



# 2025-26 NFHS WRESTLING RULES INTERPRETATIONS

**Publisher's Note:** The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

Dr. Karissa L. Niehoff, Publisher, NFHS Publications © 2025

**SITUATION 1:** Wrestler A from the neutral position uses a bear hug that places Wrestler B on their back. After the referee reaches a 3-point near-fall count, Wrestler B gets out of near-fall criteria. How long can Wrestler A keep their hands locked around Wrestler B's body before a technical violation of locked hands occurs? **RULING:** Once Wrestler B is no longer in near-fall criteria, Wrestler A cannot maintain the locked hands beyond reaction time. (7-3-3)

**SITUATION 2:** In a dual meet, who determines if competition will occur using random draw of weights or lowest weight to heaviest? **RULING:** The host school is responsible for weigh-in procedures. (4-5-3)

**SITUATION 3:** Can a wrestler have their nickname "Frank the Tank" appear on their competition uniform? **RULING:** No, a wrestler's nickname is not authorized on a school uniform. (4-1-2)

**SITUATION 4:** Can a wrestler compete wearing a leg sleeve that doesn't contain padding? **RULING:** Yes, padding is not required for a leg sleeve. (4-3-5)

**SITUATION 5:** The match score is Wrestler B, 13 points, and Wrestler A, 2 points. Wrestler B has placed Wrestler A in near-fall criteria and earned four near-fall points. Wrestler A is successful in coming out of near-fall criteria, but Wrestler B maintains the same pinning hold (situation). When should the referee stop the match? **RULING:** The referee shall stop the match once near-fall criteria are no longer met if the points earned create a 15-point advantage. (5-11-2c)

**SITUATION 6:** During a dual meet, Team A coach requests a conference with the referee at the scorer's table. The coach believes the score is incorrect and asks the referee to confirm. The referee reviews the score with the scorer and confirms the score is correct. Should the Team A coach be penalized for misconduct? **RULING:** No, Team A coach didn't request a conference regarding a misapplication of a rule or to question the referee's judgment. (7-5-4)

**SITUATION 7:** During a match, Team A coach requests a conference with the referee at the scorer's table. The Team A coach questions why the referee penalized a Team A wrestler for stalling. The referee gives the Team A coach an explanation and penalizes the coach for misconduct. Should the Team A coach be penalized for misconduct? **RULING:** Yes, if the coach questions judgment or misapplication of the rule and the referee doesn't change the call the coach will be penalized. (7-5-4)

**SITUATION 8:** During a takedown, Wrestler A indicates to the referee that they are injured. Can the referee award takedown points to Wrestler B? **RULING:** Yes, if the referee believes the injury occurred during an imminent-scoring situation. (8-2-9)

**SITUATION 9:** What is the penalty for a coach who moves toward the mat during a non-charged time-out? **RULING:** The coach will be penalized with unsportsmanlike conduct for violation of the bench-decorum rule. (7-5-2)

**SITUATION 10:** What is the penalty for a wrestler who strikes or elbows an opponent? **RULING:** The penalty is flagrant misconduct. (5-12-2b)

**SITUATION 11:** When is pulling an opponent's hair not considered unnecessary roughness? **RULING:** When the hair is caught in a legal maneuver. (5-29-1)

**SITUATION 12:** Are head coaches and captains required to meet with the referee? **RULING:** Yes, coaches and captains are required to meet before the dual meet begins. (3-1-4f)

**SITUATION 13:** Are coaches allowed to address the assistant referee? **RULING:** No, coaches are not permitted to address the assistant referee, and the assistant referee is not allowed to address the coaches. (3-2-2i)

**SITUATION 14:** Can a wrestler wear a long-sleeve form-fitted compression shirt as part of their uniform? **RULING:** No, unless permission has been granted by the state association as part of Rule 1-1-2. (4-1-1c)

**SITUATION 15:** Are socks considered special equipment or part of the uniform? **RULING:** Socks are considered special equipment. (4-3-1a)

**SITUATION 16:** Can a wrestler compete in a form-fitted compression and form-fitted tights only? **RULING:** No, the tights must be worn under a one-piece singlet or compression shorts or shorts designed for wrestling. (4-1-1b)

**SITUATION 17:** Can an electronic device that enables communication between coach and wrestler be worn under the ear guards? **RULING:** No, electronic devices are not permitted, unless permission has been granted by the state association as part of Rule 1-1-2. (4-3-6)

**SITUATION 18:** Are referees allowed to review video to make decisions related to the match? **RULING:** No, the referee cannot use TV monitoring, replay or other video equipment during the match. (3-1-9)

**SITUATION 19:** Is the school's name, school logo or school mascot on the uniform restricted to size limitation of the manufacturer's logo/trademark/reference? **RULING:** No, there are no size restrictions for school name, school nickname, school logo or school mascot. (4-1-2)

**SITUATION 20:** Is the American flag the only flag allowed on a school uniform? **RULING:** Yes, no other flag is allowed on the competition uniform. (4-1-2) Along the same theme, can a special patch be worn on the competition uniform? **RULING:** Yes, only if approved by the state association. (4-1-2)