

COLUMBIA — **Woodruff's** 92-mile trip to Ridge View High School to compete in the 2A state title match against **Loris** Thursday night was all for naught.

* **Woodruff-Loris** match postponed

Thirty minutes prior to the match, S.C. High School League commissioner Jerome Singleton was handed a court order to have the match halted.

The match was postponed for the second time due to an injunction, the latest being filed by the Berkeley County school district.

The district is challenging Singleton's ruling disqualifying Hanahan from participating in the championship due to the use of an ineligible wrestler in the 125-pound weight class.

High School League rules state a wrestler cannot compete more than one class above his actual weight. Hanahan's Koffi Dwira, who is certified to wrestle at 125 pounds, competed in a higher weight class than is permitted by the High School League when he wrestled in a holiday tournament earlier this season.

The sport uses preseason testing to determine a healthy body weight for competition.

The executive committee voted 13-0 at a hearing on Thursday to uphold Singleton's ruling which sent **Loris**, instead of Hanahan, into the title match against the Wolverines.

Singleton said he had no choice but to stop the match once receiving the court order.

"Judge Kristi Herrington signed the (court order) at 5:17 p.m.," he said. "Even if the match would have gotten under way, I would have had to stop it."

The new hearing will take place in a Berkeley County courtroom at 9 a.m. Tuesday, Singleton said.

Hanahan originally defeated **Loris** 34-33 in the lower state title match.

However, due to the disqualification, the points were reversed giving **Loris** a 39-31 victory.

Woodruff coach Daniel Westmoreland said his team was disappointed when learning of the postponement.

"We're just going to try to regroup. We'll practice at 6 a.m. (Friday) to get ready for the individual meet until this is dissolved," he said. "(The team) is a little down. They were expecting to get a championship match in tonight. Hopefully their spirits will pick up tomorrow. I'm very disappointed. My heart is broken. I was hoping to have something settled tonight."

Several wrestlers will temporarily turn their attention to the 2A upper state qualifier to be held Friday at Broome High School.

Broome **wrestling** coach Steve Carruth said the High School League will grant all 23 teams participating in the qualifier a one-pound allowance due to the title match being postponed beyond its control.

Wolverines seniors Jeremy Phillips and Akierrian Gilliam said the team will continue to work hard until the title match takes place.

"It made all of us mad, but the other teams are waiting just like we are," Phillips said. "We still just have to get the whole team practicing and pumped for the match."

"You just have to let this go. We've been put off for a week," Gilliam said. "We had already weighed in and then got shocked. But, tomorrow we'll come in and get started and get the sweat going to make up for today."

Woodruff athletic director Scott Lawson said it's too early to determine a makeup date for the title match due to the new developments. However, he said time is running out.

"The clock is ticking," Lawson said. "This has to be reconciled in a timely manner because the end of the **wrestling** season is coming soon."

Singleton said should the ruling go in Hanahan's favor Tuesday, it's possible that **Loris** could also file an injunction.

He added the league has the authority to appeal, as well, should a decision favor Hanahan.

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