

*These are updated Beach Wrestling rules for the upcoming 2011-2012 season. These rules provide clarity for wrestling directors, athletes, coaches, and everyone else within the wrestling community. They are designed to encourage more participation with this “developmental” sport. This revised list is heavily influenced on the operation of the USA Wrestling National Championships, World Team Trials, USAW National High School Beach Wrestling Duals, various Beach Wrestling contests throughout North America, and the most recent (2011) changes from FILA.*

*Please keep in mind that the rules of Beach Wrestling are changing every year, by USAW, FILA, and Tournament Directors that are devoted to constantly improve the sport. If anyone has any questions, comments, or suggestions, I can be reached at [robertteet@yahoo.com](mailto:robertteet@yahoo.com) or (810) 841-7901.*

*Thanks,*

*Robert Teet, VAWA Beach Wrestling Director*

## **Beach Wrestling Rules and Regulations: Updated for 2011-12 Season**

### **Age Categories**

All age groups may be used, and may be consolidated. Events are encouraged to include Junior Women (or High School Women), Senior Women, and Veteran categories. Under the discretion of Event Directors and the choice of Athlete participation, beach wrestling contestants may enter more than one age group.

### **Weight Categories**

Age Categories may be divided into weight classes by using the “Madison/ Easy System” to block athletes within a similar weight class within that age category. Contests may also elect to use a “Lightweight, Middleweight, Heavyweight” system, with an approximately equal number of contestants in each bracket. Contests may also choose to use the FILA International weights, as follows:

**Cadet:** Men: 132 lbs, 154 lbs, and over-154 lbs. Women: 110 lbs and over-110 lbs.

**Junior:** Men: 132 lbs, 154 lbs, 176 lbs, and over-176 lbs. Women: 110 lbs, 132 lbs, and over-132 lbs.

**Senior & Veteran:** Men: 154 lbs, 176 lbs, 198 lbs, and over-198 lbs. Women: 132 lbs, 154 lbs, and over-154 lbs.

There is no minimum or maximum weight required to compete. When set weight classes are not predetermined, the Event Director may choose not to conduct an official weigh in, and could set Weight Categories by sight or by “honor system”.

Beach wrestling events that choose to use a Team Dual format, the following weight classes are suggested at the High School level, per use in the annual "National USAW Beach Wrestling High School Duals". 103 lbs, 120 lbs, 130 lbs, 140 lbs, 150 lbs, 170 lbs, 190 lbs, 215 lbs, 285 lbs.

### **Competition dress**

- Trunks for men without any other accessory
- Swimsuit in one piece or two pieces for women without any other accessory

### **Competition surface**

On level sand free from debris, inside a circle of a 20 foot diameter (6 m)

### **Duration of the matches**

One period with a maximum three (3) minutes. If a match is tied, there shall be a thirty (30) second overtime; both wrestlers will begin the overtime period in the Over-and-Underhook position. If the match remains tied after the overtime period, the referee shall determine the winner based on who they believe to be the most aggressive wrestler.

### **Competition system**

The competition may take place as a direct (single) elimination bracket, a double elimination bracket, or a pool (either double elimination or non-elimination).

### **Officiating**

The person in charge acts as referee and his decisions cannot be questioned.

### **Kind of victories**

Beach wrestling is held only in the standing position. The victory can be obtained in the following manner: Earn two points or win by pinfall.

-One point is awarded for pushing the opponent out-of-bounds. A wrestler is out-of-bounds when any part of the body touches the sand over the ring-rope, any part of their body goes underneath the ring-rope, or any part of their body touches the ring-rope.

-One point is awarded when a wrestler earns a takedown over their opponent. A wrestler is taken down when they are down in the sand and their opponent gains control by getting behind them.

- A fall occurs when a wrestler's opponent touches their back to the sand. This does include the lower back.

### **Other Referee Calls**

If both wrestlers are scrambling within the sand in an effort to score a takedown, a pin, or attempting to push their opponent and the action is at a standstill, the referee shall call a "stalemate" and return both wrestlers to the standing position without awarding a point to either contestant.

## **Prohibitions**

- Kick or punch
- Attack the face or the hair
- Cover the body with an oily and slippery substance
- Holds that can lead to a dislocation
- Stopping the match for any reasons is forbidden
- Throwing or otherwise intentionally aiming sand toward their opponent

## **Specific Scoring Situations**

- An attacking wrestler must complete the “Head-Snap Run-Around” in a fluent motion; they may not be permitted to restrain their opponent’s face into the sand during the “Head-Snap” portion of the offense.
- A wrestler may attempt to pin a wrestler by using the “Front Headlock Roll” with a complete rotation, so long as the offensive wrestler’s back does not touch the sand (by bridging on their head). The offensive wrestler can pin themselves by rolling on their own back.
- A wrestler shall not be declared to be taken down nor pinned if they land in a sitting position and their back has not touched the sand. The offensive wrestler should not be penalized by returning to their feet (with only one point awarded) while they have their opponent within a “pin zone” (completed by elevating their seated opponent’s legs to roll them to their back).
- A pin may or may not occur out-of-bounds, but this should be clear to all officials and athletes during a “Rule Clinic” before the contest. It is becoming more common to not issue pins out-of-bounds, in an effort to keep the rules and regulations easy to understand for spectators and athletes without prior wrestling experience.

## **Other Unique Logistics**

A “Rule Clinic” should be conducted before each competition, to allow the officials and the athletes to easily understand the rules and regulations of the beach wrestling event.

A hose shall be connected to an operating water source and used to cool off the sand whenever necessary.

A flat-leveled landscape rake shall be used to level out the sand within the competition area whenever necessary.

After a one-point, pin, or stalemate call from the official, the official should allow a wrestler to remove sand from their face. Each competition area should have a bucket of water and a soft sponge to allow athletes to remove sand from their face.

The Event Director has the right to shorten the diameter of the ring in the interest of safety, such as stationary poles that may be dangerously close to the ring's perimeter within a sand volleyball court. Any alterations should be announced in promotional material and mentioned at the Rule Clinic. Adjusting the size will alter the psychology of a beach wrestling bout. It is strongly recommended that the ring be no shorter than fifteen (15) feet in diameter, and only shortened when necessary.

## **Team Duals**

Teams may compete against another team (team dual), with an odd number of predetermined weight classes. A wrestler from each team must weigh less than or equal to that specific weight class to be eligible for that specific weight class. Each wrestler may only compete in one weight class per head-to-head team dual. Each specific weight class is contested only once per dual, in the order of lightest weight class to the heaviest weight class. Team Duals may be held in any age category.

A team earns one team point when their wrestler is victorious in their specific weight class. The team with the most points after all weight classes are contested wins the head-to-head dual.

If the teams are tie after all matches are conducted (possible if a "double-forfeit" occurs at a specific weight class), the tie-breaking criteria shall be based by the following;

- **First Criteria**= Team with the most pins
- **Second Criteria**= Team with the most total match points. A pin is worth two match points, and may possibly score three match points if a pin was completed after that wrestler has scored one point.
- **Third Criteria**= Team with most number of takedowns.
- **Fourth Criteria**= Team with most number of push-outs.

## **Modifications**

Tournament Directors reserve the right to modify Beach Wrestling competitions in an effort to attract athletes and provide an enjoyable experience to contestants. There are two modifications that have been commonly used, although improper use will radically alter the psychology of a Beach Wrestling bout. The following are strongly suggested guidelines for such modifications, in an effort in maintaining the proper flow of a Beach Wrestling match.

- **Two-out-of-Three Matches**= Directors may hold tournaments in which two wrestlers compete in a best two-out-of-three match scenario in order to be victorious. In this scenario, a "match" should never be referred to as a "round" and certainly not treated as such. A "Pin" in one round should not automatically award a wrestler to be victorious in the overall two-out-of-three match method, unless the Pin determines that wrestler's second victory during the series. A 30 second break should occur between each match within the series.

- **Point Alteration**= Directors may add to the total amount of points needed to win a Beach Wrestling Match. During this alteration, a “Pin” shall be worth two points instead of an automatic winning criterion. After a Pin has occurred, both wrestlers shall return to their feet in the same manner as if a Takedown, Push-Out, or Stalemate has occurred. Needing 3 or 5 points to win the match are common point alterations.