

FALLS, NEAR FALLS AND TECHNICAL FALLS

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Falls, Near Falls, and Technical Falls are defined in the National Federation Wrestling Rules Book (2008-2009) under Rule 5, Section 11, Articles 1 to 5 (pages 23-24); photos 5-9 (pages 64-65).

Situations relating to Falls, Near Falls, and Technical Falls are exemplified in the National Federation Wrestling Case Book and Manual (2008-2009) under Rule 5 (pages 22-25).

Falls and near falls are the most productive offensive scoring maneuvers for generating team and individual match points in high school wrestling. Therefore, it is paramount for the wrestling official to have a firm understanding of the rules underlying this important facet of wrestling. An intimate knowledge of the basic definitions relating to the rules governing falls and near falls coupled with firm officiating mechanics will enable the official to properly apply the rules on the mat.

A) Pinning Area

- Bottom of the scapulae to the top of the shoulders.

B) Fall

- When any part of both shoulders or both scapulae of a wrestler are in contact with the mat (in-bounds) for two seconds.
- Must be in proper position to see the fall before it is called.
- To be in proper position the official needs to anticipate the positioning of the wrestlers before criteria is established.
 - cradles
 - tilts
 - leg turns
 - basic half + far wrist

C) Near Fall Criteria

- 1. One shoulder or scapula on the mat while the other shoulder or scapula is held at a 45° angle to the mat.
- 2. Any part of both shoulders or both scapulae are held within 4 inches of the mat.
- 3. A high bridge.
- 4. Body is supported on the mat on both elbows.

D) **Scoring Near Fall Points**

- The offensive wrestler must have control over the opponent in a pinning situation (in-bounds) and:
 - 1. Near fall criteria held for 2 seconds – 2 points.
 - 2. Near fall criteria held for 5 seconds – 3 points.
 - 3. Near fall points are awarded when the near fall situation ends.
 - Only one set of near fall points can be earned and awarded per near fall situation.
 - Changing pinning combinations (holds) in the same near fall situation does not earn additional near fall points.
 - Defensive wrestler must be out of peril (must be able to defend oneself) before a new near fall situation can begin.
 - 4. Near fall points are not scored if the pinning area of the defensive wrestler is exposed (by own action) in near fall criteria during an escape or reversal attempt unless the offensive wrestler can demonstrate restraining power (control) over the defensive wrestler for at least two seconds.

E) **In-bounds Or Out-Of-Bounds Falls And Near Falls**

- As in all boundary situations, out-of-bounds occurs when a supporting point of both wrestlers is on and/or outside of the boundary line.
- Offensive Wrestler – The supporting points are the same as defined in the Rules Book.
 - Afforded the opportunity to bring the defensive wrestler who is in near fall criteria (but out-of-bounds) in-bounds to score points.
 - If the offensive wrestler is content not to bring the defensive wrestler in-bounds or is unsuccessful after several bona fide attempts to bring the opponent in-bounds, stop the match and award any points earned to that point
- Defensive Wrestler – If near fall criteria is met the supporting points become the area from the bottom of the scapulae to the top of the shoulders (pinning area).
 - If any part of both scapulae or both shoulders are in-bounds wrestling continues regardless of whether the offensive wrestler is totally out-of-bounds.
 - If any wrestler (offensive or defensive) gains an advantage or is hindered by any part of the body being out-of-bounds, the match shall be stopped to negate the advantage/disadvantage. Award the requisite points earned prior to the match being stopped.

Tips:

- Anticipate the direction of the action so that you can be in proper position to look for the fall/near fall.
- Always get down to the mat when the potential for a fall/near fall occurs.
 - The near fall count can be started on the fly (e.g., on your feet) if you can determine that near fall criteria is met. Follow through by getting down on the mat to continue the count.
- Use hand count and audible count when possible.
- Be deliberate when counting (one second per count) - do not rush the count when the action gets exciting.
- Keep your rear end down when looking at near fall criteria (position yourself flat on mat).
- Do not use your hands as a gauge for determining a fall.

F) Bleeding Or Injury In Imminent Near Fall Or Actual Near Fall Situations

- 1. By the offensive wrestler - Stop the match and award any earned near fall points if near fall criteria was met for the requisite time period.
- 2. If injury, indication of injury or bleeding occurs by the defensive wrestler prior to (imminent) near fall criteria being met (>45°- 90°) – Stop the match and award 2 near fall points (no time factor).
- 3. If injury, indication of injury or bleeding occurs by the defensive wrestler just after near fall criteria is met but before the 2 second count (1 count) - Stop the match and award 2 near fall points (time is a factor).
- 4. If injury, indication of injury or bleeding occurs by the defensive wrestler after near fall criteria is met for 2 to 4 seconds (2 to 4 count) – Stop the match and award 3 near fall points (time is a factor).
- 5. If injury, indication of injury or bleeding occurs by the defensive wrestler after near fall criteria is met for at least 5 seconds (5 count) – Stop the match and award 4 near fall points (time is a factor).

G) Penalties In Imminent Near Fall Or Actual Near Fall Situations (Illegal Holds, Unnecessary Roughness, Unsportsmanlike Conduct, or Technical Violation)

- Offensive wrestler:
 - 1. Stop the match and award the near fall points that the wrestler is entitled to. Then award the requisite penalty point(s) to the defensive wrestler.

- Defensive wrestler:
 - 1. If any violation occurs during an imminent fall or near fall situation do not stop the match unless the offensive wrestler is put in physical peril.
 - 2. Penalty points are awarded as follows:
 - At the end of the pinning situation;
 - At the end of the period; or
 - If the match is stopped for out-of-bounds.
 - 3. If the infraction occurs:
 - Prior to near fall criteria being met ($>45^\circ$ - 90°) – 2 near fall points + penalty point(s).
 - After near fall criteria is met but before the 2 second count (1 count) – 2 near fall points + penalty point(s).
 - After near fall criteria is met for 2 to 4 seconds (2 to 4 count) – 3 near fall points + penalty point(s).
 - After near fall criteria is met for at least 5 seconds (5 count) - 4 near fall points + penalty point(s).
 - 4. The wrestler who is in near fall criteria can not gain an advantage by committing an infraction. Subsequent to an infraction and when the pinning situation has ended the match is stopped and the offensive wrestler is awarded the requisite points.

Tip: When penalizing the defensive wrestler on the fly verbally indicate that a penalty point(s) has been assessed so that the penalized wrestler and the coach are aware of the penalty.

H) Technical Falls

- 1. A technical fall occurs when a 15 point differential in match score is attained.
- 2. If 15 point differential is earned in a move that takes defensive wrestler directly to the back, the offensive wrestler is afforded the opportunity to work for the fall.
- 3 The wrestler earning the technical fall can not lose the match except if penalized for flagrant misconduct.

Tip: When the potential for a defensive fall is present, telegraph for all to see that you are looking at the offensive wrestler's back position. This will tip-off the coach that you are looking for a defensive fall. Do not warn the offensive wrestler of the precarious situation. You will save yourself a lot of grief when calling defensive falls.