



November 15, 2015

Weighing in for an event the day of a **College Entrance Exam** is not an officiating detail. The OHSAA supports the entire education process, believes officials are part of the entire educational team and education comes first. The responsibility lies with the coach to contact the host tournament director and comply with whatever arrangements the host tournament director would like to set to weigh-in any students who have registered to take either the ACT or SAT entrance exam. This will impact only a few Saturdays during the season.

Cell Phones, Smartphone, I-pad, I-pod, Laptop, Tablets, etc. are all a distraction and when distractions occur mistakes often times get made, although very much unintended. It is important for all officials to ask the table workers to please put any cell phones, I-pad, smart phone, laptop, tablet, etc. completely away so as to not become distracted from the main task at hand. This goes for all officials as well, leave your electric devices in the locker room and do not take it onto the floor of the tournament you are officiating. Give the wrestlers and the sport the undivided attention they deserve. Respect the sport and the athletes; pay attention.

Blood Clean-up is the responsibility of the host school, either to provide an athletic trainer assigned to the duty or notify coaches they clean the mat if blood occurs. Wrestling referees are not allowed to clean up blood.

Special equipment to the weigh-in: As much as we are working to be consistent, we also need to get the athletes and coaches to bring all special equipment to the weigh-in room to be approved. Let's all do some early season preventative officiating and remind them to bring any medical skin forms and special equipment to the weigh-in.

All young ladies must wear an approved t-shirt during competition, and should report to the weigh-in with the t-shirt. Remember the weigh-in must be conducted by an individual of the same gender and all female contestants must wear a t-shirt along with legal undergarment to weigh-in. For ladies that includes a sport bra and shorts that completely covers the groin and buttocks.

The hair cap must be a one-piece manufactured unit with the headgear. We must all start from the beginning of the season to enforce this NFHS rule. We are not helping anyone if we are weak, allowing two piece units. We only cause problems for the referees who will officiate during the weeks after. Although it must be manufactured by a company to meet the requirements, we may not be able to tell. If it looks professionally created, strong enough to hold up it we will accept the special equipment. It cannot be taped or Velcro to the head gear.

WEIGH-IN / CERTIFICATION: As we start the season, and perform the duties in the weigh-in room, it is important to remember that wrestlers must make scratch weight each time they decline down into a new lower weight class as they travel down to their lowest allowable alpha weight class. Also, each wrestler is allowed to weigh-in at the lowest allowable weight class as set forth by their weekly alpha time-line report, and then be bumped up one weight class. They may also weigh-in one weight class above their lowest allowable weight class as set forth by their weekly alpha time-line report, then be bumped up one weight class. Wrestlers are not allowed to weigh-in more than one weight class above their weekly time-line report at any time during the season. If they do they forfeit their lowest alpha weight class allowable. Officials are not involved with this issue, but rather send a report to Assist. Comm. Beau Rugg if there was any issues during weigh-in.

Patience * Professional * Polite * Impartial

MERKLE: Many wrestling skills have their start as weird situations. They may have been a counter or just some strange spaghetti wrestling situation. The spladle was such a maneuver that wrestling officials encountered in the 1980's that took many by surprise not recognizing control because of the strange body entanglement of the two wrestlers. The spladle has, over the years, become a regularly coached skill, and officials see it almost every weekend.

The merkle became the next maneuver that was a strange new skill that dazzled officials. The merkle although started as a counter to a takedown, it has become another regular skill. It has been used as a counter, a baited takedown, and a reversal and in unique situations one point can be earned for an escape.

There are several aspects of the merkle from both the neutral and mat wrestling positions that are important to discuss. The merkle is a hip-to-hip side headlock with a near-inside leg lace. The attacking wrestler then hits a strong side roll to hold his/her opponent for near fall points. Two questions arise; first from the referee's position; when is it a reversal? And/or can it be one point for an escape? If the defensive wrestler gets to his feet with the merkle position attained has he earned a reversal? A reversal cannot be scored until the scoring wrestler is in a rear standing position controlling the waist (hips). Therefore, he/she must unlace the leg and step behind, while releasing the side headlock to control the waist. If the pair of wrestlers would step out of bounds or the buzzer sounds ending the period, the defensive wrestler can earn one point for the escape. This is simply due to the fact the offensive wrestler is not holding his defensive opponent, not controlling his hips or exhibiting restraining control on the mat what-so-ever. On the contrary, the offensive wrestler is being held up on his/her feet in the side headlock and with the inside leg lace.

Second; from the mat, when does it become two points for either a takedown or reversal? This occurs when the scoring wrestler extends his opponent to show control of the hips and thereby takes away counters. This is how the merkle wrestler can establish control.

The important aspect to remember is that two, one or no points may be awarded. Keep in mind if the merkle wrestler is working for a reversal or takedown, the referee should be very patient. Patient to make sure restraining control is secured. Make sure the reversal is earned either by achieving a rear standing position on the feet or by extending the opponent if they are on the mat.

FINGER OR POKE IN THE EYE: The question has been asked if a finger in the eye is a technical violation or an illegal penalty point. Do we let the inadvertent poke in the eye pass if the official deems it not to be intentional? Sometimes each of us needs to be our own rule interpreter when we are officiating alone. Remember that a technical violation is a penalty of a non-injurious nature; meaning nothing to harm the opponent. Such as; stalling, grasping clothing, pulling the headgear, etc. While an illegal maneuver is a penalty point which is a harmful act or maneuver against the opponent or the intent was to harm the opponent; such as peeling fingers, twisting hammerlock, neck wrench, etc. The other fact to mention is Rule 7.1.5t has listed under the topic of illegal holds and maneuvers spells out "...hand(s) in the eye(s) or raking the eye(s)" is illegal. Along the way there are varying degrees of the illegal call. Unnecessary roughness and unsportsmanlike conduct are possible calls. And, it is also important to mention that if in the opinion of the official it was intentional it may be called as a flagrant act. Once again the key to making the correct call lies in the official's positioning. The official must always work to position himself/herself to see the action around and about the head/face region of the pair of wrestlers. If he/she does not see the finger in the eye it cannot be called without the visual confirmation of the act. With an assistant referee working the match it should make the task of seeing the act take place much easier. MOVE ... MOVE ... MOVE!