

Wrestling Spectator Cheat Sheet (by no means a complete list of rules or the descriptions of these situations)

Match Scoring and Some Referee Hand Signals...

Takedown: From neutral position one wrestler gets control of their opponent. This wrestler is now considered on “top”, their opponent is on “bottom”. **A takedown earns 2 points.** The referee will hold up two fingers of their right or left hand corresponding to the ankle band of the wrestler getting the takedown. There are many situations in which it appears that a wrestler is in control yet their opponent has their leg or their head.



Awarding Points
Left/Right Hand

Reversal: A reversal occurs when the wrestler on bottom moves themselves into a “top”, control position. **A reversal earns 2 points.**



Reversal

Escape: If the wrestler in the bottom position can break free and gain separation between themselves and their opponent they can earn an escape. **An escape is worth 1 point.** The referee will show both wrestlers are in the neutral position.



Neutral Position

Near Fall: Near fall points are earned when one wrestler is able to expose their opponents back to the mat. Exposure means having both of their opponents shoulders less than 4” from the mat or one shoulder down and the other less than 45° to the mat. The referee will swipe their hand indicating the count of how long the opponent’s shoulders have been exposed. **A two count earns the controlling wrestler 2 points, a five count earns 3 points.**

Locked Hands: If a wrestler locks their hands when attempting to return their opponent to the mat action is stopped and a penalty point is awarded to the opponent. Three locked hands penalties, by the same wrestler, ends the match and the non-offending wrestler wins by default.



Interlocking Hands or
Grasping Clothing

Fall (pin): A fall occurs when the shoulders of either wrestler come in contact with the mat for two seconds. The official will mentally count this time and indicate the fall by slapping the mat with his hand.

Duals Scoring:

- A match won by 1-7 pts. (win by decision), earns the team 3 pts.
- A match won by 8-14 pts. (win by major decision), earns the team 4 pts.
- A match won by 15+ pts. (win by tech. fall), earns the team 5 pts.
- A match won by fall (pin)* or forfeit earns the team 6 pts.

Caution: A little bit of knowledge can be a dangerous thing! Take the time to watch matches and learn all the rules. Above all let the coaches’ coach and the referees ref. The kids are here to learn. There are lessons to be learned from wins, losses, good calls, and bad. Let the kids have fun and focus on their improvement not their win/loss records.