

Wrestling Fundamentals

Wrestling Positions

Neutral Position - The match starts with both contestants standing opposite each other with their lead foot on the green or red area of the starting lines and their other foot even with or behind the lead foot. In the neutral position, neither wrestler has control.

Defensive Starting Position - The defensive wrestler takes a stationary position at the center of the mat with both hands and knees on the mat, as directed by the referee. The elbows may not touch the mat.

Offensive Starting Position - The offensive wrestler is positioned on the right or left side of the opponent with at least one knee on the mat and head on or above the midline of the opponent's back. One arm is placed loosely around the defensive wrestler's body perpendicular to the long axis of the body, with the palm of the hand placed loosely against the defensive wrestler's navel and the palm of the other hand placed on or over the back of the near elbow. One knee is on the mat to the outside of the near leg, not touching the defensive wrestler.

Stalemate - When the contestants are interlocked in a position other than a pinning situation in which neither wrestler can improve position, the referee stops the match as soon as possible; wrestling is resumed as for out of bounds.

Position of Advantage - A situation in which a contestant is in control and maintaining restraining power over the opponent. Control is the determining factor. The offensive wrestler is entitled to this advantage until such time as the opponent gains a neutral position or a reversal.

Out of Bounds - Contestants are out of bounds when a supporting part of both wrestlers is outside the outer edge of the boundary lines. A wrestler's supporting points are the parts of the body touching, or within, the wrestling area that bears the wrestler's weight, other than those parts being used to hold the opponent. (Down on the mat, the usual points of support are the knees, the side of the thigh, the buttocks and the hands.) Wrestling continues as long as the supporting parts of either wrestler remain in bounds. When the defensive wrestler's back is exposed to the mat in a pinning situation while at least the supporting points of either wrestler are in bounds, wrestling continues as long as there is a possibility of the offensive wrestler bringing the opponent back in bounds. In this situation, the defensive wrestler's shoulders (scapulae) are the supporting parts. Near-fall points may be earned only while any part of the defensive wrestler's shoulders (scapulae) is in bounds. If there is no action at the edge of the mat and one wrestler is out of bounds, the referee may stop the match. Upon resumption of the match, the contestants begin in the neutral position at the center of the mat if neither wrestler has control. If one wrestler has the advantage, that contestant will take the offensive starting position at the center of the mat, and the opponent will assume the defensive starting position.

The Wrestling Match

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

While the first period begins with the wrestlers in the neutral position, a coin toss determines which wrestler gets his choice of starting positions for the second and third periods. If the home wrestler gets to choose his starting position second period (top, bottom, or neutral), the visiting wrestler gets to choose third period. (The wrestler who chooses second period has the option of deferring his choice until third period.)

The Length of the Match - High school wrestling matches consist of three two-minute periods; there is no time between periods. (In tournament consolation matches the first period may be one minute in length.) Overtime in dual meets and tournaments start with a one minute time period from the Neutral position, in which the first to score is declared the winner. If the score is still tied, two 30-second periods follow the 1-minute period with alternating bottom positions. A final 30-second "ride-out" period is used as an ultimate tiebreaker, if necessary.

Scoring Opportunities

Takedown – (2 points) A takedown is awarded when, from the neutral position, a contestant gains control and places the opponent's supporting point(s) down on the mat beyond reaction time. For the purpose of

awarding takedown points at the edge of the mat, such points shall be awarded when control is established while the supporting points of either wrestler are in bounds or while at least the feet of the scoring contestant finish down on the mat in bounds.

Escape – (1 points) A defensive wrestler is awarded an escape when the offensive wrestler loses control of the opponent while the supporting points of either wrestler are in bounds. An escape may be awarded while the wrestlers are still in contact.

Reversal – (2points) A reversal occurs when the defensive wrestler comes from underneath and gains control of the opponent, either on the mat or in a rear-standing position. For the purpose of awarding reversal points at the edge of the mat, such points are awarded when control is established while the supporting points of either wrestler are in bounds or while at least the feet of the scoring contestant finish down on the mat in bounds.

Near Fall – (2-3 points) A near fall is a position in which the offensive wrestler has the opponent in a controlled pinning situation in which (1) the defensive wrestler is held in a high bridge or on both elbows, or (2) any part of one shoulder or scapula, or the head is touching the mat and the other shoulder or scapula is held at an angle of 45 degrees or less to the mat, or (3) any part of both shoulders or both scapulae are held within four inches of the mat. Two points are awarded for such near-fall situations when one of these three criteria have been met for two seconds. A continuous roll-through is not considered a near fall. Three points are awarded if a criterion for a near fall is met and held uninterrupted for five seconds. A near fall is ended when the defensive wrestler gets out of a pinning situation. Only one near fall shall be scored in each pinning situation and only the wrestler with the advantage may score a near fall.

End of Match

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

Decision - A decision occurs when the margin of victory is fewer than eight points. A decision also is credited to the wrestler who is awarded the first points in an overtime match that does not end with a fall, default or disqualification.

Default - A default is awarded in a match when one of the wrestlers is unable to continue wrestling for any reason. A default shall be included as a win or loss in each wrestler's season record.

Disqualification - A disqualification is a situation in which a contestant is banned from participation in accordance with a pre-determined penalty table. A disqualification shall be included as a win or loss in each wrestler's season record.

Forfeit - A wrestler receives a forfeit when the opponent, for any reason, fails to appear for the match. In order to receive a forfeit or medical forfeit, the non-forfeiting wrestler must be dressed in a wrestling uniform and appear on the mat. A forfeit or medical forfeit shall be included as a win. In the event of injury or illness, a contestant may declare a medical forfeit, which counts as a win but not as a loss on record.

Fall - Any part of both shoulders or part of both scapulae of either wrestler held in contact with the mat for two seconds constitutes a fall. A fall shall not be awarded unless part of both shoulders or part of both scapulae are in bounds. If any portion of the body of one of the wrestlers is out of bounds so that the wrestler is disadvantaged, no fall shall be awarded and out of bounds shall be declared. When the match is stopped for out of bounds in a fall situation, the match shall be resumed in the starting position on the mat.

Technical Fall - A technical fall occurs when a wrestler has earned a 15-point advantage over an opponent.

Major Decision - A major decision occurs when the margin of victory after three periods is eight through 14 points.

The Referee

The referee has full control of the match. His decisions, which are based upon *the National Federation High School Wrestling Rules Book*, are final.