



IMMAF Amateur Mixed Martial Arts rule set based on 3x3 minute rounds

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§ 1 CONTESTANTS

- 1.1 The contestant shall be of legal age according to the laws of the country where the competition is held.
- 1.2 The contestant shall be in good physical and mental shape. The contestant's shape will be examined during the medical check.
- 1.3 The contestant shall be well prepared to compete in MMA.
- 1.4 The contestant shall have experience from competing in full contact martial arts.
- 1.5 When entering a competition the contestant is responsible for ensuring that all relevant martial arts experience is reported.

§ 2 WEIGHT CLASSES

- 2.1 Opposing contestants shall be closely matched in terms of weight. At heavyweight however a larger difference in weight can be accepted.
- 2.2 The weight shall be checked at a set time before the match as decided by the organizer. The weight shall be approved by both contestants and organizer.
- 2.3 During title matches and tournaments set weight classes shall apply.
- 2.4 Weight classes for women and men:
 - Strawweight: -52.2 kg (115 lbs.)
 - Flyweight: -56.7 kg (125 lbs.)
 - Bantamweight: -61.2 kg (135 lbs.)
 - Featherweight: -65.8 kg (145 lbs.)
 - Lightweight: -70.3 kg (155 lbs.)
 - Welterweight: -77.1 kg (170 lbs.)
 - Middleweight: -83.9 kg (185 lbs.)
 - Light Heavyweight: -93.0 kg (205 lbs.)
 - Heavyweight: -120.2 kg (265 lbs.)
 - Super Heavyweight: +120.2 kg (over 265 lbs.)

§ 3 WEIGH-IN

- 3.1 The contestant shall meet a set weight within a prescribed time at the official weigh-in of the competition, as supervised by officials appointed by the organizer.
- 3.2 The contestant shall be weighed no later than 1 hour and no earlier than 12 hours before the match starts.
- 3.3 Opposing contestants shall be weighed in at the same time.

§ 4 MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND CONTEST PHYSICIAN

- 4.1 At least one licensed physician shall be appointed contest physician.
- 4.2 Contestants are required to provide certificates for Hepatitis B (HBsAg), Hepatitis C (HCVsAb) and HIV tests. These certificates cannot be older than 1 year.

4.3 The physician shall examine all contestants before they compete. The examination shall take place on the same day as the match.

Check-list: heart, blood pressure, pulse, lungs, hearing, teeth, evidence of a hernia, musculature, skin, negative Hepatitis B (HBsAg), Hepatitis C (HCVsAb) and HIV tests.

If a contestant is deemed by the physician to be out of shape, suffering from injury or illness, affected by drugs or narcotics, mentally unbalanced or in any other way unfit to participate in the match, the contestant shall not be permitted to compete.

4.4 Women are not allowed to compete when pregnant and pregnancy tests will be administered as part of the medical examination.

4.5 The physician shall be present during each match. The physician shall interrupt the match if he/she deems a contestant unfit to continue. In such an event the physician shall immediately call for the attention of the referee by throwing a towel into the competition area.

4.6 If a contestant needs assistance in getting back to the corner for the round break, the contestant shall be examined by the physician who among other things shall examine balance and responsiveness while standing without support.

4.7 The physician shall be risk averse when making judgment calls and always consider a “worst case-scenario”.

4.8 If the physician finds it necessary for the contestant to have further examinations he/she shall send the contestant to a hospital.

4.9 In the event of a suspected injury such as for example a slight concussion, the physician is allowed to detain the contestant to conduct a follow-up exam. The contestant shall in such an event stay on site. At such a follow-up examination the physician shall determine whether the contestant is in need of further care or not, and if yes whether or not that includes being sent to a hospital for further examination, and if applicable recommend follow-up treatment. All decisions and conclusions made during the follow-up exam shall be documented by the physician and handed in to the organizer.

4.10 In case of a knockout the physician shall determine how long the contestant shall be put on suspension and have said decision documented.

§ 5 REFEREE

5.1 Every match shall be overseen by a licensed referee.

5.2 The referee shall be dressed in a shirt and dress pants and shall wear soft shoes so that no damage or discomfort can be unintentionally inflicted on the contestants.

5.3 The referee shall be physically fit in order to stay alert, close to the contestants at all times and able to intervene when necessary, thus ensuring the highest possible safety for the contestants.

5.4 The referee shall ensure that both contestants are wearing appropriate protection.

5.5 The referee shall ensure that all parties involved in the match abide by the rules.

5.6 The referee shall put the contestants' safety first and immediately stop a match if and when;

- it is apparent that one contestant is so superior that the other stands the risk of being injured.
- one of the contestants is in a questionable position of disadvantage.
- one of the contestants is not able to put up a proper defense.

5.7 The referee has three verbal commands at his/her disposal during the match:

- “FIGHT” tells the contestants that the match has started; initially, after a time-out or after a round break.
- “STOP” tells the contestants to cease competing and stay in the current position.
- “BREAK” tells the contestants to cease competing, separate and assume a neutral position.

5.8 The referee shall ensure that unauthorized techniques are not used to the advantage of one contestant.

5.9 The referee shall disqualify a contestant if the contestant or the contestant’s coaches deliberately, severely or repeatedly break the rules.

5.10 The referee shall stop the match if and when;

- a contestant uses unauthorized techniques
- a contestant otherwise breaks the rules.
- anything is thrown into the competition area.
- a coach or a contest physician throws a towel or something equivalent into the competition area.

5.11 In the event of an accident or foul the referee can issue a time-out for up to five (5) minutes to examine the fouled contestant’s condition and determine whether or not he/she can safely continue. The referee may call for the contest physician to aid the assessment.

5.12 If the contest cannot be restarted within the allotted five minutes the contest must end and the outcome will be decided as a no contest or technical decision as outlined in §25.

5.13 In the event of a foul that consists of a blow or kick to the groin area, a so called low blow, the referee shall, upon request from the injured contestant issue a time-out for up to five (5) minutes, allowing him/her to recuperate.

5.14 The referee shall stop the match at the sound of the signal that marks the end of a round.

5.15 The referee shall raise the arm of the winner when the results of the match have been made public by the speaker.

§ 6 JUDGES

6.1 Every match shall be judged and the score kept by three licensed judges.

6.2 The judges shall be seated separately from the audience and from each other.

6.3 The judges shall remain neutral during the course of the match.

6.4 If a judge identifies a violation of the rules he/she shall notify the referee during the next round break.

6.5 The judges shall award points to the contestants for each round by filling out a score sheet. This task shall be carried out independently and without contact with the other judges or any other person. The results of the scoring shall be clearly marked on the score sheet.

6.6 The winner of a round is decided based on the criteria’s for judging as detailed in §24.

6.7 Upon completion of each round the judges shall submit the score sheets to the secretary.

6.8 The judges are not allowed to leave their seats until the match is over and the results have been relayed.

§ 7 SECRETARY

- 7.1 The organizer shall appoint a secretary for the competition.
- 7.2 Upon completion of each round the secretary shall collect the score sheets from the judges.
- 7.3 Upon completion of the second round the secretary is responsible for summing up the total score and handing the scorecards to the referee.
- 7.4 If the match goes to a third round the secretary shall collect the additional scorecards upon completion of that round, sum up the total score and hand the scorecards to the referee.

§ 8 TIMEKEEPER

- 8.1 A timekeeper shall be appointed by the organizer to ensure correct timing of rounds, round breaks and time-outs in the match.
- 8.2 The timekeeper signals the start of each round.
- 8.3 The timekeeper shall indicate when ten (10) seconds remain of the round.
- 8.4 The timekeeper shall indicate when fifteen (15) seconds remain of a round break.
- 8.5 When the referee signals a time-out, the time passed during the time-out shall not count as part of the round.
- 8.6 The timekeeper is responsible for keeping the time from the point the time-out starts and shall notify the referee when the time-out reaches two minutes and fifty seconds (2.50) and three (3) minutes respectively.
- 8.7 The clock shall not be stopped by anything other than a time-out signaled by the referee.

§ 9 SPEAKER

- 9.1 A speaker shall be appointed by the organizer with the task of keeping officials and personnel informed of the competition over loudspeaker.
- 9.2 The speaker shall announce the names of the contestants, ring corner and weight before they enter the ring.
- 9.3 The speaker shall call on the coaches to leave the competition area before the match starts as well as when the timekeeper indicates that fifteen (15) seconds remains of the round break.
- 9.4 The speaker shall announce the number of the round before each round starts.
- 9.5 The speaker shall announce the name and ring corner of the winner.

§ 10 COACHES

- 10.1 The contestant shall have no less than one (1) and no more than two (2) coaches.
- 10.2 The coaches are only allowed to enter the competition area during round break and then only in close proximity to their contestant's corner.
- 10.3 All equipment shall be removed from the competition area at the end of the round break by the coaches and they shall also ensure that the competition area is kept dry and clean to prevent slipping.
- 10.4 During the round break the coaches are allowed to give verbal instructions to the contestant. The coaches are allowed to bring the contestant water and bagged ice.

10.5 During the round break the coaches are required to inform the referee of any injuries sustained by the contestant.

10.6 The coaches shall bring towels to the competition area so that if they find their contestant unable to continue they may throw in the towel, thus forfeiting the match.

10.7 The coaches can give advice and encouragement in a contained manner during the course of the match.

10.8 The contestants can be told off, warned or disqualified for an offense against the rules made by the contestant's coaches.

§11 COMPETITION AREA

11.1 The competition area shall offer a high level of safety for the contestants. It shall be well enclosed so that the contestants don't stand the risk of falling out during competition and thus suffer injuries.

11.2 The competition area shall consist of an MMA ring. If no MMA ring is available a boxing ring with surrounding shock absorbing floor or padding is accepted. In case of Continental or World Championships an MMA ring shall be used at all times.

11.3 An MMA ring is a safety fenced ring constructed for the purpose of ensuring the highest level of safety for the contestants as well as to enable proper practice of the sport of MMA. An MMA ring used for MMA competitions shall meet the following requirements:

- The ring shall have a shock absorbing floor minimum 2.5 cm thick
- The ring shall be no larger than ten (10) meters and no smaller than six (6) meters in diameter.
- The safety fence shall consist of sturdy plastic covered net expanded in even sections between at least six (6) poles. The safety fence shall be no lower than one meter and sixty (1.60) centimeters and no higher than two (2) meters in height.

11.4 A boxing ring used for MMA competitions shall meet the following requirements:

- The ring shall have a shock absorbing floor minimum 2.5 cm thick.
- Measures shall be taken to ensure that the contestants are not injured if falling out of the ring. This includes a shock absorbing floor or padding outside and all around the ring area.
- The ring shall be no less than six (6) meters and no more than ten (10) meters from one side to the other within the ropes.
- The ring shall have no less than four (4) three (3) cm padded ring ropes expanded between four (4) poles.
- The ring poles shall be made of metal and properly padded.

§ 12 LENGTH OF THE MATCH

12.1 A match shall contain three (3) rounds.

12.2 A round shall last three (3) minutes.

12.3 The round break shall last sixty (60) seconds.

§ 13 COMPULSORY EQUIPMENT

13.1 Competition gloves.

13.2 Competition shin guards.

- 13.3 Competition shorts made in a durable material and designed in such a way that they can't inflict injury on either one of the contestants.
- 13.4 Mouthpiece.
- 13.5 Competition top or rashguard (women only).
- 13.6 Protective groin cup (optional for women, compulsory for men).
- 13.7 Protective chest gear (optional for women, not applicable for men).
- 13.8 Knee protection (optional).
- 13.9 Ankle protection (optional).
- 13.10 All pieces of equipment used by the contestants, compulsory as well as optional, shall be checked by the referee before the match.

§ 14 GAUZE & TAPE

- 14.1 Hands and knuckles shall be wrapped in gauze.
- 14.2 Tape may be used for fastening as well as strengthening the gauze. The tape may however not cover the knuckles.
- 14.3 The gauze and tape is restricted to 10 meters x 5 cm of gauze and 2 meters x 2.5 cm of tape per hand.
- 14.4 The fastening on the gloves and the shin guards shall be taped so that they don't come undone and injure either one of the contestants.
- 14.5 All taping shall be checked by an official before the match.

§ 15 APPROVED TECHNIQUES

- 15.1 Strikes against head, body and legs in stand-up position.
- 15.2 Strikes against head, body and legs when the opponent is in an active ground position. Ground position applies when a contestant touches the floor with another body part in addition to the feet (the so called three-point rule)
- 15.3 Kicks against head, body and legs in stand-up position.
- 15.4 Knees against body and legs in stand-up position.
- 15.5 Kicks and knees against body and legs when the opponent is in an active ground position.
- 15.6 Throws and takedowns.
- 15.7 Submission techniques.

§ 16 UNAUTHORIZED TECHNIQUES

- 16.1 Strikes against the spine or the back of the head.
- 16.2 Knees against the head.
- 16.3 Heel-hooks.
- 16.4 Elbow and forearm attacks.
- 16.5 Throws where the opponent is intended to land solely on his/her head and/or neck, so called spiking.
- 16.6 Locks on fingers and toes, so called small joint manipulation.

- 16.7 Stomps against the opponent's feet.
- 16.8 Stomps against the opponent when he/she is in an active ground position.
- 16.9 Kicks and knees against the head when the opponent is in an active ground position.
- 16.10 Heel kicks against the kidneys.
- 16.11 Kicks and knees from an active ground position against the head of the opponent when he/she is standing.

§ 17 FOULS

- 17.1 Attacking a lying down or in other ways defenseless opponent.
- 17.2 Head-butting, eye-poking, biting, clawing, scratching, pinching, hair-pulling, spitting on the opponent and poking a finger into any orifice or any cut or laceration of the opponent.
- 17.3 Throwing the opponent out of the competition area.
- 17.4 Grabbing on to the safety fence or the ropes.
- 17.5 Grabbing the opponent's clothing or protective equipment.
- 17.6 Attacking the opponent before the match has commenced, during a time-out, during the round break or after the match is over.
- 17.7 Attacking an opponent who is being examined by the referee or the physician.
- 17.8 Attacking the opponent's groin area.
- 17.9 Competing in non-sportsmanship like conduct that causes injury to the opponent.
- 17.10 Strikes aimed specifically against the throat, including gripping the opponent's larynx.
- 17.11 Cursing or using abusive language.
- 17.12 Making abusive gestures.
- 17.13 Ignoring the instructions of the referee.
- 17.14 Displaying an aggressive behavior against the referee or other officials.
- 17.15 Interference by coaches.
- 17.16 Purposely dropping or spitting out the mouthpiece.
- 17.17 Inactivity and passivity.
- 17.18 Simulating being hit in the groin area.

§ 18 APPEARANCE

- 18.1 The contestant must be clean and present a tidy appearance.
- 18.2 The contestant may not wear any jewelry, piercings or other objects of metal or accessories.
- 18.3 Contestants with long hair must tie the hair in such a way that it does not present any hazard to either contestant or referee.
- 18.4 Rubbing parts of the body other than the face with petroleum jelly, liniment or the like is not permitted.
- 18.5 Excessive use of petroleum jelly, liniment or the like is not permitted.

§ 19 FALLING AND KNOCK DOWN

19.1 If a contestant falls to the ground due to a takedown, throw, hit, surprise or loss of balance the match continues as long as the contestant can put up a proper defense and assumes an active ground position.

19.2 If a contestant is knocked down and can't put up a proper defense and/or stays down the referee shall interrupt the match immediately.

§ 20 WARNING

20.1 In the event of a foul the referee shall interrupt the match, examine the condition of the fouled contestant and issue a warning.

20.2 For repeated lesser fouls or a serious foul or an intentional foul the referee shall issue a deduction of one (1) point for the offending contestant in conjunction with the warning.

§ 21 DISQUALIFICATION

21.1 In the event of an intentional, serious or repeated offense the referee may disqualify the contestant.

21.2 If a contestant cannot continue due to an injury caused by an intentional unauthorized technique or foul, the offending contestant shall be disqualified.

21.3 If an injury caused by an intentional unauthorized technique or foul causes the contest to be stopped at a subsequent point in the contest the contestant who committed the foul shall be disqualified.

21.4 If during the pre-match inspection a contestant is found to have unpermitted taping he/she can be disqualified by the referee.

21.5 A contestant can be told off, warned or disqualified as a result of a breach of rules made by the competitor's coaches.

§ 22 RESTARTS

22.1 After a warning has been issued or an examination has been conducted by the contest physician the match shall be restarted in the same position as before it was interrupted.

22.2 The referee can restart the match in a neutral standing position if the contestants are in a stalemate, aren't actively seeking to better their position or aren't actively attempting to win.

§ 23 TYPES OF MATCH RESULTS

23.1 Submission – The contestant surrenders by tapping on the opponent or on the mat or by verbally informing the referee.

23.2 Towel – The contestant's coaches stop the match by throwing in the towel and thus forfeiting the match.

23.3 Referee Stops Contest (RSC) - The referee is required to stop the match if and when;

- he/she deems the match as too uneven
- one of the contestants isn't putting up a proper defense
- one of the contestants has been hit hard. This encompasses but is not limited to so called Technical Knock Out (TKO) and Knock Out (KO)
- the recuperation time or a medical examination of a contestant has lasted for more than five (5) minutes.

23.4 Judges decision – The scorecards of the three judges decide the winner. This includes:

- Unanimous Decision - When all three judges score the contest for the same contestant
- Split Decision - When two judges score the contest for one contestant and one judge scores for the opponent
- Majority Decision - When two judges score the contest for the same contestant and one judge scores a draw
- Unanimous Draw - When all three judges score the contest a draw
- Majority Draw - When two judges score the contest a draw
- Split Draw - When all three judges score differently

23.5 Technical Decision – If a match is ended prematurely due to injury caused by an accidental foul the scorecards of the three judges decide the winner. This includes the possibility for a technical draw.

23.6 Disqualification – If a contestant is disqualified the opponent is awarded the win.

23.7 Walkover – If an announced contestant fails to show up to the match but the opponent does, he/she is deemed to have forfeited the match and the win is awarded to the opponent.

§ 24 CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

24.1 All matches shall be evaluated and scored by 3 judges who shall evaluate the match from different locations around the competition area. The referee may not be one of the 3 judges.

24.2 The 10-Point Must System will be the standard system of scoring a match. Under the 10-Point must scoring system, 10 points must be awarded to the winner of the round and 9 points or less must be awarded to the loser, except for a rare even round, which is scored (10-10).

24.3 Judges shall evaluate mixed martial arts techniques, such as:

- effective striking
- effective grappling
- control of the ring/ competition area
- effective aggressiveness

24.4 Evaluations shall be made in the order in which the techniques appear in 24.3, giving the most weight in scoring to effective striking, effective grappling, control of the fighting area and effective aggressiveness.

- Effective striking is judged by determining the total number of legal strikes landed by a contestant.
- Effective grappling is judged by considering the amount of successful executions of a legal takedown and reversals. Examples of factors to consider are take downs from standing position to mount position, passing the guard to mount position, and bottom position fighters using an active threatening guard.
- Area control is judged by determining who is dictating the pace, location and position of the match. Examples of factors to consider are countering attempts at takedown by remaining standing and legally striking, taking down an opponent to force a ground fight, creating threatening submission attempts, passing the guard to achieve mount, and creating striking opportunities.
- Effective aggressiveness means moving forward and landing a legal strike.

24.5 The following objective scoring criteria shall be utilized by the judges when scoring a round:

- A round is to be scored as a 10-10 round when both contestants appear to be competing evenly and neither contestant shows clear dominance in a round;
- A round is to be scored as a 10-9 round when a contestant wins by a close margin, landing the greater number of effective legal strikes, grappling and other maneuvers;
- A round is to be scored as a 10-8 round when a contestant overwhelmingly dominates by striking or grappling in a round.
- A round is to be scored as a 10-7 round when a contestant totally dominates by striking or grappling in a round.

24.6 The Judges shall use a sliding scale and recognize the length of time the contestants are either standing or on the ground, as follows:

- if the contestants spent a majority of a round on the canvas, then:
 - a) Effective grappling is weighed first; and
 - b) Effective striking is then weighed
- If the contestants spent a majority of a round standing, then:
 - a) Effective striking is weighed first; and
 - b) Effective grappling is then weighed
- A round is to be scored as a 10-8 round when a contestant overwhelmingly dominates by striking or grappling in a round.
- If a round ends with a relatively even amount of standing and canvas fighting, striking and grappling are weighed equally.

24.7 In the event of a third extra round it shall be judged the same as the two first rounds. If the match is a title match, a tournament match or a championship match where a draw is not a possible outcome and a winner must be declared, it shall be judged as outlined in the respective tournament or championship protocol.

24.8 In the event of an incomplete round due to an accidental foul the round is judged using the same criteria as full rounds.

§ 25 DRAW

25.1 If the match is judged a draw after the first and second round, a third extra round shall be added to determine the winner.

25.2 If the third round is also judged a draw the match will end with a draw, unless it is a title match, a tournament match or a championship match where a winner must be declared. In such a case the round shall be judged as outlined in the respective tournament or championship protocol.

§ 26 NO CONTEST AND TECHNICAL DECISIONS

26.1 A match can be judged as “no contest”, i.e. nullified, during or after its conclusion.

26.2 Reasons for “no contest” are for example if the match is disrupted or stopped as a result of outside interference, during which it no longer can be continued.

26.3 If a contestant by accident gets injured as a result of an unauthorized technique and if the match consequently has to be stopped, then the match shall be judged “no contest” provided that the injury in question occurs during round one. If the injury occurs in round two or in the extra third round the winner will be decided based on the judges’ scorecards resulting in a technical decision.

26.4 A tournament match cannot end as a “no contest” or as a technical draw. In such a case the winner of the match shall be determined as outlined in the tournament protocol.

§ 27 PROTEST

27.1 If a contestant or his/her coaches finds the result of a match to be incorrect then a protest can be handed in to the organizer within forty eight (48) hours upon conclusion of the match.

27.2 A protest shall be submitted from the contestant’s team manager, not from the contestant personally.

27.3 The protest shall contain information regarding which match it concerns, what the protest is in regards to, reasons for protesting, how one finds that the match should be judged as well as complete contact information.

27.4 The results of a match shall only be changed if an obvious mistake has been uncovered, one that had an effect on the outcome of the match and was made by the referee, the judges or another official.

§ 28 KNOCKOUT

28.1 A contestant who was knocked out as a result of a blow to the head, or whose match was stopped by the referee because of several tough blows to the head, shall immediately be examined by the physician.

28.2 The physician is required to make an assessment on whether or not the contestant needs further examination in a hospital and/or a brain scan.

28.3 The physician shall document, when applicable, knockouts and the exams that followed in hospital or elsewhere, periods of suspension and the like.

§ 29 SUSPENSIONS

29.1 A contestant who was knocked out as a result of a blow to the head, or whose match was stopped by the judge because of several tough blows to the head which have made him/her defenseless and unable to continue, shall be suspended from competition and sparring matches. Suspension periods starting from the day of the latest match:

- One (1) knockout: Minimum four (4) weeks suspension
- Two (2) knockouts during a period of three (3) months: Minimum three (3) months suspension.
- Three (3) knockouts during a period of twelve (12) months: Minimum twelve (12) months suspension.

Listed suspension periods are minimum periods and can be extended at the physician’s discretion.

29.2 In the event that a match was not stopped the physician still has the right to decide on a suspension if he/she deems it necessary due to the contestant having received many tough blows to the head.

§ 30 DOPING

30.1 A positive test for doping according to the list of banned substances by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) leads to immediate disqualification.

30.2 The organizer is required to facilitate and aid in the implementation of doping tests run on the contestants.

30.3 If a contestant refuses to participate in a doping test he/she is immediately disqualified.