



Competition Rules

Effective 1 January 2010

Requirements for Use

- A. The ISGA / USJJF/ USMAF Competition Rules must be used at all sanctioned events.
- B. These rules may be used by non-ISGA / USJJF/ USMAF organizations if desired. No liability for use of these Rules is assumed by the International Sports Grappling Association (ISGA), the United States Ju-Jitsu Federation (USJJF), and the United States Martial Arts Federation (USMAF).
- C. The International Sports Grappling Association, the United States Ju-Jitsu Federation, and the United States Martial Arts Federation shall not assume any responsibility or liability of any kind whatsoever for any unauthorized modification of any rules.

Divisions/Event Definition

Grappling is defined as an event involving (2) individuals engaged in a ground match. Opponents will start on their feet in a designated matted area or ring. Their goal is to demonstrate their ability to take an opponent to the ground and submit or demonstrate superior grappling abilities within a set period of time. Competitors are separated by age, weight, and ability. Competitors are required to wear specified gear for their division and must adhere to the general rules.

FIGHTING AREAS: The competition takes place on mats. Each area (ring) must be composed of a minimum of 20'x20' (7mx7m) fighting area plus a 3' (1mx1m) wide warning area surrounding the fighting area.

Specified Gear:

1. All contestants are required to wear a mouthpiece during competition. Competitors with a medical mouth apparatus (e.g. Braces, retainers, etc.) are required to remove the apparatus if removable, or wear a mouth guard that fully covers the apparatus.
2. If the mouthpiece is involuntarily dislodged during competition, the referee shall call time and allow the competitor to reinsert the mouthpiece at the first opportune moment, without interfering with the immediate action.
3. Males-cup and supporter are required.
4. Females-Sport bra are required.

Note: Taping of hands, wrists or feet are not allowed

No Gi events

1. Each contestant shall wear grappling shorts, biking type shorts, or kick-boxing shorts.
 2. Gi, Kimono or shirt is prohibited during competition.
 3. Rash guard (long or short sleeve) must be worn, no skin only.
 4. Wrestling/Martial Arts shoes are allowed in the no gi divisions but NOT in the gi divisions
- Note: Contestants may not attack using their own or the opponent's cloth.

Gi events

1. A Judo or jujitsu approved uniform with sleeves, constructed of cotton or similar material.
2. Colors must be solid and tops must match bottoms, no combined colors
3. The uniform cannot be so tight or so loose as to give an "unfair advantage" to the wearer of the gi.

4. The sleeves of the competitor's uniform must extend past the elbow to approximately center between the elbow and the wrist, but shall not cover the wrist. The pants of the competitor's uniform must extend below the knee covering most of the shin, but must be at least one inch above the mat.
5. Sleeves or pants shall not be rolled-up or cuffed-up on the competitor's uniform during a match.
6. Athletes are not permitted to compete with a torn or bloody uniform, sleeves or pants that are not of proper length or with t-shirts underneath (except in the female divisions).

Match Duration

Youth- (0-12 yrs) 3 minutes
 Teen- (13-17 yrs) 4 minutes
 Adult- (18+) 5 minutes
 Advanced Adult- 6 minutes

Scoring:

| | |
|--|--|
| Takedown | 1 to 2 Points (explained later) |
| Sweep from the Guard | 2 Points |
| Pass the Guard to Side or Mount | 3 Points |
| Rear Mount | 4 Points |
| Mount Position | 4 Points |
| Simulated Submission | 4 Points |
| Knee On Stomach | 2 Points |

Each position must be held for 3 seconds (excluding takedowns) in order to be awarded points

Scoring Definitions:

Takedown

2 points are awarded for all complete, well executed throws or takedowns. If the takedown demonstrates less than near perfect technique, then 1 point will be awarded. If the takedown is incomplete or the competitor starts the execution of the takedown with both knees on the mat, then an advantage will be awarded. In determining a takedown a referee will look for the competitor who initiates control of an opponent from a takedown attempt. A takedown will not be awarded for aggressively pulling guard.

Sweep from the guard

2 points are awarded for a sweep from the guard where a competitor, from the bottom position advances their position into any top position.

Reversals - Advancing position from a bottom to top position other than from the guard. These are considered "escapes" and DO NOT get any points. Advantage points can be awarded if deemed appropriate. Examples: Side Control or North/South reverse. Full Mount escape: when competitor A push's off competitor B from a full mount position and gains a top position or simply escapes.

Pass the Guard to Side or Top Position

3 points are awarded for a guard pass where a competitor reverses a dominant position and places himself/herself into a dominant position.

Rear Mount

4 points are awarded for controlling a competitor's back from a rear mount position. *The competitor holding the rear mount must demonstrate control over the opponent. Control can be showed by proper heel hooks (heels resting on the inner part of the opponent's thighs or any action which controls the hip or torso.*

Mount Position

4 points are awarded to a competitor for positioning into a dominant top mount position.

Simulated Submission (Youth = 0 to 12 years only)

4 points are awarded for the competitor who attempts a submission. The referee will stop the match, award 4 points and then start both competitors from their feet.

Legal Simulated Submissions:

The legal submissions would include all variations of arm, shoulder locks, as well as chokes.
(no wrist locks for youth)

Knee on Abdomen Position

2 Points are awarded for a competitor placing their rear knee to the chest or stomach of the opponent with the forward leg extended. This is not a legal position in youth's divisions.

Advantage

Advantages are "ALMOST" submissions and position attempts that pose a real threat to the other fighter. These include: near arm-bar tap out, near chokes, near sweeps, near passes, etc. Also dominant positions that do not have points awarded (side, scarf, north/south). Advantages only affect the outcome of a tie match.

Tie

In the event of a tie at the end of the specified timed match the winner will be determined by the competitor with the most number of Advantages. If the number of advantages for both competitors is equal, the match shall be started with both competitors on their feet. The match will end with the winner determined by whoever scores the first points (sudden death).

15 Point Advantage

When a competitor scores 15 points more than his/her opponent the match shall be stopped and that competitor declared the winner.

Playing For Points

If a competitor simply transitions between various dominant positions with no earnest attempt at submission, but rather adding points by repeating prior positions, no additional points will be awarded

NOTE: *No points will be awarded to a competitor who is attaining a position while in a submission. Points will be awarded after the submission attempt has been defended.*

ALSO, *If a competitor is about to get POINTS for a position and the referee starts to count the 3 seconds for control and the match time runs out, the referee will give the competitor an ADVANTAGE only.*

Injuries

During an injury, the center referee will stop time and a medical professional brought in to diagnose the athlete.

1. If the athlete cannot continue because of the injury, he/she is the winner if the opponent is responsible or if responsibility for the injury can not be determined..
2. If the athlete cannot continue because of the injury, he/she is the loser if the opponent is not responsible.
3. If you cannot continue during your event, due to injury, you must not compete anymore that day.

How to win

The winner will be decided according to:

1. If a contestant gives up or submits (Tap out or verbal tap out). Youth 0-12 follow simulated submission rule.
2. Technical Stoppage:
 - Referee stops bout;
 - When an injury as a result of a legal maneuver is severe enough to terminate a bout;
3. Decision via Points
4. In the event of a tie at the end of the specified timed match the winner will be determined by the Advantage.
5. If neither competitor has been awarded an advantage then the match shall be started with both competitors on their feet. The match will end with the winner determined by whoever scores the first points. (sudden death)
6. If a competitor is unable to defend himself or the referee feels a contestant's well-being is in danger, the Referee will declare the winner.
7. In case of accidental injury or blood spillage where it is not the fault of the opponent, the contestant has one minute to completely stop the bleeding or recover else the referee will require that he/she loses.
8. Referees decision is final.

General Rules

Coaching

Coaches must remain in the chairs provided beside the scoring table. They are not permitted to enter the mat area unless asked to do so by the referee. Only the designated coach should be directing the competitor. Excessive shouting from multiple spectators only serves to confuse the competitors. No calling out of points. This only serves to confuse the scorekeepers. A Coach can stop the match by indicating to the referee that he does not want his competitor to continue. This will be considered a disqualification. Coaches must have credentials and be wearing a coaches shirt. No Negative Coaching.

Warnings and Penalties

Boundary Warning

If the competitors go off the mat, the match can be stopped for safety and restarted in the middle of the mat with the referee to determine the original positions. A boundary warning is defined as deliberately stepping out of bounds to either escape from an opponent, or to avoid grappling without any physical contact made to force the competitor out of the ring. First time, verbal warning. Second and Third, 2 points awarded to opponent. Fourth time is Disqualification.

Stalling Warning

If there is stalling on the ground or no change in position as determined by the referee in a 10 second period the referee may restart competitors on their feet. First time, verbal warning. Second and Third, 2 points awarded to opponent. Fourth time is Disqualification.

Contact Warning

A contact warning is defined as excessive contact as determined by the referee. This may include illegal takedowns, throws or slamming, punching or kicking. First time, verbal warning. Second and Third, 2 points awarded to opponent. Fourth time is Disqualification.

***Note:** The referee has the ability to escalate penalties. If deemed severe by the referee, can lead to Immediate Penalty Points or Disqualification.*

Legal Submissions

The legal submissions would include all variations of arm, shoulder and wrist-locks, as well as chokes. Leg locks are restricted by division and further discussed in next section.

Attacks Below the Waist

White Belt (gi) / Beginner (no-gi)- No attacks below the waist (i.e. toe holds, knee bars, ankle locks)

Blue Belt (gi) / Intermediate (no-gi)- Only straight knee bars and straight ankle locks are allowed (no twisting).

Purple Belt & above (gi) / Advanced Divisions (no-gi)- see table below.

Illegal Techniques

Kick – Adults Only

←----- ISGA / USJJF - Teens and Adults ----->

| Technique | Kick 0-17, ISGA 0-12 | Beginner | Intermediate | Advanced |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| Neck Crank | illegal | illegal | illegal | Illegal |
| Wrist Lock | illegal | OK | OK | OK |
| Knee on Abdomen | illegal | OK | OK | OK |
| Bicep Locks | illegal | illegal | OK | OK |
| Attacks below Waist | illegal | illegal | OK | OK |
| Any lower body twisting techniques | illegal | illegal | illegal | OK |
| Heel hooks | illegal | illegal | illegal | Illegal |

Neck Cranks

Necks Cranks are **Not** allowed in any division. In addition, placing the opponent in a headlock and twisting the neck to force a takedown or submission may cause spinal damage and is not allowed. Also, excessive squeezing or pressure on the back of the neck or base of the head is **Not** allowed. Applying a Neck Crank or a Squeezing technique is “grounds” for Immediate Disqualification.

Other Restrictions

There shall be no attacks to the eyes of the competitor.

Intentional contact to the groin is not allowed.

No biting or fish hooking (fingers in mouth) is allowed.

Placing your fingers in any orifice is not allowed.

No small joint manipulations.

No slamming.

No strikes of any kind

An uncontrolled throw

No head or neck cranks

Biting- gouging or pulling hair

The above techniques can be deemed un-sportsmanlike conduct.

Un-sportsmanlike Conduct

Defined as any act considered to be a physical display of disrespect to an official, other competitor or spectator. This includes but is not limited to arguing with an official, profanity, vulgarity, throwing of equipment, speaking in a loud or disrespectful manner. These results in one or all of the following: warning to the competitor, points awarded to the opponent, disqualification of the competitor from the match and or disqualification from the tournament.

Referee Stoppage

It is the referee's responsibility to ensure the safety of each competitor.

The referee has the ability to stop a match. If a referee determines that a competitor's safety is at risk he/she can end the match. This is a non-disputable call.

Officials

1. Medical personnel shall be available at all times and easily recognizable.
2. Each contest must have: One referee, one scorekeeper, and one timekeeper.
3. All officials should be identifiable by wearing appropriate clothing.
4. The scorekeeper tracks all scoring.
5. The scorekeeper will completely fill out the fight forms and turn them into the referee at the completion of the match.

Duties of the Referee

1. The referee assigns points for valid techniques using designated hand signals.
2. The referee is charged with supervision of the contest.
3. He/she administers and controls the tempo of the contest, enforces the rules, and ensures fair play.
4. To this end, he/she starts and stops the fight, calls and enforces all penalties.
5. The referee shall communicate clearly with the scorekeeper and timekeeper, as well as announce the winner of each match. The referee shall announce in a loud clear voice all official decisions, and shall indicate with voice and gestures the player affected by his/her decisions.
6. The referee is the only person who can call for and administer a penalty.
7. The referee is encouraged to give verbal commands throughout the competition where a penalty has not been called, such as "watch the contact, or, stay in bounds, etc."
8. Only the referee may call time out. He/she must do so for the following reasons:
 - A. To allow equipment adjustments.
 - B. To assess penalties, administer warnings.
 - C. To attend to an injured competitor.
 - D. To hear a legal protest.

Referee Commands - Hand Signals

The purpose or need for hand signals is so that everyone, including a spectator on the farthest side of the facility, can understand what is going on in the match.

- 1. To start the fight** - say the word "Combat", "fight", "go", etc and move your hand vertically (up /down motion).
- 2. When the fight is over-** say the word "Time" and, if necessary, touch both of the competitors.
- 3. Advantages** - move your hand horizontally from your chest out to the side of the competitor getting the advantage point.
- 4. Points** - hold the appropriate arm over your head and indicate the number of POINTS with your fingers (1, 2, 3 or 4). Be sure to make eye contact with the table.
- 5. Stalling** - hold both of your elbows in a box formation at chest height.
(For single round matches this is 10 seconds)
- 6. Warnings** - make a rolling wrist movement and indicate with your arm raised and fist closed (bent arm) the opponent getting the warning. See picture at right and below.
- 7. Penalties with two points** - make a rolling wrist movement and indicate with your arm raised and fist closed (bent arm) the opponent being penalized. Hold the other arm over your head and indicate the appropriate number of POINTS going to the other opponent.



8. **Stopping the match** - open both arms horizontally.

Also, YELL stop or FREEZE to the competitors



9. **Stopping the time** - use your hands to make the T-sign above the head.

The timekeeper should stop time each time you stop the match



10. **Waive points** - used when correcting POINTS. Hold the appropriate arm parallel to your head and waive your hand to remove the last points.

Coordinate with scorekeeper to ensure correction is made



11. **Re-starting a fight:** fighters must face each other and referee takes place in between the competitors and says the words to start as well as vertical hand motion.



12. **Disqualification (DQ):** Cross your forearms above your head and then point to the competitor who is getting disqualified.



Duties of the Scorekeeper

1. The scorekeeper keeps detailed match records on the grappling Scoring Sheets.
2. The referee will indicate grappling points for each competitor. The scorekeeper will record points for each competitor as indicated by the referee.
3. The scorekeeper shall keep count of all penalties awarded to competitors, as instructed by the referee.
4. The scorekeeper shall keep count of the number of advantage awarded to each competitor.

Duties of the Timekeeper

Timekeepers shall be seated adjacent to the competition area and shall stop and start time according to the referee's signal to do so. The referee must call time out with the referee's signal, and restart when fighting resumes. Timekeeper shall use the appropriate electronic time and scoring board, or if one is not available, by verbal and visual signals, such as throwing a bean bag or suitable substitute into the center of the fighting area, inform the referee when time has run out, or when he/she has received a formal protest. Time officially runs out only when the referee calls the signal to stop.

Legal Protest / Arbitration

A legal or formal protest can only be lodged for a noncompliance of the rules and can only be introduced by a designated coach, the tournament director, or his designate. A legal protest to be acted upon during a match must be lodged with the timekeeper, who will immediately notify the center referee. The center referee will then call a time out to deal with the protest. Process:

1. Coach must raise hand. The center referee will acknowledge, stop time, and confer with the coach.
2. Coach must state arbitration issue in a respectful manner.
3. Once resolved, match will continue.
4. If not in a respectful manner, coach may be asked to leave the ring, or the event, and possible disqualification of his competitor.

DIVISIONS

ISGA / USJJF/ USMAF reserve the right to add or eliminate divisions.

On the day of the event

In the event there is nobody within the division weight limits to match a Grappler, then;

1. that person will be asked to move up (1) age division,
2. the weight difference not to exceed 15 lbs max.
3. In the event there is still no other grappler, then ISGA / USJJF/ USMAF reserves the right to match the grappler with someone deemed to be at a similar weight (within 15 lbs) and skill level, regardless of age."
4. For the youngest age group (7 yrs and under), and under 50 lbs. the weight difference should be no more than 10 lbs. For fairness and safety considerations.

Experience defined: Based on grappling continuous training only

Beginner: 1 year or less continuous grappling training, for Gi, below Blue Belt

Intermediate- up to 2 years of continuous grappling training, for Gi, Blue Belt

Advanced- over 2 years of continuous grappling training, for Gi, Purple Belt and up

Youth and Teen Divisions:

Age/experience/male/female/weight

Age Groups:

Youth Divisions

7 and under - beginner- intermediate

8 to 9 year olds- beginner- intermediate- advanced

10 to 12 year olds- beginner- intermediate- advanced

Teen

13 to 15 year olds- beginner- intermediate- advanced

16 to 17 year olds- beginner- intermediate- advanced

Weight

| 7 & Under | | 8 to 9 | | 10 to 12 | | 13 to 15 | | 16 to 17 | |
|-----------|------|--------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|------|
| LBS | KG | LBS | KG | LBS | KG | LBS | KG | LBS | KG |
| - 48 | - 22 | - 62 | - 28 | - 79 | - 36 | - 90 | - 41 | - 125 | - 57 |
| - 55 | - 25 | - 70 | - 32 | - 90 | - 41 | - 105 | - 48 | - 140 | - 64 |
| - 62 | - 28 | - 79 | - 36 | - 101 | - 46 | - 120 | - 55 | - 155 | - 70 |
| - 70 | - 32 | - 88 | - 40 | - 112 | - 51 | - 135 | - 61 | - 170 | - 77 |
| 70 + | 32 + | - 97 | - 44 | - 123 | - 56 | - 150 | - 68 | 170 + | 77 + |
| | | 97 + | 44 + | 123 + | 56 + | 150 + | 68 + | | |

Adult Divisions – White, Blue (gi) and Beginner, Intermediate (no-gi)

| LBS | KG |
|-------|-------|
| - 130 | - 59 |
| - 145 | - 66 |
| - 160 | - 73 |
| - 175 | - 80 |
| - 190 | - 86 |
| - 205 | - 93 |
| - 220 | - 100 |
| 220 + | 100 + |

Adult Divisions – Purple to Black Belts (gi), Advanced (no-gi)

| Male | Male | Female | Female |
|-------|------|--------|--------|
| LBS | KG | LBS | KG |
| - 150 | - 68 | - 125 | - 57 |
| - 175 | - 79 | - 140 | - 64 |
| - 200 | - 91 | - 155 | - 71 |
| 200 + | 91 + | 155 + | 71 + |

Glossary of Terms

Grappling refers to techniques, maneuvers, and counters applied to an opponent (sometimes making use of the clothing or uniform of either person) in order to gain a physical advantage. Grappling is a general term that encompasses several disciplines or styles practiced throughout the world. Grappling is practiced as a sport and as a form of self defense, but does not include striking or the use of weapons.

Rear mount is a dominant ground grappling position where one combatant is behind the other in such a way that he or she is controlling the combatant in front.

The **mount** or **mounted position** is a dominant ground grappling position, where one combatant sits on the other combatants torso with the face pointing towards the opponent's head.

Side control (often also called **side mount** or sometimes **cross mount**) is a dominant ground grappling position where the top combatant is lying perpendicularly over the face-up bottom combatant in such a way that the legs are free and he or she exerts considerable control over the combatant on the bottom. The top combatant is referred to as having **side control**, and is in a stable position, with the other combatant pinned beneath him or her.

The **guard** or **full guard** is a ground grappling position where one combatant has their back to the ground, while holding the other combatant using the legs. The **closed guard** is the typical guard position. The legs are hooked behind the back of the opponent, preventing them from standing up or moving away. The opponent needs to open the legs up to be able to improve positioning. The bottom combatant might transition between the open and closed guard, as the open guard allows for better movement, but also increased risk in the opponent passing the guard.

Half guard or alternatively **half mount** is a ground grappling position where one combatant is lying on the other, with the bottom combatant having one leg entangled. Sometimes the bottom combatant is said to be in half guard, while the top combatant is in a half mount respectively. The half guard is the position that is in between a full guard and side control or mount. The combatant on top will try to unentangle the leg and obtain side control or mount, while the bottom combatant will try to transition into a full guard or alternatively attempt a sweep or submission.

Knee-on-stomach or **knee-on-belly**, **knee-on-chest**, is a dominant ground grappling position where the top combatant places a knee on the bottom combatants torso, and usually extends the other leg to the side for balance. This position is typically obtained from side control, simply by rising up slightly and putting a knee on the opponent's stomach or chest. **This is illegal for youth divisions.**

A **takedown** is a term for a technique that involves off-balancing an opponent and bringing him or her to the ground, typically with the combatant performing the takedown landing on top.

Sweep from the guard is technique used to transition from a neutral or inferior position to a dominant position, such as moving from under guard to full mount, hence the alternative term 'reversal' as the dominance of positions have been reversed.

Passing the guard. While in guard, the top combatant's priority is to transition into a more dominant position, such as side mount or mount.

A **transition** in grappling is a move from one grappling position to another. The process is called **transitioning** and is one of the most important aspects of ground grappling, as it allows the combatant performing the transition to advance in positioning, for instance by using a sweep, or to attempt a submission. A **submission**

(depending on the context also referred to as a "**tap out**" or "**tapping out**") is a term for yielding to the opponent, and hence resulting in an immediate defeat. The submission is commonly performed by clearly tapping the floor or the opponent with the hand or sometimes with the foot, to signal the opponent and possibly the referee of the submission. The submission can also be verbal, during which the fighter verbally informs that he is giving up.

Simulated submission is the process of working toward achieving a submission that is stopped by the referee before the opponent would tap out or yield. The objective is to protect the fighter being submitted, while rewarding the fighter demonstrating the technique or ability to submit his or her opponent.

A **neck crank** (and technically known as a **cervical lock**) is a spinal lock applied to the cervical spine causing hyperextension, hyperflexion, lateral hyperflexion, hyperrotation or extension-distraction, either through bending, twisting or elongating. A neck crank is typically applied by pulling or twisting the head beyond its normal ranges of rotation. **This is illegal in ALL divisions.**

A **Wristlock** is a joint lock primarily affecting the wrist-joint through rotation of the hand. A wristlock is typically applied by grabbing the opponent's hand, and bending and/or twisting it. **This is illegal for youth divisions.**

An **Armlock** is a single or double joint lock that hyperextends, hyperflexes or hyperrotates the elbow joint and/or shoulder joint. An armlock that hyperflexes or hyperrotates the shoulder joint is referred to as a **shoulder lock**, and an armlock that hyperextends the elbow joint is called an **armbar**.

A **leglock** is a joint lock that is directed at joints of the leg such as the ankle, knee or hip joint. A leglock which is directed at joints in the foot is sometimes referred to as a **foot lock** and a lock at the hip as a **hip lock**. An ankle lock is a leglock which hyperextends the ankle. **This is restricted to intermediate and advanced adults only.**

A **biceps lock or slicer** is a compression lock that involves pressing the biceps into the humerus. An effective biceps lock can be applied by putting an arm or leg as a fulcrum on the opponent's arm at the inside of the arm by the elbow, and flexing the opponent's arm over the fulcrum. This will result in the biceps and forearm being pressed into the fulcrum. The biceps slicer becomes most effective as a compression lock when the bony parts of the limb such as the shin or any of the bones in the forearm are forced into the biceps of the opponent. **This is restricted to intermediate and advanced adults only.**

A **heel hook** is a leg lock affecting multiple joints, and is applied by transversely twisting the foot either medially or laterally. The torsional force puts severe torque on the ankle, which in turn transfers torque to the knee. The heel hook is generally considered to be a very dangerous leg lock, with a high rate of injury, especially to ligaments in the knee. **This is illegal in all divisions.**

Small joint manipulation, refers to twisting, pulling or bending fingers or toes to cause joint locks in the various joints in those appendages. Joint locks on fingers and toes are respectively referred to as **finger locks** and **toe locks**. **This is illegal in all divisions.**

Slamming or Spiking, is the act of lifting and aggressively dropping or throwing the opponent either head-first, or on their back, to the mat. This often causes injury or at least loss of breath. **This is illegal in all divisions.**

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