

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

Clarity Provided to Out-of-Bounds Calls in High School Wrestling

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Elliot Hopkins

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (May 1, 2018) — New definitions for inbounds and out of bounds highlight high school wrestling rules changes for the 2018-19 season.

Beginning next year, a wrestler will be inbounds if two supporting points of either wrestler are inside or on the boundary line. This could be two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler that is inside or on the boundary line.

Changes related to out-of-bounds and inbounds calls, along with rules dealing with uniforms and sportsmanship, were among the rules revisions recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Wrestling Rules Committee at its April 2-4 meeting in Indianapolis. All rules changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The revised definitions for out of bounds and inbounds eliminate subjectivity with the out-of-bounds call without increasing the out-of-bounds area. The removal of “majority of weight” from the definition will allow officials to focus on inbounds and out of bounds rather than having to make a judgment on where the majority of the wrestler’s weight is being supported.

“The majority of rules changes for the 2018-19 high school wrestling season deal with revised definitions of escape, reversal, out of bounds and takedown,” said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of sports and student services and liaison to the Wrestling Rules Committee. “These changes were needed to reinforce our new position with increasing scoring opportunities by addressing the

supporting point issue, but not creating additional risk to the sport. We have defined what the usual supporting points are while down on the mat and how near-fall points or a fall shall be earned.”

Several articles in Rule 5 are affected by the elimination of subjectivity in the out-of-bounds call. Rule 5-10 now provides language stipulating that any combination of two supporting points allows an official to make an inbounds call. Similarly, Rules 5-15-1 and 5-15-3 introduce the same clarity while Rule 5-15-2 alters language from “knees” to “knee(s),” making it consistent with Rule 5-15-2a(4) and its use of “hand(s).”

The revision to the definition of an out-of-bounds call is clearly stated in Rule 5-18, which outlines that it occurs when there are no longer two total supporting points inside or on the boundary line (two supporting points of one wrestler or one supporting point of each wrestler). Rules 5-22, 5-25-1 and 5-25-3 will have similar language to establish inbounds and out-of-bounds calls for reversals and takedowns.

Revisions to Rule 5-24-3 will assist officials with making a stalling call. The new criteria establish that stalling in the neutral position also takes place when a wrestler is backing off the mat and out of bounds, as well as when the wrestler is pushing or pulling out of bounds.

In addition to the numerous changes related to inbounds and out-of-bounds calls, Hopkins noted sportsmanship issues, a new illegal hold and uniform promotional references as other rules changes made by the committee. Among those are the following:

- Rule 4-1-2: New language will state that no additional manufacturer’s logo, trademark or promotional references shall be allowed on the wrestling uniforms.
- Rule 7-1-5y (NEW): The Nelson-Cradle is a new illegal hold/maneuver that is a combination made up of a Half-Nelson on one side with a locked cradle from around the neck with the far side knee. The back of the knee acts as the other arm (arm pit) to complete the Full-Nelson pressure on the neck and throat.
- Rule 7-4-2: New language states that repeatedly dropping to one knee, as well as one hand, to break locked hands is considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

Wrestling ranks seventh in popularity among boys at the high school level with 244,804 participants, according to the 2016-17 NFHS Athletics Participation Survey. In addition, 14,587 girls participate in the sport throughout the nation.

“Overall, the sport is stable,” Hopkins said. “We are excited to have the influx of young women wrestlers who want to challenge themselves and represent their local high schools.”

A complete listing of all rules changes is available on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org. Click on “Activities & Sports” at the top of the home page, and select “Wrestling.”

This press release was written by Cody Porter, a graphic arts/communications assistant in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department.

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About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.9 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

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