# ABC MMA RULES & REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

July 2022



### Why we do this......

• "I'm a regulator. That's what I do. I make sure the rules are being followed so the fight can go on. So that it's fair. So that the fighters, their camps, the fans, companies, media, gamblers, and spectators can trust it. Otherwise, it's anarchy. Both boxing and mixed martial arts (MMA) can certainly be brutal, but the whole thing is bound together by rules. There written and enforced by the names you don't know and the faces you won't see."

Marc Ratner in the book "Ringside my life outside the ropes and the octagon"

#### **Committee Members**

- Andy Foster, California Athletic Commission
- Patrick Cunningham, Florida Athletic Commission
- Scott Bowler, Pete Suazo Utah Commission
- Cristiano Sampaio, CABMMA
- Jeff Mullen, Nevada Athletic Commission\*
- Don Muzzi, Ringside Physician
- Erik Magraken, Combat Attorney \*

- John McCarthy, Commentator & Retired Official
- Herb Dean, Official
- Jerin Valel, Official
- Marc Goddard, Official
- Sal D'Amato, Official\*
- Derek Cleary, Official\*
- Marc Ratner, UFC\*
- Cory Schafer, Bellator\*



## Item #1 for Vote-Joint/Body Coverings

#### Current Language

- •a. Other than the competitor's hands, there will be no taping, covering, or protective gear, of any kind, on the upper body. This includes, but is not limited to: joint sleeves, padding, or any form of brace/body tape.
- b. A competitor may use a soft neoprene type sleeve to cover only the knee and/or ankle joints. Approved sleeves may not have: padding, Velcro, plastic, metal, ties, or any other material considered to be unsafe or that may create an unfair advantage. Tape, gauze, or any materials other than the approved sleeves are not permitted.

#### Proposed Language

- Other than the competitor's hands (as previously listed), there will be no taping, covering or protective gear of any kind on the upper body. This includes but is not limited to: joint sleeves, padding, any form of brace or body gauze/tape.
- A competitor may use soft neoprene type sleeves to cover only the knee or ankle joints. Approved sleeves may not have: padding, Velcro, plastic, metal, ties or any other material considered to be unsafe or that may create an unfair advantage. Tape and gauze or any materials other than the approved sleeves are not permitted on the lower body. The sleeves must be Black in color, with the exception of matching the athletes Commission assigned corner with sleeves being Red or Blue in color as appropriate.

# Item #2 for Vote-Time Consideration for Fouls-Addition of Eye Poke

- Current Language
- Low Blow Foul
- Eye Poke-NONE

- Proposed Language
- Eye Poke Foul:
- A fighter who has received an eye poke as called by the referee is allowed up to five minutes to recover from the foul as long as the ringside doctors confirms the fighter may possibly continue in the contest once recovered. If the fighter states they can see and wish to continue, and confirmed by doctor, the referee shall as soon as practical restart the fight. If the fighter goes over the five-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.



### Scoring Criteria

This is just for clarification and understanding, the Committee would like all Commissions to send this out to their MMA Officials.



#### UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF PRIORITIZED CRITERIA AS IT APPLIES TO CORRECTLY SCORING AN MMA BOUT

We accept that MMA Bouts shall be scored based on a comparative evaluation of each fighters:

- EFFECTIVE STRIKING/GRAPPLING
- EFFECTIVE AGGRESSIVENESS
- CAGE/RING CONTROL

#### But NEVER as a RANDOM or SUBJECTIVE BLEND of These Evaluative Categories

When one fighter demonstrates even a Slight Advantage in EFFECTIVE STRIKING/ GRAPPLING, that fighter shall win that round without any regard for either fighter's Aggressiveness or Cage/Ring Control

#### ONE FIGHTER DEMONSTRATES AN ADVANTAGE IN EFFECTIVE STRIKING/GRAPPLING

SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED EFFECTIVE AGGPESSIVENESS

SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED

ONLY when neither fighter demonstrates even a Slight Advantage in EFFECTIVE STRIKING/ GRAPPLING should the judge consider an advantage in EFFECTIVE AGGRESSIVENESS to determine the winner of that round.

NO ADVANTAGE IN EFFECTIVE STRIKING/GRAPPLING

EFFECTIVE AGGRESSIVENESS

SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED CAGE NOTE CONTROL

SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED

Only when neither fighter demonstrates even a Slight Advantage in EFFECTIVE STRIKING/ GRAPPLING or EFFECTIVE AGGRESSIVENESS should the judge consider an advantage in CAGE/RING CONTROL to determine the winner of that round.

NO ADVANTAGE IN EFFECTIVE STRIKING/GRAPPLING NO ADVANTAGE IN EFFECTIVE AGGRESSIVENESS

CAGE RING CONTROL

In each round, Effective Striking/Grappling shall be considered the first priority in assessing the relative merits of each fighter performance. Effective Aggressiveness is a 'Plan B' and should not be considered unless the judge has determined that there was no advantage in Effective Striking/Grappling. Cage/Ring Control ('Plan C') should only be applicable when a judge determines that both fighters have failed to establish an advantage in either Effective Striking/Grappling OR Cage/Ring Control. This will be an extremely rare occurrence.

#### Scoring Ladder

This is just for clarification and understanding, the Committee would like all Commissions to send this out to their MMA Officials.



#### MMA SCORING MARGIN OF ADVANTAGE CONTINUUM Over-Substantial Slight **Dominant** whelming The option to score a round 10 - 10 is a necessity for judge's DISCERNABLE mainly due to the occasional requirement to score incomplete MMA SCORING LADDER ADVANTAGE rounds where the action or time elapsed in the incomplete 10-10 round should not impact the overall scoring of the bout. MMA PRIORITIZED SCORING CRITERIA FIGHTING AREA CONTROL is not even considered unless both combatants. ADVANTAGE fail to establish even a slight advantage in Effective Aggressiveness, Effective Striking is defined as, "Legal blows that have immediate or cumulative Effective Grappling or Effective Striking. Winning a round based solely on damage with the potential to contribute towards the end of the match". Effective Cage Control shall earn a score of 10-9 10-9 Grappling is defined as, "Successful execution of takedowns, submission attempts, reversals and the achievement of advantageous positions that produce immediate EFFECTIVE AGGRESSIVENESS is not even considered UNLESS both or cumulative damage with the potential to contribute to the end of the match. ADVANTAGE combatants fail to establish even a slight advantage in Effective Grappling or Effective Striking. Winning a round based solely on In both Effective Striking and Effective Grappling, IMMEDIATE damage Effective Aggressiveness shall earn a score of 10-9 shall weigh more heavily than the cumulative damage." SLIGHT Winning a round by a SLIGHT advantage in Effective Note that in Effective Grappling, a successful takedown is not merely a ADVANTAGE Grappling and/or Effective Striking shall earn a score of changing of position, but the establishment of an attack from the use of the takedown. The effectiveness of top and bottom position fighters 10-9 and render any comparison of Aggressiveness and/or Effective Grappling and/ is evaluated more on the damaging results of their actions rather Cage/Ring control as irrelevant. 10-9 than by their relative positions. Winning a round by a CLEAR advantage in CLEAR Nearly 95% ADVANTAGE Effective Striking/Grappling is the top criteria by which judges Effective Grappling and/or Effective Striking will evaluate each round and will be the deciding factor in a shall earn a score of 10-9 and render any Effective Striking and/o Of All Rounds high majority of rounds scored. Effective Grappling comparison of Aggressiveness and/or Cage/Ring 10-9 control as irrelevant. Will Be Scored SUBSTANTIAL ADVANTAGE Winning a round by a SUBSTANTIAL advantage in Effective Grappling 10-9 and/or Effective Striking shall earn a score of 10-9 and render any Effective Grappling and/o comparison of Aggressiveness and/or Cage/Ring Control as irrelevant Effective Striking 10-9 DAMAGE **ADVANTAGE** Winning a round by a DOMINATING ADVANTAGE reflected by a significant duration of domination combined with damage that significantly Note that the word "damage" as used in the scoring criteria diminishes the opponent's ability to compete shall earn a score of 10-8 should be viewed as "a result of legal actions that diminish 10-8 the opponent's ability or will to continue the contest". Damage Winning a round by an OVERWHELMING ADVANTAGE reflected includes visible evidence such as swelling, bruising and ADVANTAGE Less than 5% by near or complete dominance combined with multiple lacerations. Damage shall also be assessed when a fighter's damaging or near-debilitating strikes landed shall earn a score Of All Rounds Will actions, using striking and/or grappling, lead to a diminishing of 10-7. The use of this score is EXTRAORDINARILY RARE. 10-7 of their opponents' energy, confidence, ability, and/or spirit. Be Scored 10-8

# The Committee will present this proposed change at the 2023 Conference

- Current Language- Grounded Fighter
- Any part of the body, other sole of the feet touching the fighting area floor. To be grounded, the palm of one hand (a flat palm) must be down, and/or any other body part must be touching the fighting area floor. A single knee, arm, (not fingers) makes the fighter grounded without having to have any other body part in touch with the fighting area floor.
   At this time, kicks or knees to the head II not be allowed.
- Proposed Language- Grounded Fighter
- an opponent shall be deemed to be a "grounded opponent" if at least one of the opponent's hands is weight-bearing on the floor, including, but not limited to, the palm, finger tips, or fist; or if one or more of the opponent's body parts, other than a nonweight bearing hand or sole of a foot, is touching the floor.