

Rules Issues and Interpretations
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Situation

During the 165# match the referee calls Wrestler A for Flagrant Misconduct and disqualifies him. After the meet ends, i.e., after four subsequent matches, the coach of Wrestler A convinces the referee to reverse his call of Flagrant Misconduct in the 165# match, and reduce it to Unsportsmanlike Conduct. The referee agrees and informs the table, but not Wrestler B's coach.

Question #1

Can the referee reverse his earlier call?

Answer:

No. Rule 4.14.2, WR-44, covering correction of an error, states that if there is an error on the part of the timekeeper, scorers or referee, during a dual meet, correction shall be made by the referee before the start of a subsequent match (weight class). Therefore, the referee did not have the prerogative to change his call of Flagrant Misconduct after the subsequent match began.

Question #2

Can a wrestler be disqualified during a match for Unsportsmanlike Conduct?

Answer:

Yes. During a match, an Unsportsmanlike Conduct call on Wrestler A warrants a match point(s) being awarded to Wrestler B. If this call were the fourth violation, excluding warnings, fleeing, false starts or incorrect starting position violations, this unsportsmanlike call would disqualify Wrestler A.

Question #3

Should the referee have discussed the changing of his call from Flagrant Misconduct to Unsportsmanlike Conduct with the coach of Wrestler B?

Answer:

Yes. Rule 8.4.18 states that "If a correction is made, the referee should advise the wrestlers, coaches and table personnel as soon as possible."

Comments:

We have had a number of Flagrant Misconduct calls made so far this season. Remember under Rule 6.6.1 that a wrestler disqualified for committing an act of flagrant misconduct shall be suspended from the institutions next scheduled wrestling competition. Also, the referee shall alert the National Coordinator of Officials that a flagrant misconduct violation occurred, describe the reason(s) for the call, give the wrestler's name, weight class, school name and event in which it occurred, and include the opponent's name and school. This notification should take place ASAP but not later than 48 hours via e-mail (preferable) or telephone. My e-mail address and telephone number can be found on page WR-66 of the 2008 Rules Book.

Also, you are to remind the table scorer that he/she is required to inform the head coach that a team member has been charged with a flagrant misconduct violation. This is especially important if the coach is not at mat side during the match. Of course, if the head coach is mat side during the referee's call, the referee will use the correct signal #23 on WR-115, inform the table of his call, and then inform the coach of his call.