



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

PO Box 690, Indianapolis, IN 46206

317-972-6900, FAX 317.822.5700/www.nfhs.org

Overtime Procedure, 275-Pound Weight Class Changed in High School Wrestling

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jerry Diehl

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (April 10, 2006) — A change in the overtime procedure and an increase of 10 pounds in the 275-pound weight class are among the revisions in high school wrestling rules for the 2006-07 season.

A total of 14 rules revisions were approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Wrestling Rules Committee at its March 26-27 meeting in Indianapolis. The rules changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

After successful experimentation in several states last year, a potential of one additional minute was added to the overtime period. Beginning next season, if no score occurs in the sudden-victory period, two 30-second tiebreakers will take place. Scoring in these two tiebreakers will be conducted as in a regular match. If the score remains tied at the conclusion of the two tiebreakers, one additional 30-second period will be conducted, with the first person scoring declared the winner. If no points are scored, the offensive wrestler wins the match.

Previously, only one 30-second tiebreaker was conducted after the one-minute overtime period. The new rule provides for one additional 30-second tiebreaker and another 30-second period if the score remains tied after the tiebreakers.

For the first time since 1987, the limit on the heavyweight class was increased from 275 to 285 pounds. Jerry Diehl, assistant director of the NFHS and rules committee liaison, said student-athletes are bigger than they were when the limit of 275 pounds was established 19 years ago. He said the committee made the change to encourage additional high school athletes to compete in wrestling.

Dave Gannaway, assistant executive director of the Illinois High School Association and chair of the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee, noted that the additional 10 pounds will provide larger athletes, particularly football players, an increased opportunity to wrestle.

In other rules revisions, the committee altered Rule 6-6 regarding the correction of errors. Beginning next season, any error (other than bad time and positioning) must be corrected prior to the start of the next period. For the correction to be made during the last period, it must be corrected prior to the wrestler/coach leaving the mat area. Previously, changes could be made after the match or within 30 minutes of the completion of a dual meet.

“Coaches and their scorekeepers have the responsibility to recognize scoring errors as they occur,” Diehl said. “It is unfair to attempt a reconstruction of what transpired in a previous period, if it is questioned in the subsequent period.”

The definition of when a match begins was revised in Rule 5-18-2. Beginning next season, a match (in dual matches) begins when the proper wrestler reports to the scorer’s table. Previously, by definition, a match started with the action of the first period. Diehl said the committee made this change to support the current interpretation of penalizing a wrestler who reports to compete and is improperly equipped.

Following is a summary of other changes approved for high school wrestling next year:

- Head coaches and captains are required to meet with the referee prior to each dual meet.
- Technical violations and potentially dangerous holds added to the list of items that must be verbally communicated to the referee when an assistant referee system is used.
- When the referee and assistant referee meet to confer, they shall meet away from the scorer’s table. (previously was in front of table)
- Restriction for garment extending below the singlet was modified.
- Decision on when to award additional near-fall points for acts by the defensive wrestler has been clarified.
- A wrestler who properly reports to the scorer’s table for a dual match cannot be withdrawn or replaced without causing the individual to be disqualified and the weight class forfeited.
- Penalty for pulling back the fingers clarified to state the act of grasping is not an automatic violation.
- Hand(s) to the face and/or raking the eyes added to the list of illegal holds.
- The term “fleeing” has been added to Rule 7-3-2.
- An exception was added to note that a match will not be stopped to penalize the offensive wrestler for stalling when the defensive wrestler has come to the standing position.

These 14 rules revisions will take effect next season, along with the landmark weight-management guidelines approved last year by the committee for implementation in 2006-07. These guidelines were approved in an effort to discourage rapid-weight loss by student-athletes.

In addition, the following points of emphasis were developed by the Wrestling Rules Committee for the 2006-07 season: dealing with apparent concussions, unnecessary roughness and slams, weigh-in procedures, uniform requirements, and socks and use of other special equipment.

Wrestling is the sixth-most popular sport for boys at the high school level, with 243,009 participants during the 2004-05 season, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. It ranks eighth in school sponsorship with 9,562 high schools nationwide conducting the sport. In addition, a total of 4,334 girls participated in high school wrestling in 2004-05.

MEDIA CONTACT: Bruce Howard or John Gillis, 317-972-6900.