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New Hydration Protocols for High School Wrestlers a Success for Student Athletes

NJSIAA emphasizes safety related to health, competition

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ (January 23, 2012) – New protocols to help ensure high school wrestlers remain properly hydrated were recently implemented for the current season by the NJSIAA (New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association) and are proving to be a major success for student athletes.

Specifically, these measures involve the determination of a wrestler's lowest acceptable competition weight – via a pre-season certification process – as well as an assessment of whether the athlete is hydrated appropriately. The NJSIAA has also extended its descent plan – an individual wrestler's season-long plan for weight loss – allowing more time and a safer method for athletes to reach their desired weight classes

“One of the NJSIAA's core responsibilities is protecting the student-athletes we serve, and it was with this in mind that we implemented the new safety protocols – to keep our wrestlers as healthy as possible,” explains the association's Executive Director, Steve Timko. “Serious health risks are associated with the type of acute dehydration that can occur when athletes attempt to drop large amounts of weight within a short timeframe.”

Under the NJSIAA program, after a student athlete has provided a urine sample under secure conditions, they must wait at least 48 hours to re-test, in the event of an initial failure. The new testing period began November 7 and ended December 16 – the first day of the season – to ensure all athletes are properly certified for the first weekend of matches. Testing and pre-testing is conducted by a certified assessor; pre-testing can be done either by an assessor or by designated school personnel. No wrestler is eligible to compete until they've passed the certification process.

“Since implementing these new guidelines, we've been receiving extremely positive feedback from our member schools and from the student athletes themselves,” Timko adds. “Now, we're looking forward to some exciting and healthy championship tournaments in February.”

More information on the new protocols is available on the NJSIAA Web site at www.njsiaa.org, or by calling the association at 609-259-2776.

About the NJSIAA

Established in 1918, the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) is a voluntary, non-profit organization comprised of 433 accredited public, private, and parochial high schools. A member of the National Federation of State High School Associations, the NJSIAA conducts tournaments and crowns champions in 32 sports. Championship competition for girls is sponsored in basketball, bowling, cross country, fencing, field hockey, golf, gymnastics, lacrosse, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, outdoor track, winter track, and volleyball. Boys' championships are determined in baseball, basketball, bowling, cross country, fencing, football, golf, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, swimming, tennis, outdoor track, winter track, volleyball, and wrestling.

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