**The 2019-20 Wrestling Rule Book added extended time and procedures for evaluation of head-neck-concussion time and that includes the role of an appropriate health care professional, which in NYS (according to rule book and NYSPHSAA) can be a physician, physician assistant, athletic trainer, registered nurse , nurse practitioner or EMT. The following information comes from the National Federation Rule Book, the NY State Wrestling Rules Interpreter and the NYSPHSAA office. The WOA of Section 5 has provided it to all wrestling coaches at the league meetings (Monroe County, Finger Lakes, Livingston County, Genesee Region and RCAC) serviced by our association. We ask that it be distributed to all athletic trainers and others who may be involved at wrestling dual meets and tournaments so they are familiar with the wrestling rules and procedures involving these types of injuries. Any questions should be directed to our WOA of Section 5 Wrestling Rules Interpreter, Dave Grazul. He can be contacted at dgrazul@rochester.rr.com.**

# Head-Neck-Concussion Time Added

**Rule 8-2-4;** In an ongoing effort to minimize the risk of injury in high school wrestling, additional time will be given to evaluate head and neck injuries when an appropriate health-care professional is present at a match.

In addition to the 1-1/2 minutes of injury time allotted for each wrestler, an appropriate health-care professional will have a maximum of five minutes to evaluate injuries to the head and neck involving the cervical column and/ or nervous systems. At that point, the wrestler would have to continue or default the match. The revision in injury time in **Rule 8-2-4** was approved by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee at its April 3-5 meeting in Indianapolis. All recommendations were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

A second injury to the head and neck involving cervical column and/or central nervous system in the same match shall require the wrestler to default the match. If an appropriate health-care professional is not present, all injuries to the head and neck would be covered by the same timeframe as all other injuries. When the five minutes expire, the athlete would be required to prepare without delay for continuation or default the match.

When the new provision is used in an injury time out, it **will** count as one of the two injury time outs allowed for the athlete, but the time consumed for the injury will in no way affect time used, or

available, for other types of injuries. Using any part of the five minutes is equivalent to using all of it; the time cannot be "banked."

If the appropriate health care professional decides the athlete may continue, the coach may overrule that decision. But the opposite is not true; the coach may not overrule the health care professional's decision that the athlete may not continue.

In the case of a wrestler exhibiting signs of a concussion, the individual would be removed from the match and could not return to competition in the absence of an appropriate health-care professional.

In the absence of an appropriate health care professional, all injuries to the head and neck involving the head, neck, and/or cervical column will be covered in 1-1/2 minutes like all other injuries.

It is not up to the official to determine if the additional time is needed. It is part of the official's job to meet with the appropriate health care provider prior to competition to make sure he or she understands the rule and how it should be applied.

In order to alert timers that the rule is in force, a new signal has been adopted. As seen in the PlayPic below, the referee places a fist against the forehead.



**Rule 8-2-4;** Protocol for the modified rule to extend time to evaluate head, neck and cervical column injuries to a maximum of five minutes.

In dual meets the referee will check with the host team and inquire as to whether or not there will be a designated onsite meet appropriate health care professional (physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner) to evaluate any skin condition that would make participation unadvisable and that the condition is not communicable and the athletes participation will not be harmful to any opponent. The referee must also inquire if a designated onsite meet appropriate healthcare professional (physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, EMT, or certified athletic trainer) will be available to do concussion evaluations.

When appropriate healthcare professional(s) are present they have jurisdiction to extend the allowed time limit to a maximum of five minutes for evaluation of injuries to the head and neck involving cervical column and or nervous system.

In the absence of an appropriate healthcare professional all injuries including injuries to the head and neck will be covered by the conventional timeframe of 1 minute and 30 seconds.

Any team that brings their own school district approved appropriate healthcare professional may request the extended time to evaluate the wrestler to make certain the athlete is not exhibiting signs or symptoms of a concussion.

Prior to each dual meet the referee will summons the coach and the team captains to the mat for a disk toss to determine who will have choice on the odd or even matches and to discuss their expectation on sportsmanship. If there is not a designated onsite meet appropriate health care professional, they will also ask each team’s coach if they have an appropriate healthcare professional to treat their wrestlers in the event of an injury. If they have one available, they will be granted additional time to assess a wrestler’s condition as provided by this year’s rule. If they do not have their own appropriate healthcare professional to evaluate a wrestler who has sustained an injury to the head or neck, they will be limited to the same time frame as all other injuries 1 minute 30 seconds.

In a dual meet tournament, the above protocol will be used for each dual meet.

In individual bracketed tournaments, the head official or their designee will check with the host management (tournament director) to see if they are providing designated onsite meet appropriate healthcare professional for skin check and or concussion evaluations as described above.

If an appropriate healthcare professional is not available, any injuries to the head or neck will be treated on a case by case basis. Anytime a wrestler sustains an injury to the head or neck the referee will ask the injured wrestler’s coach if they have their own meet appropriate healthcare provider to conduct a concussion evaluation. If they do, they will be granted the additional time as provided in the rule if they do not, they will be limited to the 1 minute 30 seconds of injury time.

**Rule 8-2-2, Situation C, Casebook Pg. 61;** Recovery time is a maximum of 2 minutes. A wrestler cannot take injury time or extended head/neck/cervical time immediately following recovery time.

New York State Public High School Athletic Association

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Marty,

After talking with Steve Dalberth, the NYSPHSAA Wrestling rules interpreter, the extended injury time will be handled in one of the following three ways.

1. Tournament designates medical personnel for the tournament (physician, athletic trainer, registered nurse, EMT). The at hlet e may be granted extended time.
2. No designated medical personnel but the school has brought their own school appointed medical personnel. The athlete may be given extended t ime.
3. No designated medical personnel or school appointed personnel. The athlete is not given extended time.

Please let me know if you have any further quest ions .

Thanks.

Todd Nelson

Assistant Director