

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL EVENTS

### Officials Protocol

{ For more info, see: <http://www.rmnevents.com.prod.sportngin.com/page/show/1067835-rules> }

#### Be Part of Our Future: Goals for the Present

1. Establish a consistent and reliable process for retaining loyal officials and acquiring new ones.
2. Commit to hiring only quality officials – while continually raising the bar for all who work for us.
3. Build officiating level to that which mirrors the quality of competition and its national representation.
4. Evaluate and provide feedback to officials for their own betterment and to improve our product.
5. Standardize tournament compensation and compensate fairly for travel, time away from work/home, overnight accommodations, and amenities (midday snacks and social activity for two-day events).
6. Incentivize officials to return and work designated tournaments through bonus, gift, or like means.

#### P's of Professional Performance

- PATIENCE – Hold your call until control is definite and points have clearly been earned.
- PERSISTENCE – Keep on top of situations as they evolve. Approach all in a consistent manner.
- PRESCIENCE – Anticipate direction and action. Move opposite to wrestlers who are circling.
- PERSPECTIVE – Support your peers in their action on and off the mat. Return promptly from break.
- PARTICIPATION – Fit seamlessly in your role as assessor and enforcer, not as center of the action.
- PRODUCTION – Be verbal: Action – Center – Work – Improve – Continue – Return.
- PREVENTION – Position yourself to best correct – or stop – action to keep it safe and legal.
- PROMOTION – Encourage the best in participation, performance, and acceptance of the result.

#### Weigh-In Assistance (Friday 3:30-6 pm, \$25 additional – first 2-3 officials to sign up in advance)

- Organize weigh-in lines to make sure everyone gets checked before weighing in.
- Kids may weigh with singlet and socks. Girls weigh in with boys; stay dressed but turn around and lift hair off neck.
- Skin check guidelines: a) doctor's note not required; b) official may deny any wrestler with an open or contagious-looking condition; c) if acceptable condition, official may still advise covering.
- Remind kids that hair net and mouth guards are recommended but not required.
- For fingernails, don't delay the process; cut on side after weighing in or show on Saturday am.
- To help with Saturday, remind kids that headgear is required and shoelaces need to be secured.

#### 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, remaining 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.
- Consolation Bracket: 1<sup>st</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup>-place competitor has not previously wrestled the 2<sup>nd</sup>-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 be charged only if the laces come undone repeatedly.
- Mouthguards 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. Hairnet recommended but not required for long hair; adjust hair 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

- 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

*Make it your priority to maintain action in the center of the mat!*

The principle is to keep action moving, while encouraging wrestlers to improve their position. As an official, be active and remain verbal: “work in,” “center,” “continue,” “improve,” “action.”

1. HIGH SCHOOL RULES (Updated) – New rules allow for nearfalls and falls to occur outside the boundary line as long as two points of support (either or both wrestlers) remain inbounds. Due to smaller mats with less protection area, officials must make an effort to redirect or stop action before it runs into an adjoining mat, the floor, or into the scoring table.
  - a. Safety first: Only allow action to continue if it does not put one or both wrestlers at risk of injury. For clarity, score (or not score) any action prior to calling it out-of-bounds. Work the perimeter of the action, allowing ample space for it to take place; for protection reasons, you may move closer to the wrestlers, but then re-establish space.

- b. CONTINUE: If action is on the boundary bordering another mat, allow action that may result in points or a pin to continue as long as possible as long as two points of support remain inbounds, barring any interference, safety concerns, or until the period ends.
- c. STOP & RESTART IN MIDDLE: If wrestlers on one mat are on their feet, and they are approaching two wrestlers on the mat, blow the whistle early to return to the center.
- d. STOP TO PROTECT: If the wrestlers' actions are carrying them toward the mat table or floor, blow the whistle soon enough for the wrestlers to stop before encountering obstacles.

NOTE: Within the limits of 28-foot circles with reduced outside borders, we will do our best to adhere to these new determinations. For those of you who also officiate in college, you will note how the NFHS presentation distinguishes how the high school boundary will be interpreted. Specially, note that where a nearfall or pinning situation may be allowed to continue, a takedown or reversal scored on the edge will be stopped after control has been established (even if a nearfall situation exists).

As you will note in the more detailed rule emphases which are specific to RMN tournaments, where we can allow wrestling to continue – between mats or where there is sufficient border mat – we will be more adherent to these guidelines. However, as our priority is safety, we will first verbally redirect wrestlers toward the middle, then whistle to stop action where safety is compromised by proximity to the edge or mat table, as well as nearness to action on an adjoining mat.

## Rules Protocol

- Rule 3.1.13: “The referee has the authority to rule promptly, and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules.” (NFHS Rule Book)
- 1. VERBAL COMMUNICATION: With youth wrestlers, you are an educator as well as enforcer of the rules; you must see yourself as a teacher of how to properly wrestle. Helpful commands include: ACTION – WORK – IMPROVE – CENTER – STAY IN – KEEP WRESTLING – KEEP IT LEGAL.
- 2. POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS: 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, it is of primary importance that officials check – and double-check – any hold involving a limb or head. Lower your level, verbally warning the hold bearer to keep it safe; where necessary, be in position to stop a hold prior to it being pushed to the point of injury or illegality.
  - Rule 7.2.3: WARN & MONITOR: wrestler stands w/ arm trap; STOP: lift / forward trip / wing / half nelson.
  - Rule 7.2.h: “Potentially dangerous holds/maneuvers include ... other holds/maneuvers which may cause harm when used legally.” [NFHS Rule Book]
- 3. NEARFALL 5.11.2: “The offending wrestler shall not be allowed to profit from illegal action.” (NFHS) If the defensive wrestler commits a foul while in a pinning situation, the referee will allow action to continue (brush off hold where possible). Once the situation ends, the referee will award an additional nearfall point (an imminent NF becomes a ‘2’; a ‘2’ becomes 3; a ‘3’ becomes a ‘4’) + 1 penalty point for EACH foul committed. (Potentially a total of ‘5’ points.)
 

“The extra near fall point has previously been referred to as a “stoppage point” or “advantage surrender point.” Essentially, that is why the extra near fall point was awarded; the offensive wrestler lost his advantage position because the match had to be stopped due to an illegal act by the defensive wrestler. That is still applicable. However, the NFHS has now added that even if the official can address the illegal act without stopping action, an extra near fall point is to be awarded at the next stoppage.” (Rob Ververs, CWOA President)

  - “5.11.2 SITUATION G: Wrestler A has Wrestler B in a pinning situation and the referee is holding three near-fall points when B grasps A’s ear guards. The referee removes the hand, but allows action to continue to give A the opportunity to secure the fall. If (a) time expires or (b) the action is stopped due to the fact the wrestlers went out of bounds, how many points should be awarded? RULING: Whether the period ends or an out of bounds situation occurs, the point awards would be the same. The referee shall award four points for the near-fall and one point for grasping the ear guards. The offending wrestler shall not be allowed to profit from illegal action. (6-4-6; 7-3-2)” [2016-17 NFHS Wrestling Case Book]
- 4. INJURY / BLOOD / RECOVERY TIME: time for injury (1:30), recovery (2:00), and blood (5:00) are viewed as much as guidelines as they are limitations. 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. Stop wrestling if you determine that the hold may result in injury. If you decide to allow wrestling to continue, 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, do not begin the injury/blood clock until the trainer arrives. Once a 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 should immediately point to fluids so the coach or designated adult begins the clean-up WHILE the trainer is attending to athlete. Stop blood time when bleeding has ceased and wrestler/mat are being cleaned.
  - f. If you take a "crying/screaming" athlete off his/her back but find there is no apparent injury, score the back points earned, plus '1' for unsportsmanlike conduct. Rule 5-11-2-i.
5. CONCUSSION PROTOCOL: In the event of an evident head injury, STOP ACTION IMMEDIATELY.
  - a. Insist that the coach check out his/her athlete. Your judgment as official is valid & necessary.
  - b. If you have any concern about the athlete's ability to continue safely, call for a trainer to make a determination before wrestling is allowed to continue.
  - c. If a trainer is called for a concussion evaluation, start & stop the injury clock. Injury time will NOT be in effect during this process in order to ensure a complete and safe return or to declare an injury default.
  - d. If there is still any doubt as to an athlete's safety, and no trainer is available, consult with the Head Official to make a decision regarding the athlete's return to action.
  - e. 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, ongoing or visible symptoms of struggle or trauma, or if there is any reoccurrence of a head injury.
  - f. If you have not taken the annual free concussion course, we strongly recommend you visit: <https://nfhslearn.com/>.
6. STALLING: Not attempting to score or repeatedly preventing scoring without an offensive move are the antithesis of active wrestling. Verbally encourage wrestlers toward activity; penalize if warnings are not heeded. With briefer youth periods, act to stimulate action sooner and more frequently. Repeating a stalemate situation (3+) is stalling (7.6.6 Casebook).
7. 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."
8. BITING: A bite is a bite; do not judge intent. Look for top & bottom marks. *Confer with Head Official prior to deciding on disqualification.*
  - a. NFHS RULE 5, SECTION 2: **ART. 1 . . .** "Biting is an act of flagrant misconduct; and, on the first occurrence, an individual shall be disqualified from competition."
  - b. **ART. 2 . . .** "If in the opinion of the referee, a wrestler has bitten an opponent this will be deemed as intentional biting and will be called as flagrant misconduct."
9. MAT POSITION: Caution: False Starts ... 3 = 1 pt.
  - Medal rounds and 15-& Under Up: Follow procedure.
  - 12-& Under and Below – Early rounds: correct position first time, then penalize.
10. REPEAT VIOLATION: This situation describes two illegal acts being penalized in a situation where the official is not required to stop the match. It is the same as two technical violations having occurred.

- “5.14.2 SITUATION C: In a pinning situation, the defensive wrestler reaches up and pushes against the face with the hands over the mouth and nose of the offensive wrestler. The referee moves the hands of the defensive wrestler away, and shortly thereafter, the defensive wrestler does the same thing. RULING: This is an illegal hold/maneuver for both incidents and both would be penalized.” [NFHS Rule Book]
- a. PENALIZING IN PINNING SITUATION: “The rules state that any hold/maneuver where pressure is exerted over the opponent’s mouth, nose, throat or neck that restricts breathing or circulation is illegal. The penalty for this infraction is not administered until the situation has ended. By doing so, the referee would give an advantage to the defensive wrestler. Therefore, when the situation has concluded the referee would stop the match and indicate penalties for both occurrences.” (8-1-2) [NFHS Wrestling Case Book]

### Mat Official Guidelines

1. ROTATION: You owe it to your officiating team to be accountable and present throughout the lengthy tournament day. Use “first available mat” or an established rotation within your team mat area. If a bathroom break is necessary, go directly there and return promptly. Please access your cell phones only as absolutely necessary and NOT in the vicinity of the mats. The Head Official will also rotate through to provide relief, especially during the designated meal hours.
2. COVERAGE: When your mat areas finish the assigned bouts, do not leave the area. Matches will often be moved from mats that are behind to those which are ahead. Once the Head Table confirms that your mat is complete, please assist other mats in concluding all of the matches as a team effort. At times, due to a need for coverage or in order to accommodate a situation, you may be reassigned to a different group of officials.
3. COMMON START: Following the opening talk by the tournament director and the singing of the national anthem, with a universal shared whistle, ALL mats will begin with their first competitors.
4. EVALUATION & FEEDBACK: In an effort to help you improve, the Head Official will provide verbal as well as written feedback throughout the event. Afterward, you may also evaluate your peers online as well as review your peers’ constructive suggestions.
5. PROTEST PROCEDURE: Throughout the competition, if a situation is unresolved between the official and the coaches, do not proceed with the match until the issue is resolved. Send a Mat Chat to have the Head Official sent directly to your mat. If at the end of a match, keep both competitors and coaches at the mat. We cannot change situations if either or both coaches and wrestlers are no longer at the mat. The conference with the Head Official, mat official, and coaches will conclude the matter.
  - a. A coach may purchase a red protest flag in advance. Flag is the last option if there is no resolution with the mat official AND secondarily with the Head Official. NO FLAG – NO VIDEO REVIEW. It may not be purchased once the match has begun. SEE SEPARATE PROCEDURES.

### Mat Official Principles

1. LEVEL: Especially with younger & smaller competitors, be at their level starting and stopping action, as well as looking for potentially dangerous and illegal holds.
2. ACTION: Be consistent in calling stalling throughout the match. No 0-0 period should ever go without at least one warning or penalty. If the wrestlers are not creating action, it is your imperative to raise the bar.
3. SAFETY: Be in position to warn or stop potentially dangerous situations. Direct wrestlers toward center away from table, floor, and adjacent mats. Call for trainer when in doubt about a wrestler’s ability to continue from an injury and always consult the trainer with ANY head injury.
4. COMMUNICATION WITH COACHES & ATHLETES – As the competition increases, the reward for success and the pain of defeat raises the possibility of conflict. Listen first in coach conferences before responding. Defuse potentially explosive situations by warning or penalizing excessive force and holds designed more for punishment than for scoring. Be active in guiding the match toward its ultimate objective of the best-earned outcome.

## Principle & Spirit of Competition

Given the nature of open tournament enrollment for the youth age groups we serve, as well as valuing the regional and national diversity of the individual and team represented here, 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. 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. Be patient, positive, and professional at all times. Remember that not all adults in the corner are trained as coaches or have had their own wrestling experience.

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, as a proactive official, you are encouraged to verbalize warnings ("keep it legal," "careful," "watch that") throughout the execution of the move. Keep in mind that the offensive wrestler has earned the position of advantage; do your best to monitor the situation while ensuring that he safely and successfully executes his hold. At the same time, you are also empowered, where necessary and after warnings have been issued, to stop a hold from endangering the opponent. As Head Official, it is much easier to defend a hold which was stopped in order to protect from injury; it is more difficult to explain an action that could have been prevented, but instead results in temporary or permanent harm.

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 – your officiating will progress accordingly to more closely mirror higher level competition protocol. Ultimately with experience, this innate "feel" for the match – though still subtle – becomes more intentional. Be alert; your best response to a situation may vary as the circumstances within a bout evolve.

Differing age groups will bring their own challenge, but you may need to be most 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. Often these matches occur at a point in the day when you have already been tested physically, mentally, and emotionally. Be attuned to your own disposition as well to differences in athletes and competition in order to be at your best throughout the meet.

■ Bill X. Barron, Head Official – Rocky Mountain Nationals

## Check-In & Reporting

1. Accommodations for those traveling more than 3 hours are available on a limited basis through the discretion of the Tournament Director and the Head Official.
2. Rooms will be available on the evening before the tournament; depending on the duration of the event, the night of the competition may also be available.
3. If staying overnight, accommodations will not be definite until the day of arrival. Keep in contact via text or phone with the Head Official throughout your trip to assure that we all arrive safely.
4. In order to be reimbursed, travel plans must be approved by the Head Official before you take the trip. Plan to carpool where at all possible; the Head Official can suggest ride pairings. See separate reimbursement specifics for automobile and airplane travel.
5. On the day of the tournament, be dressed and ready to meet at the head table no later than 8:00 am. Depending on the facility, there may or may not be a dressing area or secure place for your gear.

## Official's Agreement { Acknowledged upon accepting assignment to this event. }

*I have read and reflected upon the principles and rules discussed herein. Therefore, I agree to enforce these policies to the best of my ability. I acknowledge that I am part of a whole; thus I will support and defend my officiating and administrative team. I also understand that I have a voice to share concerns or input to improve our efforts on and off the mat. If I have questions or concerns, I will follow up with the Head Official in advance of the event.*

*With all of the above in mind, I will be:*

- *A patient observer, an active learner, and a willing participant;*
- *Thoroughly adherent to all rules and principles;*

- *Actively invested in promotion consistent action and proper sportsmanship;*
- *Constantly aware of differences in age, skill, experience, and region of the country;*
- *Always supportive and accountable to my peers on and off the mat.*