

Minutes of the IHSA Wrestling Advisory Committee Meeting

March 6, 2024

The IHSA Wrestling Advisory Committee met Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

Committee members present: Matthew Yan, Chicago (Lane Tech); Mark Jolcover, Fox Lake (Grant); Mark Masters, Coal City; Rich Montgomery, Rock Falls; Andy Moore, Monticello; Scott Sullivan, Macomb; Eric Roberson, Alton (Sr.); Nate Kessen, Official; and Sam Knox, IHSA.

Guest Tony Clarke was also present.

The committee discussed and approved the minutes from the March 8, 2023 meeting.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. II. Dates and Sites: B. Dual Team Tournament Series VI. Tournament Structure and Time Schedules

Recommendation: Conduct the entire Dual Team State Finals tournament on Saturday of the current Girls/Dual Team State Finals weekend.

Rationale: The Dual Team State Finals was conducted only on Saturday for many years, so we already know that format is a safe and efficient way to conduct this tournament. This recommendation, combined with Recommendation 2, will allow girls to have the spotlight on Friday and teams to have the spotlight on Saturday.

2. II. Dates and Sites: C. Girls Individual Tournament Series VI. Tournament Structure and Time Schedules

Recommendation: Conduct the entire Girls State Finals tournament on Friday of the current Girls/Dual Team State Finals weekend.

Rationale: Individual wrestlers are now allowed a maximum of six matches in one day with a minimum of 30 minutes rest between matches. The committee feels the entire tournament can be safely conducted in one day. This recommendation will create a State Finals tournament where girls are the only wrestlers competing that day in an event that doesn't conflict with a boys event.

3. II. Dates and Sites: A. 2. and C. 2.

Recommendation: Conduct the entire Boys and Girls Sectional tournament on Saturday of the current Sectional weekend.

Rationale: Individual wrestlers are now allowed a maximum of six matches in one day with a minimum of 30 minutes rest between matches. The committee feels the entire tournament can be safely conducted in one day. This recommendation will lower transportation, lodging, and meal costs for participating schools and will potentially allow more schools to host a Sectional since hosts will only need the gym for one day as opposed to two days.

4. II. Dates and Sites: C. Girls Individual Tournament Series Dates

VII. Advancement of Winners: A. Individual Advancements

Recommendation: Implement an additional Girls Regional tournament within each Sectional.

Three Regionals will feed into each Sectional.

The top 4 girls from each Regional weight class will advance to the Sectional, which will continue to be on the same weekend as the Boys Sectional (IHSA Week 32).

Each Girls Sectional bracket will have 12 wrestlers, just like the Boys Sectional.

Rationale: Girls wrestling participation continues to increase rapidly.

2021-22: 1,249 girls had their body fat assessed

517 girls participated in the Sectional

2022-23: 2,215 girls had their body fat assessed

908 girls participated in the Sectional

2023-24: 2,680 girls had their body fat assessed

1,426 girls participated in the Regional

Adding a Girls Regional tournament to each Sectional will reduce the potential overload of wrestlers at the Regional level and will allow the state series to operate more efficiently.

5. II. Dates and Sites

Recommendation: Starting in the 2025-26 school year, follow this state series schedule.

- Boys Regional Saturday of IHSA Week 30 (current Girls Regional weekend)
- Dual Team Sectional Thursday of IHSA Week 31 (current Boys Regional week)
- Girls Regional..... Friday & Saturday of IHSA Week 31 (current Boys Regional weekend)
- Boys & Girls Sectionals Saturday of IHSA Week 32
- Boys Individual State Finals Thursday, Friday, & Saturday of IHSA Week 33
- Girls Individual State Finals Friday of IHSA Week 34
- Dual Team State FinalsSaturday of IHSA Week 34

Rationale: Currently, the girls individual state series (from Regional to State Finals) is five weeks long. The boys individual state series (from Regional to State Finals) is three weeks long. This recommendation creates state series events for both genders that are four weeks long. Additionally, this recommendation moves the Dual Team Sectional to the Thursday after the Boys Regional. For the teams that don't advance to the Dual Team State Finals, the wrestlers who are not still involved in the individual state series can be finished with their season and won't need to continue practicing and maintaining their weight for the Dual Team Sectional that has traditionally been on the Tuesday after the Boys Individual State Finals. The rationale for recommending implementation in the 2025-26 school year is to give schools an opportunity to adjust their schedules. Many schools have traditional events/tournaments on the final weekend of the regular season, which is where the committee recommends moving the Boys Regional.

6. II. Dates and Sites

VII. Advancement of Winners: B. Team Advancement

Recommendation: Double the number of Dual Team Sectionals to eight total Sectionals in each class.

The top two teams from each Boys Regional will advance to a Dual Team Sectional, but those two teams will be assigned to different Sectional sites.

The traditional rolling of the peas will determine which two Regional champion teams are assigned to each Dual Team Sectional in that area of the state. Corresponding Regional runner-up teams will be assigned to the other Dual Team Sectional in that area.

The traditional rolling of the peas will determine which Regional championship team wrestles which Regional runner-up team in the Dual Team Sectional semifinals.

Each Sectional will have two rounds – semifinals and championship.

The team that wins both duals will receive a Sectional championship plaque and will advance to the Dual Team State Finals.

Dual Team Sectional Example

Semifinals (5:00 p.m.): Regional A Champion vs. Regional C Runner-up

Semifinals (5:00 p.m.): Regional B Champion vs. Regional D Runner-up

Championship (7:00 p.m.): Semifinal winners

Award a Sectional championship plaque.

Eight Sectional champions will qualify for the Dual Team State Finals in each class.

This is the same number of teams that currently qualify for the State Finals.

Rationale: This recommendation allows more teams to participate in the Dual Team state series. It also allows the IHSA to recognize Sectional championship teams without affecting the State Finals format.

7. V. Tournament Assignments & Seeding Meetings: B. 2) Individual Sectional Pairings

Recommendation: Seed the Boys and Girls Individual Sectional using similar criteria that is used to seed the Individual State Finals. Remove three wins from the State Finals seed criteria since a Sectional champion wins three matches during the Sectional.

Rationale: This recommendation is intended to bring consistency to all levels of the state series tournament. The Individual Wrestling state series seeds the Regional and the State Finals brackets but not the Sectional brackets. Currently, the Sectional brackets are created by pre-determined schematics that place wrestlers randomly in the bracket based on their finish at the Regional. Sometimes, the top two wrestlers in the Sectional are randomly placed on the same side of the bracket. Seeding the Individual Sectional will ensure that the #1 and #4 wrestlers are on the same side of the bracket and the #2 and #3 wrestlers are on the same side of the bracket, just like in Regional and State Finals brackets. Seeding the Sectional could also prevent coaches and wrestlers from manipulating the bracket by taking a forfeit and moving to the wrestlebacks to have a potentially simpler path to get to the State Finals.

8. IX. Tournament Policies: C.

Recommendation: Allow schools that have five or more wrestlers at the Individual State Finals to purchase an all-session ticket and exchange it for an additional coaches pass.

Rationale: Currently, teams with five or more wrestlers are limited to a maximum of three coaches passes. These schools are not allowed to purchase an additional coaches pass. This recommendation allows schools with larger rosters at the State Finals to include an additional coach when necessary and will increase ticket sales revenue.

9. X. Awards: A.

Recommendation: Award plaques to Girls Regional team champions and Girls Sectional team champions based on tournament scoring in the NFHS rule book.

Rationale: Girls wrestling does not have a dual team competition. This recommendation allows schools to earn a plaque based on their individual wrestlers' performances, similar to other sports where individuals participate with a team component (tennis, swimming & diving, gymnastics, track & field).

Administrative Recommendation

Recommendation: Officially recognize the top three teams at the Girls Individual State Finals for 2022 and 2023, but do not retroactively award team trophies.

Rationale: The IHSA began awarding team trophies to the top three teams in 2024. Although the IHSA didn't award team trophies in 2022 and 2023, recognizing the teams for their accomplishments in those years will create historical records starting with the first Girls State Finals in 2022.

ITEMS OF GENERAL DISCUSSION:

1. The committee discussed the OPC in TrackWrestling and how those details can improve next year.
2. The committee discussed the options of changing lineups and weight classes at the Regional for a variety of reasons (injury, illness, missing weight, etc.).
3. The committee discussed NFHS rule change proposals.
4. The committee discussed creating separate Girls Wrestling Terms and Conditions. Other sports with two genders that use the same rule book have just one set of Terms and Conditions.
5. The committee discussed amending the weight control plan for girls. IHSA staff will review potential options with the Sport Medicine Advisory Committee.
6. The committee discussed concerns about the boys and girls postseason timelines overlapping.
7. The committee discussed the timeline for requiring girls to participate in the girls state series.
8. The committee discussed the assignment process for assigning schools to state series events (Sectional & Regional).
9. The committee discussed the percentages of teams in each class (1A, 2A, 3A).
10. The committee discussed ideas regarding the mats at the State Finals.
11. The committee discussed alternates at the State Finals and the possibility of implementing a Pass List for those wrestlers.
12. The committee discussed concerns about mat sizes at the State Finals.
13. The committee discussed the location of the Boys Individual State Finals and when the current contract is set to expire, which led to a discussion about the possibility of moving the State Finals to a different location in the future.
14. The committee discussed the IWCOA Frosh/Soph State Series and the fact that these events are non-school events. The committee feels better education to our schools will help clarify what coaches are allowed to do with their wrestlers during IWCOA events.
15. The committee recognized outgoing members Rich Montgomery, Rock Falls; Eric Roberson, Alton (Sr.), Nate Kessen, Official.