



**GIRLS WRESTLING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**2021 – 2022 SEASON**  
May 18, 2022 – 10:00am

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Howie O'Neil, Tournament Director  
Ken Rossi, Wrestling Coordinator  
Vinnie Russo, State Assignor  
Mohammed Abdelaziz, Chatham HS Athletic Director, NJSIAA Executive Committee Representative  
Ashely Iliff, Newton HS Coach  
Dennis Murri, Ridgefield Park HS Coach  
Steve Wallace, Pennsauken HS Coach  
Scott Pressman, President, NJ Wrestling Coaches Association  
June Cioffi, Kingsway HS AD  
John Marinelli, Clearview HS Assistant AD

1. Season in Review

Ken updated the committee on a proposal approved by the boys committee to have Trackwrestling calculate a wrestler's eligible weight to one tenth of a pound - not one hundredth of a pound, which is currently in place.

Ashley discussed efforts to solicit interest from member schools that may be looking to schedule dual meets during the regular season. Howie agreed that he will oversee a small committee during the summer that will look to schedule statewide dual meets. Vinnie recommended that these dual meets be held during the week to ensure officials are available. Colleen agreed to solicit interest from schools that entered girls in the state tournament during this past season.

2. Post-Season in Review

Ken updated the committee on a proposal approved by the boys committee that will eliminate "1C" in the pre-seed process which is "returning at the same weight...". Removing 1C from the pre-seed process will also affect pre-seed criteria #3 which is "defeated any tournament participant(s) from a previous year during this season."

The committee was in favor of adding a 3<sup>rd</sup> region site for the 2022 – 2023 season – NJSIAA will host a North, Central and South Region tournament.

The committee discussed the merits of having minimum criteria to enter the girls state tournament. This proposal is an effort to engage more girls in girls wrestling events – dual meets or individual tournaments. Howie will work with the small committee that will meet over the summer to put forth recommendations for minimum criteria.

3. 2022-2023 Season Dates

The 2022 – 2023 proposed season dates were reviewed. The committee recommended the girls regions date be pushed back one week to Sunday, February 19, 2023 – this is the Sunday after the boys’ districts. This will allow for a longer regular season to schedule dual meets. The girls state championships will be Sunday, February 26, 2023 – this is the Sunday after the boys’ regions.

Colleen updated the committee on a proposed change to the transfer sit eligibility date approved by the boys committee which will now correspond with the 21b growth allowance date – this date will be January 14, 2023, for next season.

4. Review of Rule Changes for 2022-2023

Colleen provided a press release that highlights the key rule changes that were approved by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee and Ken reviewed the key rule changes.

Ashley expressed concern with the current NFHS-provided weight classes, specifically the weight differential between the heaviest two weight classes – 185lb and 235lb. The concern is that this is too large of a gap in weights and that girls on the lower end of the weight class may be subject to injury. Colleen recommended that NJSIAA submit a proposal at the end of next season to the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee to reconsider their weight classes.

5. Review of Correspondences

The committee reviewed correspondences received from member schools. Two proposals were reviewed by the committee, one was not endorsed for further consideration by NJSIAA staff. The other proposal was a framework to host the girls’ state championships at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City on the Wednesday and Thursday prior to the start of the boys’ state championships.

Colleen noted that the girls wrestling proposal had been adopted at the Annual Meeting and would now be an officially recognized sport. Moving forward there will continue to be a girls wrestling individual tournament, but the numbers are not yet sufficient for a girls wrestling team tournament.

This year’s girl’s individual tournament was held in Phillipsburg. The tournament went well, and Phillipsburg was a good host. Some people are still lobbying to move the girl’s individual tournament back to Atlantic City, however ultimately, factors that will be considered when determining where the girl’s individual tournament will be held will include, among other things, the size of the facility in comparison to the size of the tournament field, the importance that girls wrestling establish its own traditions, the availability of officials and staff, input from the Wrestling Committee, changes to the structure of the tournament based on the growth of the sport, and finances.

Prior to the meeting, Colleen had reviewed the response from Boardwalk Hall to the Association’s RFP for the next 3-year contract with the NJSIAA Finance Committee – there were two proposals submitted by Boardwalk Hall. The first proposal was for the same format as in prior years – Thursday through Saturday – and the second proposal was for four full days – Wednesday through Saturday. The Finance Committee did not support the second proposal as there was concern with extending the length of the tournament and the possible addition of days missed from school. The committee members also expressed concern that NJSIAA is investing a lot of money into an emerging sport (girls wrestling) and that it must be consistent in its approach across all sports when evaluating budgeted costs relative to participation.

Colleen has been in contact with colleagues in other states that host a boys and girls individual wrestling tournament at the same time. She has provided information and tournament schedules from these states to Howie and Ken for their review and to see if NJSIAA can learn anything from their tournaments. While there is a concern that these states all use a minimum of 10 mats and/or have less student-athletes per weight class advancing to the state championships, NJSIAA will continue to investigate options that may permit both genders to compete at the same time in a cost-effective manner that minimize changes to the current tournament frameworks.

Respectfully submitted,  
Colleen Maguire, Executive Director