

SEASON 9
OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES
OF THE
PROFESSIONAL GRAPPLING
FEDERATION



Brandon Mccaghren, League Commissioner

Official PGF Rulebook

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SEASON 9 RULE CHANGES

Rule.Section.Subsection(s)

0.0.a.i. Rule changes are indicated in this rulebook by **red text**.

1.1 Notes: Removed suspensions and fines for disqualification losses.

1.2 Added a team tiebreaker criteria by overtime shootout.

4.1 Athletes may now decline a Major Foul to allow play to continue.

4.3 Added a Technical Foul for behavioral infractions.

4.5 Modified structure of penalties section for clarity.

4.5.a False starts will be given one warning per match before the penalty.

4.5.e Timidity penalty expanded in its scope. Added timidity warning.

4.5.g Changed stalling penalty language to “inactivity”. And updated language across the rulebook to reflect the change from “stalling” to “inactivity”.

5.1 Changed procedure for penalized athletes who were applying a submission.

6.2 Clarified onus of action to shift the burden of activity to the defensive athlete.

Updated definition of “slamming” for consistency across the document.

PENDING ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS

Referee handbook, Constitution and Bylaws, Rules of the Draft, Rule Change Procedure, Examples of Rulings, How a Team Scores Points/Block Scoring, Workings of a Block, Ejections and Suspensions, Alternate Athletes, Clarification for Penalizing No-Show Athletes, Certification Process for Officials, Specify mat markings

Definitions: Ride Time, Overtime Innings vs Periods

PREFACE

This edition of the Official Playing Rules of the Professional Grappling Federation (PGF) contains all current rules governing the playing of professional grappling that are in effect for all PGF seasons in 2025 and beyond until an updated version is released. An official rulebook may be released before the start of each calendar year, however, rules may be modified at any point in the year by means of a publicly released addendum.

Any dispute or call for interpretation in connection with these rules will be decided by the Commissioner of the League, or the appointee thereof, whose ruling will be final.

Because matches are played throughout the qualifiers, regular season, and postseason in the PGF as well as in other promotions that use the ruleset for their events, all rules contained in this book apply uniformly to all matches hosted under PGF rules and may be retroactively applied.

Where the word “illegal” appears in this rule book, it is an institutional term of art pertaining strictly to actions that violate PGF playing rules. It is not meant to connote illegality under any public law or the rules or regulations of any other organization.

The word “egregious,” when used here to describe an action by a player, is meant to indicate that the degree of a violation of the rules—usually a Major Foul—is extremely objectionable, negligent, conspicuous, unnecessary, avoidable, or gratuitous. “Egregious” in these rules does not necessarily imply malice on the part of the fouling player or an intention to injure an opponent.

AUTHORIZED USE OF THE PGF RULESET

Any event that claims to operate under the PGF ruleset must adhere to the following requirements:

- (a) **Complete Compliance:** The event must follow the PGF ruleset in its entirety, without any alterations, omissions, or modifications to the established rules and guidelines.
- (b) **Certified Officials:** The event must use a Judge certified by the PGF. The referee may or may not be a PGF certified official.
- (c) **Verification:** Events wishing to claim adherence to the PGF ruleset must undergo approval and verification by the PGF governing body. Unauthorized use of the PGF ruleset is strictly prohibited.
- (d) **Consequences for Non-Compliance:** Any event found to falsely claim adherence to the PGF ruleset without meeting the above requirements may face formal sanctions, including public disavowal by the PGF and potential legal action.

MISSION STATEMENT

The PGF is committed to promoting an active, engaging, and competitive grappling environment. The following rules are established to discourage **inactivity** and encourage competitive action:

MAT AREA

Pending updates

1. How to Win

1.1. Matches will result in one of the following outcomes:

- (a) **Submission** - By forcing your opponent to submit by tapping
- (b) **Disqualification** - If one athlete is disqualified, their opponent wins by disqualification. Athletes may be disqualified by:
 - (i) Committing a Major Foul,
 - (ii) Being issued 3 or more penalties in a match that ends without a submission, or
 - (iii) Immediately if issued 5 penalties in a match.

A disqualified athlete is not eligible to score points.

1.1.b.ii.EXC1. In a Playoff Match, if an athlete scores 3 or more penalties, the match will not advance to an overtime period and the athlete with less penalties will be declared the winner by disqualification. If both athletes have the same number of penalties, the match will advance to overtime.

Note: If both athletes are disqualified the match is scored a draw.

Note: If an athlete submits their opponent and is disqualified after the completion of the submission but before their hand is raised, the submission win counts but the athlete still receives a one match suspension. Ex: Athlete 1 commits an unnecessary roughness foul after the referee has stopped the match due to submission, the athlete wins by submission, but receives a one match suspension.

Note: If an athlete receives their 5th penalty while a submission is in play, the match will be stopped once there is no longer a submission threat and the athlete with 5 penalties will be disqualified. If both athletes receive their 5th penalty while a submission is active, once the submission clears, both athletes will be disqualified.

- (c) **Draw** - A match ends in a draw if there is no submission and neither athlete was disqualified **AND**:
 - (i) Both have less than 3 penalties **OR**
 - (ii) The athletes have the same number of penalties.
- (d) **Overtime Criteria** - Playoffs Only (See [Section 10.9](#)).
- (e) **Decision** - Qualifiers and Other Matches Only (See [Section 11](#) and [Section 12](#)).

1.2. Season Winners:

(a) **Team Champion** - The team champion is the team that has accumulated the highest combined total of individual points from their team members over the course of the season. Block points do not count toward the team total.

(i) **Team Tiebreaker** - If the total points for the top teams are equal at the end of the season, the tie will be broken by an overtime shootout. If more than two (2) teams are tied to win the season, a playoff bracket will be created, modified based on the number of tied teams. The winner of this bracket will be the winner of the season.

All matches within this bracket (or a two-team tiebreaker) will be decided by an overtime shootout. This shootout will consist of rounds, with each round following the standard PGF Overtime Rules (See Section [10.3](#) for details on Overtime Rounds) with the following modifications:

- (1) For the first five (5) rounds, each coach must select a different athlete from their team to compete. All five (5) rostered athletes must compete once before any athlete can be selected a second time. After all five (5) athletes have competed, the coach may select from any of their five athletes for subsequent rounds. However, a coach must again loop through all five (5) athletes, in an order of their choosing, before any single athlete may be selected for a *third* round. This cycle repeats as necessary.
- (2) Victory in a shootout round is determined **only** by fastest submission.
- (3) If a round does not result in a submission by either athlete, the shootout continues to the next round indefinitely until a winner is decided by a submission.

(b) **Individual Champion** - The individual champion is the athlete who wins the playoff bracket. (For individual tiebreaker criteria, see Section [10.1.a](#))

2. Match Times

- 2.1. Regular Season Matches: All regular season matches are 6 minutes in length. The clock starts and stops each time an official blows their whistle. There is no overtime for regular season matches.

- 2.2. Playoff Matches and Championship Super Fights: Playoff matches and Championship Super Fights are 10 minutes in length. The clock starts and stops each time an official blows their whistle. If there is no submission in regulation, the match proceeds to an overtime period. (Additional details regarding overtime periods are outlined in [Section 10](#).)
- 2.3. Qualifier Matches: All qualifier matches are 6 minutes in length. The clock starts and stops each time an official blows their whistle. There is no overtime for qualifier matches.
- 2.4. Other Matches: The length of all other matches and super fights are defined in [Section 12](#).

Note: The outcome of the match is considered final once the referee raises the winning athlete's hand or signals a draw.

3. Points

- 3.1. An athlete is awarded points at the end of a match based on the following criteria:
 - (a) **Kill (6 points)** - A Kill is any submission targeting the neck or above. This includes all forms of strangles, neck cranks, and smothers. Voluntary submission due to exhaustion, injury, or other reasons also counts as a Kill.
 - (b) **Break (3 points)** - A Break is any submission not classified as a Kill. For example, all joint locks targeting the arms or legs are considered Breaks.
 - (c) **Disqualification (2 points)** - An athlete is disqualified for committing a major foul (See [Section 4.1](#)) or by accruing the number of penalties as defined in [Section 1.1.a.ii and iii](#). The athlete who the foul(s) was committed against is awarded the points.

Note: A disqualified athlete is not eligible to score points.

 - (d) **Draw (0 points)** - If a match results in a draw, neither athlete scores points.
 - (e) **Submission in under a minute (+1 point)** - If a submission is achieved in under a minute, the athlete scores an additional point. A Kill achieved in under 1 minute scores 7 points and a Break achieved in under 1 minute scores 4 points. *Clarification: If the time on the clock says 1:00 (one minute), the submission will not receive a bonus point.*
- 3.2. When the nature of a submission is unclear, the referees and judges will determine whether it should be classified as a Kill or a Break.

4. Fouls

4.1. Major Fouls: A Major Foul is an egregious violation of the rules that compromises the safety of athletes or the integrity of the competition. Major Fouls result in immediate disqualification from the match and depending on the severity of the foul may result in further action such as suspension from future matches, fines, or ejection from the tournament. Examples of Major Fouls include:

- (a) Intentional actions not considered normal in the sport of grappling (striking, orifice gouging, pinching the trachea, attacking the groin, etc),
- (b) Interfering with the duties of an official,
- (c) Jumping the closed guard, or
- (d) Fighting.

A fouled athlete may elect to decline a major foul disqualification to continue the match. The penalty will count towards the offending athlete's total and the match will restart in the penalty position with the penalized athlete in the bottom position.

Note: An athlete receiving their 5th penalty will always be disqualified from the match.

4.2. Technical Fouls: A Technical Foul is issued for severe behavioral infractions or for any Major Foul that is deemed flagrant by the officials. Technical Fouls are intended to penalize and deter conduct that is unsportsmanlike or harms the spirit of the competition.

A Technical Foul may be assessed for:

- (a) Behavioral Infractions: Non-contact violations including, but not limited to:
 - (i) Disrespectfully addressing, taunting, or threatening an official, opponent, or coach.
 - (ii) Using profane or obscene language or gestures.
 - (iii) A cornerman or coach interfering with the match or an official's duties.
 - (iv) Refusing to follow an official's commands.
 - (v) Other egregious acts of unsportsmanlike conduct.

- (b) **Flagrant Major Fouls (Major-Technical Foul):** An official may elevate any Major Foul to a Major-Technical Foul if the act is determined to be excessively violent, intentional, or demonstrates a reckless disregard for athlete safety.

An athlete shall be immediately disqualified from all competition for the remainder of the event day if they commit either of the following:

- (a) Accumulate two (2) Technical Fouls.
- (b) Commit one (1) Major-Technical Foul (a Major Foul elevated to a Technical Foul per [section 4.2.b](#)).

This disqualification is final and cannot be declined by an athlete or coach.

- 4.3. Minor Fouls: A Minor Foul is a rule infraction that disrupts the flow of the match or violates the competition guidelines without posing significant danger to the athletes or significantly compromising the integrity of the competition. Minor Fouls are typically addressed with penalties but do not result in immediate disqualification. Examples of Minor Fouls include:

- (a) Starting before the referee blows the whistle,
- (b) Preventing the match from being restarted in a timely manner,
- (c) **Inactivity**, or
- (d) Unintentionally performing an illegal move.

- 4.4. When a Coach Commits a Foul: If a coach commits a Minor Foul as defined in this rulebook during the course of a match that their athlete is competing in, the penalty will be enforced upon their athlete. If the coach commits a Major Foul at any point, they may be subject to disciplinary action as defined under [Section 4.1](#).

- 4.5. **Types of Fouls:**

- (a) False Start: An athlete commits a false start foul when they move before the referee blows the start whistle during a positional reset or Penalty Position resets. A false start foul may be issued to either athlete. **Athletes will be given one false start warning per match before being issued a penalty.**
- (b) Unsportsmanlike Conduct: An athlete commits an unsportsmanlike conduct foul when they partake in any

behavior that violates the spirit of fairness, respect, and professionalism expected during a match. Examples of such conduct include: use of obscene language, application of a slippery substance to gain an advantage, moving after the whistle, embellishment, and taunting. Additionally, a coach who encourages their athlete to stall **or be inactive** is guilty of an unsportsmanlike conduct foul.

- (c) Unnecessary Roughness: An athlete commits an unnecessary roughness foul when they use unnecessary or excessive force. Examples include: winding up to apply a collar tie or foot sweep (clubbing or kicking), and continuing engagement beyond the stoppage of play.
- (d) Delay of Game: An athlete commits a delay of game foul when they prevent the continuation of play. Examples include arguing about a reset, dropping their mouthpiece, excessively tying their hair, faking an injury, and setting up improperly in Penalty Position.
- (e) Timidity: An athlete commits a timidity foul when they purposely avoid contact with their opponent, **or avoid the action of the fight. Timidity may be called when either athlete refuses to or is hesitant to engage and no criteria is met for an Inactivity penalty (see Section 6.2). Athletes will be given one timidity warning per match before being issued a penalty.**
- (f) Use of an Illegal Technique: The use of any illegal technique listed in this rulebook may result in a foul. Illegal techniques include all of those that are not considered normal actions in the sport of grappling. Examples include:
 - (a) Striking,
 - (b) Orifice gouging,
 - (c) Pinching the trachea,
 - (d) Applying pressure to the groin or orbital regions,
 - (e) Grabbing less than 3 fingers or 4 toes,
 - (f) Slamming, spiking or attempting to spike,
 - (g) Pulling the hair or ears,
 - (h) Scratching, pinching, and biting, and
 - (i) Holding the clothing in any manner.
 - (j) Additionally, JUMPING GUARD and the KANI BASAMI/FLYING SCISSOR TAKEDOWN are illegal.

Performing any illegal technique may result in a Major Foul as defined in [Section 4.1](#).

Note: All guard jumps and Kani Basami takedowns will be called major fouls and, when possible, subject to review and could be reduced to a minor foul based on official discretion.

Note: A slam is a forceful act in which an athlete lifts an opponent off the mat and returns them to the mat in an uncontrolled manner, with excessive force, or in a way that endangers the opponent's safety.

- (g) Inactivity: An athlete commits **an inactivity** penalty when they fail to grapple in an active, engaging, and competitive manner. See [Section 6](#) for specific **inactivity** criteria.

5. Penalties

5.1. When a Foul is Committed: When an athlete commits a foul, one of the following will happen:

- (a) **Stoppage Foul** - In most instances, an official will throw a flag and blow the whistle to stop the match signaling that a penalty has been initiated. A penalty will be issued to the offending athlete and they will be reset to the bottom of Penalty Position where play will resume.
- (b) **Play on Foul** - A play on foul is identified by the officials if there is a significant disadvantage for the athlete who received the foul. Play will not be stopped and the officials will announce "play on" to indicate to the athletes and coaches that play will continue. This may happen if:
 - (i) The athlete who did not commit the foul has mount or back control, or
 - (ii) The athlete who did not commit the foul is applying a submission.

In these cases, the defensive athlete will receive a penalty and will not be reset to the Penalty Position.

If an athlete commits a minor foul while applying a submission, they will be issued a penalty and they will be reset to the bottom of Penalty Position.

5.2. Simultaneous Fouls - Athletes may commit simultaneous fouls if:

- (a) Both athletes commit a foul during active play, or
- (b) Both athletes commit a foul during a stoppage, or
- (c) One athlete commits a foul during active play, and before the play restarts from Penalty Position, the other athlete commits a foul. *(For example, athlete 1 commits an inactivity infraction, then, when set in the Penalty Position, athlete 2 commits a false start.)*

When simultaneous fouls occur, play will stop, a penalty will be issued to each athlete, and they will be reset in a standing neutral position where play will resume.

6.2.EXC1: When more than 2 fouls are committed simultaneously, a penalty will be issued for each foul, and the athlete with more penalties will reset to the bottom of the penalty position. If both athletes have the same number of penalties, they will be reset to the standing neutral position.

5.3. Penalty Position:

- (a) **Bottom:** The penalized athlete starts on their hands and knees with arms completely outstretched. Their palms must be flat on the mat directly under their shoulders. Their knees must be directly underneath their hips. They may place the tops of the feet or the balls of their feet on the mat, and their body must be symmetrical and square to the mat.
- (b) **Top:** The top athlete sets with a knee down on the mat next to, but not in front of, the bottom athlete's knee. On the other leg, only their foot touches the mat between the bottom athlete's knees. On the side the knee is up, the athlete takes a grip around their opponent's waist, touching the stomach, with the middle finger no deeper than the navel of the bottom athlete. The hand on the same side as the downed knee posts behind the bottom athlete's arm and above the elbow on the same side.

Once set, both athletes must wait without moving for the referee to blow the whistle to restart the match.

6. Inactivity

- 6.1. Definition of Inactivity: An athlete is **inactive** when they avoid engagement, disengage, do not continue to attempt to advance, or repeatedly use the same unsuccessful technique.
- 6.2. Onus of Action: The onus of action falls on the athlete **acting defensively or in the defensive position. Examples**:
- (a) Positions past the guard: the onus is on the bottom athlete to move and create action. Only in extreme cases of stalling will the top athlete be penalized.
 - (b) Guarded positions: **Both athletes must actively attack, move forward, and stay engaged. Neither athlete is allowed to maintain a defensive posture. In the closed guard, the top athlete must attempt to escape the guard.**
 - (c) Neutral positions, standing, or no established top and bottom: **Inactivity** will be called on the more inactive or retreating athlete. In cases where **neither** athlete is pushing the action, penalties may be called for Timidity for both athletes.
- 6.3. Examples of Inactive Play:
- (a) Athletes are required to actively seek positional advancement, make submission attempts, and make substantial escape attempts.
 - (b) Athletes may not maintain a static or defensive posture, such as excessively framing or repeatedly disengaging from a guard.
 - (c) Athletes must be willing to compromise their positioning to avoid a penalty.
 - (d) Repeating the same unsuccessful technique while the opponent is not **inactive** can also result in **an Inactivity** penalty.
- 6.4. Inactivity Procedure:
- (a) **The Shot Clock** - A 20-second Shot Clock is initiated by the officiating table when an athlete is **inactive**. The athlete on-the-clock must initiate a "Deep Shot" within the 20-second time frame. Failure to complete a "Deep Shot" will result in **an Inactivity** penalty, and play will be stopped (See [Section 5](#)).
 - (b) **The "Deep Shot"** - A "Deep Shot" is any maneuver that forces a

strong reaction from the opponent. Examples include near guard passes, takedowns, sweeps, or significant movements to escape a position. Movements, no matter the amplitude (such as cartwheels or backflips), that do not elicit a strong defensive reaction are not considered "Deep Shots."

Note: A "Deep Shot" performed by the athlete not on-the-clock will not clear the shot clock for the athlete that is on-the-clock.

7. Injuries

7.1. An athlete who is injured must continue within a reasonable amount of time. If they cannot continue for some reason, the following criteria will be followed to decide the outcome of the match:

- (a) Accidental Injury → No Contest (0 Points): If an injury occurs due to an accident, or legal Jiu-Jitsu movement and not from a submission or egregious error, the match is ruled a No Contest, and neither athlete is awarded points.
- (b) Injury Due to an Egregious Error → Disqualification: If an injury occurs as a result of an egregious error, the at-fault athlete is disqualified.
- (c) Injury From a Submission attempt → Full Points: If an athlete is injured due to a submission attempt (Kill or Break), and the match is stopped as a result, the athlete who applied the submission is awarded submission points.

Note: For cases of blood, eye pokes, and groin shots, the referee may stop play for as long as they see fit for the injured athlete to recover.

8. Lifting an Opponent

8.1. If an athlete is in a submission or closed guard and is able to lift their opponent completely above their hips in a standing position with control, the match will be stopped and restarted in a standing, neutral position.

8.1.EXC1: If an athlete that has a degree of back control and a submission in play (ex: standing rear naked strangle) action will not be stopped as discussed above.

9. Coaches Challenges and Replays

The following criteria must be met for a coach to challenge a play:

- 9.1. A coach may only challenge these items:
- (a) **Submission type** - The submission was a kill/break.
 - (b) **Tap** - The athlete tapped/did not tap.
 - (c) **Timing of a submission** - The submission occurred before/after the first minute.
 - (d) **Legality of a technique** - The technique legal/illegal.
 - (e) **Timing of an overtime escape** - The athlete escaped sooner/later that it was called.
 - (f) **Specific reset positioning** - The position of an athlete's body on a reset was wrong.
 - (i) Coaches must note specific parts of the body and tell the officials where he believes that body part was.

Coaches may NOT challenge **Inactivity** calls. Anything else not included in the above list is not challengeable.

- 9.2. Challenge Procedure: When a coach wishes to challenge a play for official review, they will throw their red coaches challenge flag onto the mat. The play will be stopped and one coach will order the play for review by the officials and make their case to the Referee on the mat. The Head Official will review the play to determine the outcome of the challenge. ***In order for the ruling on the mat to be overturned, there must be indisputable evidence to support the coaches challenge.***

9.2.EXC1. If a coach challenges a play while a submission is active, play will not stop until the submission threat has been cleared.

If the ruling on the mat stands, the athletes will restart the match in the same position that the match was stopped in. The coach will lose their challenge flag.

If the ruling on the mat is overturned, the appropriate action will be taken to adjust the positioning of athletes, time on the clock, and/or the outcome of the match to account for the overturned play. The coach will retain their challenge flag.

- 9.3. Number of Challenge Flags: Each coach will be issued one red challenge flag per day. Any challenges not used in a day will be lost. At the beginning of the playoffs, each athlete will be issued one red coach's challenge flag, which they may assign to a coach of their choice.
- 9.4. Timing of Challenge Flags: A coach must follow these guidelines for timing the challenging of a play:
- (a) A coach must challenge items 9.1.a, b, and c before the winning athlete's hand is raised.
 - (b) A coach must challenge item 9.1.d within a timely manner (approximately 15 seconds).
 - (c) A coach must challenge item 9.1.e at the latest 5 seconds after the referee restarted play.

10. Playoffs

- 10.1. Structure and Eligibility: The playoffs consist of an eight-man, single-elimination bracket. The 8 athletes chosen to compete in the playoffs are the top 8 scoring athletes from the regular season. If an athlete is unable to compete in the playoff bracket, the next highest scoring athlete will be entered. All athletes that competed in the season will be ranked based on the number of points they accumulated during the Regular Season and the bracket will be seeded based on this ranking.
- (a) **Tiebreaker Criteria for Postseason Season Rankings** - In the case that 2 athletes are tied in points, the winner will be determined by a tiebreaker. The following criteria will break the tie in this order:
- (i) *Head to head* - If one athlete has already beaten the other, they will be awarded the higher rank, but if neither athlete won their match,
 - (ii) *Number of submissions* - The athlete with more total submission is the higher rank, but if the number of submissions is equal,
 - (iii) *Speed of submissions* - The athlete with the fastest combined submission time is the higher rank, but if the combined submission times are equal,
 - (iv) *Coin toss* - The commissioner will flip a coin to determine

who wins the tiebreaker.

The winner of the tiebreaker will receive the higher ranking.

- 10.2. Playoff Match Format: A playoff match will follow the format of regular season matches with 2 distinct differences:
- (a) Playoff matches are 10 minutes long and
 - (b) If the match timer expires without a submission, the match advances to an Overtime Period where the winner will be determined. (Unless see [1.1.b.ii.EXC1.](#))
- 10.3. Overtime Rules: An overtime period in a PGF playoff match has one round minimum and three rounds maximum where competitors alternate between offense and defense from the Back Position, attempting to submit their opponent and escape as quickly as possible. A coin toss determines who chooses to start on offense or defense at the beginning of an overtime period.
- 10.4. Winning in Overtime: Victory is achieved in overtime via submission (faster submission time wins) or ride time (longest combined ride time across rounds wins).
- 10.5. Overtime Rounds: Each round consists of two segments: one competitor on offense and the other on defense, alternating roles. Each segment lasts a maximum of two minutes.
- 10.6. Positions (and Order to Establish Overtime Position):
- (a) **Defense** - The defensive athlete will take a seat in the middle of the mat with their spine no more than 90 degrees from the mat and provide sufficient space between his elbows and knees to allow the offensive athlete to insert hooks and a seatbelt.
 - (b) **Offense** - The offensive athlete will take the back of their opponent. They insert hooks square on their opponents hips and establish a seatbelt in the center of their opponents chest.
 - (c) **Referee** - The referee will hold the Offensive athlete's grip in place in the center of the chest of the defensive athlete.
 - (d) **Defense** - the defensive athlete will choose their preferred defensive grips. They may not weave a hand inside of the seatbelt.
 - (e) **Referee** - Before starting the match, the referee will align the athletes square and vertically, holding their shin against the

back of the offensive athlete to keep them upright, a hand on the seatbelt grip to prevent it from moving, and a hand on the shoulder of the offensive athlete to prevent them from leaning.

The referee will ask both athletes "Are you ready?" Once both athletes have confirmed they are ready and neither is moving, the referee will blow the whistle to start the overtime period as they move away from the athletes.

Once the referee has started the overtime period, a 2 minute countdown timer will start.

- 10.7. Calling an Escape: A defensive athlete escapes the back position when their chest and hips face their opponent, their opponent is no longer behind their elbows, and they are no longer in danger of being submitted.

Note: If a defensive athlete is able to submit their opponent, this ends the match immediately.

- 10.8. Transition to Submissions: Competitors may transition to other submissions from back control, as long as no escape criteria were met before the transition was solidified.

- 10.9. Determining a Winner by Overtime Criteria: An overtime period can be won by fastest submission or by longest combined ride time:

- (a) **Submission** - If a submission is achieved in the top of an overtime inning, the time that the submission occurred will be recorded, and the athletes will switch positions. The athlete who was submitted and is now on offense must submit their opponent in less time than they were submitted in or they lose via overtime submission.

If a submission is achieved in the bottom of an overtime inning, the athlete who achieved the submission will be declared the winner of the match by overtime submission.

- (b) **Ride Time** - At the end of an overtime period, if no submission has been secured, the officials will add the combined ride times, and the athlete with the longest combined ride time will be declared the winner.

- 10.10. Penalties in overtime: If an athlete receives 3 penalties in the overtime period they are automatically disqualified.

If an athlete commits a false start foul, they will be penalized and the position will be reset and the overtime round restarted. All other fouls given in overtime will be Play on Fouls and the athlete who committed the foul will be penalized but play will not stop.

11. Qualifying Tournaments

Qualifying tournaments are held to determine which athletes will earn invitations to the PGF Regular Season. Qualifier matches adhere to PGF Regular Season match rules with one key difference: there are no draws.

If a qualifier match ends without a submission, the winner will be decided by a committee designated by the PGF. The athlete deemed more exciting will be declared the winner. This subjective decision aligns with the PGF's mission to promote active, engaging, and competitive grappling.

The qualifier serves as an audition for athletes, with the decision criteria emphasizing dynamic performance and entertainment value over rigid metrics.

Weigh-ins will take place the day before the event.

The winner of a qualifying tournament automatically advances to the PGF World Regular Season.

12. Super Fights

- 12.1. Championship Super Fights: Championship Super Fights will follow the same format as Playoff Matches (Refer to [Section 2.2](#)).

- 12.2. Other Matches: To be defined.

For now, any matches not defined within the official PGF rulebook shall adhere to the additional rules and guidelines provided [here](#).

These matches are subject to further definition and inclusion in the official PGF ruleset.

13. Officials

The PGF ruleset requires a Judge and Referee but it may use a Boundary Referee and Head Official as well. All officials must be certified by the PGF.

- 13.1. Head Official: The Head Official acts as the ultimate authority during matches. The Head Official has the power to change or overturn decisions made by all other officials. The Head Official oversees the match clock, ensuring accurate timing and resolving any disputes that arise during the competition. The Head Official addresses all forms of foul play as outlined in the rules.
- 13.2. Judge: The Judge's primary responsibility is to ensure continuous action in the match. The Judge issues shot clocks, and administers penalties for **inactivity** or any violations of **inactivity** criteria. The Judge addresses other forms of foul play as outlined in the rules.
- 13.3. Referee: The Referee manages the match by starting and stopping action using a whistle. The Referee directs mat action, resets positions, and officiates the Penalty Position. The Referee ensures matches conclude appropriately when time expires or a submission is achieved. The Referee determines the nature of a submission as either a "Kill" or a "Break" and calls it aloud as soon as the submission is achieved. The Referee gives courtesy warnings to athletes before they receive **Inactivity** penalties. The Referee enforces penalties for any foul play except **inactivity**. In overtime rounds, the Referee officiates the overtime rounds.
- 13.4. Boundary Referee: The Boundary Referee ensures the action remains within the central area of the mat. The Boundary Referee assists the Referee with resets and assists in officiating the Penalty Position. The Boundary Referee enforces penalties for any foul play except **inactivity**.

14. Mat Boundaries

It is the responsibility of both Referees to ensure the action stays in the middle of the mat. Athletes must heed referee commands to play in the center of the mat. Athletes may be penalized for playing on or backing up to the edge of the mat. Even if the match goes off the mat area, athletes should not stop until the referee says stop. When a submission is active, the referees will not stop the match unless absolutely necessary for the safety of the athletes

15. Athlete Attire

Athletes are required to compete in a tight fitting rash guard and shorts with no external pockets or strings.

GLOSSARY

Definitions:

Active Play - The portion of the match when the clock is running.

Back Control - A position where one athlete secures control behind the opponent with at least one hook.

Block - A subdivision of one day of the regular season. Each day has 3 blocks. In one block teams will fight one of the other teams. The athletes on the team that scores the most points within a block will be awarded an additional point.

Block Points - Points scored when a team wins a block. Block points count towards the individual totals but not the team totals.

Break - A submission targeting joints in the arms or legs; does not involve the neck or spine.

Coach - The individual responsible for leading the team. Coaches are allowed to challenge match outcomes.

“Deep Shot” - A maneuver forcing significant defensive reaction (e.g., takedowns, sweeps, guard passes).

Disqualification - Match outcome due to a major foul or excessive penalties; disqualified athletes score no points. Matches won by disqualification score 2 points.

Draw - Match outcome when neither athlete achieves a submission or disqualification. No points are scored.

Foul - Any rule infraction, including major or minor violations, resulting in penalties or disqualification.

Jumping Guard - an illegal move that occurs when an athlete leaves their feet and jumps their hips onto a standing opponent, landing between the standing opponent's knees and stomach. Flying submissions are legal but must be executed in a manner that does not risk injuring the defensive athlete's knees.

Major Foul - Serious violations compromising safety or integrity (e.g., striking, illegal moves, interference).

Match Outcome Certification - Official declaration of match results by referee signaling a winner or draw. Match results cannot be undone once a match outcome is certified.

Minor Foul - Infractions disrupting match flow are penalized but not immediately disqualified (e.g., false starts, **inactivity**).

Overtime - Additional time needed at the end of a playoff match to determine the winner. Consists of 3 rounds and the winner is determined by fastest submission or escape.

Kill - Submission targeting the neck or above (e.g., chokes, neck cranks).

Penalty Position - Reset position for penalized athletes:

Bottom - Penalized athlete on hands and knees, hips on heels, arms straight.

Top - Athlete controls from behind with specified grips and position.

Regular Season - Initial competition phase with 12 6-minute matches per athlete; outcomes include submissions, disqualifications, or draws.

Season - Complete series of matches, including regular season and playoffs, culminating in team and individual champions.

Shot Clock - 20-second timer initiated after **an inactivity** warning, requiring a "Deep Shot" to avoid penalty.

Slamming - A forceful act in which an athlete lifts an opponent off the mat and returns them to the mat in an uncontrolled manner, with excessive force, or in a way that endangers the opponent's safety.

Inactivity - Failure to engage actively in grappling or repeated ineffective techniques without advancement attempts.

Inactivity Warning - Verbal notification of **inactivity**, preceding penalties.

Standing Neutral Position - Both athletes stand facing each other with no grips or positional advantage.

Submission - Forcing an opponent to concede by tapping (clear, obvious, visible) or verbal submission.

Submission Danger - Position placing an athlete at risk of submission (e.g., caught in a choke).

Supine Guard - A form of guard play where the bottom athlete is laying flat on their back.

Tap - Clear, visible signal of submission via tapping or verbal concession. It is the responsibility of the athlete to make their tap apparent to the referee.

Team - Group of athletes drafted to compete together to accumulate points for a team championship.

CERTIFIED OFFICIALS

Massery, Heath (Referee, Judge)

Mccaghren, Brandon (Referee, Judge, Commissioner)

Montano, PJ (Referee)

Murilo, Andrew (Referee, Judge, Head Official)

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