

also contribute to burning out kids from the sport. If youth wrestling is made more fun and less intense with less of an emphasis on competition less of this “burning out” will occur when the kids reach high school. As a result, the quality of high school wrestling will be better and the sport of wrestling as a whole will be better off when it matters most, which is not at the youth level.

The next change that would improve the sport would be changing the high school out of bounds rules to that of college wrestling. It is much easier for referees to call the college rules because all they have to look for is one part of either wrestler still in the circle to know that they are still in bounds. This change would generate consistency among referees, something that is lacking with the current state of the high school rules. Although the high school rules state that if one supporting point of each wrestler is out, then it is out of bounds, each referee calls it differently. Some referees just blow it out of bounds when wrestlers get near the edge while others let the action continue when the wrestlers have been out of bounds multiple times. This current system is inconsistent and causes fans confusion over what is out of bounds and what isn't out of bounds. The sport needs to become more fan friendly. A much simpler out of bounds rule like the college rule would be easier for fans to understand. If they understand more of the rules and the way they are applied they will become more passionate about the sport. As a wrestler who has attempted to score many points near the out of bounds lines, I can vouch for the fact that it is incredibly frustrating to have referees call it out of bounds whenever wrestlers get close to the edge. The current rules make it harder to finish takedowns on the edge because the wrestlers don't know when exactly the referees are going to stop the action and call it out of bounds. A much more simple out of bounds rule like the college rule would improve the sport of wrestling.

Lastly, specifically in Pennsylvania, adjustments need to be made to the state tournament to improve the sport of wrestling. The first of these is that fixes need to be made in the bracketing process. It is not good for the sport when two kids ranked in the top five in the country who were both state finalists the year before are forced to wrestle in the quarterfinals of the state tournament like happened in the AAA 138 lbs bracket this year. Also, in the AA 126 lb bracket three returning state finalists were on the same side of the bracket while there was only