523 CMR 23.00: SOUTHEAST ASIAN KICKBOXING

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23.01: Applicability

The provisions of 523 CMR 23.00 shall apply to all professional and amateur Southeast Asian Kickboxing matches and exhibitions required to be licensed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 147, § 32 and individuals required to be licensed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 147, § 35.

23.02: Requirements for Ring

(1) Southeast Asian Kickboxing competitions must be conducted in a ring in conformance with 523 CMR 23.02(2).

(2) A ring used for a contest or exhibition of Southeast Asian Kickboxing must meet the following requirements:

(a) The ring may be either of three sizes; 18 feet x 18 feet, 20 feet x 20 feet, or 24 feet x 24 feet, measured from the inner side of the ropes.

(b) The ring floor shall be not less than three feet and not more than four feet high from the ground.

(c) The ring floor shall be soundly constructed with no obstructions, and extend at least three feet but not more than four feet beyond the ropes.

(d) The ring floor shall be based on either felt, rubber or other flexible materials not less than ½ inch and not more than ¼ inch thick, entirely covered with canvas stretched tightly over the entire ring floor.

(e) All four-ring corners must be erected with four ring posts of five inches in diameter. The erected height must be 60 inches from the ring floor and the inner corners of the ropes must be completely taped to prevent harm to competitors.

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(f) There shall be a minimum of four ropes at least 1.18 inches and not more than 1.97 inches diameter, stretched tightly to the four corner posts. Each side of the rope ring shall be held rigid by two pieces of strong cloth equally spaced each side. The tightening cloths shall not slip when the ropes are moved.

(g) There shall be at least two sets of steps to the ring: one set of steps at each of the red and blue corners provided for the competitors and their seconds.

23.03: Fighter Classification

There shall be amateur and professional classifications of Southeast Asian Kickboxing participants. No individual shall be eligible to compete as a professional until they have competed as an amateur and are adequately experienced. Any fighter who has been classified as a professional athlete in any other pugilistic sport by any official sanctioning body shall be prohibited from fighting as an amateur.

23.04: Number and Duration of Rounds

In all Southeast Asian Kickboxing contests the number and duration of rounds must conform to the following criteria unless granted a waiver or dispensation by the State Athletic Commission:

(1) Amateur. Rounds of two minutes in duration.

(2) Professional: Rounds of three minutes in duration.

(3) Non-title Bouts. Depending upon the discipline, bouts shall consist of three or five rounds of the appropriate duration with a one minute rest period between rounds. Amateur bouts shall be three rounds.

(4) Title Bouts.:

(a) Amateur. Bouts shall consist of five rounds of the appropriate duration with a one minute rest period between rounds.

(b) Professional. Bouts shall consist of five rounds of the appropriate durations with a one minute rest period between rounds.

23.05: Weight Classes

(1) Southeast Asian Kickboxing Combatants shall be classified as follows:

(a) Flyweight ..... up to 125.9 lbs
(b) Bantamweight ..... 126 to 130 lbs
(c) Light Featherweight ..... 130.1 to 135 lbs
(d) Featherweight ..... 135.1 to 140 lbs
(e) Super Lightweight ..... 140.1 to 145 lbs
(f) Lightweight ..... 145.1 to 150 lbs
(g) Light Welterweight ..... 150.1 to 155 lbs
(h) Welterweight ..... 155.1 to 160 lbs
(i) Light Middleweight ..... 160.1 to 170 lbs
(j) Middleweight ..... 170.1 to 185 lbs
(k) Light Heavyweight ..... 185.1 to 205 lbs
(l) Heavyweight ..... 205.1 to 235 lbs
(m) Super Heavyweight ..... over 235 lbs

(2) Combatants shall be given a one-pound allowance except for title fights where no allowance is given.

(3) After the weigh-in of an unarmed combatant competing in any Southeast Asian Kickboxing match, weight loss in excess of two pounds is not permitted. The weight loss may not occur later than one hour after the initial weigh-in of the fighter.

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(4) The provisions of 523 CMR 13.00: *Weight Classes, Weigh-ins, Pre- and Post-fight Physical Examinations, and Medical Conditions* shall apply to both professional and amateur Southeast Asian Kickboxing competitors, where applicable.

23.06: Specifications for Bandages on Southeast Asian Kickboxing Combatants' Hands

(1) In all weight classes, the bandages on each contestant's hand shall be restricted to soft gauze cloth not more than 15 yards in length and two inches in width, held in place by not more than ten feet of surgeon's tape, two inches in width, for each hand. Surgeon's adhesive tape may be placed directly on each hand for protection near the wrist. The tape may cross the back of the hand twice and extend to within one inch of the knuckles when the hand is clenched to make a fist. Tape may be placed between the knuckles to secure the wrap, but must not cover the striking surface. The bandages shall be evenly distributed across the hand. The bandages may be secured by one winding of lightplast (flextape) bandage with the same restriction of a one inch gap from the knuckles of a clenched fist.

(2) Bandages and tape for professional competitors shall be placed on contestant's hands in the dressing room in the presence of a representative of the Commission. At the completion of the hand wrap, each shall be marked by a Deputy Commissioner indicating that it has been performed in accordance with 523 CMR 23.06(1). Amateur wraps do not have to be affixed in the presence of a representative of the Commission, but do have to be approved after application.

(3) Each fighter shall be required to wrap their hands in accordance with 523 CMR 23.06.

(4) Under no circumstances are gloves to be placed on the hands of a contestant until the approval of the Commission or its representative is received.

23.07: Mouth Pieces

(1) All contestants are required to wear a mouthpiece during competition. The mouthpiece shall be subject to examination and approval by a Commission representative or referee.

(2) No round may begin without a mouthpiece in place.

(3) If a mouthpiece is involuntarily dislodged during competition, the referee shall call time, clean the mouthpiece and reinsert the mouthpiece at the first opportune moment without interfering with the immediate action.

23.08: Protective Equipment

(1) Male Southeast Asian Kickboxing combatants shall wear a groin protector of their own selection.

(2) Female combatants shall wear approved anatomically correct groin protectors.

(3) Female combatants may wear a chest protector during competition. The chest protector shall be subject to approval of the Commission.

(4) Amateur fighters must wear shin-guards and elbow pads approved by the Commission.

(5) The promoter shall provide the shin-guards and elbow pads.

(6) All protective equipment is subject to the inspection and approval by the Commission or its representative.

23.09: Gloves

The promoter shall provide gloves for the fighters in accordance with 523 CMR 12.05: *Requirements for Gloves*. Fighters competing against one another must wear the same size gloves. Amateurs must wear ten ounce gloves.

23.10: Apparel

(1) All combatants must wear Southeast Asian boxing style shorts without pockets.

(2) Contestants may wear traditional armbands secured around the biceps. No metal or abrasive material may be contained.

(3) Gis or shirts are prohibited during competition for males. Females may wear an armless shirt. The shirt shall be tucked into the shorts and may not be loose or in any way impede the fighter.

(4) Shoes are prohibited during competition. Fighters must compete barefoot.

(5) Elastic support anklets may be worn.

(6) Elastic or neoprene style knee supports may be worn with approval of the Commission, and may not contain any hard or solid material.

23.11: Traditional Pre-fight rituals

Prior to the start of the first round, a fighter may perform traditional pre-fight rituals, limited to one minute. There shall be a five minute time limit on traditional pre-fight rituals prior to championship fights. A fighter who interferes in any way with his or her opponent as they perform their own ritual, will be disqualified and the match awarded to the opponent.

23.12: Competitor Eligibility

Professional and amateur competitors must be licensed in accordance with 523 CMR 6.00: *Licensing and Registration*, provided, however, that amateur competitors do not have to complete the testing outlined in 523 CMR 6.02(2)(d).

23.13: Seconds

Seconds shall be governed by 523 CMR 14.08: *Limitations on Seconds*. Further, all seconds must remain seated during the round.

23.14: Stopping a Contest

The referee is the sole arbiter of a bout and the only individual authorized to enter the fighting area at any time during competition and authorized to stop a contest. A ringside physician may enter the ring at any time between rounds of a contest or when summoned by the referee.

23.15: Legal Techniques for Professional Contests

All of the following legal techniques are to be read in harmony with, and are subject to, the rules governing illegal techniques/fouls in professional contests set forth in 523 CMR 23.16. All of the following techniques are legal:

(a) All kicks to legal targets;
(b) Knee strikes to legal targets;
(c) Elbow strikes to legal targets;
(d) Strikes with all padded/gloved surfaces of the fists;
(e) Spinning and jumping techniques;
(f) Neck wrestling to unbalance and show control;
(g) Catching kicks;
(h) Clinching to strike or unbalance;
(i) Sweeping the leg of an opponent using the front of the leg as defined by malleolus to malleolus through the front of side of the leg;
(j) Sweeping the leg of an opponent using the knee;
(k) A legal strike of the opponent's leg in a manner which causes him to fall;
(l) Twisting of an opponent over a planted leg;
(m) Pushing an opponent in a manner to unbalance them.

23.16: Illegal Techniques/Fouls in Professional Contests

All of the following illegal techniques/fouls are to be read in harmony with, and are subject to, the rules governing legal techniques in professional contests set forth in 523 CMR 23.15. All of the following techniques are prohibited:

(a) Butting with the head;
(b) Eye gouging of any kind;
(c) Biting or spitting at an opponent;
(d) Groin attacks or strikes of any kind;
(e) Downward pointing elbow strikes to the head;
(f) Strikes to the spine;
(g) Throat strikes of any kind;
(h) Kicking a grounded combatant/striking an opponent who has fallen;
(i) Kneeing a grounded combatant.;
(j) Stomping of a grounded combatant or stomping the foot of a standing opponent;
(k) Use of illegal techniques to throw an opponent;
(l) Circular neck twisting;
(m) Striking the back of the head;
(n) Directly attacking the knee joint;
(o) Any joint attack including neck locks;
(p) Striking after the bell/signal has sounded;
(q) Striking after break has been called;
(r) Rubbing open lacerations;
(s) Any throw utilizing the hip to propel the opponent;
(t) Any trip or sweep using the rear of the leg as defined by: malleolus to malleolus through the heel;
(u) Elevation of the opponent which causes both feet to leave the ground before executing a throw;
(v) Any "back-breaking" technique which causes pressure on the opponent's spine;
(w) The use of abusive language in fighting area;
(x) Any unsportsmanlike conduct that causes an injury to opponent;
(y) Attacking an opponent who is under the referee's care at the time;
(z) Timidity (avoiding contact, or consistent dropping of mouthpiece, or faking an injury);
(aa) Interference from a competitor's seconds;
(bb) Holding on to the ropes or corner padding;
(cc) Intentionally throwing or trying to force an opponent out of the fighting area;
(dd) Flagrant disregard of the referee's instructions.

23.17: Legal Techniques for Amateur Contests

All of the following legal techniques are to be read in harmony with, and are subject to, the rules governing illegal techniques/fouls in amateur contests set forth in 523 CMR 23.18. All of the following techniques are legal:

(a) All kicks to legal targets;
(b) Knee strikes to legal targets;
(c) Strikes with all padded/gloved surfaces of the fists;
(d) Spinning and jumping techniques;
(e) Neck wrestling to unbalance and show control;
(f) Catching kicks;
(g) Clinching to strike or unbalance;
(h) Sweeping the leg of an opponent using the front of the leg as defined by malleolus to malleolus through the front of side of the leg;
(i) Sweeping the leg of an opponent using the knee;
(j) A legal strike of the opponent's leg in a manner which causes him to fall;
(k) Twisting of an opponent over a planted leg;
(l) Pushing an opponent in a manner to unbalance them;
(m) Elbow strikes with elbow pad to legal target.

23.18: Illegal Techniques/Fouls in Amateur Contests

All of the following illegal techniques/fouls are to be read in harmony with, and are subject to, the rules governing legal techniques in amateur contests set forth in 523 CMR 23.17. All of the following techniques are prohibited:

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(a) Butting with the head;
(b) Eye gouging of any kind;
(c) Biting or spitting at an opponent;
(d) Elbowing including any part of the forearm;
(e) Groin attacks or strikes of any kind;
(f) Downward pointing elbow strikes to the head;
(g) Strikes to the spine;
(h) Throat strikes of any kind;
(i) Kicking a grounded combatant/striking an opponent who has fallen;
(j) Kneeing a grounded combatant;
(k) Stomping of a grounded combatant or stomping the foot of a standing Opponent;
(l) Kneeing the head of an opponent;
(m) Use of illegal techniques to throw an opponent;
(n) Circular neck twisting;
(o) Striking the back of the head;
(p) Directly attacking the knee joint;
(q) Any joint attack including neck locks;
(r) Striking after the bell/signal has sounded;
(s) Striking after break has been called;
(t) Rubbing open lacerations;
(u) Any throw utilizing the hip to propel the opponent;
(v) Any trip or sweep using the rear of the leg as defined by: malleolus to malleolus through the heel;
(w) Elevation of the opponent which causes both feet to leave the ground before executing a throw;
(x) Any "back-breaking" technique which causes pressure on the opponent's spine;
(y) The use of abusive language in fighting area;
(z) Any unsportsmanlike conduct that causes an injury to opponent;
(aa) Attacking an opponent who is under the referee's care at the time;
(bb) Timidity (avoiding contact, or consistent dropping of mouthpiece, or faking an injury);
(cc) Interference from a competitor's seconds;
(dd) Holding on to the ropes or corner padding;
(ee) Intentionally throwing or trying to force an opponent out of the fighting area;
(ff) Flagrant disregard of the referee's instructions.

23.19: Ploughing and Grabbing of an Opponent's Leg

Ploughing is the act of catching an opponent's leg and walking towards them. When an opponent's leg is caught, the combatant may take three steps towards their opponent before having to release the leg. Each step must be accompanied by a legal strike. Ploughing an opponent by driving them across the ring will result in an immediate point deduction or disqualification for the second instance or if two previous fouls have occurred in the round.

23.20: Judging

(1) All bouts will be evaluated and scored by three judges. The Ten-point Must System will be the standard system of scoring a bout. Under the Ten-point Must Scoring System, ten points must be awarded to the winner of the round and nine points or less must be awarded to the loser. No round may be scored 10-10.

(2) Awarding of Points. In determining the score, judges shall evaluate Southeast Asian Kickboxing techniques such as effective striking, clinching, control of the fighting area, and effective aggressiveness and defense.

(a) Points will be awarded whenever the combatant hits the opponent by punching, kicking, kneeing or elbowing (for professionals) with force, which lands on target without infringement and without being blocked or guarded against.

(b) Effective striking is judged by determining the total number of legal heavy strikes landed by a contestant including when competitors land simultaneous or counter strikes. Strikes are ranked in order highest to lowest and shall be evaluated as follows:

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1. Push kicks landed to the head, body and legs;
2. Kicks landing to the head, body and legs;
3. Elbows landing to head, body and legs (all for professionals only);
4. Knees landing to the head (all for professionals only), body and legs;
5. Punches landing to the head, body and legs.

(c) Effective clinching is judged by ability of a fighter to effectively control their opponent while in their grasp.

(d) Fighting area control is judged by determining who is dictating the pace, location and position of the bout.

(e) Effective aggressiveness means moving forward and landing a legal strike.

(f) Effective defense means avoiding being struck or thrown while countering with offensive attacks.

(3) The following objective scoring criteria shall be utilized by the judges when scoring a round:

(a) A round is to be scored as a 10-9 Round when a contestant wins by a close margin, landing the greater number of effective legal strikes, clinching and/or other maneuvers.

(b) A round is a 10-8 Round when a contestant overwhelmingly dominates by striking or clinching in a round.

(c) A round is a 10-7 Round when a contestant totally dominates by striking or clinching in a round.

23.21: Cautions and Warnings

(1) The referee may choose to caution a fighter if they perceive that there may be an impending foul or if there has been an unintentional foul. A caution carries no judging penalty, but may advise the referee in assessing a warning for similar fouls.

(2) The referee may issue a warning for rule infractions or assess a one point penalty. The point shall be subtracted from the final round score by the judges.

(3) Severity of the penalty shall be determined by the impact the illegal act had on the bout. A combatant should never benefit from an illegal act. If the act in question results in giving the combatant a positional advantage, the referee may stop the action to take away the advantage. If the combatant uses an illegal technique to escape from a disadvantaged position, the referee may issue a warning.

23.22: Fouls

(1) The following are fouls and will result in penalties if committed:

(2) Disqualification may occur after any combination of two fouls in a single round or three in a match. The referee may immediately terminate a bout based upon a single foul if he determines that it was intentional and flagrant. In that event, the fight shall be deemed a disqualification.

(3) Fouls assessed by the referee will result in a point deduction by the judge from the offending combatant's score.

(4) Only a referee can assess a foul. Judges shall not make that assessment and cannot factor such into their scoring calculations.

(5) A fouled combatant has up to five minutes to recuperate.

(6) If a foul is committed, the referee shall:

(a) Call time;

(b) Check the fouled combatant's condition and safety; and

(c) Assess the foul to the offending contestant, deduct points, and notify each corner's seconds, judges and the official scorekeeper.

23.23: Injuries Sustained During Competition

(1) If a combatant sustains an injury during competition due to a legal maneuver that is severe enough to terminate a bout, the injured contestant loses by technical knockout.

(2) If a combatant sustains an injury during competition due an intentional foul that is severe enough to terminate a bout, the contestant causing the injury loses by disqualification.

(3) If a combatant sustains an injury during competition due to an intentional foul and the bout continues, the referee shall notify the scorekeeper to deduct two points from the contestant who committed the foul.

(4) If an injury sustained during competition because of an intentional foul causes the injured contestant to be unable to continue at a subsequent point in the contest, the injured contestant shall win by technical decision, if he or she is ahead on the scorecards. If the injured contestant is even or behind on the score cards at the time of stoppage, the outcome of the bout is a technical draw.

(5) If a contestant injures himself or herself while attempting to foul his or her opponent, the referee shall not take any action in his or her favor, and the injury shall be treated in the same manner as an injury produced by a fair blow.

(6) If an injury sustained during competition due to an accidental foul and the foul is severe enough for the referee to stop the bout immediately, the bout shall result in a no contest if stopped before the combatants complete two rounds in a three round bout or if stopped before three rounds in a five round bout.

(7) If an injury sustained during competition from an accidental foul is severe enough for the referee to stop the bout immediately, the bout shall result in a technical decision awarded to the contestant who is ahead on the scorecards at the time the referee stops the bout. This happens only when the referee stops the bout when the combatants completed two rounds of a three round bout, or three rounds of a five round bout.

(8) There will be no scoring of an incomplete round. However, if the referee penalizes either contestant, the judge will deduct the appropriate points when they calculate the final score.

23.24: The Referee

(1) The primary duty of the referee is to ensure the safety of the combatants to the maximum degree.

(2) The Referee's Responsibilities:
(a) The referee's uniform will consist of black trousers, with no belt buckle, and black short-sleeved shirt and flat soled shoes. No visible jewelry is allowed.
(b) The referee shall ensure the following:
1. Fairness in the application of the rules and regulations to all parties.
2. No impoliteness in manner or speech either to the combatants or the audience.
3. Close supervision of the match.
4. Protection of a weaker fighter against serious injury.
5. Inspection of the boxing gloves and anklets, and ensure the proper safety equipment is worn.
6. For a professional title fight, the referee must inform the combatants and their seconds of the rules and regulations governing the fight. This is to be done in the dressing room, prior to the fight itself.

(3) Three verbal orders are recognized:
(a) "STOP" command ordering the combatants to stop fighting.
(b) "BREAK" when ordering the combatants to separate.
(c) "FIGHT" when ordering the combatants to continue the match.

(4) When the combatants are ordered to "BREAK," both must step back one step and await the referee's "FIGHT" order before continuing to fight.

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(5) The referee shall use the correct signal to ensure a combatant's understanding of any rule infringement.

(6) At the end of each round the referee will collect the score sheets from each of the three judges and hand them to the scorekeeper.

(7) Should it be necessary to stop the match or penalize a combatant, the referee will immediately advise the reason to the judges and the scorekeeper.

(8) The referee is forbidden to comment or speculate on any match unless receiving prior approval from the committee chairman.

(9) All referees are subjected to a yearly medical inspection and certification by a physician approved by the Commission and must be physically fit at the start of any match.

23.25: Referee's Duties

(1) To stop the match immediately if they consider that one combatant is significantly more skilled or stronger than the other.

(2) To stop the match immediately when a combatant is in difficulties or is injured.

(3) To stop the match immediately if he considers that one or both fighters are not honestly competing.

(4) To stop the match or warn the combatant for committing a foul or breaking the rules.

(5) To immediately disqualify a combatant who intentionally breaks the rules, injures or shows any aggression to the referee.

(6) To disqualify both the combatant and his seconds if his seconds intentionally break the rules or do not follow his directions.

(7) To disqualify any combatant who intentionally causes or accidentally causes a foul multiple times.

(8) To stop the match if he considers that a combatant having received a count is unable to effectively continue the match.

(9) To disallow any advantage to a combatant who intentionally fouls in any way.

23.26: The Decision

(1) A Knock-out (K.O.) is awarded when the opponent is knocked down and unable to continue within the ten second count.

(2) A Technical Knock-out (T.K.O.) is awarded:
(a) When a combatant is seriously hurt or weakened.
(b) When a combatant cannot continue the match after the break.
(c) On the doctor's recommendation, when the referee is unsure whether a combatant can continue the match due to injury or being seriously weakened.
(d) After receiving a count twice previously in the same round, upon the need for a third count.
(e) Winning due to the opponent's retirement because of injury.

(3) Winning on Points.
(a) Unanimous. When all three judges score the bout for the same contestant.
(b) Split Decision. When two judges score the bout for one contestant and one judge score for the other contestant.

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(c) Majority Decision: When two judges score the bout for the same contestant and one judge scores a draw.

(4) Disqualification.
(a) No Decision. A result of both parties colluding together to cheat or not fighting properly.
(b) Disqualification. Winning due to the opponent's violation of the rules.

(5) No Contest. A no contest shall be declared when the referee stops a contest due to accidental injury and the requisite number of rounds have not been completed to render a decision via the scorecards or as a result of the ring being damaged and the match not being able to continue, or if an external event occurs during the fight, causing it to be stopped, or if both fighters are unable to continue due to injury. If less than one round of a three round bout or three rounds of a five round bout has been completed at the time of the stoppage, the bout shall be declared a no contest. If the requisite number of rounds has been reached, individual score decides.

(6) Draws.
(a) Unanimous. When all three judges score the bout a draw.
(b) Majority. When two judges score the bout a draw.
(c) Split. When all three judges score the bout differently and the score total results in a draw.
(d) When both combatants receive a count of ten.

23.27: Procedure After a Knock-out or Technical Knock-out

(1) If a combatant is knocked unconscious or injured, only the physician, the referee, and representative of the Commission are allowed in the ring. Any others may only enter at the physician's discretion.

(2) A combatant losing by a K.O. or T.K.O. will be immediately treated and undergo a physical examination by the ringside physician.

(3) Without the special permission of the Commission, a combatant may not compete in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts unless four days for each round that their last contest or exhibition of Southeast Asian Kickboxing lasted have elapsed.

23.28: Interpretation

(1) The Commission will have discretion over any item not covered in 523 CMR 23.00 which does not have a prior ruling established by the State Athletic Commission.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

523 CMR 23.00: M.G.L. c. 147, § 46.