

**RULE BOOK**

**CLASS “A” FULL CONTACT PANKRATION aka  
COMBAT GRAPPLING**

**Revised Rules March 1, 2012**



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## **ARTICLE I: DEFINITIONS**

Pankration and Combat Grappling are interchangeable terms. Contestants may be referenced as Grapplers, Wrestlers, Fighters, Competitors or Athletes. Officials and Referees are interchangeable terms.

### **“A” Class Rules – Full Contact Pankration**

- Takedowns, Ground Control, Submissions, Body and Face Strikes are allowed.
- Potentially dangerous strikes, takedowns and submissions are prohibited.
- Matches are won by score, stoppage, knockout or submission.
- Rules and regulations of local boxing/athletic commission may supersede actual rules.

## **ARTICLE II: LEGAL TECHNIQUES**

### **Section 1: Legal submission targets**

- Submissions are allowed to the wrist, elbow, shoulder, hip, straight knee, neck and ankle.
- Submissions should be executed with applied pressure not “cranked”, to allow time to submit prior to injury.
- Pressure points are allowed as long as they are executed with applied pressure.
- Neck cranks or submissions which involve dynamic twisting or pressure against the neck joint or spine are prohibited. “Can openers” cannot be used as a submission.
- “Heel hooks” and submissions / techniques which involve a twisting pressure against the knee joint are prohibited.

### **Section 2: Takedowns and throws**

- Takedowns and throws designed or intended to cause injury are prohibited.
- Throws that involve joint locking are prohibited.
- Open “Flying Scissors” style takedowns are prohibited.
- Unnecessary slamming or spiking to the head is prohibited.
- Slamming or “Back Splashing” to escape a submission is prohibited.

### **Section 3: Legal striking weapons**

- Punches; hammer fists; palm heels and forearms.
- Kicks with the instep; bottom of foot; blade of foot; ball of foot; toes; shin and knee.
- Knees and Forearms are allowed to the body only. Forearm strikes cannot involve the tip of the elbow.
- “Head butting” or Strikes with the head are prohibited.
- Stomping on a downed opponent and up-kicks from the bottom are prohibited.
- With exception of the bottom of foot, all strikes to the facial area must be with the padded area of the glove or shin guard (\*\*If shin guards are being used).

### **Section 4: Legal striking targets**

- Strikes are allowed to the chest, stomach, ribs, thighs and calf.
- Strikes are allowed to the “mask” of the face. The “mask” area covers the top of the forehead to bottom of the chin and ear to ear
- Strikes to the joints, kidneys, back, spine, groin or other vital points are prohibited.
- It is the striker’s responsibility to ensure all strikes are delivered to legal areas with legal striking weapons.
- The striker must have at least one supporting point on the ground while executing knees strikes. Two supporting points if the knee strike is to a grounded opponent (one foot and knee). (No Flying knees)
- Knee strikes from side control to a downed opponent are allowed to frontal rib area only. Knee strikes to any other area of a grounded competitor are prohibited. Opponent must be on back or “all fours / Turtle”
- Strikes to the rear of the ribs or kidney area are prohibited.
- Repeated non scoring strikes are prohibited.

### **Section 5: The following are strictly forbidden:**

- Stalling or executing excessive non scoring techniques.

- Maliciously causing injury to an opponent.
- Keeping in a crouched or low wrestling stance.
- Bending or twisting of fingers, biting, scratching, pulling of hair, clothing or pinching / pulling of skin.
- Speaking or disrespectful conduct during bout.
- Arguing with any official.
- Refusing to obey the direction of any official.
- Showing disregard for one's or opponent's safety.
- Continuing the bout outside competition area or after the referee calls for a halt.
- Any other condition for which the referee believes a penalty should be imposed.

### **Section 6: Determining the Winner of the Match**

The winner of the match will be determined by one of the following:

- Competitor with the most recorded points at the conclusion of the match wins.
  - 20 Point advantage is considered a technical submission and ends the match.
  - A two or less point advantage can be considered a tie and send the match into overtime.
  - After the overtime period, the highest scoring athlete will be declared the winner.
- Competitor who causes opponent to submit by taping or by verbal announcement.
- Disqualification
- Referee stops bout for safety of participant.
- Matches will be halted upon Knockout, "Flash knockout" or anytime the referee believes the competitor is unable to protect him/her self. If a competitor is knocked down and receives three consecutive unanswered blows, the match will be halted and declared a technical knockout.
- A final score with a two point or less deficit will require a one minute overtime period. The overtime period score will be added to the actual end of regulation score to determine winner of the match. One additional overtime period will be conducted if the score is a true tie after the 1<sup>st</sup> overtime period. A sudden death period will follow if the score remains a true tie. Striking is not permitted in the sudden death period.

## **ARTICLE III: SCORING OF GRAPPLING TECHNIQUES**

### **Section 1: Takedown (1 or 2 points)**

#### 1 point

- Takedown occurs when a grappler has at least 3 supporting points on the mat. Supporting points are: Feet/Foot; Knee(s); hands; forearm(s); head; buttocks; lower back; upper back/shoulder(s).
- The grappler who maintains a weighted and controlled top position for 3 seconds will receive the takedown point.
- A grappler defending a legitimate submission attempt while executing a takedown cannot receive a takedown point until the submission is relieved and top control is maintained for 3 seconds.
- Pulling guard will result in a takedown point for an opponent after 3 seconds of ground control.
- Additional takedown points cannot be scored unless one grappler reestablishes the neutral standing position or if the match is restarted in the neutral standing position.

#### 2 points

- A takedown which causes elevation of the feet and lands in a top controlled position for 3 seconds will receive 2 takedown points.
- If a scramble for top position occurs, the grappler who first maintains a controlled top position for 3 seconds will receive only 1 takedown point.

### **Section 2: Standing Escape (1 point)** **Resets the neutral standing position**

- One point is awarded to the bottom grappler who escapes top control by getting to their feet, facing their opponent in a neutral position.
- An escape point can only be awarded after a takedown is scored.

### **Section 3: Push out (1 Point)**

- One point is awarded to a grappler if their opponent steps or is forced out of bounds while in the standing neutral position.
- The match can be halted after one foot exits the competition area and restarted in the center of the mat.
- Additional push out points cannot be earned by the same grappler until both competitors return to center mat.
- A push out point is not awarded if takedown points are also awarded or if the grappler has 2 or more supporting points touching the mat while going out of bounds.
- **If the match is conducted in a cage, a push out point may be awarded when an opponent's back is pinned against the cage for a count of 3 seconds. If match is conducted inside a ring, the ring must have at least 4 ropes configured in a manner to prevent a grappler in passing through the ropes in any manner.**

### **Section 4: Attempted Submission (1 point)**

- One point is awarded to the grappler who makes a valid submission attempt and puts his/her opponent in danger for a controlled count of 3 seconds.
- The referee will allow time to finish the submission in the event of sudden deaths or overtime.
- Only high percentage submission attempts will receive points and only when the referee perceives the opponent in danger of being submitted.
- Consecutive submission points can only be earned after each submission attempt is fully released or escaped with the grappler out of danger before the next submission attempt is applied.

### **Section 5: Ground Control (2, 3 or 4 points)**

Each Ground Control Position may be scored only once, adding up to a maximum of 9 points unless the controlled grappler reestablishes a neutral position with a guard defense, reversal or neutral standing position.

- **Side Control (2 points):** Awarded when a grappler gains control by passing opponent leg and hip defenses while keeping opponent's back to the mat for the control count of 3 seconds.
- **Full Mount (3 points):** Awarded when a grappler gains control by passing opponents leg and hip defenses and obtaining a mounted position with legs or knees straddled around opponents torso for a controlled count of 3 seconds.
- **Back Mount (4 points):** Awarded when a grappler gains control of opponents back and "Grapevines" inside opponents legs or "Leg Triangles" the waist for the controlled count of 3 seconds.

### **Section 6: Reversal (1 point)**

- One point is awarded to the grappler reverses any bottom position to a top position and maintains 3 seconds of control consistent with the rules of a takedown.

### **Section 7: Passivity (1 point)**

Grapplers must constantly attempt to improve their position, earn points and/or attempt to execute a submission. Referees will give one warning for passivity and award the opponent 1 point for each occurrence that follows. A closed fist raised overhand signals a passivity warning. The burden of action is applied to the competitor who initiated the position causing inactivity.

#### **Examples of passivity:**

- Continuously backing up.
- Avoiding takedown by butt scooting.
- Refusing to ground grapple after executing a takedown.
- Holding a static guard position; holding a static mount, side control or back control position without serious submission attempts.
- Laying or remaining static inside the guard with no serious attempt to pass or submit.
- In general 15 seconds of inaction is considered passivity.

## **Section 8: Re-Start Positions**

- **Neutral Position:** Neutral position occurs at the beginning of the match, when one or both Grapplers go out of bounds before a takedown is established or upon a stale mate. Both grapplers stand opposite one another in the center of the mat with both feet inside the inner circle. When in neutral position, neither wrestler has control.
- **Guard Restart Position:** The Guard Restart is ordered when both Grapplers go out of bounds in any Guard position. Both Grapplers assume the same top and bottom role at the center of the mat when the action is restarted. The Referee will re-start the match in the “Closed Guard”, “Half Guard” or “Butterfly Guard” closely resembling the last position prior to going out of bounds. Arm positions should also closely resemble that of the previous position. When in the Guard position, neither Grappler has Ground Control.
- **Mount Position Restart:** The Mount position restart is ordered when a Grappler has been awarded points for the mount position and the action goes out of bounds while maintaining control over the opponent. Both Grapplers assume the same top and bottom role at the center of the mat when the action is restarted. The Referee will start the match in the Mount position with the top Grapplers knees straddling the torso of the bottom Grappler. Arm positions should closely resemble that of the previously controlled position.
- **Side Control Restart Position:** The Side Control restart position is ordered when a Grappler has been awarded points for a side control position and the action goes out of bounds while maintaining control over the opponent. Both Grapplers assume the same top and bottom role at the center of the mat when the action is restarted. The Referee will re-start the match in either “Side Mount”, “Reverse Side Mount”, “Scarf Hold”, “North/South” or “Knee on Belly” closely resembling the last position prior to going out of bounds. Arm positions should also closely resemble that of the previously controlled position.
- **Back Control Restart Position:** The Back Control Restart position is ordered when a Grappler has been awarded points for the Back Mount and the action goes out of bounds while maintaining control over their opponent. Back Control Restart occurs at the center of the mat with the down wrestler sitting up with legs extended and bent. The top Grappler is centered on the back either with the “Grapevine” or “Triangle” leg position as before the match was halted. The top Grappler will have the Seat Belt Lock under opponent’s arm upon re-start.
- **Attempted Submission Restart:** If the grapplers go out of bounds due to a natural progression during an attempted submission attempt, officials may allow the match to progress out of bounds as long as it is safe to do so. The match must be halted and restarted center mat if the Grapplers are in danger of coming off the mat or entering another competition area. The grappler who had the advantage will have choice of re-start in the last dominant position or neutral standing or guard position.  
Note: If a grappler forces the action out of bounds in an attempt to escape a submission, he/she will be called for a “catch” and lose the match.

## **ARTICLE IV: SCORING OF STRIKING TECHNIQUES**

### **Section 1: Stand-up striking techniques:**

Visible contact and displacement of the body must be observed to award body striking points.

#### **4 points**

- Any legal strike that causes a knockdown. The knockdown must be a direct result of the strike and not a loss of balance. Takedown points are not scored in conjunction with a 4 point knockdown but 1 takedown point may be earned if the knockdown results in a top position consistent with the scoring of takedowns.

#### **3 points**

- A kick that clearly lands on the facial “Mask” area with proper torque, distance and follow through.

#### **2 points**

- A kick that clearly lands on a legal striking target of the body with proper torque, distance and follow through.
- A combination of punches where two or more unanswered strikes clearly land on a legal striking target of the body with proper torque, distance and follow through.

- Two or more effective strikes from a single clinched position to a legal striking target area of the body or face.

1 point

- A punch, hammer fist, palm heel, knee or forearm strike delivered with proper torque, distance and follow through to a legal target area of the body.
- A punch that clearly lands on the facial “Mask” area with proper torque, distance and follow through.
- Kicks to the outer and inner thigh area with proper torque, distance and follow through.

0 points

- Any strike not witnessed by the Referee.
- Any strike which is partially blocked to a target area.
- Any body strike lacking clear contact and/or displacement to the opponent’s body.
- Any striking technique in which the striker falls to the mat.
- A clash of strikes when there is no clear advantage to either competitor.
- Knees to legal areas of the legs.

**Section 2: Ground control striking techniques**

- Striker must be in top position; “Side Mount”, “Reverse Side Mount”, “Scarf Hold”, “North/South” , “Knee on Belly” , Back Mount or inside any “Guard” position to earn ground striking points.
- The striker must be in the top position and postured upright to earn ground striking points.
- A striker standing over a downed opponent must have control of a limb to receive striking points.
- Ground control strikes must be executed in full range of motion with proper torque, distance and follow through to receive points.

1 point

- A punch, hammer fist, palm heel, knee or forearm strike delivered with proper torque, distance and follow through to any legal striking area. Hand strikes must be initialed upright with a fully “cocked” arm position.
- A Knee strike to the frontal ribs of a grounded opponent in accordance with legal striking targets.

3 points

- Three or more "1 point strikes" which land on a downed opponent from the same positions of control.
- To earn additional points the striker must change positions of control after every two 3 ground striking points are earned. Positions of control include “Side Mount”, “Reverse Side Mount”, “Scarf Hold”, “North/South” , “Knee on Belly” and Back Mount. Switching sides or modifications of classical Positions may be interpreted by referees as positional changes for striking.
- All forms of the “Guard” are considered neutral and the same position of ground control for striking points.
- A maximum of 3 striking points may be earned within any Guard position or combination of Guard positions.

0 points

- Excess of 3 strikes to a downed opponent from the same position of control.
- Striking without position of control.
- Striking in a “Clinched” or non upright posture.
- Striking legal areas of the legs.
- Legs kicks to a downed opponent with control of a limb are allowed only as a set up for an actual scoring technique.

**ARTICLE V: PENALTIES AND INJURIES**

**Section 1: Penalties**

If a technique injures a competitor the following will determine the referee action:

1. Was the technique delivered with ill intent?
2. Was the injury a result of no fault to either competitor?

3. Was the injury a result of a fighter's negligence to protect him/herself?
  - First accidental foul/violation will result in 1 point for the fouled competitor.
  - Next accidental violations will result in a 1 additional point for the fouled competitor.
  - Third accidental violation will disqualify.
  - Malicious fouls may result in immediate disqualification.
  - Intentional strikes to illegal striking areas or with illegal striking weapons may result in disqualification on first offense.
  - Intentional illegal submissions or "cranked" submissions may result in disqualification on first offense.
  - Intentional illegal slams may result in disqualification on first offense.

### **Section 2: Injuries**

- If the bout stopping injury was caused by no fault of any competitor, the victor will be determined by the score prior to injury.
- The uninjured competitor will be declared the victor in the event of a tie score with a no fault match stopping injury.
- The athletic trainer or medical staff will have the final determination if an injured competitor may continue the bout.
- The injury time clock will not include consultation time of the medical staff.
- 2 minutes of injury/ recovery time is allotted to the athlete hurt by an illegal strike. The match shall be resumed at the neutral position if the injured athlete recovers and continues. If the medical staff finds the injured athlete is unable to continue he/she will win the match by disqualification.

## **ARTICLE VI: OPERATION OF MATCHES**

### **Section 1: Weigh in**

Weigh in will be conducted prior to competition. All competitors must have similar and fair access to weigh in regards to time and equipment.

### **Section 2: Health and Safety check**

All competitors will be examined for contagious skin conditions, trimmed nails and open wounds prior to competition.

### **Section 3: Rules Briefing**

All competitors and/or coaches must attend a rules briefing prior to competition.

### **Section 4: Ankle Bands**

- Once called to the competition area, competitors will put on their designated color ankle band.
- Bands may be worn on arm if shin guards get in the way.
- Colored rash guard, fight shorts or protective gear may be used in lieu of bands.

### **Section 5: Methods of Scoring**

Referee assignments:

- Center Referee – Starts and stops that match; gives warnings and penalties; scores the match as it progresses and protects fighters from injury to include obstacles and other unforeseen events.
- Mat Official – Assists the center referee in scoring striking points; ensures the score is recorded correctly; keeps track of penalties and warnings; ensures the competition area is kept clean and clear of distractions; and protects fighters from obstacles or unforeseen events..
- Side Referee (Used in a three to five referee team) – Assists the mat official in scoring striking points; physically checks competitors gloves and safety equipment; and protects fighters from obstacles or unforeseen events.
- One referee will be assigned to physically check competitor's nails, ensure no unauthorized substance is applied on the body and check gloves hand wraps, clothing and other safety equipment prior to entry of competition area. This check will be additional to inspections conducted by inspectors or regulatory staff.

Scoring:

- The center referee will signal points as the match progresses.
- The center referee will use the color wrist band to identify which competitor receives the point(s). The thumb signals 1 point; the thumb and index finger signals 2 points; the thumb, index and middle finger signals 3 points; and four fingers without the thumb signals 4 points.
- Flip charts or electronic score boards may be used to display score.
- The scorekeeper will mark points as announced by the referee.
- Striking points may be scored separately by 2 to 4 side referees. Under this method striking points will be divided by the number of side referees and added to the grappling points as scored by the center referee. If 4 side referees are used the score with the wisest margin will be thrown out with the 3 remaining scores divided by 3.
- If only a Center and 1 side referee is utilized, the center referee will also score striking points with the side referee positioned at an opposing angle to score strikes not in center referees view.

### **Section 6: Restart on feet**

The bout may be restarted in the standing neutral position in the event of a stalemate or when both competitors are on the ground for an excess of 30 seconds with no additional advantage imminent.

### **Section 7: Challenges**

- Coaches must state any challenge before their competitor exits the mat/ competition area.
- Coaches may state a challenge during a bout by standing next to the score table. The Referee will stop the match during an appropriate time to address the objection.
- Judgmental calls by the referee cannot be overturned.
- Unjustified, excessive or needless challenges may result in point deductions or disqualification.

### **Section 8: Time Keeping**

- Time starts when the referee starts the match and halts each time the match is stopped.
- The timekeeper will give an audible and physical signal when time expires.
- The referee is the only one who may call a time out during a bout.

### **Section 9: Team Scoring:**

- Team match scoring consists of 6 points for a Submission/ Stoppage/ Forfeit; 5 points for a technical submission (20 point advantage); 4 points for a major decision (8-19 point advantage); and 3 points for a decision (1 to 7 point advantage)

Two formulas may be used to determine top teams in tournament formats.

- Cumulative format. Each individual win earns a team point. Byes do not score but a win after a Bye counts double. More points are earned in Championship rounds. Submissions = Max Pts.; followed by Technical Submission (20 point advantage); Major Decision (8 point advantage); and Regular Decision (less than 3 point advantage).
- Top three Placers. 1<sup>st</sup> place = 6 Pts.; 2<sup>nd</sup> place = 3 Pts.; and 3<sup>rd</sup> place = 2 Pts

## **ARTICLE VII: UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

### **Section 1: Attire**

- Competitors may compete in Board shorts, Fight Shorts, Rash Guard, tight fitting T-Shirt or bare chest. All competitors are encouraged to wear traditional rash guard and grappling style shorts.
- All clothing must be clean and in good repair. Buttons, zippers, metal or sharp objects are not allowed on clothing. Shorts may have pockets as long as they are Velcro.

### **Section 2: Protective Gear**

- All competitors must compete with a mouthpiece. \*\*Class "A" & "B" rules
- Male competitors must wear a cup. \*\*Class "A" & "B" rules
- Female competitors may wear a chest guard.



- Other protective gear such as knee pads, elbow pads, forearm guards and ear guards are optional and subject to approval by officials.
- Wrestling/ Martial Arts shoes are allowed in Class “B” & “C” Rules.
- Class “B” rules require approved gloves at a minimum of 4 ounces.
- Class “A” Rules require approved shin guards, headgear and 7 oz gloves.
- Gloves and other safety gear will be inspected prior to entering the competition area.
- Taping must be approved by medical staff and chief referee.

## **ARTICLE VIII: DIVISIONS**

### **Section 1: Divisions**

- Divisions will be separated by age and weight.
- Competitors 14 years and older will be further separated by gender.
- The tournament director reserves the right to modify divisions to ensure competition.
- All Competitors must be amateur. Amateur fighter is defined as: Having two or less wins in matches where payment is directly received for the bout.

### **Section 2: Skill levels**

- Some events may have beginner, intermediate and advanced/open divisions.
- All Competitors may move up a skill bracket and/or two weight divisions upon approval of officials.

### **Section 3: Weight Classes**

Weight Classes are either fixed or formed by the Madison system.

- Madison System weight classes - Weight divisions will form with the 8 lightest competitors and end with the 8 heaviest competitors. Most divisions should have no more than a 14 lb weight differential even if the result is a bracket smaller than 8 competitors. \*Heavyweights may have a larger differential. Divisions with large weight spreads will have fewer than 8 competitors.
- Fixed Weight Classes - Specific events may modify age and weight breakdowns.

### **Section 4: Length of bouts**

- Beginner and youth bouts will generally consist of one (1) three (3) minute match;
- Intermediate bouts generally will consist of one (1) four (4) minute match
- Advanced/ open bouts will generally consist of one (1) five (5) minute match.
- Special bouts may be conducted with multiple rounds not to exceed (3) three periods.

## **ARTICLE IX: COMPETITION AREA**

### **Section 1: Type of Competition areas**

- Wrestling Mat
- Boxing ring
- MMA cage.

### **Section 2: Size of Competition area**

The competition area will be a minimum of 15' X 15'. A 30' X 30' competition area is recommended.

### **Section 3: Surface of Competition area**

- The competition area will be covered by a Judo, Jiujitsu or wrestling style mat.
- Other style mats must be judged safe for competition by the Chief Referee.

- A safety area will extend a minimum of three (3) feet on each side if an open mat is used.
- The mats should be affixed together without space. They will be flat, clean and in good condition.

## **ARTICLE X: REFEREES AND OFFICIALS**

### **Section 1: Referee Certification**

#### **A Level – Chief Referee**

- Received Training in Pankration rules, scoring and bracketing.
- Minimum of Ten years Combative Sports Experience.
- Minimum of 21 years of age.
- Received CPR and Sports First Aid Training.
- Prior experience of officiating a minimum of 200 matches.

#### **B Level – Referee**

- Received Training in Pankration rules, scoring and bracketing.
- Minimum of Five years Combative Sports Experience.
- Minimum of 18 years of age.
- Prior experience of officiating a minimum of 50 matches under a Chief Referee.

#### **C Level – Referee Trainee**

- Received Training in Pankration rules, scoring and bracketing.
- Minimum of Three years Combative Sports Experience.
- Minimum of 16 years of age.

### **Section 2: Uniforms**

- Officials will wear clothing that is similar to assure the appearance of uniformity.
- Shoes will have clean soles and be appropriate to wear on the mat.



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