



## PROPOSED UNIFIED RULES OF AMATEUR KICKBOXING

This document is intended as a proposal for the Association of Boxing Commissions to approve and ratify a recommended unified set of rules for amateur kickboxing. This proposed rules-set is an edited version of the already approved ABC Unified Rules for Professional Kickboxing. Elements that have been modified from or added to the original Professional Rules Document appear in **BLUE**. I have also provided immediately below a synopsis of the differences between the approved professional rules and the proposed amateur rules.

**Professional Kickboxing:** Bouts may consist of a maximum of ten (10) rounds of three (3) minutes each  
**Amateur Kickboxing:** Bout may consist of a maximum of nine (9) rounds of two (2) minutes each

**Professional Kickboxing:** Standing Eight (8) Count is NOT allowed  
**Amateur Kickboxing:** The use of the "Standing Eight (8) Count is allowed in order to provide the referee the opportunity to make the best determination regarding if a damaged fighter should be allowed to continue in the match. Standing Eight (9) Counts are treated exactly as knockdowns in regard to scoring and in application of the maximum three (3) knockdown rule.

**Professional Kickboxing:** Striking the opponents head with the knee is a legal technique  
**Amateur Kickboxing:** Striking the opponents head with the knee is a FOUL.

**Professional Kickboxing:** 8 oz. and 10 oz. boxing gloves are the industry standard for professional kickboxing  
**Amateur Kickboxing:** 10 oz. and 12 oz. boxing gloves are the industry standard for amateur kickboxing. However, for both **professional** and **amateur** kickboxing, all issues pertaining to mandatory and optional equipment, including protective headgear and/or shin and instep protectors will be determined by the presiding commission



## PROPOSED UNIFIED RULES OF AMATEUR KICKBOXING

1. Bouts may consist of a maximum of **nine (9) rounds of three (2) minutes** each in duration, with a minimum of one (1) minute rest period between each round.
2. The referee and/or the ringside physician are the only individuals authorized to stop the contest, as determined by the presiding commission. This rule shall not preclude a video or other review of a decision under the procedures of the applicable regulatory authority if a protest is filed claiming a clear rule violation.
3. All bouts are evaluated and scored by three (3) judges.
4. Scoring:
  - A. 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.
  - B. The fighter who has lost the round may be awarded 9, 8, or 7 points.
  - C. If the round is determined to be an even round, a score of 10/10 may be awarded.
  - D. Partial or incomplete rounds will be scored. If no significant action has occurred, the round shall be scored as an even round. This is at the discretion of the judges.

### Scoring Criteria:

Bouts will be evaluated using the following prioritized criteria;

1. Number of Knockdowns.
  2. Cumulative effective Impact on the Opponent.
  3. Number of Clean Scoring Strikes
  4. Ring Generalship or Aggressiveness
5. In the event of a knockdown the referee shall send the standing fighter to a neutral corner and administer a Mandatory Eight (8) Count to the downed fighter.

A knockdown is defined as when a fighter touches the mat with anything other than the soles of their feet as the result of a legal, damaging strike – or is in a defenseless position grabbing the opponent, or hanging on or over the ropes. The referee will have sole discretion in determining a knockdown versus a slip.

If a fighter goes down from what the referee indicates is a “slip” but fails to rise after the referee’s repeated commands, the referee will initiate a count, and follow the procedures of a knockdown. If the fighter does not rise at the count of 10, it will be considered a TKO.

If a fighter injures him/herself and then fails to intelligently defend him/herself by turning their back on the opponent, the referee may, in the proper exercise of their discretion either treat the injury the same as one produced by a fair blow from the opponent and follow the procedures for a knockdown, or terminate the bout and declare the opponent winner by TKO.

6. The Three (3) Knockdown Rule is in effect only where a fighter has been knocked down 3 times in the same round by strikes/kicks to the head. In this event, this fighter shall be determined to have lost the bout by **TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT** (note that “standing eight (8) counts are considered the same as knockdowns in making this determination).
7. The use of the “Standing Eight (8) Count is allowed in order to provide the referee the opportunity to make the best determination regarding if a damaged fighter should be allowed to continue in the match.
8. A fighter who has been knocked down CANNOT be saved by the bell in any round, including the final round.
9. All fighters are required to wear a mouthpiece during any contest. No round can begin without the mouthpieces in place. If any mouthpiece becomes dislodged during the contest, the referee shall call time and have the mouthpiece rinsed and put back in the fighter’s mouth at the first opportune moment, without interfering with the action. The referee may deduct points if he/she feels the mouthpiece is being intentionally dislodged.
10. A fighter shall receive a 20 second count if the fighter is knocked out of the ring and onto the floor. The fighter shall **NOT** be assisted by anyone, including spectators or his seconds. If the fighter is assisted, he may be deducted points, or disqualified, at the sole discretion of the referee. If the fighter falls or is thrown from the ring the referee shall “stop time”, allow the fighter to return, seek the council of the ringside physician and/or penalize the other fighter if there was a fouling action, where appropriate.
11. Fouls:
  - A. Head butts.
  - B. Groin strikes.
  - C. Thrusting or Linear kicks directed at the knee joint
  - D. Striking the back of the head or the spine – defined as striking any of the area beginning at the back of the head starting at the crown of the head and running directly down the center of the head, spreading from ear to ear in the back of the head, running down the entire rear portion of the neck, and beginning again at the occipital junction and stopping at the top of the trapezius, and again from the trapezius muscle down the spine to the tailbone
  - E. Attacks to the throat.
  - F. Striking a downed fighter (a fighter is considered “down” whenever they have any part of their body other than the soles of their feet touching the canvas).
  - G. Failure to obey the referee’s commands.
  - H. Striking on a break.
  - I. Striking after a bell.

- J. Holding or using the ropes while striking or clinching.
- K. Timidity: Repeatedly, intentionally avoiding engagement or contact with the opponent.
- L. Use of abusive language and/or gestures.
- M. Causing intentional delays in the action: For example, repeatedly spitting out the mouth piece, falling out of the ring to cause delay.
- N. Thumbing
- O. Holding the opponent's leg without executing a legal strike or while executing more than one striking technique. (A fighter may grab the opponent's kicking leg and immediately execute one legal strike while taking one step, and then they must immediately release the leg.)
- P. Any effort to down a fighter by a method other than a legal strike or strikes; this includes, but is not limited to joint locks, submission attempts, sweeps, reaps, takedowns and throws.
- Q. Biting.
- R. Spiting at the opponent.
- S. Striking with the elbow, arm, wrist, or other part of the glove that is not the padded part of the glove
- T. Holding, which is defined as repeatedly grabbing, grasping or tying up an opponent in order to prevent the opponent from striking. Clinching is allowed in order to immediately launch a credible knee attack. If in the referee's estimation the attack and/or counter knee attack is consistent and effective, he may allow it to continue for up to five seconds at which point he will separate the fighters. If within the five seconds the knee attack or counterattack wanes or appears ineffective the referee will immediately separate the fighters.
- U. [Striking with the knee to the opponent's head](#)

## 12. Permissible Strikes:

- A. All boxing strikes to permissible target areas.
- B. Spinning backhands/fists to permissible target areas
- C. Knee strikes to permissible target areas
- D. All kicking strikes to permissible targets above the belt line
- E. All kicking Strikes executed with the foot or shin directed to the legs (excluding linear or thrusting kicks directed to the knee joint.

Permissible target areas: a) front and sides of the head ([except for knee strikes](#)); b) front and sides of the torso above the belt; c) entire leg, except the knee joint by thrusting or linear kicks.

## 13. The winner of a match may be decided in the following ways:

- A. Points Decision: When both contestants finish the scheduled rounds, victory is awarded by majority decision of the judging panel.
- B. Knockout: If a contestant is incapable of resuming the fight within the referee's ten-count due to legal strikes.
- C. Technical Knockout:
  1. If the official determines a contestant shows no will to, or is incapable of resuming the fight due to a legal technique
  2. If the official determines the contestant can no longer intelligently defend him/herself
  3. If the contestant does not leave his corner to take part in the fight following the sounding of the bell.
  4. If the referee is of the opinion that one contestant is outmatched by the opponent and continuing the match would jeopardize the athlete's health and safety
  5. If the bout is terminated for medical reasons due to injury resulting from a legal technique.
  6. Where an athlete's corner indicates to the official, they no longer wish to continue the contest and "throws in the towel") If a contestant or his coach/corner man gives up the fight. The contestant or his coach/corner man will indicate this to the referee or the regulatory representative assigned to his corner (The corner "throws in the towel").

D. Disqualification:

1. The referee disqualifies the fighter for any reason including intentional, deliberate, flagrant or repeated fouling.
2. The referee disqualifies the fighter if anyone from their corner enters the ring during the bout or touches one of the fighters during the contest, other than during the rest period, or when permitted by the commission representative.

E. Draw:

1. If following the end of all rounds, at least two of the three judges do not pronounce one of the fighters a winner.
2. If both fighters go down at the same time and neither can resume the fight within the referee's ten-count.

F. No Decision:

1. If a fighter cannot continue as the result of an accidental foul and the bell has not yet sounded completing the second round of a three round bout or completed the third round of a five round bout or completed the fourth round of a bout scheduled for more than five rounds.
2. If the referee decides both fighters must be disqualified
3. Where the commission determines any other determination would result in a miscarriage of justice.

14. A fighter who has been struck with a low blow is allowed up to five minutes to recover from the foul as long as in the referee and/or ringside doctor's opinion the fighter may continue on in the contest. If the fighter states that they can continue on before the five minutes of time have expired, the referee shall as soon as practical restart the fight. If the fighter goes over the five (5) minute time allotment, the fight cannot be restarted, and the contest must come to an end with the outcome determined by the round and time in which the fight was stopped.

15. Injuries Sustained by Intentional Fouls:

- A. If an intentional foul causes an injury, which is severe enough to terminate the bout immediately, the fighter causing the foul shall lose by **DISQUALIFICATION**.
- B. If the referee determines that a contest may continue despite an injury caused by an intentional foul, the referee shall immediately inform the Commission's representative and the judges and the judges shall deduct the points as determined by the referee and/or the commission's representative
- C. If an injury caused by an intentional foul result in the contest being stopped later in the bout, or in a later round:
  - (i) If the injured fighter is ahead on the scorecards, he shall be declared the winner by a **TECHNICAL DECISION**, or
  - (ii) If the injured fighter is behind or even on the scorecards, the contest shall be declared a **TECHNICAL DRAW**.
- D. If a fighter injures himself while attempting to foul his opponent, but is able to continue fighting, the referee shall take no action and treat the injury as if produced by a fair blow. If the referee determined fighter who injured him/herself is unable to continue, that fighter will lose by **TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT/KNOCKOUT**.

16. Injuries Sustained by Unintentional Fouls:

- A. If an unintentional foul causes an injury, which is severe enough to terminate the bout immediately, the contest shall result in a **NO DECISION**, if a bout has not completed the rounds necessary to score a technical decision.
- B. If an unintentional foul causes an injury severe enough to terminate the bout once the bout is considered official, the bout shall be awarded to the fighter ahead on the scorecards, including incomplete rounds, by way of a **TECHNICAL DECISION**.

A bout is considered "official" if completing the second round of a three round bout or completed the third round of a five round bout or completed the fourth round of a bout scheduled for more than five rounds.

If the injury from the UNINTENTIONAL foul is not severe enough to immediately stop the bout but later becomes aggravated and causes the bout to be stopped, the bout shall be awarded to the fighter ahead on the scorecards, including incomplete rounds, by way of a TECHNICAL DECISION if the bout has been official. Otherwise the bout will result in a NO DECISION.

- C. If a fighter injures themselves while attempting to intentionally foul their opponent:
  - (i) and is able to continue fighting, the referee will not take any action;
  - (ii) If the referee feels that a fighter has conducted themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner, the referee may stop the bout and disqualify the fighter
  - (iii) If the offending fighter fails to intelligently defend him/herself by turning their back on the opponent, the referee may, in the proper exercise of their discretion, either treat the injury the same as one produced by a fair blow from the opponent and follow the procedures for a knockdown, or terminate the bout and declare the opponent winner by TKO.

17. 10 oz. and 12 oz. boxing gloves are the industry standard for amateur kickboxing. All issues pertaining to mandatory and optional equipment, including protective headgear and/or shin and instep protectors will be determined by the presiding commission.

18. Male contestants must not wear clothing or other attire on their upper bodies. Female contestants must wear short sleeved (above the elbow) form fitting tops or a sports bra.

19. No fighter may leave the ring before the end of the bout. Should the fighter fail to resume the bout following the end of the rest period, the referee shall begin counting as though there were a knock-down. At the conclusion of the count, the opponent shall be awarded the bout by way of **TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT**.