



## UNIFIED RULES OF PROFESSIONAL MUAY THAI

***Note: These are the Official Unified Rules of Professional Muay Thai. Any other form of these rules may not be called the “Unified Rules of Professional Muay Thai” and shall be referred to by the name of the commission sanctioning the/an event.***

1. Each round shall consist of a three (3) minute duration, with a one (1) minute rest period between rounds.
  - a. Bouts shall ordinarily be scheduled for either three (3) or five (5) rounds.
  - b. When a tournament and/or another format is approved, the total number of rounds allowed to be contested in a day shall be determined by the commission with authority in that jurisdiction.
  - c. At the discretion of the presiding commission, bouts will begin after the completion of any pre-fight rituals, in accordance with Thai traditions.
  
2. The referee is the sole arbiter of a bout. 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.
  - a. The authority of a referee begins when the inspector(s) exit the cage/ring and does not end until the inspector(s) re-enter the cage/ring, upon the conclusion of the bout.
  
3. All fighters are required to wear a mouthpiece during competition. No round can begin without the mouthpieces in place. If any mouthpiece becomes dislodged during competition, the referee will call time and have the mouthpiece replaced at the first opportune moment, without interfering with the immediate action, in accordance with procedure approved by the presiding commission. The referee shall confirm with the fighter that the mouthpiece is inserted correctly before restarting the contest. The referee may deduct points if he/she feels the mouthpiece is being intentionally dislodged.
  
4. No fighter may leave the ring before the end of the bout without the referee’s permission. Should the fighter fail to resume the bout following the end of the rest period, the opponent shall be awarded the bout by way of TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT.
  - a. When a fighter is knocked through the ropes and **onto the apron of the ring** by a legal blow or blows, that knockdown shall be treated the same as if they were knocked down inside the ring:
    - i. The fighter will receive the Mandatory eight (8) count and must be standing before the count of ten (10).
    - ii. The fighter then will be given a reasonable amount of additional time to re-enter the ring.

- iii. If the fighter stalls while re-entering the ring the referee may continue the count and count the fighter out.
        - b. When a fighter is knocked through the ropes and **off the platform of the ring** and onto a table or the floor by a legal blow or blows:
          - i. The fighter will receive a Mandatory eighteen (18) count and must be standing before the count of twenty (20).
          - ii. The referee shall use their discretion to allow the fighter a reasonable amount of additional time to return to the ring due to mitigating circumstances.
          - iii. If the fighter stalls while re-entering the ring the referee may count the fighter out.
          - iv. The fighter is to be unassisted re-entering the ring by spectators or their seconds.
          - v. If the fighter is assisted by anyone, the fighter may lose points, or be disqualified with such a decision being within the sole discretion of the referee.
          - vi. The referee should consult with the ringside physician to ensure the fighter is able to continue.
        - c. When a fighter is thrown / falls over or through the ropes without a legal blow, blows or technique:
          - i. The referee will call time.
          - ii. The referee will send the standing fighter in the ring to a neutral corner.
          - iii. The referee will give a reasonable amount of time for the fighter to return to the ring.
          - iv. The referee will consult with the ring side physician to ensure the fighter is able to continue.
          - v. The referee will issue discipline (ie. warnings, point deductions, DQ) if the referee deems it necessary.
          - vi. The referee will restart the bout as soon as they can.
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. 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. It is the responsibility of the downed fighter to demonstrate the ability and intention to safely continue to avoid being “counted out”.
  - b. 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.
  - c. 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. There is **NO** Standing Eight (8) Count.
7. A fighter who has been knocked down CANNOT be saved by the bell in any round, including the final round.
8. The reapplication of petroleum jelly or another similar substance, to the face, may be allowed between rounds and shall only be applied by an approved cutman or licensed cornerman. The use of Thai liniment, as approved by the presiding commission, is permissible to be applied to the fighter’s body. Application of Thai liniment must be done in the dressing room and must be

completely dried prior to entering cage/ring. Reapplication of Thai liniment between rounds is not allowed.

#### 9. Hand Wraps

- a. A maximum of one roll (no more than 2" wide and 20 yards in length) of white, soft, cloth gauze is permitted per hand.
- b. A maximum of one roll (no more than 2" wide and 10 feet in length) of white athletic tape is permitted per hand. Tape may cross the back of the hand twice but may not extend with three-fourths of an inch of the knuckles when the hand is clenched to make a fist. Strips of tape may be placed between the fingers but may not cover the knuckles.

#### 10. Joint/Body Coverings

- a. Other than the fighter'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.
- b. A fighter may use one soft neoprene type sleeves to cover each ankle joint. 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 allowable length and color of sleeves shall be determined by the presiding commission.

#### 11. Cage/Ring Attire

- a. All fighters will be required to wear such protective gear as deemed necessary by the presiding Commission.
- b. Male fighters shall not wear any form of clothing on their upper body.
- c. Male and female fighters shall wear the appropriate trunks, mouthpiece, and gloves. Male fighters shall also wear the appropriate groin protection.
- d. Female fighters 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. The use of breast protectors is optional for female fighters as determined by the presiding commission. Female fighters will follow the same requirements for bottom coverings as the male fighters, minus the requirement for groin protection.
- e. The hem of the trunks may not extend below the mid-thigh. Long pants or leggings are prohibited.
  - i. Compression shorts may be worn under the approved fight trunks, but they may not extend down the leg below the bottom of the trunks.
- f. Fighting shorts/trunks, and sports bras, shall not have exposed Velcro, clasps, pockets, zippers, or other items that may be harmful to the fighter or their opponent.
- g. Fighters shall not wear shoes in the cage or ring.
- h. When deemed necessary by the referee, or presiding commission, all fighters shall have their hair secured in a manner that does not interfere with the vision and safety of either fighter.
  - i. No object can be worn to secure the fighter's hair which may cause injury to their opponent.
- i. The wearing of jewelry will be strictly prohibited during all contests.
  - i. Fighters may wear an inscribed cloth, ad amulet, or an inscribed charm around the upper arm or strung around the waist, but neatly wrapped and covered with cloth. Wrapping the ankles or legs with pieces of cloth is prohibited.
    1. If during the contest, the Pra Jiad (arm band) loosens or moves in a way that may be harmful, or a distraction, it may be removed at the discretion of the referee.
- j. Wearing body cosmetics shall be prohibited during all contests. Wearing facial cosmetics shall be at the discretion of the presiding commission and/or referee.

#### 12. Fouls:

- A. Head butts
- B. Groin strikes
- C. Thumbing or eye gouging
- D. Biting
- E. Spiting at the opponent
- F. Hair pulling
- G. Attacks to the throat
- H. Striking your opponent while grounded
- I. Strikes directed to the back of the head or the spine
- J. Tripping or sweeping an opponent- Using trips and sweeps; it is legal to kick an opponent off their feet. A kick is an action that uses the top of the foot and/or front of the shin. It is possible to hook the foot and kick as long as the top of the foot and/or shin, and not the side of the foot, contact the opponent's leg.
- K. Hip, shoulder, or leg throws (No hip tosses, grape vining, reaping, or lifting an opponent)
- L. Grasping the opponent's lower back while also forcing an opponent's spine to hyperextend
- M. Intentionally falling on a downed opponent, pressing elbow or knee upon him/her
- N. Wrestling, back or arm locks or any similar judo or wrestling hold
- O. Attempting to 'pile-drive' an opponent's head into the canvas
- P. Catching an opponent's kick and pushing an opponent for MORE than two steps in any direction without attempting to deliver an attacking technique. (i.e., permissible to catch your opponent's kick, hold your opponent's leg, and take up to two steps)
- Q. If a fighter's leg is caught while kicking, he/she may not intentionally ground themselves
- R. Striking a downed fighter or fighter entangled in the ropes
- S. Failure to obey the referee's commands
- T. Striking on a break
- U. Striking after a bell
- V. Holding the ropes/cage or using the ropes/cage while striking or clinching
- W. Holding the opponent's shorts
- X. Timidity or causing intentional delays in the action (Repeatedly or intentionally avoiding engagement or contact with the opponent, spitting out the mouth piece, or falling out of the ring to cause delay)
- Y. Unsportsmanlike behavior including use of abusive language and/or gestures.
- Z. Attacking an opponent who is under the care of the referee;
  - i. Once the referee has called for a stop of the action to protect a fighter who has been incapacitated or is unable to continue to compete in the fight, fighters shall cease all offensive actions against their opponent.
- AA. Interference from fighter's corners or seconds;
  - i. Interference is defined as any action or activity aimed at disrupting the fight or causing an unfair advantage to be given to a corner's fighter. Corners are not allowed to distract the referee or influence the actions of the referee in any fashion.

13. Permissible strikes include punches, kicks, elbows, and knees.

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

- A. Points Decisions
  - a. Unanimous Decision: When all three judges score the bout for the same fighter.
  - b. Split Decision: When two judges score the bout for one fighter and one judge scores the bout for the opponent.
  - c. Majority Decision: When two judges score the bout for one fighter and one judge scores the bout a draw.
  - d. Technical Decision: When a bout is prematurely stopped due to injury from an accidental foul and a fighter is leading on the score cards.
- B. Draws

- a. Unanimous Draw: When all three judges score the bout a draw.
- b. Majority Draw: When two judges score the bout a draw.
- c. Split Draw: When one judge scores the bout for one fighter, one judge scores the bout for the opponent, and one judge scores the bout a draw.
- d. Technical Draw: When an injury is sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul and the bout is allowed to continue, then later the injury requires stoppage from either a legal or illegal strike to the affected area after:
  - i. A completed 2 rounds of a scheduled 3 round bout
  - ii. A completed 3 rounds of a scheduled 5 round bout
 If the injured fighter is even or behind on the score cards at the time of stoppage, the decision is a Technical Draw
- e. Draw: When both fighters go down at the same time, and neither can resume the fight within the referee's ten count.

C. Knockout (KO)

- a. When a fighter is incapable of resuming the fight within the referee's ten-count due to legal strikes or the referee stops the contest because a fighter CANNOT intelligently defend themselves

D. Technical Knockout (TKO)

1. Referee Stoppage:

- a. If the referee determines a fighter shows no will to or is incapable of resuming the fight due to a legal technique.
- b. If the referee determines the fighter is NOT intelligently defending themselves.
- c. If the fighter does not leave their corner to take part in the fight following the sounding of the bell.
- d. If the referee is of the opinion that one fighter is outmatched by the opponent and continuing the match would jeopardize the fighter's health and safety
- e. Where a fighter's or their corner indicates to the referee they no longer wish to continue the contest. If a fighter or their coach/corner decide to give up the fight, the fighter or their coach/corner will indicate this to the referee or the regulatory representative assigned to their corner (also known as "throwing in the towel").

2. Medical Stoppage:

- a. If the bout is terminated for medical reasons due to injury resulting from a legal technique.
- b. If the bout is terminated on the advice of the ringside physician.
- c. Loss of control of bodily function.

E. Disqualification:

- a. When an injury sustained during the bout as a result of an intentional foul is severe enough to terminate the bout, multiple fouls have been assessed, interference from a fighter's corner, and/or there is a flagrant disregard for the rules and/or referee's commands.

F. No Decision/No Contest:

- 1. When a bout is prematurely stopped due to an accidental injury and a sufficient number of rounds have not been completed to render a decision via the score cards.
- 2. If the referee decides both fighters must be disqualified.

15. Time Consideration

a. Low Blow

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

low blow occurred (Intentional vs Accidental), the round, and time in which the fight was stopped.

b. Eye Poke

A fighter who has received an eye poke as called by the referee, is allowed up to five (5) minutes to recover from the foul as long as the ringside physician confirms the fighter may possibly continue in the contest once recovered. If the fighter states that they can see and wishes to continue before the five (5) minutes of time have expired, and confirmed by the ringside physician, the referee shall restart the fight as soon as practical. If the fighter goes over the five (5) minutes time allotment, the fight cannot be restarted and the contest must come to an end with the outcome determined by how the eye poke occurred (Intentional vs Accidental), the round, and time in which the fight was stopped.

16. Intentional Fouls

- A. If an intentional foul causes an injury, and the injury is severe enough to terminate the bout immediately, the fighter causing the injury shall lose by disqualification.
- B. If an intentional foul causes an injury and the bout is allowed to continue, the referee shall notify the authorities and deduct two (2) points from the fighter who caused the foul. Point deductions for intentional fouls will be mandatory.
- C. If an injury caused by an intentional foul results in the contest being stopped after a completed 2 rounds of a scheduled 3 round bout, or a completed 3 rounds of a scheduled 5 round fight, by either another legal or illegal strike, the judges will score the incomplete round and:
  - (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 themselves while attempting to intentionally foul their 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 the fighter who injured themselves is unable to continue, that fighter will lose by **TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT/KNOCKOUT**.
- E. If the referee determines that a fighter has conducted themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner, they may stop the action of the fight to deduct points or stop the bout to disqualify the fighter.

17. Accidental Fouls:

- A. If an accidental foul causes an injury severe enough for the referee to terminate the bout immediately, the bout will result in either a NO CONTEST or DISQUALIFICATION if stopped before:
  - i. A completed 2 rounds of a scheduled 3 round bout
  - ii. A completed 3 rounds of a scheduled 5 round bout
- B. If an accidental foul causes an injury severe enough for the referee to terminate the bout immediately after:
  - i. A completed 2 rounds of a scheduled 3 round bout
  - ii. A completed 3 rounds of a scheduled 5 round boutThe bout will result in a **TECHNICAL DECISION** awarded to the fighter who is ahead on the score cards at the time the bout is stopped. Partial or incomplete rounds will be scored. If no action has occurred, the round should be scored as an even round. This is at the discretion of the judges.
- C. If a fighter, during the course of a round, visibly loses control of bodily function (vomit, urine, feces), the fight shall be stopped by the referee and the fighter shall lose the contest by a **TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT (TKO)** due to Medical Stoppage.
  - i. In the event a loss of bodily function occurs in the rest period between rounds, the ringside physician shall be called in to evaluate if the fighter can continue. If the

fighter is not cleared by the ringside physician to continue, that fighter shall lose by a TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT (TKO) due to Medical Stoppage.

- ii. If fecal matter becomes apparent at any time, the contest shall be halted by the referee, and the offending fighter shall lose by a TECHNICAL KNOCKOUT (TKO) due to Medical Stoppage.

18. Bouts shall ordinarily be contested in a ring with not less than four (4) ropes. Bouts may be approved by the presiding commission to be contested in an alternative format where the size of the enclosure is no less than 16 feet in length and width. Padded surface must be approved by presiding commission.

### **Judging Criteria**

**Judges shall consider damage, domination and duration when evaluating the relative merits of each fighter's performance in each round. Towards that end they shall use the following prioritized criteria to establish their scores:**

- a. A fighter who has an advantage in the number or quality of knockdowns in a round shall never lose that round.
- b. If there is no advantage in knockdowns, the fighter with a clear advantage in cumulative damage shall win the round.
- c. If there is not a clear advantage in cumulative damage, the fighter with the greater number and/or variety of clean scoring Muay Thai techniques shall win the round.

If the above criterion fails to distinguish either fighter, the round may be awarded to the fighter who was more successful in applying either aggressiveness, control or effective defense in their efforts to win the round.

### **Judge's Scoring System**

1. All bouts will be evaluated and scored by a minimum of three (3) judges.
2. The 10 Point Must System will be the standard system for scoring a bout.
  - a. Under the 10 Point Must Scoring System, ten (10) points must be awarded to the winner of the round.
  - b. The fighter who has lost the round may be awarded nine (9) or less points depending on the margin of advantage.
  - c. In the very rare case that neither fighter has shown even a marginal advantage, a 10-10 round may be awarded.
  - d. Partial or incomplete rounds shall be scored. If no significant action has occurred, the round shall be scored as 10-10. This is at the discretion of the judges.
  - e. Any time the referee penalizes either fighter, then the appropriate points shall be deducted when the scorekeeper calculates the final score (including partial rounds).
3. The following objective scoring criteria shall be utilized by the judges when scoring a round:
  - a. An extremely rare 10-10 round is not a score to be used as an excuse by a judge that cannot assess the differences in the action of a round. It should only be used to score an incomplete round where nothing occurred in the round.
  - b. A round is to be scored as a 10-9 round when there is a slight or clear advantage in overall action favoring one fighter, but not an overwhelming advantage.
  - c. A round is to be scored as a 10-8 round when there is an overwhelming advantage without a knockdown, or a fighter won the round and scored a knockdown.
  - d. A round is to be scored as a 10-7 round when a fighter won the round and scored two knockdowns.

- e. A round is to be scored as a 10-6 round when a fighter won the round and scored three knockdowns.

**Recommended Weight Classes**

Mini-Flyweight	up to and including 105 lbs.
Light-Flyweight	over 105 to 108 lbs.
Flyweight	over 108 to 112 lbs.
Super-Flyweight	over 112 to 115 lbs.
Bantamweight	over 115 to 118 lbs.
Super-Bantamweight	over 118 to 122 lbs.
Featherweight	over 122 to 126 lbs.
Super-Featherweight	over 126 to 130 lbs.
Lightweight	over 130 to 135 lbs.
Super Lightweight	over 135 to 140 lbs.
Welterweight	over 140 to 147 lbs.
Super-Welterweight	over 147 to 154 lbs.
Middleweight	over 154 to 160 lbs.
Super Middleweight	over 160 to 168 lbs.
Light Heavyweight	over 168 to 175 lbs.
Cruiserweight	over 175 to 200 lbs.
Heavyweight	over 200 to 225 lbs.
Super Heavyweight	over 225 lbs.