

2026 CIAC State Open & Girls' Championship Wrestling Tournaments

February 27 & 28, 2026

The Floyd Little Athletic Center (Hillhouse HS) in New Haven
480 Sherman Parkway New Haven CT



This year's events are dedicated to Steve Merlino, long-time chair of the CIAC Wrestling committee, who has retired from that position of leadership. A recent inductee into the New England Wrestling Hall of Fame, Steve has been active in CT wrestling for many years, founding programs at Lyman Memorial and Coventry, and being extensively involved with area wrestlers through his action with the Windham Wrestling Club (now Silverbacks) since 1988. As CIAC chair, he has worked hard to implement our Girls Championship, as well as being an advocate of both safety for wrestlers and the overall growth of the sport. If you see him at the head table or when he is handing out medals, be sure to thank him and shake his hand. However, being the proud Italian that he is, be prepared for a big hug.

2026 CIAC State Open Schedule

Friday, February 27, 2026

12PM—1PM	Registration & Weight Check (rear entrance of facility; participating wrestlers & 2 coaches & 1 manager only. Please limit attempting to bring in large bags that delay security. Spectators and non-participating athletes front entrance 2:30PM)
1:00PM	Weigh-Ins by weight class in Field House Nails and skin will be checked--have current & proper state physician's form for any skin condition
2:15PM	Coaches Meeting/Scratch Meeting in Auditorium
2:30PM	Doors Open for spectators—front entrance only (please do not arrive before 2:30PM)
3:00PM	Welcome, Presentation of Divisional OW Awards & National Anthem
3:15PM	Championship Round of 32 est 100 bouts 6 mats (Mats 1-6)
4:45PM*	Championship Round of 16 112 bouts 6 mats (Mats 1-6)
6:30PM*	First Round Consolations (C16) est 100 bouts 6 mats (Mats 1-6)
8PM*	Championship Quarterfinals 56 bouts 4 mats (Mats 1-4)
8PM*	Consi Round of 8 #1 56 bouts 2 mats (Mats 5-6)
	Estimated finish time of 9:30PM

Saturday, February 28, 2026

8:30AM	School opens—front entrance for all (wrestlers with pass, coaches & spectators)
8:30AM—9AM	Weight Check (1 additional pound allowance from Friday)
9:15AM	Weigh-Ins by weight class in Field House—Be on time!
10:00AM	Consolation Round of 8 #2 56 bouts 4 mats (Mats 7-10)
12:00PM	Championship Semifinals 28 bouts 2 mats (Mats 3 & 4)
12:00PM	Consolation Quarterfinals 28 bouts 2 mats (Mats 1 & 2)
2:00PM*	Consolation Semifinals 28 bouts 4 mats (Mats 1-4)

2:45PM*	Third Place & Fifth Place Finals	28 bouts	4 mats (Mats 1-4)
4:00PM	Parade of Past Champions, Introductions of Finalists & National Anthem		
4:15PM	2026 State Open Finals (starting weight class will be determined by draw on Fri)		
6:45PM	Estimated Finish Time		

Presentation of Awards will take place after each medal round set of bouts, delayed 1 match (ie 120 pound awards will be presented after the 126 pound medal matches—medalists must be present to receive award, and finals will be “held” until both finished)

*indicates estimated time, and may start earlier/later. Firm times listed for semis and finals will not start earlier

2026 CIAC Girls' State Wrestling Championship Schedule

Friday, February 27, 2026

12PM—1PM	Registration & Weight Check (rear entrance of facility; participating wrestlers & coaches only. Please limit attempting to bring in large bags that delay security. Spectators and non-participating athletes at front entrance 2:30PM)		
1:30PM	Weigh-Ins by weight class in Field House Nails and skin will be checked--have current & proper state physician's form for any skin condition		
2:15PM	Coaches Meeting/Scratch Meeting in Auditorium		
2:30PM	Doors Open for spectators—<u>front entrance only</u> (please do not arrive before 2:30PM)		
3:15PM	Championship Round of 32 (as needed)	est 56 bouts	4 mats (7-10)
4:15PM*	Championship Round of 16	est 80 bouts	4 mats (7-10)
4:30PM*	1st Round Consi (C16 #1)	est 16 bouts	in mix
6:00PM*	2nd Consolation Round (C16 #2)	est 52 bouts	4 mats (7-10)
7:00PM*	Championship Quarterfinals	52 bouts	2 mats (7-8)
7:00PM*	3rd Round Consolations (C8 #1)	est 52 bouts	2 mats (9-10)

Estimated finish time of 9:15PM

Saturday, February 28, 2026

8:30AM	School opens—front entrance for all (wrestlers with pass, coaches & spectators)		
8:30AM—9AM	Weight Check (1 additional pound allowance from Friday)		
9AM	Weigh-Ins by weight class (Field House)—Be on time!		
9:45AM	Consolation Round of 8 #2	est 48 bouts	6 mats (1-6)
10:30AM	Championship Semifinals (not “holding”)	26 bouts	2 mats (3 & 4)
10:30AM	Consolation Quarterfinals	26 bouts	2 mats (1 & 2)
12PM*	Consolation Semifinals	26 bouts	4 mats (5-8)

1:30PM*	Third Place & Fifth Place Finals	26 bouts	4 mats (5-8)
4:00PM	Parade of Past Champions, Introductions of Finalists & National Anthem		
4:15PM	2026 Championship Finals (starting weight class will be determined by draw)		
6:30PM	Estimated Finish Time		

Presentation of Awards will take place after each medal round set of bouts, delayed 1 match (ie 126 pound awards will be presented after the 132 pound medal matches—medalists must be present to receive award)

*indicates estimated time, and may start earlier/later. Firm times listed for semis and finals will not start earlier

Coach & Wrestler Information

1. Admission passes will be issued for each state medal winner from the divisional class meets (1-6)
2. Coaches passes will be determined based on the number of entries for the State Open and the Girls Invitational. As in the past, each team receives 2 coaches passes and 1 manager pass for the event. Any team that qualifies more than 4 wrestlers for the Open will receive a 3rd pass. In addition, any team that enters more than 2 female wrestlers will receive one additional coach pass. Under no circumstance will more than 4 coaching passes be issued to any school. Additional coach passes for certified coaches in appropriate attire may be purchased at registration for \$20. As with the State Open, only certified coaches in proper attire may be in the corner coaching. Please note that due to both events being held concurrently, the chances of multiple wrestlers from the same team competing at the same time are increased. Referees will be instructed NOT to hold any matches for coaches who are occupied by another bout on another mat, as presence within the facility meets the requirement. Additional tickets for non-participating team member wrestlers may be purchased at spectator entrance at 2:30PM using GoFan.
3. The top six placewinners from the divisional meets qualify for the State Open. The 4 divisional state champions will be seeded according to state seeding placement points and state seeding criteria. All coaches of divisional champions are requested to email David Nowakowski at nowakowski@sbcglobal.net or call 860-705-2629 by 12pm on Monday, February 23 if their wrestler has defeated any of the other 3 state champions. Each weight class will then be bracketed based upon the seeding of the 4 state champions, with the top 2 finishers from each class receiving a bye, and the 3rd vs 6th and 4th vs 5th assignments based on the seed grid below. There are no alternates for the Open.
4. Separation of seeds from same divisional classification for the Open is as follows:
1,6,10,13,17,22 2,5,9,14,20,23 3,8,12,15,19,24 4,7,11,16,18,21
5. IF YOUR WRESTLER IS AN EARLY SCRATCH, PLEASE CONTACT Dave Nowakowski at (860) 705-2629 or nowakowski@sbcglobal.net so that brackets may be adjusted.
6. There are no alternates for the Open.
 - a. If one of the 4 divisional champions is a scratch, the other 3 state champs will move up accordingly. The vacant 4th seed will be filled by the 2nd place finisher from the same division as the scratched wrestler, and weight class will be re-bracketed based on the placement of the top 4 seeds, with alternates placed as noted.
 - b. In the event of any other scratches, all wrestlers from that division (S/M/L/LL) will move up accordingly, and some byes may be created.
7. If your wrestler is not present when his weight class is called for weigh-ins, he will be disqualified. Please be on time. If you are experiencing an emergency delay due to traffic, please call Dave Nowakowski at (860) 705-2629, and the decision of the CIAC wrestling committee will be final. This is not the "I'm a fan who needs directions" phone number.
8. Medals will be awarded to the top 6 finishers in each weight class. Wrestler must be present to receive medal. Plaques will be awarded to the top 2 teams, and an "Outstanding Wrestler Award"
9. The top 5 CT finishers from the Open and the top 3 finishers from the Girls (not including 285 girls weight class) qualify for the New England Tournament next weekend. Coaches of State Open champs are asked to contact Dave Nowakowski if their wrestler has defeated a State Champion from any of the other 5 NE states. If

a wrestler who qualifies is unable to participate, a 6th place Open or 4th place girl finisher must be submitted for state registration purposes by Thursday. Please contact Dave Nowakowski if you have a NE qualifier who will be unable to attend, and please attempt to contact the coach of the 6th place finisher. There are no "alternates" for New Englands in terms of getting into the tournament on Saturday if there are late scratches after the deadline. See <http://newenglandsports.com/> for tournament info, including seeding & payment details. AGAIN FOR 2026...on-line payment and registration required for New England Meet wrestlers!

Spectator Information

Tickets: Two sessions (Friday and Saturday). Ticket prices for each session are as follows: Children 5 & under: Free. Students Grade 1-12 and Senior Citizens 65 & older: \$5. All other adults: \$10. Tickets may be purchased on-line via CIAC at <https://gofan.co/app/school/CIAC>

Admit times: Spectators must use front entrance only. Please do not arrive prior to 2:30PM on Friday (wrestling starts at 3:15PM) or prior to 8:30AM Saturday (wrestling starts at 10AM).

Valuables: Do not leave valuables unattended. You are responsible for your own items.

Food drink: No food or drink may be brought into the field house. Bottled water is permitted. A concession stand and seating for dining is located adjacent to the ticket booth.

Seating: Spectators must be seated in bleachers, or may stand along outer perimeter at the end of the field house where no seats are located. Do not obstruct other spectators. Do not block walkways. Only certified coaches, active wrestlers and managers with credentials are permitted inside the roped-off area.

On line scoring: Wrestling may be followed either in the field house using a smartphone or at home on your computer via "FloArena"

Live video: Flo live video of all 10 mats via Flo Wrestling or NFHS Network.

Seeding the State Open Based on Seed Points of the Four Divisional Champions

Only the 4 divisional champions will be seeded (1-4), while all other seeds will be placed accordingly in the respective grid. Top six from each division qualify for Open. 1st & 2nd place divisional winners will receive first round byes, as the 32-man bracket features 24 entries and 8 byes. Ties and seeding will be done in accordance with state seeding criteria. All coaches of divisional champions are requested to email David Nowakowski at nowakowski@sbcglobal.net or call/text 860-705-2629 by 12pm on Monday, February 23 if their wrestler has defeated any of the other 3 state champions. The State Open seeds and brackets will be posted on the CIAC website (www.casciac.org) once confirmed, typically by early Tues. If one of the 4 divisional champions is a scratch, the other 3 state champs will move up accordingly (even if the 2nd place finisher from the division of the scratched champ has more seed points than any of the remaining 3 champions). The 4th seed will be filled by the 2nd place finisher from the same division as the scratched wrestler, even if that wrestler has defeated any of the other state champions, and weight class will be re-bracketed based on the placement of the top 4 seeds.

Separation of seeds from same divisional classification is as follows:

1,6,10,13,17,22

2,5,9,14,20,23

3,8,12,15,19,24

4,7,11,16,18,21