

36. WOMEN'S WRESTLING (Emerging Sport – Year 4 of 5-year window for emerging sports)**Section 1. Tournament Dates**

National Invitational dates shall be determined jointly by the host and the NJCAA.

March 6-7, 2026 at Mid-America Center, Council Bluffs, IA

March 5-6, 2027 at Mid-America Center, Council Bluffs, IA

March 3-4, 2028 at Mid-America Center, Council Bluffs, IA

Section 2. Host Pre-Tournament Responsibilities

A. The host will send official Women's Wrestling participant information to each school that has certified at least one participant for women's wrestling.

B. The host will send pre-tournament information to all wrestling colleges by January 27, 2026

Section 3. Competition in Open Meets

A. Any open competition in which students enter as representatives of a member college shall be listed on the published schedule of the college and the students must satisfy the NJCAA Rules of Eligibility. These students must have a Weight Certification form on file with the NJCAA National Office.

B. Students not representing an NJCAA member college may participate unattached in "open" or "exhibition" competition without NJCAA approval. A college shall not furnish any assistance (equipment, transportation, lodging or meals) for athletes to participate in such events. A coach may not be in the mat area during a match to provide any coaching, advice or assistance.

C. Violation of this section shall result in the offending college being placed on probation for a period of one year. The member college may not participate in any competition sponsored by the NJCAA during the probationary period.

Section 4. Participation Requirements

A. No contestant shall be permitted to enter the NJCAA Women's Wrestling Invitational Tournament unless accompanied by (1) a coach or faculty member of the sending institution or (2) a designated supervisory coach or faculty member from an NJCAA member college. Designation of a supervisory person in (2) above must be in writing. It shall bear the seal of the college and signatures of the Athletic Director and President or Dean of the sending institution. It shall be sent by certified mail to the Tournament Director. All contestants must remain under the supervision of their coach or the designated supervisory person throughout the tournament and until departure from the site.

B. Ineligible wrestlers or recruits may not attend the NJCAA Women's Wrestling Invitational at the expense of the college, tournament hosts, president of the college or athletic director.

C. Free passes will be made available for the president of the college, athletic director, three coaches, one trainer and qualifying wrestlers. All individuals representing each college must be identified to the Tournament Host 72 hours prior to the check-in deadline. All others must pay tournament fees.

Section 5. Qualification of Teams for Competition

A. The NJCAA Women's Wrestling Invitational will be an open format.

B. Teams may enter up to 15 athletes to the qualifying tournament with a maximum of two per weight. For example, no team may enter three athletes into the same weight class. This allows each team a maximum of 15 athletes at the National Tournament, which will help us to determine the total number of participants. This will also increase the awards from 6 to 8.

C. Advance point scoring, as opposed to match point scoring, will be used when teammates wrestle one another.

D. A Zoom call between all schools who are entering the NJCAA Women's Wrestling Invitational, the women's wrestling chair, and the NJCAA Office will take place no less than 10 days prior to the national tournament to seed the wrestlers in each weight class in order to provide ample time to build out and release the brackets prior to competition beginning.

E. An individual or group of individuals that is submitted via the Participant Information form supplied by the NJCAA. The form must be submitted no later than 48 hours prior to the seeding call. No additions or changes will be accepted following the 48 hour deadline.

F. NJCAA Women's Wrestling Invitational participants are defined as follows:

- i. Must be on Certified Academic Eligibility Roster
- ii. Must be on Certified NWCA/OPC Weigh-In Roster
- iii. Must be certified and eligible for specific weight class entered that weekend
- iv. Individuals failing medical examinations/skin checks may be allowed to weigh in and then be listed on the bracket as a medical forfeit
- v. Must make weight

Section 6. Rules and Procedures

A. The NJCAA mandates that all participating colleges adhere to and follow the NCAA Wrestling Rulebook and follow the NCAA Weight Management regulations (NCAA Guidelines – Rule 8) unless stated otherwise in the NJCAA Wrestling bylaws. The NJCAA will follow the newly formed NCAA weight classes (103, 110, 117, 124, 131, 138, 145, 160, 180, 207) along with the additional 235-pound weight class.

B. Conduct all matches according to the rules in the NCAA Wrestling Rulebook. The consolation bracket will determine a third-place finisher and shall include all wrestlers defeated in the first and second rounds, as well as defeated wrestlers from the tournament quarter and semifinals.

C. Official scales shall be available for at least one hour prior to each official weigh-in. Photo I.D.'s are required for weigh-ins, Tournament Host will be responsible for providing a photo I.D.

D. Official clock, scoreboard and collegiate mats are to be provided by the Tournament Host.. In accordance with NCAA guidelines, mats shall have a wrestling area between 32 and 42 feet in diameter.

E. The tournament schedule will be developed by the host and approved by the NJCAA Women's Wrestling Committee. The approved schedule is shown below:

Wednesday

Scales and workout site available as determined by the Tournament Director.

3 p.m. – 6 p.m. 1.5 mats will be available

6 p.m. – 10 p.m. 5 mats will be available

Thursday

6 a.m. – 10 p.m. 5 mats will be available

10:30 a.m. - 10 p.m. Official scale & workout site available

10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Team check-in and entry verification. Failure to appear by the deadline may result in disqualification for the championship (Phone call prior to 3 p.m. if on late flight/transportation)

Noon - 10 p.m. Official scale open and workout site available

5 p.m. Tournament procedures meeting to be followed by NJCAA Coaches Meeting

Friday

5:30 a.m. - 6:45 a.m.	Official scale and workout site available
6:45 a.m.	Skin checks
7:00 a.m.	Official weigh-in
9:00 a.m.	Preliminaries first round
	Consolation first round
6:00 p.m.	NJCAA Wrestling Coaches Association presentations
11 p.m.	Workout facilities will close

Saturday

6 a.m. - 7:25 a.m.	Scales and workout site available
8:15 a.m.	Skin Checks
8:30 a.m.	Official weigh-in
9:30 a.m.	Championship Semifinals
11:00 a.m.*	Consolation Semifinals
12:15 p.m.	Consolation Finals
5:30 p.m.	Opening Ceremonies
5:50 p.m.	Parade of All-Americans
6:00 p.m.	Championship Finals
	NJCAA Award presentations

**These times are approximate*

NOTE: The Tournament Director shall have the authority to close or open mats to allow for the 45-minute rest rule.

- F. Opening ceremonies for the tournament shall be at 5:30 p.m. on the second day.
- G. The championship round shall be held on a single mat. This round will begin no later than 6:00 p.m. and will begin with the Women's 101-pound match, followed by the Men's 125-pound match, rotating between men's and women's bouts until all championship matches are completed for both genders. An appropriate award ceremony will occur during the championship round.
- H. Each coach shall be responsible for his team's total points and shall certify this by signing a scorecard for his team at the conclusion of the tournament. If he fails to sign the scorecard, the score stands as recorded by the official scorer.
- I. Protest Procedures
 - 1. Coach should notify the head mat official of his protest immediately:
 - i. Wrestlers and coaches should remain in the mat area. The mat must be closed until the protest is resolved.
 - ii. A protest must be submitted within ten minutes of the conclusion of the match.
 - iii. Notify head scorer. No match that may be affected by the results of the protest should be wrestled.
 - iv. Notify Tournament Protest Committee.
 - v. Notify coaches and contestants that the bout has not been concluded.
 - 2. Each team will be allowed one video challenge per three qualifiers on day one and one video challenge per remaining three qualifiers on day two.
 - 3. If video challenge is unavailable, the coach should notify the head official.
- J. A games committee to handle protests and violations of the NJCAA Code of Conduct and Misconduct Policy (competition rules) shall be composed of a minimum of three of the following, as selected by the official NJCAA Representatives. Any individual participant or coach requesting a protest must pay \$100 in advance. The \$100 is nonrefundable.
 - 1. Head mat official or his alternate.
 - 2. An officer of the Wrestling Coaches Association not involved in the protest.
 - 3. NJCAA Representative.
- K. The NJCAA will provide All-American awards for 1st through 3rd place with the Women's Wrestling Coaches Association providing and purchasing awards for 4th thru 6th place.

Section 7. Officials

- A. The official selection process begins with the participating colleges nominating an official and sending a letter of recommendation and resume of that nominee to their Regional Director. The Regional Director then endorses the nomination and forwards it to the Tournament Director for consideration. The Tournament Director shall hire all tournament officials.
- B. The Tournament Director shall provide material to allow all tournament coaches an opportunity to rate all mat officials for the tournament. The lowest rated official(s) shall not be eligible to return for two years.
- C. The head official shall not participate in officiating any match during the duration of the National Tournament. The assistant head official may officiate during the duration of the tournament, with an assigned designee in case of a video challenge.
- D. No official officiating a match will be involved in the video review. There will be an independent party to conduct the review, not involved in the match.

Section 8. Finances

- A. Each college shall pay its own team expenses.
- B. Each participating college will be assessed a \$35 entry fee per qualifying wrestler.

Section 9. Open Wound Policy

Under circumstances when constant or profuse bleeding has occurred, the participant shall be immediately removed from that contest by the official and cannot return until the bleeding has been stopped.

- A. Health care attendants, known to be infected with the HIV virus, cannot administer to bleeding athletes.
- B. Anytime an athlete bleeds during a bout, the official shall stop the action and the bleeding shall be stopped.
- C. If the bleeding cannot be stopped to the satisfaction of the mat official, the athlete cannot continue to compete.
- D. Timeouts for bleeding shall not be included in injury time.
- E. Home match administration shall be responsible to notify all officials of his responsibilities in enforcing the policy.
- F. Home match administration is responsible for clean-up of mats and proper disposal of contaminated ma