

CHAPTER 29. MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

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Authority

The provisions of this Chapter 29 adopted under 5 Pa.C.S. §§ 103(b)(1) and 302, unless otherwise noted.

Source

The provisions of this Chapter 29 adopted January 30, 2009, effective February 27, 2009, 39 Pa.B. 523, unless otherwise noted.

Subchapter A. PROFESSIONAL MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

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Cross References

This subchapter cited in 58 Pa. Code § 29.21 (relating to general provisions).

§ 29.1. General provisions.

The Boxing Act, as it relates to professional boxers, and Chapter 21 (relating to professional boxing) apply to professional mixed martial arts competitors, promoters and other licensees, except as otherwise provided in this chapter.

§ 29.2. Definitions.

(a) The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

Boxing Act—5 Pa.C.S. Part I, Subpart B.

Contestant—A person who engages in mixed martial arts competition, either as a professional or as an amateur.

Flagrant foul—An intentional foul, using any foul technique under §§ 29.12(b) or 29.29(b) (relating to acts constituting fouls), that causes a crip-

pling injury upon an opponent, so that the injured contestant is adjudged incapable of continuing the contest or exhibition.

Mixed martial arts—Competition involving the use, subject to any applicable limitations set forth in this chapter, of a combination of techniques from different disciplines of the martial arts, including grappling, kicking and striking.

(b) The definitions in sections 101 and 302 of the Athletic Code (relating to definitions) are incorporated for the regulatory provisions relating to professional boxing.

§ 29.3. General requirements.

(a) Professional contests and exhibitions of mixed martial arts must be conducted under the supervision and authority of the Commission.

(b) Professional contestants shall be licensed by the Commission.

(c) Debut contestants shall complete a Commission-approved form detailing the contestant's experience and training in mixed martial arts competitions. The form may be obtained by request from the Commission office or from the Commission's web site at <http://www.dos.state.pa.us/sac>.

(d) The Commission may review the applicant's experience, qualifications, medical records, win-loss record and training record as part of its determination whether to issue or renew any professional mixed martial arts license.

(e) Professional mixed martial arts contestants shall be covered by insurance which shall be set by Commission policy and paid for by the promoter or sponsor of the event.

(f) The fees specified under Chapter 13 (relating to bonds and fees) apply to mixed martial arts permits, contestants, promoters and other licensees, except as otherwise provided in this chapter.

§ 29.4. Ring or fenced area requirements.

(a) Mixed martial arts contests and exhibitions must be held in a ring or in a fenced area.

(b) A ring used in a contest or exhibition of mixed martial arts must meet the following requirements:

(1) The ring must be at least 20 feet square and no larger than 32 feet square within the ropes.

(2) The ring floor must extend at least 18 inches beyond the ropes and must be padded with Ensolite, vinyl or similar closed-cell foam, with at least a 1-inch layer of foam padding. Padding must extend beyond the ring ropes and over the edge of the platform, with a top covering of canvas, duck or similar material tightly stretched and laced to the ring platform. Material that gathers in lumps or ridges may not be used.

(3) The ring platform must not be more than 4 feet above the floor of the building and must have suitable steps for the use of the contestants.

- (4) Ring posts must be four in number and made of metal, extending from the floor of the building to a minimum height of 58 inches above the ring floor, and must be properly padded in a manner approved by the Commission. Ring posts must be at least 18 inches away from the ring ropes.
- (5) There must be five ring ropes, at least 1 inch in diameter and wrapped in soft material. The lowest ring rope must be 12 inches above the ring floor.
- (6) There may not be any obstruction or object, including, without limitation, a triangular border, on any part of the ring floor.
- (c) A fenced area used in a contest or exhibition of mixed martial arts must meet the following requirements:
 - (1) The fenced area must be circular or have at least six equal sides and must be at least 20 feet wide and no larger than 32 feet wide.
 - (2) The floor of the fenced area must be padded with Ensolite, vinyl or another similar closed-cell foam, with at least a 1-inch layer of foam padding, with a top covering of canvas, duck or similar material tightly stretched and laced to the platform of the fenced area. Material that gathers in lumps or ridges may not be used.
 - (3) The platform of the fenced area must not be more than 4 feet above the floor of the building and must have suitable steps for the use of the contestants.
 - (4) Fence posts must be at least six in number and made of metal, extending from the floor of the building to between 6 and 7 feet above the floor of the fenced area, and must be properly padded in a manner approved by the Commission.
 - (5) The fencing used to enclose the fenced area must be made of a material that will prevent a contestant from falling out of the fenced area or breaking through the fenced area onto the floor of the building or onto the spectators, including chain link fence coated with vinyl.
 - (6) Any metal portion of the fenced area must be covered and padded in a manner approved by the Commission and may not be abrasive to the contestants.
 - (7) The fenced area must have at least two entrances.
 - (8) No obstruction may be placed on a part of the fence which surrounds the area where contestants compete.
- (d) The promoter of the event shall be responsible to thoroughly clean the ring area after each match.

§ 29.5. Duration of rounds.

- (a) A nonchampionship contest of professional mixed martial arts may not exceed three rounds of 5 minutes per round with a 1 minute rest period following each round, except with the written or oral permission of the Commission or the Executive Director.

(b) A championship contest of professional mixed martial arts may not exceed five rounds of 5 minutes per round with a 1 minute rest period following each round, except with the written oral permission of the Commission or the Executive Director.

§ 29.6. Weight classes of contestants.

(a) The weight classes for contestants competing in professional mixed martial arts contest or exhibitions are as follows:

Flyweight	up to 125 lbs.
Bantamweight	over 125 to 135 lbs.
Featherweight	over 135 to 145 lbs.
Lightweight	over 145 to 155 lbs.
Welterweight	over 155 to 170 lbs.
Middleweight	over 170 to 185 lbs.
Light Heavyweight	over 185 to 205 lbs.
Heavyweight	over 205 to 265 lbs.
Super Heavyweight	over 265 lbs.

(b) Sections 710 and 711 of the Athletic Code (relating to weights and classes; and limitation on difference in weights) are incorporated by reference.

§ 29.7. Proper attire of contestants.

(a) *Trunks.* Each contestant shall wear mixed martial arts shorts, biker shorts, boxing or kickboxing shorts during competition as approved by the Commission.

(b) *Shirt or gi.* Male contestants may not wear a shirt or gi during competition. Female contestants shall wear a body shirt and blouse during competition.

(c) *Shoes.* Contestants may not wear shoes or padding on their feet during competition.

§ 29.8. Physical appearance of contestants.

(a) Each contestant shall present a clean appearance.

(b) The excessive use of grease or any other foreign substance, including grooming creams, lotions or sprays, may not be used on the hair or any portion of the body of a contestant. The referee or the Commission will cause any excessive grease or foreign substance to be removed. A light coating of petroleum jelly is permitted on the face only and must be applied at cage side or ring side in the presence of the referee or the Commission. This coating is at the discretion of the referee.

(c) The Commission will determine whether head or facial hair presents a hazard to the safety of the contestant or the opponent or will interfere with the supervision and conduct of the contest or exhibition. If the head or facial hair of a contestant presents a hazard or will interfere with the supervision and conduct of the contest or exhibition, the contestant may not participate in the contest or exhibition unless the circumstances creating the hazard or potential interference

are corrected to the satisfaction of the Commission. Without limiting the standard in this subsection, head hair must be trimmed or tied back in a manner that it will not interfere with the vision of either contestant or cover any part of a contestant's face.

(d) Contestants may not wear any jewelry or other piercing accessories while competing.

(e) Taping of the hands, wrists and ankles are permitted at the discretion of the Commission.

(f) Finger and toe nails must be trimmed.

§ 29.9. Equipment.

(a) The gloves used in professional mixed martial arts contests and exhibitions must be new for all main events. The gloves used for all undercard events must be in good condition and approved by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee before and during use or they must be replaced.

(b) Contestants shall wear open finger gloves weighing between 4 to 8 ounces, which shall be supplied by the promoter and approved by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee before and during use. Contestants are not permitted to supply their own gloves.

(c) Male contestants shall provide and wear a foul-proof groin protector during competition. The groin protector is subject to examination and approval by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee.

(d) Female contestants shall provide and wear a chest protector during competition. The chest protector is subject to examination and approval by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee. Female contestants may provide and wear a foul-proof groin protector during competition. The groin protector is subject to examination and approval by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee.

(e) For each contest or exhibition, the licensed promoter shall provide each contestant's corner with a clean water bucket and a stool.

§ 29.10. Method of judging.

The method of judging professional mixed martial contests or exhibitions must comply with requirements in the Boxing Act, as it relates to professional boxers and Chapter 21 (relating to professional boxing).

§ 29.11. Scoring.

(a) Professional mixed martial arts techniques are defined as:

(1) *Effective striking*. The total number of legal heavy strikes landed.

(2) *Effective grappling*. The successful execution of a legal takedown or reversal, or both, including the following maneuvers:

(i) Takedowns from standing position to mount position.

(ii) Passing the guard to mount position.

- (iii) Bottom position fighters using an active, threatening guard.
- (3) *Fighting area control*. Dictating the pace, location and position of the contestant using the following maneuvers:
 - (i) Countering an opponent's attempt at takedown to remain standing and legally striking effectively.
 - (ii) Taking down an opponent to force a ground fight.
 - (iii) Creating threatening submission attempts past the guard to achieve mount, while on the ground.
 - (iv) Creating striking opportunities.
- (4) *Effective aggressiveness/defense*. Moving forward and landing a legal strike, while avoiding being struck, taken down or reversed, or both, while performing the maneuvers described in this subsection.
- (b) Judges shall evaluate professional mixed martial arts techniques in the following order:
 - (1) Effective striking.
 - (2) Effective grappling.
 - (3) Fighting area control.
 - (4) Effective aggressiveness/defense.

§ 29.12. Acts constituting fouls.

- (a) Disqualification from a mixed martial arts contest or exhibition occurs after any combination of three fouls or after a flagrant foul as determined by the referee.
- (b) The following acts constitute fouls in a professional mixed martial arts contest or exhibition:
 - (1) Butting with the head.
 - (2) Eye gouging of any kind.
 - (3) Biting.
 - (4) Hair pulling.
 - (5) Fishhooking.
 - (6) Groin attacks of any kind.
 - (7) Putting a finger into any orifice or into any cut or laceration on an opponent.
 - (8) Small joint manipulation.
 - (9) Striking to the spine or the back of the head.
 - (10) Striking downward using the point of the elbow.
 - (11) Throat strikes of any kind, including, without limitation, grabbing the trachea.
 - (12) Clawing, pinching or twisting the flesh.
 - (13) Grabbing the clavicle.
 - (14) Kicking the head of a grounded opponent.
 - (15) Kneeing the head of a grounded opponent.
 - (16) Stomping a grounded opponent.

- (17) Kicking to the kidney with the heel.
- (18) Spiking an opponent to the floor surface on his head or neck.
- (19) Throwing an opponent out of the ring or fenced area.
- (20) Holding the shorts or gloves of an opponent.
- (21) Spitting at an opponent.
- (22) Engaging in any type of unsportsmanlike conduct, especially that which may cause an injury to an opponent.
- (23) Holding the ropes or the fence.
- (24) Using abusive language in the ring or fenced area.
- (25) Attacking an opponent on or during the break.
- (26) Attacking an opponent who is under the care of the referee.
- (27) Attacking an opponent after the bell has sounded the end of the period of competition.
- (28) Disregarding the instructions of the referee.
- (29) Timidity, including, without limitation, avoiding contact with an opponent, intentionally or consistently dropping the mouthpiece or faking an injury.
- (30) Interference by the corner. Team members including cornermen and trainers shall stay in their designated area at all times during an event.

Cross References

This section cited in 58 Pa. Code § 29.2 (relating to definitions); and 58 Pa. Code § 29.29 (relating to acts constituting fouls).

§ 29.13. Deduction of points for fouls; effect of low blow.

- (a) If a contestant fouls his opponent during a contest or exhibition of professional mixed martial arts, the referee may penalize him by deducting points from his score, whether or not the foul was intentional. Except as otherwise provided in Chapter 21 (relating to professional boxing), the referee may determine the number of points to be deducted in each instance and shall base his determination on the severity of the foul and its effect upon the opponent.
- (b) When the referee determines that it is necessary to deduct a point or points because of a foul, he shall warn the offender of the penalty to be assessed.
- (c) The referee shall, as soon as is practical after the foul, notify the judges and both contestants of the number of points, if any, to be deducted from the score of the offender.
- (d) Any points to be deducted for any foul shall be deducted in the round in which the foul occurred and may not be deducted from the score of a subsequent round.
- (e) A contestant may not be declared the winner of a contest or exhibition of professional mixed martial arts on the basis of his claim that his opponent accidentally fouled him by hitting him in the groin. If a contestant falls to the floor of the ring or fenced area or otherwise indicates that he is unwilling to continue after a maximum of a 5-minute rest period, because of a claim of being hit in the

groin, the contest or exhibition shall be declared to be a technical knockout in favor of the contestant who is willing to continue.

§ 29.14. Accidental fouls.

(a) If a contest or exhibition of professional mixed martial arts is stopped because of an accidental foul, the referee, with advice from the ringside physician, shall determine whether the contestant who has been fouled can continue or not. If the contestant's chance of winning has not been seriously jeopardized as a result of the foul, the referee may order that the contest or exhibition continue after a recuperative interval of not more than 5 minutes. Immediately after separating the contestants, the referee shall inform the Commission's representative of a determination that the foul was accidental.

(b) If the referee determines that a contest or exhibition of professional mixed martial arts may not continue because of an injury suffered as the result of an accidental foul, the contest or exhibition shall be declared a no contest if the foul occurs during either of the following:

- (1) The first two rounds of a nonchampionship contest or exhibition.
- (2) The first three rounds of a championship contest or exhibition.

(c) If an accidental foul renders a contestant unable to continue the contest or exhibition after the completed second round of a nonchampionship contest or exhibition, or after the completed third round of a championship contest or exhibition, the outcome shall be determined by scoring the completed rounds and the round during which the referee stops the contest or exhibition.

(d) If an injury inflicted by an accidental foul later becomes aggravated by fair blows and the referee orders the contest or exhibition stopped because of the injury, the outcome shall be determined by scoring the completed rounds and the round during which the referee stops the contest or exhibition.

§ 29.15. Results of contests.

- (a) A mixed martial arts contest may end under the following results:
- (1) Through submission by:
 - (i) Physical tap out.
 - (ii) Verbal tap out.
 - (2) Technical knockout by the referee stopping the contest.
 - (3) Decision by means of the scorecards, including unanimous decision, split decision or majority decision.
 - (4) Draw.
 - (5) Technical decision.
 - (6) Technical draw.
 - (7) Disqualification.
 - (8) Forfeit.
 - (9) No contest.

(b) The referee and ringside physician are the sole arbiters of a contest and are the only individuals authorized to enter the ring or fenced area at any time during competition and to stop a contest.

§ 29.16. Use of prohibited substances; detection and penalties.

The use of any illegal drug, narcotic, stimulant, depressant, analgesic of any description, or alcohol substance, by a contestant either before or during a match, will result in the immediate disqualification of the contestant from the match and may result in disciplinary action in accordance with 5 Pa.C.S. § 1304 (relating to suspension or revocation of licenses or permits).

§ 29.17. Promoter licensing and bonding requirements.

Mixed martial arts promoters shall:

- (1) Be licensed by the Commission.
- (2) Be required to execute and file a surety bond with the Commission of not less than \$10,000.
- (3) Notify the Commission in writing of the time, date and location of the event. The notification must be received by the Commission at least 10 days in advance of the event. Promoters must receive written approval from the Commission to hold the event on the specified date. The Commission reserves the right to limit the number of mixed martial arts events per month to ensure the proper regulation of each event.
- (4) Submit a written list of all the scheduled match-ups which includes the full names, records and scheduled rounds for all contestants. The Commission reserves the right to limit the number of mixed martial arts bouts scheduled for each event.
- (5) Submit a list of all officials that may be working that event, including referees, judges and timekeepers. Officials must be approved by the Commission. Officials for professional events must also be licensed by the Commission.

Subchapter B. AMATEUR MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

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§ 29.21. General provisions.

The Boxing Act, as it relates to professional boxers and Chapter 21 (relating to professional boxing) apply to amateur mixed martial arts competitors, promoters and other licensees, except as otherwise provided in this chapter. Subchapter A (relating to professional mixed martial arts) applies to amateur mixed martial arts, except as otherwise provided in this subchapter.

§ 29.22. General requirements.

- (a) Amateur contestants shall be at least 18 years of age.
- (b) Amateur contests and exhibitions of mixed martial arts shall be conducted under the supervision and authority of the Commission.
- (c) Amateur contestants shall be licensed by the Commission.
- (d) Debut amateur contestants shall complete a Commission-approved form detailing the contestant's experience and training in mixed martial arts competitions. The form may be obtained by request from the Commission office or from the Commission's web site at <http://www.dos.state.pa.us/sac>. The trainer of the debut contestant shall certify that the contestant is skilled enough to compete and has never engaged in any type of professional mixed martial arts event. A professional boxer may compete as an amateur in a mixed martial arts event only with the approval of the Commission.
- (e) The Commission may review the applicant's experience, qualifications, medical records, win-loss record and training record as part of its determination whether to issue or renew any amateur mixed martial arts license.
- (f) Amateur mixed martial arts contestants shall be covered by insurance which will be set by Commission policy and paid for by the promoter or sponsor of the event.
- (g) Amateur contestants shall attend the prebout meeting with a designee of the Commission to review all rules and regulations of the Commission pertaining to amateur mixed martial arts.

§ 29.23. Amateur mixed martial arts license fee.

A nonrefundable annual license fee of \$10 must accompany each application for a license or renewal of a license as an amateur mixed martial arts contestant.

§ 29.24. Conduct of contests.

Amateur events must have at least two professional bouts.

§ 29.25. Duration of rounds.

- (a) A contest of amateur mixed martial arts with a contestant with three or less amateur bouts may not exceed three rounds of 2 minutes per round with a 1 minute rest period between rounds, except with the written or oral permission of the Commission or the Executive Director.

(b) A contest of amateur mixed martial arts with a contestant with more than three amateur bouts may not exceed three rounds of 3 minutes per round with a 1 minute rest period between rounds, except with the written or oral permission of the Commission or the Executive Director.

§ 29.26. Proper attire for contestants.

(a) *Trunks.* Each amateur contestant shall wear mixed martial arts shorts, biker shorts, boxing or kickboxing shorts during competition as approved by the Commission.

(b) *Shirt or gi.* Male contestants may not wear a shirt or gi during competition, other than a close-fitting rash guard. Any rash guard must be approved by the Commission. Female contestants shall wear a body shirt and blouse during competition.

(c) *Shoes.* Contestants may not wear shoes or padding on their feet during competition.

§ 29.27. Equipment.

(a) The gloves used in amateur mixed martial arts contests and exhibitions must be new for all main events. The gloves used for all undercard events must be in good condition and approved by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee before and during use or they must be replaced.

(b) Amateur contestants shall wear open finger gloves weighing at least 7 ounces, which shall be supplied by the promoter and approved by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee before and during use. Contestants are not permitted to supply their own gloves.

(c) Contestants shall wear a mouth guard, shin pads and instep pads during competition.

(d) Ankle wraps may be used during competition. Ankle wraps are subject to examination and approval by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee.

(e) Male contestants shall provide and wear a foul-proof groin protector during competition. The groin protector is subject to examination and approval by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee.

(f) Female contestants shall provide and wear a chest protector during competition. The chest protector is subject to examination and approval by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee. Female contestants may provide and wear a foul-proof groin protector during competition. The groin protector is subject to examination and approval by the referee and the Executive Director or a designee.

(g) For each contest or exhibition, the licensed promoter shall provide each contestant's corner with a clean water bucket and a stool.

Cross References

This section cited in 58 Pa. Code § 29.30 (relating to waiver of rule for contests with three or more amateur bouts).

§ 29.28. Legal techniques.

(a) The following acts constitute legal techniques while standing in any amateur mixed martial arts contest or exhibition:

- (1) Closed hand strikes to head and body.
- (2) Kicking to body and legs.
- (3) Knees to body and legs.
- (4) Throws.
- (5) Take downs.
- (6) Sweeps.
- (7) Standing submissions.
- (8) Chokes.
- (9) Armbars.
- (10) Shouldering.

(b) The following acts constitute legal techniques while on the ground in any amateur mixed martial arts contest or exhibition:

- (1) Closed hand strikes to body and legs.
- (2) Submissions (chokes, armbars, straight leg locks only).

§ 29.29. Acts constituting fouls.

(a) Disqualification from an amateur mixed martial arts contest and exhibition occurs after any combination of three fouls or after a flagrant foul as determined by the referee.

(b) The following acts constitute fouls in a contest or exhibition of amateur mixed martial arts:

- (1) An act prohibited by § 29.12 (relating to acts constituting fouls).
- (2) Any of the following illegal techniques while standing:
 - (i) Elbows of any kind.
 - (ii) Knees to head.
 - (iii) Kicks to knees or head.
 - (iv) Stomps on feet.
 - (v) Slamming. Throws should be completed in a controlled manner.
 - (vi) Throws against a joint.
 - (vii) Neck cranks.
 - (viii) Pinching, biting or gouging.
- (3) Any of the following illegal techniques while on the ground:
 - (i) Striking to the head.
 - (ii) Neck cranks.
 - (iii) Heel hooks.
 - (iv) Finger locks.

- (v) Toe locks.
- (vi) Choking with hand on throat.
- (vii) Smothering (hand over mouth).
- (viii) Spine locks.
- (ix) Hammer locks.
- (x) Slamming.
- (xi) Pinching, biting or gouging.

Cross References

This section cited in 58 Pa. Code § 29.2 (relating to definitions); and 58 Pa. Code § 29.30 (relating to waiver of rule for contestants with three or more amateur bouts).

§ 29.30. Waiver of rule for contestants with three or more amateur bouts.

(a) An amateur contestant who has completed at least three amateur bouts may petition the Commission to waive the “striking to the head while on the ground” provision in § 29.29(b)(3)(i) (relating to acts constituting fouls) and the shin/instep pad requirement in § 29.27(c) (relating to equipment).

(b) The waiver will include only bouts in which both contestants have the required three-bout experience and both have agreed to conduct the contest with a waiver of the “striking to the head while on the ground” and the shin/instep pad rules.

(c) Grant of the waiver will be at the discretion of the Commission. In reviewing waiver requests, the Commission will consider factors including the win-loss record, conditioning, training, experience and skill level of each individual contestant.

Source

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