

# The Practical Book for Officiating FS/GR

By

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Welcome to the world of officiating. Sports' officiating is an art form unto itself. You will learn to apply the rules to a fluid situation quickly, efficiently and correctly. Let's take a look at what you need to know.

## **Equipment**

In order for wrestling to occur we must have a wrestling area that provides for boundaries and safety. This is accomplished by using a wrestling mat. The wrestling area on the mat is defined by a circle 9 meters in diameter. The outer 1 meter will be marked either by a line, change of color or tape. This is the Zone. The inner 7 meters is known as the central wrestling area. Most of the wrestling should take place in this area. In the center of the mat is a 1 meter circle. This is the starting area. Outside of the 9-meter circle should be 5 meters of additional padded space, known as the protection area.

Also necessary are a visible means of scorekeeping and a visible clock. These may be a combined unit or separate units.

## **Uniform - Officials**

Your uniform consists of a light blue polo shirt, gray slacks, black shoes, black socks, black belt, a whistle, a lanyard and Red & Blue wristbands. The red band is worn on your left wrist with the blue on the other. Additional items you may wish to have include a handkerchief, red & yellow cards and a wristwatch.

## **Uniform – Athletes**

Wrestlers are required to wear a singlet, one-piece, of mostly blue or red. Enough of one color so that when you look at them, it is obvious if they are red or blue. Wrestling shoes, with the laces either taped or covered. And they must carry a handkerchief.

Wrestler may wear kneepads and/or headgear. Headgear is required for all Kids Division wrestlers.

Now that the equipment is in place, let's look at the officials.

For a Freestyle or Greco-Roman match there are three basic systems for officiating, 1-man, 2-man, or 3-man teams. We will start with the 3-man team.

The 3-man team consists of three or more officials assigned to a mat or match.

## **Mat Chairman**

The Mat Chairman is the leader of the team. The Mat Chairman sits at the table with the clock and administers the match. The Mat Chairman is responsible for everything that occurs during a match. If the Referee and Judge do not make the same call, the Mat Chairman will decide which is correct. If the Mat Chairman observes an error, he may call for a conference to correct the error. The Mat Chairman will keep a bout sheet.

## **Judge**

The Judge will sit across the mat from the Mat Chairman. The judge will assist the Referee in scoring the match. He will observe the action and provide his evaluation of the points being scored.

Typically this is done with the use of numbered paddles. The paddles will be red or blue. The Judge raises the paddle with the color of the scoring wrestler with the number of points the action was worth. The Judge will have three additional paddles, one each in blue & red and also a white paddle. The blank paddles are used for indicating a caution on the wrestler of the same color. The white paddle is used to indicate a disagreement with the referee. If the Referee indicates 3 blue and the Judge disagrees that there was a score, the Judge would show the white paddle. The Judge will also keep a bout sheet.

## **The Referee**

The Referee (or whistle) is the person responsible for conducting the match. Action will start with the whistle and stop with the whistle. The Referee will place themselves where they can best observe/control the match through the use of verbal commands and whistle. The Referee should avoid blocking the sightline of the Judge and Mat Chairman. If one must be blocked, temporarily, then block the Mat Chairman as the Judge is your partner in calling the match. The Referee is responsible for initiating calls on the mat. Simply put, the Referee should score the action first and let the Judge confirm or disagree with the score. Using a clock system, with the Mat Chairman sitting at 12 o'clock and the Judge sitting at 6 o'clock, the Referee will be in the 7-11 o'clock position or the 1-5 o'clock position. Crossing over as needed, quickly, to get to the best side. Best is usually to the outside on the close side. The close side is where the wrestlers are closest to the boundary line. The Referee must project "Presence" so that the wrestler's will respond to commands and directives. Do not be hesitant when making a call. Do not use meek commands. Be firm and exude confidence. If the wrestlers do not respect your presence, your match will be long and tiresome. When they do respect your presence, the matches tend to be easier to conduct. As a Referee you must learn when to stop a match and when to let things continue.

Typically when asking for a caution, the match will continue until the call is confirmed. Then stop the match. But, if time is running short, you may wish to stop the match and ask for the caution, in order to give the offended wrestler time to use their opportunity. If the Mat Chairman is asking for a conference, stop the match when there is no significant action. You would not want to stop the match in the middle of a scoring effort and prevent the score from happening. The whistle stops all activity when it sounds. If something was about to happen but the whistle sounds, it can't happen and score.

Articles 37-49 are the most important for you to know. They cover scoring, penalties, procedures and special situations. If something happens outside of these articles, ask for help from a senior officials or your mentor. Don't have a mentor, find one. Unlike folkstyle, the FS/GR rules don't try to answer every possible question. The rules are very clear and will provide you with guidance on how and what to call. When confused seek help.

When more than three officials are assigned to a mat, the officials not occupying one of the three positions are genially referred to as the off officials. The Mat Chairman may use a rotation of officials through the

positions or may pick & choose as needed. If you are in an off position, pay attention, ask questions quietly and do as the Mat Chairman requests. This will speed up your learning and help the mat run faster and smoother.

## **2-Man**

The 2-man system consists of a Referee and a glorified scorekeeper/table worker. The Referee is responsible for the whole match. The other official acts as the scorekeeper is available to consult with as needed. The Referee has sole authority for everything; the other official may not override, overrule, or offer an opinion. Only when consulted may he offer advice to the Referee. The two officials will rotate positions as needed to keep things moving. The Referee deals with coaches.

## **1-Man**

The 1-man system consists of the Referee. That's it, just you. You are responsible for everything about the match including the table workers. Apply your skills and knowledge and work what's in front of you, call what you see. Coaches may approach as in folkstyle, answer the question and move on with the match. This is not a debate.

Any questions so far?

Good. And now for something completely different...

## **The Bout**

As a Referee your place to start a bout is in the center, facing the table. The wrestlers will approach the table to check in, wearing a singlet of the correct color. The Red wrestler is listed on the left side of the bout sheet or is the top wrestler on the brackets. Brackets will be posted around the venue. If perchance, they are dressed incorrectly, have them fix it. Once everyone is properly dressed, invite them out onto the mat to stand beside you. Red to your left and blue to your right. As they approach, begin your check of their uniform. Shoes, singlet, handkerchief and headgear, if required. Wrestlers are no longer required to present their handkerchief but are required to have one. If you don't see it, ask. Now, turn and face one wrestler, ask them to raise their arms (make a t). Inspect them by checking

that they are clean and dry and have nothing that presents a hazard to their opponent. Use your hands to check head, arms and body. You are looking for grease, stick'em, loose change, credit cards, knives guns, chains and/or cash. When checking wrestlers of the opposite sex, skip the body check. Turn about and do the same with the other wrestler. When complete, while still standing in-between the wrestlers, check to make sure everyone else is ready starting with the Judge and then the Mat Chairman. Make sure the clock is properly set and step out from the center. Have the wrestlers shake hands and blow the whistle. Now the fun really starts. The wrestlers will bob, weave, shake, fake, jump, dive, roll, two-step and cha-cha. You have to keep up. To signal a score, raise your hand with the color of the scoring wrestler and extend the correct number of fingers, starting with the thumb. That's right, the thumb means one. Then add fingers as needed. The possibilities are 1,2,3, or 5.

To score 1-point a wrestler must, by their action:

Takedown the opponent (belly down)

Cause the opponent to step out of bounds

Reverse their opponent

Held their opponent in the danger position

Or a wrestler may receive 1-point when their opponent:

Commits a defensive foul

Challenges a call and loses the challenge

Did not score when required during extra time

Refuses the hold in FS clinch

To score 2-points a wrestler must:

Place the opponent in a danger position

A wrestler may receive 2-points when their opponent:

Places themselves flat on their back attempting a hold

Flees the mat in a danger position

Commits a foul that prevents a score

Refuses a correct par terre position in Greco

To score 3-points a wrestler must:

Cause the opponent to go from feet to danger position

Lifts the opponent off the mat, in par terre, and throws to a danger position; feet/knees and/or hands may drag

To score 5-points a wrestler must:

With high amplitude, cause the opponent to land in the danger position from their feet

Lift the opponent clear from the mat, high amplitude, and cause them to land in the danger position

High Amplitude – Are you looking up at a wrestler? Did the throwee's hips come up higher than the thrower's hips? Were the feet extended and describing an arc?

This will go on for two minutes in freestyle, one and one-half minutes in Greco.

At the 1&1/2 minute mark in a Greco match, wrestling stops. Unless someone is in the danger position, then the match continues without stopping.

The wrestler who is leading (points or criteria) will take the top position with a choice of par terre or ordered hold position. If the score is 0-0, Red will take the clinch in the first period, Blue for the second. For the third period if the score is 0-0, in the period, consult the criteria for who will clinch.

The down wrestler will position themselves on the mat with hands under the shoulders, down on the mat and knees under the hips. The back should be nice and flat, the arms and legs perpendicular to the mat.

Once the bottom wrestler is set, bring in the top wrestler to assume his position. The top wrestler may choose par terre and place both hands on

the back of the down wrestler and may stand anywhere in the “U” between the shoulders and feet. Not in front. Or the top wrestler may choose the reverse lift position. The top wrestler will face the feet of the down wrestler and may be standing or on one knee. Kids division must be on two knees. If standing, the foot may not go past the mid-line of the down wrestler. Upon command, the top wrestler will reach down & around the bottom wrestler to lock his hands. In both cases, when contact is made, blow the whistle and start wrestling.

If someone takes the clinch because they earned it, they do not have to score on top. If the score was 0-0, top must score or give 1-point to the down wrestler.

How does a period end?

When someone gains a 6-point advantage

When someone executes 2 3-point throws

When someone executes a 5-point throw

Time expires

Who won the period?

If there was no Technical Superiority (6-point, 2 3-points, 1 5-point), then the wrestler with the most points wins. If the score is tied, we use criteria.

Fewest cautions

Most 3's

Most 2's

Last to score

If the score is 0-0 in a freestyle match, extra time is used. The referee will conduct a disc flip and the color that lands up will take the hold. He will tell the referee which leg he wants to attack. The defender will place that leg in the center of the mat and put weight on it. The defender may place his hands on the BACK of the top wrestler. The defenders stance will be fairly square.

The top wrestler will assume a head-outside single-leg position. The stance will be fairly square and contact with the defender is not allowed. The top

wrestler will reach around the thigh of the defender and lock his hands. Upon contact, blow the whistle and start the wrestling. If top does not score within the 30-seconds of extra time, the defender is given 1-point.

Once the period is finally over, send the wrestlers to their corners. They make take fluids, medicines and/or advice while in the corner.

Thirty (30) seconds after wrestling was stopped, they should be starting the next period. So call them back to center at about the 15-second point. Check to make sure they are “dry”. Check that your team is ready. Start the next period. Go through it all over again.

Once the 2<sup>nd</sup> period has ended, check to see if you have a bout winner.

How do you win a bout?

Someone has won two periods

Someone has pinned their opponent

Someone was DQ'd, defaulted, withdrew or otherwise quit.

The pin, default withdrew may apply after the first period.

If no bout winner, return them to their corners and bring them out again like the second period. Check'em and start'em.

After the third period ends, somebody has won. Find out who.

## **End of Bout**

Once the bout has ended, you will announce the winner. Bring both wrestlers back to the center and have them shake hands. Then shake hands with each wrestler and hold onto their wrists. When the Chairman indicates who won, raise that wrestler's hand. If you turn to announce to the other side, the winner walks forwards and the loser retreats. After turning about halfway, let the loser go.

## **Commands**

Commands are used to conduct the bout. You will tell the wrestlers what they need to do to keep from being penalized.

## Basic terms:

Contact – Touch the other wrestler and do something. Failure to do so in a timely manner will result in a caution. Typically two times and ask for the caution.

Action – You're touching him but do something, now. Failure results in a caution. See Contact

Open – Present yourself for attack. Defender may not “turtle up” for example. Failure results in a caution.

Center – Get your butts back in the middle and wrestle.

Zone – You are nearing the edge, get your butts back in the middle.

Place – Used in par terre to tell the down wrestler to maintain position and defend. Quit trying to get to the edge.

No Jump – Used in Greco in par terre starts & wrestling. Bottom cannot leap forward to cause top to commit a foul.

## **Illegal/prohibited holds**

General:

Choking, strangling, twisting of limbs in excess of 90 deg, gouging, biting, striking, kicking, hammerlocks above 90 deg,

Women

Full nelsons

Cadets

Full nelsons

Kids

Full nelson

Straight back belly-back or belly-belly

$\frac{3}{4}$  nelson w/leg hooked

## Slams

Double chicken wing w/sit out

Neck wrench

Cross chest cradle (Iron Cross, Colorado, West Point ride)

## Fall

It is a fall when you see the squish of the shoulders pressing into the mat. There can be no rolling motion, side-to-side.

For Kids age groups the fall must be held for two seconds.

## Changes

The FILA, the international governing body, reserves the right to modify or re-interpret the rules as the season progresses. They seek to find ways to encourage more active wrestling. As they make changes they will pass them on to USA Wrestling, our national governing body, for implementation. USA Wrestling, in turn, passes these changes on to us. We pass the word by use of pre-event clinics. Each tournament will have a short clinic at every event to let you know of changes. At larger USAW events, there is a formal clinic required to work at that event. When travelling to events, make allowances to arrive in time to attend these clinics.

