

# Kickboxen

## Competition rules

Explanation of the match rules  
Referee guidelines



These competition rules supersede all previous rules. They are therefore invalid.  
This new version is effective as of September 1, 2025. These rules can be viewed on the IMAF Europe website.  
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## INTRODUCTION

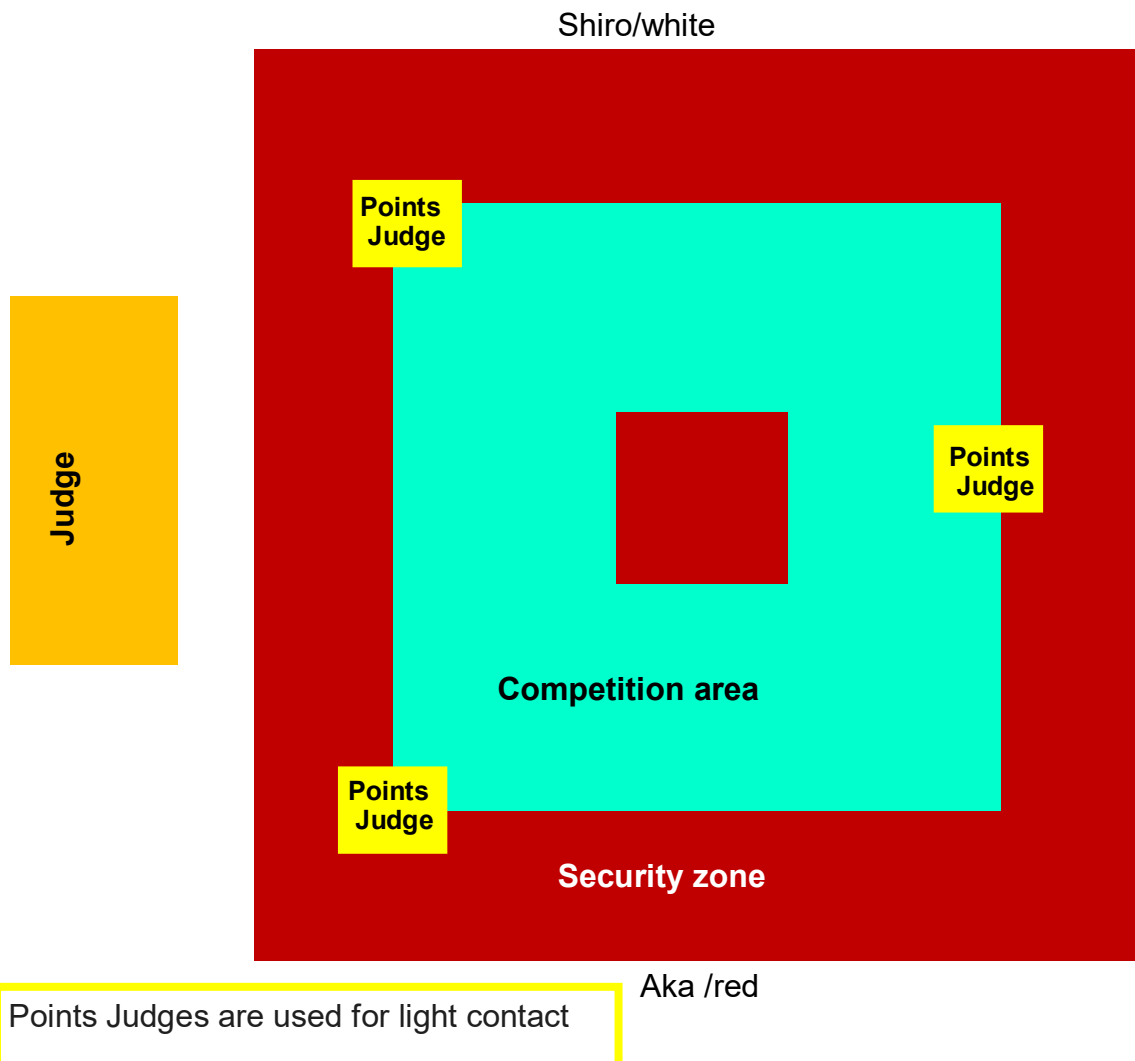
Semi-contact kickboxing is a form of combat in which two participants compete for points using correct, light, and controlled hand and foot techniques. It is a technical competition in which speed and precision of techniques are paramount. Scoring is based on controlled actions. It is a paused fight, with points being awarded immediately after each successful action.

### 1. Conditions of Participation

- ⇒ A medical examination, i.e., approval from a sports doctor to participate in the sport of kickboxing, is required. **It must be no older than 6 months.**
- ⇒ This examination must be recorded in the passport or medical record.
- ⇒ If the information in the sports and health record is illegible, crossed out, or if dates and signatures are crossed out or corrected, the certificate is automatically invalidated.
- ⇒ A signed consent from a parent or guardian is required for minors.
- ⇒ The following IMAF Europe competition rules apply.

### 2. Competition Area

- ⇒ The competition area must be at least 7x7 m and no larger than 9x9 m. The mat thickness must be at least 2 cm and no larger than 6 cm. A clearly visible safety area of 1x1 meters must be maintained outside this area. This area can be marked by a colored mat border, and competitors must not cross it. Failure to do so may result in a warning or a reprimand from the referee. A colored marking measuring at least 50x50 cm is located in the center of the mat.
- ⇒ Competitions will take place exclusively on the mat.



### 3. Clothing

#### Referee:

- ⇒ White shirt, tie, dark blue jacket, black socks, black pants, mat shoes.

#### Judges:

- ⇒ White shirt or blouse, black socks, black pants, mat shoes.

#### Competitors:

- ⇒ Head protection
- ⇒ Hand guards (10 oz) with sewn-on thumb and Velcro closure
- ⇒ Shin guards
- ⇒ Foot guards, closed at the back (one-piece shin and toe guards with exposed heel are not permitted)
- ⇒ Mouth guard
- ⇒ Chest guard (applies to women)
- ⇒ Groin guard
- ⇒ Competitors fight in T-shirts and long pants (without protruding pockets or external straps).
- ⇒ The T-shirt must be tucked into the pants.
- ⇒ The wearing of hard contact lenses and jewelry of any kind is prohibited.
- ⇒ Fingernails and toenails must be kept short.

### 4. Participant Categories

- ⇒ Age categories. The age category is determined by date of birth.
- ⇒ List of age categories:
  - ⇒ Children 10 to 12 years
  - ⇒ Juniors 13 to 17 years
  - ⇒ Seniors 18 to 34 years
  - ⇒ Dan holders 18 years and older
  - ⇒ Veterans 35 years and older
- ⇒ Juniors may compete in the next higher age group (Youth and Senior, but not in the Veteran class) after signing a written declaration of intent.

### 5. Competition Times

- ⇒ Students aged 10 to 15 years fight 2 x 1.5 minutes with one minute break.
- ⇒ Youth aged 16 to 17 years fight 2 x 2 minutes with one minute break.
- ⇒ Seniors aged 18 and older fight 2 x 2 minutes with one minute break.
- ⇒ Veterans aged 35 and older fight 2 x 1.5 minutes with one minute break.
- ⇒ The effective fight time is measured from the start of the fight upon the referee's command.
- ⇒ After the bout ends with the "Stop" command, the time is stopped until the referee announces the resumption with the "Fight" command.
- ⇒ If the contestants leave the fighting area, the time is not stopped until the referee stops the bout.
- ⇒ The time spent attending to an injured contestant and the time spent consulting with the referee are not counted as effective bout time.

## 6. GEWICHTSKLASSEN

| Age Categorie              | Weight male | Code   | Weight female | Code   |
|----------------------------|-------------|--------|---------------|--------|
| Children 10 until 12 years | - 45 kg     | KB 001 | - 45 kg       | KB 042 |
| Children 10 until 12 years | - 50 kg     | KB 002 | - 50 kg       | KB 043 |
| Children 10 until 12 years | - 55 kg     | KB 003 | - 55 kg       | KB 044 |
| Children 10 until 12 years | - 60 kg     | KB 004 | - 60 kg       | KB 045 |
| Children 10 until 12 years | - 65 kg     | KB 005 | - 65 kg       | KB 046 |
| Children 10 until 12 years | + 65 kg     | KB 006 | + 65 kg       | KB 047 |
| Juniors 13 until 15 years  | - 45 kg     | KB 007 | - 45 kg       | KB 048 |
| Juniors 13 until 15 years  | - 50 kg     | KB 008 | - 50 kg       | KB 049 |
| Juniors 13 until 15 years  | - 55 kg     | KB 009 | - 55 kg       | KB 050 |
| Juniors 13 until 15 years  | - 60 kg     | KB 010 | - 60 kg       | KB 051 |
| Juniors 13 until 15 years  | - 65 kg     | KB 011 | - 65 kg       | KB 052 |
| Juniors 13 until 15 years  | + 65 kg     | KB 012 | + 65 kg       | KB 053 |
| Juniors 15 until 17 years  | - 50 kg     | KB 013 | - 50 kg       | KB 054 |
| Juniors 15 until 17 years  | - 55 kg     | KB 014 | - 55 kg       | KB 055 |
| Juniors 15 until 17 years  | - 60 kg     | KB 015 | - 60 kg       | KB 056 |
| Juniors 15 until 17 years  | - 65 kg     | KB 016 | - 65 kg       | KB 057 |
| Juniors 15 until 17 years  | - 70 kg     | KB 017 | - 70 kg       | KB 058 |
| Juniors 15 until 17 years  | - 75 kg     | KB 018 | - 75 kg       | KB 059 |
| Juniors 15 until 17 years  | + 75 kg     | KB 019 | + 75 kg       | KB 060 |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | - 50 kg     | KB 020 | - 50 kg       | KB 061 |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | - 55 kg     | KB 021 | - 55 kg       | KB 062 |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | - 60 kg     | KB 022 | - 60 kg       | KB 063 |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | - 65 kg     | KB 023 | - 65 kg       | KB 064 |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | - 70 kg     | KB 024 | - 70 kg       | KB 065 |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | - 75 kg     | KB 025 | - 75 kg       | KB 066 |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | - 80 kg     | KB 026 | + 75 kg       | KB 067 |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | - 85 kg     | KB 027 |               |        |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | - 90 kg     | KB 028 |               |        |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | - 95 kg     | KB 029 |               |        |
| Seniors 18 until 34 years  | + 95 kg     | KB 030 |               |        |

|                        |         |        |         |        |
|------------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| Veterans away 35 years | - 50 kg | KB 031 | - 50 kg | KB 068 |
| Veterans away 35 years | - 55 kg | KB 032 | - 55 kg | KB 069 |
| Veterans away 35 years | - 60 kg | KB 033 | - 60 kg | KB 070 |
| Veterans away 35 years | - 65 kg | KB 034 | - 65 kg | KB 071 |
| Veterans away 35 years | - 70 kg | KB 035 | - 70 kg | KB 072 |
| Veterans away 35 years | - 75 kg | KB 036 | - 75 kg | KB 073 |
| Veterans away 35 years | - 80 kg | KB 037 | + 75 kg | KB 074 |
| Veterans away 35 years | - 85 kg | KB 038 |         |        |
| Veterans away 35 years | - 90 kg | KB 039 |         |        |
| Veterans away 35 years | - 95 kg | KB 040 |         |        |
| Veterans away 35 years | + 95 kg | KB 041 |         |        |

## 7. Judging Committee

- ⇒ The matches will be refereed exclusively by the head referee, whose instructions are binding for the participants. Instructions will be given in English.
- ⇒ It is recommended that the referee team officiate the competition on a rotating basis.

## 8. Start, Conduct, Stoppage, and End of the Match

### Start:

- ⇒ At the start, the referee checks the prescribed competition attire. If it is incorrect, the competitor has one minute to change it.
- ⇒ The referee then signals the mirror referee and the fighters to take their positions on the fighting area or in the ring.
- ⇒ The referee then gives the command "Shake hands" – the fighters touch their gloves and return to their starting position. The match begins with the command "Fight." Every resumption of the match after an interruption begins with the same command.

### Conduct of the Match:

- ⇒ Simultaneous observation of both fighters and assessment of the progress of the match. The mirror referee signals his opinions with subtle hand gestures.

### Stop:

- ⇒ "Stop" – The match is stopped to award a point, issue a warning, impose a penalty, or end the match. The fighters return to their starting positions (if the match has not yet ended, the timer is not stopped).

### "Time Stop":

- ⇒ Accompanied by placing the hands in a capital "T," the referee stops the time.
  - ⇒ e.g., a fighter falls, a competitor is injured, a warning is issued for a rule violation, or a fighter requests a break by raising their right hand.
  - ⇒ When the referee determines that a fighter's attire needs to be adjusted.
  - ⇒ When the referee determines that a fighter may be injured (up to a 2-minute break for medical treatment).
- ⇒ This command requires a brief explanation of the reason for stopping the match.

### End:

- ⇒ The timekeeper signals: – with an acoustic signal or a signal bag that is thrown onto the contest area: "Time is up."
- ⇒ The referee gives the command "Stop" and, after reviewing the score, announces the verdict and the winner by raising his hand.

## 9. Overtime

- ⇒ In the event of a draw during the effective time of the fight, the referee will call a one-minute overtime.
- ⇒ If the score is tied again at the end of the overtime, the fight will continue until one of the fighters scores a point.
- ⇒ Previously awarded points or penalties will not be carried over into the overtime.

## 10. Victory or Loss

**Victory or loss will be decided based on the following points:**

- ⇒ Due to technical superiority (5-point advantage).
- ⇒ Disqualification or elimination of the fighter from the competition.
- ⇒ The winner is the fighter with the highest score.
- ⇒ If both fighters are injured and the at-fault fighter cannot be determined, the judges will calculate the points scored so far. If it is not the first round, they will determine the winner on points. If it is the first round, the fight is deemed not to have taken place.
- ⇒ Victory by submission of the opponent.
- ⇒ Each fighter may submit a submission at any time during the fight by raising their hand and announcing their submission.
- ⇒ The fight may also be submitted by throwing a towel onto the mat.
- ⇒ Victory by TKO (the referee will stop the fight if the fighter is unable to continue due to a visible lack of technical skill, lack of conditioning, constant turning, avoidance of the fight, injury, or after the second knockdown).
- ⇒ Walkover: The fighter's name is read three times and they fail to appear on the mat within two minutes.
- ⇒ A fight is considered a nullity for reasons beyond the control of the fighter and the referee.

## 11. Scoring

|                                                                                        |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Fist strikes within the permitted area:                                                | 1 point  |
| Kicks to the upper body:                                                               | 1 point  |
| Sweeps (forces the opponent to touch the ground with a body part other than the feet): | 1 point  |
| Sweeps with follow-up technique:                                                       | 2 points |
| Kick to the head:                                                                      | 2 points |
| Jump kick to the upper body:                                                           | 2 points |
| Jump kick to the head:                                                                 | 3 points |

## 12. Awarding of Points

- ⇒ A fighter receives one or more points if the punch or kick they execute is executed with a legal technique in a legal target area with controlled force.
- ⇒ If a fighter executes a jumping technique, they must finish within the contest area and may not land on the opponent's body.
- ⇒ If a fighter crosses the contest area with at least one foot, they will not receive a point even if they have scored a hit.
- ⇒ If a fighter hits their opponent cleanly with a technique, the referee calls "Stop" and awards the point(s).
- ⇒ The awarding of points is signaled by extending their hand with the appropriate number of raised fingers.
- ⇒ The referee may award a point if the **mirror referee** also signals for the same player.
- ⇒ If the fighters have not scored any points and one of them leaves the contest area for the third time or receives a second warning, their opponent receives one point.
- ⇒ In the event of simultaneous hits, the point is awarded to the fighter who is within the contest area; the fighter who is outside will not be penalized for "leaving the area." If the referees' assessment is not unanimous after the fight has been stopped, the **Referee** will call a consultation and ask the referee for their opinion to determine which technique all the judges saw. The decision and verdict will be made by majority vote.
- ⇒ A technique executed after the "Stop" command will not be counted.
- ⇒ If a fighter achieves a 5-point lead, the Referee will declare the winner by technical superiority.
- ⇒ A fighter cannot receive a penalty and a point for the same action at the same time.

### 13. Permitted Techniques and Actions

All techniques must be executed in a controlled manner, not with full force, and cleanly.

#### 1. Permitted strikes and kicks to the following body parts:

- ⇒ Head – front and side
- ⇒ Trunk – front and side
- ⇒ Sweeps are permitted below the mid-calf.
- ⇒ Attacks on a falling opponent are permitted unless the "Stop" command has been given.

#### 2. Permitted strike types:

- ⇒ Fist strikes: Straight, hook, uppercut / **including back of fist and palm without rotation.**

#### 3. Permitted kick types:

- ⇒ Forward, sideways, backward, circular, heel kicks – with the sole of the foot and vice versa, jumping and spinning techniques.

### 14. Prohibited Techniques and Actions

- ⇒ Punches and kicks must not be delivered with full force.
- ⇒ Attacks with uncontrolled force and blind techniques.
- ⇒ Avoiding the fight, diving too deep, intentional delaying, grabbing.
- ⇒ Falling without any apparent reason, feigning.
- ⇒ Leaving the fighting area (**crossing the line with both feet**):
- ⇒ Without pushing, kicking, or striking, the fighter receives a warning.
- ⇒ Leaving the area for the third time will result in a penalty point.
- ⇒ The fourth will result in disqualification.
- ⇒ Unsportsmanlike conduct, pulling, and pushing; in this case, the fighter will receive a verbal warning. In subsequent cases, the fighter will receive a warning.
- ⇒ In cases of obviously unsportsmanlike conduct, the fighter may be disqualified after the first offense.
- ⇒ **Attacks and insults against referees, officials, trainers by the fighter or their seconds during and after the fight. In such cases, yellow and red cards will be used.**
- ⇒ All techniques to the back, neck, and back of the head.
- ⇒ Techniques below the belt.
- ⇒ Talking on the fighting floor.
- ⇒ Intentionally spitting out the mouthguard.
- ⇒ Fighting actions after the break and follow-up strikes on the ground.
- ⇒ Actions with the shoulder, knee, or elbow.
- ⇒ Headbutts.
- ⇒ **For women, punching and kicking to the chest.**

### 15. Penalties

- ⇒ For non-compliance with the rules of the fight, a fighter may receive a verbal warning, a penalty point, or disqualification.
- ⇒ Penalties are divided into two types based on the following criteria:
  - ⇒ Rule violations and unsportsmanlike conduct are scored separately and accumulated during the fight.
  - ⇒ Exiting the contest area is scored separately and accumulated during the fight.
  - ⇒ Exiting the contest area is considered to be leaving the contest area when a fighter crosses the contest line with both feet.
  - ⇒ Exiting the contest area is not scored if:
    - ⇒ A fighter was forced over the line.
    - ⇒ The fighter was outside the line due to a punch or kick.
    - ⇒ The fighter moved along the line without crossing it.



## 15. Penalties

The following penalty levels apply:

- ⇒ **Verbal warning**
  - ⇒ For the first rule violation/sign of unsportsmanlike conduct, pushing, pulling, etc., and for the first time the fighter leaves the fighting area.
- ⇒ **Warning**
  - ⇒ For the second rule violation or for the second time the fighter leaves the fighting area after a prior verbal warning.
  - ⇒ A warning can be issued without a warning if violations endanger the opponent's health or influence the course and outcome of the fight.
- ⇒ **This applies in particular to:**
  - ⇒ Head tilt during an attack, headbutts, twisting.
  - ⇒ Blows to the neck, kidney, below the belt, or back of the head.
  - ⇒ Unsportsmanlike conduct and prohibited techniques (pushing, clinching, etc.).
  - ⇒ Blows with uncontrolled force.
  - ⇒ Unsportsmanlike conduct by the fighter, coach, or trainer.
  - ⇒ Loud commands, instructions from the trainer.
  - ⇒ Entry of the trainer into the fighting area in the event of an injury to the fighter.
  - ⇒ The fighter leaves the contest area.
- ⇒ **Warning and penalty point**
  - ⇒ For the third rule violation or third exit from the contest area.
- ⇒ **Disqualification**
  - ⇒ For the fourth rule violation or fourth exit from the contest area.

**A fighter will be disqualified after reaching the maximum limit of three warnings (i.e., the fourth warning results in disqualification) or without warning if they commit any of the following offenses:**

- ⇒ Injuring an opponent through an illegal action.
- ⇒ If the opponent is unable to continue the fight for 10 seconds after an illegal or powerful strike (the referee consults with the doctor).
- ⇒ If the fouled fighter is ready to continue the fight before 10 seconds have elapsed, but the referee determines that continuing the fight could endanger their health (the referee consults with the doctor), the fighter may not continue to participate in these competitions.
- ⇒ If the fighter strikes after the "Stop" command.
- ⇒ If the referee fails to notice an illegal strike or action, but the fighter's behavior indicates that such a strike could have been delivered. After consultation with the mirror referee, a disqualification may be declared.
- ⇒ If the fighter, coach, or trainer engages in unsportsmanlike conduct (e.g., insults, pushing, foul language).
- ⇒ If the fighter demonstrates a lack of technical skill during the fight.
- ⇒ Yellow or red card:
  - ⇒ For excessive noise or unsportsmanlike conduct, the head referee may issue a yellow card to the trainer or coach. A second offense will result in a red card, which will disqualify the trainer or coach from the competition and require them to leave the tournament.
- ⇒ If the referee deems disqualification necessary due to the severity of the offense and decides not to increase the penalty, they will consult with the mirror judge and the referee on the decision – the decision should be unanimous.



## Scoring Light Contact Competitions

### Light Contact

Light contact is usually fought on mats. The goal is to land more hits than the opponent, with points being awarded based on semi-contact scores depending on the federation. Unlike semi-contact, the fight does not pause after each hit; instead, the match continues. Light contact is technically and, above all, physically demanding. Each round must be scored individually by each judge. The scores for a round should be based on the number of hits actually landed.

The same rules apply as for semi-contact kickboxing.

**The only difference is that the fight is not paused after each hit.**

### 16. Judging Committee

1 Chief Referee

1 Referee

3 Judges

1 Timekeeper

### 17. Referee Gestures

**Warning:** Pointing with the index finger, hand extended above the head

**Minus Point:** Hand movement diagonally downwards

**Disqualification:** Crossing hands in front of the competitor

**No Decision:** Hands crossed at the bottom (if the technique is not recognized)

**Missed:** Hands – palms at eye level

**Exiting the fighting area:** Hand movement horizontally downwards.

### 18. Referee's Instructions

**Greeting:** The contestants touch their gloves.

**Contest:** Resumption of the contest after any interrupted action.

**Stop:** The contest is interrupted to award a point or to end the contest.

**Time Stop:** When the Referee stops the time.

### 19. Duties of the Referees

- ⇒ The Chief Referee monitors the condition of the ring/mat, is responsible for compliance with the rules and regulations, gives loud and clear instructions in English, and indicates the winner by a show of hands.
- ⇒ The Referee checks the fighters' equipment and attire, signals any irregularities to the Chief Referee, observes the bout, and signals any actions noticed through gestures.
- ⇒ The Chief Referee sits outside the ring, observes and monitors the progress of the bout and the decisions of the Chief Referee, signals any irregularities with a whistle, receives official protests, and oversees their resolution.
- ⇒ The Timekeeper signals the start and end of each round and stops the time at the command of the Chief Referee.
- ⇒ The Scorekeeper records points and penalties, signals technical superiority, and the exhaustion of the penalty limit.
- ⇒ The Chief Referee of the competition may overturn the decision of the Chief Referee if :
  - ⇒ The points on the scorecards were added incorrectly.
  - ⇒ The referee awarded a point to a fighter who fell or landed outside the contest area.
  - ⇒ The referee awarded a point on his own initiative without instructing another referee.
  - ⇒ A referee error occurred.

### 20. Referee Procedure After an Excessive Strike

- ⇒ If a competitor remains unconscious for more than 10 seconds:
  - ⇒ End the fight.
  - ⇒ Immediately call a doctor to examine the competitor and recommend further measures.
  - ⇒ Record this fact in the fight report.

## **14. Protests**

- ⇒ Protests will only be accepted by the International Referee if the protest fee has been deposited and the protest form has been submitted (Appendix 1).
- ⇒ The amount of the protest fee will be determined before the tournament. It will be announced by the organizer in consultation with the International Referee.
- ⇒ Protests can only be filed by the team captain/coach.
- ⇒ The protest fee will be refunded to the team captain if the protest is upheld.
- ⇒ If the protest is not upheld, the money will be used for tournament equipment.
- ⇒ Video evidence will not be considered for judging.

## **15. Injuries**

Should an injury occur, the injured competitor is given 5 minutes of recovery time. The paramedic or team captain/coach decides whether the injured competitor may continue fighting.

If the uninjured competitor is causally (negligently) responsible for the opponent's injury, the injured competitor will be awarded the victory. The referee decides, after consultation with the head referee, whether the fighter is disqualified for the entire tournament or only for this fight.

# Competition list

Tournament  
Weight class

Mode

- ☐ Main Round  
☐ Consolation round  
☐ Men  
☐ Women
- ☐ Children  
☐ Youth  
☐ Adult  
☐ Veteran

|            | Place 1 | Place 2 | Place 3 | Place 4 |
|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| First name |         |         |         |         |
| Last name  |         |         |         |         |
| Club       |         |         |         |         |
| Born date  |         |         |         |         |



Club Name

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 1   |  |
| 2*  |  |
| 3   |  |
| 4*  |  |
| 5   |  |
| 6*  |  |
| 7   |  |
| 8*  |  |
| 9   |  |
| 10* |  |
| 11  |  |
| 12* |  |
| 13  |  |
| 14* |  |
| 15  |  |
| 16* |  |

3rd place

Battle area: \_\_\_\_\_  
 List leader: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Protest sheet

### Kickboxen competition



Tournament and date: \_\_\_\_\_

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Protest leader</b>      |  |
| Name of team captain/coach |  |
| Club/Association Country   |  |
| Competitor's name          |  |

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Protest opponents</b>   |  |
| Name of team captain/coach |  |
| Club/Association Country   |  |
| Competitor's name          |  |

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Official</b>                   |  |
| Chief referee                     |  |
| Referee                           |  |
| Scoring table operator/side judge |  |

**Details of the protest. Use the back cover if necessary.**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**Decision:** The protest is upheld ☐ Yes ☐ No

Protest fee of \_\_\_\_\_ € has been paid.

Signature of Chief Referee \_\_\_\_\_

|                                            |  |
|--------------------------------------------|--|
| Signature of all involved                  |  |
| Chief referee                              |  |
| Referee                                    |  |
| Scoring table operator/side judge          |  |
| Competitor's name <b>Protest leader</b>    |  |
| Competitor's name <b>Protest opponents</b> |  |