

8 KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL START

Officials, please refer to the following keys opening weekend and throughout the 2019-20 wrestling season.

1. Deliberate or intentional use of hands to the eyes, nose, mouth, or chin of an opponent is penalized as an Illegal Hold. Officials, be preventative – incidental or inadvertent hands to the face should be called potentially dangerous, with a clear verbal warning to the wrestlers that continued use of hands to the face is illegal. Rules 5.3 and 5.6.13.
2. Be concise and thorough with Pre-Meet and Pre-Tournament instructions. Note: In open tournaments, home management and coaches must be informed that Control of Mat violations will be penalized as Unsportsmanlike Conduct. Two Unsportsmanlike violations result in disqualification and removal from the premise.
3. Set the Tone: Wrestlers backing out of bounds in the Neutral Position must be call for Stalling. A wrestler pushing-out his opponent in the Neutral position must be called for Stalling. Make the Action call when both wrestlers are engaged and go out of bounds. Control breathing, focus on not speeding up counts for Neutral Danger, Drop-down or Near-fall situations.
4. Officials, a major Point of Emphasis is control with Reaction Time in scoring situations – remember, the only 2 situations in college wrestling that do not require reaction time are:
 - Hand Touch Takedown – Rule 4.2.2 (page 41)
 - Locked Hands on the Mat

5. Proper Signals: Use the 31 signals, and only the signals on p.95 of the Rule Book. Use the proper signals for Concussion Protocol and the Drop Down Stall signal when reaching the 5 count, if scoring is imminent by the defensive wrestler. Use the proper signal #1 when starting wrestling.
6. Near Fall Criteria is 45 degrees or less. Call Near Fall criteria as outline on p. 42, section 4.5.1.
7. Neutral Danger Zone Takedown: Make a strong verbal announcement of the word “Danger” green or red, followed by a verbal and visual vertical count anytime a wrestler exposes their shoulders to the mat at any angle less than 90 degrees beyond reaction time. 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 p.41 of the Rule Book.
8. Be Preventative! We must do everything possible to keep wrestlers safe. Stop action when possible, before it becomes illegal and call potentially dangerous. When penalizing wrestlers for Illegal Holds, clearly communicate to the offending wrestler why they were penalized.

Officials, I’m looking forward to a great 2019-20 season.

Tim Shiels

National Coordinator of Officials