

OHSAA WRESTLING BULLETIN

2023-2024 Bulletin No. 3

February 7, 2024

Recovery Time vs. HNC Time

Rule 5.28.3 states: “If a contestant is injured as a result of an illegal hold/maneuver, unnecessary roughness or unsportsmanlike conduct (during the match) or the result of a false start (contact by the opponent) in the neutral position, the wrestler is entitled to two minutes of recovery time, which is not deducted from the injured wrestler’s injury time allowance nor should it constitute an HNC time out.”

Rule 8.2.2 adds, in part: “...to the extent the injured contestant is unable to continue following a maximum to two minutes recovery time, the injured contestant shall be awarded the match by default.”

Rule 5.28.6 deals with HNC and states in-part: “If a contestant is injured, the onsite appropriate health care professional (AHCP) will have up to five (5) minutes (maximum) to evaluate the wrestler’s head and neck involving the cervical column and/or nervous system...”.

What happens if an illegal hold/maneuver, unnecessary roughness, or unsportsmanlike conduct results in a potential HNC injury and the AHCP requests time for an HNC evaluation? **Does recovery time or HNC time take precedence?**

The protocol is as follows: Once an injury occurs as the result of an illegal act, the two-minute recovery time clock is started. In the meantime, if the AHCP requests HNC time to evaluate the injured wrestler, the AHCP can initiate an evaluation to ensure the injured wrestler is okay. However, during the evaluation, the recovery time clock remains running. If the injured wrestler cannot continue at the expiration of the two-minute recovery time clock, he/she will be declared the winner. The AHCP may continue to evaluate the injured wrestler, but HNC has no bearing on the match as it is terminated by virtue of recovery time expiring.

Preventative Officiating

In dual meet competition the wrestlers must report to the scorer’s table when called by the referee (Rule 6.2.2). After properly checking in, the competitors are to report directly to the center of the mat to begin competition. At this point in the reporting

protocol, the official assumes that the wrestlers who have reported to the center of the mat are in the proper weight class. After all, we rely on the coaches on both sides of the competition to ensure that the wrestlers in the proper weight class are being sent to the table to check-in. Moreover, we assume that the table personnel have been vigilant in checking-in both competitors to confirm that their names and weights are accurate. Both competitors then report to the circle, shake hands and the referee blows the whistle to start the match.

What's wrong with this picture? Two assumptions were made by the official: 1) Each head coach sent the correct wrestler in the proper weight class to the table, and 2) The table personnel did their diligence to ensure that the proper wrestlers in the correct weight classes reported to the table. The referee officiates the match to a conclusion, after which it is discovered that wrestlers in the wrong weight classes competed against each other. While 99 percent of the time the assumptions we make are correct, the one time a mistake is made is one time too many.

A cornerstone of officiating is “preventative officiating”. In this case, one aspect of preventative officiating relates to asking the right questions before starting each match. For example: “Ladies this is the 130-pound weight class. Are you both 130-pounders?” Alternatively, you may ask: “Did you weigh-in for the 130-pound weight class?”. Make sure you make eye contact with each contestant and ensure that the competitors respond in the affirmative. If there is no response or hesitation in responding to the question, confirm the contestants’ name and weight class with the table personnel and/or the head coaches on both sides. An ounce of prevention here will save pounds of consternation later. Once the official is certain that both wrestlers are competing in the proper weight class, the match can be started. The official is the last line of defense to ensure that the wrestlers are competing in the proper weight class.

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