



**Official Rules Interpretations/Clarifications and Situations**  
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**Last Updated 12-14-2015**

**Rule:** 3.12 Questioning the Timing and/or Scoring a Match

**Date:** 9-10-2015

**Question:** What is the proper way to request that the timing and/or scoring for a match be reviewed?

**Ruling:** When the coach wishes to request a review of timing and/or scoring they shall approach the score table and indicate to the scorer they would like to have the match stopped for timing and scoring review. The individuals working the score table will then notify the referee(s) to stop the bout. Once the bout is stopped and the official approaches the score table, the coach may express his concern to the official, and then return to their appropriate corner so that the review can be accomplished by the scorer, the referee, and the assistant referee, if applicable. Once the review is completed the referee shall indicate to each corner whether there was a change, or no change in the score or time and the score table will make any appropriate changes to the score clock.

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**Rule:** 3.16.2 Tournament Committee: Arbitration of All Disputes

**Date:** 9-10-2015

**Question:** Can a tournament committee arbitrate a match dispute, or an error of timing or scoring within a match?

**Ruling:** No, tournament committees arbitrate **non-match related disputes only.**

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**Rule:** 5.18 Interlocking Fingers in the Neutral Position

**Date:** 9-10-2015

**Question:** Is grasping all four fingers together in the neutral position considered interlocking fingers? Additionally, do both athletes get a warning before being charged with an interlocking fingers violation? Finally, how exactly should the stalling call be made when the 2<sup>nd</sup> incidence of interlocking fingers occurs?

**Ruling:** Interlocking fingers is described as: the fingers, of either one or both hand(s), of each wrestler are laced alternately with the opponent's fingers. One wrestler grasping all four of the opponent's fingers together is not considered interlocking fingers violation. When an official calls stalemate for the first instance of interlocking fingers, this stalemate is alerting both wrestlers that the next instance of interlocking fingers, as determined by the referee, will be called stalling.

When/if a second occurrence of interlocking fingers occurs the match shall be stopped and the referee will call the appropriate person(s) for stalling. If it is apparent to the referee that both athletes are equally responsible for the interlocking of fingers they can call stalling on both athletes. Please note: this is the only time a match is stopped in the neutral position to make a stalling call.

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**Rule:** 5.9.2 (a) (b) & (c); Rule 5.9.2.2; Rules 5.9.2.5 neutral position stalling

**Date:** 9-10-2015

**Descriptor:** Rule 5.9.2 states the following: Each wrestler must attempt to work toward the center of the mat and continue wrestling in an attempt to secure a takedown, regardless of the time or score of the match. When wrestling is stopped in the neutral position for going out of bounds, one of the following three calls shall be made: a) stalling on one or both wrestlers for leaving the wrestling area; b) stalling for pushing or pulling the opponent out of bounds; or c) wrestling action is taking place.

The following official interpretation/clarifications shall be used to support all of the noted rules in this memo and any additional supporting rules not mentioned but determined applicable.

#### 5.9.2(a) & associated Rule 5.9.2.2 neutral stalling

a) stalling on one or both wrestlers for leaving the wrestling area;

**Ruling:** If wrestler A is pursuing wrestler B to compete, and wrestler B backs out of bounds with minimal to no effort to circle back into the competition area, wrestler B is considered stalling. The threshold of minimal to no effort applies in all standing neutral wrestling situations, regardless of the hold or lack of a hold one wrestler has on another; any wrestler on the out of bounds line must make substantial effort to circle back into the competition area. If both wrestlers are straddling the out of bounds line and they go out of bounds simultaneously, then they are equally responsible for not circling back into the competition area and they will both be called for out of bounds neutral stalling.

The neutral position stalling criteria applies immediately after the referee awards an escape point. However, an escape that is awarded as a loss of control call after the wrestlers have gone out of bounds will not warrant a stalling call.

#### 5.9.2(b) & associated Rule 5.9.2.5 neutral stalling

b) stalling for pushing or pulling the opponent out of bounds;

**Ruling:** If wrestler A is on or near the out of bounds line and actively trying to circle into the competition area, is met by, his opponent, wrestler B, who is pushing, simply to impede, inhibit or block his wrestler A's attempts to circle in bounds; and this action results in an out of bounds call, then this is considered out of bounds stalling by pushing on opponent (B).

Out of bounds stalling by pushing can occur in any wrestling hold or position in which the athletes are in the standing neutral position.

Pulling an opponent out of bounds to avoid being scored on, and/or to unnecessarily force a restart. Out of bounds stalling by pulling can occur in any wrestling hold or position in which the athletes are in the standing neutral position. Additionally, Rule 5.9.2.3 shall be called using this interpretation.

#### 5.9.2(c) Neutral stalling

c) wrestling action is taking place.

**Ruling:** Action calls will be indicated when there is aggressive wrestling by both athletes with the out of bounds line playing little to no role in the wrestler's actions or decisions. Aggressive wrestling is characterized by athletes that are actively executing a wrestling maneuver, or working aggressively to score or not be scored on.

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**Rule:** 5.9.3.a and Rule 5 WI Situation #1 drop down rule

**Date:** 9-10-2015

**Ruling:** The following interpretation is added to the above noted rule and interpretation: If the offensive wrestler drops down below the buttocks and lifts the defensive wrestlers leg up to the standing position but the defensive wrestler does not come up to the standing position with him, the count will continue.

Additionally, the drape ride, where the wrestler holds the ankle and a cross face in order to work towards securing a cradle or other pinning/turning move is allowable, as is the continued use of the cross-body ride and securing the ankle to break the person down and/or setup turning and/or pinning holds from this offensive position.

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**Rule:** 5.9.3.b waist and lower leg rides

**Date:** 9-10-2015

**Question:** When using the waist and ankle ride, can the offensive wrestler continue to hang onto the ankle once the defensive wrestler is broken down to the mat?

**Ruling:** Unless the offensive wrestler is using the lower leg to immediately execute a pinning or turning combination, the offensive wrestler must release the hold after breaking the defensive wrestler down to the mat.

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**Rule:** 5.9.3.b waist and lower leg rides

**Date:** 9-10-2015

**Ruling:** The following interpretation is added to the above noted rule:

When utilizing wrestling techniques, such as a drape ride or a cross body ride where the athlete is grasping the ankle but the top hand is near the neck or in a cross face position, the five count is not required. In these two special situations, officials can still, if deemed appropriate, utilize existing stalling rules to call the offensive wrestler for stalling, but no verbal and visual count should occur. Additionally, if the offensive wrestler has one arm around the waist and the other arm through the crotch of the defensive wrestler, and has a clear grasp on the defensive wrestler's wrist (ball and chain type technique) this should not be considered a situation in which a mandatory count is required. Please keep in mind, in this position the offensive wrestler **must** have a hold of the wrist.

A wrestler may use the waist and ankle ride throughout a match, however, it is important to note that gaming the rule by releasing and immediately re-grasping after the count is stopped can result in an immediate stall call.

Additionally, neither a waist and ankle ride that turns into a drop-down position, or a drop-down position that turns into a waist and ankle ride require a restart of the referees verbal and visual five count.

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**Rule:** 6.1.1 Unethical Timeouts

**Date:** 9-10-2015

**Question:** What happens when/if a coach continues to repeatedly call for a review of timing and/or scoring when there has obviously been no error made and the coach is simply trying to interrupt the match?

**Ruling:** A coach that, in the judgment of the official, repeatedly and unnecessarily stops the wrestling action to question timing and scoring, can be charged as requesting an unethical timeout and penalized with a control of mat area violation.

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Updates 10-21-2015

**Rule:** 6.1.2 Injury Timeouts

**Date:** 10-21-2015

**Interpretation:** In addition to the primary interpretation posted on the homepage of the Center Mat website the following interpretation shall also apply: The referee shall not start injury time until medical personnel arrive at the mat of the injured athlete.

**Question:** What happens if a wrestler calls an injury timeout and then notifies the referee that he is OK to continue wrestling prior to any medical personnel arriving onto the mat? Will this wrestler be charged with a timeout and will any injury time be used?

**Ruling:** In this instance, a wrestler will be charged with an injury timeout and the referee should advise the scorer to log 1 second of injury time used.

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**Rule:** 6.1.5 Referee Timeout, Concussion Evaluation Timeouts

**Date:** 10-21-2015

**Interpretation:** In addition to the original interpretation found on the homepage of the Center Mat website, the following interpretation applies: Only the referee or the medical personnel are allowed to request the concussion evaluation timeout.

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11-4-2015 Updates

**Rule:** Rule 1.8 on page 11 Tournament Setup

**Question:** I have a quick question concerning Rule 1.8 and the placement of chairs in the corner of the mat for coaches and medical personnel. In the case where there is not two (2) coaches present in the corner, is it permissible for the credentialed medical person to sit in one of the front two (2) chairs? I understand that the medical person should not displace a coach but there are numerous episodes when a team has multiple individuals wrestling simultaneously on separate mats and there are not two (2) coaches per mat. In previous years, some officials have required the medical person to sit in the back chair even when they were the only one occupying the bench area. As I read the rule, I did not interpret it to mean that the medical person was REQUIRED to sit in the back chair only.

**Interpretation:** If during a tournament, the coaches corner is setup with a single chair placed behind the two coaches chairs, then the medical personnel shall sit in the back chair, if two coaches are present. However, if there is only one coach present then the medical personnel is allowed to two sit in one of the front chairs.

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**Rule:** Rule 5.9.2.6 Interlocking fingers

**Question:** If the referee sees interlocking fingers should he stop the match instantly to make the stalemate/warning call and/or the stalling call?

**Interpretation:** The referee is allowed to provide for a small amount of reaction time in calling interlocking fingers. If the wrestler's interlock fingers and then immediately work towards releasing this situation then the call can be held. However, if it is clear that one or both of the wrestlers is/are continually interlocking and releasing repeatedly, and/or they interlock fingers and hold that position beyond a reaction time period (as determined by the referee) then the referee should stop the match immediately and make the appropriate call. Referees should refer to guidance provided by Tim Shiels on what to look for with interlocking fingers, and some appropriate verbal cues to use in order to handle interlocking fingers during the match.

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**Rule:** 3.21 Video Review and the 5 count

**Question:** Red & Green wrestlers are in the 2nd :30 OT, Red is in control of Green. Red wrestler drops down on Green, referee does not start his count. 3 seconds later the Green wrestler escapes. Can the Red coach challenge that the referee did not start his count? If so, the escape would be nullified correct?

**Answer:** Yes, the red coach can challenge this call. The official would need to be certain that there was enough time remaining on the clock so that had the count been started properly it would/could have resulted in a 5th count, which would have stopped the match to issue the stall warning. If per the video review, there was sufficient time to achieve the 5th count then this is basis for overturning the call, nullifying the escape point and re wrestling that portion of the match. If on the other hand for example, there were only 4 seconds on the clock at the point of the drop down, then this would indicate no substantive error occurred on the part of the official. The lack of a count in and of itself would not warrant a reversal of this call because even if the count had begun, there was not enough time to reach a 5th count and the escape would stand.

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**Rule:** 2.6 and 5.9.3.a.b.c takedowns and the drop down rules

**Question:** Another situation was also from a takedown award. Wrestler A was awarded a takedown and moved into a hand-turk situation (bottom leg cradle) but the official began the 5 second count immediately and hit Wrestler A with a stall call after reaching 5. My opinion is that Wrestler A should be able to transition to this effective near fall opportunity and not have a count against him. A question about this would be if in the referee's position, the top wrestler used a far ankle/far knee breakdown (which would start the 5 second count) and then, after breaking his opponent to a hip, would be allowed to transition to a hand-turk situation for a turning opportunity?

**Answer:** The hand-turk, or bottom leg cradle situation is not a position in which the 5 count should be utilized. Referees should allow this action to continue and if it becomes apparent that the wrestler is using the technique as a stalling tactic then the wrestler should be called for stalling using existing rules. To answer specifically your second question, once the wrestler has transitioned from the waist and ankle ride to the bottom leg hand-turk position the count would stop.

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**Rule:** 2.6 takedowns

**Question:** Neutral position, green shoots in on an outside single, red counters with a deep whizzer. Somehow green is able to walk his hips behind red & put in the far side boot. Red still has the deep whizzer. No action can be taken by either wrestler. Is green awarded the takedown?

**Answer:** in order for this to be considered a takedown, two things must occur: 1) the leg must be in; 2) the wrestler with the leg in, must be able to advance his leg – side arm, off of the lower leg and up to at least the waist level of the athlete being taken down. If he can satisfy both of those criteria he should be awarded the takedown regardless of whether the other athlete has, or does not still have the whizzer. Both hands remaining on a single leg, and a leg in would not constitute a takedown.

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Updated 11-19-2015

**Rule:** 5.9.2.3 Stalling when kicking out from a lower leg hold

**Question:** When in the neutral position if a wrestler kicks out of a low leg hold and goes beyond the OB cylinder he is to be called for stalling. But what if he is already outside of the cylinder when he gets into the lower leg hold and then kicks out? Some say to call the stall, but the rule states "going out of the wrestling area".

Please note, this interpretation supersedes any previous interpretations on rule 5.9.2.3. With consideration for the new neutral stalling rules, this new interpretation should be immediately applied when calling situations related to wrestlers kicking out from a lower leg hold in the neutral position.

**The current rule states:**

*Rule: 5.9.2.3 A wrestler shall be called for stalling if kicking out from a lower leg hold when this action results in the defending wrestler going out of the wrestling area.*

The phrase going out of the wrestling area is formally interpreted as **“an out of bounds call being made by the referee.”** When applying this rule in a match, the rulebook and my interpretation could then be read in this manner:

A wrestler shall be called for stalling if kicking out from a lower leg hold when the action results in an out of bounds call being made by the referee.

Knowing this, a wrestler who kicks out of a lower leg hold should not be called for stalling unless his actions results in an out of bounds call being made by the referee.

**Rationale:** as we know, one wrestler can be completely outside the wrestling cylinder but wrestling action can still be taking place, since the other wrestler is still within this cylinder. An inbounds leg attack, or a defense to a leg attack is all viable action up until the point in which an out of bounds call is made by the referee. In the case of rule 5.9.2.3, the point in which the attack

on the lower leg occurs is not relevant (in the cylinder, out of the cylinder, etc.), as long as the competitors are still considered to be in bounds. Understanding this, the defending wrestler who kicks out of a lower leg attack shall be called for stalling if that kick out results in the referee calling them out of bounds. If the kick out does not result in an out of bounds call then wrestling should continue normally. As a side note, this stall call could also be justified as out of bounds neutral stalling by pulling, rule 5.9.2.5.

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Updated December 14, 2015

**Rule:** 2.6 Takedown, near-side cradle from the neutral position, when to award the takedown.

**Question:** If wrestler A and B are in the neutral position and wrestler A secures a near-side cradle on wrestler B, when should you award points for a takedown to wrestler A.

**Answer:** This interpretation supersedes any previous interpretation on this subject. In the neutral position, when wrestler A secures a near-side cradle on wrestler B, a takedown shall be awarded once he has broken wrestler B down to his far hip. If wrestler A secures the near-side cradle while in the standing position he must still break wrestler B down to his far hip before the takedown will be awarded.