

**CHAPTER 2202**  
**COMBATIVE SPORTS COMMISSION**  
**COMBATIVE SPORTS**

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**2202.0010 AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE.**

The purpose of this chapter is to adopt uniform rules for mixed martial arts and to establish other rules necessary to carry out the purpose of Minnesota Statutes, chapter 341, including but not limited to, the conduct of mixed martial arts contests, and their manner, supervision, time, and place pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 341.25.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.0020 DEFINITIONS.**

Subpart 1. **Generally.** The terms used in this chapter have the meanings given to them in this part.

Subp. 2. **Amateur.** "Amateur" means an individual who participates in a mixed martial arts contest as a pastime rather than a profession and who is not receiving or competing for and has never received or competed for any purse or other article or thing that exceeds \$50 in value for participating in a contest.

Subp. 3. **Combatant.** "Combatant" means an individual who employs the act of attack and defense as a mixed martial artist while engaged in an amateur or professional mixed martial arts contest.

Subp. 4. **Commission.** "Commission" means the Minnesota Combative Sports Commission.

Subp. 5. **Combative sports contest.** "Combative sports contest" means a professional or amateur mixed martial arts bout, competition, match, or exhibition.

Subp. 6. **Individual.** "Individual" means a living human being.

Subp. 7. **Inspector.** "Inspector" means an individual appointed by the commission, or a member of the commission, with specific duties and authority as set forth in this chapter. If an inspector is not a member of the commission, the inspector must be a referee licensed pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 341.30.

Subp. 8. **Person.** "Person" means an individual, corporation, partnership, limited liability company, organization, or other business entity organized and existing under law, its officers and directors, or any person holding 25 percent or more of the ownership of the corporation that is authorized to do business under the laws of this state.

Subp. 9. **Professional.** "Professional" means a licensed mixed martial arts combatant who competes for any money prize or a prize that exceeds the value of \$50 or teaches,

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pursues, or assists in the practice of mixed martial arts as a means of obtaining a livelihood or pecuniary gain.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.0100 APPROVAL OF FACILITIES OR EQUIPMENT.**

In all instances in which this chapter authorizes the commission or a designee to approve facilities or equipment, requests for approval shall be assessed on the following criteria:

- A. the ability of the item or facility to protect the safety of combatants;
- B. the ability of the item or facility to protect the safety of officials, inspectors, physicians, and seconds;
- C. the ability of the item or facility to protect the safety of spectators;
- D. generally accepted industry standards or practices in the mixed martial arts field;
- E. the physical constraints of a specific venue in which the contest is to be held; and
- F. the availability of particular items at the venue in which the contest is to be held.

In the event that a determination as to a particular item of equipment or facility is challenged before the end of the contest, the commission or a designee shall document the basis for the disapproval according to Minnesota Statutes, section 341.28, subdivision 1, clause (2).

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.0200 WEIGHT CLASSES.**

Combatants shall be divided into the following weight classes:

- A. flyweight under 125.9 pounds;
- B. bantamweight 126 pounds to 134.9 pounds;
- C. featherweight 135 pounds to 144.9 pounds;
- D. lightweight 145 pounds to 154.9 pounds;
- E. welterweight 155 pounds to 169.9 pounds;
- F. middleweight 170 pounds to 184.9 pounds;
- G. light heavyweight 185 pounds to 204.9 pounds;
- H. heavyweight 205 pounds to 264.9 pounds; and
- I. super heavyweight 265 pounds and over.

In determining the weight class of a combatant, the measured weight of each combatant shall be rounded to the nearest one-tenth.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.0300 FIGHTING AREA.**

A. The fighting area canvas shall be no smaller than 18 feet by 18 feet and no larger than 32 feet by 32 feet. The fighting area canvas shall be padded in a manner as approved by the commission, with at least one-inch layer of foam padding. Padding shall extend beyond the fighting area and over the edge of the platform. No vinyl or other plastic rubberized covering shall be permitted.

B. The fighting area canvas shall not be more than four feet above the floor of the building and shall have suitable steps or ramp for use by the participants. Posts shall be made of metal not more than six inches in diameter, extending from the floor of the

building to a minimum height of 58 inches above the fighting area canvas and shall be properly padded in a manner approved by the commission.

C. The fighting area canvas shall be enclosed by a fence made of such material as will not allow a fighter to fall out or break through it onto the floor or spectators, such as vinyl-coated chain link fencing. All metal parts shall be covered and padded in a manner approved by the commission and shall not be abrasive to the combatants.

D. The fence shall provide two separate entries onto the fighting area canvas.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

#### **2202.0350 STOOLS.**

A. A ring stool of a type approved by the commission shall be available for each combatant.

B. An appropriate number of stools or chairs, of a type approved by the commission, shall be available for each combatant's seconds. The stools or chairs shall be located near each combatant's corner.

C. All stools and chairs used must be thoroughly cleaned or replaced after the conclusion of each contest.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

#### **2202.0375 EQUIPMENT.**

For each contest, the promoter shall provide a clean water bucket and a clean plastic water bottle in each corner.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

#### **2202.0400 SPECIFICATIONS FOR BANDAGES ON COMBATANT'S HANDS.**

A. In all weight classes, the bandages on each combatant's hand shall be restricted to soft gauze cloth not more than 13 yards in length and two inches in width, held in place by not more than ten feet of surgeon's adhesive tape, one inch in width, for each hand.

B. Surgeon's adhesive tape shall be placed directly on each hand for protection near the wrist. The tape may cross the back of the hand twice and extend to cover and protect the knuckles when the hand is clenched to make a fist.

C. The bandages shall be evenly distributed across the hand.

D. Bandages and surgeon's adhesive tape shall be placed on the combatant's hands in the dressing room in the presence of the inspector and in the presence of the manager or second of the combatant's opponent.

E. Under no circumstances are gloves to be placed on the hands of a combatant until the approval of the inspector is received.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

#### **2202.0500 MOUTHPIECES.**

A. All combatants are required to wear a mouthpiece during competition. The mouthpiece shall be subject to examination and approval by the ringside physician.

B. The round cannot begin without the mouthpiece in place.

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C. If the mouthpiece is involuntarily dislodged during competition, the referee shall call time, clean the mouthpiece, and reinsert the mouthpiece as soon as possible, consistent with the safety of the combatants and the referee.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.0520 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT.**

A. Male combatants shall wear a groin protector of their own selection, of a type approved by the commission.

B. Female combatants are prohibited from wearing groin protectors.

C. Female combatants shall wear a chest protector during competition. The chest protector shall be subject to approval of the commission.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.0540 GLOVES.**

A. The gloves shall be new and in good condition for all competitions or they must be replaced. The inspector shall determine whether gloves must be replaced.

B. All combatants shall wear either four, five, or six ounce gloves, supplied by the promoter and approved by the commission. No combatant shall supply their own gloves for participation.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.0560 APPAREL.**

A. Each combatant shall wear mixed martial arts shorts, biking shorts, or kickboxing shorts.

B. With the exception of shorts and a groin protector, male combatants shall not wear clothing during competition.

C. Shoes are prohibited during competition.

D. With the exception of shorts and a sports bra under an approved chest protector, female combatants shall not wear clothing during competition.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.0580 APPEARANCE.**

A. All combatants shall cleanly shave all facial hair immediately prior to competition, except that a combatant may wear a closely cropped mustache.

B. Hair shall be trimmed or tied back in such a manner as not to interfere with the vision of either combatant or cover any part of a combatant's face.

C. Jewelry or piercing accessories are prohibited to be worn during competition.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.0600 ROUND LENGTH.**

A. Each nonchampionship mixed martial arts contest shall be three rounds, of five minutes duration, with a one-minute rest period between each round.

B. Each championship mixed martial arts contest shall be five rounds, of five minutes duration, with a one-minute rest period between each round.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

#### **2202.0700 STOPPING A CONTEST.**

The referee and ringside physician are the sole arbiters of a contest and are the only individuals authorized to enter the fighting area at any time during competition and authorized to stop a contest.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

#### **2202.0800 JUDGING.**

A. All contests will be evaluated and scored by three judges.

B. The 10-Point Must Scoring System will be the standard system of scoring a contest. Under the 10-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, except for a rare even round, which is scored (10-10).

C. Judges shall evaluate mixed martial arts techniques, such as effective striking, effective grappling, control of the fighting area, and effective aggressiveness and defense.

D. Except as specified in item K, evaluations shall be made in the order in which the techniques appear in item C, giving the most weight in scoring to effective striking, and decreasing weight to effective grappling, control of the fighting area, and effective aggressiveness and defense, in the order listed.

E. Effective striking is judged by determining the total number of legal heavy strikes landed by a combatant.

F. Effective grappling is judged by considering the number of successful executions of legal take downs and reversals. Examples of factors to consider are take downs from standing position to mount position, passing the guard to mount position, and bottom position fighters using an active, threatening guard.

G. Fighting area control is judged by determining who is dictating the pace, location, and position of the contest. Examples of factors to consider are countering a grappler's attempt at take down by remaining standing and legally striking; taking down an opponent to force a ground fight; creating threatening submission attempts, passing the guard to achieve mount, and creating striking opportunities.

H. Effective aggressiveness means moving forward and landing a legal strike.

I. Effective defense means avoiding being struck, taken down, or reversed while countering with offensive attacks.

J. The following objective scoring criteria shall be utilized by the judges when scoring a round:

(1) a round is to be scored as a 10-10 round when both combatants appear to be fighting evenly and neither combatant shows clear dominance in a round;

(2) a round is to be scored as a 10-9 round when a combatant wins by a close margin, landing the greater number of effective legal strikes, grappling, and other maneuvers;

(3) a round is to be scored as a 10-8 round when a combatant overwhelmingly dominates by striking or grappling in a round so effectively that the opposing combatant is only able to provide a minimal amount of defense; and

(4) a round is to be scored as a 10-7 round when a combatant totally dominates by striking or grappling in a round so effectively that the opposing combatant is completely unable to execute successful defensive maneuvers.

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K. Judges shall use a sliding scale and recognize the length of time the combatants are either standing or on the ground, as follows:

- (1) If the combatants spent a majority of a round on the canvas, then:
  - (a) effective grappling is weighed first; and
  - (b) effective striking is then weighed.
- (2) If the combatants spent a majority of a round standing, then:
  - (a) effective striking is weighed first; and
  - (b) effective grappling is then weighed.
- (3) If a round ends with a relatively even amount of standing and canvas fighting, then striking and grappling are weighed equally.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.0900 WARNINGS.**

A. The referee shall issue a single warning for the following infractions:

- (1) holding or grabbing the fence;
- (2) holding opponent's shorts or gloves; or
- (3) the presence of more than one second on the fighting area perimeter.

B. After the initial warning, if the prohibited conduct persists, a penalty will be issued by the referee. The penalty shall result in a deduction of points or disqualification, with a one point deduction after the third warning. A deduction of two points in the same round will result in a disqualification.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.1000 FOULS.**

A. The following are fouls and will result in penalties if committed:

- (1) butting with the head;
- (2) eye gouging of any kind;
- (3) biting or spitting at an opponent;
- (4) hair pulling;
- (5) fish hooking;
- (6) groin attacks of any kind;
- (7) intentionally placing a finger in any opponent's orifice;
- (8) downward pointing of elbow strikes;
- (9) small joint manipulation;
- (10) strikes to the spine or back of the head;
- (11) heel kicks to the kidney;
- (12) throat strikes of any kind;
- (13) clawing, pinching, twisting the flesh, or grabbing the clavicle;
- (14) kicking the head of a grounded fighter;
- (15) kneeling the head of a grounded fighter;
- (16) stomping of a grounded fighter;
- (17) the use of abusive language in fighting area;
- (18) any unsportsmanlike conduct that causes an injury to opponent;
- (19) attacking an opponent on or during the break;

- (20) attacking an opponent who is under the referee's care at the time;
  - (21) timidity (avoiding contact, or consistent dropping of mouthpiece, or faking an injury);
  - (22) interference from a combatant's second;
  - (23) throwing an opponent out of the fighting area;
  - (24) flagrant disregard of the referee's instructions; and
  - (25) spiking an opponent to the canvas on his or her head or neck.
- B. Disqualification occurs after any combination of three of the fouls listed in item A or after a referee determines that a foul was intentional and flagrant.
- C. Fouls will result in a point being deducted by the official scorekeeper from the offending combatant's score.
- D. Only a referee can assess a foul. If the referee does not call the foul, judges shall not make that assessment on their own and cannot factor such into their scoring calculations.
- E. A fouled combatant has up to five minutes to recuperate.
- F. If a foul is committed, the referee shall:
- (1) call time;
  - (2) check the fouled combatant's condition and safety; and
  - (3) assess the foul to the offending combatant, deduct points, and notify each corner's second, the judges, and the official scorekeeper.
- G. If a bottom combatant commits a foul, unless the top combatant is injured, the fight shall continue, so as not to jeopardize the top combatant's superior positioning at the time.
- (1) The referee shall verbally notify the bottom combatant of the foul.
  - (2) When the round is over, the referee shall assess the foul and notify both corners' seconds, the judges, and the official scorekeeper.
  - (3) The referee may terminate a contest if a foul results in an unnecessary injury caused by an intentional act. If a contest is terminated based upon a foul committed under this subitem, the combatant who committed the foul shall lose by disqualification.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

#### **2202.1100 INJURIES SUSTAINED DURING COMPETITION.**

- A. If an injury sustained during competition as a result of a legal maneuver is severe enough to terminate a contest, the injured combatant loses by technical knockout.
- B. If an injury sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul is severe enough to terminate a contest, the combatant causing the injury loses by disqualification.
- C. If any injury is sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul and the contest is allowed to continue, the referee shall notify the scorekeeper to automatically deduct two points from the combatant who committed the foul.
- D. If an injury sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul causes the injured combatant to be unable to continue at a subsequent point in the contest, the injured combatant shall win by technical decision, if the combatant is ahead on the scorecards. If the injured combatant is even or behind on the scorecards at the time of stoppage, the outcome of the contest shall be declared a technical draw.
- E. If a combatant is injured while attempting to foul the combatant's opponent, the referee shall not take any action in the combatant's favor, and the injury shall be treated in the same manner as an injury produced by a fair blow.

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F. If an injury sustained during competition as a result of an accidental foul is severe enough for the referee to stop the contest immediately, the contest shall result in a no contest if stopped before two rounds have been completed in a three-round contest or if stopped before three rounds have been completed in a five-round contest.

G. If an injury sustained during competition as a result of an accidental foul is severe enough for the referee to stop the contest immediately, the contest shall result in a technical decision awarded to the combatant who is ahead on the scorecards at the time the contest is stopped only when the contest is stopped after two rounds of a three-round contest, or three rounds of a five-round contest have been completed.

H. There will be no scoring of an incomplete round. However, if the referee penalizes either combatant, then the appropriate points shall be deducted when the scorekeeper calculates the final score.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*

**2202.1200 TYPES OF CONTEST RESULTS.**

The following are the types of contest results:

## A. Submission by:

(1) tap out is when a combatant physically uses the hand to indicate that the combatant no longer wishes to continue; or

(2) verbal tap out is when a combatant verbally announces to the referee that the combatant does not wish to continue.

## B. Technical knockout when:

(1) referee stops contest;

(2) ringside physician stops contest; or

(3) an injury as a result of a legal maneuver is severe enough to terminate a contest.

## C. Knockout by failure to rise from the canvas.

## D. Decision via scorecards:

(1) unanimous is when all three judges score the contest for the same combatant;

(2) split decision is when two judges score the contest for one combatant and one judge scores for the opponent; or

(3) majority decision is when two judges score the contest for the same combatant and one judge scores a draw.

## E. Draws:

(1) unanimous is when all three judges score the contest a draw;

(2) majority is when two judges score the contest a draw; or

(3) split is when all three judges score differently and the score total results in a draw.

F. Disqualification is when an injury sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul is severe enough to terminate the contest.

G. Forfeit is when a combatant fails to begin competition or prematurely ends the contest for reasons other than injury or a tap out.

H. Technical draw is when an injury sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul causes the injured combatant to be unable to continue and the injured combatant is even or behind on the scorecards at the time of stoppage.

I. Technical decision is when the contest is prematurely stopped due to injury and a combatant is leading on the scorecards.



J. No contest is when a contest is prematurely stopped due to injury sustained as a result of an accidental foul and a sufficient number of rounds have not been completed to render a decision via the scorecards.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 341.25*

**History:** *34 SR 317*