

IMMAF YOUTH RULES as of January 2025

Download IMMAF Youth MMA Rules here **(U18s)**

<https://immaf.org/about/what-is-mma/>

These are the Official Unified Rules of Amateur MMA under IMMAF regulation. Any other set of rules shall not be referred to as the “Unified Rules of Amateur MMA” and must instead be identified by the name of the governing commission or sanctioning body overseeing the event.

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS UNIFIED RULES FOR U18s AMATEUR COMPETITION [As of January 2025]

1) 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 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 or indeed any IMMAF open tournament globally may be held in differing countries and as 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.

There shall be an “over and above” policy instructed to officials when it comes to dealing with the safety of the youth participants, this shall be further detailed throughout this document.

2) DEFINITION:

“Mixed martial arts” means a combat 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.

3) 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/host regulatory body.

The IMMAF currently recognizes and regulates 12[Twelve] different categories of Amateur Mixed Martial Arts competition:

Masters

FEMALE & MALE

M1/F1 30-34 (U35)

M2/F2 35-39 (U40)

M3/F3 40-44 (U45)

M4/F4 45-49 (U50)

M5/F5 50-54 (U55)

M6/F6 55-59 (U60)

Seniors 18+ IMMAF

Juniors 18 - 20s (U21) IMMAF

Youth A 16-17s (U18) IMMAF

Youth B 14-15s (U16) IMMAF

Youth C 12-13s (U14)

Youth D 10-11s (U12)

The rules as set out in this document shall be applied to, and be in accordance with, any IMMAF Youth tournament held globally.

4) ELIGIBILITY:

past competitive experience exclusively as an amateur, not active for minimum 5 years.

5) AGE BANDING CRITERIA

Youth A 16-17s (U18) IMMAF

Youth B 14-15s (U16) IMMAF

Youth C 12-13s (U14) IMMAF

Youth D 10-11s (U12) IMMAF

6) MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARD

All participants require to have MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARD grade according to IMMAF Progression scheme before the tournament draw commences. For clarification, this grade must be recorded in the official IMMAF App and will be crossed checked at the point of registration. If a competitor doesn't have the required minimum technical standard grade, they will not be entered into the tournament draw and be removed from competition.

Please contact IMMAF's Development Director Andrew Moshanov via andrew.moshanov@immaf.org for any questions around obtaining technical grades.

Minimum technical standard for participants.

Age Band D - Yellow

Age Band C – Yellow

Age Band B - Orange

Age Band A - Green

Age Band Juniors U21 - Blue

Age Band Seniors and Masters - Blue+

More explanation if need be: immaf.org

7) ROUNDS:

Each contest under **IMMAF Youth** regulation shall consist of the following:

IMMAF Youth A 16-17s (U18) 3 x 2 minute rounds duration with a 1 minute rest period.

IMMAF Youth B 14-15s (U16) 1 single round of 4 minutes duration.

IMMAF Youth C 12-13s (U14) 1 single round of 3 minutes duration.

IMMAF Youth D 10-11s (U12) 1 single round of 3 minutes duration.

The premise here is in granting the participants the necessary additional and incremental competition times [increasing with age] during matches, rising from 3 to 4 to 6 minutes respectively.

No contest should be allowed over a two round format as the likelihood for a drawn result significantly increases.

8) WEIGHT DIVISIONS:

Weigh-ins for amateur contestants shall be on the day of competition, **and each subsequent day of competition** that the athletes progress.

All athletes must weigh in on the official competition scale in **shorts and t-shirt/rash guard**, most preferably the official **IMMAF apparel**.

Youth contestants are not permitted to strip above or below the waist to underwear or bare torso. To facilitate this all contestants at all official weigh ins shall be granted an additional 1lb [454gr] allowance over and above their designated weight category as detailed below.

Weigh-ins for all contestants shall be on the day of competition. Competitors must be within the weight limits for the division they are registered to.

YOUTH WEIGHT CLASSES:

Youth D 10–11s (U12):

FEMALE & MALE

-27 kg /59.5 lbs

-30 kg /68.3 lbs

-34 kg /75 lbs

-37 kg /81.6 lbs

-40 kg /88.2 lbs

-44 kg /97 lbs

-48 kg /105.8 lbs

-52 kg /114.6 lbs

-57 kg /125.7 lbs

+57 kg /125.7 lbs – TO A MAXIMUM OF 62KG/136.7 lbs

Note: Minimum 2 Participants are required in each category.

Youth C 12–13s (U14):**FEMALE & MALE**

-34 kg /75 lbs
-37 kg /81.6 lbs
-40 kg /88.2 lbs
-44 kg /97 lbs
-48 kg /105.8 lbs
-52 kg /114.6 lbs
-57 kg /125.7 lbs
+57 kg /125.7 lbs – TO A MAXIMUM OF 62KG/136.7 lbs

Note: Minimum 2 Participants are required in each category.

Youth B 14–15s (U16):**FEMALE & MALE**

-44 kg /97 lbs
-48 kg /105.8 lbs
-52 kg /114.6 lbs
-57 kg /125.7 lbs
-62 kg /136.7 lbs
-67 kg /147.7 lbs
-72 kg /158.7 lbs
+72 kg /158.7 lbs – TO A MAXIMUM OF 77.1KG/170 lbs

Note: Youth B & C categories, for the upper weight limits only, no athlete shall be allowed to compete with a weight difference greater than 5 kg.
For example: for the “-72kg” division, the lower limit is +67kg to a maximum limit of 72kg.

Youth A 16–17s (U18)**FEMALE**

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

MALE

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

9) COMPETITION FORMULA:

IMMAF Youth Championships – Round Robin Tournament Format

Overview:

The IMMAF Youth Championships utilize a **Round Robin** tournament format, where each competitor in a weight category faces all other opponents. This format is favoured for youth events as it supports the long-term development of athletes, allowing them to gain international competition experience without the immediate elimination risk of direct knock-out formats.

Tie-Breaking Criteria

To encourage a focus on technical grappling over striking, the primary tie-breaking criterion in the Round Robin format is **submission victories**. The goal is to emphasize refined grappling techniques and minimize the risk of knockouts and concussions, which can occur even without strikes to the head.

Clarification on Knockouts

Despite the prohibition of strikes to the head in youth categories, it is crucial to recognize that knockouts and concussions can still occur due to various factors, such as falls, impacts during takedowns, and strikes to the body. This highlights the importance of safety protocols and proper officiating.

Tie-Breaking Order

1. More wins by submission
2. Shorter total time in submission victories
3. More wins by knockout (KO)
4. Shorter total time in KO victories
5. More wins by TKO
6. Shorter total time in TKO victories
7. More unanimous decision wins
8. Higher scoring in unanimous decisions
9. More split decision wins
10. Higher scoring in split decisions
11. Fewer fouls and deducted points
12. Result of the mutual contest

By prioritizing submission victories, IMMAF aims to foster a culture of technical excellence while ensuring athlete safety and long-term engagement in the sport.

Final Tie-Breaking Criterion – IMMAF Youth Championships (Round Robin Format)

In the event that all established tie-breaking criteria fail to determine a winner, where the competitors in a Round Robin format have identical scores (e.g., all bouts scored 30-27 with no fouls, deductions, or differentiating factors) a **Panel Board** will be convened to assess the three bouts and select the best overall performance.

Selection of the Panel Board

- The **Chairman of the IMMAF Regulatory Affairs Department (Director of Regulatory Affairs)** will appoint three officials to the Panel Board.
- These officials must be **IMMAF Level A or Professional Certified Judges and Cage Commissioners**, ensuring an expert evaluation based on IMMAF's global judging standards.

Evaluation Criteria

The **Panel Board** will judge the three bouts using the **IMMAF Universal Judging Criteria**, ensuring consistency with the highest standards of amateur MMA officiating:

1. **Effective Striking & Grappling** (Primary criterion)
 2. **Proactive Effectiveness**
 3. **Cage Control – Decision Process**
- Each judge on the **Panel Board** will independently review the three fights and determine which competitor demonstrated the most dominant and effective overall performance.
 - Their collective assessment will be submitted to the **Director of Regulatory Affairs**, who will officially announce the winner.

This process ensures that even in rare cases of absolute statistical ties, the **best overall performance is recognized**, maintaining the integrity of the competition while upholding IMMAF's commitment to technical excellence and athlete development.

Competition Structure

- Each category consists of at least three competitors.
- The number of rounds is determined based on the number of athletes.
- Accurate record-keeping in Smoothcomp ensures fair and transparent competition tracking.

This tournament format aligns with IMMAF's mission to provide a safe and educational platform for young athletes while promoting high technical standards in amateur MMA.

10) PRE-COMPETITION MEDICAL & SAFETY CHECK – REFEREE RESPONSIBILITIES

Before the start of any MMA event under IMMAF regulation, the Regulatory Affairs team and referees must verify and confirm the presence of the following mandatory medical and safety requirements. No fight can commence unless these minimum standards are met.

1. PRESENCE OF FULLY EQUIPPED AMBULANCES

- A minimum of two (2) fully equipped ambulances (ICU – Intensive Care Unit Mobile) must be available at the event venue at all times.

2. PRESENCE OF QUALIFIED MEDICAL STAFF

- A minimum of two (2) licensed doctors per Field of Play (FOP) must be present:
 - One (1) doctor stationed at ringside to monitor fights.

- One (1) doctor assigned for post-bout medical examinations.

3. MANDATORY MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AT THE FIELD OF PLAY (FOP)

The following must be available at the ringside medical table and must not be removed from the Field of Play:

- Automated External Defibrillator (AED/DEA)
 - This equipment must be independent from the ambulance, ensuring it remains available even if an ambulance leaves the venue.
- One (1) portable oxygen cylinder with a regulator and Ambu-bag near each ring/cage.
- Stretcher and spinal board for immobilization and transportation of injured athletes.
- Emergency resuscitation and first-aid equipment, including rigid cervical collars.

4. CLEAR EVACUATION ROUTE

- The Regulatory Affairs team and referees must ensure the presence of a clear and unobstructed evacuation route, allowing quick and efficient access for the medical team and ambulances.

IMPORTANT

If any of these requirements are not met, the referee CANNOT authorize the start of any match until full compliance is ensured. The responsibility for athlete safety falls not only on the event organizers and medical staff but also on the referee, who must verify and confirm that all minimum safety conditions are in place before the competition and each match begins.

11) MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTESTANTS:

All athletes are required to complete all pre competition medical examinations and tests as set out by the commission/host regulatory authority. This can be found in the competition license and registration handbook or the statutes as defined by the IMMAF. The medical requirements set out pre competition shall be mandatory.

The commission/host regulatory authority licensing the contest shall conduct or supervise all pre-contest weigh-ins and supervise a rules meeting for all contestants and their cornermen. It is mandatory for at least one cornerman from each team to attend the rules meeting during the competition.

Post-Contest medical examination:

1) Immediately following a contest, each contestant shall be given a medical examination by a physician approved by the commission/host regulatory authority. 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 undergo a post-contest medical examination shall be immediately suspended for an indefinite period for an investigation to take place.

12) IMMAF EQUIPMENT SECTION

Competitors participating in IMMAF official events should comply with the IMMAF regulations. National federations of the competing athletes are responsible for ensuring that athletes are wearing IMMAF Approved kit that comply with the rules.

In IMMAF tournaments, it is a mandatory requirement under IMMAF competition for all IMMAF Approved equipment to be worn at all times during competition. Competitors will be issued two sets of kit; one in red and one blue, with each set consisting of the following items: gloves, shin guards, rash guard, and a pair of shorts. Coaches and cornermen must wear their country's official uniform.

Competitors will retain both sets of kit at the end of the competition.

Protective Kit:

Hand Wrapping

Mandatory Hand Wrapping in All IMMAF Competitions

Requirements:

- Hand wrapping is **mandatory** for all IMMAF categories, including those that prohibit strikes to the head, as it provides essential protection against fractures and injuries from body strikes.
- No wrapping or gauze is permitted on any other body parts except the hands.

Gloves:

The gloves shall be new for all events and in good condition or they must be replaced. Only gloves supplied by the commission/host regulatory authority with prior approval from the IMMAF Technical Committee can be used for the duration of the competition.

All athletes shall wear gloves with protective padding weighing a minimum of no less than 6 ounces and no more than 8 ounces. The gloves for amateur competition shall be recognised as visibly different to those used under professional rules and have the aesthetic of such. Athletes are not permitted to supply their own gloves.

Gloves are to be open handed with finger and thumb loops to facilitate grappling. The wrist shall be supported by means of a Velcro strap. No lace up gloves are permitted.

Gloves shall be coloured either Red or Blue.

Shin guards:

The use of shin guards 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. Shin guards shall be coloured either Red or Blue.

Groin Protectors:

All male athletes must provide and wear a groin protector. Females may choose to wear a groin protector should they so wish.

Mouthpieces:

Red Mouthguards Not Allowed.

All athletes are required to wear a well-fitting mouthpiece, which shall be subject to examination and approval. A round will not begin until both athletes have their respective mouthpieces in place. 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. Athletes are responsible for sourcing their own non-branded mouth guards.

Athlete's Apparel

Shorts:

Each athlete must wear mixed martial arts shorts/compression shorts. No pockets, zips, fasteners or any foreign substance other than that of the material that the shorts are made of shall be permitted to present on the shorts. No external lace up waistband on the outside of the shorts are permitted, it must be inside the waist band of the shorts. The shorts shall be coloured either Red or Blue.

Rash guards:

The type of rash guard to be used shall be of tight fighting stretch material. The rash guard will carry 3 letter country codes and the surname of the athlete on the upper back of the garment in tournaments where back numbers are applicable. All rash guards are to be of short sleeve type. No long sleeve rash guards are permitted. The rash guards shall be coloured either Red or Blue.

Special Considerations

IMMAF understands and gives special dispensation to all cultural and religious belief and practice. Any female athlete wishing to wear either/or long sleeve rash guards, socks and tights to cover the skin can do so with prior written notification to the commission/host regulatory authority.

Neoprene Support

Athletes are permitted to use **neoprene sleeves** to cover **only** the knee and/or ankle joints. The following conditions must be met for compliance:

- **Material Restrictions:**
 - Approved sleeves **must not** contain padding, velcro, plastic, metal, ties, or any other material deemed unsafe or that could provide an unfair advantage.
 - **Only plain black neoprene** or elastic fabric is allowed.
- **Pre-Approval Requirements:**
 - **Tape, gauze, or any materials underneath** the approved sleeves **are not allowed**.

- The athlete is required to notify the regulatory staff and doctor **on the day of the weigh-in or prior to the competition**, before stepping into the cage.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification or removal of unauthorized equipment before competition.

Shoes:

Athletes can't wear shoes of any kind during competition.

Equipment Control procedure

Athletes' equipment/kit must be exempt from stains and must not show any signs of being worn out. If the condition of the equipment is assessed as unsatisfactory, the athlete must obtain replacement equipment from the Equipment Room.

Replacements will only be issued in the following cases:

- Torn Equipment
- Bloodstains or any other apparent stains
- Worn out
- Lost or stolen kit (at discretion of the Equipment Manager)

The surname of the athlete on the accreditation card has to correspond with the surname on the back number.

Braiding and Grooming Protocol

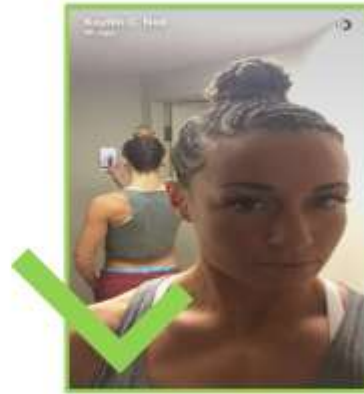
Long hair must be tied up out of the way.

Mandatory Hair and Grooming Requirements

Guidelines:

- All athletes must have their hair securely braided before competition.
- Only elastic bands are allowed no metal, hard plastic, or any material that may cause injury to the opponent.
- Braids must not extend past the neckline to prevent potential eye injuries and entanglements, which could compromise safety and hygiene.

BRAIDINGS!



False eyelashes and artificial nails are strictly prohibited, as they pose a risk of injury to both the athlete and their opponent.

Eyewear and Braces Protocol

Contact Lenses:

- **Not Permitted:** Athletes are **not allowed** to compete while wearing contact lenses for safety reasons. Contact lenses can dislodge during competition, posing risks of eye injury or vision impairment.

Braces (Dental Orthodontics):

- Athletes with **braces on their teeth** are permitted to compete **only** if they wear an appropriate mouthpiece.
- If an athlete has braces **on both upper and lower teeth**, a **double mouthguard** is mandatory to provide full protection against impact injuries.
- Athletes without the required mouthguard will **not** be allowed to compete.

World Champion Athletes

At the IMMAF World Championships IMMAF will issue gold kit to previous athletes who are gold medallists under ALL of the following conditions:

- Athlete is a Gold medallist from any tournament since the last World championships including the previous year's Worlds tournament
- Athlete is fighting in the same weight category as when they won gold
- Athlete is fighting at the same level of competition (e.g., seniors' tournament).

The gold kit is not compulsory and can be swapped for the red/blue kit if preferred at the Equipment Manager's discretion.

Note:

1. In the instance that both athletes in the bout are in gold it; one or both athletes will be issued with the red/blue protective kit for the bout as per the corner specified for the athlete on the bout card.
2. If the gold kit is not available, the athlete will be defaulted to blue/red as per the corner specified for the athlete on the bout card.

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13) THE FIELD OF PLAY (FOP) REQUIREMENTS

Where possible and where it is practically feasible, host federations should use the IMMAF-approved Field of Play for all competitions.
Details can be found here:

<https://immaf.org/immaf-fighting-area/>

In all other instances where the IMMAF-approved Field of Play is not used, the following specifications for the Field of Play should be strictly followed. Thorough and detailed inspections of the Field of Play must be conducted before the start of IMMAF competitions and on each subsequent day of competition to ensure the highest safety standards.

Field of Play:

1. The field of play must be circular, hexagonal, or octagonal, with equal sides and a minimum size of **20 feet x 20 feet** and a maximum size of **32 feet x 32 feet** in diameter/cross section.
2. The field of play floor shall be padded with a minimum **40mm layer of high-density foam**, as approved by the commission/host regulatory authority.
3. The padding shall extend beyond the competition surface and cover the edges of the platform.
4. The field of play must have a **vinyl covering**. Canvas covers are only permitted for single-day competitions or finals.

Fence:

1. The vinyl-covered floor of the field of play must be enclosed by a fence made of a material that prevents contestants from falling out or breaking through it. This may include **a vinyl-coated chain-link fence** or another approved structure.
2. Any metal portion of the fenced area must be **padded and covered** in a manner approved by the commission/host regulatory authority, ensuring that it is not abrasive to the contestants.
3. The fenced area must have **two gated entrances**, preferably on opposite sides, which must open outward.
4. There must be no obstructions on any part of the fence that could interfere with the contestants' movement or visibility.

Ring Stools:

1. A **commission-approved ring stool** must be available in the **red and blue corners** for each field of play.
2. All stools must be **cleaned or replaced** after each contest.
3. An adequate number of stools or chairs must be provided for each contestant's corner.

Other Equipment:

The **licensed promoter** must provide each contestant's corner with:

1. A **clean water bucket** with a clean towel.
2. A **clear plastic bottle containing only water**.
Athletes are only allowed to consume water from **clear plastic bottles** at all times during competition.

14) SAFETY REQUIREMENTS:

Hand wraps are mandatory for all IMMAF competitions, across all weight classes and age groups.

Cut Team

The **MMA licensed Cut Team** consists of a minimum of two representatives **ringside per field of play** at any one time during an MMA event: one attending each corner and a supervisor.

Additionally, the Cut Team is responsible for **hand wrapping all IMMAF athletes prior to competition. Hand wrapping is mandatory across all categories and age groups, and no athlete is permitted to compete without properly applied hand wraps by a certified Cutman.**

Cutmen Presence Requirement:

- Certified cutmen must be **present at all IMMAF events**, across all categories, to ensure the safety and proper care of athletes during and after competition.
- Only the licensed Cut Team is authorized to wrap athletes' hands before competition. However, qualified coaches may also perform hand wrapping, provided they are supervised by the Cut Team and the IMMAF Inspectors.
- The presence of a Cutman at the field of play is mandatory for all fights, ensuring proper safety protocols and injury management.

PREP POINT

When a competitor enters the field of play, the Cut Team is responsible for the following:

- Greasing the face in a figure-eight motion only around the eyes, nose and making sure there is heavy emphasis on eyebrow and cheeks.
- Collaborating with the commissioner/referee, ensuring that any grease applied before entering the field of play (no grease in dressing rooms) by a coach is correctly removed or adjusted by the referee, head inspector, or Cutperson.
- The head inspector (dressing rooms) and the cutmen must detect and report any scented oils, massage creams, or prohibited substances on the athlete's skin to the referee or head inspector.

BETWEEN ROUNDS

Between rounds, if an athlete sustains an injury (e.g., laceration, hematoma), the Cutman/woman's role includes:

- Informing the corner that only one coach is allowed in the competition area.
- Informing the referee that the Cut Person will enter the field of play.
- Applying only sanctioned treatments within the allotted 50-second timeframe.

HANDWRAPS:



- A properly applied hand wrap is critical for protecting an athlete's hands and ensuring fair competition.
- MMA hand wraps use less gauze, cannot cover the webbing of the fingers, and will only extend a few inches past the wrist.
- Hand wraps must follow IMMAF's approved wrapping method to prevent illegal padding or manipulation.
- Gauze must not extend beyond the required wrist length, and tape cannot cover the knuckles excessively.
- Hand wraps must be inspected and approved by the assigned Inspector or the Cutman before the athlete enters the cage.

Specifications for Bandages on Contestants' hands:

- 1) In all weight classes, the bandages on each contestant's hands **are mandatory** and shall be restricted to soft open weave 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/zinc oxide tape, 1 inch in width, for each hand.
- 2) Surgeon's/zinc oxide adhesive tape shall be placed directly on each hand for protection near the wrist. 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/host regulatory authority.
- 5) Under no circumstances are gloves to be placed on the hands of a contestant until the approval of the commission/host regulatory authority is received. Each glove shall be sealed and taped either in red or blue. Athletes may not remove the gloves once sealed until the competition bout has taken place.

CUTMAN EQUIPMENT

Essential Equipment for the Cut Team:

- Enswell (eye iron): Used to cool bruises and reduce swelling.
- Cotton swabs: For applying medications to cuts.
- Ice packs: Used to control bruising, swelling, and sprains.
- Petroleum jelly: Applied to cuts and high-impact areas to reduce the risk of skin tearing.
- Gauze pads or Hand Towels: For drying and treating cuts.
- Medical gloves: Worn by the Cutman to minimize exposure to blood and infections.
- Zinc Oxide Tape (Red and Blue, 3.8-5cm width): Essential for securing gloves and hand wraps, preventing sharp edges that may cause injury.

ALLOWED ITEMS

The following items are approved for use by Cutmen during IMMAF competitions:

- White athletic tape 1/2 inch / 1 inch and 2 inch
- White gauze
- Enswell
- Vaseline
- Scissors

Approved cut medications:

- 1/1000 adrenaline
- Avitene
- Thrombin

Unapproved or unauthorized medications, substances, or materials are strictly prohibited.

MEDICATIONS

The use of coagulating treatments, vessel constrictors and dehydration of blood is highly regulated. Approved materials include:

- Qwick Aid (100% natural seaweed based)
- Adrenalin 1000

Contestant's Physical Appearance:

- 1) Each contestant must be clean and present a tidy appearance.

- 2) The use of Vaseline/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/host regulatory authority 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.

15) INSTANT REPLAY:

The Instant Replay system is a critical tool to ensure accurate decisions in specific fight scenarios.

There are only two situations where Instant Replay may be used:

To review a Fight Ending Sequence by only the referee video replay and for a clarification of specific fouls made only by the **central referee**.

Usage Guidelines:

- **Fight-Ending Sequence Review:** Instant replay may only be used to review a **Fight Ending Sequence** and shall only be utilized after the fight has been officially stopped and before the announcer declares the official result.
Once instant replay is used to review a fight-ending sequence, the fight shall not be resumed.
- **Clarification of Specific Fouls:** The **central referee** can use instant replay to verify low blows or eye pokes when in doubt. Instant replay may be utilized if the referee requires clarification on these specific fouls.

Time Limit for Reviews:

- The total review time for an instant replay decision shall not exceed **five minutes** from the moment the review begins.

Authorized Personnel:

- Only **video replay referee** is authorized to initiate instant replay for **Fight-Ending Sequences** and notify the central referee.
- The **central referee** may use instant replay to verify **foul situations**, such as low blows or eye pokes, when he is in doubt.

Equipment Requirement:

- Instant replay must be conducted using official IMMAF equipment.
- The use of mobile phones or non-official devices is strictly prohibited.
- If the competition lacks the necessary IMMAF approved equipment, instant replay shall not be utilized.

16) RED LIGHT:

The primary objective of the Red-Light Protocol is to allow immediate assessment of potential risks or errors without prematurely stopping the fight. When activated, the referee will call for a timeout and assesses the situation.

Situations for Red Light Activation:

- **Incorrect Fight Results:** If an error is detected before the official result is announced, the red light can be triggered to allow the referee to review the decision at the regulatory department's table.
- **Unseen Fouls:** Situations such as fish hooking or eye gouging and missed by the referee but observed by regulatory officials.
- **Submission Tap Not Acknowledged:** If an athlete taps but the referee fails to notice, the red light allows for a review before the next round begins or the fight be announced.
- **Equipment Issues:** Situations such as a lost mouthpiece that may compromise athlete safety.
- **Intentional Misleading Claims:** If an athlete falsely claims an illegal blow to stop the fight, the red light can be used to review and apply disciplinary actions.
- **Lack of Video Replay Equipment:** When official IMMAF video replay equipment is unavailable, the red light serves as an alternative to assist the referee in decision-making.

Authorized Personnel:

The red light can only be activated by the **Director of Regulatory Affairs, and the field of the match Commissioner.**

17) 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.

18) Red, Blue, and White Towel:

White Towel:

In a MMA and other combat sports, the practice of "throwing in the towel" is a long-standing and widely recognized method for a coach to indicate their athlete's withdrawal from the fight to protect their safety. By throwing a white towel into the ring or cage, the coach signals to the referee that they want to end the fight to prevent further harm to the competitor. While the referee has the ultimate authority to stop the fight, the act of throwing the towel is respected and considered a crucial safety measure.

Red and Blue Towels:

The red and blue towels is for exclusive use by the Director of Regulatory Affairs and the field of the match Commissioner in critical situations where an athlete's safety is at immediate risk, and the referee has failed to recognize the severity of the situation.

These towels are used in the following scenarios:

- **Undetected Bone Fracture:** When an athlete suffers a visible fracture, but the referee does not notice the injury, allowing the fight to continue, which could worsen the athlete's condition.
- **Loss of Consciousness in a Submission:** If an athlete loses consciousness due to a submission hold (such as a choke), and the referee fails to recognize it, allowing the submission to be maintained for an extended period, increasing the risk of serious injury.

In such cases, the towel corresponding to the athlete's corner color (red or blue) is thrown into the cage to signal the need for immediate fight stoppage and urgent medical attention. The use of colored towels ensures quick identification of the athlete requiring assistance, enabling a more efficient response from the medical team.

The implementation of these measures aims to enhance athlete safety during competitions by providing clear and effective mechanisms for stopping fights in emergency situations.

"In cases where a visibly broken bone or a major joint dislocation is confirmed, the decision to stop the fight is final, and the athlete's coaching staff will not be allowed to file an appeal."

19) No Free Will Rule

In IMMAF amateur competitions, the concept of "Free Will," which allows an athlete to endure a submission until a bone is broken, is strictly prohibited. Athlete safety is the top priority in amateur sports, and IMMAF aims to protect competitors from preventable injuries.

- IMMAF Amateur MMA focuses on long-term development and injury prevention.
- Referees and Coaches (White Towel) are responsible for preventing serious injuries by stopping fights at the right moment.
- The referees must stop a fight when an athlete is caught in a submission with no means of intelligent defense (Broken Bone).
- When a fight is stopped under this rule, the official result announced will be a **Preventive Submission Stoppage (PSS)**, indicating that the referee intervened to prevent a potential injury.
- This rule applies across all IMMAF age categories to ensure consistency in safeguarding athletes' health.

Chokes Exception

- While submission locks that threaten bone integrity are strictly regulated, chokes resulting in temporary loss of consciousness are managed differently, provided they are promptly addressed by referees. It is permitted for an athlete to lose consciousness due to a choke; however, they must not remain unconscious within the hold for more than **5 seconds**. The fight must be

stopped immediately once the referee identifies that the athlete has lost consciousness to prevent further harm. This measure ensures that while chokes can be part of competition strategy, athlete safety remains the top priority.

20) Knockdowns and Flashdowns: Preventing the KO (Concussion)

At IMMAF Tournaments The Referees are also trained to monitor flashdowns and knockdowns. A flashdown occurs when an athlete is briefly stunned or knocked down but still appears able to continue. However, the referee's role is to prevent a knockout (KO) before it happens. If an athlete experiences a flashdown and the referee observes that the athlete's brain is no longer sending signals for intelligent defense, the fight should be stopped before a KO occurs.

Prevention is key. If the referee determines that an athlete is no longer able to intelligently defend themselves, even if they remain standing, the fight must be stopped. The priority is to prevent further damage that could result in a knockout or a possible concussion.

Two Times Knockdown Rule, which states: If an athlete is knocked down to the mat twice in one round, the bout is automatically over.

- If an athlete is knocked down three times during the entire bout, it is automatically over, and the opponent wins by Technical Knockout (TKO).
- An athlete who loses by KO to the head is no longer allowed to compete in any other category or division for the remainder of the competition.

This aims to further enhance fighter safety by preventing athletes from suffering cumulative damage that could lead to severe long-term health issues.

It's important to remember that brain concussions, and their short, medium, and long-term consequences, are not only related to a single event but also to the cumulative effect of multiple concussive events. Preventing this concussion cycle, through competition regulations and suspensions, not only helps preserve the athlete's health but also allows them to stay in the sport longer and in better condition.

21) REFEREE HAND SIGNALS, COMMANDS, AND WARNINGS

HAND SIGNALS MUST ALWAYS BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH VOICE COMMANDS

Stopping Time:

To signal a time stoppage, the referee forms a "T" shape with their hands, directing it toward the timekeeper to indicate the need to pause the match.

Ending the Match by KO/TKO:

To officially stop the match, the referee vigorously waves both hands in an "X" motion above their head. If attending to a downed fighter, they may use only one hand for clarity. This action must be clear and decisive to ensure all parties understand that the contest has been halted.

Start or Resume Action – "FIGHT":

The referee uses the verbal command "FIGHT" while making a forward hand motion, resembling a cutting action, to signal the start or resumption of the fight.

Stopping the Fight – "STOP":

When the referee needs the fighters to halt all offensive actions, they issue the command "STOP," while making a distinct hand signal, such as raising one open hand with the palm facing forward, similar to the sign for 'stop' in sign language.

Breaking or Separating the Fighters:

When necessary to separate fighters, the referee firmly calls out "STOP!" while stepping in and, if needed, lightly touching both fighters (preferably on the chest) to ensure compliance. This verbal and physical cue reinforces the break.

Before restarting the action, the referee ensures that both fighters are positioned outside of immediate striking range. Only after creating sufficient space does the referee restart the fight by issuing the "FIGHT!" command.

WARNINGS:

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

- 1) Holding or grabbing fence
- 2) Holding onto opponent's shorts, gloves, shin-guards or rash-guard
- 3) Having the fingers outstretched, palm parallel to the floor toward opponent face

22) FOULS:

The following acts constitute a foul in mixed martial arts professional competition and at all IMMAF Classes:

1. Butting with the head
 2. Eye gouging of any kind
 3. Biting or spitting at an opponent
 4. Fish Hooking
 5. Hair pulling
 6. Spiking the opponent to the canvas onto the head or neck (pile-driving)
 7. Strikes to the spine or the back of the head. The spine includes the tailbone
 8. Throat strikes of any kind and/or grabbing the trachea
 9. Fingers outstretched toward an opponent's face/eyes
 10. Groin attacks of any kind
 11. Kneeing and/or Kicking the head of a grounded opponent
 12. Stomping of a grounded fighter
 13. Holding opponent's gloves, shorts, shin-guards or rash guard
 14. Holding or grabbing the fence with fingers or toes
 15. Small joint manipulation [fingers or toes]
 16. Throwing an opponent out of the fighting area
 17. Intentionally placing a finger into any orifice, or into any cut or laceration of your opponent
 18. Clawing, pinching, twisting the flesh
 19. Timidity (avoiding contact, or consistently dropping the mouthpiece, or faking an injury)
 20. Use of abusive language in the fighting area
 21. Flagrant disregard of the referee's instructions
 22. Unsportsmanlike conduct that causes an injury to opponent
-

23. Attacking an opponent after the bell has sounded the end of the period of unarmed combat.
24. Attacking an opponent on or during the break
25. Attacking an opponent who is under the care of the referee
26. Interference from a mixed martial artist's corner or seconds
27. Applying any foreign substance to the head or body in order to gain an advantage

Grounded Opponent Definition

A fighter shall be considered grounded and may not be legally kned or kicked to the head when any part of their body other than their hands or feet is in contact with the canvas (ground).

23) FORBIDDEN TECHNIQUES

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

- 1) Elbows and forearm strikes of any kind.
- 2) Heel Hook.
- 3) Twister, neck crank, can opener, sit through crucifix and/or any submission deemed as applying pressure to the neck or spine.
- 4) Knees to the head of an opponent.
- 5) Linear/front kicks directly targeting the knee.

In addition to the listed fouls and forbidden techniques for amateur competition the following restrictions shall also apply to the masters and youth all age categories:

There shall be no striking to the head or face.

Is important to remember that any technique that manipulates the spine or neck is considered illegal, even if it is not directly listed. This means that even if a position is initially allowed, transitioning into a finishing maneuver that manipulates the neck or spine renders the technique illegal.

Youth D Category Rules

1. No striking with the knees in any fashion
2. No grounded striking of any fashion
3. No bicep or calf crush
4. No wristlocks
5. No leg submissions of any description
6. No omoplata submission
7. No suplex, elevated/shoulder throws or slams
8. No guillotine chokes of any description
9. No linear kicks to the knee
10. No up-kick from a grounded position
11. No foot stomps

Prohibition of Jumping Guard

- **Jumping into guard is strictly prohibited.**
- Pulling guard is allowed, meaning the athlete can sit or pull their opponent into guard, but they are not permitted to leap or jump to initiate guard position.
- This rule aims to minimize unnecessary risks associated with jumping guard, such as potential injuries to the lower limbs or accidental head collisions.

Key Differences:

1. **Pulling Guard Allowed:** Athletes may pull their opponent into guard by dragging them down or transitioning smoothly to the ground.
2. **Jumping Guard Prohibited:** Athletes cannot jump or leap to establish guard; any attempt to do so will result in penalties. Such actions may result in a warning (if unintentional), a point deduction (if considered reckless), or a disqualification if the referee determines it was an intentional foul.

Any throw must be of a hip or hip toss variation and have both head and arm control. The premise on which the youngest group of amateurs shall compete shall be based heavily upon applying and adapting the techniques of mixed martial arts in an enhanced safety environment.

The technical restrictions detailed above shall both allow and facilitate young competitors to garner the necessary time and experience in a competitive format without the risk of unnecessary injury or trauma suffered. As a result, the referee's shall be instructed to allow the techniques to be freely and openly used and applied but not necessarily finished. In other words a young competitor who has been caught in a legal submission hold shall not be permitted the same leniency and time that an advanced senior would have to utilize an escape. We must recognize that at such an early age the emphasis will be exaggerated from a safety first perspective in not allowing or risking unnecessary injury to our young athletes. As a result "Technical Submission's" shall be a more frequent occurrence to both decide and end a match.

Youth C 12-13 years old

1. No striking with the knees in any fashion
2. No grounded striking of any fashion
3. No bicep or calf crush
4. No wristlocks
5. No leg submissions of any description
6. No omoplata submission
7. No suplex, elevated/shoulder throws or slams
8. No guillotine chokes of any description
9. No linear kicks to the knee
10. No up-kick from a grounded position
11. No foot stomps

Any throw must be of a hip or hip toss variation and have both head and arm control. The premise on which the youngest group of amateurs shall compete shall be based heavily upon applying and adapting the techniques of mixed martial arts in an enhanced safety environment.

Youth B 14-15 years old

1. No striking with the knees in any fashion
2. No grounded striking of any fashion
3. No bicep or calf crush
4. No wristlocks
5. No knee-bar [legal leg attacks are straight Achilles lock and figure four ankle lock with straight leg only]
6. No omoplata submission
7. No suplex, elevated/shoulder throws or slams
8. No standing guillotine chokes
9. No linear kicks to the knee
10. No up-kick from a grounded position

11. No foot stomps

Figure four ankle locks are to be applied to a **straight leg only, no bending of the knee whilst applying the submission allowed.**

Guillotine chokes must be of “**arm-in**” type and finished from a grounded position.

Youth A 16-17 years old

1. No striking with the knees in any fashion
2. No kicking to the body of a downed opponent - Closed fist striking to the body only
3. No bicep or calf crush
4. No wristlocks
5. No suplex, elevated/shoulder throws or slams
6. No standing guillotine chokes
7. No linear kicks to the knee
8. No up-kick from a grounded position
9. No foot stomps

Figure four ankle locks are to be applied to a **straight leg only, no bending of the knee whilst applying the submission allowed.**

Guillotine chokes must be **finished from a grounded position.**

24) FOUL PROCEEDURE

Disqualification can occur after any combination of fouls or after a single flagrant foul.

Fouls resulting in a point[s] being deducted and as signaled by the referee must result in the deduction from the offending contestant's score and is to be notated by all three judges and official scorekeeper.

Only a referee can assess a foul, if the referee does not call the foul then judges must not make that assessment on their own.

Time Consideration:

A fouled contestant has up to 5 minutes to recuperate. This is not applicable to all fouls.

- If a foul to the groin or eye poke occurs and the competitor is able to continue, the fouled contestant may have up to five (5) minutes to recover.
- Fighters injured severely enough by a foul to require medical consultation may be given up to five (5) minutes, at the referee's discretion, for evaluation by the ringside physician before a decision to continue is rendered.
- At no time may a referee call a timeout to evaluate the impact of a legal strike, other than when a laceration is present.

If a foul is committed the referee may call time should the fouled contestant show any visible sign of distraction or injury.

- 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 judges and official scorekeeper.

If a bottom contestant commits a foul, unless the top contestant is injured, the contest will continue without referee intervention.

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.

Eye Poke Protocol – Athlete Safety and Recovery Procedures:

1. Immediate Actions by the Referee:

- Upon identifying an eye poke, the referee must immediately call **"Time"** to pause the fight.
- The affected fighter is granted a **maximum of 5 minutes** to recover from the foul.
- The 5-minute recovery period starts as soon as the referee calls **"Time"** and ensures the fight is halted.
- The referee will allow the fighter **1 to 1.5 minutes** to attempt to recover independently before further intervention.

2. Initial Care During Recovery:

- Within the first 1 to 1.5 minutes, the affected fighter **must be offered a cold compress or damp towel** to apply to the injured eye.
- The cold compress or damp towel must be applied **only to the affected eye** and must not be used on any other part of the body.
- This procedure is intended to alleviate discomfort and swelling, aiding the fighter in their recovery.

3. Medical Assessment Procedures:

- After the **1 to 1.5-minute** initial recovery period, the ringside physician will evaluate the injured eye.

4. Time Management and Recovery Considerations:

- The full **5-minute recovery period** must be respected to give the athlete the best possible chance to continue competing.
- If the fighter is unable to continue after 5 minutes, the referee, in consultation with the ringside physician, will determine whether the fight should be stopped.

5. Responsibilities of the Referee and Medical Team:

- The referee must ensure the 5-minute timeline is adhered to and communicate clearly with the fighter and the medical team throughout the process.
- The referee must also assess if the fighter is fit to continue based on medical advice and their own observations of the athlete's condition. While the referee holds the final authority to stop a fight, **it is strongly advised that they do not override medical recommendations.**

6. Additional Guidelines:

- Coaches and corners must be instructed not to provide any strategic advice during the medical evaluation period.

If it is determined that the eye poke was intentional, appropriate penalties such as point deductions or disqualification may apply.

Use of Cutmen After a Foul

To enhance athlete care and minimize unnecessary stoppages, IMMAF will allow a designated cut person to be used after a foul results in a laceration. The procedure is as follows:

- When a fighter suffers an accidental or intentional foul that does not result in the immediate disqualification of the offending fighter, and the foul causes a laceration, the referee shall call time and separate the fighters to neutral corners. At this point, the referee may summon the designated cut person or, alternatively, allow one of the fighter's corners to treat the injury, provided that no coaching instructions are given.
- The cut person may enter the competition area during the allocated 5-minute recovery period to manage the cut and control bleeding.
- The attending medical professional will assess the injury and determine whether the athlete can continue within the 5-minute window.
- The cut person is only permitted to treat the specific injury related to the foul and no other injuries.

25) INJURIES SUSTAINED BY FAIR BLOWS AND FOULS IN IMMAF AMATEUR TOURNAMENTS:

IMMAF Amateur MMA follows a multi-day tournament format, unlike professional MMA, where fights are standalone events. This structural difference necessitates additional athlete safety measures to ensure competitors can progress through the tournament without compromising their health.

In professional MMA, an athlete may continue after sustaining an intentional foul that results in an injury, even with a 2-point deduction, because they do not have to compete again for months. However, in amateur MMA tournaments, athletes may compete on consecutive days, making it unsafe to allow a fighter who has suffered a significant injury from an intentional foul to continue.

Therefore, in IMMAF Amateur MMA:

- The only type of Technical Draw that exists in IMMAF is a Double Knockout. In cases of a Technical Decision, the injured athlete will always advance.
- The bout does not continue if a 2-point mandatory deduction is required in case of an intentional foul with an injury happens → Safety is the priority.
- The offending athlete is eliminated from the tournament → This reinforces discipline and prevents dangerous behaviors.

The goal is to **educate amateur fighters, protect their health, and promote a structured pathway to professional MMA.**

1. Fair Blows:

If an athlete sustains a severe injury caused by a legal strike and is unable to continue, the bout will be stopped, and the injured athlete will lose by **TKO (Technical Knockout)**.

2. Fouls:

Intentional Fouls Causing Severe Injury:

An intentional foul that causes an injury in amateur MMA must result in an immediate disqualification. There is no need to expose the injured athlete to further risk by allowing them to continue fighting after suffering an intentional foul.

IMMAF competitions follow a tournament format, with athletes competing over multiple days. For this reason, it is crucial to prioritize the injured athlete's recovery and safety, ensuring they can advance to the next round in the best possible condition. Allowing an injured fighter to continue after an intentional foul could worsen their injury, ultimately forcing them out of the competition instead of protecting their physical integrity.

IMMAF Amateur MMA applies stricter rules regarding intentional fouls that cause a severe injury to ensure athlete safety in tournaments spanning multiple days. The following guidelines apply.

In the case of an intentional foul causing an injury, an automatic two-point deduction is mandatory, regardless of whether the fight continues or not.

1. Immediate Disqualification (DQ) for Intentional Fouls Causing Severe Injury:

- If an athlete commits an intentional foul that results in a **severe injury sufficient to immediately stop the bout**, they will be **disqualified (DQ)** and eliminated from the tournament.
- The injured athlete will be **declared the winner and will advance in the tournament**.
- The injured athlete will always advance. However, if the injury is severe enough that the event doctor declares a Doctor Stoppage either immediately after the fight or during the next-day weigh-in, both athletes will be removed from the competition. In this case, the next scheduled opponent in the bracket will automatically advance without needing to compete.

2. Intentional Fouls That Require an Automatic 2-Point Deduction:

- If an athlete commits an intentional foul that causes an injury is always **mandatory 2-point deduction, the bout will not continue**.

- The injured athlete will be **declared the winner and will advance in the competition.**
- The offending athlete will be **disqualified and removed from the tournament.**
- The injured athlete will always advance. However, if the injury is severe enough that the event doctor declares a Doctor Stoppage either immediately after the fight or during the next-day weigh-in, both athletes will be removed from the competition. In this case, the next scheduled opponent in the bracket will automatically advance without needing to compete.

3. Elimination of Technical Decision and Technical Draw:

- In IMMAF Amateur **Technical Draws are not permitted.**
- If a bout is stopped due to an intentional foul that cause a injury, **the injured athlete will automatically advance as the winner, removing the need for a Technical Decision or Technical Draw.**
- This measure ensures that an injured athlete does not have to continue fighting while compromised, prioritizing their safety and allowing them to recover for the next match.

4. Athlete Who Injures Themselves While Attempting to Commit a Foul:

- If an athlete injures themselves while attempting to commit a foul, **the bout will be stopped, and the injury will be treated as if caused by a legal strike.**
- No action will be taken in favor of the offending athlete.

Intentional Fouls without a Severe Injury:

If an intentional foul does not result in an injury, the referee may either disqualify the offending athlete or, if disqualification is not applied, must deduct two (2) mandatory points from the fighter who committed the foul.

If the Referee takes 2 points mandatory:

- **The bout will continue**, allowing the fouled fighter a fair chance to compete.
- **In Case of a Tie by the judges scorecards** at the end of the bout, the athlete who commits the intentional fault without a injury will lose and will not be allowed a extra round.

What Happens If the Fouled Fighter Loses by judges scorecards decision at the end of the bout?

- **If the fouled fighter loses after receiving an intentional foul without suffering an injury, the decision will stand.**

- **No additional penalties will be applied post-fight.**
- **The two-point deduction remains in place**, ensuring the foul was punished **without forcing an unnatural outcome**.

Reckless Action Fouls (IMMAF Amateur Tournaments)

A **Reckless Action Foul** occurs when a fighter executes an intentional technique without the intention to foul, but due to negligence or carelessness, it results in an illegal blow that may or may not cause injury.

In the case of an Reckless Action foul causing an injury, an automatic one-point deduction is mandatory, regardless of whether the fight continues or not.

Reckless Action Foul Causing Severe Injury:

If the reckless action foul causes an injury severe enough for the referee to stop the bout before the bell marking the end of the 2nd round in a three-round bout:

- The offending athlete will be **disqualified (DQ)**.
 - The fight will result in a **disqualification (DQ)**, and the injured fighter will **advance in the tournament**.
 - The injured athlete will always advance. However, if the injury is severe enough that the event doctor declares a Doctor Stoppage either immediately after the fight or during the next-day weigh-in, both athletes will be removed from the competition. In this case, the next scheduled opponent in the bracket will automatically advance without needing to compete.
1. **If the reckless action foul causes an injury severe enough for the referee to stop the bout after the bell marking the end of the 2nd round in a three-round bout:**
 - If the injured athlete is ahead on the scorecards, they will be declared the **winner by Technical Decision (TD)**.
 - If the injured athlete is behind on the scorecards, the offending fighter will be **disqualified (DQ)**.
 - If the result is a technical draw. In amateur competition, where technical draws are not permitted, an extra round will not be granted in cases of reckless fouls with a injury. The result will be a Disqualification (DQ) for the offending fighter.
 - The injured athlete will always advance. However, if the injury is severe enough that the event doctor declares a Doctor Stoppage either immediately after the fight or during the next-day weigh-in, both athletes will be removed from the competition. In this case, the next scheduled opponent in the bracket will automatically advance without needing to compete.

2. If the reckless action foul that does not cause an injury:

- The referee may disqualify the offending fighter. If disqualification is not applied, the referee is required to deduct one (1) mandatory point from the offending fighter.
- The bout will **continue as normal**, allowing both fighters to compete under fair conditions.
- **In Case of a Tie by the judges' scorecards** at the end of the bout, the athlete who reckless action foul without a injury will lose by a Fault disqualification and will not be allowed an extra round.

What Happens If the Fouled Fighter Loses by judges scorecards decision at the end of the bout?

Since the foul did not result in an injury that required the fight to be stopped, the result of the bout **stands**.

- No additional penalties will be applied beyond the one point mandatory deduction.
- The deduction serves as an educational measure to enforce fighter responsibility without unfairly altering the outcome of the fight.
- This approach ensures that reckless techniques are properly addressed while maintaining the integrity of amateur competition.

Additional Considerations for Amateur MMA

- **Reckless fouls are not considered intentional fouls** but still require **mandatory penalties** to reinforce proper technique and fighter responsibility.
- In amateur MMA, **point deductions serve as corrective measures to maintain fairness while allowing the fight to continue**.

Unintentional Fouls Definition:

An **unintentional foul** occurs when a fighter **performs an illegal action unknowingly or without recognizing** that their movement or technique violates the rules. These fouls are different from reckless fouls because there is **no negligence or excessive aggression** involved.

Unintentional with injury:

1) Any injury severe enough for the referee to stop the contest immediately, if stopped before 2 rounds have been completed in a 3 round contest. will result in The offending athlete will be **disqualified**.

. The injured athlete will always advance. However, if the injury is severe enough that the event doctor declares a Doctor Stoppage either immediately after the fight or during the next-day weigh-in, both athletes will be removed from the competition. In this case, the next scheduled opponent in the bracket will automatically advance without needing to compete.

2) If an unintentional foul results in an injury severe enough to stop the fight after two full rounds have been completed in a 3 round contest, the fight will go to the scorecards.

- If the injured athlete is ahead on the scorecards, they will be declared the **winner by Technical Decision (TD)**.
- If the injured athlete is behind on the scorecards, the offending fighter will be **disqualified (DQ)**.
- If the result is a technical draw in amateur competition, where technical draws are not permitted, an extra round will not be granted in cases of accidental fouls with a injury. The result will be a fault disqualification for the offending fighter.
- The injured athlete will always advance. However, if the injury is severe enough that the event doctor declares a Doctor Stoppage either immediately after the fight or during the next-day weigh-in, both athletes will be removed from the competition. In this case, the next scheduled opponent in the bracket will automatically advance without needing to compete.

3) If an unintentional foul causes a serious injury but the bout can continue, the referee must deduct one (1) point mandatory from the offending athlete.

If the fight continues and later the fouled athlete is forced to stop due to the injury caused by the foul, the offending athlete will lose by disqualification.

Decisions in the Scorecards at the end of the fight:

- If the injured athlete is ahead on the scorecards, they will be declared the **winner**.
- If the result is a draw, an extra round will not be granted in cases of unintentional fouls with a injury. The result will be a fault disqualification for the offending fighter.

Unintentional without injury:

- 1. If an unintentional foul does not cause a serious injury**, the referee will issue a **mandatory warning** instead of an immediate point deduction.
- **Repeated unintentional fouls** of the same nature or a different will lead to a **mandatory point deduction or even a DQ**.
 - If the bout ends in a tie and a unintentional foul was committed, the athlete responsible for the foul will lose by Disqualification (DQ) and will not be granted an extra round.
 - This allows referees to educate fighters and discourage careless actions without directly influencing the outcome of the bout.

Accidental Fouls Definition:

An **accidental foul** happens when a fighter executes a legal technique, but due to **unpredictable circumstances**, it results in an unintentional foul, these fouls are purely incidental and not due to negligence or intent.

Some examples of Accidental Fouls:

- A fighter shoots for a double-leg takedown while the opponent sprawls, resulting in an unintentional head clash.
- A knee is aimed at the body in a clinch, but the opponent moves unexpectedly, causing an unintentional low blow.
- A fighter throws a legal body kick, but the opponent ducks at the same moment, causing an unintentional strike to the head of a grounded opponent.

Consequences:

If the foul causes an injury severe enough to stop the fight before the minimum number of rounds are completed, The fight is declared a **No Contest (NC)**.

If the fight is stopped after the minimum number of rounds are completed 2 rounds in a 3 rounds bout:

If the fouled fighter is ahead on the scorecards: Wins by **Technical Decision (TD)**.

If the fouled fighter is behind or the score is tied: The fight is declared a **No Contest (NC)**.

Accidental Fouls without an Injury will not be punished.

3. Tiebreaker Protocol (Fights with Any Kind of Foul)

In cases where a fight ends in a tie, the following criteria will be applied to ensure fairness and reinforce the importance of competing within the rules:

Tie with Foul:

- If a fight ends in a tie and a foul was committed, the athlete who did not commit the foul will be declared the winner, except in cases where the foul was accidental and caused no injury. In such cases, a tiebreaker round may be conducted..
- This protocol serves as a deterrent for fouls by ensuring that no competitor benefits from breaking the rules.
- If the foul was deemed **accidental**, with no resulting injury, an **extra round** may be conducted under the **Tiebreaker Foul System**, providing a fair opportunity for both athletes while reinforcing discipline and rule adherence.
- However, if the foul whether **intentional, unintentional or reckless** occurs, the athlete who committed the foul will **automatically lose** the contest.

- If the foul was deemed **reckless**, meaning it was caused by an uncontrolled action without intent but still dangerous, the offending athlete will **not** be granted an extra round and will lose the fight in the event of a tie.
- Only in cases of **minor, accidental fouls**, where the infringement occurred due to circumstances beyond the athlete's control, such as a reaction to the opponent's movement an **extra round may be granted**.

This system, IMMAF aims to discourage athletes from committing fouls, prevent unnecessary fatigue from additional rounds, and ensure fair outcomes that uphold the integrity of the sport. Athletes should compete with the knowledge that fouls, whether intentional or reckless, carry serious consequences, while unintentional fouls will be evaluated with fairness and context in mind.

Blood Rules:

Immediate Stoppage Obligation:

If an athlete is visibly bleeding, the referee must **immediately stop the contest** to assess the severity of the injury and prevent potential health risks.

Determination of the Cause:

- **Illegal Technique:**
If the bleeding is caused by an **illegal technique**, the offending athlete will be **disqualified and will lose the contest**.
- **Normal Combat:**
If the bleeding results from normal, legal actions during the fight, the athlete who is bleeding will **lose the contest by TKO**.
- **Accidental Injury:**
 - If the bleeding is caused by an accidental injury, the outcome will be determined based on the judges' scorecards. But if **the score is tied**: The fight is declared a **No Contest (NC)**.
 - If the contest has **exceeded at least half** of the scheduled bout time, the judges' scorecards will determine the winner.
 - If the contest is stopped **before the halfway point**, the match will be declared a **No Contest**.

These protocols aim to prioritize athlete safety while maintaining the integrity of the competition by ensuring consistent and fair rulings in cases involving blood-related stoppages.

Special Cases: Advancement in the Tournament:

Accidental Fouls:

In IMMAF Amateur Tournaments, if an accidental foul occurs, the fighter who committed the foul may only advance in the tournament if all of the following conditions are met:

- The foul was deemed accidental by the referee.
- The event doctor determines that the injured athlete is not medically cleared to continue, resulting in a doctor stoppage.
- The injured athlete undergoes a medical evaluation at the next day weigh in, where the doctor will confirm their status and determine if they are fit to continue.

Specific Situations & Outcomes:

Cuts & Concussions:

If an accidental foul results in a cut or concussion, the injured athlete will be automatically eliminated for safety reasons, and the result will be recorded as a Doctor Stoppage

Low Blows & Eye Pokes:

If an accidental low blow or eye poke occurs, the injured athlete will be given time to recover during the fight.

If the injured fighter cannot continue immediately, but there is a possibility they may continue in the tournament, both fighters must attend the next-day weigh-in for a final medical evaluation.

If the injured athlete is medically stopped at the weigh-in, the fighter who committed the accidental foul will advance in the tournament.

Appeals that result in a No Contest:

Will award both fighters 0 points for the bout, and the competition will proceed as normal.

Important Note:

The advancement rule applies only to accidental fouls and Appeals that results in a no contest. Fighters who commit intentional, unintentional or reckless fouls cannot advance.

Intentional and Reckless Faults & Advancement:

A Athlete can advance in the competition and even become a champion in these situations without competing if their opponent is deemed unfit to continue by a doctor stoppage, like a forfeit situation.

Tournament Placement in Special Cases:

If this occurs in a quarter-final, the injured athlete will be placed 3rd place, reflecting their advancement in the ranking.

If this occurs in a semi-final, the opponent who was supposed to fight in the final against the injured athlete will be declared the champion, while the injured athlete will be ranked 2nd place.

If this occurs in a pre-final, the injured athlete will be awarded 1st place.

27) JUDGING:

All IMMAF contests will be evaluated and scored by three judges, with the potential use of a Fourth Judge system to enhance scoring fairness and accuracy.

Fourth Judge System

The Fourth Judge system has been introduced to enhance the fairness and accuracy of scoring in IMMAF competitions. The role of the Fourth Judge is to provide an additional level of oversight, ensuring that athlete performances are judged accurately and fairly.

How the Fourth Judge Works:

- The judging panel consists of three primary judges, with a Fourth Judge acting in a supervisory capacity.
- The Fourth Judge must be a senior official holding an IMMAF Level A certification, IMMAF Pro status, or be an appointed Cage Commissioner.
- The Fourth Judge's role is to replace a score given by only one of the three judges, but only in cases of clear and significant errors.

Usage Rules:

- The Fourth Judge can only intervene in split decisions where a clearly obvious judging error has occurred.
- The Fourth Judge cannot override unanimous decisions.
- If the Fourth Judge believes a round was genuinely close and the differing scores are justified, no changes will be made.
- Priority will be given to implementing the Fourth Judge protocol in **semi-finals and finals**, with a **scaled-down system** applied to earlier rounds when necessary.

Implementation:

- This system ensures that the Fourth Judge is only used when the competition has a sufficient number of qualified officials.
- Whenever possible, **preference will be given to senior officials** for the role of Fourth Judge to maintain consistency and accuracy in officiating.

This refined Fourth Judge system aims to maintain competitive integrity while fostering the development of high-level officiating within IMMAF.

Scoring of Partial/Incompleted Rounds

- If a bout is stopped in the middle of a round, the judges may score the partial round based on the action that has occurred, but only if the referee instructs them to do so.

28) TEN (10) POINT MUST SYSTEM:

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

- **10–10 Round (Very Rare):**
Used when no effective actions or clear dominance occurred, resulting in an entirely even round.

- **10–9 Round:**
Awarded when one competitor has a slight but clear edge in Effective Striking/Grappling.
- **10–8 Round:**
Awarded when a competitor overwhelmingly dominates with Effective Striking/Grappling.
- **10–7 Round (Very Rare):**
Awarded in cases of total domination and near stoppage situations.

29) Open Scorecards System

To enhance transparency, IMMAF uses **The Open Scorecards System**. Under this system, scorecards will be made available at the end of each fight, displaying round-by-round scoring with judge anonymity maintained by replacing names with identifiers (Judge 1, Judge 2, and Judge 3)

How it Works:

- Judges will continue scoring each round on traditional paper scorecards. After recording their scores on paper, they must immediately input their scores into a dedicated tablet system.
- The tablet system will provide real-time access to the regulatory affairs table, allowing the field of play commissioner and the chair of the regulatory affairs department (director of regulatory affairs) to monitor the scores as they are entered and ensure that judges are scoring round by round at the correct time.
- This system prevents judges from delaying their scoring until the end of the fight, ensuring timely and accurate recording.
- At the end of the fight, the compiled score will be **reviewed by the Fourth Judge, a Commissioner, or Regulatory Affairs Director** to ensure accuracy.
- Only after this verification process at the end of the fight, the compiled score will be displayed on a screen or monitor for public viewing, offering transparency and allowing teams to verify the calculations and identify any discrepancies before the official announcement.
- Protects judges by maintaining anonymity throughout the event's 11-day format, reducing the risk of external pressure or intimidation.

This system strikes a balance between transparency and fairness, offering visibility into scoring decisions while safeguarding the welfare of both athletes and officials. The system will only be applied when appropriate equipment and personnel are available to ensure accurate and consistent implementation.

30) SCORING TECHNIQUES:

MAIN ONE:

- I. Effective Striking/Grappling

BACKUP CRITERIA:

- II. Effective Proactively
- III. Cage/Ring Control

Only if the effective striking/grappling is even, or non-existent, should the second criteria (Proactively) be utilized in the scoring. The same then applies to the second criteria, only utilizing the third criteria (cage/ring control) if there is still no advantage based on the first two criteria.

1) Effective Striking/Grappling

Any legal strike, such as a punch, kick, elbow, knee, etc. that lands on an appropriate legal target.
All effective strikes should be scored!

Any legal grappling technique that is successfully applied against an opponent, such as a takedown/sweep, advancement of position, reversal, or submission attempt.
Every successful takedown should be scored!

Takedowns, a fighting technique that can be compared to a successful strike on the feet. It should be scored in the same way.

MEASURE IS A KEY WORD!

2) Effective Proactively

Proactively making attempts to finish the fight. The key term is 'effective'. Chasing after an opponent with no effective result or impact should not render in the judges' assessments. So, it is not always the fighter moving forward or dominating the center of the ring that is being proactively.

Effective Proactively is only to be assessed if Effective Striking/Grappling is 100% equal for both competitors or if they do not exist. This will be assessed very rarely.

3) Fighting Area Control

Fighting area control is assessed by determining who is dictating the pace, place and position of the match.

Fighting Area Control shall only be assessed if Effective Striking/Grappling and Effective Aggressiveness is 100% equal for both competitors or if they do not exist. This will be assessed very rarely.

Round scoring:

The 10 point must system shall be utilized when scoring a fight.

10–10 Round:

Is when both fighters have competed for whatever duration of time in the round and there is no difference or advantage between either fighter.”

A Possible type of 10-10 round is when both fighters do not want to engage.

Should be extremely rare and is not a score to be used as an excuse by a judge that cannot assess the differences in the round.

10–9 Round:

Where one combatant wins the round by a close margin.

is the most common score a judge assesses during the night. If, during the round, the judge sees a fighter land the better strikes, or utilize effective grappling during the competition, even if by just one technique

over their opponent, the judge shall give the winning fighter a score of 10 while assessing the losing fighter a score of 9 or less.

A score of 10 – 9 can reflect an extremely close round or a round of marginal domination and/or impact.

10–8 Round

Where one fighter wins the round by a large margin. A score of 10 – 8 does not require a fighter to dominate their opponent for the entire 3 minutes of a round.

The score of 10 – 8 is utilized by the judge when the judge sees verifiable actions on the part of either fighter. Judges shall ALWAYS give a score of 10 – 8 when the judge has established that one fighter has dominated the action of the round, had duration of the domination and also impacted their opponent with either effective strikes or effective grappling maneuvers that have diminished the abilities of their opponent.

10–7 Round

A 10 – 7 Round in MMA is when a fighter completely overwhelms their opponent in Effective Striking and/or Grappling and stoppage is warranted.

In amateur competition is a score that judges will rarely give.

31) TYPES OF CONTEST RESULTS:

1) Submission:

Tap Out: When a contestant physically uses of their body to indicate that he or she no longer wishes to continue.

Verbal Tap Out: When a contestant verbally announces or voluntarily/involuntarily screams in pain or distress to the referee that they do not wish to continue.

Technical Submission: When a legal submission act results in unconsciousness or broken/dislocated bone(s)/joint(s).

Preventive Submission Stoppage (PSS): indicating that the referee intervened to prevent a potential injury (Broken Bones Prevention).

2) Technical Knockout (TKO):

Referee Stoppage: the referee stops the contest because the combatant IS NOT INTELLIGENTLY DEFENDING THEMSELF

Strikes, Laceration, Corner Stoppage, Did Not Answer the Bell

TKO due to Medical Stoppage, Laceration, Doctor Stoppage, Loss of control of bodily function.

3) Knockout (KO):

Referee Stoppage: the referee stops the contest because the combatant CANNOT INTELLIGENTLY DEFEND THEMSELVES

No combatant can be saved by the bell in any round. If the referee determines that the fighter was knocked out or submitted [including technically] when the round bell sounds he/she shall loose the contest.

4) Disqualification

5) Forfeit

6) Technical Draw (exclude in Amateur)

The only type of Technical Draw that exists in IMMAF is a Double Knockout

7) Technical Decision

8) No Contest

9) Doctor Stoppage:

The event doctor determines that the injured athlete is not medically cleared to continue, resulting in a doctor stoppage.

10) Blood Stoppage:

If an athlete is visibly bleeding, the referee must immediately stop the contest to assess the severity of the injury and prevent potential health risks.

Illegal Technique:

If the bleeding is caused by an illegal technique, the offending athlete will be disqualified and will lose the contest.

Normal Combat:

If the bleeding results from normal, legal actions during the fight, the athlete who is bleeding will lose the contest by TKO.

Accidental Injury:

If the bleeding is caused by an accidental injury, the outcome will be determined based on the judges' scorecards. But if the score is tied: The fight is declared a No Contest (NC).

If the contest has exceeded at least half of the scheduled bout time, the judges' scorecards will determine the winner.

If the contest is stopped before the halfway point, the match will be declared a No Contest.

10) 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

31) IMMAF Appeal Procedure

1. Change of Decision

A decision rendered at the end of any contest is final and cannot be changed unless the Chair of the IMMAF Regulatory Affairs Department (Director of Regulatory Affairs) determines that any one of the following has occurred:

1. Collusion – There was collusion affecting the result of the bout.
2. Scorecard Error – The compilation of the scorecards was incorrect, and the decision was awarded to the wrong contestant.
3. Rule Violation – There was a clear violation of the rules and regulations governing IMMAF competition that affected the outcome of the bout (e.g., a misinterpretation of a rule by the referee).

A Petition for Change that is not based on the aforementioned grounds will not be considered. Petitions seeking **to contest the judges' decision solely based on a difference of opinion will not be grounds for changing a decision.**

2. Standing

A written Petition for Change shall only be accepted if filed by:

- The contestant involved in the bout.
- A representative of the contestant, with the relationship clearly defined in the submission.

No other parties shall have the standing to contest a bout on any grounds.

3. Submission Requirements

All Petitions for Change must include the following:

- A formal written request stating the grounds for the appeal.
- Video evidence from IMMAF TV ONLY (no external sources will be accepted).
- All supporting documents and judge scorecards.

Failure to provide complete documentation will result in the appeal being dismissed.

4. Delivery Process

All Petitions for Change must be submitted both:

1. In person to the Cage Commissioner, who will forward the petition to the Chair of the IMMAF Regulatory Affairs Department (Director of Regulatory Affairs).
2. By email to regulatory.affairs@immaf.org with the subject line: "Petition for Change".

Panel Board:

- The Disciplinary Officer (Compliance Officer) of IMMAF to verify the decision made by the Panel Board.
- A Cage Commissioner or any IMMAF official holding a Level A or Professional certification, authorized by the Chair of the IMMAF Regulatory Affairs Department (Director of Regulatory Affairs) to access appeals during the event.

Note: If the Disciplinary Officer is not present, the Director of Regulatory Affairs will designate another qualified Commissioner who does not present a conflict of interest to verify the decision made by the Panel Board.

5. Review Process

1. The petition will be reviewed along with all supporting evidence, including video footage from IMMAF TV.
2. If the petition meets the required criteria, it will be escalated to the Panel Board for final assessment.
3. The Panel Board will consist of:
 - Three (3) IMMAF officials, who may include Cage Commissioners or any other officials holding an IMMAF Level A or Professional certification and are neutral to the bout in question.
 - The Disciplinary Officer of IMMAF, who will verify the decision without voting rights.

All decisions must be made by a 2/3 majority, and the final decision will be communicated by the Chair of the IMMAF Regulatory Affairs Department (Director of Regulatory Affairs).

6. Appeal Fee

- A \$100 USD fee must accompany the petition.
- If the petition results in a successful change of decision, the fee will be refunded.
- If the petition is denied, the fee will be retained by IMMAF.

7. Timeline for Appeals

- Appeals must be submitted within 15 minutes of the conclusion of the bout.
- Supporting evidence must be provided within 2 hours following the bout's conclusion.

8. Finality of Decisions

The Panel Board's decision is final and binding, and no further appeals will be considered after a ruling has been made. The judgment of the ringside physician is considered final and non-contestable.

9. Disqualification from Protest

- Failure by any team member to maintain a calm and professional manner following the result of a decision will result in disqualification from the appeal process.
- Aggression or violence shown by any team member will result in disqualification from the appeal process.
- Any team member being argumentative or failing to leave the cage and field of play as directed will result in disqualification from the appeal process.
- Any team member approaching an official or IMMAF representative after filing the appeal will result in the process being terminated.

- Sharing of public statements by any team representative ahead of the appeal review or failure to respect the final decision of an official or review will be reported and reviewed by the Disciplinary Officer.

Final Note

If the Chair of the IMMAF Regulatory Affairs Department (Director of Regulatory Affairs) is unable to attend an IMMAF sanctioned event or needs to step away during an official event, their functions must be carried out by a qualified individual previously designated by the Chair of the IMMAF Regulatory Affairs Department (Director of Regulatory Affairs).