreaker is wrestled. If no score occurs within the ultimate tiebreaker, the offensive wrestler is the winner.

Team Points

Once the match is over, the wrestlers return to the 10-foot circle and the referee declares the winner by raising his hand. The winning wrestler's team is awarded the following points:

Dual Meet

Decision (wrestler wins by fewer than 8 points) - 3 points

Major Decision (wrestler wins by 8-14 points) - 4 points

Technical Fall - 5 points

Fall (pin) - 6 points

Tournament (championship bracket)

Decision - 2 points (advancement points)

Major Decision - 3 points (2 advancement points and 1 bonus point)

Technical Fall - 3½ points (2 advancement points & 1½ bonus points)

Fall (pin) - 4 points (2 advancement points and 2 bonus points)

Teams also receive points when the opposing team has forfeited, defaulted, or been disqualified. In a dual meet, 6 points are awarded for a forfeit, default, or disqualification. In a tournament, 2 points are awarded, and the wrestler advances to the next round.

Default: a wrestler is unable to continue wrestling for any reason.

Disqualification: a wrestler is removed from participation for flagrant misconduct, unsportsmanlike conduct, or for an accumulation of penalties.

Forfeit: a wrestler fails to make weight or fails to appear on the mat ready to compete.

In a tournament, additional points are also added for placement (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.).

Wrestling Web Sites

www.wrestlingusa.com

(magazine about interscholastic wrestling)

www.amateurwrestlingnews.com

(magazine devoted to amateur wrestling)

www.themat.com

(the USA Wrestling Web site)

www.nwcaonline.com

(the National Wrestling Coaches Association Web site)

INFRACTIONS, PENALTIES, and INJURY TIME-OUTS

Illegal Holds

Illegal holds are dangerous and they can cause injury. When a referee sees an illegal hold being used, he awards one point to the offender's opponent. Illegal holds include, but are not limited to:

Slam - lifting and returning an opponent to the mat with unnecessary force.

Hammerlock - pulling an opponent's arm too high on his back or pulling his arm away from his back.

Headlock - locking arms or hands around an opponent's head without encircling an arm.

Full Nelson - locking arms under both arms of an opponent and behind his head.

Intentional Drill - forcing a wrestler who is standing to fall back forcibly to the mat, while having a scissors-hold (legs crossed encircling the body) on him.

Other illegal holds include bending, twisting, or forcing a wrestler's head, knee, or limb beyond the normal limits of movement, pulling back a thumb or finger, and/or using any hold as a punishment.

Some holds are not illegal, but they are potentially dangerous. Potentially dangerous holds occur when a body part is forced to the limit of its normal range of movement. The referee will caution a wrestler against forcing a potentially dangerous hold into an illegal hold. The referee, however, will not stop the wrestling action unless it is necessary to prevent an injury. Potentially dangerous holds include the double wristlock, scissors, toe holds, and the guillotine.

Technical Violations

Technical violations include assuming an incorrect starting position, a false start, the grasping of clothing or headgear, interlocking hands, and leaving the wrestling area without first receiving the referee's permission to do so. When a wrestler commits a technical violation, he may be given a caution (warning), or he may be penalized one point.

Conduct Infractions

When a referee witnesses one of the following conduct infractions, he takes the appropriate action:

Unnecessary Roughness - physical acts that exceed normal aggressiveness (e.g., a wrestler uses his forearm or elbow on his opponent's spine or on the back of his opponent's head). The offending wrestler may be penalized one point.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct - any unsportsmanlike physical or nonphysical act occurring before, during, or after a match. These acts include failure to comply with the directions of the referee, shoving, swearing, taunting, baiting, throwing headgear, and spitting. The offending wrestler is penalized one point for the first offense.

Flagrant Misconduct - any physical or nonphysical act that's considered serious enough for disqualification. These acts, which can occur before, during, or after a match, include biting, hitting, butting, kicking, and elbowing. The offending wrestler is disqualified on the first offense.

Stalling - wrestling unaggressively and/or not making an honest attempt to stay within the 10-foot circle. When a referee recognizes stalling (the wrestler is playing the edge of the mat, avoiding contact, not trying to improve his position, not trying to secure a takedown, etc.), he warns the offender. Further violations are penalized.

Penalties and Warnings are Cumulative

Penalty points are awarded to the offender's opponent. Penalties and warnings are cumulative throughout the match and the overtime period. The wrestler's opponent is awarded one point for the first offense, one point for the second offense, and two points for the third offense. On the fourth offense, the offending wrestler is disqualified.

Injury Time-Outs

Injury time-outs are cumulative throughout the match and overtime. A wrestler is limited to two time-outs totaling a maximum of 1½ minutes. If a second injury time-out is taken, the opponent will have his choice of position for the restart. The number of bleeding time-outs is determined by the referee. If the referee feels it's necessary, he will stop the match. If the bleeding is not controlled within five minutes, the match is terminated and the opponent is awarded the match.

WRESTLING TERMS

Bye - a wrestler advances to the next round without wrestling. A wrestler is given a bye when there are not enough wrestlers in a weight class to fill each line of the tournament bracket.

Decision - a win by the wrestler who has scored the most points. It is a regular decision if the winner's score exceeds the loser's score by fewer than 8 points. If the winner's score exceeds the loser's score by 8-14 points, it's a major decision.

Dual Meet - a competition between two schools in which there's a match in each of the 14 weight classes.

Seed - seeded wrestlers are acknowledged as superior wrestlers. Seeds are usually selected according to criteria established by the tournament director and/or by a vote of the participating team coaches.

Seven Basic Wrestling Skills - the US Wrestling Federation has divided wrestling skills into the following categories:

1. **Stance** - having good body position during moves and counter-attacks, and in the various starting positions
2. **Motion** - keeping proper position and balance when defending and attacking
3. **Changing Levels** - raising and lowering the body to attack and defend
4. **Penetration** - moving forward to penetrate an opponent's defenses and to gain a takedown
5. **Lifting** - lifting an opponent off the mat
6. **Back-step** - the action (footwork, level changes, etc.) taken to begin back-step throws (headlock, hiplock, etc.)
7. **Back-arching** - throwing an opponent from his feet to his back

Stalemate - two contestants are interlocked (in a position that will not result in a pin) and neither wrestler is able to improve his position. The referee starts the wrestlers again in the center of the circle.

Supporting Points - the parts of the wrestler's body that are supporting his weight. Supporting points can be the feet, knees, hands, the side of the thigh, and the buttocks.

WHAT EVERY COACH WANTS YOU TO KNOW

Your School's Athletic Eligibility Criteria

At most schools, students must meet certain academic requirements in order to be eligible to play a sport. If you have questions about your school's athletic eligibility guidelines, talk to your son's coach or contact the athletic office.

The Importance of Conditioning

Wrestlers should follow a conditioning program that combines weight training & aerobic exercise (like running) during the off-season. Conditioning is important not only for performance enhancement, but also for injury prevention. Encourage your son to work with his coach and trainer in order to develop a program that's appropriate for him.

Proper Nutrition Guidelines

Wrestling is a strenuous, physically demanding sport. It is, therefore, important for wrestlers to eat a healthy diet that includes vegetables, fruits, meat, and foods high in complex carbohydrates (e.g., pasta, potatoes). It is also extremely important for your son to drink enough fluids, particularly when practicing. The meal the night before a match is especially important for strength and endurance; it should be a nutritious meal high in carbohydrates. If your son is having difficulty maintaining weight while eating a healthy diet, you and your son should talk to the coach.

First Aid for Minor Injuries

Injuries are a part of every sport. Wrestlers are most likely to get minor cuts, sprains, bumps, and bruises. Clean minor cuts with soap and water, and then apply an antiseptic ointment and a Band-Aid. For minor bumps, bruises, & sprains, elevate the area & put an ice pack (not heat) on it as soon as possible. Apply the ice pack for 15-20 minutes, wait 45 minutes, and apply it again. All injuries should be reported to the coach. The coach will contact the trainer and/or a doctor.

Preventing injuries should, of course, be of utmost importance to everyone. Athletes can avoid injury by: 1) being in good condition when the season starts, 2) having the right equipment, 3) stretching properly before all practices and matches, 4) drinking enough water, 5) getting the proper rest and nutrition, and 6) working closely with the trainer.

Skin Care

As a precaution against communicable diseases from skin to skin contact, wrestlers must shower after each practice or competition with an antibacterial soap. Each wrestler's competition uniform and practice uniform, including headgear and towels, should be cleaned after each use with an antibacterial soap or cleaner.

The coach must be informed of any skin disorder, and the wrestler must be seen by a doctor (preferably a dermatologist) for diagnosis and, if necessary, treatment. A doctor's written verification of treatment, and a release to wrestle, shall be furnished at the weigh in.

To protect wrestlers, wrestling mats should be cleaned before each practice and competition with a disinfectant.

Equipment

Schools often provide wrestlers with a singlet (uniform) and protective headgear. Wrestlers need to buy socks and wrestling shoes. Each wrestler also needs to have a water bottle with his name on it.

There are rules governing the use of special equipment (e.g., face masks, braces, supports). Equipment that does not permit the normal movement of joints is not permitted. Equipment that prevents opponents from applying normal holds is also not permitted. Any equipment which is hard and/or abrasive must be covered and padded.

The Dangers of Steroids

In recent years, a number of athletes have chosen to use steroids to build muscle and gain strength. Steroids are illegal, and they can cause liver damage, heart damage, and sterility. Make sure that your son is aware of the dangers of steroids. If your son wants to put on weight and/or muscle, talk to the trainer.

Wrestling in College

Wrestling in college requires talent and a great deal of dedication. For wrestlers who wish to continue competing after high school, there are several options. See page 16 for info on college requirements.

How to Best Help Your Athlete

The best way to help your athlete is to provide encouragement and to be positive, both at home and in the stands. If there's a problem at any time during the season, have your son talk to his coach. If the problem is not resolved, or if it's serious, call the coach yourself.

Know that you are the most important person in your son's life and that your son wants you to be proud of him. Be in the stands for all dual meets and tournaments, and cheer loudly.

DEVELOPING STUDENT-ATHLETES

TIPS FOR PARENTS

The wrestling coach's job is to develop athletes and to win matches. As a parent, it is your job to monitor your son's academic progress and to encourage him be successful in the classroom. These tips will help you do that.

Be interested.

Make sure that your son knows that his academic progress is important to you. Attend all open houses and parent conferences. Know when each grading period ends, and see all progress reports and report cards as soon as they come out. Do not just assume that someone will call you if there's a problem. If you do not see a progress report or report card, call the school and request a copy immediately.

Make sure your son's courses are appropriate.

Help your son choose his courses carefully. If any of his courses are too difficult, too easy, or inappropriate, talk to his counselor.

If your son hopes to wrestle at a Division I or Division II college, talk to your son's counselor to make sure that he's taking the courses he needs to be eligible. (See page 16.)

Help your son set goals.

Sit down with your son at the beginning of each grading period and help him set realistic academic goals for that term. Setting goals gives your son something to work for, and it helps him understand what your expectations are.

Talk to your son about time management.

Playing any sport requires a substantial time commitment. In order to be able to get everything done, athletes must develop good time-management skills. Encourage your son to use all the time he's given in school to study and to work on homework. Help your son create a study plan, and then help him identify anything that might sabotage his plan (e.g., lying down on the couch to watch TV before homework is done).

Offer to help.

Offer to help with homework, but don't give more help than is wanted. Your son may not ask again. Keep in mind that it is your son's responsibility to get his homework done and to prepare for tests.

Make your son accountable.

It's human nature to be tempted to "slack off" when we're not held accountable. Your son needs to know that you care and that you are monitoring his academic progress. He needs to know that successes will be recognized and that poor performances will be noticed. Go over every progress report and report card with him, and contact the teacher if your son has a low grade in a class.

Work with the school.

Teachers, counselors, coaches, and principals are there to help your son get the best education possible. A divorce, health problem, or death in the family can affect your child's attitude and performance. If such a circumstance should arise, call the school and tell them what's going on. If you have a concern that relates to a specific class, call the teacher. For other concerns, call your son's counselor.

COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS FOR ATHLETES

Colleges are affiliated with associations that have their own rules, regulations, and eligibility requirements. Eligibility guidelines for NCAA, NAIA, and NJCAA are outlined below. For more detailed information, visit their Web sites.

NCAA - Division I and Division II colleges can offer athletic scholarships; Division III colleges (mostly smaller, private colleges) cannot. Before an athlete can play a sport or receive an athletic scholarship at a Division I or II college, he/she must meet NCAA's academic requirements. Division III athletes do not need to meet NCAA academic requirements.

Athletes going to Division I and II colleges must have a minimum GPA in a specified number of *core courses*. They must also have the required ACT or SAT score. ACT/SAT requirements for Division I eligibility are based on a sliding scale. The higher the core GPA, the lower the test score required.

Athletes should take the ACT and/or the SAT by the spring of their junior year. Then if they need to raise their scores, they'll have time to retake these tests in the fall of their senior year. Athletes must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center to initiate the eligibility process. This should be done at the beginning of an athlete's junior year.

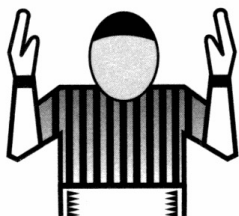
<https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter>

NAIA - NAIA colleges can award full or partial scholarships. To play a sport or receive an athletic scholarship, an athlete must meet two of the following three NAIA requirements: 1) have the required ACT or SAT score, 2) have an overall 2.0 GPA, 3) graduate in the top half of his/her class. <http://naia.cstv.com>

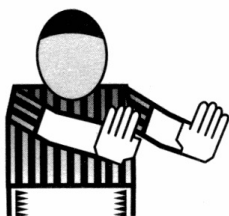
NJCAA - Division I and Division II colleges can offer scholarships; Division III colleges cannot. There are no academic eligibility requirements for athletes entering junior colleges. www.njcaa.org

For information and advice on getting an athletic scholarship, athletes should talk to their coach and/or athletic director.

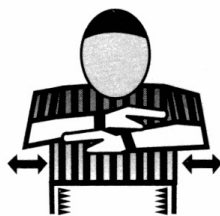
Wrestling Referee Signals



Neutral Position



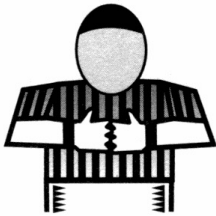
Out of Bounds



Defer Choice



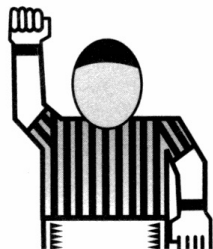
Potentially Dangerous



Stalemate



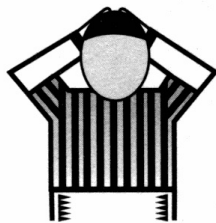
Caution for False Start and
Incorrect Starting Procedure



Stalling



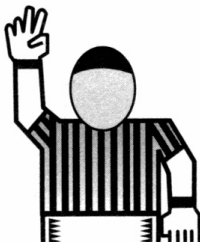
Reversal



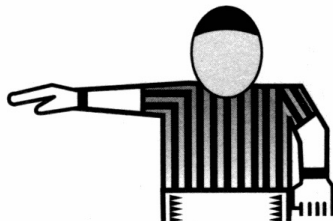
Illegal Hold or
Unnecessary Roughness



Near Fall



Awarding Points



Unsportsmanlike
Conduct