

PROPOSED

UNIFIED RULES OF AMATEUR MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

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Introduction:

The Unified Rules of Mixed Martial Arts – established by the New Jersey State Athletic Control Board, became the de facto set of rules for professional MMA competition internationally. These rules have long served the sport of MMA for professional athletes. There currently are no formal national unified rules governing amateur MMA that have been endorsed and adopted by the Association of Boxing Commissions - ABC.

As a result, this document is being presented to the ABC, with a proposed set of rules designed specifically for amateur MMA events. These proposed amateur rules mirror many of the same rules found within the Unified Rules of Mixed Martial Arts.

In order to properly prepare athletes for competition, it is important to develop amateur rules that parallel the ones that they would be facing, should they decide to turn professional. This proposed set of rules is designed to make the transition from amateur to professional competition smooth and seamless.

The focus of every Athletic Commission is to ensure the safety and protection of all athletes who engage in combatative sports. With that fundamental goal in mind, the primary focus of developing these amateur rules is also to ensure the safety of the athlete.

Why The Need for the Amateur Rules?

Within many jurisdictions, MMA is growing at a phenomenal rate. While many Athletic Commissions govern and administer professional MMA, some Commissions do not do the same with amateur MMA.

There are some jurisdictions that do not recognize amateur MMA, due to the sport not having any recognized rules or a recognized amateur body. There are jurisdictions that have amateur MMA shows taking place without any knowledge or support from an Athletic Commission. These shows function as more of an underground show, with competitions taking place within a Commission's jurisdiction, yet free from a Commission's involvement.

Some Athletic Commissions have allowed third party sanctioning groups to step in and administer amateur MMA, allowing the responsibility to shift away from their Commissions entirely. Some Commissions have taken the approach of shared governance with these third party sanctioning organizations.

A recent ABC survey was conducted, which consisted of a questionnaire being given to ABC member Commissions. There were some questions that dealt specifically with amateur MMA. Most respondents supported the idea of establishing national unified rules for amateur MMA.

Athletic Commissions

As previously stated, the mandate of every Commission is to ensure that athletes are protected and that athlete safety is of utmost importance. These rules are an attempt to provide governance and clarity to amateur MMA competition, and give all athletes that protection.

It also makes sense that should a Commission decide to relinquish authority to a third party sanctioning organization, then there is the knowledge that the organization is using rules that have been standardized throughout the nation, and are part of the Association of Boxing Commissions' recognized rules.

It is however, strongly recommended that all Athletic Commissions take an active role in the regulation and administration of MMA, both professional and amateur within their jurisdictions.

Additional Goals and Objectives of the Amateur Rules:

Besides providing structured safety guidelines, these rules also provide additional benefits. One of the goals of amateur MMA is to provide an educational opportunity for athletes to develop skill sets and attributes that will allow them to participate and compete, should they choose to turn professional.

Some athletes, who enter the professional ranks too early, without developing proper skills, can have problems very early on in competition. The absence of technical skills, coupled with nerves, can often result in a fighter displaying poor skills and tactics, and having a fight end too quickly. The athlete can accumulate a poor record before ever developing the skills and attributes required to successfully compete inside the cage.

Although many athletes have successfully made the leap into professional MMA without ever having gone through the amateur ranks, there are some cases where athletes can benefit by amateur MMA competition. Amateur competition will aid these athletes in developing themselves as combatants. It is beneficial to some athletes to have the opportunity to hone techniques, tactics, and work at controlling stress unique to competition. Amateur MMA enables an athlete to achieve these results. The amateur MMA athlete will have a head start by being familiar with the rules, should the transition be made to professional MMA.

As such, found within the framework of these proposed rules are philosophies specific to amateur MMA and to the integrity of the sport of Mixed Martial Arts. These include:

1. Ensuring that athletes have the opportunity to learn and develop skills, techniques and tactics specific to MMA competition.
2. Provide a fair and safe venue for amateur athletes to engage in MMA competition
3. Preparing athletes both mentally and physically for MMA competition
4. Promoting the general welfare of amateur MMA sports competition
5. Providing rules that parallel and cooperate with the existing professional rules (Unified Rules of Mixed Martial Arts), so that skills and learning can easily be transported from amateur to professional competition
6. Providing clear rules that are easy to interpret for all parties associated in MMA such as the Athletic Commission, judges, referees, doctors, athletes, coaches, and the fanbase.
7. Providing behavior codes so that athletes are self governed and represent the sport and themselves accordingly.

DEFINITIONS

1. "Athlete" refers to any competitor, participant or fighter
2. "Commission" refers to the recognized state, provincial, tribal or city authority designated by law to oversee and administer all combative sports within their respective jurisdictions
3. "MMA" refers to Mixed Martial Arts

Weight Categories – Mixed Martial Arts (overview)

It is recommended that the unwritten custom of the one pound allowance for non-title bouts be discontinued. Athletes must make their contracted weight class by the close of the weigh-in and should not be allowed the one pound allowance.

NOTE: Commissions may however use their discretion to approve certain out of weight class bouts.

For example, if one athlete weighs in at 264 pounds while the opponent weighs in at 267, the Commission may still decide to allow the contest if it feels that the contest would still be fair, safe and competitive. This would be despite the fact that the two athletes weighed in at differing weight classes.

However, in general cases, the Commission should not allow the contest scheduled for the proposed Middleweight division if one athlete weighs in at 185 and the opponent's final weight is 196.

The following shall comprise the full list of useable weight categories in any Mixed Martial arts competition whether amateur or professional.

MEN'S DIVISIONS

Flyweight	(Up to 105 pounds)
Super Flyweight	(Over 105.1 to 115 lbs)
Bantamweight	(Over 115.1 to 125 lbs)
Super Bantamweight	(Over 125.1 to 135 lbs)
Featherweight	(Over 135.1 to 145 lbs)
Lightweight	(Over 145.1 to 155 lbs)
Super Lightweight	(Over 155.1 to 165 lbs)
Welterweight	(Over 165.1 to 175 lbs)

Super Welterweight	(Over 175.1 to 185 lbs)
Middleweight	(Over 185.1 to 195 lbs)
Super Middleweight	(Over 195.1 to 205 lbs)
Light Heavyweight	(Over 205.1 to 225 lbs)
Heavyweight	(Over 225.1 to 265 lbs)
Super Heavyweight	(Over 265.1 pounds)

WOMEN'S DIVISIONS

Flyweight	(95 lbs. and below)
Bantamweight	(95.1-105 lbs.)
Featherweight	(105.1-115 lbs.)
Lightweight	(115.1-125 lbs.)
Welterweight	(125.1-135 lbs.)
Middleweight	(135.1-145 lbs.)
Light Heavyweight	(145.1-155 lbs.)
Cruiserweight	(155.1-165 lbs.)
Heavyweight	(165.1-185 lbs.)
Super Heavyweight	(185.1 and above)

MEDICAL

All athletes must meet the medical requirements which are subject to each Athletic Commission.

WEIGHT LOSS

Athletes shall not take part in excessive or extreme weight loss practices.

BREAST IMPLANTS:

Athletes must make a full disclosure to the Athletic Commission's medical doctor regarding any surgeries specific to having breast implants, and also disclose the type of implants, for safety reasons associated with the sport.

DIVISIONS AND ROUNDS

Amateur MMA bouts will be constructed of three separate divisions. These are as follows:

NOVICE – 0 to 3 amateur fights *(see specific rules regarding head strikes on the ground – below)*

BEGINNER – 4 to 9 amateur fights

ADVANCED – 10 amateur fights and beyond

NOTE: Athletes may be moved to any division, at the discretion and under the authority of the Athletic Commission based on an athlete's previous experience, or any factors that a Commission determines would warrant an athlete competing in a different division.

Rounds for the Novice fighter: will consist of three 2 minute rounds with a break of 90 seconds in between each round.

Rounds for the Beginner fighter: will consist of three 3 minute rounds with a break of 90 seconds in between each round.

Rounds for the Advanced fighter: will consist of three 3 minute rounds with a one minute break between rounds.

NOTE: It is the intent of the ABC to give new athletes to the sport of MMA a chance to compete in an arena where the various complexities of MMA are taken in smaller steps.

The ABC believes that participants, who have no formal background such as NCAA wrestling experience, or amateur / professional boxing experience or other similar combative experience should be brought into the sport slowly to help indoctrinate them into the multitude of techniques and variables associated with the sport.

Therefore: athletes who have 0 to 3 amateur fights SHALL NOT be allowed to utilize head strikes while on the ground. They may strike to the body during ground action, but all strikes to the head shall be deemed illegal.

Once an athlete has engaged in 3 amateur fights as a novice and has constructed a verifiable record, they will be moved from the “Novice” category into the “Beginner” category. **All amateur fights contested in the BEGINNER or ADVANCED category SHALL allow the use of strikes to the head of a grounded opponent as a legal technique.**

COMBAT PLATFORMS (Ring / Cage)

All MMA contests will take place in either a Cage or a Ring that has been approved by the Commission. The Cage or Ring will meet the requirements set forth by each Commission and also be subject to inspection prior to each event by the Commission or a Commission representative such as a referee.

It is advised that all promoters consult with the Commission prior to any MMA contests regarding Cage or Ring requirements and standards.

MEDICAL PERSONEL REQUIREMENTS AT ALL EVENTS:

At all amateur MMA events there must be the required doctors, paramedics and other support medical personnel such as EMT's on site at all times. Medical personnel guidelines will be in accordance with all the requirements set forth by each Commission and be subject to the verification of the Commission prior to and during each event.

EQUIPMENT (General Overview of Required Equipment)

The following is a list of required equipment for Amateur MMA Competition

- Commission approved Mouthguard

- Commission approved open finger MMA gloves (minimum 4 oz.)
- Commission approved groin protection (male and female)
- Commission approved breast protection (female) sport bra

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT (Shinguards / Instep protection (pads))

At the discretion and under the authority of the Athletic Commission, the Commission can require that athletes wear:

1. Commission approved Shinguards,
2. Commission approved Instep protection (pads)

In addition to the required equipment.

ATHLETE EQUIPMENT, ATTIRE AND APPEARANCE (Guidelines)

The COMMISSION is the final authority in all equipment or costume matters.

NOTE: Improper use and or tampering with any equipment prior to the bout may result in a removal from competition and if during a bout, a point(s) deduction or DISQUALIFICATION.

- Shoes are not allowed.
- For male athletes no body shirts or pants are allowed. Female athletes must wear fighting shorts and rash guard.
- Only form fitted supports are allowed.
- Facial hair as determined by the Commission to pose a health, safety or sanitary issue is prohibited.
- Supports may not have brace, metal, etc. of any kind.
- No tar material on any part of body.
- Fingernails and toenails must be cut and trimmed prior to any bout.
- Henna type tattoos are prohibited.
- Piercing accessories are prohibited.
- Use only soft materials to tie hair.

- Makeup of any kind is prohibited.
- Masks, costumes, props must be approved by the Commission prior to usage.
- Each athlete shall have a Commission approved form fitted mouthpiece. The bout cannot start without the mouthpiece inside the athlete's mouth and properly set. The mouthpiece is to be worn at all times during competition.
- Each athlete shall wear a foul-proof groin protector.

MMA GLOVES

The Commission must approve all gloves.

- Athletes shall wear gloves that are open finger gloves (minimum 4 oz.) that have no padding in the palm or fingertip area and that are appropriate in weight for their hand size.
- No tampering of the gloves will be allowed.

MOUTHPIECE

- All athletes are required to wear a mouthpiece during the bout. It is strongly recommended that all athletes have two (2) form fitted mouthpieces available for use in each bout.
- The round cannot begin without the mouthpiece inside the athlete's mouth and set in place. The mouthpiece must be inside the athlete's mouth and properly set at all times during the bout.
- If the mouthpiece is dislodged during the bout, the Referee will wait until the first opportune moment, without interfering with the action, call time out and have the mouthpiece replaced.
- At the discretion of the Referee, point(s) may be deducted or a DISQUALIFICATION rendered in the following situations:
 - If the mouthpiece is not being properly kept inside of the athlete's mouth
 - If the mouthpiece is purposely spit out
 - If the corner fails to have the athlete resume competition with the mouthpiece in place, and or delays in replacing it after it has become dislodged

GENERAL RULES

The Athletic Commission is the final authority on all rules, policies and procedures.

BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT:

-Athletes and coaches will conduct themselves with appropriate behavior at all times.

-Athletes and coaches will demonstrate respect for the governing Athletic Commission and the Commission's personnel and representatives including all officials, inspectors, and other assigned personnel.

-Absolutely no jumping over the cage by anyone.

-Offensive language, behavior, clothing, placards, gestures, emblems, tattoos, etc. are prohibited.

ANTI-DOPING TESTING

-Refusal to submit to any anti doping procedures requested by the Commission shall be considered a doping violation. The Commission shall issue sanctions against the offender.

-If you compete outside of your state or province and lose by stoppage you must notify your Athletic Commission within 3 days. Not doing so will result in a mandatory suspension and may result in other disciplinary actions.

SECONDS

- Seconds must stay in their athlete's area outside the cage while the bout is in progress.
- Seconds may not lean on the cage or interfere with the cage during the bout.
- Seconds may spray but not pour water; and apply ice to an athlete during the rest period.
- There can be no more than four (4) seconds working in each corner.
- Only one corner person is allowed inside the cage during the rest period. In cases where a cut or injury needs to be treated, the cut man is also allowed into the cage.
- Excessive coaching from the corner and or excessive use of water is prohibited.
- All seconds will be under the direct supervision of the corner Inspector.
- Any second who conducts himself or herself in an unruly manner will be removed from the corner.
- A violation of the rules or unsportsmanlike tactics as determined by the Referee may also result in administrative discipline to include a fine, suspension and or a withholding of pay.
- An athlete may lose point(s) due to the misconduct of his or her second(s).

CHIEF SECOND

- One of the seconds will be deemed the Chief Second. This Chief Second is responsible for all activities in the corner during the bout.
- If the corner wants the bout stopped he or she may notify the Inspector or throw in a towel.

CUT MAN

- All medicine for cuts shall always be made available to an Inspector upon request.
- All medicines for cuts must be in their original packaging.

Approved cut medicines:

Adrenalin 1:1000 - It is a clear liquid that is usually stored in a dark bottle because it is adversely affected by prolonged light. It is a potent vaso-constrictor (constricts torn blood vessels and helps to decrease flow of blood). It is almost tasteless. Very little is absorbed through the cut. It is usually applied by Q-tip to a cut or a bleeding nose (inside).

Avitene - It is a Microfibullar Collagen Hemostat (agent that stops bleeding). It is usually in white powder form or white thin sheets of material like cloth. It is usually applied to a bleeding surface. It causes platelets to adhere.

Thrombin - It works on fibrinogen (a protein in the blood plasma that is essential for the coagulation of blood). Blood must be removed prior to usage. It must be fresh - if left in a bag for months it becomes useless. Needs refrigeration. The liquid is applied directly to cut.

USE OF VASELINE / LINIMENTS

-The discretionary use of Vaseline around the eyes and lightly about the face is permissible. However, its use on other body parts is prohibited.

-The use of liniments and or greased muscle pain relievers is prohibited.

CONSUMABLES DURING THE BOUT

-Only water or an approved drink by the Commission may be consumed during the bout. The use of banned substances is grounds for DISQUALIFICATION and administrative disciplinary action. Athletes are advised to consult with the Commission in authority as to what drinks are allowed.

BANDAGES

-Wrapping and taping of hands will be subject to the Athletic Commission guidelines of each state or province.

GUIDELINES FOR SECONDS AND CORNER PERSONNEL (Additional Items)

- Vaseline, under the supervision of the Athletic Commission and referee is allowed around the eyes and on the bridge of the nose only.

-No grease, oil, balms or lotions are allowed on the face or body

- No shoes or sneakers
- No metal zippers on shorts or other sharp or abrasive objects or materials
- No shirts (females must wear a rashguard)

SOLE ARBITER

- The Referee is the sole arbiter of the fight.
- Either the Referee or the Ringside Physician may stop the bout.

MMA Technical Definitions:

The following are abbreviated definitions found within the sport of MMA. These definitions are designed to be used as an aid to Athletic Commissions, Commission personnel, athletes, and coaches to bring clarity on many of the MMA technical applications found within competition.

Takedowns:

Duck Under

A grappling move in which a fighter “ducks under” the opponents arm in an attempt to get behind him, to position him for a lift, throw, trip, takedown or other MMA attack.

Single Leg

A move in which a fighter takes the opponent down by lifting and controlling one of the opponent's legs.

Double Leg

A driving takedown which is executed when a fighter engages another fighter by grasping both of the fighter's legs, generally gripping the back of the fighters knees and lifting to displace balance.

This takedown is known as Morote Gari in Japanese (Judo) and Baiana in Portuguese (BJJ)

Arm Drag

A method of grabbing, pulling and controlling an opponent's arm in an attempt to throw him off balance and gain positional control.

Ankle Pick

A move in which a fighter takes the opponent down by the grabbing or lifting of the ankle of his opponent forcing him to the ground.

Inside Trip

Is a sweeping motion applied when one fighter sweeps or hooks with his leg, the inner leg of his opponent in an effort to displace their balance and bring them to the ground.

This takedown is also known as a O Uchi Gari – “major inner reap” in Japanese (Judo)

Outside Trip

Is a hooking motion applied when one fighter hooks with his leg the outside leg of his opponent in an effort to displace their balance and bring them to the ground.

This takedown is known as Kosoto Gake – “minor outer hook” in Japanese (Judo)

Body Lock

A hold in which a fighter locks his arms around the opponent's body as a method of control and from this position may take him to the ground

Osoto Gari

Japanese (Judo) which translates as a “major outer reap”, which accurately describes the throw. Osoto Gari is throw where a fighter steps to the outside of the opponent, pushing the oponent off balance while at the same time sweeping the opponent's leg out from under them

Uchi Mata

Japanese (Judo) which translates as “inner thigh”, which describes the action of the throw. It is throw common to grappling arts where a fighter uses both the action of the hip and leg to to displace an opponents balance.

Hip Toss

A forward throw common to most grappling disiciplines where one fighter is thrown over the other fighters hips.

Tai Otoshi

Japanese (Judo) which translates as “body drop”. A throw common in grappling arts which is quickly executed and must be well timed. An attacking fighter will off balance the opponent and at the same time pivot away from the opponent in the same direction of the opponent's feet. The attacking fighter will extend his leg in front of the opponent so that the back of his calf is practically touching the opponents shin. At this time the attacking fighter will pull the fighter over the extended leg, resulting in a trip as the opponent falls forward.

Power Bomb

A lifting technique generally used, when a fighter is stopped during a double leg takedown attempt. The athlete grabs their opponent by the waist and uses a swinging motion while simultaneously elevating their opponent. The athlete performing the move steps back and throws their opponent onto the mat usually causing the opponent to land flat on to their back and shoulder area.

Seoinagi

Japanese (Judo) meaning shoulder throw. A throw common to many grappling disciplines. It is a forward throwing technique in which one fighter is thrown over the other fighters shoulder.

Iranian Lift

Wrestling technique used when an athlete has pushed his weight too far forward when their opponent attempted a takedown. Usually preformed from the knees the athlete will raise their back straight up while holding their opponents legs causing their opponent to be inverted

Whizzer

Defensive technique used to prevent a single leg takedown attempt.

Switch

Defensive technique used against a single leg takedown attempt to switch the position and gain control.

Submissions:

Armbar

A straight arm lock technique that attacks the elbow hyper-extending the joint.

Double Armbar

Attacks both arms simultaneously. Performed from the guard position, the athlete brings their legs up high around their opponents back and neck area trapping both arms. Athlete extends hips while controlling their opponent's wrists.

Kimura / Double Wrist Lock

Attacks the shoulder. Can be performed from either side while standing or on the ground. Arm needs to be bent at approximately 90 degrees at the elbow with the arm being moved from the athlete's waist towards their head

This submission is also known as *ude garami* "entagled armlock" in Japanese (Judo)

Arm Triangle

Performed by trapping an opponent's arm against their own neck. The head is used to control the arm while the arms are wrapped around the opponent's neck and arm. Performed correctly the action intensifies when the athlete moves to an approximate 60 degree angle from their opponent

Americana

Also known as a "Key Lock" attacks the shoulder area. Usually performed in a cross body or mount position. Athlete must control their opponent's head position while keeping the arm bent at a 90 degree angle.

Omoplata

The translation in Portuguese (BJJ) literally means "shoulder blade" and this accurately describes this submission. The omoplata is a submission that attacks the shoulder area by using the legs.

This submission is also known as *sankaku garami* or *shoulder lock* in Japanese (Judo)

Gogoplata

A choke hold usually performed from the guard position. The shin is brought across the opponent's neck while one arm moves under the leg and meets up with the other arm to pull down on the opponents head

Rear Naked Choke

Most common choke used from behind the opponent. Athlete brings their arm around their opponents neck and locks the arm in place by grabbing their opposite arm at the elbow and wrapping the hand behind their opponents head

Guillotine Choke

Straight-arm choke used when facing an opponent. Usually performed from standing or guard position.

Anaconda Choke

Started from North / South position athlete moves hand from neck area to far side of opponent and wraps hand into opposing elbow and then rolls his opponent bringing his hips towards opponent's hips tightening the hold

Darce Choke

Performed the opposite of the Anaconda Choke, the arm starts from the opponent's side and moves up along the neck area and wraps into the opposing elbow.

Eziquel or Front Choke

Performed by placing the blade of the forearm across the neck area and grabbing the arm to fulcrum the leverage down into the throat area to create the choke

North / South Choke

Performed while one athlete is on top of their opponent with one fighter facing down and one fighter facing up. The top fighter slips their arm around the bottom fighters head allowing the armpit area to settle into the throat area. The top fighter then settles their weight down applying the choke

Bar Arm Choke

Used by placing the blade of the forearm against the throat and pulling straight back

Toe Hold

Attacks the ankle joint. Athlete grabs the foot and figure fours their arms around the lower leg while applying pressure towards the inside of the foot.

Triangle Choke

Used primarily from the guard the athlete must pass one leg over their opponents shoulder trapping the head and one arm inside. The athlete then must figure four their legs applying pressure against the neck by forcing the trapped arm against the neck. Pulling down in the head intensifies the hold.

This technique may all be referred to as *sankaku jime* in Japanese (*Judo*)

Ankle Lock

Attacks the ankle joint and athlete uses his arms and torso to apply pressure to the ankle.

Ankle Lock from back control

Usually seen when a fighter takes the back and then crosses their feet, their opponent can ankle lock them by using his legs to cross over the ankle and foot and then extends and arches the hip area.

Reverse Triangle Choke

Reversed by the way the fighter positions the legs around the opponents head and arm.

Heel Hook

Attacks the knee joint. Set up in a similar fashion to the ankle lock, the fighter positions their opponent's foot down past their side and the heel just outside the crook of their elbow. The fighter then applies leverage by pulling the heel towards their nose

Inverted Heel Hook

Set up in a similar fashion the straight heel hook applies pressure by rotating the heel towards the inside. The inverted heel hook applies the rotation of the heel to the outside

Knee Bar

Attacks the knee joint in the same fashion as the Armbar attacks the elbow joint.

Twister

Attacks the spine by isolating the legs in one direction and leveraging the head neck and torso in the opposite direction.

Head & Arm Shoulder Lock

Performed from side control the fighter uses their legs to control their opponents arm. The maneuver masks the movements of the Kimura, only utilizing the legs

Head & Arm Arm Lock

Performed from side control the fighter uses their legs to control the opponents arm. The maneuver masks the movements of the straight arm bar, only utilizing the legs

Peruvian Neck Tie

Similar to the Guillotine choke the move is performed by placing both hands together in the neck area or your opponent. Pulling in and squeezing arms together while using legs to trap far side arm and control opponents' body

Positions:

Closed Guard

Most common defensive position seen on the ground. Fighter on bottom has wrapped legs around their opponent's waist and has crossed their feet.

Open Guard

Fighter on the bottom has not closed his legs around the waist of their opponent. Hip movement is key

Butterfly Guard

Fighter on bottom has placed their feet inside their opponent's legs near groin area. Knees are held high to prevent passing of the guard

X- Guard

Performed by using both legs against opponent's one leg crossing feet similar to an X. Arms attack opponents other leg attempting to off balance the fighter.

Half Guard

Position of fighting when the bottom fighter controls only one leg of the top fighter with their legs

Side Control

Dominant position of fighting where the top fighter has cleared the legs of the bottom fighter and is now off to one side on top of their opponent

Mount

Dominant position where the top fighter has straddled the bottom fighter with their legs

Rear Mount

The most dominant position in MMA. The fighter who has the back will have his legs hooked into his opponents' pelvic area or will triangle their opponents body to control position

North – South

Both fighters are on the ground. Fighter on the bottom is facing up, while the fighter on top is facing down. The fighters feet will be facing opposite directions

Crucifix

A technique that is used to control an opponent's arms by the use of your legs and arms. Can be a submission hold when applied as a neck crank. Usually used to control a fighters arms in a ground and pound attack

Can Opener

Used to open the closed guard of your opponent by pulling on the head bringing it towards the chest area. Can be a submission only if the fighter on the bottom refuses to open their guard.

Underhooks

Wrapping the arm under your opponents arm and around the shoulder area or torso

Overhooks

Wrapping the arms over the top of your opponents arms

Double Underhooks

Wrapping both arms under your opponents arms. Usually has connection of the hands for takedown attempt

Plumb

Muay Thai technique used to control the head with both hands clasped around the neck area

Hip Over Sweep

Used from guard position. Fighter traps opponents post arm, elevates hips and rotates opponent over landing in mount position

Scissor Sweep

Used from the guard position bottom fighter traps post arm, brings one leg up high the other leg low and scissor kicks the legs together while pulling on opponents trapped arm

Elevator Sweep

From guard position bottom fighter hooks inside of opponents leg with their foot. Fighter then pulls opponent towards them while lifting with hooked leg. Opponent is rolled over the shoulder area to complete the sweep

Double Ankle Sweep from Guard

From the guard the top fighter stands up. The bottom fighter drops their closed guard and grabs the standing fighter's ankles. The bottom fighter pinches knees together, lowers their hips and pushes the standing fighter over following the movement in to a top position

Half Guard Escape to single leg

Bottom fighter uses an underhook to pull themselves into and under their opponent off balancing the opponent. Bottom fighter moves to their knees and continues into a single leg takedown

COMMISSION AUTHORITY WITH RESPECT TO ALL RULES AND TECHNIQUES

This document contains the minimum standard of what is deemed the acceptable safety standards with respect to all rules, fouls and technical applications, as part of the unified rules of amateur MMA. However, the safety limitations in terms of prohibiting techniques can be increased under the authority and discretion of any Athletic Commission.

As an example: A Commission may decide based on its own discretion that kicking to the head while standing-although allowed within document - may not be deemed

suitable within the parameters of a Commission's own governance and bylaws, and wish to increase the strictness of the existing rules of this document, and as a result may prohibit those techniques.

In summary any Athletic Commission can increase the strictness of the limitations found within this document, but cannot decrease the existing safety standards with respect to rules, fouls and technical applications found within this document.

It is advised that all promoters, athletes and coaches consult with the Athletic Commission prior to any amateur MMA contest to verify all rules and policies specific to that Commission

RULES

LEGAL TECHNIQUES WHILE STANDING

- Closed hand strikes to head and body
- Kicking techniques to head, body and legs
- Knees to the body and legs
- Throws / Takedowns / Sweeps
- Standing Submissions
- Chokes
- Armbars
- Shouldering

LEGAL TECHNIQUES WHILE ON THE GROUND

- Closed hand strikes to head, body and legs *** (Except for fighters with 0 to 3 amateur fights)
- Knees to the body and legs

- Submissions (chokes, armbars, straight leg locks – ankle-lock & kneebar only)

ILLEGAL TECHNIQUES

- Elbow or forearm strikes
- Knees to head while standing and on the ground
- Stomps
- Groin strikes
- Hitting back of head
- Spine attacks (strikes and locks)
- Pile driving your opponent
- Throwing out of competition area
- Neck cranks
- Holding ropes or grabbing the cage
- Pinching, biting, gouging,
- Choking with hand on throat
- Smothering (hand over mouth)
- Fish hooking
- Throwing out of competition area

FOULS AND ILLEGAL TECHNIQUES

The following tactics and techniques are fouls and are forbidden.

Fouls while standing or on the ground

The following actions shall constitute fouls during any professional Mixed Martial Arts competition.

1. Head-butting or striking with the head in any manner.
2. Eye gouging of any kind.
3. Biting.
4. Hair pulling.
5. Fish Hooking.
6. Groin attacks of any kind.
7. Smothering (hand cupped over opponent's mouth)
8. Elbow or forearm strikes
9. Neck Cranks
10. All leg submissions except (Kneebar and Straight Ankle Lock)
11. Knee strikes to the head (standing and grounded fighter)
12. No strikes to the back of the head
13. Hand chokes
14. Placing a finger into any orifice, or into any cut or laceration of your opponent.
15. Small joint manipulation.
16. All spine attacks (strikes and locks).
17. Throat strikes of any kind, including, without limitation, grabbing the trachea.
18. Clawing, pinching or twisting the flesh.
19. Kicking the head of a grounded opponent.
20. Stomping
21. Pile-driving your opponent into the mat.
22. Purposely throwing an opponent out of the ring or caged area.

23. Holding the shorts or gloves of an opponent.
24. Engaging in any unsportsmanlike conduct
25. Holding the ropes or the fence.
26. Attacking an opponent on or during the break.
27. Attacking an opponent who is under the care of the referee
28. Disregarding the instructions of the referee.
29. Timidity, including, without limitation, avoiding contact with an opponent, intentionally or consistently dropping the mouthpiece or faking an injury.
30. Interference by the corner.

Fouls Defined

1. Head-butting or striking with the head in any manner.

Any use of the head as a striking instrument whether head to head, head to body or otherwise is illegal.

2. Eye gouging of any kind.

Eye gouging by means of fingers, chin, or elbow is illegal. Legal strikes or punches that contact the fighter's eye socket are not eye gouging and shall be considered legal attacks.

3. Biting.

Biting in any form is illegal. A fighter must recognize that a referee may not be able to physically observe some actions, and must make the referee aware if they are being bit during an exhibition of unarmed combat.

4. Hair pulling.

Pulling of the hair in any fashion is an illegal action. A fighter may not grab a hold of his opponent's hair to control their opponent in any way.

5. Fish Hooking.

Any attempt by a fighter to use their fingers in a manner that attacks their opponent's mouth, nose or ears, stretching the skin to that area will be considered "Fishhooking". Fishhooking generally is the placing of fingers into the mouth or your opponent and pulling your hands in opposing directions while holding onto the skin of your opponent.

6. Groin attacks of any kind.

Any attack to the groin area including, striking, grabbing, pinching or twisting is illegal

7. Smothering (hand cupped over opponent's mouth)

A fighter may not cup his hand over his opponent's mouth or nose in an attempt to smother his opponent's ability to breathe. This does not include covering a fighter's mouth or nose with the arm while attempting a choke

8. Elbow or forearm strikes

No elbows or forearm strikes are allowed during amateur competition. You may not strike with the elbow, forearm or triceps area.

9. Neck Cranks

Any hold that places the fighter's neck in jeopardy from a crank is illegal. Neck cranks such as the "Can Opener" or "Bulldog" are examples of an illegal neck attack

10. All leg submissions except (Kneebar and Straight Ankle Lock)

Heel hooks and toe holds are prohibited. Kneebar and the Straight Ankle lock are allowed.

11. Knee strikes to the head of a grounded fighter

No knee strikes of any kind are allowed to a fighter's head while they are on the ground during the contest. During the stand-up portion of the contest fighters are allowed to knee to the body and the legs. ** When a fighter goes to the ground knees to the body are allowed**

12. No strikes to the back of the head

The back of the head is considered from the crown of the head down the centerline of the skull into the spine, with a 1 inch variance to each side, similar to a Mohawk haircut. Strikes that are thrown to areas behind the ears but not within the Mohawk limitation are legal strikes

13. Hand chokes

A fighter may not attack his opponent with a choke utilizing only his hand or hands in an attempt to submit his opponent. A common phrase for this type of choke is the "C clamp" choke. Placing your thumb on one side of your opponents neck with your fingers on the opposite side

14. Placing a finger into any orifice, or into any cut or laceration of your opponent.

A fighter may not place their fingers into an open laceration in an attempt to enlarge the cut. A fighter may not place their fingers into an opponents, nose, ears, mouth, or any body cavity.

15. Small joint manipulation.

Fingers and Toes are small joints. Wrists, Ankles, Knees, Shoulders and Elbows are all large joints.

16. All spine attacks (strikes and locks).

No striking attacks are allowed to the spine or locks such as the “Twister”.

17. Throat strikes of any kind, including, without limitation, grabbing the trachea.

*No directed throat strikes are allowed. Directed throat attacks are not punches that connect during an exchange from the standing position while fighters are engaged in combat. A directed attack would include a fighter pulling his opponents head in a way to open the neck area for a striking attack. A fighter may not gouge their fingers or thumb into their opponent’s neck or trachea in an attempt to submit their opponent. **All arm chokes such as the Rear Naked, Guillotine, and Bar Arm are legal.***

18. Clawing, pinching or twisting the flesh.

Any attack that targets the fighter’s skin by clawing at the skin or attempting to pull or twist the skin to apply pain is illegal.

19. Kicking the head of a grounded opponent.

*A grounded opponent is any fighter who has more than just the soles of their feet on the ground. If the referee determines that a fighter would be a grounded fighter but is not solely because the ring ropes or cage fence has held fighter from the ground, the referee can instruct the combatants that he is treating the fighter held up solely by the cage or ropes as a grounded fighter. **A fighter can be kicked to the body when they are on the ground with any type of legal kick except to the head or groin.***

20. Stomping

*Stomping is considered any type of striking action with the feet where the fighter lifts their leg up bending their leg at the knee and initiating a striking action with the bottom of their foot or heel. **This does include stomping the feet while both fighters are standing** **(Note) Axe kicks are not stomps.***

21. Pile-driving your opponent into the mat.

*A pile driver is considered to be any throw where you control your opponent's body placing his feet straight up in the air with his head straight down and then forcibly drive your opponents head into the canvas or flooring material. It should be noted when a fighter is placed into a submission hold by their opponent, if that fighter is capable of elevating their opponent they may bring that opponent down in any fashion they desire because they are not in control of their opponents body. The fighter who is attempting the submission can either adjust their position, or let go of their hold before being slammed to the canvas. *** **This is crucial that referees are properly advised and trained and that the fighters fully understand this at the rules meeting** ****

22. Purposely throwing an opponent out of the ring or caged area.

A fighter shall not intentionally or purposely throw their opponent out of the ring or cage.

23. Holding the shorts or gloves of an opponent.

*A fighter may not control their opponent's movement by holding onto their opponent's shorts or gloves. A fighter may hold onto or grab their opponent's hand as long as they are not controlling the hand only by using the material of the glove, but by actually gripping the hand. **It is legal to hold onto your own gloves or shorts***

24. Engaging in any unsportsmanlike conduct.

Any type of behavior or conduct observed or heard by the referee which can be considered detrimental or disrespectful towards their opponent or the sport of MMA. This includes but is not limited to spitting at your opponent, abusive language, abusive gestures, etc.

25. Holding the ropes or the fence.

A fighter may put their hands on the fence and push off of it at anytime. A fighter may place their feet onto the cage and have their toes go through the fencing material at any time. When fighter's fingers go through the cage and grab hold of the fence and start to control either their body position or their opponent's body position it now becomes an illegal action. A fighter may not grab the ropes or wrap their arms over the ring ropes at any time.

If a fighter is caught holding the fence, cage or ring rope material the referee shall issue a one-point deduction from the offending fighters scorecard.

If a point deduction for holding the fence occurs, and because of the infraction, the fouling fighter ends up in a superior position due to the foul, fighters will be re-started standing in a neutral position

26. Attacking an opponent on or during the break.

A fighter shall not engage their opponent in any fashion during a time-out or break of action in competition

27. Attacking an opponent who is under the care of the referee.

A fighter shall not engage their opponent in any fashion while their opponent is under the care or handling of the referee

28. Disregarding the instructions of the referee.

*A fighter **MUST** follow the instructions of the referee at all times. Any deviation or non-compliance may result in the fighter's disqualification*

29. Timidity, including, without limitation, avoiding contact with an opponent, intentionally or consistently dropping the mouthpiece or faking an injury.

Timidity is defined as any fighter who purposely avoids contact with his opponent, or runs away from the action of the fight. Timidity can also be called by the referee for any attempt by a fighter to receive time by falsely claiming a foul, injury, or purposely dropping or spitting out their mouthpiece or other action designed to stall the fight

30. Interference by the corner.

Interference is defined as any action or activity aimed at disrupting the fight or causing an unfair advantage to be given to one combatant. Corners are not allowed to distract the referee or influence the actions of the referee in any fashion.

TECHNICAL DECISIONS

-There must be two completed rounds in a three round bout before going to the scorecards on an accidental foul. Partial rounds are scored.

-If it is before the completion of the second round the bout shall be declared a No Decision. If it is after the second round the judges will tally their scores and the winner will be determined according to the score cards. The winner on the scorecards will be deemed the winner by Technical Decision.

-If the score cards were even, the bout is determined to be a Technical Draw.

Intentional Fouling

(a) When a bout is interrupted due to an injury caused by an intentional foul, the referee, in consultation with the ringside physician, shall determine whether the athlete who has been fouled can continue or not. If it is determined that an athlete is accidentally fouled and if the athlete's chance of winning has not been seriously jeopardized as a result of a foul, the referee may order the bout continued after a reasonable interval. A fighter who is fouled with a low blow has up to five minutes to recover.

(b) If the injured athlete is thereafter unable to continue, the offending athlete shall be disqualified, and he or she may be subject to suspension. Disposition of the penalty to be imposed upon the athlete shall be determined by action of the commission or the commission's representative.

(b) If the referee and/or the ringside physician determines that the bout may continue because of an injury suffered as the result of an intentional foul and later the injury inflicted by the intentional foul becomes aggravated by fair blows a Technical Decision will be rendered.

-If the Technical Decision rule is applied and the bout goes to the scorecards:

After the Second (2nd) or Third (3rd) round if the fouled fighter is ahead on the scorecards he or she will win by: TECHNICAL DECISION

After the Second (2nd) or Third (3rd) round if the fouled fighter is even or behind on the scorecards the result will be a: TECHNICAL DRAW

Accidental Fouling

(a) When a bout is interrupted due to an injury caused by an accidental foul, the referee, in consultation with the ringside physician, shall determine whether the athlete who has been fouled can continue or not. If it is determined that an athlete is accidentally fouled and if the athlete's chance of winning has not been seriously jeopardized as a result of a foul, the referee may order the bout continued after a reasonable interval. A fighter who is fouled with a low blow has up to five minutes to recover.

(b) If the referee and/or the ringside physician determines that the bout may not continue because of an injury suffered as the result of an accidental foul or because of an injury inflicted by an accidental foul which later becomes aggravated by fair blows a Technical Decision will be rendered.

-If the Technical Decision rule is applied and the bout goes to the scorecards:

After the Second (2nd) or Third (3rd) round the fighter who is ahead on the scorecards will win by: TECHNICAL DECISION

After the Second (2nd) or Third (3rd) round ends it is a: NO DECISION

REFEREE ACTION ON FOULS

The Referee shall inform the Commission Representative as soon as possible of the following:

- The type of foul
- If the foul was accidental or intentional
- If point(s) will be deducted from the offending athlete
- If the offending athlete will be disqualified
- If the Five (5) minute rule will or will not be applied

-If the bout will be delayed to evaluate a athlete

-If the bout will or will not continue

The Referee must declare if a blow was legal or a foul and if a foul, if it was Accidental or Intentional.

-Deduction of point(s) for fouls will be done at the time of the infraction.

-If an Intentional Foul causes an injury, and the injury is severe enough to immediately terminate the bout, the athlete causing the injury shall lose by DISQUALIFICATION.

-Deduction of point(s) for Intentional Fouls is mandatory.

-If an Intentional Foul causes an injury and the fouled athlete can continue, the Referee will deduct points from the offending athlete at his discretion from the athlete who committed the foul.

FOULS OR UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT DURING THE ONE (1) MINUTE REST PERIOD

-If an athlete fouls or acts in an unsportsmanlike manner during the one (1) minute rest period the Referee may deduct points from the offending athlete depending on the severity of the offense.

-The Chief Second is responsible for all corner activities. Any illegal activity may cause the Chief Second to be immediately removed from the corner from the entire event.

CONCUSSIVE HEAD IMPACT FOULS

-Before allowing a fight to continue the Referee should consult with the Ringside Physician in all cases involving concussive head fouls. The Referee in conjunction with the Ringside Physician will determine the length of time needed to evaluate the affected athlete and his or her suitability to continue.

Intentional

-If the Referee determines that a foul to the head was intentional, he will follow the Intentional Foul rule and guidelines considering that allowing the bout to continue may subject the athlete to a severe injury. If the affected athlete is not badly injured and their chance of winning has not been seriously jeopardized because of the foul, the bout may be allowed to continue. If the bout is allowed to continue, the offending athlete will be issued an official warning and have two (2) points deducted from his or her score in the round.

-If the Referee determines that the affected athlete cannot continue, the offending athlete will lose by DISQUALIFICATION.

Accidental

-If the Referee determines that a foul to the head was accidental, he will follow the Accidental Foul rule and guidelines considering that allowing the bout to continue may subject an athlete to a severe injury. If the affected athlete is not badly injured and their chance of winning has not been seriously jeopardized because of the foul, the bout may be allowed to continue. If the bout cannot continue the Technical Decision rule will be applied.

THE FIVE (5) MINUTE RULE (Applicable to Low Blows ONLY)

-The five (5) minute rule is only applicable to low blow fouls.

-In cases where another foul or an accidental injury occurs and there is a need to temporarily stop the bout, the length of time needed to evaluate the affected athlete will be determined by the Referee in clear consultation with the Ringside Physician.

LOW BLOW

Intentional

-If the Referee determines that the low blow foul was intentional, he will follow the Intentional Foul guidelines. If the offended athlete is not badly injured and their chance of winning has not been seriously jeopardized because of the foul, the Five (5) Minute rule may be applied.

-If the Referee determines that the athlete cannot continue, the offending athlete will lose by DISQUALIFICATION.

Accidental

-In cases where an athlete is hit with an accidental low blow and claims injury, the Referee, at his discretion, may apply the Five (5) Minute Rule. If the injured athlete cannot resume fighting before the recovery period ends, the injured athlete will lose the bout by TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT.

DISQUALIFICATION

An athlete will lose by DISQUALIFICATION when he or she has:

- Intentionally fouled and caused harm to their opponent
- Continually refused to follow the rules
- Continually disobeyed the Referee

SELF-INJURY

-If an athlete injures himself or herself while attempting to intentionally foul their opponent or by performing an unorthodox move, the Referee will not take any action in their favor, and the injury will be considered the same as one produced by a fair blow.

-In cases of Self-Injury the athlete must resume competition when ordered. If the injured athlete cannot resume fighting when ordered to do so by the Referee, he or she will lose the bout by TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT.

SUSPENSION OF THE BOUT FOR UNFORESEEN REASONS

-If a bout has to be suspended for any reason other than the actions of the athletes, the Referee will have the clock stopped and attend to the issue.

-The Referee and Commission will decide the length of time allotted to address the issue.

-ALL reasonable efforts shall be made to resume the bout as soon as possible. It is expected that the responsible party or parties make a true effort to resolve the issue.

-If the bout is unexpectedly stopped under suspicious circumstances all or part of the following actions may take place:

-If an athlete and or their corner are involved, the offending athlete may be DISQUALIFIED

-The athlete may be held to a formal hearing or investigation depending on Commission guidelines and be subject to Commission penalties, resulting in fines, suspensions, or other administrative disciplines.

- In certain circumstances the matter may be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or the courts.

STANDING 8 COUNT:

No standing 8 count is permitted under any circumstances. Referee's will be held responsible for fighter safety and shall stop fights when a fighter is unable to intelligently defend themselves, unresponsive, timid (not fighting back), mismatched in competition, or where the referee feels the fighters safety is jeopardized.

METHODS OF WINNING

KO: Athlete is unable to intelligently defend him or herself following a strike(s).

TKO: If the licensed ringside physician or referee decides the athlete cannot continue due to a cut or other injury.

Submission: When an athlete submits by tapping out on the opponent or the mat as a result from a choke, lock, or for any other legal technique or strike. An athlete may call out defeat when unable to tap out.

Referee stoppage: The referee may stop the bout when one athlete can no longer defend themselves, cannot or will not tap out, or for any other reason to preserve the health and safety of the athlete.

Decision: When the bout has ended after its specified time period without a winner, or due to fouls that terminate the bout due to injury, or due to unforeseen circumstance, it shall be scored by the three judges.

Decisions via a score card will result in:

Unanimous decision - all three judges agree on winner

Split decision - two judges agree on one athlete and one judge scores for the other

Majority decision - two judges agree on one athlete and one judge scores a draw

A Draw may be:

Unanimous - all three judges score the bout a draw

Majority - two judges score the bout a draw and one judge scores for a winner

Split - one judge scores for an athlete, one judge scores for the other athlete and one judge scores the bout a draw

Other scorecard decisions are:

Technical Decision

Technical Draw

No Contest

Disqualification: Fouling and or unsportsmanlike conduct as determined by the Referee.

SCORING OF THE BOUT

-All bouts will be evaluated and scored by three (3) judges.

-In exigent circumstances and / or at the discretion of the COMMISSION a Referee may be allowed to judge a bout.

-The 10 Points Must System will be the standard system of scoring a bout.

-In the event that a bout ends by TECHNICAL DECISION, the Judges will score the partial round.

General Scores - Not counting any point deductions:

10-10

10-9

10-8 etc. (10-8 rounds must consist of having both Domination and Damage)

Primary scoring considerations:

The following are primary scoring considerations when determining scores in amateur MMA competition:

-Legal striking - Clean effective strikes in the legal scoring zone / Number and quality of legal scoring blows

-Legal Takedowns, throws or knockdowns

-Near completed Submission

-Overall Control and Dominance

-Damage

ATHLETE DOWN AFTER THE SOUND OF THE BELL

-The round ends when the bell sounds to end the round.

-In the event that legal blows during the round negatively affect an athlete, and he or she goes down after the bell has sounded to end the round, the Referee will consider that the round is over and that the one- (1) minute rest period has begun.

-The Referee may then allow the athlete's corner to assist him or her, and or summon the Ringside Physician to evaluate the athlete.

BLOWS AT OR AFTER THE BELL

-A blow that strikes an athlete concurrent with the sounding of the bell is deemed to be a legal blow.

-A blow that strikes an athlete after the sounding of the bell is deemed to be a foul that the Referee will determine if it was Accidental or Intentional.

TERMINATION OF A BOUT DUE TO A FAIR BLOW

-If an athlete sustains an injury from a fair blow(s) and the injury is severe enough to immediately terminate the bout, the injured athlete will lose by TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT (TKO).

END OF THE ROUND ANNOUNCEMENT

-The Timekeeper will signal the eminent end of every round when there are ten (10) seconds left in the round.

OFFICIAL END OF THE ROUND

-The round ends when the bell sounds to end the round.

BEGINNING OF THE ROUND ANNOUNCEMENT

-The Timekeeper will signal the eminent beginning of every round when there are ten (10) seconds left in the one (1) minute rest period.

AMATEUR MMA - SANCTIONING BODY REQUIREMENTS

The Commission is the final authority on all amateur MMA regulation. Any organization representing itself as a sanctioning body with respect to amateur MMA must meet the following requirements:

1. All bouts must be conducted in accordance with the Commission rules;
2. All officials must meet the training and certification requirements in accordance with the Commission;
3. The sanctioning body must provide evidence of sufficient liability insurance for the officials;

4. The sanctioning body must not let the event proceed unless proof of medical insurance for contestants is provided, an ambulance and EMT's are present and on site at all times and an Commission approved physician or physicians as determined by Commission regulations is onsite and ringside;
5. The sanctioning body must only permit the bouts that have been granted approval by the Commission;
6. The sanctioning body must receive Commission approval for officials such as referees and judges;
7. The sanctioning body cannot have any direct or indirect financial interest in the fighters or the promotion;
8. The sanctioning body must agree that the fighters are not to receive any type of purse payment other than a Commission approved reimbursement of travel expenses;
9. The Commission will assign the ringside physician(s)
10. The sanctioning body must oversee the weigh-ins, the hand wrapping and glove placement after inspecting the gloves as per Commission standards; and
11. The sanctioning body must inspect and approve the fighting area prior to the start of the contests as per Commission standards.

Any violation of these requirements may result in actions by the Commission to remove the organization as a recognized sanctioning body with respect to amateur MMA, or the Commission may impose other sanctions as deemed appropriate.