

2006 Freestyle Rules Changes (as of 9 July 2006)

At 2005 U.S. Nationals in Las Vegas, the first year under the new freestyle rules, analysis of 720 bouts studied found that:

1. 84% of the matches lasted less than 4 minutes
2. in championship matches, 25% fewer points were scored than under the 2004 rules (less scoring, but each score has more impact on outcome)
3. of wrestlers who lost the first period, 60% came back to win the match

The bout consists of up to three 2-minute periods with 30 second rest. First wrestler to win 2 periods wins match.

Ways to win a period:

1. Six point lead = great superiority
2. Two 3-point throws
3. 5-point throw
4. Pin (also ends match)
5. Ahead on points when time expires
6. If points are even, winner determined by ranking criteria:
 - cautions
 - quality of points - highest value action (3, 2, 1)
 - last point scored
7. If opponent is eliminated due to injury, three cautions, or misconduct

Eliminated from the rules:

1. Passivity calls
2. Limitation on scoring with ankle lace and gut wrench
3. Almost all par terre starts (*exceptions*: resumption after injury stoppage called by official; if foul occurs par terre; fleeing the mat on the back). Par terre is still important and wins many matches due to lower 6-point criteria for superiority and ability to repeat the ankle lace and gut wrench.
4. Choice of position after a caution (no choice given any more)
5. Escape point
6. Extra point for lift from par terre
7. Option to continue on tech – not being used in United States
8. Any injury time without blood is 1 point to opponent – not being used in United States.

Caution for Fleeing the Hold is still available and is being used where in the past we might have used passivity. Verbal warning = “Red, contact!” or “Red, head up!” or “Red, head out!” or “Red, open!”) Fleeing the hold can be anything that prevents scoring, not just keeping distance, e.g., blocking, holding.

If you go out of bounds standing you will lose 1 point unless done as an inherent part of a scoring throw that started in bounds. Going out of bounds par terre = no score, resume standing. Both wrestlers must be standing for the position to be considered standing (per Tucci at Las Vegas

Nationals). Verbal warnings = “Red, zone!” or “Red, center!” or “Zone!” or “Center!” Pushing out of bounds is OK (as of Las Vegas Nationals).

Caution for Fleeing the Mat is still available and is being used if the official thinks the wrestler went out on purpose, where exiting the mat has the effect of refusal to wrestle. Verbal warning should be given to set up the caution.

Freestyle clinch: If period ends 0-0 at end of two minutes, 30-second clinch determines winner. Disc is flipped, one color wins, e.g., Red. Red selects which leg Blue must present. Blue must present leg in square stance (no staggered stance). Red may take any hold with hands, wrists, or elbows, at or somewhat above the knee, with head outside. Defender getting clinched must put hands on attacker’s back before the leg is clinched to prevent false starts. Whistle blows and Red must score in 30 seconds or Blue gets one point (no caution). Period ends with first point scored. Bottom foul = Attention! followed by caution + 2. Top foul = Attention! followed by caution + 1. During the clinch there is no slip given, and wrestler underneath always loses a point. During the clinch if wrestler carries his opponent out of bounds without opponent’s feet touching the mat at all, attacker will receive a caution and 1 point goes to the opponent (treated like Fleeing the Hold).

Any holds that the official considers *potentially dangerous* or *illegal* may be stopped at discretion of the official. A hold may be potentially dangerous without being illegal by application. If attacker applies an illegal hold, the action is voided and attacker is given a verbal warning. If defender applies illegal hold, he will receive a caution, and the attacker will receive either one or two points depending on whether or not points were scored on the action anyway despite the illegal action. *Brutality* is flagrant misconduct and can be given caution + 2 with wrestler eliminated.

Examples of holds that are *illegal by application*:

1. Any action that takes a joint beyond range of motion
2. Scissors or figure-4 around the body or head
3. Holding the head or neck without an arm included (in any position)
4. Two hands on the head
5. Peeling the fingers
6. Throat holds
7. Pike position
8. Bowing the spine

Examples of holds that are *potentially dangerous*:

1. Any hold that places unreasonable pressure on a joint, particularly if the defender cannot easily release the pressure
2. Many positions in which one wrestler is standing and elevating a portion of a defending wrestler’s body who is on the ground are potentially dangerous depending on the angles at which force could be applied.
3. Lifting the defending wrestler from the mat when in a bridge position or pushing toward the head when in bridge.