



February 16, 2017

**Be Professional \* Polite \* Prompt \* Patient \* Direct \* Decisive**

The greatest number of false starts and cautions are assessed during the starting of the wrestlers in the referee's position. Many times it is the referee who may cause the wrestlers to flinch, and then assess a caution violation. When this occurs, the official has interfered with the match and possibly the outcome. For these reasons it is important for the official to always start the wrestlers utilizing the same procedure, be in position to see all points of concern for a fair start and allow all to hear and have a visual look at the hand signal. The other aspect of the start is to allow the team of table workers to have the same unobstructed view of the start.

The second "set" to freeze the top wrestler has been causing the problem. Different voice inflections, moving while the wrestlers are stationary, raising your hand after they are ready are a few of the reasons why it is necessary to make a slight change to the official's procedure. We have been causing penalty points, and even penalty points which have determined the outcome of a match. The change is to eliminate one word; the second "set" for the top wrestler.

The following is a procedure for setting the wrestlers in the referee's position. While standing at the top of the ten foot circle, ask the defensive wrestler to get set in his bottom position. With your arm extended to set the bottom wrestler ask "are you set?" With any affirmative response or nod of the head, check his/her position. Are the hands in front of the starting line with heel of the hands on the mat? Are the knees behind and parallel to the rear starting line? If the position is correct continue to place the offensive wrestler, if not assess the necessary caution violation and inform the athlete. Now ask the top wrestler to mount. Remember, you are still standing at the top of the ten foot circle directly in front of the head of the bottom wrestler. Whichever side the top wrestler chooses to mount, the official should take two or three step to the opposite side, stand stationary with arm raised, and hand in position to signal the start of the wrestling. After the top wrestler is stationary the official should quickly check his/her position to make sure it is legal. That means, glance at the hand on the navel, check that the offensive wrestler's knee is not draping on the hip and the feet are not breaking the plane of the feet in the rear. Again, if the position is not legal, make the necessary caution violation. If the position is correct give the simultaneous visual hand signal and blow the whistle to start wrestling.