



January 17, 2019

Sometimes called “**Roman Fingers**”, it should be a quick potentially dangerous call when the wrestlers reach out and interlock to grasp their fingers/hands together. They should be cautioned not to interlock in such a manner. It only takes a fast arm rotation when one wrestler rotates and lifts upward possibly injuring or breaking a bone in the fingers, hand or wrist.

There is no rule which stipulates a wrestler cannot grab just two fingers. A wrestler can reach out a **grab two, three, four fingers** or the entire hand for that matter. The rule states a wrestler, if peeling fingers to escape, must have all four fingers to pry them open to break free from the clasp hands and score an escape. This is to prevent the offensive wrestler from being injured if just one or two fingers are being peeled back.

The OHSAA report form is to either **report an ejection** or **report a positive sportsmanlike situation** that deserves recognition. Whichever the case may be, it is important to be completely factual, direct to the point, without any personal thoughts from your end. Your personal feelings, philosophies, etc., are not needed and may come back to bite you in the butt. Your ejection report must be filed with 48 hours after returning to school, and the official must make contact with the school administration (this may be in person if an administrator was present and you spoke at the event or by phone).

Just a few years ago, the rules committee spelled out in the rule book it is **potentially dangerous** from a rear standing position to have an **arm trapped** then return the opponent to that side, thereby possibly injuring the shoulder. There were several different interpretations by different state associations how their officials would make that call. Just to review, here is how we in Ohio are to make that P-D call. When a wrestler from a rear standing position locks around the body and has an arm trapped, so that the defensive wrestler does not have the use of that arm to protect himself/herself when returned to the mat. It is to be stopped P-D when the official sees the offensive wrestler moving to the trapped arm side to initiate a return. In other words if the top wrestler has the left arm trapped and then steps to the left side to front trip, back heel trip, knee brake, etc. it shall be stopped once you see that movement or action to go to that side. The same is true about a lifting action. If the top wrestler steps in to lift from the left side the whistle shall stop action and it is deemed P-D. We do not wait to see the lift, by then it is too late and the bottom wrestler can be brought down on his head or crown of shoulder. We stop once you see the action to return to the side of the trap arm. This is both safe and fair. If we stop too soon we have interfered in the match and have taken away an opportunity for the bottom wrestler to try to score once he/she has achieved getting up to their feet. We allow wrestling to continue if the top wrestler is called for stalling once the bottom wrestler gets to the feet. This is to allow the bottom wrestler the opportunity to complete a possible score. The Ohio procedure with respect to the arm trap is both fair and consistent.

Be Professional * Polite * Prompt * Direct * Decisive

All headlocks are potentially dangerous, yet legal only when an arm is encircled. The arm encircled may actually be the elbow. By this we mean when the headlock passes under the elbow

and includes the elbow the arm is encircled. The head lock will become illegal when the offensive wrestler no longer has the arm encircled. This may occur one of two ways. Either the offensive wrestler, in the act of trying to pin his opponent, loses the arm, or the defensive wrestler in the act of fighting off his back causes the arm to slide out of the lock. If the offensive wrestler causes it to occur it is illegal and the pinning situation is stopped with the points earned being awarded and the defensive wrestler being awarded one point for the penalty of the illegal hold. When the defensive wrestler causes it to occur the offensive wrestler is not penalized for it becoming illegal because he did not cause the action. The match is stopped and the situation is considered potentially dangerous because it was caused by the defensive wrestler. The important part is for the official to continually check the headlock and watch for the situation to develop.

Stall vs. Flee Call: We have had a great deal thrown at scholastic wrestling officials this 2018-19 season. With 15 rule changes, editorial changes, out-of-bounds and inbounds completely flip flopped and a real strong emphasis on stalling it has been huge. Congratulations to all our Ohio officials for the great job thus far. We all don't have it right, but we are working on it. It is important to question, listen and learn as each week moves forward to regional and state events. As Ray, Dick and I watch events, answer questions and hear from observers, the one area that may need our attention is stalling on the edge and the stalling vs. fleeing on the edge. First; **it can only be a fleeing call if a wrestler leaves the competition circle to avoid being scored upon.** This can occur in the neutral, offensive and defensive position. Just leaving the mat cannot be fleeing, although you may call stalling if he is backing and/or playing the edge. The important concept is to read the "action on the boundary line". Wrestling action is not stalling. We must not interfere or put ourselves in the match. We must let the kids wrestle and determine the match based upon their "actions" or "lack of action". Stalling has not changed, the rules committee has simply added language to keep the wrestlers inbounds so we stop delays in the match, make for more action, scoring and excitement. If action takes a wrestler out-of-bounds he/she must return inbounds. We must allow the wrestler to sprawl and counter being taken down, but after the counter he/she must show an effort to return inside and compete. We have constantly discussed the importance of today's wrestling official to read body language, and that is never more important than right now. Read the intent of the counter wrestler to return and the intent of the attacking wrestler to let his opponent back inbounds or not let him/her back inside.

Takedowns and reversals require the attacking wrestler to gain restraining control beyond reaction time over their opponent. Although control is often times felt, there are a few points of evidence which tell us one wrestler has control over the other. The most important of these is controlling the opponent's hips. By controlling the hips counters to the attack are minimized and reduced to zero. If the defending wrestler maintains control of his own hips he still has opportunity, movement and his power center to continue to counter the attack. Some officials have been awarding a takedown if the attacking wrestler is holding down on both ankles. This is not restraining control. If the defending wrestler is on his hands and knees with the attacking wrestler holding the ankles, would it be a takedown? NO, because he is not being restrained and has control of his own hips. If the defending wrestler is on his butt with his ankles being held, he is still not being controlled. The defending wrestler continues to control of his own hips and can hip heist over to his base and continue to counter the attack. Merely holding the ankles is not restraining control beyond reaction time. This can easily be demonstrated. If the attacking wrestler climbs up from the ankles to grasp above the knees the hip heist counter is taken away and restraining control may be earned. Giving a takedown or reversal just holding the ankles is the same as giving a near fall for a roll though. It is a mistake and not fair. Think about it!

Restraining control beyond reaction time ...

DO IT RIGHT ... ?