



# KNOCK OUT-UNLIMITED official Rules

- Supervised by: Japan MMA Referee Organization -

## Article 1 [General Provisions]

### Section 1: (Purpose)

The purpose of these rules is to determine all of the matters related to the operation and management of fights under the UNLIMITED rules (hereinafter referred to as "rules") adopted in official KNOCK OUT fights held under the jurisdiction of the KNOCK OUT UNLIMITED Fight Management Office (hereinafter referred to as "KOU Fight Management").

### Article 1-2 (Definition and Fundamental Principles of the Competition)

The rules are centered around striking (punches, kicks, knees, elbows) and throws/takedowns. Chokes and submissions are strictly prohibited, as well as attacks and holds lead to these prohibited attacks.

### Section 2: (Respect for the host country and fight officials)

During the fight, regardless of whether it is before, during or after the fights, all officials such as referees and doctors who are in a position to manage and control the fight have absolute authority and must be respected.

2: In accordance with international standards, we must show the utmost respect for the host country and city.

3: During the fight, you must focus on MMA as a fair sport and refrain from any discriminatory racial or sexual remarks, political statements, religious statements, etc. that needlessly incite conflict among spectators.

### Section 3: (Role of KOU Fight Management)

As an internal organization entrusted with fight management by the promoter, KOU Fight Management will manage all fights under these rules held under its jurisdiction and approve the results of the fights.

2: Although KOU Fight Management is an organization entrusted with fight management by the promoter, it has independence in terms of fight management authority and carries out its duties in a neutral and fair manner. At the same time, the entrusting promoter will strive to maintain the independence of KOU Fight Management and guarantee its independence, including exemption from liability for damages etc. that occur during the fight.



#### Section 4:(Name)

The KOU Fight Management will appoint a head referee for each fight, and the selected head referee will manage the fight as the on-site manager. The head referee and the other referees, judges, and inspectors are collectively referred to as "ring official."

#### **Article 2: Conditions for participation in the fight**

##### Section 5: (Weight classes)

Bouts will be held in the following 12 weight classes:

- Flyweight - 50.5kg
- Super Flyweight - 52.0kg
- Bantamweight - 53.5kg
- Super Bantamweight - 55.0kg
- Featherweight - 57.5kg
- Super Featherweight - 60.0kg
- Lightweight - 62.5kg
- Super Lightweight - 65.0kg
- Welterweight - 67.5kg
- Super Welterweight - 70.0kg
- Cruiserweight - 90.0kg
- Heavyweight 90kg

2. The KOU Fight Management may approve catchweight bouts at its discretion. If it is assured that the fight is fair, safe and there are no competitive issues, an upper weight limit may be set regardless of the above classification.

##### Section 6: (Official Weigh-in)

The official weigh-in will be held at a date, time and place designated by the organizer before the fight. The official weigh-in will end two hours after the weigh-in began.

2: In principle, fighters who fail the weigh-in as above will be disqualified, but the fight can be held only if the excess weight over the prescribed weight limit (including weight limits in fights where weight limits are approved; the same applies below) is less than 2.0 kg and the opponent agrees to the fight.

3. When a fight is held pursuant to the above, points will be deducted from fighters who fail the weigh-in as set forth below, and the fight will begin after point deducted.

(1) If a fighter is less than 1.0 kg over the designated weight limit, one point will be deducted.

(2) If a fighter is less than 2.0 kg over the designated weight limit, two points will be deducted.



### Section 7: (Obligation to Attend Rules Meetings)

At least one fighter or corner participating in a fight must attend the rules meeting designated by the fight management organization.

### Section 8 (Obligation to get a medical examination)

Before each fight on the day of the fight, fighters must follow the organizers' instructions and undergo a medical examination by a doctor at the venue to check for any health problems that would prevent them from participating in the fight.

2. If, as a result of the medical examination as above, it is determined that it is medically inappropriate for a fighter to participate in the fight, the fighter will not be able to take part in the fight on that day.

## **Article 3 Fight Area**

### Section 9: (Official Fight Area)

Fights are held in a cage surrounded by a fence or a ring surrounded by ropes.

2. The cage must be a circle with at least six equilateral sides and of a suitable size with a diameter of at least 5.5 meters. The fence must be of standard and material that will prevent fighters from falling or breaking through it and must be properly coated with vinyl or other materials. All metal parts in the fenced area must be covered and padded.
3. The ring must be in the shape specified as above or a square with at least 6 meters on each side and must be surrounded by at least three ropes.
4. The floor of the fight area must be padded with at least 2 cm of urethane material, and the top surface must be covered with canvas. The padding material must be homogenous throughout and must not vary in hardness or unevenness.
5. No obstacles of any kind may be placed on the floor of the fight area.
6. Fight venues that do not meet the standards set forth in this Article may be considered official fight venues only when approved by the KOU Fight Management.

## **Article 4: Sports Equipment, etc.**

### Section 10:

Fighters must wear the equipment listed in Item 1 below. Fighters may also wear the equipment listed in Item 2 below at their discretion. All equipment must be checked and approved by the referee at a designated time before the fight.

### (Item1) Must Be Worn Equipment

- a) Open Finger Gloves



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Fighters must wear open finger gloves approved for use in the fight by the KOU Fight Management.

Fighters must not use gloves brought by fighters or other third parties and must use gloves provided by the promoter.

b) Mouthpiece

c) Foul cup: Goring Guard (men)

Fighters must wear a foul cup that the referee approved which will not interfere with the fight.

d) Men's Fight Shorts

Male fighters must be naked from the waist up, and wear the following shorts, leggings, etc. for the lower body.

- ① Shorts that are long enough but not to reach the kneecaps when worn.
- ② Shorts that do not use parts made of metal, hard plastic, or other hard materials.
- ③ Shorts that have strings or elastic attached to the waist to prevent from slipping.
- ④ Shorts that do not have pockets or similar on the outside.
- ⑤ Shorts that have materials other than the main material of the sewn or glued to the surface. However, this does not apply to shorts that are clearly not dangerous and that the referees deem it will not interfere with the fight, such as prints on the shorts, etc.
- ⑥ Shorts that are clean and undamaged
- ⑦ Shorts that have a reasonable need to wear a costume not specified in these rules, and that the referees deem will not interfere with the fight.

e) Shorts for women's fights

Female fighters will wear the following rash guards or other clothing on their upper body, and shorts, spats, or other clothing of the same standard as men on their lower body.

- ① Shirts that fit close to the body and are either short-sleeved, sleeveless, or sports bra in shape.
- ② Shirts that are not integrated with the shorts as one piece.
- ③ Shirts and shorts that do not use parts made of metal, hard plastic, or other hard materials.
- ④ Shirts and shorts that have materials other than the main material of the sewn or glued to the surface.
- ⑤ However, this does not apply to shirts and shorts that are clearly not dangerous and that the referee deems
- ⑥ will not interfere with the fight, such as print with paint, etc.
- ⑦ Shorts that are clean and undamaged
- ⑧ Shorts that have a reasonable need to wear a costume not specified in these rules, and that the referees
- ⑨ deem will not interfere with the fight.

### (Item 2) Optional Fight Equipment

a) Use of bandages and taping on hands (hand wrapping)



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When fighters voluntarily use bandages or taping on their hands (hereinafter referred to as "hand wrapping"), they must use them within the scope of the following standards.

- ① The materials and quantities of bandages and taping that can be used for hand wrapping will be decided by KOU Fight Management.
  - ② When wrapping hands, taping must not be used on the knuckle part (front part of the fist) or knuckle arch (head of metacarpal bone on the front of the fist). However, only thin pieces of tape may be used between fingers.
  - ③ When wrapping hands, bandages must not be passing between fingers.
  - ④ When wrapping hands, bandages or tape must not be twisted, folded, or otherwise formed into a core, paper twist, or similar state.
  - ⑤ When wrapping the hands, foreign substances other than bandages and tape (water, chemicals, solid objects, etc.) must not be used.
  - ⑥ After the wrapping hand is completed, it must be checked by a referee within the designated time.
- b) Taping on the body parts other than hands
    - ① Taping on joints around elbows and knees is permitted as long as the referee approves it will not interfere with the fight, and fighters must not cover the tips of their elbows or knees with tape.
    - ② When using tape, the referee must check the material and quantity to ensure safety, and only tape that is deemed safe may be used.
    - ③ After applying the tape, the referee must check and approve it within the designated time.

c) Supporters

Fighters may wear supporters on their lower limbs (knees, ankles) that do not contain metal, plastic, hard rubber, or other parts, and are not padded with cushioning materials, and that the referee approves it will not interfere with the fight.

d) Abdominal guards, chest guards, or chest pads (women only)

The first part of this c) above (Supporter regulations) shall apply to the materials, etc.

Section 11: (Non-standard equipment and application of other substances)

Wearing equipment other than that specified in the previous article or use of non-standard/non-approved equipment is not permitted.

2. Fighters are not permitted to wear hard objects, except for the foul cup for male fighters. In addition, fighters are not permitted to wear any jewelry or piercing.
3. Fighters are not permitted to use any chemicals or application of cosmetics, such as Vaseline, oils, hair products, slip-proof products, nail polish, nail art, pedicures, etc., on any part of the body, except for Vaseline applied to the face under the supervision of the referee. However, makeup on the face of female fighters is permitted if it does not cause discomfort to the opponent and does not interfere with the fight.



4. Fighters must apply an appropriate amount of Vaseline to their face under the supervision of the referee before the fight and during the interval between rounds before participating in the fight. However, this does not apply to fights in which elbow attacks to the head and face are not permitted.

## **Article 5 Fights: Fight Format**

### Section 12: (Fight format)

Fights shall consist of three rounds, with each round to be three minutes. The rest period (interval) between rounds shall be one minute. A fourth round (extension round) shall be held as an extra round only if the winner is not decided by judges at the end of the third round. In the case of an extra round, an interval of at least one minute shall be provided.

2. In preliminary fights, etc., the fight time for each round may be two minutes.
3. The fight format for tournament fights or special fights may be held with respective special regulations.

### Section 13: (Definition of offensive and defensive positions)

The offensive and defensive positions are defined as follows.

- ① Starting position: The position at the start of a fight or after the main referee has called "break" Both fighters stand at least 1.5m apart and show a fighting pose, and the fight begins and resumes at the voice and signal of the main referee.
- ② Ground position: A position in which any part of the body other than the hands and feet is in contact with the floor.
- ③ Standing position: Any position that is not a ground position.

### (Interpretation and Restrictions on Submissions)

Article 13-2: Holds for the Purpose of Control (Permissible): Even if a hold is generally considered to be a step toward a submission (chokehold or joint lock), it is recognized as a valid technique if it is used solely to "control the opponent's movements" or "transition to a favorable position (guard pass, sweep, etc.)."

2. Actions Considered as Setups (Prohibited and Breaks): If the main referee determines that the hold described in the previous article goes beyond control and is "preparation for a submission (setup)," the action will be immediately stopped, and both fighters will be required to resume (break) from their starting positions (standing).

### Section 14: (Decision of the winner)

The winner of a fight shall be decided by technical knockout (TKO), knockout (KO), disqualification, no contest, decision, etc.



### Section 15: (Technical knockout: TKO)

If the referee determines that the fight cannot continue due to any of the following circumstances, the result will be determined as a technical knockout (TKO).

① Referee stoppage

- a) When the main referee determines that a fighter is not consciously [intellectually] defending himself/herself, etc.
- b) When the sub-referee in charge of the fight determines that the fight cannot continue due to the first paragraph of item 1-a of this section and requests the main referee to stop the fight. The method by which the sub-referee requests the fight to be stopped shall be determined by the head referee for each fight such as blowing the whistle.

② Tap out (TO)

When a fighter uses his/her body to hit the opponent or the mat two or more times to indicate that the fight cannot continue.

③ Verbal tap out (VTO)

When a fighter verbally informs the referee that the fight cannot continue, or when he/she yells out in pain or distress, either of his/her own volition or unintentionally.

④ Doctor Stoppage

When the main referee declares the end of the fight after considering the official doctor's professional advice.

⑤ Medical Stoppage

- a) When a fighter visibly loses control of bodily functions during a round (vomiting, incontinence, defecation).
- b) When a loss of bodily function occurs during the rest period between rounds, the official doctor will determine whether the fighter can continue, and the official doctor will not make it clear that the fighter can continue.

⑥ Corner Stoppage

When a corner of the fighter expresses his/her intention to abandon the fight. In principle, a corner expresses his/her intention to abandon the fight by throwing a towel into the fight area.

### Section 16: (Knockout: KO)

If the main referee judges that a fighter is in a state where he is unable to consciously (intellectually) defend himself (defense is impossible) due to the opponent's attack, the result will be determined as a knockout.

### Section 17: (Disqualification)

If the main referee judges a fighter to be disqualified for any of the following reasons, the outcome will be decided by disqualification.



- ① If a fighter commits a foul as specified in Article 24 and is disqualified at the referee's discretion.
- ② If a corner commits a serious violation of the provisions of Article 31 and is disqualified at the referee's discretion.
- ③ If any other act besides the above two occurs that seriously undermines the validity of the fight.

#### Section 18: (No Contest)

If the main referee determines that the fight is a no contest due to any of the following circumstances, the fight will end with a no contest ruling.

- ① If the referee determines that an injury was the result of an accidental foul during the fight and immediately determines that the fight should be ended, but one round has not yet been completed.
- ② If the fight is deemed invalid by the judges or in consultation with the fight officials.

#### Section 19: (Judgment)

If the outcome is not decided within the allotted time, three judges will judge the fight, and the fighter judged to be superior by two or more of the three judges will be declared the winner by points. However, if the fight extends into an extension round, the judges will judge only one of the fighters based on extension round, and the fighter judged to be superior by two or more of the three judges will be declared the winner by points.

2. Judging procedures for fights held in a tournament, special fights, etc. may follow the respective special regulations.

(Special Provisions for Judging in Title fights)

Article 19-2: In fights approved as title fights, Article 19, Paragraph 1 shall not apply. The outcome shall be determined by decision by five judges. The fighter who receives the advantage from three or more judges shall be declared the winner by decision.

#### Section 20: (Criteria for Judging)

The criteria for judging shall be as follows.

The judges shall evaluate the first (Plan A), second (Plan B), and third (Plan C), etc., and shall determine the winner by the scoring method set forth in the next section after evaluating each item in order (Plan B and C will not be considered unless Plan A is evaluated as equivalent).

- ① Effective Striking/Grapppling (Plan A)

Effective striking is judged based only on the results of strikes allowed by the rules, and the impact/effect of the strikes.

Effective grappling is judged based on effective results with the impact brought by takedowns, gaining advantageous position, etc.



② Effective Aggression (Plan B)

Effective aggressiveness is aggressively trying to end the fight.

③ Fighting Area Control (Plan C)

Fighting area control is judged by determining which fighter controls the pace, location, and position of the fight.

Section 21: (Judge's Scoring)

The judge's scoring method is as follows. Each judge will score each round on a 10-point system, and the winner will be determined by the total score.

① 10 - 10

If there is no difference or advantage between the two fighters, regardless of the length of the fight, the round will be scored 10-10.

② 10 - 9

If one fighter lands more effective strikes or uses more effective grappling during the time of a round and wins by a narrow margin, the round will be scored 10-9.

③ 10 - 8

If one fighter wins by a large margin in terms of impact, advantage, and duration of strikes or grappling during the time of a round, the round will be scored 10-8.

④ 10 - 7

If one fighter completely dominates the duration of a round in terms of striking or grappling impact, dominance, and duration of dominance, the round will be scored 10-7.

2. The definitions of impact, dominance, and duration of dominance in the preceding paragraphs 3 and 4 are as follows:

① Impact: Damage

The judges will evaluate whether a fighter caused a significant impact (damage) on the opponent in that round. Impact includes visible signs such as swelling and lacerations. Impact also includes any action that reduces the opponent's energy, confidence, fighting ability, or mental strength through strikes or grappling. All of these are considered to have occurred as a direct result of impact. If a fighter becomes unsteady or loses the ability to fight due to the impact of a strike, this is a decisive moment in the round and must be evaluated with great value.

② Dominance

Since UNLIMITED is a sport based on aggression, a round's dominance is when a fighter who is inferior in terms of strikes is forced to defend and could attack but does not return or react in any way. The advantage in grappling is when a fighter has a position of advantage during a fight and uses that position to launch a fight-ending attack. Advantage cannot be evaluated by simply maintaining a position of advantage, but by what the fighter does in that position.



### ③ Duration

Duration of control is defined as the amount of time that one fighter effectively attacks, controls, and impacts the opponent. Judges evaluate the relative amount of time during a round that one fighter has complete control and maintains effective offensive control. This can be done both on the ground and on the stand.

#### Section 22: (Draw)

If the main referee determines that both fighters have been knocked out at almost the same time, the fight is declared a draw.

2. Cases stipulated in Section 29- 4 and 7 (technical draw).

#### Article 23: (Suspension of fight results)

If a situation arises that makes it impossible to make an on-the-spot decision on a fight, the officials may withhold the fight result and leave it for deliberation by the fight management organization.

2 If the facts necessary to make a decision are not clear at the time of the fight, the officials may make a provisional decision. A provisional decision must be confirmed later, and a formal decision must be made within two weeks.

### **Article 6: Fouls**

#### Section 24:

The acts set below in this article are fouls, and if they are committed, an appropriate penalty will be imposed at the discretion of the referee.

- (1) Headbutting
- (2) Direct attacks on the eyeballs
- (3) Biting
- (4) Spitting on an opponent
- (5) Grabbing or pulling an opponent's hair
- (6) Fish hooking
- (7) Any attack on the groin area
- (8) Inserting fingers into an opening, wound, or laceration
- (9) Grabbing or applying pressure to small joints (fingers or toes) less than three at a time
- (10) Strikes to the spine or back of the head
- (11) Any strike to the throat or grabbing the trachea
- (12) Pointing outstretched fingers at an opponent's face or eyes
- (13) Grabbing, pinching, or twisting the skin
- (14) Grabbing any part of the ring, such as the ropes or fences



- (15) Grabbing an opponent's costume or gloves
- (16) Using abusive language in the ring
- (17) Any unsportsmanlike behavior that may cause injury to an opponent
- (18) Attacking an opponent during a break
- (19) Attacking an opponent while under the referee's control
- (20) Attacking an opponent after the end of the round signal has sounded
- (21) Avoiding contact with the opponent or any other passive behavior
- (22) Leaving the fight area on your own
- (23) Throwing an opponent outside the fight area
- (24) Significantly ignoring the instructions of a referee
- (25) Making verbal protests or making false statements to a referee
- (26) Sticking an opponent's head or neck into the canvas (so-called spiking)
- (27) Chokehold: Any act of compressing the opponent's neck (throat, carotid artery) with the forearm, upper arm, leg, or fingers, thereby restricting breathing or blood flow.
- (28) Joint lock: Any act of extending, bending, or twisting the opponent's joints (wrists, elbows, shoulders, hips, knees, ankles, spine) beyond their anatomical range of motion.

## **Article 7: Actions for fouls, etc.**

### Section 25: (Actions for fouls)

The main referee may take any of the following actions for fouls committed by fighters, depending on the nature of the foul:

- ① Caution
  - ② Verbal warning
  - ③ Points deduction
  - ④ Disqualification
- 2: The main referee shall not stop the fight in the case of item 1 (Caution) in the previous section, but shall stop the fight in the case of items 2 (Warning) and 3 (Point deduction) and clearly indicate the fighter who committed the foul and the action to be taken with appropriate signals, gestures, and penalty cards.
3. The main referee will use the two types of penalty cards he has to clearly indicate the deduction of points as listed below.
- (1) Yellow card: 1 point deduction
  - (2) Red card: 2 points deduction
4. When a foul is committed (especially one resulting in injury or damage), the referee will, in principle, handle it in the order listed below and will announce to the judges, corners, and the ring ring announcers the referee's decision on whether the foul was accidental or intentional, and whether or not points should be deducted.



- ① The referee will call a timeout.
  - ② The referee will instruct the fighter who committed the foul to stay in a neutral area.
  - ③ The referee will check the condition and safety of the fighter who was fouled.
  - ④ The referee will evaluate the severity of the foul and impose the appropriate deduction of points.
5. If a fighter in a lower (inferior) position commits a foul and the fighter in a higher (dominant) position is not injured, the fight will continue and, in principle, the matter will be dealt with in the order listed below.
- ① The referee will verbally inform the fighter in the lower (inferior) position of the foul.
  - ② At the end of the round, the referee will evaluate the severity of the foul and notify the judge, corners, and ring announcer.
  - ③ The referee may end the fight if the foul is serious. A fighter who commits such a flagrant foul will be disqualified and lose the fight.
6. If a fighter in a lower (inferior) position commits a foul and the fighter in a higher (dominant) position is injured, the referee will call "Stop, don't move" and then deal with the foul, and the fight may be resumed from the same position, or the referee may decide the position at which the fight will resume.
7. In the event of accidental minor foul occurrence or minor injuries, the referee may, at his discretion, allow the fight to continue without interruption.

#### Section 26: (Disposal of fouls committed before and after the fight)

If a foul is committed before the start of a fight, the fight may begin with a penalty point or the fighter may be disqualified because of the foul.

2. If a foul is committed after the fight ends, or if a foul committed before or during the fight is discovered after the fight, the result of the fight may be changed depending on the nature of the foul.
3. The above two points shall also apply mutatis mutandis to cases where instructions from officials, including the doctor, are not followed, whether at the fight venue or backstage.

#### Section 27: (Low Blow Foul)

A fighter who has been hit with a low blow is allowed a maximum of five minutes to recover, if the doctor determines that the fighter is able to continue the fight.

- 2 If the fighter can continue before the five-minute mark, the referee must restart the fight as soon as possible.
- 3 If the fighter is unable to resume the fight after the five-minute resting time has elapsed, the fight will end according to the results determined up to the round and time when the fight was stopped.

#### Section 28: (Fouls other than low blows)

When a fight is stopped due to an accidental foul, the referee must decide whether the offended fighter can continue the fight. If the fighter's chances of winning are not seriously affected because of the foul and the



foul does not result in a concussive impact to the head of the offended fighter, the referee may order the fight to continue after a recovery interval of no more than 5 minutes.

2. If one of the fighters is hit by a foul, the referee will stop the fight and call for a timeout. The referee will hand the injured fighter over to the doctor, who will examine the fighter to see if he/she is fit to continue the fight. The doctor will have up to 5 minutes to decide. If the doctor decides that the fighter can continue the fight, the referee must immediately resume the fight. Unlike the low blow foul rule, fight cannot use up to 5 minutes of their own discretion and must continue the fight when instructed by the referee.
3. If a fighter injured by a foul other than a low blow is deemed unfit to continue by the referee, the referee must immediately call a halt to the fight. If the referee determines that a fighter is unfit to continue with five minutes remaining, the fighter cannot resist because of the remaining time, and the fight must be ended.
4. If the referee stops the fight and requests a doctor's advice, the advice must not exceed five minutes. If the five minutes are exceeded, the fight cannot be resumed, and fight must end.

#### Section 29: (Procedure for injuries sustained as a result of legitimate attacks or fouls, etc.)

If an injury occurs during a fight as a result of a legitimate technique and the injury is fight-ending, the injured fighter will be subject to Section 15. (TKO loss)

- 2: If an injury occurs during a fight and the referee determines that it is the result of an intentional foul, and the injury is fight-ending, the injured fighter will be disqualified.
- 3: If an injury occurs during a fight and the referee determines that it is the result of an intentional foul, and the fight is allowed to continue, two points will be deducted from the fighter who committed the foul.
- 4: If an injury occurs during a fight and the referee determines that it is the result of an intentional foul and the fight is allowed to continue, and the injured fighter is unable to continue after the fight is restarted and is leading in the score at that point, the injured fighter will be declared the winner by technical decision. If the score is tied or the injured fighter is behind at the time the fight is stopped, it will be a technical draw.
5. If a fighter injures himself/herself while trying to make a foul on his/her opponent, the referee must not take any action to give that fighter an advantage and must treat the injury as if it were a legitimate attack.
6. If the referee determines that the injury is the result of an accidental foul during the fight and the referee immediately decides that the fight should be ended, but one round has not yet been completed, the fight will be declared a no contest.
7. If the referee determines that the injury is the result of an accidental foul during the fight and the referee immediately decides that the fight should be ended, but one round has already been completed, the fighter who is leading by score at that time will be declared the winner by technical decision, and if the score is tied, the fight will be declared a technical draw.



8. The uncompleted round must be judged using the same criteria as for other rounds, up to the point at which the round is completed.

Article 30: (Disciplinary Actions for Fouls, etc.)

If a fighter is found to have committed a foul intentionally, he/she will be penalized in the fight, suspended, and fined. The length of the suspension and the amount of the fine will be decided by the organizer and the KOU Fight Management in consultation with each other, depending on the severity and seriousness of the foul.

**Article 8 Corners**

Section 31: Corners

Corners are to be at least one and no more than three per fighter, and unless permitted by the fight management organization, only fight and their corners are allowed to enter the fighter dressing rooms, entrance gates, and areas surrounding the fight arena. Furthermore, during the fight, they must not leave their own team's corner area and must be careful not to disturb the spectators. If an interpreter or other person is assigned to act as a corner, they must be included in the number of people specified in this section.

2. The equipment that corners may bring to the area surrounding the fight arena is as listed in the following items, and items 1 to 3 below must be brought with them.
  - (1) Drinking water
  - (2) Drinking water bottle
  - (3) Towel (for wiping off water and sweat from the body)
  - (4) Ice pack (ice cannot be used loose)
  - (5) Scissors
  - (6) Bucket
  - (7) Timer
  - (8) Spare fight equipment
  - (9) Any other items that the referee determines will not interfere with the fight
3. Corners may give verbal advice to fighters during the fight but may not make direct contact with fighters or touch the cage, ring, or other fight area.
4. Corners may only give fighters drinking water from the time the fighters enter the ring until the start of the fight and during intervals but may not wet the fighters' bodies or the fight area with water. However, before the start of the fight, they may use a spray bottle (hereinafter referred to as "spray bottle") prepared by the organizer only on the soles of the feet. In addition, fighters may use spray bottles or ice packs brought with them to cool their bodies during intervals.
5. Up to two corners may enter the fight area during intervals.



6. Corners must properly wipe off any water or sweat from the bodies of fighters during intervals.
7. If a corner tampers with a fighter's equipment or applies oil to the body, whether before, during, or after the fight, he or she will be removed from the fight and the fighter may be disqualified.
8. A corner may throw a towel into the fight area to indicate that they wish to end and abandon the fight.
9. If a corner commits a foul in any corner, the corner may be ordered to leave the fight, and the fighter may be penalized points.
10. Corners may not leave any objects in the ring, ring apron, or other areas of the fight area during the fight.
11. Corners must not be abusive, insulting, or violent towards the opposing fighters or the referees.
12. Corners must not verbally protest or make false statements to the referees.
13. If a fighter's corners or anyone related to him/her fails to follow the instructions of the fight officials before or after the fight, whether at the fight venue or backstage, the fighter may be subject to the same penalties as those imposed during the fight.

## **Article 9 Fight Officials**

### Section 32: Fight Officials

- Referees must be persons who have been authorized by the Japan MMA Refereeing Organization (JMOC) for their skills and techniques as a referee, be familiar with these rules and their application, and be neutral and fair in all related aspects. In addition, people involved in the management of events cannot participate in the fight as referees. However, in any case, this does not apply if the head referee decides to allow it.
2. A head referee is assigned to each fight, and as the person entrusted with the authority to manage the fight on the day of the fight by the promoter, the head referee can make decisions and give instructions regarding the organization of fight officials, the application of rules, and the approval of fight results.
  3. The referees for a fight will consist of the main referee (1 person), sub-referees (2 people), and judges (3 or more people). However, at the discretion of the head referee, the sub-referee may also serve as a judge.
  4. The main referee will manage the fight within the fight area, the sub-referee will assist the main referee outside the fight area, and the judge will assist the main referee from the judge's seat.
  5. Referees not in charge of the fight may provide advice at the request of the head referee or the referee in charge of the fight.
  6. If the main referee has an accident, the fight will be stopped and the fight will continue after another referee enters the fight area.
  7. If the sub-referee or a judge has an accident, the fight will be stopped and the fight will continue after a referee has been placed in place to ensure that the progress of the fight is not affected.
  8. Referees must study the rules, as well as interpretations of refereeing issues not provided for in the rules, and how to deal with them, with the aim of improving their refereeing skills.

### Section 33: (Main Referee)

The main referee has full authority to manage, direct, and give orders for the fight in accordance with the rules. The main referee's judgment takes precedence over any matters not prescribed in these rules, so far as they relate to the fight.

- 2 When the main referee enters the fight area, he/she must wear clothing approved by the organizer and must not wear any metal objects such as glasses or rings. However, contact lenses are permitted. If a camera or microphone is equipped at the request of the promoter, the equipment must not contact the fighters.
- 3 The main referee must monitor the fight to ensure that the rules are strictly followed, give necessary warnings and instructions, and endeavor to ensure that the fight is conducted smoothly, seriously, and with the utmost quality.
- 4 The main referee must ensure that the fight area is properly prepared, all fight officials are properly positioned, and that there are no violations in the fighters' uniform, fight equipment, etc.
5. The main referee shall invite the fighters to the center of the fight area at the start of the fight, explain that the fight will be conducted under these rules, and briefly and clearly explain any fouls that should be particularly noted, and then give the signal to the timekeeper to start the fight.
6. If a fighter is injured during the fight, the main referee may request an official doctor to check the injury.
7. If a doctor's check is to be conducted as described above, it shall not be conducted during the break (interval) between rounds. If a doctor's check is to be conducted before or after a break, it shall be conducted in a neutral corner immediately after the end of the round (before the break) or after the break. However, this does not apply in emergency cases.
8. If a situation not provided for in these rules occurs, the referee may make a ruling consistent with the intent and spirit of the rules as a whole and other provisions.

### Section 34: (Sub-referees and judges)

Sub-referees and judges must assist the main referee and manage and direct the fight in cooperation with the main referee to ensure that the fight is conducted in accordance with the rules.

- 2 Sub-referees and judges must carry a whistle to assist the main referee during the fight.
- 3 Sub-referees must be careful not to disturb spectators when refereeing outside the fight area.
- 4 Sub-referees and judges may enter the fight area as necessary to assist the main referee.
- 5 Sub-referees and judges may touch fighters' bodies, etc., from outside the fight area to a minimum extent in order to prevent fighters from falling or committing fouls.

### Section 35: (Inspector)

Inspectors must supervise and guide fighters to ensure that the fight is played in accordance with the rules.

2. Inspectors must check that there are no violations with fighters' uniforms, fighting equipment, etc.



### Section 36: (Commands and instructions from the referee)

Commands and instructions used by the main referee are as follows.

- ① "Fight"  
When announcing the start or continuation of a fight.
- ② "Stop"  
When announcing the end or temporary stop of a fight.
- ③ "Action"  
When the fight is not encouraging an offensive or defensive action for both fighters to encounter more actions.
- ④ "Break"

When ending the offensive or defensive action of the fight and returning to the starting positions in the following cases a) to f).

- a) When there is no attack or defense that results in immediate damage (an impact that ends the fight). This also includes cases where it is determined there is cumulative damage by attack or only defense is equivalent.
  - b) When the referee determines that the ropes or corner posts are interfering with the progress of the fight and the fight will be restarted from the starting position.
  - c) When the competition equipment is interfering with the fight.
  - d) When the main referee determines that there is a risk of a foul being committed, whether intentional or accidental.
  - e) When a fighter falls outside the fight area, or when the main referee determines that there is a high risk of a fall.
  - f) When it becomes necessary to end the offense and defense of the fight due to a foul or accident.
  - g) When an act is recognized and determined as to be a setup for a submission (preparation to execute a choke or submission lock) as defined in Article 13-2, Paragraph 2.
- ⑤ "Stop, don't move"
    - a) When an accident or other incident has caused the fight to be temporarily suspended and then restarted in the same position.
    - b) When the referee sees that the ropes or corner posts are interfering with the progress of the fight, the fight will be temporarily suspended and then restarted in the same position.
  2. After the winner is determined, the main referee will raise one hand to indicate that the fighter has won. In the case of a draw, both fighters will raise their hands.
  3. The sub-referee may use hand signals to urge the main referee to make a call under part 1 on this section
  4. The sub-referee may, as necessary, request the main referee to suspend or end the fight. The whistle carried during the fight will be used as a means of signaling for these actions.



5. If a minor foul is committed in the main referee's blind spot, the sub-referee may give a verbal warning directly to a fighter from below the ring without stopping the fight.

#### Section 37: (Official Doctor)

The official doctor is a doctor certified by the KOU Fight Management who is familiar with sports medicine and manages the health of the fighters. The judgments of doctors other than the official doctor will not be recognized as official.

2. The official doctor will always sit near the fight area during the fight, and if requested by the referee, will check on the injured fighter and provide first aid as necessary. The official doctor will need the referee's permission to enter the fight area and will generally check on the injured fighter near the entrance to the fight area except in emergencies.
3. The official doctor may, at own discretion, request the referee to suspend or cancel the fight after examining the condition of the fighter's injury.
4. If the official doctor finds a reason for the fighter's inability to compete in the fight based on the results of pre-fight advice, the official doctor is to immediately report this to the promoter and recommend a suspension for a certain period.

#### **Article 10: Title Fights**

##### Section 38: Title Fights

A title fight is a fight between a champion and a title challenger, both of whom are at the legal weight defined in Section 6, and which has been approved as a title fight by Def Fellow Co., Ltd.

##### Section 39: (Appointment of Champions)

For each weight class defined in Section 6, one champion will be appointed for each male and female.

##### Section 40: (Title defense)

In principle, the champion must defend the title within 10 months from winning the title. If the champion fails to fulfill this obligation without a valid reason, it will be grounds for the champion to lose the title. However, this does not apply if there is a valid reason such as the champion's injury, illness, or the fault of promoter.

##### Section 41: (Title transfer, etc.)

The rules for title transfer, vacancy, defense, etc. in title fights shall be as follows:

- (a) In a title fight, if a challenger who also passed the weight-in wins against champion who also passed the weight-in, that challenger will become the new champion.



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(b) In a title fight, if a champion who passed the weigh-in wins against a challenger who also passed the weigh-in, or if the fight ends in a draw, that champion will defend his title.

(c) In a title fight, if a champion fails to make the weigh-in, the title will become vacant.

(d) If a title becomes vacant because a champion fails to make the weight-in as listed above (c), but a fight was held with the consent of both fighters, a title fight shall be held as a title certification fight for the challenger who passes the weigh-in, and if that challenger wins, that challenger shall become the new champion.

(e) In a title fight, if a challenger fails to pass the weight-in, but a fight is to be held with the consent of both fighters, the champion who passes the weight-in may choose to hold a title fight as a title defense fight, and if that champion wins, it will be counted towards the number of title defenses.

### **Article 11: Appeals**

#### Section 42: (Appeals)

Fighters and corners may make an appeal to the KOU Fight Management through the promoter for the following reasons and methods. However, appeals against judges' decisions will not be accepted.

- ① Misapplication of rules
- ② Major misunderstanding of facts that affect the outcome of the fight
- ③ All appeals must be made in writing within two weeks after the fight, and oral appeals are invalid.
- ④ Appeals against decisions made during a fight must be addressed to the KOU Fight Management through the promoter, not to the referee, judge, or fight official.

#### Supplementary Provisions:

1. This rule will come into effect on March 1, 2025.
2. The old rule will be abolished.

#### Supplementary Provisions:

1. These rules will be partially revised and will come into effect on February 1, 2026.

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