

## The match

At the start of the first period, the two wrestlers are in the neutral position. Usually at the start of the second and third periods, both wrestlers start in the referee's position, with one wrestler on the bottom with hands spread out and feet held together, and one wrestler on the top with his hand around the opponent's waist for control.

A **match** is a competition between two individual wrestlers of the same weight class. The match consists of three periods totaling six minutes, with an overtime round if necessary if the score is tied at the end of regulation.

## Period format

### Pre-match

Each wrestler is called by the referee, reports to the scorer's table, steps onto the mat, and may put on a **green** (for the home team) or **red** (for the visiting team) anklet about two inches wide which the referee will use to indicate scoring. The referee then prepares the wrestlers to begin the first period.

### First period

The referee prepares both wrestlers for the first period by making sure each wrestler is correctly in the **neutral position**. The neutral position has the two wrestlers standing opposite each other on their feet. Each wrestler starts with his lead foot on the green or red area of the starting lines, and his other foot even with or behind the lead foot. Both wrestlers then usually slightly crouch with their arms in front of them at or above waist level. In this position, neither wrestler is in control. When the referee is certain that both wrestlers are correctly in the neutral position, he blows the whistle to begin the first period (as well as whenever wrestling is resumed, such as at the beginning of the second and third periods, when contestants resume wrestling after going out of bounds, etc.). The match commences with each wrestler attempting to *take down* his opponent. There are various ways to accomplish this, such as taking a shot or completing a throw.

### Second period

If the match is not ended by a fall, technical fall, default, or disqualification, the referee then prepares both wrestlers to begin the second period. After the first period ends, one wrestler will have the choice of starting position in the second period. In dual meets, this is determined by the colored disk toss that took place before the meet began. In tournaments, the referee will toss a colored disk, with a **green**-colored side and a **red**-colored side, and the winner of that disk toss will have the choice of position. The wrestler could choose between the neutral position, or to begin in what is called the **referee's position** on the mat. The referee's position has both wrestlers beginning action at the center of the mat with one wrestler (in the **defensive starting position**) on the bottom with his hands spread apart in front of the forward starting line and his knees spread apart behind the rear starting line with his legs held together. The other wrestler on the top (in the **offensive starting position**) then kneels beside him with one arm wrapped around the bottom wrestler's waist (with the palm of his hand against the opponent's navel) and the other hand on or over the back of the opponent's near elbow for control. The wrestler starting in the offensive position is in control of his opponent, and thus does not need to gain control to score nearfall points or a pin. The wrestler could also choose the defensive (bottom) position,

where he would have the opportunity to score points for a reversal or an escape and a subsequent takedown, as riding time is not calculated in high school wrestling. The wrestler could also defer his choice to the beginning of the third period.

Any of the starting positions may be used to resume action during a period when the wrestlers go off the mat, depending on the referee's judgment as to whether any or which wrestler had the advantage. The use of the optional starting position has been reduced by a 2007-08 rule change, which allows the offensive wrestler to choose to start from a neutral position, yielding one point for an escape to the defensive wrestler. The offensive wrestler must signal this intention to the referee before he comes set.

### **Third period**

If the match is not ended by a fall, technical fall, default, or disqualification, the referee then prepares both wrestlers to begin the third period. The wrestler who did not choose the starting position for the second period now chooses the starting position.

### **Overtime round**

#### **Sudden victory period**

If the third period ends in a tie, a one-minute sudden victory period occurs. Both wrestlers start in the neutral position. The first wrestler to score a point wins.

The referee raises the winners arm in victory after every match

#### **Tiebreaker periods**

If no points are scored in the sudden victory period, two 30-second tiebreaker periods occur. Both wrestlers start in the referee's position. The wrestler who won a colored disk toss made by the referee has the choice of either top or bottom position, or he may defer the choice to the opponent. After the wrestler makes the choice, the two contestants then wrestle. Either of the two wrestlers must try to score as many points as he can. Once one 30-second period is over, the wrestler who was in the bottom position then wrestles on the top in another 30-second period. Whoever scores the most points (or is awarded a fall, default, or disqualification) wins the match.

#### **Ultimate tiebreaker period**

If no points were scored or the score is still tied after the two 30-second tiebreaker periods, a final ultimate tiebreaker period is used. The ultimate tiebreaker period lasts for 30 seconds. Both wrestlers also start in the referee's position. The wrestler who scored the first points in regulation (except in the case of double-stalling or simultaneous penalties) has the choice of top or bottom position, or he may defer the choice to the opponent. If no points were scored in the regulation match, the winner of a colored disk toss will have the choice of position. After the wrestler makes his choice, the two contestants then wrestle. The person in the bottom position must then escape to get the win. If the wrestler in the offensive (top) position rides the defensive (bottom) wrestler (that is, keeps the defensive wrestler under control in the position of advantage) for the entire 30 seconds, he wins the match and is awarded one point.

## Post-match

After the match is completed, regardless of the victory condition, the wrestlers will return to the center of the mat (on the 10-foot inner circle) while the referee checks with the scorer's table. Upon the referee's return to the mat, the two wrestlers shake hands, and the referee declares the winner by raising the winner's hand. While not stipulated by the rules, it is customary for both contestants to then shake the hand of the opposing team's coach(es). Both contestants then return to their team benches from the mat.

## Match scoring

- ⤴ **Takedown (2 points):** A wrestler is awarded two points for a takedown when, from the neutral position, he gains control by taking the other wrestler down to the mat in bounds and beyond reaction time, and the supporting point(s) of either wrestler are in bounds. This is most often accomplished by attacking the legs of the opponent, although various throws can also be used to bring a wrestler down to the mat.
- ⤴ **Escape (1 point):** A defensive wrestler who is being controlled on the bottom is awarded one point for an escape when the defensive wrestler gains a neutral position and the offensive wrestler loses control of the opponent while the supporting point(s) of either wrestler remain in bounds.
- ⤴ **Reversal (2 points):** A defensive wrestler who is being controlled on the bottom is awarded two points for a reversal when he comes from the bottom/defensive position and gains control of the opponent either on the mat or in a rear standing position. Reversal points are awarded on the edge of the wrestling area if either wrestler's supporting point(s) or the feet of the scoring wrestler remain in bounds.
- ⤴ **Near Fall:** Near fall criteria is met when: (1) the offensive wrestler holds the defensive wrestler in a high bridge or on both elbows; (2) the offensive wrestler holds any part of both his opponent's shoulders or scapulae (shoulder blades) within four inches of the mat; or (3) the offensive wrestler controls the defensive wrestler in such a way that one of the bottom wrestler's shoulders or scapulae, or the head, is touching the mat, and the other shoulder or scapula is held at an angle of 45 degrees or less to the mat. The referee counts the seconds off. Near fall points are also known as "back points."
  - (2 points) - Two points are given when near fall criteria is met for two to four seconds. Two points can also be granted in cases where a pinning combination is executed legally and a near fall is imminent, but the defensive wrestler is injured, signals an injury, or bleeds excessively before the near fall criterion is met.
  - (3 points) - Three points are given when near fall criteria is met for five seconds or more. After five seconds, the referee awards three points and stops counting. When a near fall criterion is met that is between two and four seconds, and the defensive wrestler is injured, indicates an injury, or bleeds excessively, three points are also awarded.
- ⤴ **Penalty (1 or 2 points):** One or two points can be awarded by the referee to the opponent for various penalty situations. "Unsportsmanlike conduct" by the wrestler includes swearing, teasing the opponent, etc. "Unnecessary roughness" involves physical acts during the match that exceed normal aggressiveness. "Flagrant misconduct" includes actions (physical or nonphysical) that intentionally attack the opponent, the opponent's team, or others in a severe

way. Illegal holds are also penalized accordingly, and potentially dangerous holds are not penalized, but the match will be stopped by the referee. Also, "technical violations" such as stalling, interlocking hands, and other minor infractions are penalized. With some situations, such as stalling, a warning is given after the first occurrence, and if there is another occurrence the penalty point is given. In other situations, there is no warning and penalty points are automatically given. In general, after a certain number of occurrences where penalty points are given, the penalized wrestler is disqualified.

## Victory conditions in scholastic wrestling

A fall, also known as a pin, occurs when any part of both shoulders or both shoulder blades of the defensive wrestler is held in continuous contact with the mat for a specified amount of time (in scholastic wrestling for two seconds).

A match can be won in the following ways:

- ⤴ **Win by fall:** Falls (or pins) can be attained in many different technique combinations. The pinning situation seen here is that from a double arm tie-up. The wrestler later secured the fall.
- ⤴ **Win by technical fall:** If a fall is not secured to end the match, a wrestler can win a match simply by points. If a wrestler can secure an advantage of 15 points over an opponent, then the wrestler can win the match by technical fall. A technical fall is very likely when one wrestler has great control over the other wrestler and is able to score near fall points repeatedly. If the 15-point advantage is gained while the offensive wrestler has his opponent in a pinning situation, the match would continue to allow the offensive wrestler to secure the fall. If the offensive wrestler is unable to secure a fall, the match ends once a near fall situation is no longer seen by the referee or when the wrestlers return to the neutral position.
- ⤴ **Win by major decision:** If no fall or technical fall occurs, a wrestler can also win simply by points. If the match concludes, and a wrestler has a margin of victory of eight or more points over an opponent, but under the 15 points needed for a technical fall, the win is known as a **major decision**.
- ⤴ **Win by decision:** If the match concludes, and a wrestler has a margin of victory of less than eight points over an opponent, or wins the first point in a sudden victory period in overtime without gaining a fall, default, or a win by an opponent's disqualification, the wrestler then wins by **decision**.
- ⤴ **Win by default:** If for any reason, a wrestler is unable to continue competing during the match (e.g. because of injury, illness, etc.), his opponent is awarded victory by **default**. A wrestler can concede a win by default to his opponent by informing the referee himself of his inability to continue wrestling. The decision to concede the win by default can also be made by the wrestler's coach.
- ⤴ **Win by disqualification:** If a wrestler is banned from participating further in a match by virtue of acquiring penalties or for flagrant misconduct, his opponent wins by **disqualification**.
- ⤴ **Win by forfeit:** A wrestler also may gain a victory by **forfeit** when the other wrestler for some reason fails to appear for the match. For a wrestler to win by forfeit however, he must appear on the mat in a wrestling uniform. The existence of the forfeit condition encourages teams to have at least one junior varsity and one varsity competitor at every weight class.

## Team scoring in dual meets

On the high school level in a **dual meet**, the wrestler not only wins the match for himself, but also gains points for his team. The number of points awarded to a team during a dual meet depends on the victory condition. It is possible for a team to lose team points in certain infractions, such as unsportsmanlike conduct, flagrant misconduct, and unauthorized questioning of the referee by the coach.

### Summary of team scoring in a dual meet

<b>Victory Condition</b>	<b>Number of Team Points Awarded</b>
Fall	6
Forfeit	6
Default	6
Disqualification	6
Technical Fall	5
Major Decision	4
Decision	3

In a dual meet, when all team points are totaled, the team with the most points wins the competition. In all victory cases, the junior varsity and varsity competitions are scored separately.