



## A Basic Understanding of H.S. Wrestling

Jim Vreeland, Ohio

Wrestling practices are quit demanding, but as beginning wrestlers start in the sport they soon get acclimated to the workouts. Anything worth doing is worth doing right. Warm-ups to prepare the muscles and joints, running, two-man non-wrestling drills, weight lifting; and they haven't even started the wrestling training. Many of these drills are designed to help the young wrestlers learn how wrestling is a constant flow of movement to control the opponent. Tumbling, learning to walk on their hands and calisthenics are all part of the daily workout, which improves the wrestler's balance. Coaching wrestling skills, continued practice and putting skills in sequence so the athletes learn to series wrestle are all part of their training.

**Competition:** All wrestlers begin with the weigh-in process. Male and female athletes start by dressing in their school uniform and proceed to the weigh-in room. All wrestlers weigh-in and have their skin checked while wearing their uniform. The official weigh-in may proceed either by each team or by each weight class. All must pass a health, safety and skin check, which simply means the officials and any attending health care professional assigned by the school will examine each for any contagious skin conditions. If any skin problems are suspected, the coach is required to have a specific note from a physician stipulating the condition, the treatment and when the athlete may return to completion. Special taping, pads and braces are also examined for their legality, so the opponents are not put at a disadvantage. Once all is checked and the wrestlers pass the pre-competition process they usually have something to eat if they were watching their weight the night before. Now it is time for the coaches to have their seeding meeting. This is where the wrestlers are separated so the best wrestlers may meet at the end of the tournament to make the finals more exciting. All others are placed on the bracket selected in a random draw order. With the wrestlers checked, the brackets drawn it is time to wrestle ... let's watch wrestling.

**Spectator Responsibilities:** It is true our kids mimic the adults in their life. All need to be mindful of the immense responsibility to model good sportsmanlike behavior for our children. It is important to appreciate the sport, the athletes and the officials. All involved with our youth continue to stress the importance of good sportsmanship, citizenship and work to model such behavior. This also includes our fans; respect the officials and the job they perform, and we encourage anyone to become ... a licensed wrestling official. Would you really like to learn the rules? Ask any official how one would go about being a licensed official? We have had many parents become an official just to learn the rules.

**On The Gym Floor:** A dual meet or dual meet tournament will start at a random weight class which is selected prior to the weigh-in procedure. A pool tournament will have all the wrestlers in each weight class together and they will wrestle a round robin system. This is where each wrestler will wrestle all other wrestler in their pool. A bracket tournament will begin with the 106-pound weight class and progress in order up through 285 weight class. After the conclusion of the first championship round the winners continue along the champions side of the bracket, while the loser drops into the consolation side of the bracket. The tournament may place up to eight places. The consolation bracket will determine the third through eighth place finisher. Championship matches constitute three periods of wrestling, each being two-minutes in length, while consolation marches have a one-minute first period followed by two two-minute periods.

**The Officials:** All officials are OHSAA licensed and are contracted to officiate the event. Most tournaments provide at least one more official than they have mats. Larger events may provide two officials assigned to each mat. This is to allow the officials to rotate so they get an opportunity to eat, get fluids, and use the rest room. After a short break the officials will rotate to the next mat and bump the other officials so their fellow officials can get a break. This rotation continues through the event. One official shall be designated the head official who is responsible to oversee all officials, select teams to work together for the championship final matches, the final rotation and assist the tournament management if situations arise. The tournament administration will assign matches to a mat, maintain and post the running team scores. The official may stop action for a variety of reason; if the wrestlers go our-of-bounds, an illegal hold, stalling, injury and a technical fall or pin fall. Each wrestler gets two injury time outs that total one and a half minutes. Each, may also use up to two-minutes to recover after an illegal hold and a total of five minutes to control any bleeding. The most common is having a nose bleed. For all but recovery time, if the wrestler exceeds the time limit they must default the match.

**The Neutral Position:** The match starts with both wrestler standing opposite each other in the center of the mat with the official standing between them. Once set the official steps back as he/she blows the whistle. Once a wrestler gets his/her opponent down to the mat and establishes control, the official will raise his/her hand with the same corresponding color wrist band to award the wrestler two-points for the takedown. Some of the common takedown techniques you may see might be; a single leg, a double leg, a duck under, a simple snap down and spin behind, and a variety of throws which are designed to put

the opponent directly on his/her back to score a pin fall. Some wrestlers are so very proficient with their takedown work, they intentionally let their opponent go just to continue to score more takedowns.

**Stalling:** All wrestlers are expected to stay inside the circle and continue wrestling action to score points for the victory. Stalling is a lack of action on the part of either or both wrestlers to score points. The official is constantly watching action, recognizing wrestling skills as the athletes compete. If the official sees a lack of action, backing, blocking, avoiding contact or stepping out of bounds he/she will raise a closed fist with the same corresponding color wrist band to signal a warning for stalling. After a warning for stalling the next violation will be one-point penalty.

**Offensive & Defensive Position:** The top wrestler is in the advantage position and may work to score near fall points (two or three points) and/or pin his/her opponent by holding the scapulae of the opponent in contact with the mat for a period of two continuous seconds. While the offensive wrestler is trying to pin his/her opponent, the bottom wrestler (defensive wrestler) must try to score an escape (one-point) or a reversal (two-points). This action will last six minutes.

**Frequently Used Referee Hand Signals:** The color wrist band matches the wrestler's color ankle band.

