

## RMN OFFICIAL PREP & PROCESS

NOTE: Weekly check the most updated tournament schedules at [www.rmnevents.com/tournaments](http://www.rmnevents.com/tournaments). Remain flexible in your travel arrangements, continue to express interest in potential opportunities, and recognize for the foreseeable future that ALL sites have the potential to flex from the posted schedule. We are constantly accommodating for social distancing, session house-clearing breaks, separate age group divisions, and dual as well as individual competition in folkstyle as well as freestyle. Email Bill with your updated availability (the Arbiter pre-registration for 2020-21 tournaments cannot maintain pace with changing dates and sites). Accept or decline assignments promptly. – bxb

**Official's Agreement** { Acknowledged upon accepting assignment to this event. }

*I have read and reflected upon the principles and rules discussed herein. Therefore, I agree to enforce these policies to the best of my ability. I acknowledge that I am part of a whole; thus I will support and defend my officiating and administrative team. I also understand that I have a voice to share concerns or input to improve our efforts on and off the mat. If I have questions or concerns, I will follow up with the Head Official in advance of the event.*

*With all of the above in mind, I will be:*

- *A patient observer, an active learner, and a willing participant;*
- *Thoroughly adherent to all rules while respecting the principles;*
- *Actively invested in promoting consistent action, active safety, and proper sportsmanship;*
- *Constantly aware of differences in age, skill, experience, round, and region of the country;*
- *Always supportive, respectful, and accountable to my peers on and off the mat.*

### Conduct & Expectations

Professional Conduct: From the time you arrive through your departure, whether in the tournament venue or in our provided lodging, you are expected to conduct yourselves in a manner which represents the best in yourself and which reflects positively as an employee of RMN Events. No tobacco products, alcohol, or substances of any kind are allowed in or around the venue.

Unprofessional conduct will be subject to a review which may include – but not be limited to – reimbursement of lodging by the official, re-evaluation of pay for that event, consideration of immediate dismissal, as well as reconsideration of future employment.

### Safety Measures

As an RMN admin team, we have worked hard to develop strict safety protocol, as well as stay in alignment with local authorities. Although encouragement (our first resource) and enforcement of these guidelines do not normally fall within the purview of a mat official, these are not normal times. Not only is safety for every person in attendance of the utmost importance, but also failing to embrace these guidelines puts at risk our ability to hold and finish each event. For this opportunity to continue – every weekend now and in the future – we must all invest in ensuring the safest possible outcome.

- **VENUE CONSIDERATIONS**: RMN is in constant contact with state and local authorities; in this regard, we will follow all recommended accommodations, including separate age-group sessions, a midday venue house clearing and mat cleaning, competition spread over two days, and a limit of two people per competitor allowed on the main floor.
- **HEALTH PROTOCOL**: In addition to what the local venue requires of us, we implement our standard protocol. In certain venues or locations, officials may be required wear a mask or shield (if needed, we provide a shield). Disinfectant and gloves are available at each table, and temperature scans are performed on each person every time s/he enters the main arena.
- **OFFICIALS' PRECAUTIONS**: We invite you to take any additional safety measures which you believe you need to take, for example: long-sleeve shirts, Kenshield cream, hair covering,

whistle sheath (Smitty's), electronic handheld whistle (RMN), electing to stand behind the winning wrestler raising your hand instead of his/her hand, wearing gloves or using a portable skin disinfectant, etc.

- **OUR ROLE & EXPECTATIONS:** Our expanded role, in this time of caution, is to be gentle but consistent reinforcers of the necessary health and safety protocol. The enforcers, if needed, are the additional security personnel hired specifically for this reason; if you encounter resistance, simply let one of them know.

### **CoVid & Infectious Disease Protocol**

We expect each official to make responsible decisions, both on and off the mat. Given heightened concern and various degrees of vulnerability, it is recommended that you report any positive CoVid test or significant infection to the Head Official as well as any established contact that has led to recommended quarantine or isolation.

If the quarantine or isolation dates are proximate to or include the event date, you will be encouraged to withdraw from the upcoming event. To return to RMN Events, you should be released from quarantine or isolation. In the case of a positive test result, after you remove yourself from an upcoming tournament, let the Head Official know when you test negative and are ready to be re-assigned.

### **Travel & Accommodations**

Hotel lodging accommodations are primarily for out-of-state officials: the night before event and night between multiple-day events are available upon request; the night after an event may be considered, although the preference is that you depart on the final day. For any multiple-day in or out-of-state tournament, accommodations will be offered on the in-between nights for those who need them. For in-state officials who travel a significant distance to a one-day event, you may ask for a room the night before the competition; the night afterward will be considered upon request.

### **Philosophy**

In essence, as officials we are educators first and foremost, with a responsibility to enforce the rules within a spirit of educating wrestlers to understand and then to learn from their mistakes. To that end, we encourage officials to not only call penalties but, where necessary, explain what the wrestler needs to correct. Instruct / warn / guide prior to and along with enforcing the regulations.

If a situation begins to escalate, give the wrestler a time-out with his/her coach. Do what you can to defuse and deflect the conflict without being in the center of it. If the number or type of violations is leading toward termination of the match, we ask officials to take a moment of preventive management to address the athlete in the presence of his or her coach. Paradigm shift: aim to qualify vs. disqualify.

- **SAFETY IS PRIORITY #1:** The safe execution of a move or hold always takes precedence over its potential to score. Win or lose, it is our responsibility to ensure that a wrestler can continue to compete in this tournament and the next one. Potentially dangerous is our friend. Look for compromise to breathing, an inability to communicate, or the risk to limb or joint.
- **QUALIFY BUT DO NOT DISQUALIFY:** Our responsibility is to facilitate advancement for those wrestlers who have earned the right to participate in the next round or earn their deserved places. If you have a situation which warrants consideration for disqualification for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct, please consult first with the head official before making that determination.

### **Perspective**

On and off the mat, consider yourself a representative of what is best in the sport of wrestling. Remember that you are both a learner and an educator: we must constantly desire to improve ourselves and our knowledge, and we have an obligation to educate those less knowledgeable in a

manner where they can hear what we are saying. As ambassadors of wrestling, we embrace character, recognize sportsmanship, encourage best effort, and ultimately serve as rules arbiters.

Hearing begins with listening first before we speak – you will resolve many issues just through listening to and attempting to understand the coach's or athlete's point of view. With a participating audience who may be relatively unacquainted with certain aspects and rules, RMN's perspective is one where we seek to educate before (and after) we resolve to punish infractions.

While we will do our best to explain policy and procedures, each tournament and environs creates its own parameters. Thus we cannot explain every nuance or variation. Instead, we rely upon independent thinkers who are flexible and capable of making the necessary adjustments as they are required. The need for flexibility is especially true in that every one of the 16 RMN tournaments has a different referee crew who each come from diverse state and national wrestling associations.

Thus, we do our best to meld our interpretations, ultimately meeting somewhere in the middle. Officiating is at its best a negotiation, not a science, a process which is best accomplished without compromising essential values. As a work in progress, not a defined product, we are inclined to value the principles as much as the rules. Our job is to make it right by the best means possible.

### **Situations**

On and off the mat, we are here to work with our wrestlers, parents, and coaches. This requires a teaching hat as well as that of a rule enforcer: where we can, let's avoid conflict or misunderstanding through consistent application of the rules and a patient explanation where helpful.

Putting ego aside, our job is to get the call right. If a coach respectfully asks a conference at the table, it is our expectation that you grant it. *Listen first, respond second*. Seek to de-escalate the situation. Respect the coach's right to have the assistant head or head official come to the mat.

If the coach requests the presence of a head official, the expectation is that you will hold action or keep wrestlers on the mat until either the assistant head or head official can confer with you. A conference is our assurance to the coach that he was heard and that we reconsidered the situation (even when we do not change the decision).

If a situation is serious enough (i.e., biting or flagrant misconduct), do not consider disqualification until consultation with and approval from the Head Official.

### **Protest Procedure**

- i. if the situation concerns a timing or scoring issue, go to the table by yourself;
- ii. if the challenge involves your judgment: no meeting, warn the coach;
- iii. if question is about an interpretation meet with coach(es) at the table;
- iv. if not resolved, call for a conference with the head official;
- v. if the situation is not resolved, ONLY the head official may elect to review video.

### **Mat Official Guidelines**

1. ROTATION: You owe it to your officiating team to be accountable and present throughout the lengthy tournament day. Use "first available mat" or an established rotation within your team mat area. If a bathroom break is necessary, go directly there and return promptly. Please access your cell phones only as absolutely necessary and NOT in the vicinity of the mats. The Head Official will also rotate through to provide relief, especially during the designated meal hours.
2. COVERAGE: When your mat areas finish the assigned bouts, do not leave the area. Matches will often be moved from mats that are behind to those which are ahead. Once the Head Table confirms that your mat is complete, please assist other mats in concluding all of the matches as a team effort. At times, due to a need for coverage or in order to accommodate a situation, you may be reassigned to a different group of officials.
3. COMMON START: Following the opening talk by the tournament director and the singing of the national anthem, with a universal shared whistle, ALL mats will begin with their first competitors.

4. **EVALUATION & FEEDBACK:** In an effort to help you improve, the Head Official will provide verbal as well as written feedback throughout the event. Afterward, you may also evaluate your peers online as well as review your peers' constructive suggestions.
5. **PROTEST PROCEDURE:** Throughout the competition, if a situation is unresolved between the official and the coaches, do not proceed with the match until the issue is resolved. Send a Mat Chat to have the Head Official sent directly to your mat. If at the end of a match, keep both competitors and coaches at the mat. We cannot change situations if either or both coaches and wrestlers are no longer at the mat. The conference with the Head Official, mat official, and coaches will conclude the matter.
  - a. A coach may purchase a red protest flag in advance. Flag is the last option if there is no resolution with the mat official AND secondarily with the Head Official. **NO FLAG – NO VIDEO REVIEW**. It may not be purchased once the match has begun. **SEE SEPARATE PROCEDURES**.
6. **DEALING WITH CONFRONTATION:** On one end is flagrant misconduct and disqualification of a wrestler or coach; on the other side are degrees of interface that we can utilize as we go up that ladder. Only as a final resort should we involve ourselves as a physical barrier. Best not to go to the ultimate scenario until needed. Create win-win opportunities that hold the wrestler accountable but also provide a way to save face. If they then choose not to respond to lesser initiatives, then we have both provided a learning moment as well as set the stage for justifying any final consequence.

## Compensation

Make sure your Arbiter account is linked directly to your bank account. Weigh-in supervision is compensated at \$25/hour. Fees listed are the base. Actual pay will consider several variables specific to each event, including length of the day and the officials-to-mats ratio. Based on length of commute and means of travel, compensation (maximum \$50 per individual) is available. Hotel information will be disseminated by email and text as soon as it is available.

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### ONE-DAY EVENT

- 6 Hours or Less – \$150 ... 6-8 Hours – \$200 ... 8+ Hours – \$250

### TWO-DAY EVENT (total hours)

- 12 Hours or Less – \$300 ... 12-16 Hours – \$350 ... 16+ Hours – \$400
- Elite 2-Day Event – \$500 (RMN National Championship, Freak Show)

### TRAVEL ALLOWANCE (car or plane)

- 2 Hours of Less – None ... 2-4 Hours – \$25 ... 4+ Hours – \$50
- For elite national events (D-Day, Freak Show, & RMN Nationals), you may appeal for additional compensation in order to arrive at a fair compromise in terms of expenses.

## Check-In & Reporting

1. Accommodations for those traveling more than 3 hours are available on a limited basis through the discretion of the Tournament Director and the Head Official.
2. Rooms will be available on the evening before the tournament; depending on the duration of the event, the night of the competition may also be available.
3. If staying overnight, accommodations will not be definite until the day of arrival. Keep in contact via text or phone with the Head Official throughout your trip to assure that we all arrive safely.
4. In order to be reimbursed, travel plans must be approved by the Head Official before you take the trip. Plan to carpool where at all possible; the Head Official can suggest ride pairings. See separate reimbursement specifics for automobile and airplane travel.
5. On the day of the tournament, be dressed and ready to meet at the head table no later than 8:00 am. Depending on the facility, there may or may not be a dressing area or secure place for your gear.

## General Event Protocol

Weigh-Ins: Officials are needed for weigh-ins on the afternoon prior to competition. The first to *respond by text or email* will receive additional compensation: \$25 (1-2 and/or 4-6 pm). See separate weigh-in guidelines posted on the website on the officials' page. Regular events need 1-3 officials. Freak Show and RMN Nationals can use up to 6 weigh-in officials.

Mat Assignments: Posted in advance (see attached) for you to familiarize yourself with your work groups. Please do not take it upon yourself to trade with another official.

- Our goal for every event is for 3 officials designed to rotate on 2 mats. All mats finish at approximately the same time.
- As a true rotation, the relieved official proceeds to wait 1.5-2 matches to referee on the next mat in your sequence. **DO NOT REMAIN ON THE SAME MAT.**
- Between rotations, when not on the mat but still in the mat vicinity, actively support table staff and clear the coaching areas. No phones in the mat area!
- All age groups are randomly assigned to mats. We are confident that as experienced and knowledgeable officials, you will be prepared to raise your level to meet that of any competition group. At the same time, you will need to appropriately modify your rule enforcement and boundary interpretation to meet the needs of each age group.
- If the assistant head or head official relieves you, it will be for 2 matches; return directly to the same mat, not to the next one in your rotation.
- When your mat group finishes and you are helping another rotation, be an assistant to those on the mat and switch positions or rotate through your group after EVERY match.
- Where possible, ALL final matches are head-assistant. As you finish your assigned mats, reassign yourself in a pair with another official.
- Because coaches, athletes, and officials are more stressed toward the end of the tournament day, when you pair it is in an active head-assistant rotation.
- When we get down to the final mats, rotate officials every match; when not on the mat, help with tables, traffic control, and sportsmanship.
- **WE ARE ALL ON ACTIVE DUTY UNTIL THE FINAL MATCH IS CONCLUDED.**

Food: There will be snacks, Gatorade, & water available for morning and afternoon. For lunch and dinner, it will either be brought into the officials' room or you will be provided with a meal ticket for concessions. In the latter case, go to the front of the line. Max meal break: 15 min.

Mat Table Coordination: Following the officials' meeting, go directly to your mat area, figure out your team's rotation, and orient the table workers.

- FLO SPORTS – We have changed from Track to Flo. Your homework is to become familiar enough to help your table in order to keep the matches "flo"ing.
  - i. See: <https://www.flowrestling.org/search?q=FloArena%20Demo&page=1&limit=10>. You can also go to Flowrestling.com. In the search bar, look up FloArena Demo; the videos will illustrate how to score.
- Emphasize the importance of getting the "on deck" and "in the hole" wrestlers ready during the current match. Utilize all table help to direct this process.
- Wrestlers have 15 minutes between matches unless both wrestlers & coaches waive this time period.
- Double-bracketed individuals should check in with both mats. Upon finishing the first scheduled match, the wrestler should report promptly to the second mat. Once s/he reports, for safety reasons give them at least one match to rest.
- Do "3" mat calls through the head table. Before disqualifying a no-show individual, confirm this decision with the wrestler's coach, the Head Official, and the Head Table.
  - i. If a wrestler is not present, do the first mat call and move to the match "on deck" or "in the hole" (if necessary).

- ii. Perform a second call during a break in the interim match.
  - iii. For the 2<sup>nd</sup> call, also ask the coach to come to the mat table in order to confirm that the individual is present and to facilitate getting them there to wrestle.
  - iv. If confirmed that the wrestler is in the building, give him/her the time needed to get to the mat. We are about competition, not disqualification.
- Remind table workers to NOT begin a championship (1<sup>st</sup> place) finals match until we have two officials on the mat.

Organization: Once the official meeting and orientation have concluded at 8:30 am, the tournament director, Ed Gutierrez, will meet with us before we head out to the event. Then please go directly to the mat tables and work on getting a table crew and the first contestants ready.

Start: Band first competitors before or by 8:45 am. You must have 2 wrestlers ready in the center for the universal start! If necessary, go to on-deck or in-the-hole competitors.

- Clear mat area to enforce 2 in the coaching corner and everyone else behind the table.
- Prepare for announcements, a prayer, and the national anthem.
- Stand with your first wrestlers ready in the center circle for a universal start. All whistles will blow simultaneously after “let’s get ready to wrestle” and a final countdown to “0.”

### **General Information**

Pictures: If you have not had your picture taken for the RMN website or for your Arbiter profile, email one to Bill. If necessary, he will take yours in uniform before wrestling begins. These will be posted with your name and state under the "officials" tab: <https://www.rmnevents.com/officials>.

Wrestling Bio: Please email a brief wrestling & officiating biography, including important details, your philosophy on the sport and/or officiating, and why you look forward to working RMN Events. Bill will then edit and post it on the RMN Officials' Page. (If you have already submitted your bio, please review and send any current updates or edits.)

Features: Read up on some of the unique and extraordinary young people who shine on and off the mat at RMN Events: <https://www.rmnevents.com/news>.

Change in Plans: If for some unforeseeable reason, you decline or turn back this assignment (in all or in part), please have the consideration to do so ASAP (a minimum of one week prior to the event), in order to allow adequate replacement time. Email Bill, then turn back the assignment on Arbiter. All last-minute changes will be reviewed when making further assignments.

Assessment: If you would like a formal evaluation (limited to one per season), please inform me in advance, in order to review the assessment criteria which will be sent to you.

Let me know if you have questions or specific needs. Email or text is the best means to reach me. Thank you – you are an important part of the nation's best wrestling!

-- Bill X. Barron – [bx4barron@gmail.com](mailto:bx4barron@gmail.com), (207) 837-3223