

TWOA Officials Expectations and Evaluation Criteria

MECHANICS

Positioning, Movement/Mobility, Anticipation: Mechanics are, for the most part, positioning and how you move and anticipate getting in position. You should always be in position to:

- Stop action for potentially dangerous situations
- Properly view the action
- Make appropriate calls
- Stop action for penalties when appropriate
- Call near falls and falls
- Stop out-of-bounds situations

Always keep an appropriate distance from the action, far enough away during times of action to allow for a good overall view. Work to the “short side” of the mat, the side on which the wrestlers are closest to the out-of-bounds line. By assuming this position, not only does your physical presence encourage the wrestlers to stay in bounds, but it also gives you the ability to cut down the mat by decreasing the distance you need to follow the action. Position yourself in out-of-bounds situations so that you are at a distance and angle that allows you determine control and evaluate the supporting parts of the wrestlers. Movement is related to both positioning and anticipation; so focus is on the ability to keep up with the action at any speed. Movement always has a purpose; it places the official in the proper position at the proper time.

Usually you can straddle the out-of-bounds line; but, this may not be appropriate if you’re concerned about a possible injury occurring due to action continuing onto the floor. When an out-of-bounds is imminent, shift your focus to the wrestlers’ supporting points.

When setting the wrestlers in the referee’s position, stand in front of them (at 10 or 2... not at 12). Check with both the timer and the scorekeeper to make sure they are ready.

When looking for a fall, position yourself in front of the defensive wrestler’s head and shoulders. If the view in front is obscured, take a view through the defensive wrestler’s hips. Keep at least 3 to 5 feet away and never reach in to touch the shoulders or to feel for the pin! Don’t guess in a pinning situation; make sure you see the pin before you call it.

During injury or blood time-outs, the official should be at the table to monitor time and the assistant should be at the top of the mat to monitor the situation. Do not stand near the injured wrestler; let the coach and trainer attend to them. Notify the coach at 45 seconds, 15 seconds and the termination of injury time.

Be in the prime position to see what you need to see and trust your assistant to see the rest. Keep wrestlers between you and your assistant official to the best of your ability. For reference, see the rule book page 13 – “the two referees should be facing each other while each is maintain a view between the wrestlers. Both referees must move to positions on the mat where the best view of wrestling and verbal communications can be achieved”. Your State qualified assistant should know from the other side what locked hands, illegal holds, etc. are, so don’t kill yourself trying to chase action. Do not chase the action around in a circle. STOP; let the action come back to you. As a result of experience and knowledge, you should foresee the potential of any action. Running after an action is a result of poor anticipation. Anticipate where the action will end and put yourself in the best position for when, or even before, those actions occur. Rotate your assistant to see the clock towards the end of the period if possible.

Do not look at table when making calls, keep eyes on action at all times. Out-of-bounds situation, return to center with first wrestler. Don’t appear LAZY - Hands off knees and hips – change levels to one knee if needed. Back up: In all action, scrambles, scoring and pinning situations. You can usually see more from a distance. Move in: In potentially dangerous and illegal holds (this shows your control) as well as when you have to communicate to the wrestlers (such as: work center, improve position, keep this legal, etc.)

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Since the safety of the contestants is our #1 priority, anticipate actions, situations, and holds that may be potentially dangerous or illegal. You don't always have to stop the action, yet you must be in a position to do so if necessary and close enough to verbally caution the wrestlers of a potentially dangerous situation. Always err on the side of safety.

Besides recognizing and anticipating potentially dangerous situations, anticipate situations that may become emotional. In hotly contested matches, the official should take preventive actions to head off any abusive or unruly activity between participants and/or coaches. For example, stepping in and stopping the action to verbally warn each wrestler.

Match Procedures: Always follow the proper match procedures from the beginning to the end of the match and throughout the event. When possible (before the wrestlers check in at the table), be proactive and give a quick visual check for proper equipment and have them make any necessary adjustments prior to coming on the mat.

Before starting the match, check with both the timer and scorekeeper to see if they are ready. When stopping the match, maintain visual contact with the wrestlers in case they do not respond to the sound of the whistle. In cases of extreme crowd noise or confusion, maintain a position close enough to the wrestlers to enable them to hear the sound of his whistle easier. In extreme situations in which the wrestlers cannot or will not respond to the sound of the whistle, you may be ready to physically "tap" both wrestlers. Quickly return to the center of the mat from out-of-bounds with the first wrestler, keeping your eyes on the second for potential injury or stalling situations. When setting the wrestlers in referee's position, make sure that the correct wrestler is down and in a stance that enables the offensive wrestler to assume a correct starting position on top.

Absolutely DO NOT respond to coaches in the corner. DO NOT acknowledge, deny or answer at all. The only conversation that needs to take place will be at the table. Do not hurry to the table. On a heated call or controversial situation: Control wrestlers, stop action when available, ask the wrestlers to stay in the middle, have your assistant assume a position with the wrestlers, then AND ONLY THEN make your way to the table. Put your back to the table, arms at your side. If the coach tries to step in front of you, politely tell him that you need him to stand beside you so you can continue to watch the wrestlers during your conversation. Listen completely before responding and respond only to question – do not assume further. Allow the coach to speak first and do not respond with what you think he might ask or is asking. Be confident in your difference between interpretations and judgment – just because they phrase it in the form of a question doesn't mean it's not a question of your judgment. Do NOT tell coach to go to corner or sit down. They don't HAVE to, if they don't want to. Penalize accordingly if needed. You have four options after a conversation with a coach: nothing/misconduct/unsportsmanlike conduct/flagrant misconduct. No Coaches Misconduct from the corner. Allow them to disagree and voice their opinion from the corner, as long as it's sportsmanlike. Keep your table conversations under 30 seconds if at all possible. The quicker the better. Do not get baited in to explaining your judgement.

Specific Mechanics Criteria (20 points)

- ✓ Was the official in position to make the call?
(Out-of-bounds, near fall criteria, PD, too close too far, start and restart of the match, blood/injury time)
- ✓ Did the official demonstrate movement/mobility that was efficient to position and anticipate action?
(Run in circles chasing action, quick center return, for near fall, PD, emotional situations)
- ✓ How well did the official follow match procedures?
(Proactive wrestler checks, touching wrestlers in loud situations, interactions with coaches)

SIGNALS

Visual: Only use the adopted National Federation signals. When awarding points, hold up the hand with the appropriate colored wrist band high overhead and rotate it slowly (1/4 turn, up to 5 seconds) so that the number of fingers may easily be seen at all angles. In each case, your hand comes up quickly and decisively as soon as the action warrants. Avoid false starts via 'hard sets', movement, long pauses, etc. Your job is to create a fair start. Let the disc hit the ground. One hand per color (pick up with the hand matching the color). When asking a wrestler

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for his choice of position at the start of the 2nd or 3rd period, turn to the wrestler who has the selection and visually and verbally indicate choices. Ask something to the effect of “Your choice, top, bottom, neutral or defer” (defer obviously only asked in the 2nd period). At the same time, signal with the corresponding colored wrist band (palm open) up, down, neutral or defer. If the wrestler’s choice is to defer, use a crossing motion with hands in front of body (indicates defer) and then asks the other wrestler his choice of top, bottom, or neutral

When calling near fall, move your arm and hand (palm open, facing the mat) from your chest to a fully extended position (to the same side as the arm you are using) to indicate a full NF count. Make sure your verbal count matches the extreme point of your visual signal. When calling a fall, the 2 second count is silent and there is no visual signal. Signals are critical for everyone that can’t hear you (spectators). Points and verbalization go together.

Verbal: The volume, intonation and intensity of verbal signals communicate both information and confidence. The verbal instructions used are only those adopted by the National Federation. Know the proper terminology and the appropriate time and place to use it. In order to promote activity, offer such verbal comments as: “work to score”, “action”, and “contact”. Volume is generally dictated by the intensity of the match and crowd noise. In a fast paced match, you may need to increase the volume of verbal signals in order to counter the difficulty the wrestlers will have in following the sound. In matches where crowd noise may interfere with the ability of the wrestlers and coaches to hear, increase the volume appropriately. Your overriding priority is to communicate with the wrestlers. When calling near fall, count out loud so the wrestlers and coaches can hear you.

You are not only communicating information, but also your own authority, confidence, and self- assurance. Therefore, intonation of verbal signals should be in the form of stimulation and command; not in the form of pleading and questioning.

Improper starting position- consider advantage (or not) gained by position. The rule is black and white; however, the spirit of the rule calls for the starting positions to be what they are to nullify any advantage by either wrestler, so we will use this as our guide. Preventive officiating is key here; verbalize while setting wrestlers. Don’t be afraid to re-set the wrestlers or “eat” a caution (lots of noise, distraction and emotion at this event).

Verbalize action,– points, color, signal, situation (as needed). It is imperative that the wrestlers, then coaches, know the situation as you see it, or you will call it. If NF is earned but not yet awarded – you **MUST** verbalize ‘Holding 3 green’ loud enough and often enough that both wrestlers (and coaches) know the **pinning situation** has not ended. Because a pin **hold** is totally different doesn’t necessarily mean the **pinning situation** has changed. The defensive wrestler **MUST** be allowed to return to a ‘defendable position’ before points can be awarded. Takedown awarded to alert for locked hands potentials.

Demonstrative, Clear, Confident & Decisive: This describes how you carry out your actions rather than describing the actions themselves. It measures the forcefulness and purpose of your actions, often indicted by the speed at which you make your signals. This also indicates your level of confidence - There is a fine line between confidence and arrogance and we should always strive to maintain the highest level of professionalism. Since the sound of a whistle starts and stops all action, it should always be clear, precise, and loud enough for all involved parties to hear and is never faltering. When starting the wrestlers, the whistle is coordinated with the movement of your hand, particularly in the case of matches involving hearing impaired wrestlers. Be confident with your whistle.

Specific Signals Criteria (20 points)

- ✓ Did the official give the correct signal for the call?
(Start/stop, count, points, infractions, choice)
- ✓ Was the official verbal when required?
(Giving points, counting/holding NF, giving 2 when the takedown is given)
- ✓ Was the official demonstrative/confident in their calls?

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RULES APPLICATION

Understanding: You should not necessarily cite each rule by line and verse, but you should know each rule and when to apply it. Recognize all infractions and know the penalties for each, including sequence. Particularly in areas of potentially dangerous, or illegal holds, you must instantly recognize the situation and what action to take, including being able to translate the stated rules to the actions occurring on the mat. You should not only know the literal interpretation of each rule, but also the intent, or why the rule was written. Intent deals mainly with the philosophy of the rule, including something about the evolution and history behind a particular rule. You will best obtain this knowledge from attending clinics and working with more senior, and/or experienced officials.

Consistency: Since judgment is your overt application or interpretation of the rules, you must be able to carry out that judgment consistently from the beginning of the match until the end, and throughout a tournament. Mentally evaluate the criteria that must be met in order to make a call and use the same evaluative procedure and criteria each time that call is made. The actions or inactions that would warrant a stalling call at the end of a match should also be penalized at the beginning. The official establishes a standard that is applicable throughout the tournament, and although the situations, pressures, and flow will vary, the criteria and application remain the same.

Fairness & Spirit: In cases where the action does not call for an exact translation of a rule, judge the situation on the basis on fair play and good sportsmanship. The “Spirit of the Rule” or “Rule of Good Sportsmanship” should be paramount in officiating.

Specific Rules Application Criteria (20 points)

- ✓ Did the official accurately translate the rules to the actions occurring on the mat?
(Standing reversal, illegal holds, trapped arm lift)
- ✓ Was the official consistent in their judgment and application of the rules?
(Is the out-of-bounds or stalling call made the same regardless of the period or score)
- ✓ Did the official promote the sport of wrestling via the spirit of wrestling in their calls?

JUDGMENT

Control: Determine control in a decisive and consistent manner. There are 3 specific things that must happen for point to be awarded on a takedown. 1-control 2-on the mat 3-beyond reaction time. Control (beyond reaction time) of both legs (thighs, knees, shins, feet, ankles) with the other wrestler on the mat (any supporting point other than feet) is control. Also from a front position just because a wrestler hooks the near ankle doesn't always mean control is established. Look for superior hip position, and/or other wrestler to be broken down or on a hip to help with this call. This aspect (judgment) of officiating is what makes the difference in what level of an official you are (youth, varsity, state, etc.).

Reversal or Escape: In attempted escapes that go out-of-bounds or are not completely finished before the end of the period, you must make a decision on control instantly at the out-of-bounds, or as the period ends, applying good judgment. In reversal or escape situations, focus on the offensive wrestler and determine if he is able to maintain control over the defensive wrestler. Look for the defensive wrestler to establish neutrality or dominant control, rather than the offensive wrestler having lost control.

Specific Judgment Criteria (20 points)

- ✓ Was the official accurate on their control calls based on their judgment of the action?
- ✓ Was the official accurate on their reversal and escape calls based on their judgment of the action?

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MATCH CONTROL

Poise: You must always keep your composure, especially in difficult situations. Show firmness in your application of the rules and don't be intimidated by coaching staffs, other officials or fans. In volatile situations remain calm, self-assured and professional at all times. In dealing with highly emotional situations, remember that you have the necessary authority to keep control of the situation and you must keep a controlled dialogue, including eliminating all parties that are not essential to the discussion.

In difficult situations on the mat, always collect your thoughts and make a deliberate judgment. Make these in a timely manner, but follow the philosophy that it is better to make the right decision rather than a rash one. A bad first appearance is hard to overcome no matter how hard you try. Do not make yourself available for conversation in public access areas. Do not converse with coaches or wrestlers (especially mat-side). Do not answer any questions of media, parents or administrators. Do not "react" to negative comments or criticism from spectators. Perception is reality – do not 'high 5' officials after a match, etc., or visibly react to a call/no call.

Flow: A match should flow smoothly, be well paced and not be unduly interrupted with unnecessary stopping and starting. You should encourage wrestlers to keep the action going and to improve their positions. Do not stop the action for minor problems and be sensitive to such stalling tactics as straggling back from out-of-bounds or taking too long to make a decision on starting position. In cases of injury, maintain vigilance over the athlete's care and make sure that they are treated for an injury. Ensure that time does not go beyond the prescribed limit by indicating to the coach the amount of time remaining. When time is up, the wrestler must be ready to wrestle as if coming from an out-of-bounds situation.

Introduce yourself to table help, including towel tapper. Table workers should only give time and score, not opinions on calls (to coaches, wrestlers, each other). Table does not respond to coaches in any manner. Table help is part of your officiating crew – protect them and penalize as if the coach was talking to you.

Ensure scoreboard mimics score book, stress the importance of keeping the score book "correct". Let the timekeeper know that their role is critical in short time scoring situations; they must know when the clock runs out in relation to what you have called on the mat. Ask if there are any questions or clarifications they may need, let them know there are no "stupid" questions.

Please be vigilant with the Coaches Misconduct, and ensure that this is tracked on the bout record as needed. If a coach believes a misapplication of a rule has taken place, and a correction is made, it shall be a referee's timeout (no penalty assessed). Otherwise, the coach shall be charged with Coaches Misconduct in accord with the Penalty Chart. The coaches should know this rule, and it should be evident from being called more closely during Districts and Regionals. Look at this as a business transaction, the coach took the risk of going to the table and must face the consequence of a misconduct penalty if he is questioning judgment and the call is not changed. If you don't follow this expectation as we have directed you that coach will be at the table in several other situations and this is disruptive to the match and the overall event. Giving a penalty to a coach is not personal... "It's Just Business". Please be vigilant with the Coaches Misconduct, and ensure that this is tracked on the bout record as needed. If a coach

Appearance: The uniform is to be worn at weigh-ins (if applicable). Be in complete uniform or none at all, no shirt only. Red/Green bands on wrist, Black shoes. Your shirt should always be tucked in and your shirt and pants should be comfortable, not too tight or baggy. No tobacco in any undesignated area. Wear your jacket when you are not on the mat in public access areas.

Specific Match Control Criteria (10 points)

- ✓ Was the official's poise/conduct professional and collected in match dealings?
- ✓ Was the official proactive and able to keep the match moving, not to interrupt the flow of wrestling?
- ✓ Did the official follow the proper uniform guidance?

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STALLING

You must have an intimate knowledge, insight, and understanding into the sport of wrestling to recognize the dynamics, philosophies, and tactics of stalling and insist that both wrestlers work to improve their positions, work for a pin, takedowns, escapes, etc. It is rare for both wrestlers to be attacking equally. There is often an ebb and flow within a match. You must determine who is working harder, or even, who is working more sincerely. You must be able to recognize the difference between sincere effort and those actions that are meant to make the wrestler look busy, or that are fake. Discern between a wrestler who is unable to execute a move and one that can execute but will not, many officials wrongly call the inferior wrestler for stalling. In situations that involve action along the edge of the mat, position yourself correctly and determine out-of-bounds, who initiates the action, who hinders the action and who is using the edge to gain an unfair advantage, penalizing accordingly.

Specific Judgment Criteria (10 points)

- ✓ Did the official recognize stalling when it was occurring and call without hesitation?
- ✓ Did the official consistently call stalling, when appropriate, throughout the match?

MISCELLANEOUS

Evaluations will be conducted throughout the duration of the event to help give you constructive feedback from the evaluator on mechanics, signals, rules application, judgment, match control and stalling.

These evaluations will also be used to make decisions regarding pairings for the final championship round of the event and next season's state championship assignments/selections.

Off-The-Mat Official

- ✓ Sit in designated area or in hospitality room
- ✓ Do not lay on mats (sit on a chair, kneel or stand)
- ✓ Police middle area for coaches, wrestlers and media (safety of wrestlers and officials)
- ✓ Watch mat area for issues, if needed – respond only when asked, don't insert yourself into match
- ✓ Make sure you respect the established rotation and be punctual on breaks.

Assistant Official

- ✓ You have everything the referee does not! The referee will not be looking at the table when awarding points or penalties - this is your responsibility to ensure points get posted.
- ✓ Clock start/stop, score, period
- ✓ Work with towel tapper
- ✓ Determine who will handle count down – Start at 4 – 3 – 2 – 1 – TIME!
- ✓ Make tapper aware of fractions of second (under 1 minute)
- ✓ Take route to referee around perimeter of circle
- ✓ See everything referee does not – doesn't always mean 180 degrees, change levels
- ✓ Communicate, but realize what can be heard – no goofy hand signals
- ✓ Do NOT respond to coaches; circle away if needed
- ✓ Handle wrestlers in middle of mat during table discussion – never be at the table with Referee
- ✓ Out-of-bounds, stay with 2nd wrestler – Referee will be with 1st
- ✓ Keep the coaches in their restricted areas when wrestling is taking place on your mat.
- ✓ Keep wrestlers between you and the official to the best of your ability
- ✓ Don't appear LAZY - Hands off knees and hips – change levels to one knee if needed
- ✓ Discussions with official MUST be handled away from the table
- ✓ Don't block the table