

The initial meeting of the ad-hoc committee to study the set-up of the state wrestling series was held in the IESA Office on Wednesday, November 29. The meeting was chaired by Brad Powell, wrestling coach at East Peoria Central. There were 19 schools represented at the meeting.

The committee discussed the current set-up of the state series and there was unanimous support for continuing to allow schools the opportunity to list two wrestlers in each weight class at the regional level. To that end, all of the discussion focused on keeping two wrestlers per weight class. There are solutions to the problems we are encountering that include only using one wrestler per weight class but the committee was not in favor of any solution where there were not two wrestlers per weight class allowed.

There were many ideas discussed that included continuing with just one class of wrestling, splitting into classes based on school enrollment and splitting into three classes based on school enrollment. Our current set-up looks like this:

16 regionals, 8 sectionals, 1 state tournament. The regionals have 10-12 teams assigned to them. There are four qualifiers from each weight class from regional to sectional. Two regionals feed into each of the 8 sectionals. Sectionals are an 8 man bracket and the top 3 from each weight class advance to state. We have a 24 man bracket and there are 6 placers in each weight class. Total number of wrestlers at state is 456 and there are 114 individuals who place. The top four teams receive a team trophy.

Of the many ideas that were discussed, the committee felt that the following two options were the most viable both keeping two wrestlers per weight class:

Option 1: Continue with one class, 32 regionals 8 sectionals 1 state tournament. The regionals would have 5-6 teams assigned to them (based on the current number of schools entering the state series). There would be 3 qualifiers from each weight class from regionals to sectionals. Four regionals would feed into each of the 8 sectionals. Sectionals would be a 12 man bracket and the top 4 from each weight class would advance to state. That would make each state bracket have 32 wrestlers and there would be 8 wrestlers placing in the finals. Total number of wrestlers at state would be 608 and there would be 152 individuals who would place. The top four teams would receive a team trophy.

Option 2: Split the schools entering the state series into two classes based on enrollment. Each class would have the following: 16 regionals 4 sectionals 1 state tournament The regionals would have 5-6 teams assigned to them (based on the current number of schools entering the state series). There would be 3 qualifiers from each weight class from regionals to sectionals. Four regionals would feed into each of the four sectionals. Sectionals would be a 12 man bracket and the top 4 from each weight class would advance to state. That would make each state bracket have 16 wrestlers and there would be 6 wrestlers placing in the finals. So, for Class A there would be 304 total wrestlers and 114 would be place. Class AA would be 304 total wrestlers and 114 would place. Total number of wrestlers (including both classes) at state would then be 608 with 228 wrestlers placing. The top four teams in each class would receive a team trophy for a total of 8 team trophies. If this option were approved, the split between Class A and Class AA, using the enrollment figures for the schools entered in the 17-18 state series would be 388. Schools with a 7-8 enrollment of 388 and higher would be Class AA; schools with a 7-8 enrollment of 387 and lower would be Class A. Schools that co-op have the enrollments of both schools added together to determine the enrollment number used for classification purposes.

The most obvious obstacle to either option is that we would need to double the number of regional hosts. Either option would require 16 additional hosts for regional contests. We would need 32 regional hosts whereas under our current set-up we only need 16. However, because there would only be 5-6 schools in a regional, the hope of the committee is that more schools would be able to host because only two mats would be needed. But, the fact remains, we would still need 32 regional hosts.

Another item that will present a problem for some is travel--especially if there was a two class system. Travel for some schools at the regional level would increase greatly. And with only four sectionals in each class, sectional travel will increase for most. This doesn't mean that just because there will be increased travel that the option should not be considered but it is definitely something to consider and that all schools need to be aware of.

The next meeting of the committee is set for Wednesday, January 10 at the IESA Office in Bloomington. It is expected that this will be the last meeting of the ad-hoc committee and that they will be recommending one of the

above options to the IESA Board of Directors. The IESA Board would then vote on that recommendation at their January 19 meeting.