

# Assistant Referee: Roles and Responsibilities



# All Alone

- Wrestling is one of a few sports where there is one official per contest.
- About 95-98% of the season, the wrestling official is on the mat by himself.



# The Problem

- When we do work with an assistant official, in most cases we haven't worked with them before or it's been a long time.
- Understanding each others role  
(Just stand there and let me work!)
- Be a part of the team
- BOTH officials are equally responsible for the match.

# Why work with an Assistant?

- Beginning in 2005 the MHSAA and NFHS stressed the need for the use of assistants at every opportunity.
- To improve calls on the mat.
- To create greater consistency.
- It is another set of eyes.
- **TO GET IT RIGHT!!!**

# Assistant Referee Duties

- What are these duties?



# Assistant Referee Duties

- Granted the same mobility as the referee and will compliment and assist the head official.
- Maintain constant verbal communication (to include technical violations, illegal and potentially dangerous situations)
- The two referees should be facing each other 180 degrees apart.
- In near fall situations, the assistant should not be down on the mat.
- To observe locking hands, grasping of clothing, and/or other illegal actions and properly signal the referee
- When necessary, meet briefly with referee to discuss situations (quietly and away from coaches, wrestlers, and scorers table 3-2-2f)
- Assistant referee does not address coaches
- Monitor the wrestlers in the center of the mat during officials/coaches/scorers time out discussions
- Be in position to see both the **action** and the **clock** near the end of a period
- Monitor the scoring table to ensure points are displayed properly

# The Pre-Meet Duties

- If time is not an issue, then both officials should visit the locker rooms as a team.
- Duties of checking the wrestlers should be split between the head and assistant.
- During the coin flip and coaches meeting, the assistant should be present.

# Officials Pre-match Discussion of Communication/Signals

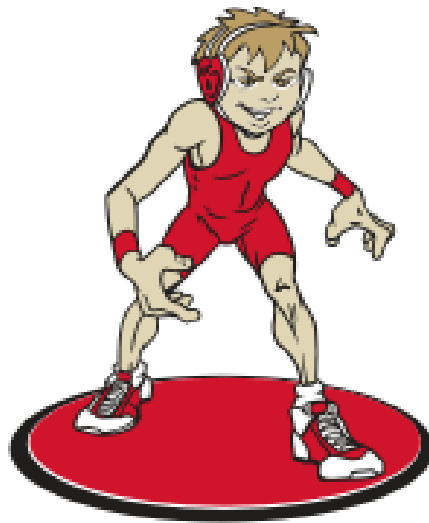




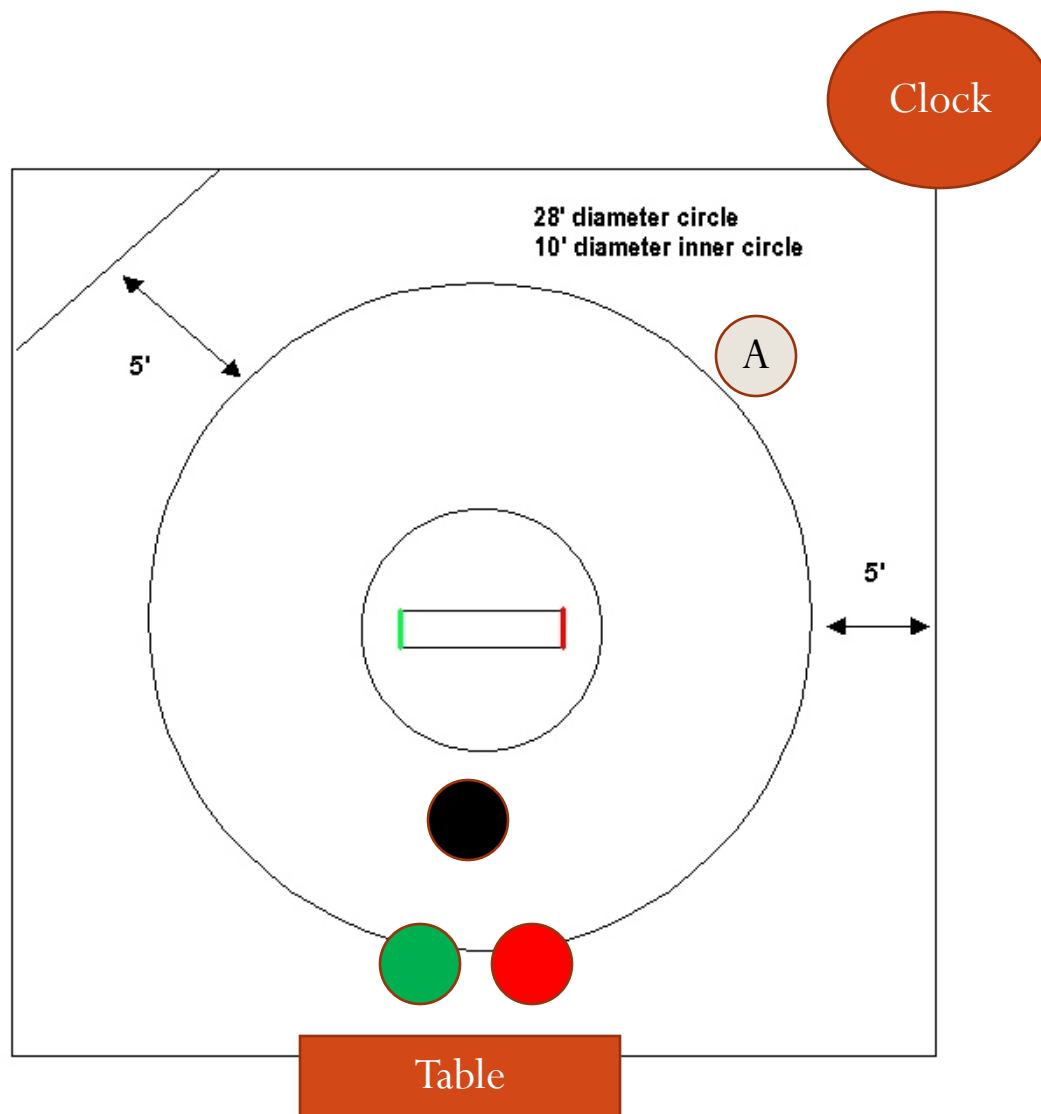
# Getting Started

- Communication
  - Before you start the lead official and the assistant need to discuss the roles and expectations during the match
  - Ensure there are no misunderstandings or surprises on the mat
  - Positioning:
    - Neutral. Line calls. Top/Bottom starts. Near Fall.
- Notification of Locked Hands (note: this is the only allowable signal by an assistant referee)
- Signals
  - How are you going to let the lead know you want to talk?
  - Talk prior and decide how you will convey the need to talk.

# During Check-in and Start of Match



# During Check-in



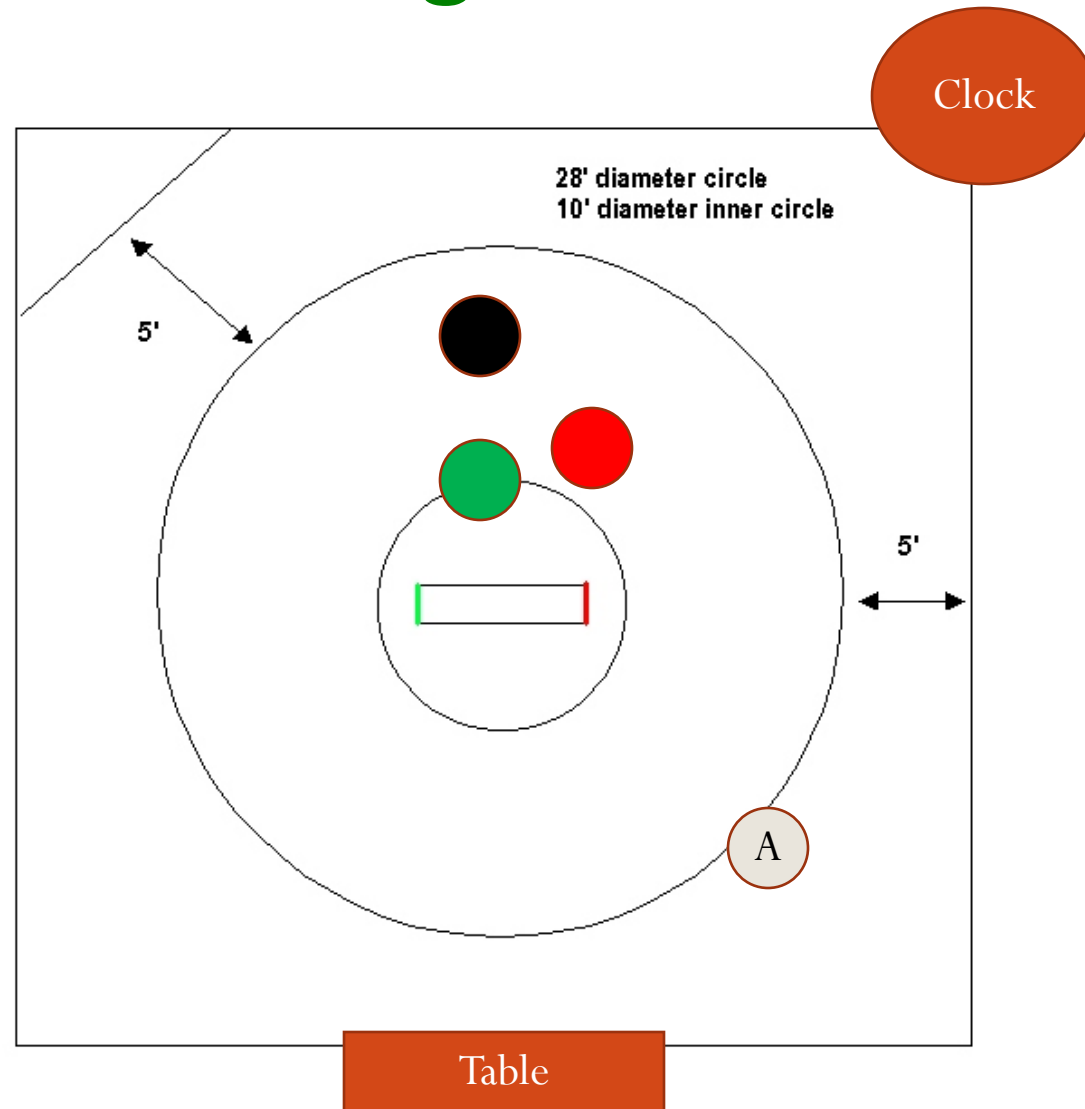
# Positioning

- The assistant should be the first on and the last off.
- Freedom to move wherever, but should try to stay to the outside of the wrestling area.
- Mobility and communication to complement the referee – this may include passing by and unobtrusively speaking to the referee. For example stating, “red” or “green” to indicate who the assistant feels is stalling. Communication!
- If the lead official goes to the table, stay in the center with the wrestlers.

# Neutral Positioning



# Neutral Positioning



**Assistant referee is 180  
opposite the referee and near  
the outer circle**



# Neutral Positioning

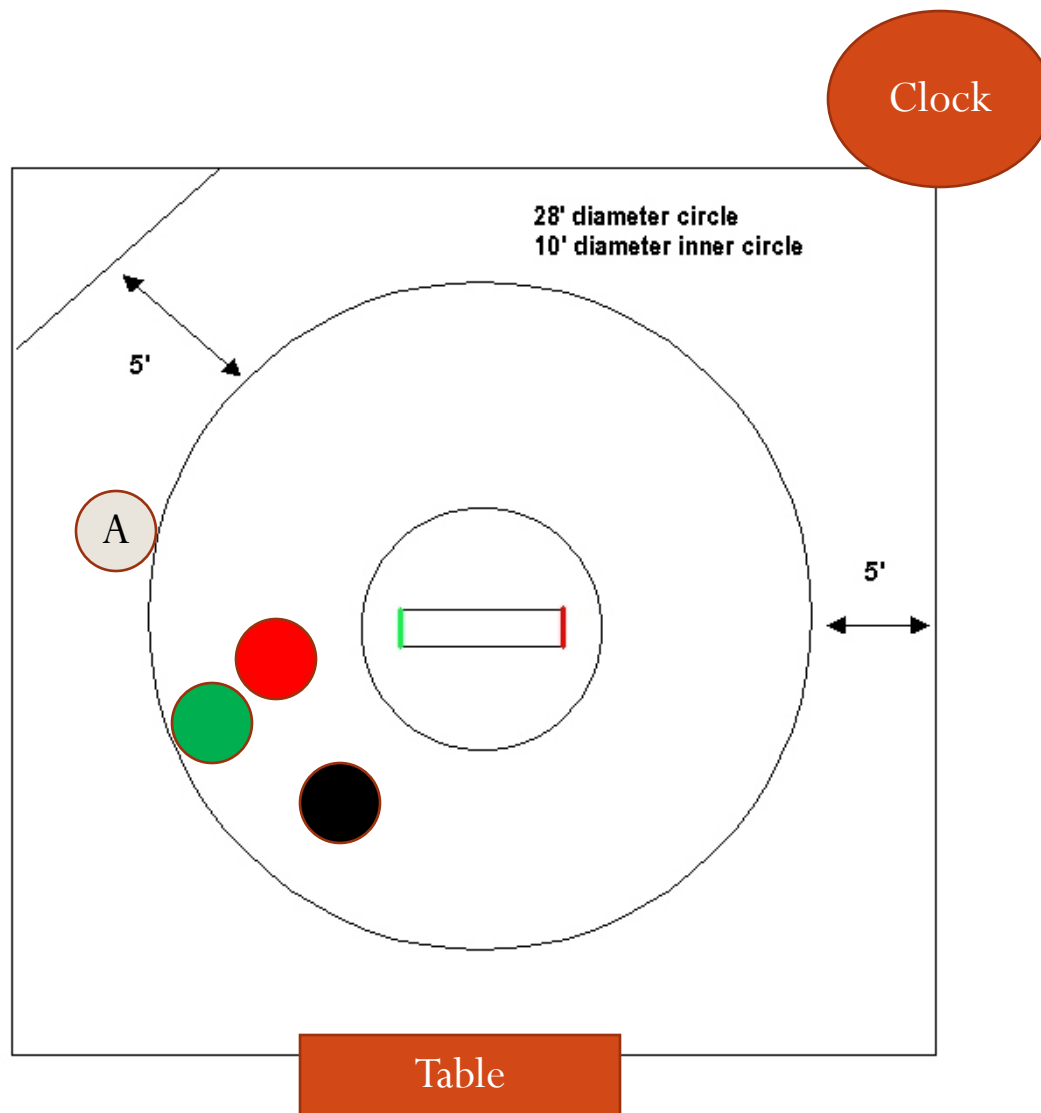
- Out of the circle
- Stay 180 degrees opposite the lead
- Distance from the action
- Is the clock running on whistle?
- Does the timer/scorer have the correct score on the board?
- While the assistant has the same mobility as the referee, there are restriction as to where the assistant should or shouldn't be during certain situations.



# Neutral with Line Calls



# Neutral with Line Calls





**Both referees  
positioned for  
a line call**

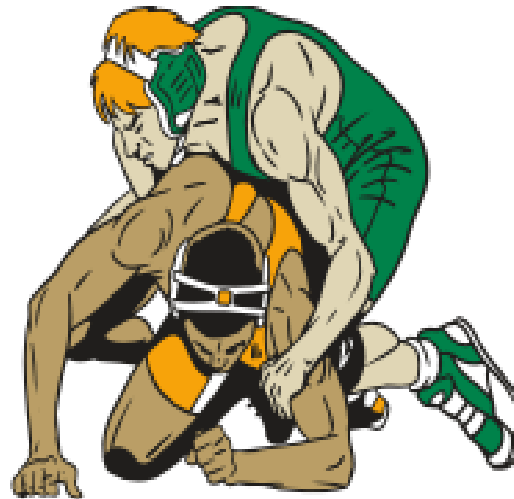




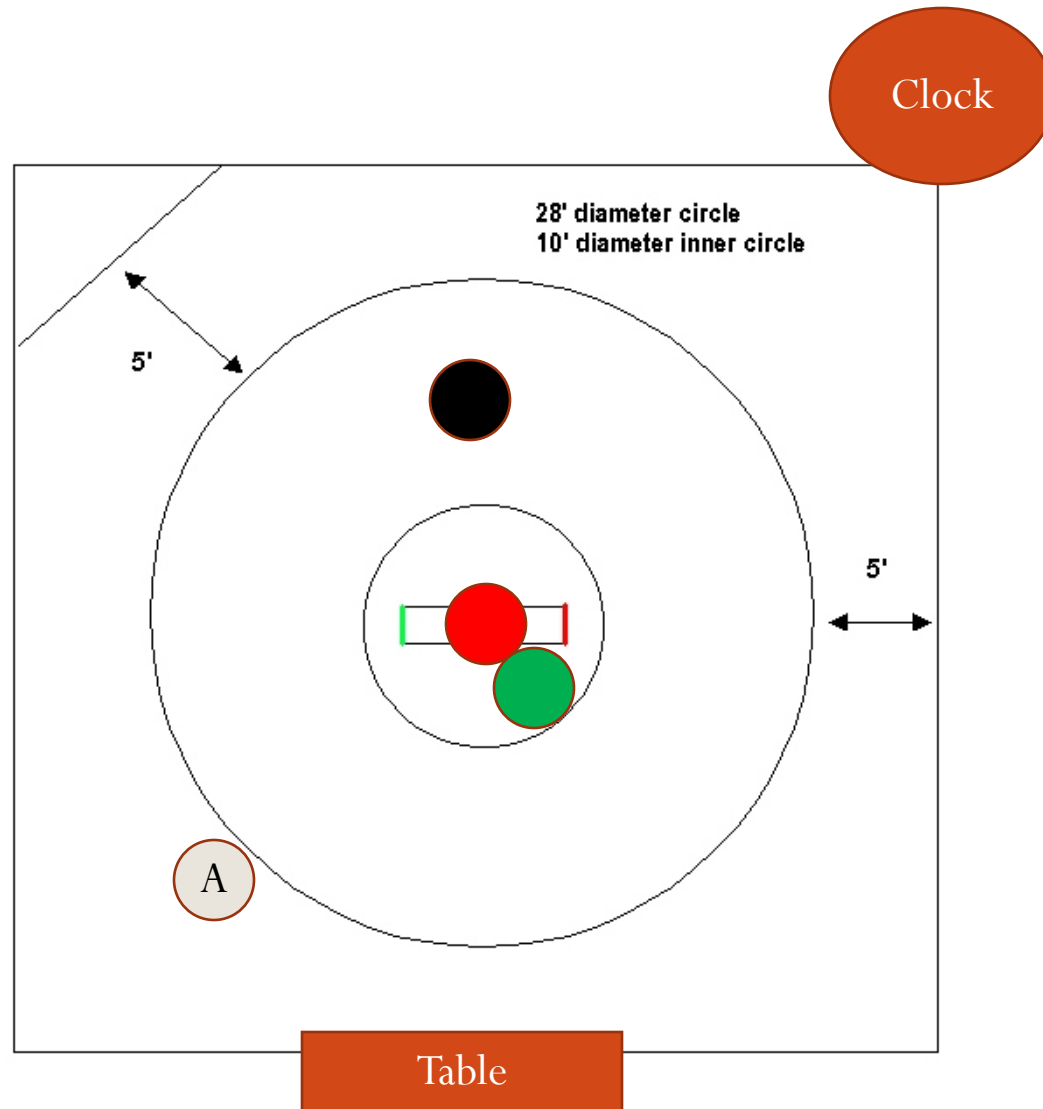
# Neutral with Line Calls

- Assistant should be 180 degrees and near the out of bounds line, yet maintain a position facing the lead referee.
- Straddle the line
- Distance yourself from the action
- Observe surroundings (for safety)
- The assistant, as well as the referee, should never “catch” an out-of-bounds wrestler. They should be watching for out-of-bounds criteria for awarding points or an out-of-bounds call.

# Top/Bottom Starts



# Top/Bottom Starts







**Referees  
positioned for  
top/bottom start**

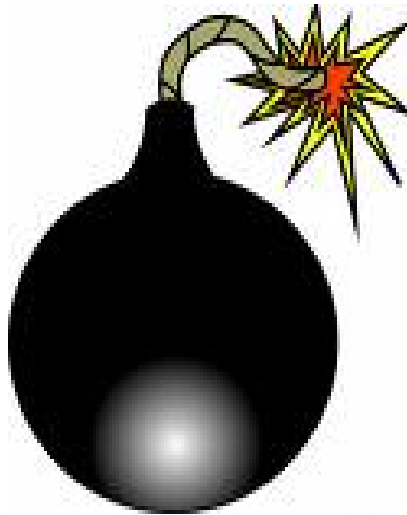


**Do you want this  
much help?  
Communication**

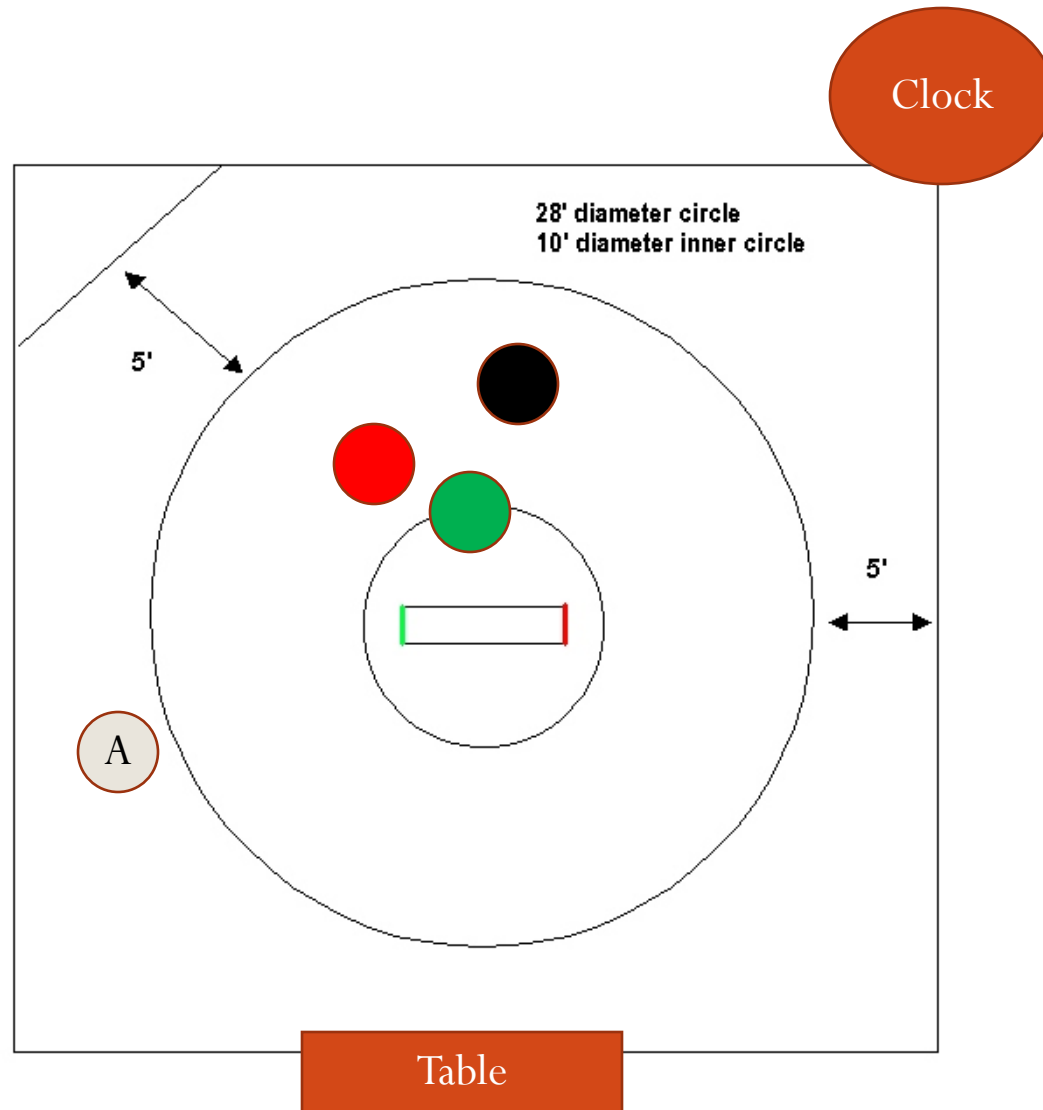
# Top/Bottom Starts

- Referee's position: Assistant should take a position behind (normally) wrestlers to observe trail leg of advantage wrestler (for straddling opponent). Position should place assistant somewhat opposite of the referee and can be tighter to the 10 foot circle than in the Neutral starting position. Also, if out of the wrestlers sight, the assistant can be moving to observe proper positioning.
- Optimal start: Same as the referee's position, but look for hand placement on back as well as straddling by the offensive wrestler. Keep your distance.

# Start and End of Period/ as Time Expires



# Start and End of Period/as Time Expires



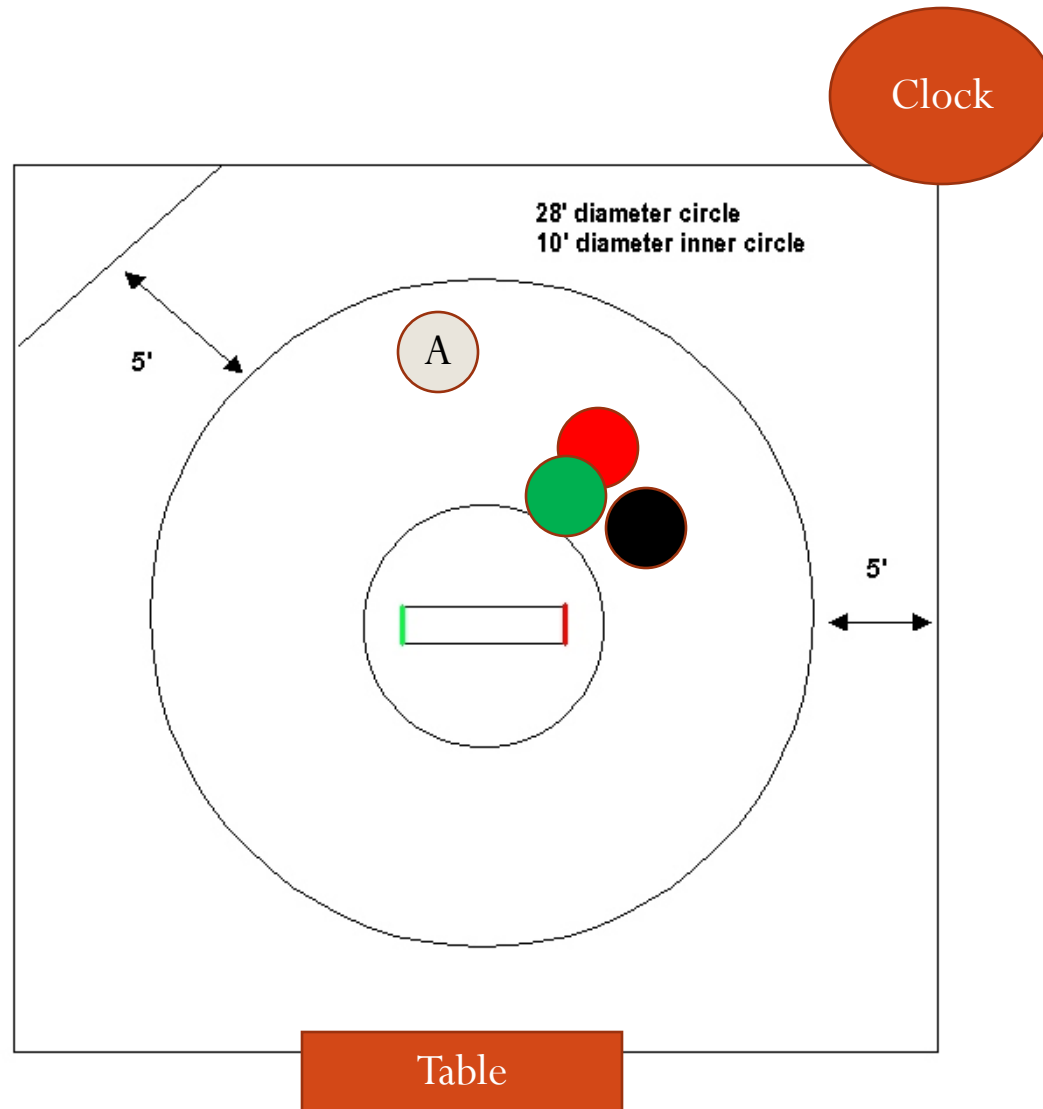
# Positioning While Clock is Running

- Take a look at the clock to see if started or stopped on time
- Note time on clock in all situations where the match should be stopped and quickly, but hopefully unobtrusively, notify referee.
- Assistant should be constantly moving, allowing the referee to align where he wants to be and the assistant moving out of the referee's way
- Assistant should stay in the flow of the match and be in position to help at the conclusion of the period and on edge of mat calls
- Assistant, when in disagreement with the referee, should position near the referee and unobtrusively state that opinion. The referee will not stop the match unless necessary and only when no significant action is taking place.

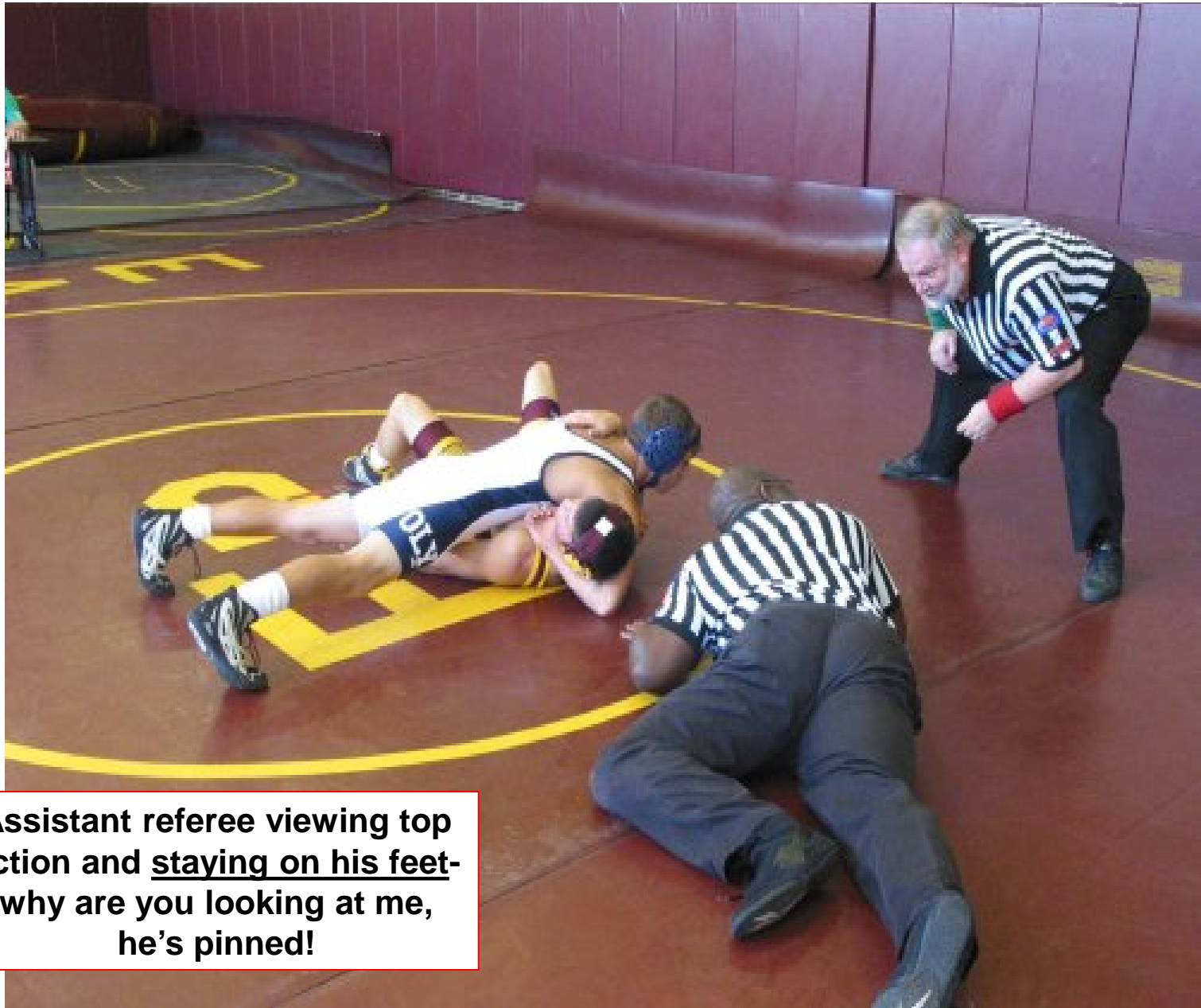
# Pinning Situations



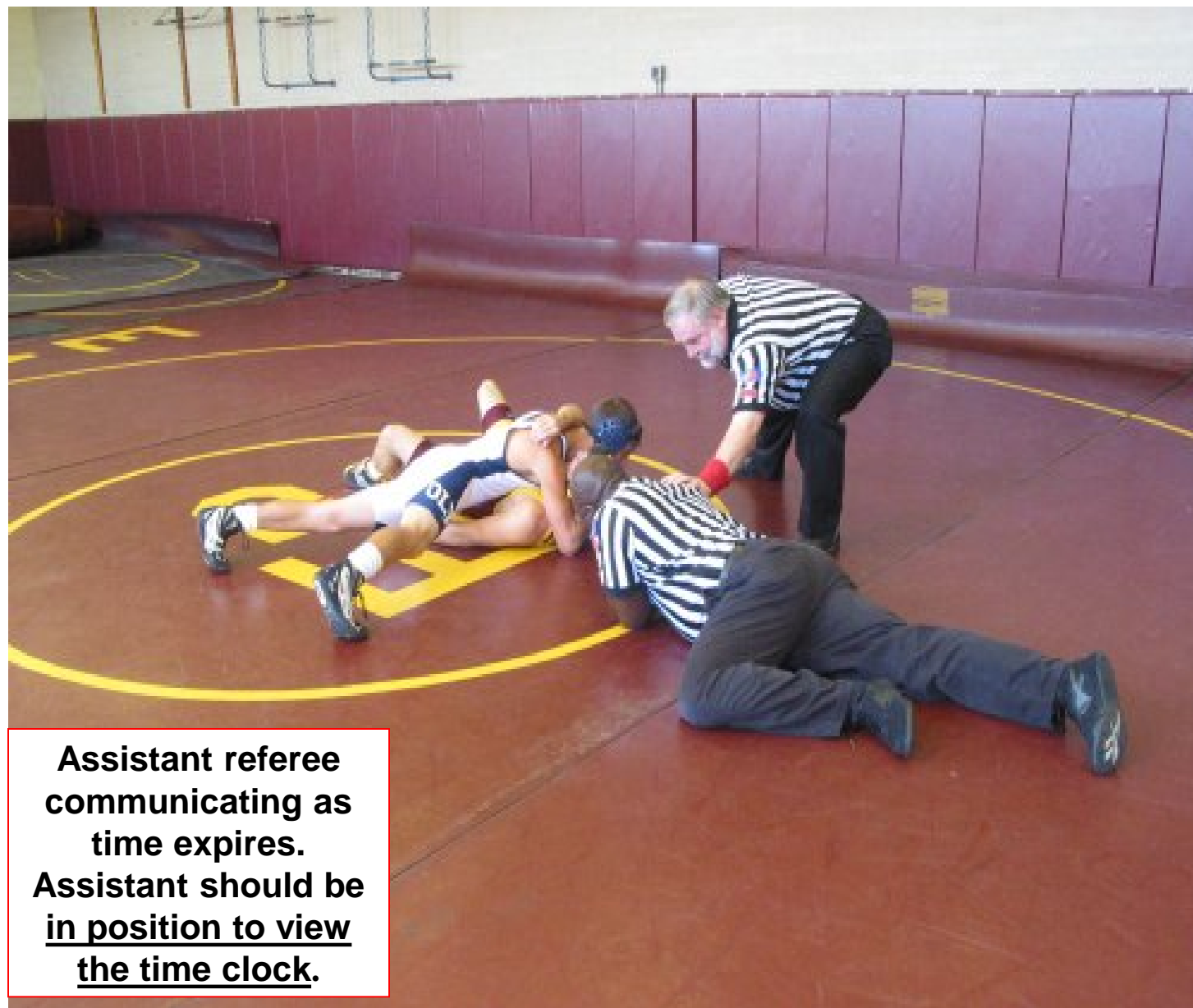
# Pinning Situations







**Assistant referee viewing top action and staying on his feet- why are you looking at me, he's pinned!**



**Assistant referee  
communicating as  
time expires.  
Assistant should be  
in position to view  
the time clock.**

# Pinning Situations

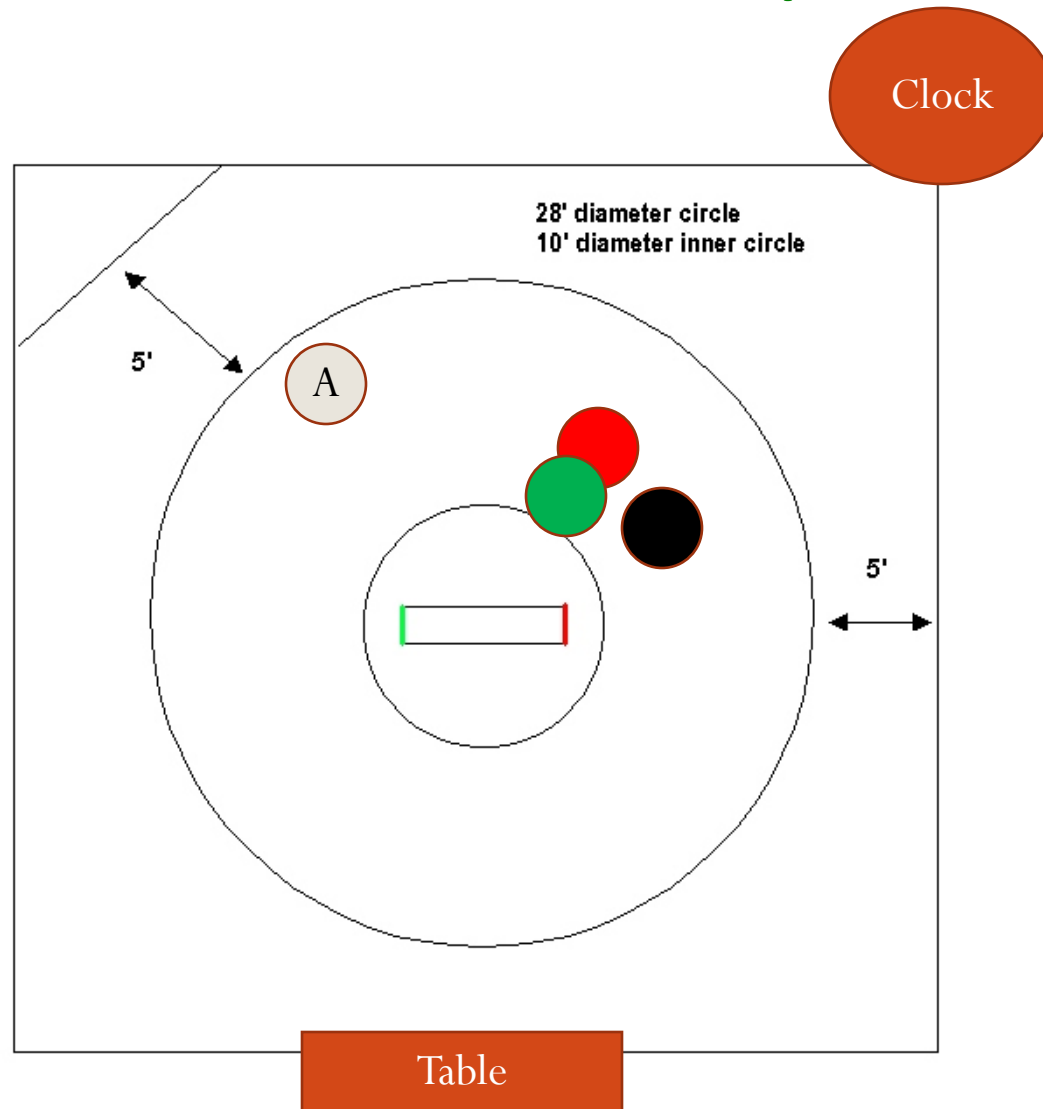
- Can move closer to the action, yet not too close to be hit on a scramble.
- In a pinning situation, the assistant should be watching from above for legality of the hold as well as keeping the referee aware of the time remaining.
- Assistant in near fall situations should never be looking for a fall.
- Should an illegal action take place, verbally notify the referee so he can take appropriate action.



# Illegal/Technical Violations/Blood



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# Illegal/technical Violations/Blood

- Monitor the action to include acts of unnecessary roughness, unsportsmanlike conduct (to include wrestlers and coaches UNC)
- Watch for locked hands, grasping of clothing, head gear, illegal holds
- Potentially dangerous; be close enough to quickly assist and inform the lead of a PD situation.
- Watch for bleeding
- Should any of the above actions take place, verbally notify the referee so he can take the appropriate action

# Illegal/Technical Violations/Blood

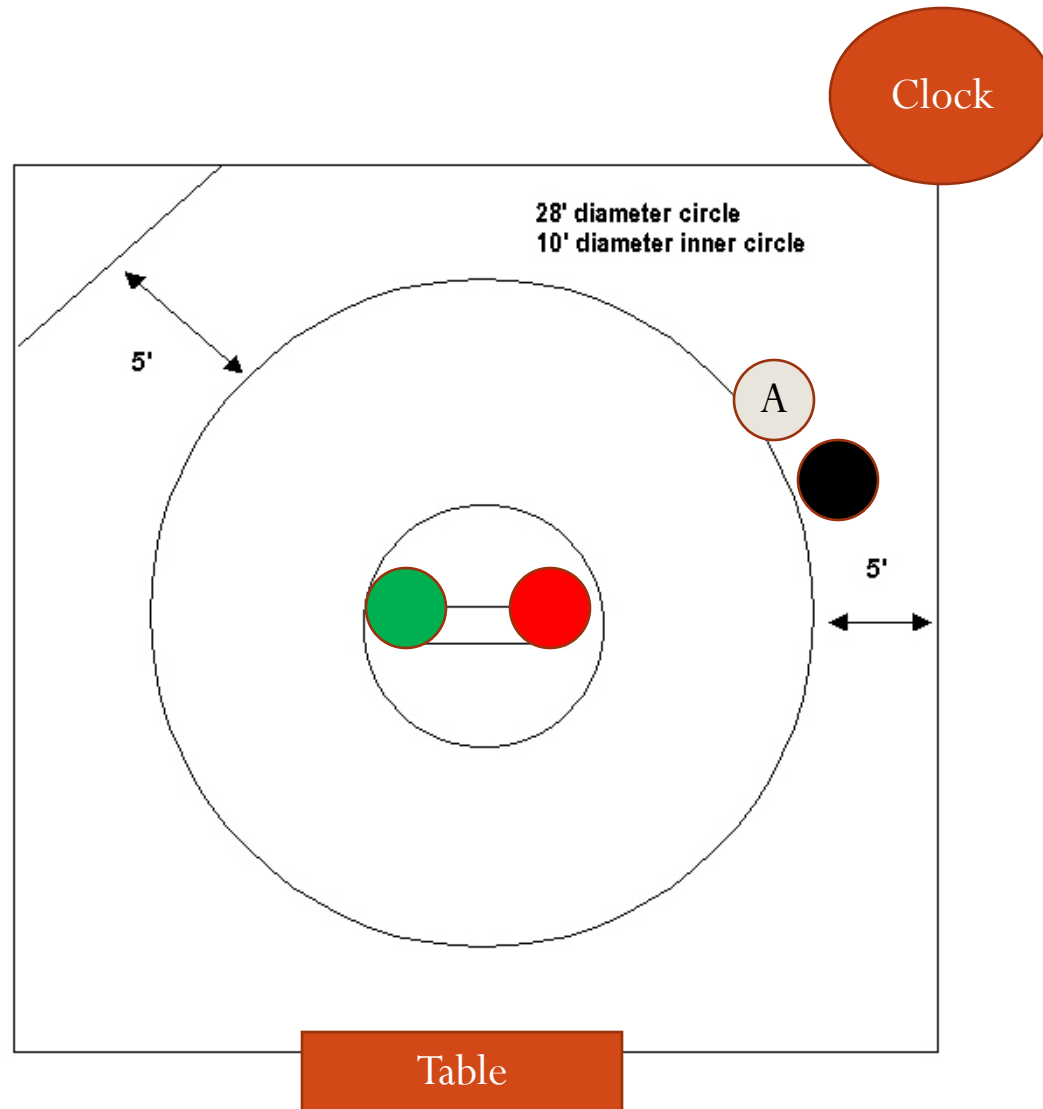
- The locked hands signal is the only indicator that is to displayed by the assistant:
  - Assistant must be absolute in this signal, knowing that you saw it and the referee did not. Try to be casual, but professional in communicating this signal to the referee.
  - When done properly, the locked hands signal should be noted by the lead referee and then he should indicate the infraction with the proper signal.
  - If stoppage is not required then points should be awarded for the TV defensive score and the match should continue smoothly.
  - If stoppage is required then the assistant has the time from where to restart in his mind on illegal holds.



# Officials Discussions



# Officials Discussions







I can  
hear  
you!!





# Officials Discussions

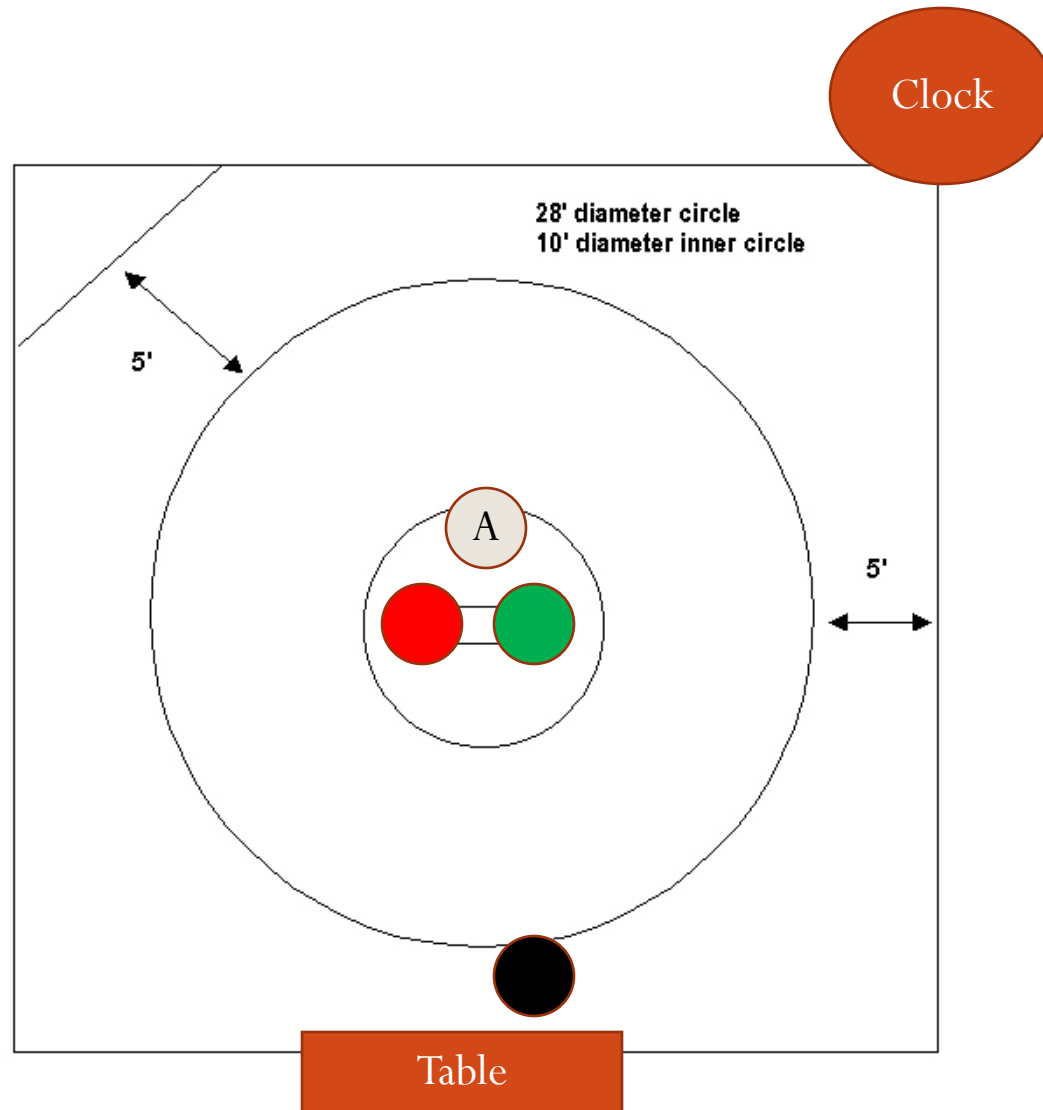
- When there is a disagreement between the assistant and the referee, the contestants should be within the 10 foot circle and the officials should meet near the edge of the mat away from anyone else.
- When the lead and the assistant disagree, the ruling of the lead official shall prevail.
- Once a ruling has been determined, the lead official should return to the center of the mat and use the proper signal to award points as determined.

# Time Outs





# Time Outs



# Role During Time-Outs

- The assistant will move to the center of the mat and maintain both wrestlers within the 10 foot circle.
- The assistant will enter a lead official and coaches scoring discussion only if requested by the lead.

# End of Match



# End of Match

- Be first on and last off to observe inappropriate while the wrestlers are leaving the mat. Watch the corners and benches as well.
- Remain in the 10 foot circle with the two contestants of the lead is at the scorer's table.
- Blend in and keep a low profile.

# Recap



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# Do



- Discuss expectations before working together
- Provide help when asked
- Use only approved signals
- Move on your feet, stay opposite of your partner
- Communicate quietly (when required)
- Check clock frequently (on starts and stops to see if running)
- Check score frequently (make sure points are awarded and displayed correctly)
- Align with the action and clock as the period ends
- Enter the circle to observe for illegal actions during a pinning situation
- Pinning situation – communicate properly when an illegal action occurs
- Keep wrestlers in the center when the lead is at the table
- Join conversation to help scoring when asked

# Do Not



- Fold arms
- Have hands in pocket
- Have your whistle out
- Stand stationary for the entire match
- Interact with the coaches
- Get close to the action
- Communicate with non-approved signals
- Make facial expressions or other non-verbal signals

# Wrap-Up

- Talk about expectations before you step on the mat
- Make sure you know how you will communicate
- Talk as long as need be to understand what happened and what is correct
- Agree to disagree – the lead official has the final say
- Slow it down when there is a need to control emotions
- Support the lead on all calls
- Keep both wrestlers and coaches in your view
- Pay attention to EVERYTHING!

Work as a team to get the call right !!!