



MEMORANDUM

February 28, 2019

VIA EMAIL

TO: NCAA Division I Directors of Athletics and Head Wrestling Coaches.

FROM: Karen Langston
NCAA Division I Wrestling Committee Chair.

SUBJECT: Sportsmanship.

As wrestling's regular season draws to a close and conference tournaments begin, the Division I Wrestling Committee wants to emphasize its clear expectations regarding sportsmanship during the NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships:

The highest level of respect and integrity, which embody good sportsmanship, must be exhibited throughout the 2019 Division I Wrestling Championships.

We have a mutual responsibility to serve as leaders and role models in this regard. Wrestling is a competitive sport which, by its very nature, may lead to adversarial relationships between opponents. However, the relationship should not foster a negative interaction. Individuals should employ a behavior that respects the skill level of an opponent and should not create an atmosphere that negatively influences the attitude of the competition.

Accordingly, the committee will take strong action in response to any form of misconduct and/or unsportsmanlike behavior by student-athletes, coaches and/or administrators/support personnel during the championship, from the time selections are announced through the end of your institution's championship experience. In this regard, the wrestling committee expects all contest officials to **strictly and consistently enforce the sportsmanship and reserved and restricted zone rule.** As outlined in the 2018-19 Men's Wrestling Rules Book, the committee will mandate that officials have a renewed focus and appropriately penalize the following types of unsportsmanlike behavior by student-athletes and/or coaches, including but not limited to:

1. Comments directed at or referring to any official that questions the integrity of an official.
2. Profane, vulgar, threatening or derogatory remarks or personal comments relating to race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation directed at or referring to any game official or opposing personnel.
3. Prolonged, negative responses to a call/no-call which is disrespectful or unprofessional and includes, but is not limited to: thrashing the arms in disgust, dramatizing contact by re-enacting the action, or running or jumping in disbelief over a call/no-call.

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4. A negative response to a call/no-call including, but not limited to, approaching/charging an official in a hostile, aggressive or otherwise threatening manner.
5. Continual criticism during a match regarding the same incident after receiving a warning from an official.
6. Taunting, baiting, ridiculing, finger pointing, trash talking or inappropriate gestures (obscene, provoking, and intimidating).

When these activities are witnessed by fans in attendance, or by those watching a broadcast, such actions also damage the sport – which is a concern to all that support the principles of sportsmanship. All stakeholders must agree that behavior exhibited by coaches, student-athletes and institutional personnel at the championship should portray the highest ideals of higher education and intercollegiate athletics.

Officials who, during the regular season, have not consistently enforced the rules as written will not be selected to officiate in this championship. Further, those who do not enforce the rules throughout the championship will not advance and may jeopardize future championship assignments.

In closing, please note the wrestling committee will monitor decorum throughout the championship. With your leadership, this year's championship can demonstrate your personal, as well as our collective, commitment to assuring that this event will continue to be the best possible experience for student-athletes and fans alike.

We fully anticipate and appreciate your cooperation in helping us to further enhance this outstanding championship.

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cc: NCAA Division I Conference Commissioners
NCAA Division I Wrestling Committee
NCAA Men's Wrestling Officials
NCAA Wrestling Rules Committee
Selected NCAA Staff Members