



MIXED MARTIAL ARTS UNIFIED RULES FOR AMATEUR COMPETITION

SCOPE:

Amateur Mixed Martial Arts [MMA] competition shall provide participants new to the sport of MMA the needed experience required in order to progress through to a possible career within the sport. The sole ethos of Amateur MMA is to provide the safest possible environment for combatants to train and gain the required experience and knowledge under directed pathways allowing them to compete under the confines of the rules set out within this document.

It is recognized, through the International Mixed Martial Arts Federation [IMMAF] that varying country codes and legislation may differ from region to region and this can be reflected in the resultant documentation and rules sets from the member countries. The annual IMMAF MMA World Amateur Championships may be held in differing countries and such changes shall be facilitated and known prior to competition. What we are striving for in conjunction with the unparalleled safety conscious nature of the combatants is a unified and an aesthetically common identity of the sport of Mixed Martial Arts for amateur competition.

1) **DEFINITION:**

“Mixed martial arts” means competition involving the use, subject to any applicable limitations set forth in these Unified Rules, of a combination of techniques from different disciplines of the martial arts, including, without limitation, grappling, kicking and striking.

2) **JURISDICTION:**

The Referee shall remain the sole arbiter of a contest.

All contests and exhibitions of mixed martial arts must be conducted under the supervision and authority of the commission.

3) **ROUNDS:**

A) Each non-championship mixed martial arts contest is to be for 3 rounds, each round no more than 3 minutes duration, with a rest period of 1 minute between each round.

4) **STOPPING THE CONTEST:**

The referee and the ringside physician are the only individuals authorized to enter the ring/fighting area at any time during competition, and the referee is the sole arbiter of a contest and is the only individual authorized to stop a contest.

5) **JUDGING:**

All contests will be evaluated and scored by three judges.

6) **TEN (10) POINT MUST SYSTEM:**

The 10-Point Must System will be the standard system of scoring a contest.

7) **WARNINGS:**

A single warning will be issued for the following infractions only:

- A) Holding or grabbing fence
- B) Holding onto opponent's shorts, gloves, shin-guards or rash-guard

8) **FOULS:**

A) The following acts constitute fouls in a contest or exhibition of mixed martial arts:

- 1) Butting with the head
- 2) Eye gouging of any kind
- 3) Biting
- 4) Spitting at an opponent
- 5) Hair pulling
- 6) Fish hooking
- 7) Groin attacks of any kind
- 8) Putting a finger into any orifice or any cut or laceration of an opponent
- 9) Small joint manipulation
- 10) Striking downward using the point of the elbow
- 11) Striking to the spine or the back of the head
- 12) Kicking to the kidney with a heel
- 13) Throat strikes of any kind, including grabbing the trachea
- 14) Clawing, pinching or twisting the flesh
- 15) Grabbing the clavicle
- 16) Kicking the head of a grounded opponent
- 17) Kneeing the head of a grounded opponent
- 18) Stomping a grounded opponent
- 19) Holding the fence [gripping the fence to control/hold/alter position with fingers and toes]

- 20) Holding the shorts, gloves. Shin-guards or rash-guard of an opponent
- 21) Using abusive language in fenced ring/fighting area
- 22) Engaging in any unsportsmanlike conduct that causes injury to an opponent
- 23) Attacking an opponent on or during the break
- 24) Attacking an opponent who is under the care of the referee
- 25) Attacking an opponent after the bell has sounded the end of the round
- 26) Timidity, including, without limitation, avoiding contact with an opponent, intentionally or consistently dropping the mouthpiece or faking an injury
- 27) Throwing opponent out of ring/fighting area
- 28) Flagrantly disregarding the instructions of the referee
- 29) Spiking an opponent to the canvas on his head or neck
- 30) Interference by the corner
- 31) Applying any foreign substance to the hair or body to gain an advantage

FORBIDDEN TECHNIQUES

In addition to the listed fouls above, techniques that shall remain forbidden in Amateur Mixed Martial Arts contests shall be:

- 1) Elbow and forearm strikes of any kind
- 2) Heel Hook
- 3) Twisters/Sit through crucifix and/or any submission deemed as applying pressure to the spine
- 4) Knees to the head at any point

FOUL PROCEEDURE

- B) Disqualification occurs after any combination of 3 fouls or after a flagrant foul.
- C) Fouls result in a point being deducted by the official scorekeeper from the offending contestant's score. The judges should only make notations of points deducted by the referee, for each round.
- D) Only a referee can assess a foul. If the referee does not call the foul, judges must not make that assessment on their own.
- E) A fouled contestant has up to 5 minutes to recuperate.
- F) If a foul is committed
 - 1) The referee shall call time.
 - 2) The referee shall check the fouled contestant's condition and safety.
 - 3) The referee shall then instruct the fouling contestant to a neutral corner, assess

the foul to the fouled contestant, deduct points [if required] and notify the cornermen, judges and official scorekeeper.

- G) If a bottom contestant commits a foul, unless the top contestant is injured, the contest will continue
- 1) The referee will verbally notify the bottom contestant of the foul.
 - 2) When the round is over, the referee will assess the foul and notify both corners, the judges and the official scorekeeper.
 - 3) The referee may terminate a contest based on the severity of a foul. For such a flagrant foul, a contestant shall lose by disqualification.

9) **INJURIES SUSTAINED BY FAIR BLOWS AND FOULS:**

A) Fair Blows:

If injury is severe enough to terminate a contest, the injured contestant loses by TKO.

B) Fouls:

1) Intentional:

- a) If an injury is severe enough to cause the immediate termination of a contest, the contestant causing the injury loses by disqualification.
- b) If an injury is produced and the contest is allowed to continue, the referee will notify the authorities and automatically deduct 2 points from the contestant who committed the foul. Point deductions for intentional fouls will be mandatory.
- c) If an injury as described in (b) above is the cause of the contest being stopped in a later round, the injured boxer will win by TECHNICAL DECISION, if he is ahead on the scorecards.
- d) If an injury as described in (b) above is the cause of the contest being stopped in a later round, the contest will result in a TECHNICAL DRAW, if the injured contestant is behind or even on the scorecards.
- e) If a contestant injures himself while attempting to foul his opponent, the referee will not take any action in his favor, and the injury will be the same as one produced by a fair blow.

2) Accidental:

- a) Any injury severe enough for the referee to stop the contest immediately, will result in a NO CONTEST if stopped before 2 rounds have been completed in a 3 round contest or if stopped before 3 rounds have been completed in a 5 round contest.
- b) Any injury severe enough for the referee to stop the contest immediately after 2 rounds of a 3 round contest, or after 3 rounds of a 5 round contest have occurred, the contest will result in a TECHNICAL DECISION, awarded to the contestant who is ahead on the score cards at the time the contest is stopped.
- c) If injury (b) above occurs, there will be no scoring of an incomplete round.
- d) If injury (b) above occurs, and the referee penalizes either contestant, then point(s) shall be deducted from the final score.

10) **WEIGHT DIVISIONS:**

Except with the approval of the commission, the classes for mixed martial arts contests or exhibitions and the weights for each class shall be:

Straw-weight	under 115 pounds
Flyweight	over 115 to 125 pounds
Bantamweight	over 125 to 135 pounds
Featherweight	over 135 to 145 pounds
Lightweight	over 145 to 155 pounds
Welterweight	over 155 to 170 pounds
Middleweight	over 170 to 185 pounds
Light Heavyweight	over 185 to 205 pounds
Heavyweight	over 205 to 265 pounds
Super Heavyweight	over 265 pounds

Weigh-ins for amateur contestants shall be on the day of competition. The practice of weight cutting techniques is to be discouraged by clubs, coaches and all connected with amateur competition. The ethos behind amateur competition and experience is for combatants to concentrate solely on technique and experience gained through competitive fighting. There should be a period of no less than 1 hour before competition and no longer than 8 hours between weigh-in and competition.

11) **MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTESTANTS:**

- 4.1 A) Contestants shall complete all pre-licensure medical examinations and tests required by the jurisdiction licensing the contest. Contestants are required to provide certificates for Hepatitis B (HBsAg), Hepatitis C (HCVsAb) and HIV tests. These certificates cannot be older

than 1 year.

- B) The jurisdiction licensing the contest shall conduct or supervise all pre-contest weigh-ins and supervise a rules meeting for all contestants and their cornermen.
- C) Post-Contest medical examination:
 - 1) Immediately following a contest, each contestant shall be given a medical examination by a physician approved by the commission. The medical examination may include any examinations or tests the commission deems necessary to determine the post-contest physical fitness of a contestant.
 - 2) Any contestant who refuses to submit to a post-contest medical examination shall be immediately suspended for an indefinite period.

12) **RING/FIGHTING AREA REQUIREMENTS AND EQUIPMENT:**

- A) Ring/Fighting Area:
 - 1) Size: The ring/fighting area must be circular or have at least eight equal sides¹ and must be no smaller than 20 feet x 20 feet and no larger than 32 feet x 32 feet. The ring/fighting area floor shall be padded in a manner as approved by the commission, with at least 1 inch layer of foam padding. Padding shall extend beyond the ring/fighting area and over the edge of the platform. The ring/fighting area shall have a canvas covering. No vinyl or other plastic rubberized covering shall be permitted, and material that tends to gather in lumps or ridges must not be used.
 - 2) Height: The ring/fighting area platform shall not be more than 4 feet above the floor of the building and shall have suitable steps or ramp for use by the participants. Ring posts shall be made of metal not more than 6 inches in diameter, extending from the floor of the building to between 5 and 7 feet above the canvas of the ring/fighting area and shall be properly padded in a manner approved by the commission.
 - B) Fence:
 - 1) The canvas of the ring/fighting area shall be enclosed by a fence made of such material as will not allow a contestant to fall out or break through it onto the floor or spectators; including, without limitation, chain-link fence coated with vinyl. Any metal portion of the fenced area must be covered and padded in a manner approved by the commission and must not be abrasive to the contestants.
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- 2) The fenced area must have 2 gated entrances, preferably on opposite sides of the fenced area.
- 3) There must not be any obstruction on any part of the fence surrounding the area in which the contestants are competing.

C) Video Screens:

The promoter of a mixed martial arts contest or exhibition shall hang at least 2 video screens which meet the approval of the commission or its executive director and which allow the patrons to view the action inside the fenced area.

D) Gloves:

- 1) The gloves shall be new for all events and in good condition or they must be replaced. Only gloves supplied
- 2) All contestants shall wear gloves weighing minimum of no less than 6 ounces and no more than 8 ounces, which shall be supplied by the promoter and approved by the commission. The gloves for amateur competition shall be recognized as different to those used under professional rules and have the aesthetic of such. Contestants are not permitted to supply their own gloves.

E) Shin-guards and rash guards.

The use of shin and rash guards shall be a mandatory requirement for amateur mixed martial arts competition. The type of shin guard used shall be able to facilitate the grappling aspects associated with competition. As such the preferred type shall be a tight fighting pull-on sock/neoprene type shin guard. The use of shin guards with Velcro type strap fasteners or utilizing any substance other than which the shin guard is made of shall be forbidden. The type of rash guard to be used shall be of tight fighting stretch material and carry 3 letter country codes on the upper back of the garment. All rash guards are to be of short sleeve type. No long sleeve rash guards are permitted. The rash guards shall be either blue or red in color.

F) Ring Stools:

- 1) A ring stool of a type approved by the commission shall be available for each contestant. All ring stools must be thoroughly cleaned or replaced after each contest.
- 2) An appropriate number of stools or chairs, of a type approved by the commission, shall be available for each contestant's seconds in the corner. Stools must be thoroughly cleaned or replaced after each contest.

G) Other Equipment:

For each contest, the licensed promoter shall provide each contestant's corner with:

- 1) A clean water bucket; and
- 2) A clean plastic bottle.

13) **SAFETY REQUIREMENTS:**

A) Specifications for Bandages on Contestants' Hands:

- 1) In all weight classes, the bandages on each contestant's hand shall be restricted to soft gauze cloth not more than 20 yards in length and 2 inches in width, held in place by not more than 10 ft. of surgeon's tape, 1 inch in width, for each hand.
- 2) Surgeon's adhesive tape shall be placed directly on each hand for protection near the wrist. The tape may cross the back of the hand twice, but may not extend within three-fourths of an inch of the knuckles when the hand is clenched to make a fist. Strips of tape may be used between the fingers to hold down the bandages.
- 3) The bandages shall be evenly distributed across the hand.
- 4) Bandages and tape shall be placed on the contestant's hands in the dressing room in the presence of the commission inspector and in the presence of the manager or chief second of his opponent. A contestant may waive his privilege of having a representative witness the bandaging of his opponent's hands.
- 5) Under no circumstances are gloves to be placed on the hands of a contestant until the approval of the commission inspector is received.

B) Groin and Chest Protectors:

- 1) Groin: All male contestants shall provide and wear a foul-proof groin protector, which shall be subject to examination and approval by the commission.
- 2) Chest: All female contestants shall be given the choice to wear either a chest and /or groin protector during competition. The chest protector shall be subject to examination and approval by the commission.

C) Mouthpieces:

- 1) All contestants are required to wear a well-fitting mouthpiece, which shall

be subject to examination and approval by the commission.

- 2) A round will not begin until both contestants have their respective mouthpieces in place.
- 3) If a mouthpiece is involuntarily dislodged during competition, the referee will call time and replace the mouthpiece at the first opportune moment, which does not interfere with the immediate action.

D) Contestant's Apparel:

- 1) Trunks/shorts. Each contestant must wear mixed martial arts shorts, compression shorts, boxing or kickboxing shorts/pants. No pockets, zips, Fasteners or any foreign substance other than that of the material that the shorts are made of shall be permitted.
- 2) Shirt or Gi: Male contestants may not wear a shirt. GI's and tights/grappling type spats/tights are not permitted.
- 3) Shoes: Contestants may not wear shoes of any kind during competition

E) Contestant's Physical Appearance:

- 1) Each contestant must be clean and present a tidy appearance.
- 2) The excessive use of grease or any other foreign substance, including, without limitation, grooming creams, lotions or sprays, may not be used on the face, hair or body of a contestant. The referee or the commission's representative shall cause any excessive grease or foreign substance to be removed.
- 3) The commission's representative shall determine whether head or facial hair presents any hazard to the safety of the contestant or his opponent or will interfere with the supervision and conduct of the contest. If the head or facial hair of a contestant presents such a hazard or will interfere with the supervision and conduct of the contest, the contestant may not compete in the contest unless the circumstances creating the hazard or potential interference are corrected to the satisfaction of the commission's representation. Without limiting the foregoing standard, head hair must be trimmed or tied back in such a manner that it will not interfere with the vision of either contestant or cover any part of a contestant's face.
- 4) Contestants may not wear any jewelry or other piercing accessories while competing.

F) Emergency Medical Facilities, Personnel and Equipment:

- 1) All promoters must provide medical information, facilities and equipment, including, but not limited to a stretcher and emergency oxygen, adequate for emergency occasions, and an ambulance for each event, and all such

medical facilities and equipment must be approved in advance by the commissioner. No event shall be allowed to start until an ambulance is available and present at the event. No event shall be allowed to continue if an ambulance is utilized to transport a previous contestant to a medical facility, until another ambulance is available and present at the event.

- 2) There shall be at least 1 GMC Registered Doctor and a minimum of 2 paramedics present at all events, from the commencement of the first contest, throughout the duration of the event, and until the last contestant leaves the arena. No event shall be allowed to continue if an paramedic leaves the arena to transport a previous contestant to a medical facility, until an paramedic replacement is available and present at the event.
- 3) Disposable Hygienic Gloves must be worn by all seconds, referees, ringside physicians and inspectors while involved with the event.

14) **TYPES OF CONTEST RESULTS:**

A) Submission by:

- 1) Physical Tap Out
- 2) Verbal tap out

B) Technical Knockout (TKO) by:

- 1) Referee stopping contest
- 2) Ringside Physician stopping contest (according to some states' laws)

C) Decision via the scorecards, including:

- 1) Unanimous Decision - When all three judges score the contest for the same contestant
- 2) Split Decision - When two judges score the contest for one contestant and one judge scores for the opponent
- 3) Majority Decision - When two judges score the contest for the same contestant and one judge scores a draw
- 4) Draw, including:
 - a) Unanimous Draw - When all three judges score the contest a draw
 - b) Majority Draw - When two judges score the contest a draw
 - c) Split Draw - When all three judges score differently

D) Disqualification

E) Forfeit

- F) Technical Draw
- G) Technical Decision
- H) No Contest

15) **SCORING TECHNIQUES:**

- A) Using the 10-Point Must Scoring System, judges are required to determine a winner of a contest that ends after the initial scheduled number of rounds have been completed. 10 points must be awarded to the winner of the round and nine points or less must be awarded to the loser, except for a rare even round, which is scored (10-10).
- B) Mixed Martial Arts Techniques are defined as:
 - 1) “Effective Striking”: The total number of legal heavy strikes landed

“Effective Grappling”: The successful execution of a legal takedown and/or reversal including the following maneuvers:
 - a) Takedowns from standing position to mount position;
 - b) Passing the guard to mount position;
 - c) Bottom position fighters using an active, threatening guard.
 - 2) “Effective Aggression”: Moving forward and landing a legal strike.
 - 3) “Fighting Area Control”: Dictating the pace, location and position of the contest using the following maneuvers:
 - a) Countering a grappler’s attempt at takedown to remain standing and legally striking effectively;
 - b) Taking down an opponent to force a ground fight;
 - c) Creating threatening submission attempts pass the guard to achieve mount, while on the ground;
 - d) Creating striking opportunities, while on the ground.
- C) Judges must evaluate mixed martial arts techniques, such as:
 - 1) Effective Striking/Effective Grappling
 - 2) Effective Aggression
 - 3) Ring/Fighting Area Control

Evaluations shall be made in the order in which the techniques appear above, giving the most weight in scoring to effective striking, grappling, ring/fighting area control and aggressiveness/defense.

- D) Judges should use a sliding scale and recognize the length of time the contestants are either standing or on the ground, as follows:
- 1) If 90% of a round was spent on the ground, then:
 - a) Effective Grappling is weighed first
 - b) Effective Striking is then weighed
 - 2) If 90 % of a round was standing, then:
 - a) Effective Striking is weighed first
 - b) Effective grappling is then weighed
 - 3) If a round ends with 50% standing and 50% grounded, striking and grappling are weighed more equally.

16) **OBJECTIVE SCORING CRITERIA:**

10-10 Round

- A) When both contestants appear to be fighting evenly and neither contestant shows clear dominance in a round.
- B) When both contestants suffer equal numbers of legal knockdowns, takedowns, and strikes and neither shows clear dominance in a round.

10-9 Round

- A) When a contestant wins by a close margin, landing the greater number of effective legal strikes, grappling and other maneuvers.
- B) When a contestant remains in the guard position with no fighter having an edge in striking or grappling, the fighter who scored the legal takedown wins the round.

10-8 Round

- A) When a contestant overwhelmingly dominates by striking or grappling in a round.
- B) When a contestant adversely affects his opponent by knocking him down from a legal strike, threatening submission attempts, throwing, legal striking while

standing or grounded.

10-7 Round

- A) When a contestant totally dominates by striking or grappling in a round.
- B) When a contestant detrimentally affects his opponent by knocking him down from a legal strike, threatening submission attempts, throwing, legal striking while standing or grounded.

In a tournament format where fighter progression/champion is needed, no contests and draws cannot be applied. In such instances after the three rounds of competition have resulted in a draw then a fourth period/over time round shall be contested.

Only in a tournament format should overtime rounds be contested. At all other times the judges evaluation and score remains final.