

Appropriate Dress for Weigh-ins Among 2010-11 Rules Changes

INDIANAPOLIS — A revision in the appropriate dress for weigh-ins in high school wrestling was among four rules changes approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Wrestling Rules Committee at its annual meeting. The changes, which were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors, will take effect with the 2010-11 season.

“The committee felt the need to make very few changes because the sport of high school wrestling is in good shape,” said Dale Pleimann, chair of the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee. “Two of the changes deal with minimizing risk, one deals with privacy issues and the other change was clean-up in a mechanics procedure instituted last year.”

Regarding weigh-ins, previously both male and female contestants had to weigh in wearing “no more than a suitable undergarment.” Beginning next year, specific language has been added regarding what constitutes a “suitable undergarment.” Male and female contestants will be required to wear a suitable undergarment that completely covers the buttocks and the groin area. In addition, for female contestants the suitable undergarment must also cover the breasts.

Bob Colgate, assistant director of the NFHS, said the change was made to consider privacy issues for all individuals involved with weigh-ins.

The committee also addressed the process for an offensive wrestler assuming a legal starting position. The following statement has been added to **Rule 5-20-9**:

“Once the offensive wrestler has assumed a legal starting position and is stationary, the referee shall verbally say ‘set’ and then pause momentarily before starting wrestling.”

“This rule change will eliminate either wrestler gaining an advantage by using a rolling start,” Colgate said. “It also eliminates the need for the offensive wrestler using a specific sequence when assuming a legal starting position, including the optional offensive starting position.”

Effective with the 2010-11 high school season, any contestant who shows signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be removed immediately from the match and shall not return to competition until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (**Note:** Under AHSAA rules, a wrestler must be cleared by a medical doctor before returning to competition.)

The previous rule directed officials to remove an athlete from competition if “apparently unconscious.” The previous rule also allowed for return to competition based on written authorization by a medical doctor.

The Wrestling Committee also added the “rear-standing, double-knee kickback” to the list of illegal maneuvers. Colgate said this maneuver, which is being used more frequently at the high school level, clearly puts the opposing wrestler in a dangerous situation and at a high risk for injury.

Perhaps as significant as the changes approved by the committee was one that was not. After much discussion, the committee voted against changing the wrestling weight classes and will stay with the 14 weight classes currently in place according to the NFHS Wrestling Rules Book.

“The response from member state associations was divided equally between the option to change and making no change,” Pleimann said. “The committee, with no clear choice from the membership, did not believe it was appropriate to make a change in the weight classes just for the sake of change. However, the committee did request the NFHS to conduct another survey on wrestling weight classes during the 2010-11 season.”

Three “Points of Emphasis” were issued by the committee for the 2010-11 high school wrestling season: Concussion Recognition and Management, Communicable Disease and Fleeing the Mat.