

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE  
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



**NEWS RELEASE**

**New Potentially Dangerous Hold Identified in High School Wrestling**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Elliot Hopkins

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (August 24, 2016) — At its April 6-8 meeting in Indianapolis, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Wrestling Rules Committee added another maneuver to the list of potentially dangerous holds in high school wrestling.

The new potentially dangerous hold occurs when a wrestler, from a standing position, is placed in a body lock with one or both arms trapped and then is lifted and is unable to use his arm(s) to break the fall.

“The rear standing position with a trapped arm should be considered potentially dangerous and should be monitored very closely by the referee,” said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of sports and student services and liaison to the Wrestling Rules Committee. “Coaches, officials and competitors should be aware of the potential for injury in this situation if the defensive wrestler is returned to the mat and has no arm available to break the fall.”

The committee also approved a change in Rule 5-11-2 that will award penalty point(s) to the offensive wrestler in situations where the defensive wrestler exhibits inappropriate behavior in order to avoid being pinned.

Rule 5-11-2(i) will now read, “. . . when a defensive wrestler commits a technical violation, applies an illegal hold/maneuver, commits unnecessary roughness or unsportsmanlike act during an

imminent or near fall situation, the offensive wrestler shall be awarded a penalty point(s) in addition to the near fall points in accordance with (subarticles) f-h at the next stoppage.”

“The committee felt that when the defensive wrestler uses unethical techniques to avoid being pinned, the offensive wrestler should not only be awarded the near fall or fall points, but should be awarded the appropriate penalty point(s) for that transgression at the next stoppage of the match,” Hopkins said.

These rules changes recommended by the Wrestling Rules Committee were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

Wrestling ranks No. 6 in popularity among boys at the high school level with 258,208 participants, according to the 2014-15 NFHS Athletics Participation Survey. In addition, 11,496 girls were involved in wrestling in 2014-15.

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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 16 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 7.8 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](http://www.nfhs.org).

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