

## STALLING – NFHS RULES & INTERPRETATIONS

Wrestling Points of Emphasis - 2018-19: **Stalling** – Wrestling is an aggressive endeavor and should be coached and executed in that manner. It is expected that wrestlers stay inbounds and compete. There is no passive wrestling. There are no provisions in the rules to allow a wrestler to rest. Backing off the mat out of bounds, pushing or pulling the opponent out of bounds, hands locked around one leg of an opponent without the intent of taking him/her down or preventing the opponent from scoring is considered stalling. Regardless of the position – top, bottom or neutral – stalling is not acceptable. The referee shall be firm and consistent in enforcing the letter and spirit of the rule. *The referee shall be unwavering in penalizing a stalling infraction without warning or hesitation.*

Rule Change for 2018-19: 5-24-3e, f: Stalling in the neutral position also takes place when a wrestler is backing off the mat and out of bounds, as well as when the wrestler is pushing or pulling out of bounds. Rule Emphases for 2018-19: The addition of these two criteria has contributed to keeping the action within the boundary lines at different positions. This modification of stalling in the neutral position has made the stalling call an easier call for the official with definitive language as a guide.

RMN OFFICIALS NOTE: With regard to stalling, RMN officials call it as required in the rule book: essentially, lack of effort / action / initiative to improve one's opportunity to score. This is of particular importance with the shorter youth periods. Referees are also asked to stop and restart, without penalty, situations in which neither wrestler can improve (ear-to-ear tie-up or both wrestlers stopped near the boundary). It can also be deliberately avoiding action or preventing an opponent from scoring by blocking or holding. Delaying the orderly progress of the match, such as not immediately getting into the start position, IS stalling (see Rule 5-24-6 attached). Another stalling situation not always recognized and called is repeatedly creating a stalemate (Case Book 7.6.6B). We encourage you to review ALL of the stalling criteria below as well as the interpretations. In fact, stalling is so important that the entire list of criteria is repeated in the rule book (Rule 5 Definitions, Section 24 AND Rule 7 Infractions, Section 6).

In all regards, the rules ask for stalling to be called without hesitation or favor. The higher the level, nationally and internationally, the more quickly stalling or a caution is indicated. As we advise our officials, make sure to call for action verbally – "action," "improve," "continue," "contact" – before physically signaling stalling or calling a stalemate, in order to invite one or both wrestlers to take their own action. Moreover, the rules provide a nonpunitive warning in folkstyle as a call to action, putting the ownership squarely back with the athletes to take further initiative or to be penalized for not doing so.

### **NFHS. 2018-19 NFHS Wrestling Rules Book. NFHS. (Rule 5 Definitions AND Rule 7 Infractions)**

(5-24 & 7-6) SECTION 24 – STALLING – ART. 1 . . . Each wrestler is required to make an honest attempt to stay within the 10-foot circle and wrestle aggressively, regardless of position or the time or score of the match. Action is to be maintained throughout the match by the contestants wrestling aggressively whether in the top, bottom or neutral position and both contestants are equally responsible for initiating action. It is the responsibility of contestants, coaches and referees to avoid the use of stalling tactics or allowing the use thereof. This shall be demonstrated by those responsible with strict enforcement by referees.

ART. 2 . . . When a referee recognizes stalling occurring at any time and in any position, the offender shall be warned and thereafter violations shall be penalized when stalling recurs. These provisions require the referee to penalize stalling without hesitation. Stalling shall be penalized in accordance with the Penalty Chart.

ART. 3 . . . It is stalling in the neutral position when a wrestler: a. continuously avoids contact with the opponent; b. plays the edge of the mat; c. prevents the opponent from returning to or remaining inbounds; or d. is not attempting to secure a takedown. e. backs off the mat, out of bounds; or f. pushes or pulls their opponent out of bounds.

ART. 4 . . . It is stalling when the contestant in the advantage position: a. does not wrestle aggressively and attempts to secure a fall, except when the wrestler intentionally releases the opponent in order to thereafter immediately attempt to secure a takedown; b. legally holds the heel to the buttocks while the defensive wrestler is broken down on the mat for more than five seconds; or c. holds an opponent's leg with the use of two hands on two legs or two hands on one leg in action not designed to break the opponent down, or for the Rule 8-1 2017-18 NFHS Wrestling Rules Page 40 purpose of securing a fall, or to prevent an escape or reversal, is stalling. Repeated grasping and holding the leg or legs with both hands or arms to break an opponent down for the sole purpose of controlling is stalling. d. Stays behind the opponent while on his/her feet, making no attempt to bring the opponent to the mat.

ART. 5 . . . When a defensive wrestler refuses to aggressively attempt escapes or reversals, it is stalling.

ART. 6 . . . It is stalling when either wrestler: a. repeatedly grasps or interlocks around one leg of the opponent to prevent scoring; or b. delays the match. This includes straggling back from out of bounds, unnecessarily changing or adjusting equipment or delay in assuming the starting position on the mat; or c. repeatedly creates a stalemate situation to prevent an opponent from scoring.

ART. 7 . . . The defensive wrestler is not stalling when overpowered.

Rule Interpretations 2018-19: SITUATION 7: From the neutral position, Wrestler A has captured one leg of Wrestler B while at the edge of the mat to avoid being taken down when Wrestler B dives out of bounds. Is this stalling or fleeing the mat? RULING: This is considered fleeing. (7-3-1)

SITUATION 8: From the neutral position, both wrestlers are at the edge of the mat. Wrestler B has control of Wrestler A's wrists. Wrestler A backs out of bounds to stop the match. Is this fleeing the mat? RULING: No, Wrestler A is warned/penalized for stalling. (5-24-3e)

### **NFHS. 2018-19 NFHS Wrestling Case Book. NFHS.**

STALLING 7.6.1 SITUATION: From the optional start, the offensive wrestler, on the whistle, backs away to the outer edge of the ten-foot circle and the defensive wrestler just sits there. Would there be stalling by either wrestler? RULING: In a situation like this both wrestlers have the responsibility of initiating action. The rules require that both wrestlers wrestle aggressively and that action is to be maintained throughout the match. In this situation the defensive wrestler must turn and face the opponent and the offensive wrestler must move around to face the opponent. Either one or both individuals could be called for stalling if they were to remain in the situation described.

7.6.2 SITUATION A: During the third period with both wrestlers in the neutral position, the referee does not feel either wrestler is wrestling aggressively. Is it permissible for the referee to give a double call for stalling? RULING: If at any time, the referee recognizes stalling occurring, it is permissible to either warn or penalize one or both wrestlers at the same time.

7.6.2 SITUATION B: Wrestler A is warned for stalling in the first period. In the second period, Wrestler A is penalized for an illegal hold and Wrestler B is awarded one match point. Later in the second period, Wrestler A is penalized for a technical violation for locked hands and Wrestler B is awarded

one match point. In the third period, Wrestler A is penalized for stalling and Wrestler B is awarded two match points since this is the third penalty on Wrestler A. Wrestler B will now have choice of position on the next restart. RULING: Correct. The choice of position on the next restart for Wrestler B can be carried over to the sudden victory period in overtime. Stalling shall be penalized in accordance with the Penalty Chart. (Penalty Chart)

7.6.2 SITUATION C: Wrestler A is warned for stalling right after the first period has started. Later in the first period, Wrestler A is penalized for an illegal hold/maneuver and Wrestler B is awarded one match point (First Penalty). At the start of the second period, Wrestler A is penalized again for an illegal hold/maneuver and Wrestler B is awarded one match point (Second Penalty). Later in the second period, Wrestler A is penalized for stalling in the defensive position and Wrestler B is awarded two match points (Third Penalty). Wrestler B will now have the choice of position on the next restart since the two-point penalty was for stalling. (a) Before the second period ends, Wrestler A takes his/her second injury time-out. (b) Between the second and third periods, Wrestler A takes his/her second injury time-out. Wrestler B was to have his/her choice of position at the start of the third period. RULING: In (a), Wrestler B will have his/her choice of position on the restart after the injury time-out plus Wrestler B will have his/her choice of position on the next restart after that. In (b), Wrestler B will have his/her choice of position at the beginning of the third period plus on the next two restarts – one for the two-point stalling penalty and one for the second injury time-out. COMMENT: If the third penalty on Wrestler A, following the progression on the Penalty Chart, happens to be stalling, Wrestler B is awarded two match points and will have the choice of position on the next restart. The choice of position on the next restart only applies if the third penalty (2 points) is for stalling. When a stalling call results in a 2-point penalty being awarded, the opponent will have the choice of position on the next restart. The choice of position on the next restart would be carried over to the sudden victory period in overtime if there is no restart prior to overtime. Stalling shall be penalized in accordance with the Penalty Chart.

7.6.4 SITUATION: Wrestler A is in the advantage position. A grasps the far leg and brings the heel to the buttocks in attempting to break down the opponent. The heel is held in continuous contact to the buttocks for approximately 10 seconds before the opponent is broken down to the mat. Once the defensive wrestler is broken down, the offensive wrestler continues to hold the heel to the buttocks. When should the wrestler in the advantage position be called for stalling? RULING: Holding the heel to the buttocks, unless your opponent is broken down on the mat, is not in itself a violation. However, once an individual is broken down the five-second count should begin immediately. (Note: Should not be a visual count by the referee.) If the heel is held to the buttocks for more than five seconds after the wrestler is broken down, the wrestler in the advantage position shall be called for stalling.

7.6.6 SITUATION A: While down on the mat, Wrestler A, who is in control, applies a grapevine to Wrestler B's leg and, at that time, B, stands, bearing all the weight of A. The referee stops the match immediately because this is a potentially dangerous situation and, accordingly, must be stopped. What is the call to be made by the referee? RULING: The first time this situation occurs, it would be potentially dangerous, and the match is simply restarted at the center of the mat. If it occurs a second time, the referee will call potentially dangerous and consider making a stalling call on Wrestler B. The third time it occurs, there is no question that it would be considered stalling on Wrestler B.

7.6.6 SITUATION B: Should stalling be called in the following situations? (a) In the neutral position, Wrestler A attempts a takedown and is stopped by Wrestler B who applies a legal front headlock. Wrestler B does not use the headlock to attempt to score a takedown but maintains the headlock. The referee stops the match indicating a stalemate and restarts the wrestlers. (b) Wrestler A, in the top position, puts in a leg and is aggressively attempting to turn Wrestler B to score a near fall. Wrestler B, in the bottom position, grabs and holds Wrestler A's wrist and arm. Wrestler B continues to hold the wrist/arm of Wrestler A but does not use the situation to attempt to break Wrestler A's hold or to secure an escape or reversal. A stalemate is called when Wrestler A fails to turn Wrestler B and

Wrestler B fails to escape or gain a reversal. (c) In the neutral position, Wrestler A applies a legal front headlock and aggressively and legally uses the hold/maneuver to attempt to secure a takedown. Wrestler B grabs and holds Wrestler A's elbow/arm to prevent Wrestler A from using the headlock to secure a takedown. Wrestler B simply holds on to the elbow/arm and does not use it to attempt to break the hold/maneuver or to secure a takedown. A stalemate is called and wrestling re-started. RULING: In all three situations (a), (b) and (c), Wrestler B has created a stalemate situation to avoid being scored upon. Repeating the same action to create a stalemate situation without using it in an attempt to score would be stalling on Wrestler B. When warranted, a warning or penalty for stalling may be issued at the same time a stalemate is called. In all three situations Wrestler A has initiated action in an attempt to score and been stopped in their effort by Wrestler B's creation of a stalemate situation; Wrestler A would not be called for stalling in any of these situations. (5-24-6c)