

July 6, 2008

Dear NWOA Member:

The Rules Committee met in Indianapolis, IN, April 14-16, 2008. I will discuss later in this letter the New Rules that will be in force beginning with the 2008-2009 season along with information on certification, and other procedures to be instituted. There were little changes in the playing rules for the upcoming season, but one that is significant regards out of bounds. The videotape for this year's clinic was shot May 5-7, in Kent, Ohio, with an edited version made available for viewing at the NWCA Convention June 11. The online viewing and registration for all referees and coaches will probably occur over a one-month window starting in early September and ending on October 19, 2008. Information will be announced on the NWOA, NWCA and NCAA websites. The NWCA site will host the registration process at NCWAonline.com. Note that again, there will be no teleconference for certification this year. Plans for an in-person clinic, however, have just now been solidified. An in-person clinic will be held at the University of Pittsburgh, Sunday morning, October 26, 2008, starting at 9:30 am EDT. Details of the exact campus location and time will be made available on our website and the NCAA and NWCA websites. The Pittsburgh site will change next season, and be moved each subsequent year to another region of the country, repeating every approximately 5 years. Bob Bubb and I will make the presentation. There have been strong feelings expressed from referees and others that an in-person clinic is exceedingly effective and important for the standardization of rules' interpretation on a national basis. Therefore, we have decided to conduct these clinics in the method described above. Remember, in order to referee any college wrestling in the 2008-2009 season, you must attend that clinic, or view the rules tape before the one-month deadline (to be provided) for doing so. As you know the certification is exceedingly important to us. Rule 7.1.1 states that a referee must be certified in order to referee college matches, tournaments or NCAA Championships. Further, an institution faces significant penalties for using a non-registered referee as stated in Rule 7.1.2. Note that these rules have been in chapter 8. However, the rules book has been restructured, eliminating Chapter 3, for example. Basically, playing rules and rules of a more administrative nature have been separated. Look for these changes in the rules book starting this year.

Also, as was done last year, the DVD has separated the rules part from the weight management part and the segment on skin diseases. All referees should view at least the rules part and the skin disease part.

The 2008 Division I Championships was held at the Scottrade Center, St. Louis, MO, March 20-22, 2008. It was very successful with great crowds totaling 94,324 over the six sessions. The finals were shown on ESPN in prime time and in real-time reaching 524,000 homes. Also, the quarterfinals and semifinals were shown in real time on ESPN U. The 2008 Division II and III Championships were held at the US Cellular Center, Cedar Rapids, IA, March 14-15, and March 7-8, respectively. All tournaments were well attended and successful. The attendance for the DII and DIII Championships were 5,831 and 7,829, respectively. The Division I Championships in 2009 will again be held in St. Louis, March 19-21, 2008, at the Scottrade Center. Future DI Championships will be held in Omaha at the Quest Center, March 18-20, 2010, and at the Wachovia Center, March 17-19, 2011, in Philadelphia. The 2009

Division III tournament will be held again at the US Cellular Center, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, March 6-7. The Division II Championships will be held at the University of Houston, Houston, TX, March 13-14. Other 2009 qualifier tournaments are listed on the NWOA website. All referees should regularly visit our website at <http://www.nwoaofficials.org/> for updates to rules, interpretations, and general announcements on refereeing and the NWOA.

Please find enclosed the minutes of the NWOA business meeting held March 21, 2007 at the site of the Division I Championships in St. Louis.

In developing the new rules, a number of proposed changes were submitted by coaches, referees, and friends of wrestling. In considering changing the rules, the tabulated results from the Questionnaire were listed along with each suggested rules change. Therefore, it is important for each of you to fill out the questionnaire every year (it will be posted on the NWCA website in January.) As usual, the suggestions from our NWOA business meeting in St. Louis were brought forward for consideration as were suggestions made to me during the past season. The committee thoroughly and carefully considered all suggestions.

The major changes affecting us are given below in an abridged form. A complete version of the changes is posted on our website. I have also posted a power point version for your use.

1. All matches shall be seven minutes; matches less than seven minutes shall not count.
2. Recommendation that mats be cleaned and disinfected before and between all competitions, and that a shoe cleaning and disinfecting mechanism be available mat side. Anyone stepping onto the mat should use the shoe cleaning/disinfecting device.
3. The time sequence to be followed in assuming the offensive position is to:
 - A) Set the knee(s) and feet;
 - B) Place the palm of one hand on the navel;
 - C) Place head on or over the mid-line;
 - D) Place the palm of the other hand on or over the near elbow and become stationary (motionless); and,
 - E) The referee shall then pause momentarily before starting the wrestling.
4. Contestants are considered to be in bounds if any part of either wrestler is on or inside the boundary line and imaginary cylinder above the boundary line. This rule is a major change. This means that wrestling can continue as long as any part of either wrestler is penetrating the imaginary cylinder in bounds.
5. Wrestlers shall appear properly groomed when reporting to weigh-ins. Wrestlers who do not make weight on the first day of a two-day team-advanced tournament are ineligible to weigh-in on the second day. Wrestlers must weigh-in at the same weight class for the second day of competition as they weighed in for on the first day of competition.
6. A wrestler who doesn't weigh-in and compete on the first day of competition may weigh-in at scratch weight and compete on the second day of competition. Disqualification for communicable skin disease listed as a medical forfeit in bracket.
7. An NCAA Skin Evaluation and Participation Status Form must be used.
8. Medical forfeit declaration must be made by an official team representative to the official scorer before wrestler is called to the mat. Injured/ill wrestler does not have to appear; winning wrestler does accept forfeit in uniform.

9. New Symbols:

DQW - disqualification for weight-management violation.

INJ(2) 3:15 ↓ -- Method of recording second Injury TO. Down arrow indicates position of injured wrestler at resumption of wrestling.

10. Act of flagrant misconduct results in suspension. Referee alerts national coordinator of officials as soon as possible. See rules book for contact info.

11. New signal to indicate starting recovery time. Referee points downward and circles index finger of arm with appropriate color band for injured contestant.

12. Additional changes:

Coaches', athletic trainers' (and officials') mandatory viewing and registration for the annual wrestling rules presentation will be available on the NWCA online.

The 2009 Wrestling Rules and Interpretations book will separate the NCAA Weight Management Program and medical examination information from the rules of actual competition. Note that a Chapter 10 has been added (at least that is the plan at this writing).

The 2009 Wrestling Rules and Interpretations book should be available by late August. The following year, a two-year rules book will be published (for 2009-10 and 2010-11 seasons).

In the Rules DVD look for the Points of emphasis concerning:

- **Twisting knee-locks during counters**
- **Offensive starts-stationary or motionless added**
- **Inbounds with no action**
- **Near Falls-proper count using 1000-0ne, proper angle (45), 4-inch distance, on both elbows, and high-bridge.**
- **Control of mat area—coaches at tournaments and restricted zone.**
- **Reporting Flagrant Misconduct**
- **Neutral cradles**
- **Fleeing vs. attempted fleeing**

In addition, some new WIs have been written, and fleeing rewritten to clearly allow for the violation to be called while in bounds and to define fleeing as trying to flee the situation and not necessarily the wrestling area. Pictures have been rearranged and one added to the illustrations section.

For those of you eligible to buy an updated version of the NWOA ring, it can be ordered from Pat Fitzgerald, our Vice President, by calling him at 405-273-0172, or by email at fitztown@aol.com. If you have refereed any combination of five (5) NCAA Division I, II, or III Championships, or one (1) Division I finals match, you are eligible. Check it out on our website.

Please support the NWOA, the official voice for the college referee, and a source of support for all officials, by promptly paying your dues (\$10) to Lynn Dyche. The annual dues cover July to July and, therefore, should now be paid. Also, you can subscribe to Amateur Wrestling News and pay your dues for a total of \$35.

Have a great summer and do not hesitate to call or email me if you need further information or clarification about the rules, or any wrestling call/rule, or good refereeing practice.

**Yours in Wrestling,
Pat McCormick, President**