

APA1
07/04

TRANSMITTAL SHEET FOR
NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION

Control No. 165 Department or Agency Alabama Athletic Commission
Rule No. 165-X-2-08
Rule Title: Officials: Conduct of Contest, Match, or Exhibition
New Amend Repeal Adopt by Reference

Would the absence of the proposed rule significantly harm or endanger the public health, welfare, or safety? No

Is there a reasonable relationship between the state's police power and the protection of the public health, safety, or welfare? No

Is there another, less restrictive method of regulation available that could adequately protect the public? No

Does the proposed rule have the effect of directly or indirectly increasing the costs of any goods or services involved and, if so, to what degree? No

Is the increase in cost, if any, more harmful to the public than the harm that might result from the absence of the proposed rule? No

Are all facets of the rulemaking process designed solely for the purpose of, and so they have, as their primary effect, the protection of the public? Yes

Does the proposed rule have an economic impact? Yes

If the proposed rule has an economic impact, the proposed rule is required to be accompanied by a fiscal note prepared in accordance with subsection (f) of Section 412223, Code of Alabama 1975.

Certification of Authorized Official

I certify that the attached proposed rule has been proposed in full compliance with the requirements of Chapter 22, Title 41, Code of Alabama 1975, and that it conforms to all applicable filing requirements of the Administrative Procedure Division of the Legislative Reference Service.

Signature of certifying officer Joseph B. McCarroll
Date 9/19/16

(DATE FILED)
(STAMP)

APA-2
07/04

**Alabama Athletic Commission
NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION**

AGENCY NAME:

Alabama Athletic Commission

RULE NO. & TITLE:

165-X-2-.08 Officials: Conduct of Contest, Match or Exhibition

INTENDED ACTION:

Amend the AAC Rules to bring them in line with the national Unified Rules for Professional Mixed Martial Arts.

SUBSTANCE OF PROPOSED ACTION:

Amending of judging standards, fouls, and apparel worn by competitors.

TIME, PLACE, MANNER OF PRESENTING VIEWS:

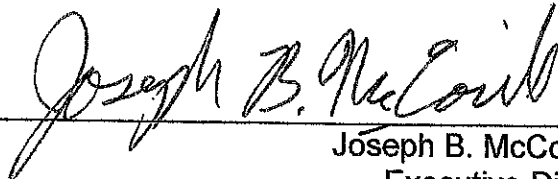
This rules amendment was voted on by the AAC Commissioners at our Regularly Scheduled Meeting on Friday, September 16, 2016. The amendment passed unanimously.

FINAL DATE FOR COMMENT AND COMPLETION OF NOTICE:

November 14, 2016

CONTACT PERSON AT AGENCY:

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Joseph B. McCormick
Executive Director
Alabama Athletic Commission

165-X-2-.08 Officials: Conduct Of Contest, Match, Or Exhibition.
Chapter 165-X-2 Athletic Commission

(1) Mixed Martial Artists.

(a) False Name. No mixed martial artist shall enter any agreement or contract with a promoter, compete in any match, contest, or exhibition, or otherwise participate in any capacity in a mixed martial arts program under any name which does not appear on his or her Federal ID card.

(b) Prohibition if Under Suspension. No mixed martial artist shall enter any agreement or contract with a promoter, compete, or attempt to compete in any match, contest, or exhibition in this state when the mixed martial artist knows that his or her mixed martial arts license, issued by this Commission is under suspension.

(c) Pregnancy. No mixed martial artist shall enter any agreement or contract with a promoter, compete, or attempt to compete in any match, contest, or exhibition in Alabama when such mixed martial artist knows that she is pregnant.

(d) Diuretics Prohibited. The use of any herbal, prescription or non-prescription diuretic by any mixed martial artist within twelve hours prior to the weigh-in is strictly prohibited.

(e) Weigh-In.

1. In all contests and exhibitions, contestants shall weigh-in in the presence of the chief official appointed to preside over the contest or exhibition. The weigh-in shall not take place less than six (6) hours nor more than thirty-six (36) hours prior to the contest or exhibition.

(i) All official weigh-ins shall be conducted at a time and place designated by the Commission. Attendance to official weigh-ins is strictly limited to commissioners, licensees and officials scheduled to participate in the contest or exhibition.

(ii) Ceremonial weigh-ins may be conducted in such manner and at such place as agreed to by all parties involved in the promotion or match, contest, or exhibition.

2. No over-contract-weight contestant appearing at the initial weigh-in will be allowed to lose in excess of two (2) pounds in order to make contract weight unless mixed martial artist is re-

examined by the cage side or ringside physician and receive clearance from the cage side or ringside physician prior to entering the cage or ring.

(f) Weight Classes. Weight classes for professional mixed martial artists shall be:

1. Flyweight (125 lbs. and Below) - 8 lbs. maximum allowable weight spread.
2. Bantamweight (125.1 to 135 lbs.) - 10 lbs. maximum allowable weight spread.
3. Featherweight (135.1 to 145 lbs.) - 10 lbs. maximum allowable weight spread.
4. Lightweight (145.1 to 155 lbs.) - 10 lbs. maximum allowable weight spread.
5. Welterweight (155.1 to 170 lbs.) - 15 lbs. maximum allowable weight spread.
6. Middleweight (170.1 to 185 lbs.) - 15 lbs. maximum allowable weight spread.
7. Light Heavyweight (185.1 to 205 lbs.) - 20 lbs. maximum allowable weight spread.
8. Heavyweight (205.1 to 265 lbs.) - in div. or spread of lighter div. maximum allowable weight spread.
9. Super Heavyweight (265.1 lbs. and above)- in div. or spread of lighter div. maximum allowable weight spread.

(i) No professional mixed martial art contest or exhibition may be scheduled, and no mixed martial artist may engage in a contest or exhibition without the approval of the Commission or the Commission's representative if the difference in weight between the mixed martial artists exceeds the allowances set out above.

(ii) Any agreement to proceed with a mixed martial arts contest or exhibition where the weight spread exceeds the limit established in this rule shall be entered on each participant's bout contract and shall be initialed or signed by such participant.

(g) Weighing of Mixed Martial Artists. Weighing of all mixed martial artists shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements for professional boxers of Appendix B.

(h) Appearance Time. All contestants must be in the officially designated dressing room at least sixty (60) minutes before the event is scheduled to begin.

(i) Cage or Ring Attire. Mixed martial artists shall appear and compete in proper cage or ring attire.

1. All mixed martial artists will be required to wear such protective gear as deemed necessary by the Commission.

(i) Male and female mixed martial artists shall wear the appropriate trunks, groin cup, mouthpiece, and gloves.

(ii) Female mixed martial artists shall wear a short sleeved (above the elbow) or sleeveless form fitting rash guard and/or sports bra. No loose fitting tops shall be allowed. Female competitors will follow the same requirements for bottom covering as the male competitors, minus the requirement for groin protection.

2. The belt-line of the trunks shall not extend above the waistline and the hem may not extend below the knee.

3. Mixed martial artists in the same match, contest, or exhibition shall wear different color trunks.

4. Each mixed martial artist shall use a mouthpiece and no round may start without a boxer's mouthpiece in place.

(i) If the mouthpiece is dislodged during competition, the referee will call time and have the mouthpiece replaced at the first opportune moment without interfering with immediate action.

(ii) Points may be deducted by the referee, if the referee feels the mouthpiece is purposely spit out.

5. Mixed martial artists shall not wear shoes in the cage or ring.

6. When deemed necessary by the referee all mixed martial artists shall have their hair secured in a manner that does not interfere with the vision and safety of either contestant.

(i) Provided however that no object can be worn to secure the contestant's hair which may cause injury to either contestant.

7. The wearing of body jewelry will be strictly prohibited during all contests.

8. The wearing of any facial or body cosmetic is strictly prohibited during all contests.

(j) Profanity. Use of profanity by a all mixed martial artist, manager or second is prohibited. Any use of profanity after a warning by the referee or chief official may result in disqualification of the contestant, or ejection from the facility and a penalty point may be deducted from the contestant.

(k) Entering Cage or Ring. All contestants must be ready to enter the cage or ring immediately upon the conclusion of the preceding contest or exhibition on a scheduled fight card.

1. Failure to enter the cage or ring when requested and, after warning by the inspector or chief official of the program, may result in disciplinary action by the Commission.

(l) Demeanor During the Round. Each all mixed martial artist shall take care to avoid fouling their opponent or illegally striking their opponent.

1. Regulations against fouls, as defined in these rules will be strictly enforced.

2. Illegal techniques or fouls in the cage or ring will not be tolerated.

3. All mixed martial artists are at all times to follow the instructions of the referee. Any call for a break should immediately result in a clean break.

(m) Under-Conditioned Fighter. A contestant deemed under-conditioned by the referee, Commission or any designated representative of the Commission, shall be suspended for ninety (90) days.

1. If it should be determined by the referee that a contestant did not give a good faith effort to display their skills they shall be subject to disciplinary action.

(n) Penalty for Disqualification. Any mixed marital artist who is disqualified for any reason by the referee or chief official of the program will be subject to disciplinary action by the Commission.

1. Any mixed marital artist disciplined by the Commission because of a loss by disqualification has a right to a hearing and must request a hearing in writing to the Commission within fifteen days of the disqualification.

(o) Fines. Any mixed marital artist can be fined, have his or her license suspended or have his or her license revoked in the event that a majority of the Commission determines that the mixed marital artist did not utilize his or her best efforts in a match, contest, or exhibition.

(p) Cuts and Lacerations. A cut or laceration caused by either an intentional or an unintentional foul may only be treated during the one (1) minute break between rounds, provided however that the referee may call a brief time-out and request a physician's evaluation of the cut to determine if the bout shall be allowed to continue. During such time-out, the cut may not be treated by the physician or any other person.

(q) Recuperation Time. Any contestant struck by a low blow may, at the discretion and after consultation with the cage or ring physician, be given up to five (5) minutes to recuperate.

1. During such recuperation the injured mixed martial artist may sit on a stool inside the cage or ring, or in a neutral corner, but may not rest in his assigned corner.

2. Only the referee is allowed to assist the injured mixed martial artist during the five minute rest period.

3. The uninjured fighter, during any such rest period, may not be assisted and shall remain in the neutral corner furthest from the injured mixed martial artist.

(r) Bout Stopped by Low Blow. Except as provided in subparagraph (5) (a) (15) of this rule, no contestant injured by a low blow may be awarded the contest.

1. If a contestant falls to the cage or ring floor or otherwise indicates an unwillingness to continue because of a claim of a

low-blow, he shall be declared the loser by a technical knockout.

(2) Seconds.

(a) Number Allowed. Each mixed marital artist must have two (2) seconds, unless the Commission permits otherwise. Each contestant shall have one (1) chief second and each chief second must have a complete first aid kit. The seconds must be neatly attired. Persons holding a manager's or trainer's license in this state may participate in a contest as a second without applying for or obtaining a second's license.

(b) Leaving the Cage or Ring. Seconds shall leave the cage or ring enclosure at the sound of the timekeeper's whistle. They shall leave the cage or ring platform promptly when the bell sounds for the beginning of each round and immediately remove all obstructions, including stools, buckets, and any other corner equipment. None of these articles shall be replaced on the cage or ring floor until the bell has sounded the end of a round.

(c) Assisting Contestant during Bout. During rounds, seconds are prohibited from assisting or interfering with the contestants.

(d) Throwing Towels. Seconds are prohibited from tossing a towel into the cage or ring.

(e) Ejection and Disqualification. Violations of the provisions of this subparagraph may result in ejection of the offender from the cage or ring corner, and may result in the disqualification of his or her contestant by the referee.

(3) Between Round Care. Between rounds care of a mixed marital artist will be strictly enforced by the Commission.

(a) Licensees Allowed in Cage or Ring between Rounds. One (1) licensee shall be allowed in the cage or ring with the mixed marital artist during the rest period between rounds and no more than two (2) licensees, exclusive to the corner inspector and approved media personnel, will be allowed on the apron during that time.

(b) Swinging Towel. Fans may be used between rounds. Towels may not be used to fan the contestant. Motorized fans must be approved by the Commission, prior to use at a contest or exhibition.

(c) Corner Kit. The use of an unapproved preparation during the match, contest, or exhibition is prohibited. The only substances and materials allowed in the corner are limited to the following:

1. Ice;
2. Water;
3. Cotton swabs;
4. Gauze pads;
5. Clean towels;
6. Vaseline or surgical lubricant approved by the Commission;
7. Enswell;
8. Avitine or Adrenalene;
9. Athletic tape approved by the Commission.

(i) Any variance to the materials must be approved by the Commission.

(ii) Substances such as Monsell's solution, other iron or bismuth compounds, collodion, silver nitrate, ammonia or smelling salts will not be used and the use of such modalities will result in disqualification, and disciplinary action against the mixed martial artist, manager, second and/or trainer.

(d) Excessive Lubricant. The use of excessive lubricant on the body, arms or face of a mixed marital artist shall be prohibited. The referee shall determine whether excessive lubricant is on mixed marital artist's body, arms or face.

(e) Rehydration of Contestant during Bout. Water shall be used to hydrate a mixed marital artist between rounds. Honey, electrolyte glucose, sugar or any other substance mixed with water is prohibited.

(4) Referee.

(a) Stopping a Match. No one other than the referee may stop a fight during or between rounds. The referee shall have the authority to stop a contest at any time if one of the mixed marital artists is unable or no longer able to defend himself.

(b) Pre-match Instructions. Referees shall meet with the contestants and with each chief second appointed by the contestants prior to the beginning of the match, contest, or exhibition and during that meeting shall inform each party of the rules applicable to each fight as well as the in-ring or cage conduct expected from each contestant and second assisting in the corner of each contestant.

(c) Pre-Bout Confirmation of Officials and Physician. Prior to calling for the sounding of the bell to begin each bout, the referee in the cage or ring will confirm that the cage side or ringside physician as well as each judge assigned to the bout is in place at the cage side or ringside.

(d) Touching Contestants. The referee shall not touch the competing mixed marital artists, unless a contestant fails to obey the break command.

(e) Count. The referee shall have sole determination of whether a mixed martial artist has been knocked out. There will be no knockout count.

~~(f) Count for Dazed Contestant. Should a contestant who is down rise before the count of ten (10) and again go down without being struck then the referee shall resume the count where he or she stopped.~~

~~(g)~~ (f) Mixed Martial Artists Knocked Out of the Ring.

1. Any mixed marital artist knocked out of the ring shall receive a twenty (20) second count.

2. During the time that any such mixed marital artist is outside the ring, he or she shall not be assisted by any member of their corner, and if such assistance is offered, it shall end the match, contest, or exhibition with that mixed marital artist losing by a technical knockout.

3. As a general precaution, to protect the safety of the mixed marital artist and to prevent any potential injury, a mixed marital artist knocked out of the ring may have his or her fall stopped or slowed by any person without penalty, provided that

such assistance shall only be to prevent injury from the fall and not to assist the mixed martial artist in returning to the ring.

~~(h)~~ (g) Standing Eight Count. There shall be no standing eight count.

~~(i)~~ (h) Knock-Out. Knockouts are instantly called by the referee in mixed martial arts matches. There shall be no ten-count.

~~(j)~~ (i) Failure to Answer Bell. A contestant shall not leave the cage or ring during any one (1) minute rest period between rounds. If any contestant fails or refuses to resume fighting when the bell sounds signaling the commencement of the next round, the referee shall award a decision of technical knockout to his opponent as of the round which has last been finished.

1. If the circumstances indicate to the referee the need for investigation or punitive action, the referee may withhold giving a decision and may recommend the purse or purses of either or both fighters should be withheld pending a Commission hearing.

(5) Fouls.

(a) The following are fouls and will result in penalties if committed:

1. Butting with the head;
2. Eye gouging of any kind;
3. Biting or spitting at an opponent;
4. Hair pulling;
5. Fish hooking;
6. Groin attacks of any kind;
7. Intentionally placing a finger in any opponent's orifice;
8. Downward pointing of elbow strikes;
9. Small joint manipulation;
10. Strikes to the Spine or back of the head;

~~11. Heel kicks to the kidney;~~ 11. Fingers outstretched toward an opponent's face/eyes;

12. Throat strikes of any kind;

13. Clawing, pinching, twisting the flesh. ~~or grabbing the clavicle;~~

14. Kicking the head of a grounded fighter;

15. Kneeing the head of a grounded fighter;

16. Stomping of a grounded fighter;

17. The use of abusive language in fighting area;

18. Any unsportsmanlike conduct that causes an injury to opponent;

19. Attacking an opponent on or during the break;

20. Attacking an opponent who is under the referee's care at the time;

21. Timidity (avoiding contact, or consistent dropping of mouthpiece, or faking an injury);

22. Interference from a mixed martial artist's second(s);

23. Throwing an opponent out of the fighting area;

24. Flagrant disregard of the referee's instructions;

25. Spiking an opponent to the canvas on his or her head or neck.

(b) Disqualification occurs after any combination of three or more of the fouls listed in (a) above or after a referee determines that a foul was intentional or flagrant.

(c) A grounded fighter is defined as any part of the body, other than a single hand and soles of the feet touching the fighting area floor. To be grounded, both hands palm/fist down, and/or any other body part must be touching the fighting area floor. At this time, kicks or knees to the head will not be allowed.

1. At the referee's discretion, any foul defined in subparagraph (a) may be called "intentional" or "flagrant."

(c) Fouls will result in a point being deducted by the official scorekeeper from the offending mixed martial artist's score.

(d) Only a referee can assess a foul. If the referee does not call the foul, judges shall not make that assessment on their own and cannot factor such into their scoring calculations.

(e) A fouled fighter has up to five (5) minutes to recuperate.

(f) If a foul is committed, the referee shall:

1. call time;

2. check the fouled mixed martial artist's condition and safety; and

3. assess the foul to the offending contestant, deduct points, and notify each corner's seconds, judges, and the official scorekeeper.

(g) If a bottom contestant commits a foul, unless the top contestant is injured, the fight shall continue, so as not to jeopardize the top contestant's superior positioning at the time.

1. The referee shall verbally notify the bottom contestant of the foul.

2. When the round is over, the referee shall assess the foul and notify both corners' seconds, the judges, and the official scorekeeper.

3. The referee may terminate a bout based on the severity of a foul.

(h) Injuries sustained during competition

1. If an injury sustained during competition as a result of a legal maneuver is severe enough to terminate a bout, the injured contestant loses by technical knockout.

2. If an injury sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul is severe enough to terminate a bout, the contestant causing the injury loses by disqualification.

3. If an injury is sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul and the bout is allowed to continue, at the referee's discretion, the referee may notify the scorekeeper to automatically deduct two points from the contestant who committed the foul.

4. If an injury sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul causes the injured contestant to be unable to continue at a subsequent point in the contest, the injured contestant shall win by technical decision, if he or she is ahead on the score cards. If the injured contestant is even or behind on the score cards at the time of stoppage, the outcome of the bout shall be declared a technical draw.

5. If a contestant injures himself or herself while attempting to foul his or her opponent, the referee shall not take any action in his or her favor, and the injury shall be treated in the same manner as an injury produced by a fair blow.

6. If an injury sustained during competition as a result of an accidental foul is severe enough for the referee to stop the bout immediately, the bout shall result in a no contest if stopped before two (2) rounds have been completed in a three (3) round bout or if stopped before three (3) rounds have been completed in a five (5) round bout.

7. If an injury sustained during competition as a result of an accidental foul is severe enough for the referee to stop the bout immediately, the bout shall result in a technical decision awarded to the contestant who is ahead on the score cards at the time the bout is stopped only when the bout is stopped after two (2) rounds of a three (3) round bout, or three (3) rounds of a five (5) round bout have been completed.

8. There will be no scoring of an incomplete round. However, if the referee penalizes either contestant, then the appropriate points shall be deducted when the scorekeeper calculates the final score.

(6) Warnings.

(a) The referee shall issue a single warning for the following infractions.

1. Holding or grabbing the fence;

2. Holding opponent's shorts or gloves; or
3. The presence of more than one second on the fighting area perimeter.

(b) After the initial warning, if the prohibited conduct persists, a penalty will be issued. The penalty may result in a deduction of points or disqualification.

(7) Types of Bout Results.

(a) Submission by:

1. Tap Out: When a contestant physically uses his hand to indicate that he or she no longer wishes to continue; or
2. Verbal tap out: When a contestant verbally announces to the referee that he or she does not wish to continue;

(b) Technical knockout by:

1. Referee stops bout;
2. Cage side or ringside physician stops bout; or
3. When an injury as a result of a legal maneuver is severe enough to terminate a bout;

(c) Knockout by failure to rise from the canvas;

(d) Decision via score cards:

1. Unanimous: When all three judges score the bout for the same contestant
2. Split Decision: When two judges score the bout for one contestant and one judge scores for the opponent; or
3. Majority Decision: When two judges score the bout for the same contestant and one judge scores a draw;

(e) Draws:

1. Unanimous - When all three judges score the bout a draw;
2. Majority - When two judges score the bout a draw; or

3. Split - When all three judges score differently and the score total results in a draw;

(f) Disqualification: When an injury sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul is severe enough to terminate the contest;

(g) Forfeit: When a contestant fails to begin competition or prematurely ends the contest for reasons other than injury or by indicating a tap out;

(h) Technical Draw: When an injury sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul causes the injured contestant to be unable to continue and the injured contestant is even or behind on the score cards at the time of stoppage;

(i) Technical Decision: When a bout is prematurely stopped due to injury and a contestant is leading on the score cards; and

(j) No Contest: When a contestant is prematurely stopped due to accidental injury and a sufficient number of rounds have not been completed to render a decision via the score cards.

(8) Judging.

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

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

(c) Judges shall evaluate mixed martial arts techniques, such as effective striking, effective grappling striking/grappling, control of the fighting area, effective aggressiveness and defense, and control of the fighting area.

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

(e) Effective striking is judged by determining the total number of legal heavy strikes landed by a contestant impact/effect of legal strikes landed by a contestant solely based on the results

of such legal strikes. Effective grappling is assessed by the successful executions and impactful/effective result(s) coming from: takedown(s), submission attempt(s), achieving an advantageous position(s) and reversal(s).

~~(f) Effective grappling is judged by considering the amount of successful executions of a legal takedown and reversals. Examples of factors to consider are take downs from standing position to mount position, passing the guard to mount position, and bottom position fighters using an active, threatening guard.~~

~~(g) Fighting area control is judged by determining who is dictating the pace, location, and position of the bout. Examples of factors to consider are countering a grappler's attempt at takedown by remaining standing and legally striking; taking down an opponent to force a ground fight; creating threatening submission attempts, passing the guard to achieve mount, and creating striking opportunities.~~

~~(h)(f) Effective aggressiveness means moving forward and landing a legal strike aggressively making attempts to finish the fight.~~

~~(g) Fighting area control is judged by determining who is dictating the pace, location, and position of the bout. Examples of factors to consider are countering a grappler's attempt at takedown by remaining standing and legally striking; taking down an opponent to force a ground fight; creating threatening submission attempts, passing the guard to achieve mount, and creating striking opportunities assessed by determining who is dictating the pace, place and position of the bout.~~

~~1. Effective defense means avoiding being struck, taken down or reversed while countering with offensive attacks.~~

(i) The following objective scoring criteria shall be utilized by the judges when scoring a round:

1. A round is to be scored as a 10-10 Round when both contestants appear to fighting evenly and neither contestant shows clear dominance in a round have competed for whatever duration of time in the round and there is no difference or advantage between either fighter;

2. A round is to be scored as a 10-9 Round when a contestant wins by a close margin, landing the greater number of effective legal strikes, grappling and other maneuvers;

3. A round is to be scored as a 10-8 Round when a contestant ~~overwhelmingly dominates~~ large margin by impact, dominance, and duration of striking or grappling in a round.

4. A round is to be scored as a 10-7 Round when a contestant ~~totally dominates~~ completely overwhelms their opponent in Effective Striking and/or Grappling and stoppage is warranted by striking or grappling in a round.

5. Judges shall use a sliding scale and recognize the length of time the fighters are either standing or on the ground, as follows:

(i) If the mixed martial artists spend a majority of a round on the canvas, then effective grappling is weighed first, and effective striking is then weighed.

(ii) If the mixed martial artists spent a majority of a round standing, then effective striking is weighed first, and effective grappling is then weighed.

(iii) If a round ends with a relatively even amount of standing and canvas fighting, striking and grappling are weighed equally.

(9) Timekeepers.

(a) Number Assigned per Bout. Two (2) licensed timekeepers, assigned by the Commission, shall be required at each event; one (1) to keep time and one (1) to count for the knockdowns.

(b) Duration of Rounds. Except as provided in (3)(c)6 above, the timekeeper shall ensure that each round last no more and no less than five (5) minutes.

(c) Announcement Responsibilities.

1. The bell shall be sounded at the beginning and at the end of each round. Except as provided in (d) below the timekeeper shall not sound the bell during the process of the round.

(i) Regardless of the sounding of the bell, the referee in the cage or ring is the sole authority to announce when the round begins. Each mixed martial artist will remain in their assigned

corner. The referee, once he or she is satisfied that each mixed martial artist is prepared to begin and that no condition exists which may present a medical hazard to either mixed martial artist, will announce "FIGHT."

(ii) The timekeeper will immediately start the clock at the referee's command of "FIGHT."

2. Timekeepers shall alert the referee by striking the table ten (10) seconds prior to the end of each round.

3. Timekeepers shall blow their whistle ten (10) seconds prior to the end of each one (1) minute rest period.

(d) Responsibility to Announce in an Emergency Suspension of Round. If the referee is absent from the cage or ring or temporarily incapacitated the timekeeper shall immediately sound the gong for temporary discontinuance of the contest.

(10) After the Contest, Match, or Exhibition.

(a) Contestants to Leave Cage or Ring. When the decision of the referee or judges has been announced both contestants and their seconds shall at once leave the cage or ring and retire to their dressing rooms.

(b) Decision Announcement. In all preliminary contests decided by the judges' scorecards, up to and including the semi-main event, the announcer will announce if the decision is "unanimous," "a majority decision," or "a draw." In main events and championship contests decided by the judges' scorecards, the total points given each contestant by the three (3) individual judges will be announced.

(c) Finality of the Decision. A decision rendered at the end of any event is final and shall not be changed unless the Commission determines that any of the following occurred:

1. There was collusion or fraud affecting the result of any contest, or,

2. The compilation of the score cards of the referee and judges reveals a clerical or mathematical error which caused the decision to be given to the wrong mixed martial artist.

3. There was a violation of the laws or rules and regulations governing professional mixed martial arts in this state which affected the results of any contest.

4. The chief official may in his or her discretion change a referee's decision if, in his or her judgment, a palpable and self-evident error has been committed.

(d) Appeal of Decision.

1. A petition to change a decision or the ruling of the chief official shall be in writing and filed by a mixed martial artist or the mixed martial artist's manager within five (5) business days from the date the decision was rendered.

2. The Commission may hold a hearing to change the decision or the ruling of the chief official at any time within fourteen (14) days from the date the decision was written. A majority vote of the Commissioners shall be required prior to holding a hearing.

3. If the Commission determines that any of the above occurred with regards to any contest then the decision rendered shall be changed as the Commission may direct, and shall notify the national registry of the change.

Authors: J. Matt Bledsoe, Brandon Owens, Casey Sears, Joseph B. McCormick

Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §41-9-1024.

History: New Rule: Filed December 27, 2013; effective January 31, 2014.