

OHSAA WRESTLING BULLETIN

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Scoring Situations Relative to Contiguous Mats

As discussed at various forums throughout the course of the preseason, NFHS Rule 5.15.1 changes the inbounds definition as follows: “Contestants are considered inbounds if one point of contact of either wrestler is inside or on the boundary lines”. The new point of contact rule significantly expands the wrestling area, allowing wrestling to continue as long as one point of contact of either wrestler is on or inside of the boundary line.

NFHS Rules 5.10, 5.22.1, and 5.25.3 define escapes, reversals, and takedowns at the edge of the mat, respectively, in terms of points of contact occurring on or inside the boundary line.

An escape is defined, in-part, as: “An escape is when the defensive wrestler gains a neutral position and the opponent has lost control, beyond reaction time, while one point of contact of either wrestler is inbounds...”. (i.e., on or inside the boundary line) (Rule 5.10).

A reversal is defined in-part as: “It is a reversal when the defensive wrestler comes from underneath and gains control of the opponent, either on the mat or in the rear-standing position, while one point of contact is inside or on the boundary line...”. (Rule 5.22.1).

The edge of mat takedown is defined as: “In awarding a takedown at the edge of the mat, control must be established while one point of contact of either wrestler is inbounds (i.e., on or inside the boundary line) (Rule 5.25.3).

In the foregoing scoring situations, if a point of contact of either wrestler is on or inside the boundary line of the competition mat, and the scoring maneuver (establishing control/loss of control) finishes within the competition circle (on or inside the boundary line) of a contiguous mat, the match shall be stopped and the earned scoring maneuver points awarded (i.e., an escape, a reversal, or a takedown). If the scoring maneuver (e.g., takedown or reversal) results in near fall criteria being met (e.g., a takedown directly to the back with exposure on or within the competition circle of a contiguous mat, only the initial scoring maneuver (e.g., the takedown) is awarded. There is no consideration for scoring the potential “imminent near fall points”. Only the initial scoring maneuver is awarded.

The mechanics of the abovementioned situation are: 1) blow your whistle to stop the match, followed by 2) awarding the requisite points for the scoring maneuver.

As mentioned in my Early Season Bulletin (No. 1), the OHSAA takes the position that safety overrides allowing wrestling to continue in certain situations. It is incumbent upon all officials to be vigilant and err on the side of safety by stopping the match, even if this means prematurely stopping action, relating to potentially unsafe situations, including coaches’ chairs, contiguous mats that are in proximity, scorer’s tables, walls, and gym floors.

Inbounds Point of Contact Situations in Proximity to the Gym Floor/Coaches' Chairs/Walls/Competition Area of a Contiguous Mat(s)/Scorer's Table

In situations where a wrestler has control over an opponent with a point of contact of either wrestler inside or on the boundary line while wrestling action is near the gym floor/coaches' chairs/wall/competition area of a contiguous mat(s)/scorer's table, and the defending wrestler makes an overt effort to bait the official to stop the match by touching the gym floor/coaches' chairs/wall/competition area of a contiguous mat(s)/scorer's table with an appendage or body part, the official must stop the match for safety reasons and penalize the wrestler who baited the official to stop the match for unsportsmanlike conduct. In such situations the official must determine if the action of wrestling caused the defending wrestler to inadvertently contact the gym floor/coaches' chairs/wall/competition area of a contiguous mat(s)/scorer's table, or if the action was deliberate to bait the official to stop the match to gain an advantage.

Note: Anytime a body part of either wrestler contacts the gym floor/coaches' chairs/wall/competition area of a contiguous mat(s)/scorer's table, the match must be stopped (regardless of the action being deliberate or inadvertent) for safety reasons.

Toby Dunlap
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