

## STALLING

### DEFINITIONS

- **Rule 5-25-1 & Rule 7-6-1:** "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." NFHS Rule Book

- **Rule 5-25-2 & 7-6-2:** "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." NFHS Rule Book

### GENERAL COMMENTS

- Stalling is high school wrestling's most controversial call, because it is the most subjective call
- Each year, questions arise as to how stalling is to be called
- Coaches and officials regularly ask for specific criteria that can be used to identify when stalling should be called
- There are objective criteria outlined in the NFHS Rule Book that can be applied by officials to assist in identifying stalling
- Coaching stalling as a tactic, in the neutral, offensive and defensive positions, is well-documented
- Every team is looking for a competitive advantage, and stalling is an effective strategy when used in the proper situations
- Stalling is not, and should not, be coached as an overall team philosophy or attitude
- Coaches and wrestlers must accept the fact that if they are stalling, they will be penalized
- It is important to understand that the burden for eliminating stalling does not belong solely to the official, but with the coaches and their philosophies, as well as the wrestlers themselves
- "Each wrestler is required... to wrestle aggressively, regardless of position, time or score of match" NFHS Rule Book

### GUIDELINES FOR OFFICIALS

- Stalling should be called consistently throughout every match, from beginning to end
- When calling stalling, use the appropriate NFHS hand signals
- When calling stalling, ensure that the wrestler who has been warned/penalized is aware of his/her infraction  
There should be no doubt to the wrestlers and coaches that stalling has been called
- When calling stalling, the official should be confident in making the call, using a clear hand signal and commanding voice  
"Sell the Call" to both wrestler and coach
- Avoid coaching either specific wrestler. Use general comments, directed at both wrestlers (ex. "action", "work", "circle", "center")
- Each official needs to develop their own "attitude" and pattern of consistency to identify and penalize stalling
- Stalling is rarely the result of one specific move or action. It is often the result of an accumulation of blocking, avoiding contact or purposely delaying the match

### PENALTY SEQUENCE

Stalling may be called anytime during the match when it is identified (during wrestling or after a stoppage)

First Offense: Warning

Second Offense: Penalty=1 match point given to opponent

Third Offense: Penalty=1 match point given to opponent

Fourth Offense: Penalty=2 match points given to opponent

Fourth Offense: Disqualification from match

### MOVEMENT SEQUENCE BY WRESTLERS

**Initiate Movement + Follow Through = Aggressive Wrestling**

- Initiate Movement: to begin or originate a move or series of moves that requires a countermove or action
- Follow Through: an attempt to fully execute a move or series of moves
- Aggressive wrestling occurs when a wrestler initiates movement and follows through
- The combination of initiation of movement and follow through results in a "series" or "chain" of action/moves

## STALLING

### NEUTRAL POSITION

- **Rule 5-25-1 & Rule 7-6-1:** "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." NFHS Rule Book

#### **General Guidelines**

- Allow the wrestlers time to set up a move, which may include tie-ups, reflex actions, changing levels, pushing/pulling of opponent to shift weight or feinting (a movement made to deceive an opponent; ex: fake shot)
- At some point within the first 30-45 seconds, each wrestler must make an honest attempt to secure a takedown
- A valid takedown attempt requires both Initiation and Follow Through
- Questions to ask yourself: "Who is the aggressor?" "Who is initiating the action?"

#### **Tactics commonly used to disguise stalling in the Neutral Position**

- Circling
- Changing levels and direction with no follow through
- Attempting to penetrate with no follow through
- Moving opponent to create angles, but no offensive attacks
- Set ups with no initiation to take advantage of scoring opportunities

#### **Actions that may be considered stalling in the Neutral Position**

- **Rule 5-25-3a & Rule 7-6-3a:** Continuously avoiding contact with opponent. NFHS Rule Book
- **Rule 5-25-3b & Rule 7-6-3b:** Playing the edge of the mat. NFHS Rule Book
- **Rule 5-25-3c & Rule 7-6-3c:** Preventing your opponent from returning to or remaining in bounds. NFHS Rule Book
- **Rule 5-25-3d & Rule 7-6-3d:** Not attempting to secure a takedown. NFHS Rule Book
- Continuously backing up or pushing without attempting a takedown.
- Repeatedly faking contact but not following through.
- Preventing an opponent from returning to the center of the mat/10-foot circle.
- Tying up an opponent in the neutral position using any arm, head, and shoulder ties is stalling if the maneuver it is not used in an aggressive manner to attempt to secure a takedown.
- Tying up an opponent with an underhook and wrist control without an effort to take him down.
- Controlling an opponent's wrists with no further effort to gain a takedown.
- Blocking with the forearm(s) with no effort to gain a takedown.
- Blocking an opponent with the head without moving in for a takedown.
- Making contact but moving out of bounds or to the edge of the mat.
- Grasping one leg and holding it without an attempt at following through to secure a takedown.
- Using single or double underhooks without attempting a takedown.
- Shooting and hanging onto a leg without attempting to progress towards a takedown.
- Grasping a single leg, holding and/or elevating it in a standing position without making an attempt to bring opponent to the mat.
- Repeatedly giving up a grasp on an opponent's leg with no follow through to gain control or secure a takedown.
- Dropping to one or both knees in an effort to block all moves by the opponent without countering.
- Delaying your return to the center of the mat following an out of bounds situation.
- Unnecessarily changing or adjusting equipment.
- Not aggressively working for a takedown.
- Repeatedly causing a stalemate.
- Repeatedly and/or intentionally causing a potentially dangerous situation.

## STALLING

### TOP/OFFENSIVE POSITION

- **Rule 5-25-4a & Rule 7-6-4a:** "It is stalling when the contestant in the advantage position 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." NFHS Rule Book

#### **General Guidelines**

- Watch for parallel riding (Riding the Hips) vs. perpendicular riding (Out to the Side)

#### **Tactics commonly used to disguise stalling in the Top/Offensive Position**

- Use of maneuvers to prevent action
- Moves used just to stay in the top position (just holding on)

#### **Actions that may be considered stalling in the Top/Offensive Position**

- **Rule 5-25-4b & 7-6-4b:** legally holding the heel to the buttocks while the defensive wrestler is broken down on the mat for more than five seconds. NFHS Rule Book
- **Rule 5-25-4c & 7-6-4c:** holding 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 is for the purpose of securing a fall, or is 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. NFHS Rule Book
- Repeatedly dropping to one leg and grasping it when the opponent attempts a stand up.
- Trapping an opponent's leg to the groin or using a rear leg ride.
- Picking up one or both legs and not attempting to improve the position.
- Single wrist ride or two-on-one.
- Pinching an opponent's knees with your own knees.
- Continual use of the cross-body ride with no attempt to improve position.
- Trapping an ankle with the lower leg while using a deep waist.
- Repeatedly (2 or more) putting in the legs and/or a grapevine after an opponent stands up, thus intentionally causing a potentially dangerous situation.
- Repeatedly grabbing one leg to prevent a switch.
- Use of the double leg grapevine for control only and no attempt to progress or secure a nearfall or a fall.
- Use of the body scissors and underhooks for control only and no attempt to progress or secure a nearfall or a fall.
- Not attempting to secure a fall or nearfall.
- Using the inside thigh ride sometimes called the Cornell or Purdue ride.
- Lifting an opponent off the mat and holding him in the air without returning him to the mat.
- Staying behind an opponent while in control on your feet, without making an attempt to return him to the mat.
- Using a deep waist for control only with no attempt to progress.
- Securing a half-nelson and not moving perpendicular to making an attempt to turn the opponent for nearfall or a fall.
- Using a cradle for control only with no attempt to turn the opponent for nearfall or a fall.
- Riding your opponent without making an attempt to turn the opponent for nearfall or a fall (riding parallel).
- Deep waist with no attempt to improve.
- After breaking your opponent flat on the mat, securing a half-nelson or arm bar, then staying parallel without working to improve.
- Simply not wrestling aggressively to secure nearfall or a fall.
- Holding an opponent's leg(s) or ankles with the use of one or two hands in an action that is not designed to break your opponent down or secure a fall or nearfall.
- Repeatedly grasping or interlocking around one leg to prevent the defensive wrestler from scoring.
- Repeatedly grasping an ankle, and holding it
- Delaying the match.
- Unnecessarily changing or adjusting equipment.
- Repeatedly applying a grapevine and being unable to turn your opponent, thus causing a stalemate.
- Repeatedly causing a stalemate.
- Repeatedly and/or intentionally causing a potentially dangerous situation.



## STALLING

### **“RIDING THE LEGS”**

#### **“Riding the Legs” by the Offensive Wrestler-Guidelines**

- Over the years, leg riding has had its place in mat wrestling as an effective means of scoring. However, it can also be used as a very effective stalling tactic, thus creating little action.
- Emphasis should be placed on eliminating stalling with the use of leg riding.
- Because the defensive wrestler’s ability to wrestle aggressively is significantly reduced when the offensive wrestler applies a leg ride, the burden to wrestle aggressively is generally placed on the offensive wrestler.

#### **Situation #1 - One leg is in, wrestlers are on the mat.**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Stop - Stalemate
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Stop - Stalemate - warning top wrestler
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Stop - Stalemate - penalize top wrestler

#### **Situation #2 - Both Legs are in, bottom wrestler stands, offensive wrestler has no foot on the mat.**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Stop - Potentially dangerous
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Stop - Potentially dangerous - warning top wrestler
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Stop - Potentially dangerous - penalize top wrestler

#### **Situation #3 – One leg is in, bottom wrestler stands, offensive wrestler puts in second leg, so no foot is on the mat.**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Stop - Potentially dangerous - warning top wrestler
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Stop - Potentially dangerous - penalize top wrestler

\*When the bottom wrestler stands, and the offensive wrestler’s 2<sup>nd</sup> foot stays on the mat, allow reaction time to see if the top wrestler attempts to take the defensive man to the mat. After reaction time, penalize top man without stopping the match.\*

\* The only exception to the stalemate sequence would be when the bottom man creates the stalemate with action like clamping down on the top man’s arm so he can’t improve. In this situation, the bottom man would be penalized accordingly.\*

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### BOTTOM/DEFENSIVE POSITION

- **Rule 5-25-5 & Rule 7-6-5:** "When the defensive wrestler refuses to aggressively attempt escapes or reversals, it is stalling." NFHS Rule Book

#### **General Guidelines**

- Watch for the bottom wrestler to "build a base", for the purpose of attempting an escape or reversal.

#### **Tactics commonly used to disguise stalling in the Bottom/Defensive Position**

- Repeatedly building a base, without initiating an escape or takedown

#### **Actions that may be considered stalling in the Bottom/Defensive Position**

- Remaining in a four-legged table or basic referee's position without any effort to execute an escape or reversal.
- Assuming the fetal position and remaining there, not attempting to improve position.
- Pulling the elbows in close to the body and remaining in that position, not attempting to improve position.
- Keeping head down on the mat.
- Going out of bounds intentionally for a new start.
- Clasping own hands in front of his body with no attempt to improve position, secure an escape or reversal.
- Grasping an opponent's hands or wrists and simply maintaining control of them in front of your own body.
- Refusing to wrestle aggressively by not attempting an escape or reversal.
- Repeatedly locking or interlocking around the leg(s) of the offensive wrestler.
- Repeatedly (2 or more times) performing a stand up once the offensive wrestler has the legs in and a grapevine, thus intentionally causing a potentially dangerous situation.
- Delaying the match.
- Repeatedly causing a stalemate.
- Repeatedly and/or intentionally causing a potentially dangerous situation.

### GENERAL STALLING RULES & CONSIDERATIONS

- **Rule 5-25-6a & Rule 7-6-6a:** "repeatedly grasping or interlocking around one leg of the opponent to prevent scoring." NFHS Rule Book
- **Rule 5-25-6b & Rule 7-6-6b:** "delaying 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." NFHS Rule Book
- **Rule 5-25-6c & Rule 7-6-6c:** "repeatedly creating a stalemate situation to prevent an opponent from scoring." NFHS Rule Book

### EXCEPTIONS

- **Rule 5-25-7 & Rule 7-6-7:** "The defensive wrestler is not stalling when overpowered." NFHS Rule Book
- Intentionally going out of the wrestling area (Fleeing the Mat) is a technical violation. **Rule 5-28-1a**

\* Stalling shall be called consistently throughout the match, including the Sudden Victory and the two 30 second Tiebreakers. Stalling in the 30 second Ultimate Tiebreaker is the only exception to how you would call stalling, since the offensive wrestlers responsibility is controlled wrestling. Therefore, the first obvious stall call on the top wrestler will be called a stalemate. If this is repeated, the next call will be called stalling. Keep in mind, all cautions, warnings, penalty points, injury time, etc. all carry through the entire match.\*

As in any sport, there are certain rules, guidelines or practices that a coach or official may not agree with. Some take a position of, "I do not agree with that rule, therefore, I am not going to follow it". It is NOT the prerogative of an official and/or coach to set aside a particular rule because they do not agree with it. Officials must not "pass" on a call they don't believe in - instead, work for a change in the rule through your state and national rules organizations.

Acknowledgement: Mike Blasczyk, Wisconsin Fox Valley Officials Association