

523 CMR: STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION

523 CMR 14.00: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL UNARMED COMBAT CONTESTS AND EXHIBITIONS

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14.01: Unarmed Combatants must Report Before Contest or Exhibition

Each unarmed combatant must report to the representative of the Commission in charge of dressing rooms before the scheduled time of the first contest or exhibition of a program of unarmed combat.

14.02: Proper Attire and Equipment of Unarmed Combatants

- (1) Each unarmed combatant must provide themselves with a costume, including shorts without pockets or openings, which is subject to the approval of the Commission or its representative.
- (2) Each unarmed combatant must appear in proper attire. The unarmed combatants may not wear the same colors in the ring or, if the contest or exhibition is being held in a fenced area, in the fenced area, without the approval of the Commission's representative.
- (3) The belt of the shorts must not extend above the waist line.
- (4) (a) Each unarmed combatant must wear a mouthpiece which has been individually fitted.
(b) Each boxer must wear an abdominal protector which will protect him or her against injury from a foul blow. The abdominal protector must not cover or extend above the umbilicus.
- (5) Mixed Martial Arts combatants may not wear shoes or any padding on their feet during the contest.
- (6) Mixed Martial Arts combatants may not wear anything on the legs, including but not limited to braces or sleeves on the knees or ankles, or tape.
- (7) For boxers only, soft braces or sleeves on the knees or ankles may be used with the approval of the Commission.
- (8) All male combatants must wear appropriate groin protections.
- (9) All female combatants must wear a form-fitting short sleeve rash guard and/or sports bra, and groin protections are prohibited.

14.03: Physical Appearance of Unarmed Combatants

- (1) A light layer of grease and nothing else may be used on a combatant's face, not to extend behind the ears. Grease may not be used anywhere else on the combatant's body. The referees or the Commission's representative in charge shall cause any excessive grease or foreign substance to be removed. Combatants shall be examined by a referee or Deputy Commissioner prior to entering the ring or cage to ensure that improper or excessive amounts of grease are not present.
- (2) The Commission's representative shall determine whether head or facial hair presents any hazard to the safety of the unarmed combatant or his or her opponent or will interfere with the supervision and conduct of the contest or exhibition. If the head or facial hair of an unarmed combatant presents such a hazard or will interfere with the supervision and conduct of the contest or exhibition, the unarmed combatant may not compete unless the circumstances creating the hazard or potential interference are corrected to the satisfaction of the Commission's representative.
- (3) An unarmed combatant may not wear any jewelry or other piercing accessories while competing.
- (4) Finger nails shall be of a length so as not to be able to inflict injury to an opponent.

14.04: Time Required to Elapse Before Unarmed Combatant Competes in Successive Contest or Exhibition

- (1) With respect to contests or exhibitions of unarmed combat, except for mixed martial arts, without the special permission of the Commission, an unarmed combatant may not compete unless:
 - (a) Four days have elapsed since their last contest or exhibition if the contest or exhibition lasted not more than four rounds.
 - (b) Seven days have elapsed since their last contest or exhibition if the contest or exhibition lasted five or six rounds.
 - (c) 14 days have elapsed since their last contest or exhibition if the contest or exhibition lasted seven or eight rounds.
 - (d) 21 days have elapsed since their last contest or exhibition if the contest or exhibition lasted nine or ten rounds.
 - (e) 30 days have elapsed since their last contest or exhibition if the contest or exhibition lasted 11 or 12 rounds.
- (2) With respect to mixed martial arts contests or exhibitions, without the special permission of the Commission, an unarmed combatant may not compete unless four days have elapsed for each round completed in their last competition.

14.05: Procedure for Use of Scorecards

- (1) The Commission or Commission's representative shall give scorecards to each judge, before the start of the contest or exhibition,. There shall be one card for each scheduled round of the bout. Each card shall identify the unarmed combatant and the corner they are assigned to.
- (2) The judges shall score each round of the contest or exhibition on an individual scorecard and sign it. The Commission or its designee shall pick up the scorecard from each judge and turn in the scorecards at the Commission's desk following the completion of each round.
- (3) Reports of each contest or exhibition will be kept on file in the office of the Commission.

14.06: Conduct of Chief Second and Assistant Seconds; Instructions to Unarmed Combatants by Referee

The referee shall, before starting a contest or exhibition, ascertain from each unarmed combatant the name of their chief second, and shall hold the chief second responsible for the conduct of the assistant seconds during the contest or exhibition.

14.07: Limitations on Seconds

- (1) No unarmed combatant may have more than three seconds except that in a contest for a world title or in a special event the Commission may authorize four seconds.
- (2) For boxing, only one of the seconds may be inside the ring ropes during a period of rest. In mixed martial arts and other unarmed combative sports, two of the seconds may be inside the ring ropes or fenced area during a period of rest unless the services of a cutman are required during the period of rest. In that case, only one of the seconds may be inside the ring ropes or fenced area during the period of rest.
- (3) A second may not coach excessively from the corners during a period of unarmed combat and must remain in their assigned corner area during the period of the contest.
- (4) Any excessive or undue spraying or throwing of water on an unarmed combatant by a second during a period of rest is prohibited.

14.08: Duties of Ringside Physician

- (1) There shall be at least two physicians present at all programs of unarmed combat.
- (2) One of the two physicians designated by the Commission shall sit at the immediate ringside at every contest or exhibition. A contest or exhibition may not proceed unless one ringside physician is in their seat at ringside. The ringside physician shall not leave until after the decision in the final contest or exhibition. They shall be prepared to assist if any serious emergency arises and shall render temporary or emergency treatments for cuts and minor injuries sustained by the unarmed combatants.
- (3) If an unarmed combatant appears to have been injured during a period of unarmed combat, their manager or second shall not attempt to render aid to him before the ringside physician has had an opportunity to examine them.
- (4) A physician shall examine each unarmed combatant contemporaneously with the weigh in for the scheduled match and following the match. An evaluation form provided by the Commission shall be completed for each examination and returned to the Commission.

14.09: Warning Before Start of Round

Ten seconds before the beginning of each round the timekeeper shall give warning to the seconds of the unarmed combatants by blowing a whistle or by utilizing some other type of audible device approved by the Commission.

14.10: Duration of Round

- (1) A round of unarmed combat, other than the final round, includes a period of unarmed combat followed by a period of rest. The final round of unarmed combat includes only a period of unarmed combat.
- (2) For boxing and amateur mixed martial arts contests or exhibitions, a period of unarmed combat must be three minutes in duration, and a period of rest following a period of unarmed combat must be one minute in duration. The Commission may approve a different duration for either period.
- (3) For professional mixed martial arts contests or exhibitions, a period of unarmed combat must be five minutes in duration, and a period of rest following a period of unarmed combat must be one minute in duration. The Commission may approve a different duration for either period.
- (4) A round of unarmed combat does not begin or end until the bell, gong, airhorn or other audible device approved by the Commission sounds.

14.11: Persons Allowed in Ring

- (1) No persons other than the unarmed combatants and the referee may be in the ring or fenced area during a period of unarmed combat.
- (2) The referee may stop a contest or exhibition if an unauthorized person enters the ring or fenced area during a round.

14.12: Fouls: Disqualification; Withholding of Purse in Professional Contests or Exhibitions

An unarmed combatant guilty of a foul may be disqualified by the referee and, in the case of professional contests, their purse may be withheld by the Commission. Disposition of the purse and the penalty to be imposed upon the unarmed combatant will be determined by the Commission.

14.13: Fouls: Intentional

- (1) If the referee determines that a contest or exhibition may not continue because of an injury caused by an intentional foul, the unarmed combatant who committed the intentional foul loses by disqualification.
- (2) If the referee determines that a contest or exhibition may continue despite an injury caused by an intentional foul, the referee shall immediately inform the Commission's representative and the judges and shall deduct two points in boxing or one point in mixed martial arts from the score of the unarmed combatant who committed the intentional foul.
- (3) In boxing only, if an injury caused by intentional foul results in the contest or exhibition being stopped in a later round:
 - (a) The injured unarmed combatant wins by technical decision, if they are ahead on the scorecards; or
 - (b) The contest or exhibition must be declared a technical draw, if the injured unarmed combatant is behind or even on the scorecards.
- (4) If an unarmed combatant injures themselves while attempting to foul his opponent, the referee shall not take any action in their favor and the injury must be treated the same as an injury produced by a fair blow.

14.14: Determination to Stop Contest or Exhibition: Injury to Unarmed Combatant

The referee shall determine whether a contest or exhibition should be stopped because of an injury to an unarmed combatant.

14.15: Determination to Stop Contest or Exhibition: One-sided Contest or Exhibition; Risk of Serious Injury

- (1) The referee may stop a contest or exhibition at any stage if the referee determines that the contest or exhibition is too one-sided or if either unarmed combatant is in such a condition that to continue might subject the unarmed combatant to serious injury.
- (2) The referee shall stop a contest or exhibition of unarmed combat at any stage if the referee determines that both unarmed combatants are in such a condition that to continue might subject the unarmed combatants to serious injury. If a contest or exhibition is stopped pursuant to 523 CMR 14.16(2), the decision shall be deemed to be a technical draw.

14.16: Determination to Stop Contest or Exhibition: Unarmed Combatant not Honestly Competing

If the referee decides that an unarmed combatant is not honestly competing, they may stop the contest or exhibition before its scheduled completion, disqualify the unarmed combatant and recommend the purse of that unarmed combatant be withheld in whole or in part.

14.17: Leaving Ring During Period of Rest Prohibited; Effect of Failure to Resume Competition

An unarmed combatant shall not leave the ring or, if the contest or exhibition is being held in a fenced area, the fenced area, during any period of rest that follows a period of unarmed combat. If an unarmed combatant fails or refuses to resume competing when the bell sounds signaling the commencement of the next round, the referee shall award a decision of technical knockout to their opponent as of the round which has last been finished, unless the circumstances indicate to the Commission the need for investigation or punitive action, in which event the referee shall not give a decision and shall recommend that the purse or purses of either or both unarmed combatants be withheld.

14.18: Procedure When Unarmed Combatant Has Fallen Through or Been Knocked Through Ropes

- (1) An unarmed combatant who has been knocked or has fallen through the ropes and over the edge of the ring platform during a contest or exhibition:
 - (a) May be helped back by anyone except his or her seconds or manager; and the referee will stop the clock, assess the combatant's condition, and resume time once the combatant is able to safely re-enter the ring.
 - (b) Will be given 20 seconds to return to the ring.
- (2) An unarmed combatant who has been knocked or has fallen on the ring platform outside the ropes, but not over the edge of the ring platform:
 - (a) May not be helped back by anyone, including, without limitation, his or her seconds or manager; and the referee may stop the clock and assess the situation until the combatant is able to return to the ring.
 - (b) Will be given ten seconds to regain his or her feet and get back into the ring.
- (3) If the seconds or manager of the unarmed combatant who has been knocked or has fallen pursuant to 523 CMR 14.18(1) and (2) helps the unarmed combatant back into the ring, such help may be cause for disqualification.
- (4) When one unarmed combatant has fallen through the ropes, the other unarmed combatant shall retire to the farthest corner and stay there until ordered to continue the contest or exhibition by the referee.
- (5) An unarmed combatant who deliberately wrestles or throws an opponent from the ring, or who hits him or her when he or she is partly out of the ring and is prevented by the ropes from assuming a position of defense, may be penalized.

14.19: Announcement of Winner

At the termination of each contest, the announcer shall announce the winner and the referee shall raise the hand of the winner.

14.20: Change of Decision after Contest or Exhibition: Factors Considered by Commission

- (1) A request for change of decision after a contest or exhibition must be in writing, and the Commission may, in its discretion, refuse the request without reviewing details of the fight or holding a hearing.
- (2) The Commission will not exercise its discretion to review a decision unless it receives compelling and plausible allegations of:
 - (a) Collusion or fraud affecting the result of a contest or exhibition; or
 - (b) Scoring error resulting in a decision given to the wrong unarmed combatant; or
 - (c) Flagrant referee error resulting in a decision given to the wrong unarmed combatant.
- (3) The Commission will hold a hearing to review a decision only if it believes there is the potential for licensee discipline, or if in its judgment testimony is required. In the case of allegations addressed in 523 CMR 14.20(2)(a) and (b), review of the decision will generally be limited to scoring records and / or video of the fight in question.
- (4) The Commission will not change a decision unless collusion or error directly affected the outcome of the fight.

14.21: Physician's Report to Commission after Contest or Exhibition; Contents

The physician designated by the Commission shall conduct a post fight examination of each combatant and file a report after a contest or exhibition. The report must list, at a minimum, each case in which an unarmed combatant:

- (1) Was injured during the contest or exhibition; or
- (2) Applied for medical aid after the contest or exhibition.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

523 CMR 14.00: M.G.L. c. 147, § 46.