

The Art of Refereeing

Freestyle

&

Greco-Roman

Wrestling

Third Edition

United States Wrestling Officials Association

PREFACE

Development into a top-level referee is based on two disciplines. The first discipline is the science of refereeing. A referee must learn and practice the technical rules of wrestling. Understanding the science of refereeing can be accomplished through training and education. It is paramount to not only have a firm understanding of the rules of wrestling, but also to have a solid technical foundation in order to be able to develop the second discipline, the art of refereeing. This discipline encompasses the application of the science of refereeing. Developing a mastery of effective bout management without involving yourself or affecting the outcome is truly an art and will take time, patience, and dedication to perfect.

Over the years, I have been mentored by some of the best referees, not only in the United States, but on the World level. In an effort to capture the philosophies and techniques they have shared with me and pass them on to help others, "The Art of Refereeing Freestyle and Greco Roman Wrestling" was created. It is a compilation of philosophies and techniques learned during senior referee mentoring sessions, mat side situation discussions with fellow referees and coaches, clinics, Officials Education Program (OEP) and watching other referees apply their skills both nationally and internationally.

This guide is designed to complement the rulebook and is not all encompassing. It is not intended to be "the way;" but rather, "a way" of bringing together the art and science of refereeing Freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling.

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Table of Contents

PHILOSOPHIES / THOUGHTS.....	5
PRE-BOUT PLAN	6
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?	6
REFEREE MECHANICS	6
DURING EACH BOUT TWO THING OCCUR	6
STARTING/RESTARTING THE ACTION.....	6
BREAK THE MAT INTO QUADRANTS	6
HOLD THE WHISTLE IN YOUR HAND.....	6
OUTSIDE-LOOKING IN	6
FORM A TRIANGLE.....	7
VERBAL COMMUNICATION	7
VISUAL COMMUNICATION.....	7
EYE SCAN PATTERN	7
ANTICIPATE THE DIRECTION OF THE ACTION	8
LEVEL CHANGE	8
MAKING THE CALL	8
MAINTAINING CONTROL OF THE MAT	8-9
MAINTAINING CONTROL OF THE CORNERS.....	9
EVALUATING THE ACTION	9
AWARDING POINTS	9
REWARD THE AGGRESSOR	9
QUADPOD.....	10
MERKEL	10
FRONT HEAD LOCK	10
ATTACKING WITH THE FRONT HEAD LOCK	10
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STANDING UP OR GETTING LIFTED.....	11
THROWS	11
RISK / CORRECT THROW	12
RISK / SLIP THROW.....	13
MISIDENTIFIED ACTION AS A SLIP THROW	13
TAKEDOWN TO TURN VERSUS THROW	13-14
PAR TERRE	14
STARTS	14
GROUND WRESTLING	14
WHEN TO STAND THEM UP.....	15
GUT WRENCH / TURNS / TILTS	15
MISIDENTIFIED TURN	15
THE FALL.....	15
NO DEFENSIVE FALLS	15
CALLING THE FALL.....	16
CHAIRMAN MUST CONFIRM THE FALL	16
TAKING A WRESTLER OFF THEIR BACK.....	16
ATTACKING THE FACE.....	16
THE PROTECTION AREA.....	16
PROTECTION AREA	16
LET SITUATIONS DEVELOP	16-17
PAR TERRE OUT OF BOUNDS	17
GOING INTO THE PROTECTION AREA.....	17
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PUSHING OR ATTACKING	17
PASSIVITY & FLEEING THE HOLD ARE INTERRELATED.....	18
NEGATIVE APPROACH TO A BOUT	18
TWO SIGNIFICANT INDICATORS.....	18
INDICATORS OF WHO'S LOCKING FINGERS.....	18
ADDITIONAL INDICATORS..	19
WHO'S ATTACKING AND WHO'S NOT.....	19

TIMING.....	19-20
GRECO-ROMAN EVALUATION EXAMPLE.....	20
VERBAL WARNING & ATTENTION.....	20
PASSIVITY	20
PASSIVITY IS NOT STALLING	20
TECHNICAL PASSIVITY	20
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MOVING FORWARD/MOTION OR OFFENSIVE ACTION/ATTACKING	21
REFEREE-JUDGE-CHAIRMAN PASSIVITY TEAMWORK.....	21
EXPECT EVERY BOUT TO BE 0-0	21-22
WHY PASSIVITY	22
FLEEING THE HOLD	22
STANDING	22
PAR TERRE	23
UNDER-ATTACK.....	23
FLEEING THE MAT	23
MUST DEFEND POSITION.....	23
STANDING	23
PAR TERRE	24
DANGER.....	24
FOULS & ILLEGAL HOLDS	24
DEFENSIVE FOUL	24
DEFENSIVE ILLEGAL HOLD	24
OFFENSIVE FOUL / ILLEGAL HOLD	24
PIKE POSITION.....	24
GRECO-ROMAN LEG FOULS.....	25
LEGS ARE GOING TO TOUCH.....	25
INCIDENTAL LEG CONTACT.....	25
OFFENSIVE LEG FOUL.....	25
DEFENSIVE LEG FOUL	25-26
PAR TERRE LEG FOULS	26
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD COUNTER-ATTACK/DEFENSE OR FOUL.....	26
UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACTS OF PENALTIES.....	27
HAVE COURAGE	27
END OF THE BOUT	27
JUDGE MECHANICS.....	27
STRONG OR WEAK JUDGE.....	27
CALL YOUR OWN BOUT	27
PROPER SCORING-PADDLE MECHANICS	28
PROPER SCORING-PADDLE MECHANICS IN SUPPORT OF PASSIVITY	28
IMPROPER SCORING-PADDLE MECHANICS	29
CHAIRMAN'S CONFERENCE	29
ASK YOURSELF	29
CHAIRMAN HAS AN AGENDA	29
LISTEN CAREFULLY.....	29
THE CHALLANGE.....	30
WHEN DISASTER STRIKES.....	30
NOT EVERY BOUT WILL GO WELL.....	30
BEST PART OF REFEREEING	30
FRIENDSHIPS.....	30
LIST OF FIGURES & PHOTOGRAPHS	31-32

"PHILOSOPHIES - THOUGHTS"

"STOP" Thinking like a Folkstyle Referee. Philosophies in Freestyle and Greco are counter-intuitive to Folkstyle. Situations are not always black and white; they are open to interpretation.

You are part of a "Referee Team." Do your job and let others do their job. Points are "*opinions*" until they are "confirmed by the referee team." It's not how you score the action; it's how the referee team scores the action.

Expand your gray area & be flexible. The broader your gray area, the better referee you'll become. Be flexible and able to adjust to change. Don't be rigid. Need to be able to adjust during a tournament or during a bout.

Understand the seven basic wrestling skills. Stance – Motion - Level Change – Penetration - Lift - Back Step - Back Arch.

Understand the three pillars of evaluation. Wrestler must use a variety of holds to score. Wrestler must be active. Wrestler must take risks.

Understand the skill level of wrestlers you are refereeing. (*Figures 1 & 2 apply*). Different skill levels (Bantam to Olympian) and location (local high school gym to World Championship venue) can determine your mechanics. Each skill level requires an understanding of the wrestler's capabilities and referee skill set as situations may get called a little different. Good referees understand this well. As you work higher level competitions, the tournament clinician will provide guidance for each tournament. It is imperative you follow their instruction or you may get disciplined (sat down).



Figure 1



Figure 2

Your ability to manage the bout without involving yourself or affecting the outcome is an art. Plan, Think and Anticipate.

Keep Learning. Never stop learning. "*It's what you learn after you know it all that counts.*" John Wooden. Be observant at tournaments – watch and see how things are being called. Identify the referees that are good and watch them. Choose a mentor you can discuss calls and situations.

Respect. If you want to be respected, you must be respectful. As a referee; you should be able to mediate conflict not cause more of it.

Opinions. If you have an opinion, make sure it is in accordance with the rules. You must respect the rules. Read the rule book! Know the rules! Don't make stuff up.

Evaluating the Action. As a referee, you must feel the action. When evaluating the action your first thoughts are typically the best. As soon as the call comes to mind, call it. Go with your first instinct. If you wait, you'll begin to over-analyze and change your mind.

"PRE-BOUT PLANNING"

What are you thinking about before a bout?

1. Are you thinking about wrestling or something completely unrelated to wrestling?
2. Don't just wing it and hope for the best.
3. Should be based on the level of competition you are refereeing.
4. Your pre-bout planning should include points of emphasis to help focus on during the bout.
 - a. Examples: Personal weak areas, clinician directives, competitor tendencies, etc.

"REFEREE MECHANICS"

During each bout, there are two things occurring.

1. The match occurring between the two wrestlers.
2. The referee team working together to make the right call at the right time.

As a Referee: "You should feel like you're pulling the action towards you, not pushing the action away." Chuck Almeida.



Figure 3

When starting/restarting the action, ensure you can see between the wrestlers. (Figure 3 applies)

1. At the start of each period, ensure the judge and chairman are ready before blowing the whistle starting the action.
2. Watch for a head butt, eye gouge, punch, etc.
3. Do not start/restart the bout from the zone or protection area.
4. Do not start/restart the bout looking into a wrestler's backside.
5. Move in close so the wrestlers can feel your presence. But not so close you block the view of the judge or chairman.

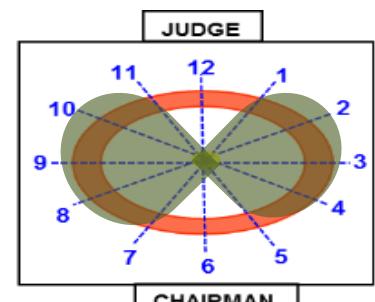


Figure 4

Break the mat into quadrants, "Clock Positions." (Figure 4 applies)

1. You should try to referee within the 1:00 to 5:00 and 7:00 to 11:00 quadrants.
2. However, when the action begins, move to a position where you can best evaluate the scoring situation.
3. Be in a position so the wrestlers can hear your commands.
4. The most important thing on the mat is "Position," "Position," "Position."



Figure 5

Hold the whistle in your hand, not in your mouth. (Figure 5 applies)

1. This helps prevent an inadvertent whistle especially at the edge of the mat.
2. It also allows you to verbally communicate with the wrestlers.



Figure 6

Referee Outside-Looking In. (Figures 6 & 7 apply)

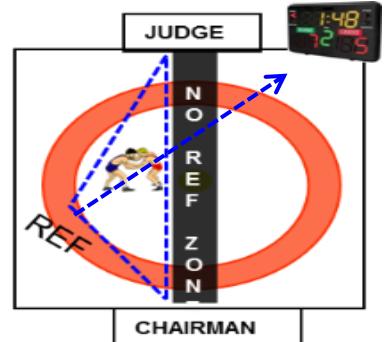
1. Do not stand in the middle of the mat and watch the action move away from you.
2. Move to the outside and pull the action towards you. (Figure 6 applies)
3. Do not get so close that you get kicked or hit by the wrestlers. Stay back so you can see the entire action sequence. (Figure 7 applies)



Figure 7

Form a triangle with the Judge and Chairmen. (Figure 8 applies)

1. Be aware of your position in relation to: Judge, Chairman, Wrestlers and Clock.
2. Try to not block their view of the action.
3. Work for positions that keep the wrestlers between you & the Judge. You and the Judge are a team and work together.



Verbal Communication.

1. **MUST BE VOCAL.**
2. When talking to the wrestlers use proper vocabulary and are very clear and strong.
3. Two reasons to verbally communicate.
 - a. Talking to the wrestlers for activity.
 - b. Talking through the wrestlers to the referee team, setting up a call.
4. The difference between "Commanding" and "Nagging" the wrestlers.
 - a. *Command:* Spread out your commands giving the wrestler's time to react. They will listen and react to what you want.
 - b. *Nag:* Non-stop chatter that does not give the wrestlers time to adjust. When you "Nag" the wrestlers, they will tune you out.

Visual Communication. (Figure 9 applies)

1. When talking to the wrestlers or blowing the whistle use your hands to signal.
2. Signaling with your hands visually lets everyone know who you are addressing or why you blew the whistle stopping the action.
3. Not everyone can hear what you are saying or may not understand why you stopped the action.
4. Visual Communication breaks that barrier.



Figure 9

Eye scan pattern. (Figure 10 applies)

1. As a referee, you must watch/evaluate numerous things during a bout. The wrestlers, clock, score, judge and chairman.
2. It is important to monitor each without overlooking the others or losing overall focus.
3. Develop an eye scan pattern while on the mat similar to how we drive a car.
4. *Example: (Figure 10 applies)*
 - a. A = Watching the road and evaluating the conditions. (*watching the wrestlers and evaluating action*).
 - b. B = Checking the rear-view mirror. (*Checking the clock*).
 - c. C = Scanning the driver & passenger mirror. (*Scanning the judge and chairman*).
5. Developing a scan pattern will also help you maintain proper position on the mat and enable you to non-verbally communicate with the judge and chairman.

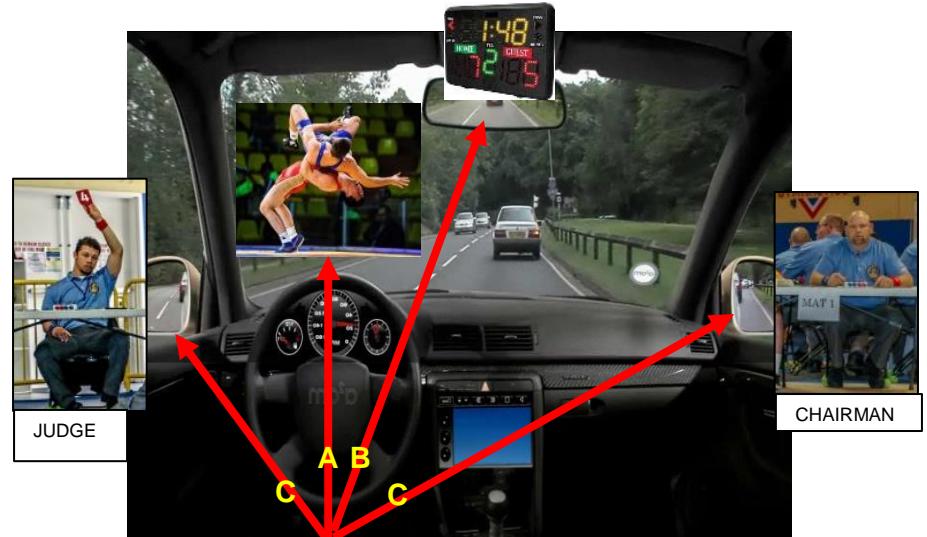


Figure 10

Anticipate the direction of the action. (Figure 11 applies)

1. Work the short-side of the mat.
2. When the action moves away from you. Walk briskly, cutting off the mat to get into position. Never Run.

Level Change. (Figures 12 & 13 apply)

1. As the action changes levels, so should you in order to be in the best position to observe/evaluate the action.
2. This is especially true in Greco. When a lift/throw begins, you should lower your level to watch for leg fouls.
3. Lowering your level will give you a good view of how the action lands on the mat, see chokes/illegal holds and observe a fall.
4. If the action quickly changes direction away from you, don't run, lower your level.



Figure 12



Figure 13

Making the call. (Figures 14 & 15 apply)

1. Be decisive and confident.
2. It is important to sell your call.
3. Hold your points high so everyone can see what you scored.
4. Make your call and continue with the action/bout.
5. If the team makes a different call (goes around you), don't show emotion or displeasure; continue with the bout.
6. Remember, it's not how you score the action; it's how the referee team scores the action.



Figure 14



Figure 15

Maintaining control of the mat. (Figure 16 applies)

1. As a referee, you must ensure discipline is maintained.
2. You set the tone for what will and will not be accepted.
3. Do not let the wrestlers or coaches dictate discipline to you.
4. There is a difference between aggressive wrestling and brutality (unnecessary roughness).
5. Things can and will escalate quickly unless you maintain control.
6. Example (1): **Clubbing or Hard shot to the Head.** (Figures 17 & 18 apply)



Figure 16

- a. The first hard shot, immediately stop the bout, give an Attention to the offending wrestler and tell them to knock it off.
- b. Make sure you tell the other wrestler not to retaliate. They will want to get their shot in.
- c. Make them shake hands. This can help defuse the situation. (Figure 18 applies)



Figure 18



Figure 17

7. Example (2): **Hands to the Face.** (*Figures 19 & 20 apply*)
- When the wrestlers start putting their hands in the face, tell both wrestlers no hands in the face.
 - If they continue, stop the bout. Give an Attention to the offending wrestler and tell them no hands to the face.
 - If they still continue, stop the bout, and request a caution and point(s) for the illegal action.
 - Hands in the face will cause fingers/thumbs to get into the eyes and potentially could lead to hard shots to the head.



Figure 19



Figure 20

Maintaining control of the corners. (*Figures 21, 22 & 23 apply*)

- Use proper protocol and be respectful when dealing with coaches.
- Coaches are emotionally invested in their wrestlers; referees are not.
- Coaches are going to talk, yell, clap, cheer, etc. Don't over react to everything a coach says or does.
- Coaches are trying to help their wrestler. It's not personal.
- Be aware of who is in the corner. From the novice dad-coach to the national team coach, each coach is different.
- Some sit quietly in the corner and some become very vocal and animated.
- You must be mentally prepared to deal with the corner.
- Typically, a big bout will have high-level coaches in the corner.
- If a coach begins to direct his/her focus on you vice the wrestlers; stop the bout at an appropriate time.
 - "Respectfully" give them an attention and ask them to op.
 - If they continue, you can give them a yellow card. (*Figure 23 applies*)
 - If they still continue, a red card may be appropriate.



Figure 21



Figure 22



Figure 23

EVALUATING THE ACTION

Award points for all "Actions in a Series."

- Award points as "YOU" see them, not just the final action like in Folkstyle.
- When scoring multiple actions, show only one color at a time, in the order the points are scored. Do not hold up both hands at the same time showing Red and Blue points.
- Example: Red scored a four point throw then Blue scored a 1 point reversal.
 - You would show Red-4pts first, then show, Blue-1pt.



Figure 24

Reward the aggressor / risk taker (Evaluating the Hold). (*Figure 24 applies*)

- Things to ask yourself when evaluating the action.
 - Who took the risk/initiated the action?
 - Where did the action start? Standing or Parterre?
 - Was the action grand amp or not?
 - How did they land? In danger or not?
 - Did the offensive wrestler maintain or lose the lock?
 - Did the momentum of the attack carry the offensive wrestler to his/her back?
 - Did the defensive wrestler's counter-attack change the direction of the attack?

Quadpod. (Figures 25 & 26 apply)

1. A Quadpod is “NOT” a freestyle takedown.
2. A Quadpod is a folkstyle takedown.
3. A Quadpod DOES NOT meet freestyle takedown criteria “UNTIL” three points of contact touch the mat or the defending wrestler is turned/thrown.



Figure 25



Figure 26

Merkel. (Figures 27 & 28 apply)

1. The Merkel is “NOT” a freestyle takedown.
2. It is a folkstyle takedown.
3. The Merkel DOES NOT meet freestyle takedown criteria “UNTIL” the offensive wrestler’s leg comes out and offensive wrestler goes behind the defending wrestler’s hips.



Figure 27



Figure 28

Front Head Lock. (Figures 29 & 30 apply)

1. Watch for the choke. Lower your level and look from the bottom-up, focus on the throat (airway/artery).
2. If you see a key lock, they are going for the choke.
3. If a wrestler is just hanging on to the head lock and not trying to improve. (approx. 3-4 seconds):
 - a. Give a couple of “Action” commands.
 - b. If no improvement, quickly stop the action.
4. It only takes a few seconds for a wrestler to be choked unconscious.



Figure 29



Figure 30

Attacking with a Front Head Lock.

(Figures 31, 32, 33, & 34 apply)

1. The key analytical point when evaluating a front head lock attack is to watch the offensive wrestler’s lock.
2. If the offensive wrestler maintains the lock throughout the action sequence, only the offensive wrestler should score points.
3. If the offensive wrestler opens/loses the lock during the action sequence and is counter-attacked, the offensive wrestler can score points and the defensive may also score counterattack points.



Figure 31



Figure 32



Figure 33



Figure 34

There is a difference between “standing up” and “getting lifted.”

1. Standing up. (Figure 35 applies)

- a. If the offensive wrestler secures a takedown and the defensive wrestler, under his/her own power, stands up and attempts to escape or turn to face the offensive wrestler and the offensive wrestler returns the defensive wrestler back to the mat; this could be another takedown.
- b. If the defensive wrestler gets to their feet, yet their hands are still on the mat (Quadpod position) or close to the mat, hold your call until the action has completed. In this situation, if they go back to mat, no points.
- c. This call is situational dependent.
- d. *This philosophy is counter-intuitive to folkstyle.*



Figure 35

2. Getting Lifted. (Figure 36 applies)

- a. If the offensive wrestler secures a takedown and lifts the defensive wrestler, unable to score and then returns the defensive wrestler back to the mat, no points.



Figure 36

Throws. (Figures 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 & 44 apply)

1. When a throw begins, step back; lower your level so your eyes are even with the legs.
2. Watch the “Beginning” and most importantly the “Landing.”



Figure 37



Figure 38



Figure 39



Figure 40



Figure 41

3. Attacker’s knees can be on the mat. (Fireman’s Carry). (Figure 41 applies)
4. A throw may start out looking big. Don’t get caught up watching the middle of a big throw and lulled into making a grand amp call. (Figure 38 applies)
5. There are times when a big throw doesn’t land in danger, making it a basic throw/takedown. (Figure 42 applies)
6. On the edge: Watch the offensive wrestler’s hips to evaluate a good throw or step out.
 - a. “Step Out”: the hips will turn after stepping out-of-bounds. (Figure 43 applies)
 - b. “Good Throw”: the hips will turn before stepping out-of-bounds. (Figure 44 applies)



Figure 43



Figure 44

Risk - Correct Throw.

Correct Throw "IS" scored. (Figures 45, 46 & 47 apply)

1. A throw that takes one wrestler off his/her feet and moves them 180 degrees and does not score. However, the defensive wrestler "loses control" when they hit the mat as a result of the action.
2. Reward the technique and risk taken by the offensive wrestler.



Figure 45



Figure 46



Figure 47

Correct Throw "IS NOT" scored. (Figures 48, 49, 50 & 51 apply)

1. A throw that takes one wrestler off his/her feet and moves them 180 degrees and does not score. However, the defensive wrestler "maintains control" when they hit the mat.
2. Reward the technique and counter-action taken by the defensive wrestler.



Figure 48



Figure 49



Figure 50



Figure 51

Evaluate the scoring options on a Correct Throw. (Figures 52, 53 & 54 apply)

1. **No Control** (Figure 52 applies): Red executes a correct throw, does not gain control and Blue loses control. (Correct throw point(s) for Red).
2. **Reversal** (Figure 53 applies): Red executes a correct throw; however, Blue counter-attacks and secures a reversal. (Correct throw point(s) for Red; Reversal point(s) for Blue).
3. **Control** (Figure 54 applies): Red executes a correct throw and gains control and secures the takedown. (Takedown points for Red).



Figure 52



Figure 53



Figure 54

Risk - Slip Throw. (*Figures 55, 56 & 57 apply*).

1. Action that results in the offensive wrestling going directly to par terre without any action by the defensive wrestler is a slip throw. The defensive wrestler does not score any points.
2. *PHILOSOPHY: Reward the offensive wrestler for taking risk by not giving the defending wrestler unearned points.*
3. Must determine if the action was a legitimate attempt.
4. If there is a slip throw, do not stop the bout. Get confirmation from the judge or chairman.
5. A “desperation swing and miss” is not a slip. Typically, this occurs on the edge.
6. A wrestler cannot be going backwards for a slip throw. This is typically a bail-out by the defensive wrestler.
7. *Evaluation note: Throws do not start from the heels. Throws begin from the toes.*
8. If the defending wrestler “catches” the offensive wrestler in a counter-attack and takes them to the mat, then it is not a slip. It is a takedown for the defending wrestler. (*Figure 57 applies*).



Figure 55



Figure 56



Figure 57

Misidentified Action as a Slip Throw. (*Figures 58, 59, 60 & 61 apply*)

1. The following attack is often misidentified as a slip throw.
2. In *Figure 58*, both wrestlers are fighting for position.
3. In *Figure 59*, Red begins an attack (Head Lock).
4. In *Figure 60*, Red passes by Blue’s head and attacks (traps) Blue’s right arm.
5. In *Figure 61*, Red successfully throws Blue into danger.
6. The key analytical point when evaluating this action is to watch the follow through trapping the arm. The throw into danger is typically very quick which causes the slip throw misidentification.
7. Don’t get caught just watching the arm passing the head and call a slip throw. Let the situation develop.



Figure 58



Figure 59



Figure 60



Figure 61

Takedown to Turn versus Throw. (*Figures 62, 63, 64 & 65 apply*)

1. The difference between Take Down to Turn and Throw; a Takedown to Turn has two separate actions and a Throw has one action.
2. The action sequence below is used to illustrate two possibilities:
3. “Takedown to Turn.”
 - a. In *Figure 62*, *Blue* begins the attack.
 - b. In *Figure 63*, *Blue* has placed *Red* on the mat. Takedown criteria “has been met.”
 - c. In *Figure 65*, *Blue* immediately turns *Red* placing him in danger.
4. “Throw.”
 - a. In *Figure 62*, *Blue* begins the attack.

- b. In Figure 64, Blue has placed Red in a quadpod position. Takedown criteria "has not been met."
- c. In Figure 65, from the quad pod position, Blue throws Red placing him in danger.



Figure 62



Figure 63



Figure 65

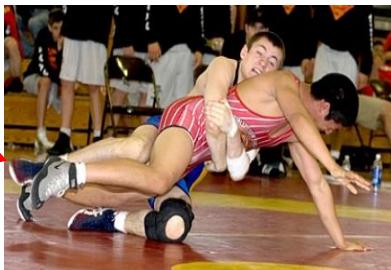


Figure 64



Figure 66

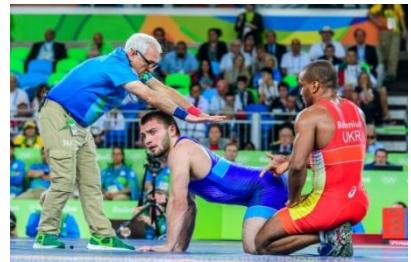


Figure 67



Figure 68



Figure 69



Figure 70



Figure 71



Figure 72

When to stand them up? (Figure 73 applies)

1. **PHILOSOPHY:** While standing, a wrestler has up to a minute to set-up and score points. Why in par terre do we as referees stand them up in only a few seconds? There is set up time and points to be scored in parterre. Par Terre is not a rest time. They need to work to score points in par terre just as they do while standing.
2. If the offensive wrestler worked hard to score technical points, give extra recovery time.
3. If the offensive wrestler did not work hard, give less recovery time.
4. If the offensive wrestler is continuing to improve, no matter how slow the action is occurring, let them continue. (This is based on progression not speed.)
5. Additionally, par terre wrestling is the perfect opportunity to exercise clock management.
6. **Top-Wrestler (Figure 74 applies)**
 - a. If the offensive wrestler stops the action, looks at you and wants to stand up, don't let them. They are trying to dictate the bout to you. Give them an "Action" command.
 - b. If they have tried to score and are unable, bring them up.



Figure 73



Figure 74

Gut Wrench - Turns - Tilts. (Figures 75 applies)

1. When the action begins, lower your level to observe a fall.
2. Watch the attacking wrestler's breathing.
 - a. Action typically *begins*: "sucks-air-in, holds it, attempts turn."
 - b. Action typically *ends*: "big exhale, action is done."
3. Make sure the bottom wrestler gets back to defendable position before the next scoring action.



Figure 75

Misidentified Turn.

1. The offensive wrestler will position him/herself to kick themselves over the defensive wrestler, exposing their own back, in order to place the defensive wrestler in danger.
2. A common error is to misidentify this action as a counter-attack and reward the defensive wrestler.
3. An example is depicted in Figures 76, 77 & 78.
 - a. In *Figure 76*, Blue is positioning himself for a kick over.
 - b. In *Figure 77*, Blue kicks himself over exposing his own back.
 - c. In *Figure 78*, Blue places Red in danger.



Figure 76



Figure 77



Figure 78

"THE FALL"

No Defensive Falls.

1. According to the National Federation of High School Wrestling rules, "a fall occurs when any part of both shoulders or scapula of either wrestler are in contact with the mat for two seconds".
2. Within international wrestling, when the defensive wrestler is held by his opponent with his shoulders against the mat for a sufficient time to allow the referee to observe the fall.
3. The offensive wrestler cannot pin him/herself. *This is counter-intuitive to folkstyle.*

Calling the Fall. (Figure 79 applies)

1. Criteria for a fall.
 - a. "CONTROL" (offensive wrestler in control).
 - b. "COMPRESSION" (shoulders being compressed into the mat).
 - c. "INDENTATION" (shoulder indentation marks in the mat).
2. If you see the fall, relax and signal the chairman.
3. No rolling or touch falls.
4. NEVER, NEVER, NEVER call a fall from your feet.



Figure 79

Chairman must confirm the fall. (Figures 80 & 81 apply)

1. NEVER call a fall until it is confirmed by the chairman.
2. It is imperative you follow procedure when calling a fall.



Figure 80



Figure 81

Taking a wrestler off their back.

1. If an offensive legal hold becomes illegal (*without possible injury*), the offensive wrestler must immediately adjust to make the hold legal. If they don't, stop the action and the offensive wrestler will lose their position.
2. If there is the potential for injury, stop the action immediately.
3. If a wrestler is complaining about an injury, quickly evaluate the situation.
4. The younger the athlete, stopping the action for safety is a better option than hesitating. Restart accordingly.

Attacking the Face (Figures 82 & 83 apply)

1. While looking for the fall, ensure you watch for the defensive wrestler attacking the wrestlers face.
2. When this happens, it is permissible to reach in and pull the hand away from the face.
3. Attacking the face is a foul and should be penalized accordingly.



Figure 82



Figure 83

"THE PROTECTION AREA"

Protection Area (Out of Bounds). (Figure 84 applies)

1. The boundary is NOT your friend. Do not let the wrestlers hang out on the edge.
2. He who steps out first.... is out-of-bounds (unless they score.)



Figure 84

Let situations develop. (Figures 85 & 86 apply)

1. Action that starts in bounds can finish in the protection area.
2. Give the attacking wrestler a chance to complete an action/move.
3. Be patient when the action moves towards the edge.
4. Don't have a quick whistle and stop a scoring action too quickly.
5. Counter-attacks cannot occur in the protection area.



Figure 85



Figure 86

6. Scoring Sequence below. (*Figures 87, 88 & 89 apply*)
 - a. In *Figure 87*, Red begins a throw.
 - b. In *Figure 88*, during the throwing action, Blue steps out of bounds.
 - c. In *Figure 89*, because of Blue's step out, Red lands on his back. Blue should not score.
7. Step back so you can see then entire action sequence.



Figure 87



Figure 88



Figure 89

Parterre out of bounds

1. Based on the defensive wrestler's position, not the offensive wrestler.
2. Defensive wrestler's head & shoulders in bounds, legs in the protection area = IN.
3. Defensive wrestler's chest beyond the boundary into the protection area = OUT.
4. One hand could possibly be called out if the chest is beyond the boundary line.
5. Two hands in the protection area could possibly still be inbounds, if the chest is not beyond the boundary line.
6. If the wrestlers are in par terre on the edge and stand up in the protection area: blow the whistle and bring them back to center mat. No points for step out.
7. If the wrestlers are in par terre and stand up in the zone/central wrestling area and step out; then score the points for the step out.

When the wrestlers go into the Protection Area. (*Figure 90 applies*)

1. Escort the wrestlers back to center mat.
2. Do not turn your back or take your eyes off the wrestlers regardless how quiet or respectful the bout has been.
3. Punches, fights, etc. can erupt without any indication or provocation.



Figure 90

There is a difference between "Pushing" and "Attacking" out of bounds. (*Figures 91, 92, 93 & 94 apply*)

1. When evaluating the action to determine if a wrestler is "pushing" or "attacking," there are several indicators that will differentiate between the two actions.



Figure 91



Figure 92

2. A wrestler that is deliberately "pushing" his/her opponent into the protection area will typically have their arms extended, not use legitimate offensive techniques and will stop just before the edge; not going into the protection area. (*Figures 91 & 92 apply*)
3. A wrestler that is attempting to score technical points will typically "attack" his/her opponent using legitimate offensive techniques. The offensive wrestler will continue their attack and accompany the defensive wrestler into the protection area. (*Figures 93 & 94 apply*)



Figure 93



Figure 94

PASSIVITY AND FLEEING THE HOLD ARE INTERRELATED

Passivity and Fleeing adopt a “negative” approach to a bout by one or both wrestlers.

1. The basic principle of a bout is “total wrestling.” Referees should encourage and stimulate activity at the appropriate times throughout the bout.
2. The indicators and evaluation principles apply for both passivity and fleeing the hold across both styles of wrestling.

Two significant ways to identify passivity and/or Fleeing the Hold is “Locked Fingers” & “Head Down.” (Figures 95 & 96 apply)

1. Do not allow this type of “negative” wrestling.
2. When you see grabbing the fingers or head down, tell the offending wrestler(s) “Red/Blue Open, No Fingers” or “Red/Blue head up.”
3. If they continue to grab the fingers or keep their head down, it could be passivity or fleeing the hold depending on the timing of the negative action in relation to the score, which period the negative wrestling is occurring and time remaining in the bout/period.



Figure 95



Figure 96

Indicators of who is locking the fingers

(Figures 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103 & 104 apply)

1. When trying to determine which wrestler is guilty of locking the fingers; evaluate hand position.
 - a. In Figure 97, Both wrestlers have equal hand position, both are guilty.
 - b. In Figure 98, **Blue** has an open hand. **Red** is beginning to grasp the fingers.
 - c. In Figure 99, **Red** has an open hand. **Blue** has a firm grasp on the fingers.
 - d. In Figure 100, **Red** is interlocked with **Blue** and is bending **Blue's** hand back.
 - e. In Figure 101, **Red** is twisting **Blue's** fingers.
 - f. In Figure 102, **Blue's** head is down and has a firm lock on **Red's** fingers. As you evaluate the fingers, also watch head position. The wrestler who is grabbing fingers will more than likely be blocking with the head.



Figure 97



Figure 98



Figure 99



Figure 100



Figure 101



Figure 102

2. Once identified and a wrestler continues to grab the fingers, you can penalize them accordingly. Ensure everyone knows you are penalizing the guilty wrestler for continually grabbing the fingers. (Figures 103 & 104 applies)



Figure 103

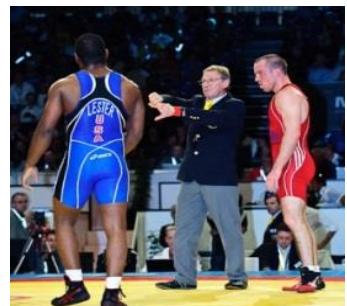


Figure 104

Additional Indicators of Passivity and/or Fleeing the Hold. (Figures 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112 & 113 apply)

1. Having a great hold and not improving.
2. Not making a genuine effort to score.
3. Not taking proper holds.
4. Giving up mat position – *Backing away*.
5. Preventing contact.
6. Head Position – *Blocking* (Figures 106, 107 and 111 apply)
7. Satisfied with neutralizing the opponent.
8. Torso/Hip position (GR) – *Back and away*. (Figure 106 applies)
9. Forearm position – *Blocking*. (Figures 107 & 112 apply)
10. Continually putting hands in the face. (Figure 108 applies)
11. Hand position – *Blocking*. (Figures 105, 111 & 113 apply)
12. Closed refusing to open. (Figures 109 & 110 apply)
13. *Crawling forward (swimming)* without attempting a counter-attack.



Figure 105



Figure 106



Figure 107



Figure 108

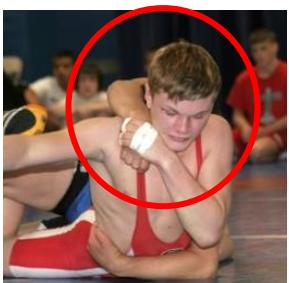


Figure 109



Figure 110



Figure 111



Figure 112



Figure 113

Have a sense of who's attacking and technically passive. (Figures 114 & 115 apply)

1. There is a difference between "Defense" and "Blocking"
2. There is a difference between "Hanging on" and "Creating an Attack."
3. Basically, who wants to wrestle and who doesn't?

Timing of Passivity and/or Fleeing the Hold calls.

1. Must have a thought process regarding timing of your calls.
2. Space your passivity warnings throughout the period in order to allow a wrestler to adjust.
3. Clock management and teamwork are critical.
 - a. You don't want to make your calls too late and run out of time.
 - b. You don't want to make your calls so quickly you have too much time remaining.
 - c. You should not call passivity then immediately make another passivity call.
4. In the last 30 seconds of the first period, it is ok to give a wrestler their first passivity call. However, you cannot put them on the 30-second penalty shot clock.
5. If you call passivity that results in par terre, give the top wrestler ample time to score.
6. Keep in mind which wrestler has scored technical points. Technical points are different than points from cautions.

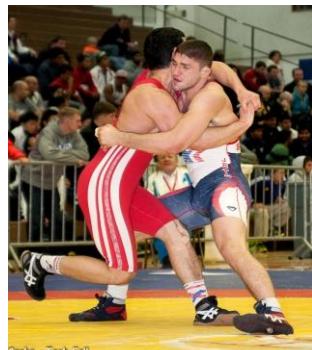


Figure 114



Figure 115

7. Fleeing the Hold typically occurs in the last 20-30 seconds of the period; however, it can occur anytime during the bout.
8. If you are going to penalize the winning wrestler, they must be "blatantly" fleeing. You must verbally set up the call and ensure there is no doubt to anyone why you made the call.

Greco-Roman Passivity/Fleeing the Hold evaluation example.

1. Which wrestler is passive/fleeing? (Figure 116 applies)



Figure 116

Using verbal warnings and attentions effectively.

1. Verbal Warning. (Figure 117 applies)
 - a. If a wrestler has a substantial lead and is slowing down, SO WHAT!
 - b. They have "Earned the Right" to be technically passive (up to a point). You DO NOT need to immediately penalize them.
 - c. Before penalizing the winning wrestler, Ask yourself;
 - i. What has the losing wrestler done to warrant the winning wrestler to get penalized?
 - ii. You can give the winning wrestler a few commands, "*Blue Action*," "*Blue Contact*," etc. This helps with clock management and also lets the winning wrestler know they are being passive.



Figure 117

"Verbal"

2. Attention. (Figure 118 applies)

- a. If you are at the point in the bout where the winning wrestler has received numerous verbal warnings and passivity is not the most appropriate call, you may consider fleeing the hold.
- b. If you decide to go with fleeing the hold, you must first give an "Attention." Example: "*Red Action*," "*Red Action*," no improvement, stop the bout, "*Red ATTENTION Action*."
- c. It is very important when giving an attention and everyone knows why you are giving the attention as the next call will be a penalty.



Figure 118

"Attention"

PASSIVITY

1. **"Passivity is NOT stalling."** Stalling, according to the National Federation of High School Wrestling rules, "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 the score of the match."
2. Within international wrestling, passivity is determined to be a lack of scoring or lack of attempting to score. In other words, "*The absence of scoring is the absence of action*" Roy Scott.

Technical Passivity. Looking really good with lots of movement but not scoring.

There is a difference between “Moving Forward/Motion” and “Offensive Action/Attacking.” (Figures 119 & 120 apply)

1. When evaluating the action to determine if a wrestler is just "Motion/Moving Forward" or is creating "Offensive Action/Attacking", there are several indicators to differentiate between the two actions.
2. A wrestler that is just moving forward/motion will display a lot of movement and expend a great deal of energy but will not take any real offensive actions. They will give the illusion of offense but in actuality they are technically passive. Moving forward actions include; locking up, moving forward and not attacking or just push away; moving up and down but no real attempt to attack, moving side-to-side but again, no real attempt to attack. Moving forward is part of offensive action; however, it's not the only part. (Figure 119 applies.)
3. A wrestler that is attempting to score technical points will use offensive technics. In addition, an offensive wrestler will also use the seven basic wrestling skills; Stance, Motion, Level Change, Penetration, Lift, Back Step and Back Arch. Don't get tunnel-vision on one skill, a wrestler must utilize numerous skills during a legitimate offensive action. (Figure 120 applies.)



Figure 119



Figure 120

Referee-Judge-Chairman Passivity Teamwork. (Figure 121 applies)

1. Verbalization and clock management are the keys for the team to work together in order to make timely and accurate passivity calls during a bout.
2. The referee sets the stage for the judge and chairman.
3. Referee verbalization lets the judge/chairman/coaches and wrestlers know who is being identified for passivity.
4. Referee eye scan should nonverbally signal the referee team your intentions.
 - a. Example;
 - i. “**Red Action**”..no action..“**Red Action**”..no action - Eye Scan the Judge/Chairman...“**Red Action**”..no attack..signal **Red** passivity.
 - ii. You've given multiple commands, allowed time for the passive wrestler to attack/score and eye scanned the judge/chair.
 - iii. You have set up the passivity call for the referee team.



Figure 121

Every bout is different – Expect every bout to be 0-0.

(Figures 122 & 123 apply)

1. You must have an understanding of what is taking place during the bout.
2. If a wrestler has been “aggressive”, “taken risks” and “scored technical points” - reward their efforts.
3. **PHILOSOPHY:** “If a wrestler has scored technical points, they have “earned the right” to be technically passive, “Up to a point!” Do not let the wrestler with the lead take advantage of you.
4. The effort that goes with the technical points scored should determine technical passivity.
5. Once you have points on the board, you have a winner. You can ease off passivity. However, passivity does not go away entirely.



Figure 122

6. **PHILOSOPHY:** "you have a responsibility not to punish the wrestler that has earned the lead by penalizing him/her with overly strict calls or not rewarding risk."
7. **PHILOSOPHY:** "If a wrestler has scored substantial points (5 or more), "passivity" may not be an appropriate call. They have scored technical points. Fleeing the Hold may be more appropriate.
8. **PHILOSOPHY:** When all is even....."Sometimes, you may just have to pick someone."

9. Example: In a 0-0 bout. *The passivity warning times depicted below are a guide.*



Figure 123

- a. 1st PERIOD
 - i. 3:00 to 2:20; "1ST Passivity Call." Evaluate the action; who is being passive?
 - ii. 2:20 to 1:40; "2ND Passivity Call." Evaluate the action; who is being passive?
 - iii. 1:40 to 1:00; "3RD Passivity Call." Evaluate the action; who is being passive?
 - iv. 1:00 to 0:30; "Potentially 4TH Passivity Call." Evaluate the action; who is being passive?
This would rarely be made, if ever.
 - v. 0:40 to 0:00; Watch for fleeing the hold.
 - b. 2nd PERIOD
 - i. If no technical points have been scored and the only score is from passivity, look at the wrestler that has received the passivity points for technical passivity.
 - ii. 3:00 to 2:20; Give the wrestler who has earned the passivity points about 20 seconds to score. No score, ask for passivity.
10. A wrestler "can" be placed on a 2nd 30 second shot clock.
 11. In the second period, if putting a wrestler on the a 2nd -30 second shot clock or a call that could result in par terre will decide the bout, ensure there is enough time remaining in the bout after the penalty period or par terre position is completed so that the losing wrestler has time and an opportunity to win the bout.
 12. **PHILOSOPHY:** "If a wrestler has been hit with passivity and has given up points, "it's not their right to be reciprocated." They have to earn it.

Why Passivity? (Figure 124 applies)

1. Evaluate to the entire bout. How were points scored and how many?
2. In *Figure 124*, why would you penalize Blue with Passivity? You shouldn't. Blue has good position and Red has his head buried. Think to yourself, why penalize with passivity if they are scoring points.
3. Too many times, referees want to hit the wrong wrestler. "Think!"



Figure 124

"FLEEING the HOLD"

Standing.

1. Verbally and Visually set up the call.
 - a. After the verbal warnings, if no improvement, stop the bout, give an attention.
 - b. Use proper UWW vocabulary.
 - c. After the Attention, give the offending wrestler an opportunity to adjust.
 - d. If there is still no improvement, stop the bout and ask for fleeing the hold penalty.
 - e. This will keep time on the clock and will prevent further issues from occurring.
2. Tell the wrestler they are fleeing the hold, so they know why they are being penalized.

Par Terre. (*Figures 125 applies*)

1. Verbally and visually set up the call.
 - a. If the bottom-wrestler is closed and won't open, don't give a couple of open commands and then stand them up. You will be rewarding the bottom-wrestler for staying closed.
 - b. Slap the mat and give an "open" command to the bottom-wrestler.
 - c. If the bottom-wrestler still won't open, ask for a fleeing the hold penalty.
2. Leave the bottom wrestler down until they open up or penalized.
3. Don't let the bottom wrestler stay closed and dictate the bout to you.
4. Give the top-wrestler a fair chance to score.



Figure 125

Under-Attack. (*Figure 126 applies*)

1. If the wrestler under-attack drops to their knees in the zone and then gets driven into the protection area, think about Fleeing the Hold.
2. They are dropping down to simulate being in par terre so they won't give up any points when they go into the protection area.
3. If a wrestler is sprawling, they have a responsibility to circle and stay on the mat.



Figure 126

"FLEEING the MAT"

Defensive wrestler must defend their position. (*Figure 127 applies*)

1. Look at the entire action sequence.
2. Common mistake, "only" evaluating the last action (folkstyle).
3. If a wrestler (standing or par-terre) makes no attempt to stay on the mat, they are fleeing and penalize them in accordingly.
4. Four things to ask yourself when evaluating the action.
 - a. Where did the action begin? (center, zone, edge)
 - b. Who was the aggressor? (red or blue)
 - c. How did they get to the edge? (swam, backed up, wrestled)
 - d. What took them out of bounds? (bailed, crawled, wrestled)

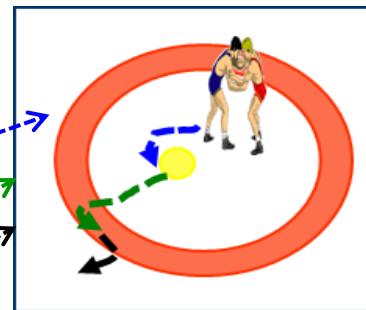


Figure 127

Standing. (*Figures 128, 129 & 130 apply*)

1. Did the wrestler move to the edge, stopped defending and walked/backed out of bounds?
2. Make sure you give the command "Red/Blue Zone". This will set up a fleeing the mat call.
3. Quadpod situation on the edge, watch for the defensive wrestler crawling out of bounds.
4. Offensive wrestler cannot lift and carry the defensive wrestler to the edge and place them in the protection area. This would be offensive fleeing.



Figure 128



Figure 129



Figure 130

Par Terre. (Figures 131 & 132 applies)

1. Did the defensive wrestler purposely place their head in the protection area?
2. Close to the edge, watch the defender's eyes. If the wrestler is glancing at the edge, he/she is looking for an escape.
3. Make sure you give the command "Red/Blue Place" to the defensive wrestler. This will set up a fleeing the mat call.



Figure 131



Figure 132

Danger. (Figure 133 applies)

1. Both wrestlers have a responsibility to stay in bounds.
2. If the defensive wrestler is in a bridge and only the head is touching the mat and while trying to maintain the bridge he/she slides out of bounds, this is not fleeing the mat. They can only go one way.
3. If the defensive wrestler is on their back and is actively using their elbows and hands to get out of bounds, this would be fleeing the mat.

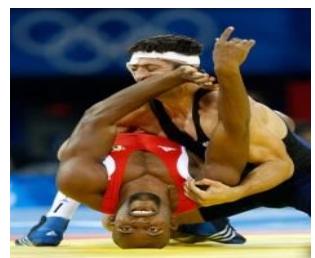


Figure 133

"FOULS & ILLEGAL HOLDS"

Defensive Foul.

1. Foul in the "Same Direction"; let the action continue allowing the offensive wrestler to score. After the action is complete, stop the bout and penalize accordingly.
2. Foul that "Changes Direction"; stop the action and penalize accordingly. Offensive wrestler cannot re-attack after the change of direction.

Defensive Illegal Hold.

1. Unless possible injury, let the action continue, allowing the offensive wrestler to score.
2. After the action is complete, stop the bout and penalize accordingly.



Figure 134

Offensive Foul / Illegal Hold. (Figure 134 applies)

1. Stop the action, offensive wrestler loses his/her position.
2. If the offensive wrestler repeats a foul (GR or FS), you can penalize them.
 - a. The first time an offensive foul occurs: "Attention".
 - b. The second time an offensive foul occurs, penalize accordingly.
3. The offensive wrestler cannot score using an illegal hold.

Pike Position. (Figures 135, 136, 137 & 138 apply)

1. If the defensive wrestler is lifted and the action stops or hesitates while they are in the "Pike Position"STOP THE ACTION! IMMEDIATELY!
2. At no time should the offensive wrestler be allowed to return, drop, or slam the defensive wrestler to the mat on their head while in that position.



Figure 135



Figure 136



Figure 137



Figure 138

"GRECO-ROMAN LEG FOULS"

Legs are going to touch.

- Just because the legs touch or are touched, does not mean it's a foul.
- Was an advantage gained by the contact?
- Did the wrestler actively use the legs or actively touch the legs?
- Before blowing the whistle, get confirmation for the leg foul.
- If you get confirmation, blow the whistle stopping the bout at the appropriate time, penalize and restart accordingly.
- If you do not get confirmation, keep wrestling.

Incidental leg contact. No foul.



Figure 139



Figure 140

Offensive leg foul. (*Figures 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144 & 145 apply*)

1. Pay close attention to the offensive wrestler subtly using the knees or feet to trip.
2. Was an advantage gained by the contact?



Figure 141



Figure 142



Figure 143



Figure 144



Figure 145

Defensive leg foul. (*Figures 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152 & 153 apply*)

1. Attempts to block an offensive score.
2. If you see a defensive foul. Signal the foul and let the action continue giving the offensive wrestler a chance to complete the action and score. (*Figure 133 applies*)
3. Ensure you watch the entire action sequence. Once the action is complete, score the offensive points and penalize the foul accordingly.



Figure 146



Figure 147



Figure



Figure 149



Figure 150



Figure 151



Figure 152



Figure 153

4. Scoring Sequence below. (*Figures 154, 155, 156, 157, 158 & 159 apply*)
 a. In *Figures 154, 155 & 156*, **Blue** lifts **Red** and begins a throw.



Figure 154



Figure 155



Figure 156

b. In

Figures 157 & 158, Red holds Blue's leg during the throwing action attempting to prevent landing in danger.

- c. In *Figure 159*, **Blue** completes the throw with **Red** lands in danger.



Figure 157



Figure 158



Figure 159

5. By allowing the action to continue, **Blue** will score the throw points and also get rewarded for **Red's** foul.

Par Terre leg fouls. (*Figure 160 applies*)

1. Lifting a leg is not necessarily a foul.
2. Lifting a leg must prevent the offensive wrestler from stepping over or getting to the side.
3. If lifting the leg prevents an action, it doesn't matter if it's straight or bent.



Figure 160

The difference between a good counter-attack and a foul can be very small. (*Figures 161 & 162 apply*)

1. Step back so you can see the entire action sequence.
2. In *Figure 161*, **Red's** hand is above the hip. Good Defense.
3. In *Figure 162*, **Red's** hand is below the hip. Foul.
4. The difference between good defense and a foul can be inches.



Figure 161



Figure 162

No Foul

Foul

"UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACTS OF PENALTIES"

1. You must understand what's going on in the bout and how cautions/passivity's can affect the outcome of the bout.
2. Don't over-officiate and penalize with overly strict calls.
3. Late in the bout, make sure you know what passivity or fleeing the hold call will do in the bout.
4. Will it decide the winner or change the outcome of the bout?

"HAVE THE COURAGE TO MAKE A BOUT DEFINING CALL" (*Figures 163 & 164 apply*)

1. Your #1 priority is to let the wrestlers decide the winner.
2. In most cases, there are rules in place so the wrestlers can decide the winner.
3. HOWEVER, if you are in a situation and required to make this call:
 - a. You have exhausted all other options.
 - b. You have set up the call extremely well.
 - c. EVERYONE (the referee team, coaches AND wrestlers) knows the call is coming.
 - d. Ensure there is enough time remaining on the clock for the offending wrestler to attempt to win the bout.



Figure 163



Figure 164

"END OF THE BOUT" (*Figures 165 & 166 apply*)

1. When the bout has ended, you should be the last one off the mat.
2. After you raise the winners hand, step to a position where you can observe both wrestlers until they have left the mat.
3. Do not turn your back or take your eyes off the wrestlers regardless how quiet the bout has been.
4. Punches, fights, etc. can erupt without any indications.
5. Once the wrestlers are off the mat, you can leave the mat.



Figure 165



Figure 166

"JUDGE MECHANICS"

A "Strong" or "Weak" Judge can "make" or "break" the referee team.

Call your own bout. (*Figure 167 applies*)

1. The referee and judge are a team and must work together.
2. The judge is not required to agree with the referee.
3. Offer options to the chairman when pertinent.
4. Don't offer options just to offer something different. This could backfire on you and your option could get confirmed and the wrong wrestler could get undeserved points or win the bout. Be selective when giving options.
5. Sit emotionless, no excessive movements. Do not draw attention to yourself.
6. **PHILOSOPHY:** "*Whenever you move your hands, should either be writing a score on you score card or raising/lowering a paddle*".
7. If you see a foul, signal caution, get the chairman's attention.
8. Don't get into a discussion with the coach; that is the chairman's job.
9. Your understanding of what is taking place in the bout can help or sink the referee.
10. You need to be comfortable using the white paddle.



Figure 167

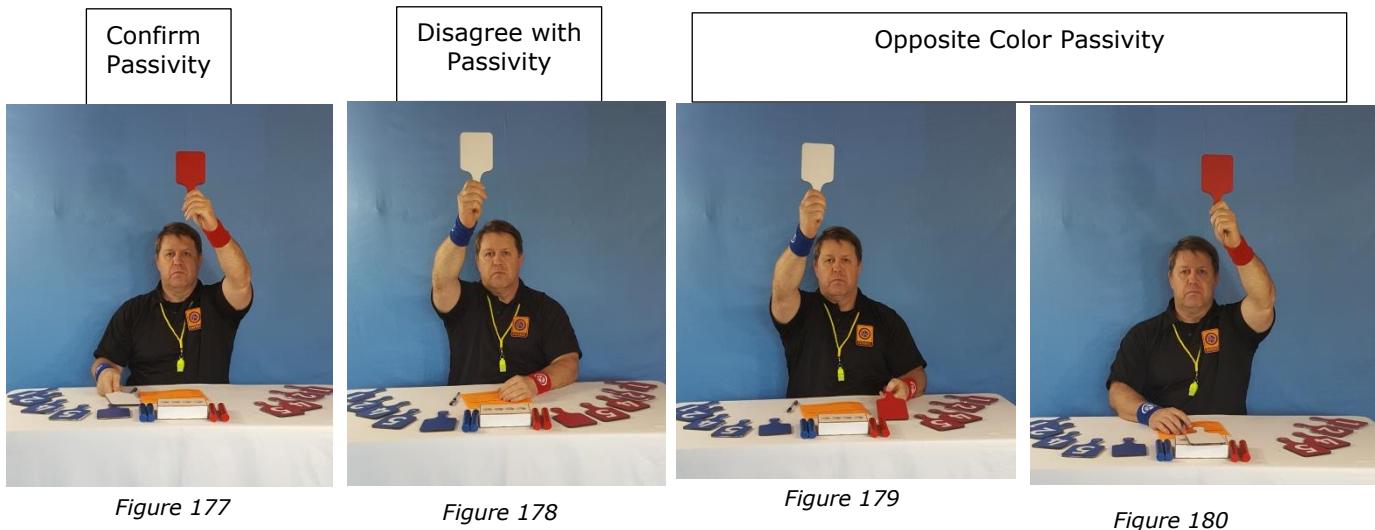
Proper Scoring-Paddle Mechanics. (Figures 168, 169, 170, 171, 172 apply)

1. Do not play with the paddles.
 2. Score the action by raising the paddle over your head (not out to the side), PAUSE, set it down.
 3. Continue watching the action. Once the action has stopped, mark the score card.
 4. Do not look down at the score card until action has stopped. You may miss an action.
 5. When scoring multiple actions, raise only one-colored paddle at a time in the order the points are scored.
 6. Do not hold up multiple paddles at the same time.
7. Proper Paddle Mechanics
- a. White paddle. (*Figure 168 applies*)
 - b. Single scoring action. (*Figure 169 applies*)
 - c. Multiple scoring actions. (*Figure 170 & 171 apply*)
 - d. Caution & point(s). (*Figure 172 applies*)



Proper Scoring-Paddle Mechanics in support of Passivity.

1. If you do not agree with the referee's call, do not raise the opposite colored paddle.
2. If the referee asks for one color (**Blue**), as the judge, you have several options;
 - a. "Confirm the call." Raise the appropriate colored paddle (**Blue**). (*Figure 177 applies*)
 - b. "Disagree with the call." Raise the white paddle and allow the chairman to make a call. (*Figure 178 applies*)
 - c. "Opposite Color is passive." Raise the white paddle disagreeing with the initial call. Set the white paddle down. Then raise the opposite colored paddle (**Red**) indicating you are identifying **Red** as being passive, not **Blue**. (*Figure 179 & 180 apply*)



Improper Scoring-Paddle Mechanics

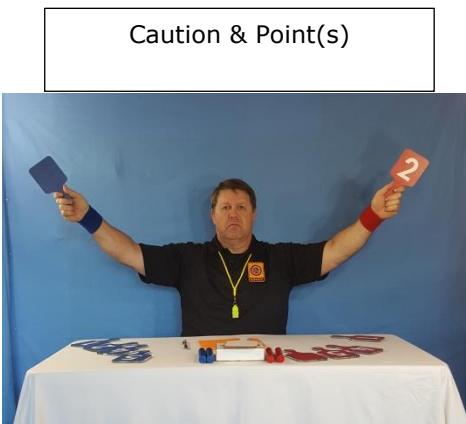
1. Paddle out to the side. (*Figure 173 applies*)
2. Palming the paddle in front of the face. (*Figure 174 applies*)
3. Caution and points paddle out to the side. (*Figure 175 applies*)
4. Both colors simultaneously. (*Figure 176 applies*)



Out to the Side



Palming the Paddle



Caution & Point(s)



Figure 173

Both Colors

Figure 174

Figure 175

Figure 176

CHAIRMAN'S CONFERENCE (*Figure 181 applies*)

Ask yourself. "Why is the Chairman calling a Conference?"

Chairman has an agenda for a conference.

1. May have seen something that the Referee and Judge did not.
2. May want to clarify what happened.
3. May be appeasing a coach.

Listen carefully and answer accordingly.

1. Be open-minded and flexible.
2. Answer the Chairman's question and that's all. It's not a debate.
3. Don't offer alternative possibilities, opinions or defend your call during a conference.
4. Your response should be short to the point.



Figure 181

THE CHALLENGE” (Figures 182 & 183 apply)

1. Mat-side video review “the brick” challenge procedure is a good tool to assist the referee team.
2. When a challenge occurs and “*the brick*” is thrown onto the mat, do not immediately blow the whistle stopping the action. This becomes a Chairman’s decision and he/she will stop the bout at the appropriate time in order to review the action being challenged.
3. When challenging an action; the coach has “APPROXIMATELY” five (5) seconds from the time the questioned score is posted on the official scoreboard to request a challenge. The challenge timeframe is an approximation and “NOT A HARD TIMELINE.”
4. However, a challenge may be accepted if it is made within a reasonable amount of time (longer than five seconds); especially, if the challenge will ultimately determine the winner of the bout. Internationally, challenges have been accepted well beyond five seconds after the score was posted on the scoreboard. Again, do not get fixated on five seconds, it is an approximation.
5. Once a challenge is accepted, the jury of appeals will review the video and render a decision. It is not possible to request a “counter challenge” and there is no follow-on discussion.
6. The jury of appeal’s decision is final.



Figure 182



Figure 183

“WHEN DISASTER STRIKES” (and it will)

Not every bout will go well.

1. You will have that special bout when disaster strikes and you make a bad call, the referee team is out of sync or you get disciplined.
2. When this happens, don't panic and handle the situation with professionalism.
3. If you make a mistake or bad call and get disciplined; “Own it, Learn from it and Let it go.”
4. Don't lose your composure, become emotional or argue with the tournament delegation, Head Referee, Clinician or Mat Chairman.
5. Your reaction and conduct “after the disciplinary action” will have a longer lasting and greater impact than what got you into trouble.

“THE BEST PART OF REFEREEING”

Friendships (Figure 184 applies)

- You will meet some great people (Referees, Coaches and Wrestlers) and forge life-long friendships.
- Have fun and enjoy yourself.
- “*No matter what happens during your referee career, they can never take your memories.*” Zach Errett.



Figure 184.

LIST OF FIGURES & PHOTOGRAPHS

- Cover Page: Tony Rotundo, "Zach Errett."
- Figure 1: Tony Rotundo, "Young Wrestler."
- Figure 3: UWW Press, "Staring the Bout."
- Figure 5: Tony Rotundo, "Casey Goessl."
- Figure 7: Tony Rotundo, "Kicked."
- Figure 9: John Sachs, "Sam Julian."
- Figure 11: Tim Pierson power-point image.
- Figure 13: John Sachs, "Sam Julian."
- Figure 15: John Sachs, "Casey Goessl."
- Figure 17: UWW Facebook, "Hard Shot."
- Figure 19: Tony Rotundo, "USA Wrestlers."
- Figure 21: Google Images, "Coach Momir."
- Figure 23: UWW Press, "Yellow Card"
- Figure 25: John Sachs, "Quadpod."
- Figure 27: John Sachs, "Merkel."
- Figure 29: Tony Rotundo, "Eric Fajerman."
- Figure 31: Tony Rotundo, "Front Head Lock1."
- Figure 33: Tony Rotundo, "Front Head Lock3."
- Figure 35: Tony Rotundo, "Stand Up."
- Figure 37: John Sachs, "2 vs 4-1."
- Figure 39: John Sachs, "2 vs 4-3."
- Figure 41: John Sachs, "Fireman's Carry."
- Figure 43: John Sachs, "Edge1."
- Figure 45: Tony Rotundo, "Correct Throw1."
- Figure 47: Tony Rotundo, "Correct Throw3."
- Figure 49: Tony Rotundo, "Correct Throw5."
- Figure 51: Tony Rotundo, "Correct Throw7."
- Figure 53: 2014 FILA New Rules Brief.
- Figure 55: John Sachs, "Slip Throw1."
- Figure 57: John Sachs, "Catch1."
- Figure 59: Youtube, "Misid Slip Throw2."
- Figure 61: Youtube, "Misid Slip Throw4."
- Figure 63: John Sachs, "Throw2."
- Figure 65: John Sachs, "Throw4."
- Figure 67: Tony Rotundo, "UWW Ref."
- Figure 69: Tony Rotundo, "Wrestlers."
- Figure 71: Tony Rotundo, "Wrestlers."
- Figure 73: Tony Rotundo, "UWW Referee."
- Figure 75: UWW Press, "Gut Wrench."
- Figure 77: Tony Rotundo, "MisId Turn2."
- Figure 79: NBC, "Tim Pierson."
- Figure 81: UWW Facebook, "Na Humma."
- Figure 83: John Sachs, "Hands in Face #2."
- Figure 85: John Sachs, "Out of Bounds Throw."
- Figure 87: Tony Rotundo, "Tom Clark1."
- Figure 89: Tony Rotundo, "Tom Clark3."
- Figure 91: John Sachs, "Push1."
- Figure 93: John Sachs, "Attack1."
- Figure 95: Google Images, "Locked Fingers."
- Figure 97: John Sachs, "Fingers1."
- Figure 99: John Sachs, "Fingers3."
- Figure 101: John Sachs, "Fingers5."
- Figure 103: Tony Rotundo, "Illegal Hold1."
- Figure 105: Google Images, "Blocking."
- Figure 107: John Sachs, "Forearm."
- Figure 109: John Sachs, "Closed."
- Figure 111: John Sachs, "Arm Block1."
- Figure 113: John Sachs, "Choke"
- Figure 115: John Sachs, "Attack2."
- Figure 117: John Sachs, "Sam Julian."
- Figure 119: Tony Rotundo, "Motion."
- Figure 121: Tony Rotundo, "Sam Julian."
- Preface: Tony Rotundo, "Tim Pierson."
- Figure 2: Tony Rotundo, "Jordan Burroughs."
- Figure 4: Tim Pierson power-point image.
- Figure 6: Facebook, "Casey Goessl."
- Figure 8: Tim Pierson power point image.
- Figure 10: John Sachs and Google Images.
- Figure 12: Tony Rotundo, "Tim Pierson."
- Figure 14: UWW Press, "Referee Holding Points High."
- Figure 16: Tony Rotundo, "Gary Bird."
- Figure 18: Google Images, "Hand Shake."
- Figure 20: Tony Rotundo, "Hand to face."
- Figure 22: Tony Rotundo, "Coach Brands."
- Figure 24: John Sachs, "Double Leg."
- Figure 26: Tony Rotundo, "Quadpod."
- Figure 28: Google Images, "Merkel."
- Figure 30: Tony Rotundo, "Toska Adams."
- Figure 32: Tony Rotundo, "Front Head Lock2."
- Figure 34: Tony Rotundo, "Front Head Lock4."
- Figure 36: John Sachs, "Getting Lifted."
- Figure 38: John Sachs, "2 vs 4-2."
- Figure 40: John Sachs, "2 vs 4-4."
- Figure 42: John Sachs, "Bad Landing."
- Figure 44: John Sachs, "Edge2."
- Figure 46: Tony Rotundo, "Correct Throw2."
- Figure 48: Tony Rotundo, "Correct Throw4."
- Figure 50: Tony Rotundo, "Correct Throw6."
- Figure 52: 2014 FILA New Rules Brief.
- Figure 54: 2014 FILA New Rules Brief.
- Figure 56: John Sachs, "Slip Throw2."
- Figure 58: Youtube, "Misid Slip Throw1."
- Figure 60: Youtube, "Misid Slip Throw3."
- Figure 62: John Sachs, "Throw1."
- Figure 64: John Sachs, "Throw3."
- Figure 54: Tony Rotundo, "Parterre-Sam Julian."
- Figure 68: Tony Rotundo, "Kevin Maxwell."
- Figure 70: Google Images, "Wrestlers."
- Figure 72: Tony Rotundo, "Wrestlers."
- Figure 74: Tony Rotundo, "Zach Errett."
- Figure 76: Tony Rotundo, "MisId Turn1."
- Figure 78: Tony Rotundo, "MisId Turn3."
- Figure 80: Johnny Ruggiano TMWC, "Tim Pierson."
- Figure 82: John Sachs, "Hands in Face #1."
- Figure 84: John Sachs, "Foot & Hand Out."
- Figure 86: John Sachs, "Danny Blackshear."
- Figure 88: Tony Rotundo, "Tom Clark2."
- Figure 90: Facebook, "Sam Julian."
- Figure 92: John Sachs, "Push2."
- Figure 94: John Sachs, "Attack2"
- Figure 96: Google Images, "Jon Anderson."
- Figure 98: John Sachs, "Finger2."
- Figure 100: John Sachs, "Fingers4."
- Figure 102: Tony Rotundo, "Grab Fingers."
- Figure 104: Tony Rotundo, "Illegal Hold2."
- Figure 106: John Sachs, "Robbie Smith2."
- Figure 108: John Sachs, "Justin Lester."
- Figure 110: Tony Rotundo, "Closed."
- Figure 112: John Sachs, "Arm Block2."
- Figure 114: John Sachs, "Attack1."
- Figure 116: Google Images, "Wrestlers."
- Figure 118: UWW Press, "Attention."
- Figure 120: Tony Rotundo, "Attack."
- Figure 122: John Sachs, "Danny Blackshear."

Figure 123: Tony Rotundo, "Tim Pierson"
Figure 125: Tony Rotundo, "Sam Julian."
Figure 127: Tim Pierson power-point image.
Figure 129: UWW Facebook, "Wrestlers."
Figure 131: 2014 FILA New Rules Brief.
Figure 133: UWW Facebook, "Danger."
Figure 135: UWW Facebook, "Pike Position."
Figure 137: John Sachs, "Pike2."
Figure 139: Tony Rotundo, "Trip1."
Figure 141: John Sachs, "Offensive Foul1."
Figure 143: John Sachs, "Offensive Foul3."
Figure 145: John Sachs, "Offensive Foul5."
Figure 147: John Sachs, "Defensive Foul1."
Figure 149: John Sachs, "Defensive Foul3."
Figure 151: UWW Facebook, "Leg Foul."
Figure 153: UWW Press, "Leg Foul."
Figure 155: John Sachs, "Defensive Foul2."
Figure 157: John Sachs, "Defensive Foul4."
Figure 159: John Sachs, "Defensive Foul6."
Figure 161: John Sachs, "No Foul."
Figure 163: John Sachs, "Danny Blackshear1."
Figure 165: John Sachs, "UWW Referee."
Figure 167: John Sachs, "Shawn Thorson
& Mark McNichol."
Figure 169: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson2."
Figure 171: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson4."
Figure 173: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson6."
Figure 175: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson8."
Figure 177: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson10."
Figure 179: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson12."
Figure 181: Facebook, "Mark Mundy."
Figure 183: Larry Slater, "Rick & Bill."

Figure 124; Tony Rotundo, "No Passivity."
Figure 126: John Sachs, "Flee."
Figure 128: UWW Press, "Sam Julian."
Figure 130: John Sachs, "Wrestlers."
Figure 132: 2014 FILA New Rules Brief.
Figure 134: John Sachs, "Spine Compression."
Figure 136: John Sachs, "Pike1."
Figure 138: John Sachs, "Pike3."
Figure 140: Tony Rotundo, "Trip2."
Figure 142: John Sachs, "Offensive Foul2."
Figure 144: John Sachs, "Offensive Foul4."
Figure 146: Tony Rotundo, "Tom Clark."
Figure 148: John Sachs, "Defensive Foul2."
Figure 150: John Sachs, "Defensive Foul4."
Figure 152: John Sachs, "Caylor Williams."
Figure 154: John Sachs, "Defensive Foul1."
Figure 156: John Sachs, "Defensive Foul3."
Figure 158: John Sachs, "Defensive Foul5."
Figure 160: Google Images, "Not Leg Foul."
Figure 162: John Sachs, "Foul."
Figure 164: John Sachs, "Danny Blackshear2."
Figure 166: John Sachs, "Jason Babi."
Figure 168: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson1."

Figure 170: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson3."
Figure 172: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson5."
Figure 174: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson7."
Figure 176: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson9."
Figure 178: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson11."
Figure 180: Erica Pierson, "Tim Pierson13."
Figure 182: John Sachs, "Casey Goessl."
Figure 184: Facebook, John Sachs, Tony Rotundo
and Larry Slater, "Friends."

