



REPORT OF THE  
NCAA WRESTLING RULES COMMITTEE  
APRIL 17-19, 2023, ANNUAL MEETING

ACTION ITEMS.

1. **Legislative items.**

- **None.**

2. **Nonlegislative items.** The NCAA Wrestling Rules Committee approved the following rules change proposals for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 seasons. The NCAA Wrestling Rules Committee requests approval from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel for the following items:

a. **Facial Hair (Rule 1.8.2).**

1. Recommendation. To eliminate the restrictions on facial hair.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. Removing the ½-inch maximum length brings this rule in alignment with the current hair rule that does not have a maximum length restriction associated with it.
4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. None.

b. **Medical Forfeit (Rule 2.3.12).**

1. Recommendation. To change the medical forfeit rules so that the first medical forfeit is registered as a loss on the wrestler's individual season record form. This will apply in all situations, except when a medical forfeit occurs immediately following an injury default.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. When a wrestler registers for and competes in an event, there should be an assumption that barring injury, the individual will complete the entire event. If a wrestler is injured during competition, they should be allowed to immediately medical forfeit and acknowledge that in all competitions there is a risk of a loss, but they should not be penalized for multiple losses in the single event. This rule change will more accurately reflect the wrestler's true competition record but not overly penalize them for getting injured.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.

5. Student-athlete impact. None.

**c. Mat-Side Video Review (Rule 3.13).**

1. Recommendation. To provide the referee with authority to confirm or overturn all calls or missed calls during a video review challenged sequence. For coach challenges the sequence is described as the time from the alleged error until the match is, or should have been, stopped by the referee.

2. Effective date. Immediately.

3. Rationale. Allowing referees or independent reviewers to correct any discovered errors in the review sequence will provide for a more accurate review and also eliminate issues with challenges to points awarded prematurely by the referee, and other variations of gaming the video review challenge rule.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.

5. Student-athlete impact. None.

**d. Coach's Video Review Challenge (Rule 3.13.9d).**

1. Recommendation. To eliminate the control of mat violation and team point deduction for a delayed video review request and maintain the loss of the video review as the appropriate penalty.

2. Effective date. Immediately.

3. Rationale. Currently, this violation has two penalties – loss of video review and a team point deduction. The change to a single penalty – loss of video review – provides a more appropriate and immediate sanction to video review requests that are not requested immediately.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.

5. Student-athlete impact. None.

**e. Takedown Scoring (Rules 4.2 and 4.6).**

1. Recommendation. To change the points earned for a takedown from two (2) points to three (3) points.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. To better reflect the skill and energy required to secure a takedown. Increasing the points awarded will incentivize wrestlers to take additional risk in the neutral position, providing increased opportunities for both offensive and defensive takedowns.
4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. None.

**f. Hand-Touch Takedown (Rule 4.2.2).**

1. Recommendation. To eliminate the hand-touch takedown.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. To standardize the requirement for demonstrating control beyond reaction time in all takedown situations and to make coaching and refereeing in this situation easier. It also will be an improvement for wrestling fans and media since they are no longer required to understand the one situation in which reaction time is not required to secure a takedown. Finally, this rule eliminates many potential injuries that can occur when wrestlers attempt to defend the takedown by executing dangerous rolls without touching a hand to the mat.
4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. None.

**g. Near Fall (Rule 4.5).**

1. Recommendation. To allow wrestlers to earn three (3) near fall points when the referee achieves three (3) counts in a near fall situation.
2. Effective date. Immediately.

3. Rationale. To provide wrestlers additional opportunities to score points in the near fall position (currently only two (2) and four (4) points may be earned), and also to more easily understand for the average fan that wrestlers earn the same number of points for each of the earned near fall swipes – two-point near fall, three-point near fall and four-point near fall.
  4. Estimated budget impact. None.
  5. Student-athlete impact. None.
- h. Riding Time Point (Rule 4.5.11). \*This rule was subsequently rescinded by the Wrestling Rules Committee during its May 23, 2023, videoconference.**
1. Recommendation. To require a wrestler to score near fall points during the match to be awarded the riding time point.
  2. Effective date. Immediately.
  3. Rationale. To acknowledge the importance of riding time for college wrestling and maintain the ability for a wrestler to be awarded a riding time point if they score near fall points. The near fall requirement incentivizes wrestlers to both ride and pursue near fall points during the match. Additional near fall attempts will produce more near fall points and also provide increased opportunities for the defensive wrestler to escape or reverse their opponent.
  4. Estimated budget impact. None.
  5. Student-athlete impact. None.
- i. Tournament Team Scoring (Rule 4.8.6).**
1. Recommendation. To modify true placement rules so that any true placement matches conducted shall not alter the final team score of the event.
  2. Effective date. Immediately.
  3. Rationale. To better ensure that all tournament team point totals are calculated equally from one competition to another, and also to provide event hosts the ability to conduct true placement matches only at weight class in which a national qualifying spot is available and not at the other eligible weight classes.
  4. Estimated budget impact. None.

5. Student-athlete impact. None.

**j. Assessing Match Penalties (Rule 5.1.2f).**

1. Recommendation. To remove the required match stoppage after a wrestler is penalized for an illegal hold when there is no presence of an injury.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. To eliminate the arbitrary and unnecessary match stoppage when the illegal hold point can be easily awarded to an opponent while maintaining continuous wrestling action.
4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. None.

**k. Waist and Ankle Ride Stalling (Rule 5.7.13).**

1. Recommendation. To expand the current mandatory five second count for the waist and ankle ride to include all situations in which the offensive/advantage wrestler grasps the bottom wrestler's ankle.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. To allow for the continued use of grasping the ankle to execute legitimate wrestling holds but reduce the ability for stalling in a greater variety of wrestling situations in the offensive/advantage position.
4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. None.

**l. On-the-Mat Stalling Situations (Rule 5.7.15a).**

1. Recommendation. To add that the offensive wrestler must work toward obtaining near fall points and/or a pin to avoid stalling.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. To put an equal burden of aggressive wrestling to score points on both the offensive and defensive wrestler. Currently, the offensive wrestler must aggressively

attempt to break down the opponent but is not required to work toward earning near fall points or securing the pin.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. None.

**m. Weight Certification Procedures (Rules 8.3.1 and 9.7.1).**

1. Recommendation. To standardize the weight certification period to not sooner than September 1 and redefine the playing rules season as September 1 until the end of the competition season.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. Currently, institutions may conduct the initial weight certification on the first day of classes, which is when their playing rules season begins. The first day of classes varies greatly within the membership, especially in regard to whether an institution is on the semester or quarter system, so this will allow for a standardized weight certification period and playing rules season for all teams.
4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. Standardizing this time will allow all student-athletes the opportunity to begin the weight certification process at the same time.

**n. Weigh-Ins for Dual, Triangular and Quadrangular Meets (Rule 9.3.1).**

1. Recommendation. For dual, triangular and quadrangular meets, to allow weigh-ins to be held two hours or sooner before the start time of competition.
2. Effective date. Immediately.
3. Rationale. To standardize weigh-in times across all competition types. Currently, dual meet weigh-ins are from one hour or sooner before the start of competition and tournament weigh-ins are two hours or sooner before the start time of competition. Standardizing the weigh-in times will make it easier for wrestlers to develop a consistent pre-match nutrition/hydration protocol, instead of having to plan for a one-hour protocol for dual meets and a two-hour protocol for tournaments. In addition to standardizing pre-match nutrition/hydration protocols, the two-hour weigh-in provides a consistent amount of time for wrestlers to engage in appropriate warmup and warm down routines.

4. Estimated budget impact. None.
5. Student-athlete impact. Same as stated rationale.

#### INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and announcements.** John Hangey, chair of the Wrestling Rules Committee, welcomed the committee and invited guests and thanked them for their time.
2. **Review schedule, agenda, committee operations manual and Playing Rules Oversight Panel directive.** The Wrestling Rules Committee reviewed the meeting schedule and agenda. The Wrestling Rules Committee also reviewed the operations manual, which included the NCAA conflict of interest policy, guidance for committee members regarding meeting reports, notes and email, voting procedures, principles for rules writing, and experimental playing rules guidelines. The Wrestling Rules Committee was reminded of the directive of PROP from 2014. This directive encourages all rules committees to strongly consider providing at least a one-year delay for Division II and Division III institutions before implementing any rules changes that have financial or facility implications.
3. **Approval of the March 21 videoconference report.** The Wrestling Rules Committee approved the report as written.
4. **Playing Rules Oversight Panel report.** The Wrestling Rules Committee heard a report from David Hicks, PROP liaison to the Wrestling Rules Committee, which focused on a discussion from PROP's annual meeting in January regarding the federated playing rules process. PROP approved a recommendation directing the divisional governance bodies to pursue the appropriate legislative actions to eliminate the requirement that playing rules shall be common for all divisions of the Association. It was noted that PROP emphasized that there should continue to be a multi-divisional panel to maintain oversight of the playing rules process and determine which playing rules are federated.
5. **Secretary-rules editor/weight management liaison report.** The Wrestling Rules Committee heard a report from the secretary-rules editor and weight management liaison, which included a recap of the preseason points of emphasis and a review of the information posted on Center Mat, interpretations, rules book corrections, waivers and sanctions. The weight management liaison report focused on the five weight management violations from the past season.
6. **National coordinator of officials report.** The Wrestling Rules Committee heard a report from the national coordinator of officials, which focused on a recap of the season, highlighting the use of third-party video review officials at the DIII Wrestling Championships for the first time.
7. **Active official report.** The Wrestling Rules Committee heard a report from the active official, which highlighted two main initiatives amongst the active officials – education and networking.

- 8. National Athletic Trainers' Association liaison report.** The Wrestling Rules Committee heard a report from the athletic trainer liaison, which focused on the 1.020 specific gravity value to reflect a well-hydrated state. The committee did not recommend any changes to this value.
- 9. National Federation of State High School Associations report.** The Wrestling Rules Committee heard a report from the NFHS, which included the 12 areas of potential change for next season. Girls wrestling continues to grow.
- 10. NCAA Injury Surveillance Program report.** The Wrestling Rules Committee reviewed the wrestling injury data report from the Datalys Center for Sports Injury Research and Prevention. As in years past, the committee noted concerns with the effectiveness and usability of historical athlete exposure calculation methodologies in individual multi-event sports like wrestling. The Wrestling Rules Committee once again requests CSMAS review current Injury Surveillance Program data collection methodologies related to athlete exposure.
- 11. Wrestling Championships scoring, video review and violations data.** The Wrestling Rules Committee reviewed scoring and video review data from the DI, DII and DIII Wrestling Championships.
- 12. Review 2022-23 rules survey results.** The Wrestling Rules Committee reviewed the 2022-23 rules survey results in conjunction with discussion on the corresponding rules change proposals. It was noted that the response rate for head coaches was high (72%), but the response rate for administrators and coaches was low (24% and 36% respectively).
- 13. Review 2023-24 and 2024-25 rules proposals.** The Wrestling Rules Committee reviewed and considered 54 rules proposals and recommended 14 major rules changes for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 wrestling seasons, as noted above in the Action Items section of this report. The recommended rules changes include changing the points earned for a takedown from two to three points, eliminating the hand-touch takedown, allowing wrestlers to earn three near fall points, requiring a wrestler to score near fall points during the match to be awarded the riding time point, and allowing weigh-ins to be held two hours or sooner before the start time of competition for dual, triangular and quadrangular meets.
- 14. Review 2021-22 and 2022-23 Wrestling Case Book.** The Wrestling Rules Committee reviewed and approved all approved rulings in the case book with the exception of A.R. 4-18.
- 15. Future annual meeting and videoconference schedule.** The Wrestling Rules Committee scheduled a videoconference for noon Eastern time on Tuesday, May 23, to review the comment period results. The 2024 annual meeting videoconference dates are to be determined.
- 16. Selection of chair.** The Wrestling Rules Committee reelected John Hangey, head wrestling coach at Rider University, as chair for the 2023-24 academic year.



**17. Other business.** The outgoing committee members were recognized and thanked for their service to the committee and Association. The national coordinator of officials and secretary-rules editor were given special acknowledgement for their service, including a memento presented to Chuck Barbee in recognition of eight years as the secretary-rules editor.

**18. Adjournment.** The Wrestling Rules Committee adjourned at 10 a.m. Eastern time on Wednesday, April 19.

*Committee Chair:* John Hangey, Rider University, Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference  
*Staff Liaison(s):* Ashlee Follis, Championships and Alliances, Playing Rules and Officiating

NCAA Wrestling Rules Committee April 17-19, 2023, Annual Meeting	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Chuck Barbee, secretary-rules editor and weight management liaison.	
Duane Bastress, York College (Pennsylvania).	
Chris Bono, University of Wisconsin-Madison.	
Deral Brown, Newberry College.	
Austin DeVoe, Colorado School of Mines.	
John Hangey, Rider University.	
Jonathan Reeder, Appalachian State University.	
Coleman Scott, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
Robert Fox, Waynesburg University.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
David Hicks, King University.	
Elliot Hopkins, National Federation of State High School Associations.	
Angel Rivera, active official.	
Tim Shiels, national coordinator of officials.	
Jim Thornton, athletic trainer liaison.	
<b>NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance:</b>	
Ashlee Follis.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>	
Greg Johnson.	