

IESA WRESTLING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES & RECOMMENDATIONS
IESA Office, Bloomington, IL
April 23, 2015

The following members were present for the meeting: Coaches Kevin Hinkle, Ed Bryson, Chris Protska, John Schaidle; Dan Henneberry; and TJ Austin; and IHSA Official Shane Morgan.

The IESA Wrestling Advisory Committee, in its meeting of April 23, 2015, submit the following recommendations to the Board of Directors for their June 19, 2015, meeting:

1. To cross bracket the state finals and to eliminate the walkovers. **Rationale: While this is a major change to the state final set-up, it is a change according to the advisory committee that the majority of coaches would like to see implemented. Currently, without the cross bracket and the walkover procedure, when wrestlers who are scheduled to wrestle in the wrestlebacks and have met in an earlier round, the winner of the previous match will "walk over" or is automatically advanced to the next round without the two wrestlers wrestling again. If the recommendation is passed, it is possible two wrestlers who previously met could still face each other in the consolation bracket but the wrestlers would actually wrestle to determine who advances and it would not be based on the previous decision. The committee believes it is better to allow the wrestlers determine who moves on rather than having it decided by the previous decision.**
2. To change By-Law so wrestlers are limited to 37 matches per season exclusive of matches wrestled in regular season tournaments. **Rationale: The current by-law states that the maximum number of matches allowed per season is 37 and specifically states that it includes all matches wrestled (varsity, j.v. exhibition, tournaments, duals, etc.) In other words, any time a wrestler wrestles an opponent, that counts as one of the 37 matches. Approving this recommendation would allow probably 4-10 more matches in a given year. The trend for schools is to enter fewer tournaments (according to the IESA definition of a tournament) and instead opt for more dates. Schools can max out on 37 matches fairly easily with many of the 5-6 team dual meets that are popular today. Excluding tournaments from the max limit will allow for a few additional matches for those teams who still enter tournaments.**
3. To change By-Law 4.057 so that 10 varsity matches are needed in order to be a seeded wrestler at the regional level. **Rationale: Currently, it is up to each regional, the night of the seeding meeting, to determine how many matches are needed in order to be seeded. Regional 1 may set it at 5 matches; Regional 2 may set 8 as the minimum number, Regional 3 may set it at 10. Each regional has the responsibility to set that number. Approving the recommendation would take away the responsibility of each regional determining the number of matches needed to be seeded and make it a consistent number for everyone.**

Discussion was held once again about conducting weigh-ins on Saturday. There was no support for doing so. The distribution of individual awards at the regional and sectional level was discussed. Host schools should not wait until all championship matches have been held

to start the distribution of awards. At the conclusion of the championship matches, the wrestlers who won awards should be seated as the next round of finals are held. Then when that round is over, the wrestlers who are finished and have been waiting should receive their awards. This will be added to the host booklets. The pay to regional and sectional officials was discussed. Weight allowances were once again discussed. There was no support for giving any weight allowance during the entire wrestling season. There was some discussion as to how to handle meets and/or tournaments that are hosted by non-IESA member schools that do give a weight allowance. No definitive procedure in this situation was formalized although the general consensus was IESA schools who wrestle an away meet or tournament hosted by a non IESA member can abide by the rules set up by that host but all contests between IESA member schools should be abiding by all IESA rules and regulations.

Discussion was held concerning the state series set-up given the number of schools that now enter the state series. There were 152 schools entered in the state series this year necessitating almost every one of the 16 schools having 9 or 10 schools in the regional. Should the growth continue, there are really only two options:

1. Allow only one wrestler per weight class from each school to enter the regional. Thirty-six years ago when IESA started a wrestling state series there were so few schools entered in the state series that the format could accommodate two wrestlers per weight class from each school. If we were to start the wrestling state series today with 152 schools entered, I highly doubt we would set it up so a school could enter two wrestlers in each weight class. The numbers are simply too big, Yet, we have maintained that procedure but it is now starting to cause some awfully big regionals (18-20 wrestlers in a given bracket) which makes for a very long day for the wrestlers, coaches, officials, host school, and fans. Allowing only one wrestler per weight class would reduce a lot of the problems but it also reduces the number of competitors. We would have at most a 10 man bracket with the current number of teams entering the state series. While there is definitely upside to this format, there is downside as well.
2. A second solution would be to change the number of regionals from 16 to 24. This would allow schools to continue to enter two wrestlers per weight class. There would still be 8 sectionals so 3 regionals would feed each sectional....and then we would continue with taking the top 3 in each weight class to the state finals--24 wrestlers in each weight class just like we have now. We would need to figure out how to place wrestlers in the brackets at the sectional level since it would be a 12 man brackets and there would be 3 regional winners. One of the second placers from one of the three regionals would have to draw a bye. We would need 24 hosts instead of 16 although the committee felt it would be an easier event to host since there would only be 6 or 7 schools assigned to each regional. More hosts means more regional officials who need to be hired which equals more cost. Admission at the sites would be less because there are fewer kids at each site. While there is definitely upside to this format, there is downside as well.

In essence, we have to accept that due to the number of schools that are now entering the IESA state series, a change of some type is on the horizon. There won't be any changes to the format for 2016 unless there is an unforeseen influx of new schools that would force our hand to make a change immediately. It's just that schools should begin to look at these two options and think which one do they think is better. There are pros and cons for each of the above mentioned options.

Kevin Hinkle was recognized for his service to the committee.

The next meeting of the committee was set up for Thursday, April 21, 2016.