

2027 SEASON
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**.

Mat Area. Now requires boundary lines for all matches.

2. Updated section for clarity.

4.2.b. Settled on Major-Technical foul as the name for this rule.

4.4. Coaches' penalties no longer count toward their athlete's penalty total.

4.5. Restructured fouls to procedural and personal. Procedural fouls receive a warning

4.5.b. Slamming is included in unnecessary roughness.

4.5.e. Expanded the scope of the Timidity penalty to account for fleeing.

4.5.f. Updated illegal technique list for clarity (no new illegal techniques).

5.1.b. Updated Play On procedure to be more general.

5.3. Modified Penalty Position to be stricter for the bottom player and less strict for the top player.

6.1. Updated definition of Inactivity.

6.2. Shot clock adjustment for double underhooks from the back.

6.4.b. Redefined Deep Shot for clarity.

6.5. & 6.6. Established procedure for mutual inactivity and inactivity indicator.

7. Boundaries and Resets: Established procedure for out of bounds resets

10.1.f. Removed coaches challenge for positional resets.

11. Updated playoff structure to reflect new changes in format.

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

The mat area shall be clearly delineated by a boundary line to designate the out-of-bounds perimeter.

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.

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. Ex: Athlete 1 commits an unnecessary roughness foul after the referee has stopped the match due to submission, the athlete wins by submission.

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.

1.1.b.ii.EXC1. In an individual 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.

- (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 11.4.f](#))
- (e) **Decision** - Qualifiers and Other Matches Only (See [Section 12](#) and [Section 13](#))

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

1.2. Season Winners:

- (a) **Team Champion** - The team champion is determined by a team playoff. The teams that have 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) will compete in a team playoff bracket to determine the Team Champion. (See [Section 11.1](#))
- (b) **Individual Champion** - The individual champion is the athlete who wins the Individual Champion playoff bracket. (See [Section 11.2](#))

2. Match Times

In all matches, the clock starts and stops with the referee's whistle

Regular Season and Qualifier Matches: All regular season and qualifier matches are 6 minutes in length. There is no overtime for regular season matches.

Playoff Matches and Championship Super Fights: Playoff matches and Championship Super Fights are 10 minutes in length. If there is no submission in regulation, the match proceeds to an overtime period. *(Additional details regarding overtime periods are outlined in [Section 11.4](#).)*

Other Matches: The length of all other matches and super fights are defined in [Section 13.2](#).

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.b.ii and iii](#). The athlete who the foul(s) was committed against is awarded the

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 5:00 (in a 6 minute match), the submission will 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 with no option to decline the penalty.

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) **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 or
- (b) Commit one (1) Major-Technical Foul.

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: Should a coach commit a foul as defined in this rulebook during a match in which their athlete is competing, the resulting penalty shall be assessed to the athlete based on based on the procedure outlined in [Section 5](#), but shall be excluded from the athlete's cumulative match penalty count. 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:**

Procedural Fouls - Athletes will be given 1 warning in a match for any procedural violation before a foul will be assessed.

- (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.
- (b) 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.
- (c) Timidity: An athlete commits a timidity foul when they purposely avoid contact with their opponent, avoid the action of the fight or flee the playing area. 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 6.1](#))

Personal Fouls - Athletes will not be warned before being issued a personal foul.

- (a) Inactivity: See [Section 6](#) for Inactivity.
- (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.

- (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), **slamming**, and continuing engagement beyond the stoppage of play.
- (d) 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:
 - (i) Striking,
 - (ii) Orifice gouging,
 - (iii) Pinching the **neck**,
 - (iv) Applying pressure to the groin or orbital regions,
 - (v) **Manipulating the fingers or toes**,
 - (vi) **Slamming**,
 - (vii) **Spiking or attempting to spike**,
 - (viii) Pulling the hair or ears,
 - (ix) Scratching, pinching, and biting,
 - (x) Holding the clothing in any manner, and
 - (xi) **Jumping at/falling towards the opponents knees (ex: jumping guard, kani basami)**.

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.

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. Slams may be called major fouls and, when possible, subject to review and could be reduced to a minor foul based on official discretion.

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 when stopping the match would disrupt a critical exchange. Play will not be stopped, and the officials will announce "play on" to indicate that the action will continue. A play on foul will be called anytime a foul is committed while the athletes are in one of the following positions:

- (i) *Mount Position* - The top athlete is straddling their opponents torso with both knees above the hipline and below the shoulders and no back exposure. The bottom athlete's legs are not pushing to prevent their opponent from advancing to mount.
¾ mount counts as mount.
- (ii) *Back Position* - An athlete has established posterior control.
- (iii) *Submission Position* - An athlete has established a meaningful and imminent threat of submission (as established by case and precedent).

In these instances, the offending athlete will be assessed the appropriate penalty, but the match will not be stopped or reset to the 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.

5.2.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 underneath their hips, no wider than the shoulders. 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 Position:** The top athlete must set with the knee on the same side as their body in contact with the mat and the other knee elevated off the mat. Neither of the top athlete's legs may advance past the line created by the bottom athlete's knees and they may not be farther across the body than the bottom athlete's far knee. One arm must maintain contact with the bottom athlete's hip, ensuring the hand does not cross the midline of the front of the bottom athlete's body. The other arm must maintain contact with the bottom athlete's arm anywhere between the elbow and the shoulder, posterior to the arm.

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 commits an inactivity penalty when they fail to grapple in an active, engaging, or competitive manner.
- 6.2. Onus of Action: The onus of action falls on the athlete acting defensively or in a 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: Inactivity will be called on the more inactive or retreating athlete.

Note: The shot clock will not be initiated against either athlete while one athlete maintains back control and has secured control under both of their opponent's arms.

6.3. Examples of Inactive Play:

- (a) Athletes are required to actively seek positional advancement, make submission attempts, and 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) **Deep Shot** - A meaningful, sustained maneuver that successfully imposes your will upon the opponent or compels a defensive reaction.

Note: The shot clock is not a warning; it is a grace period. When the 20-second timer begins, the athlete is already considered penalized for inactivity. The athlete now bears the burden to overturn that penalty by executing a Deep Shot significant enough to cancel the impending consequence.

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.

6.5. Stalemates: A stalemate is recognized when both athletes enter a prolonged period of mutual inactivity, or neutral standstill.

(a) **Resolving a Stalemate** - When officials identify a stalemate, the mat referee will issue a clear, verbal warning to both athletes simultaneously (e.g., "Stalemate, action!"). Following the warning, both athletes are given a brief opportunity to break the stalemate by initiating a meaningful move. If neither athlete increases their level of activity shortly after the warning is issued, the shot clock will be initiated. The shot clock will be applied to the athlete whose team currently holds the burden of activity set forth by the Inactivity Indicator (see Section 6.6).

6.6. Possession Arrow: The Possession Arrow indicates which athlete possesses the burden of action. They will be put on the shot clock to resolve the next Stalemate (see Section 6.5).

Initial Assignment - For a team game, the arrow is assigned first to the away team. For individual matches, the arrow is assigned first to the lower seed or if there is no seeding, by coin toss (or other appropriate random method).

Application - Each time a Stalemate is called, the athlete or team who holds the arrow will have the shot clock started on them. This immediately changes the burden of activity to the other team/player.

Continuity - For team games, within the game, the arrow's direction carries over from match to match.

7. Out of Bounds Resets

7.1. The action of the match must remain within the boundaries specified in the Mat Area Section. Any action that leave the mat area will follow the procedure outlined below:

Determining Out of Bounds - *The action of the match is considered out of bounds when the action of the match is nearing the boundary line.*

Active Submissions - If a submission is in play when the match goes out of bounds, the match will not be stopped. Once the submission is no longer in play, the match will be stopped and reset.

Note: Intentionally forcing the match to go out of bounds will be penalized for fleeing. (See [Section 4.5.c](#))

- 7.2. Resetting a match: When action goes out of bounds, the referee will stop the match and the athletes will be returned to the center of the mat to restart in the position that most accurately reflects the state of the match at the time of the whistle.

When the referee stops the match, the athletes must freeze in place so the referee can accurately determine the position they want the athletes to reset in. Athletes who attempt to cheat the reset and/or fail to cooperate with the referee on the reset will be penalized.

8. Injuries

- 8.1. 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 → 6 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 6 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.

9. Lifting an Opponent

- 9.1. If an athlete is in a submission and able to lift their opponent

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

9.1.EXC1: If an athlete that has a degree of posterior exposure action will not be stopped.

10. Coaches Challenges and Replays

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

- 10.1. 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.

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

- 10.2. 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.

- 10.3. 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.
- 10.4. 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).

11. Playoffs

Two post season playoff brackets will determine the team and individual champions.

- 11.1. Eligibility: All athletes and teams that competed in the Regular Season will be ranked based on the number of points they accumulated during the season. Selection for post season playoffs will be based on point totals. Block points count for an individual's total but not for a team's total. The top scoring athletes or teams will be selected to compete in the post season playoffs. If an athlete or team is unable to compete in the playoff bracket, the next highest scoring athlete or team will be entered.
- (a) **Tiebreaker Criteria for Postseason Season Rankings** - In the case that two athletes or teams 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 (for individuals only)* - 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 or use another appropriate method at their discretion to determine what breaks the tie.

The winner of the tiebreaker will receive the higher ranking.

COMMISSIONER'S NOTE

Multi-Athlete Postseason Ranking Ties

Brandon-approved interpretation - August 21, 2026

When three or more athletes are tied, rank the tied group first by number of submissions and then, among athletes still tied, by fastest combined submission time. If exactly two athletes remain tied after applying either criterion and they competed against each other, use their head-to-head result to rank them. If a tie still remains, the Commissioner will conduct a supervised random draw.

- 11.2. Team Champion: The team playoffs consist of a single-elimination bracket of teams. The team who scores more points in the game is the winner and advanced in the playoffs.

In the case that points are tied at the end of a team playoff game, the winner will be determined by a first to score overtime. The fight order will repeat and athletes compete until one team has scored a submission.

- 11.3. Individual Champion: The individual playoffs consist of a single-elimination bracket of individual athletes. Matches follow championship rules.

Championship 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.](#))

- 11.4. Overtime: 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.

- (a) **Winning in Overtime** - Victory is achieved in overtime via submission (faster submission time wins) or ride time (longest combined ride time across rounds wins).
- (b) **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.

(c) **Positions (and Order to Establish Overtime Position) -**

- (i) *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.
- (ii) *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.
- (iii) *Referee* - The referee will hold the Offensive athlete's grip in place in the center of the chest of the defensive athlete.
- (iv) *Defense* - the defensive athlete will choose their preferred defensive grips. They may not weave a hand inside of the seatbelt.
- (v) *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. Once both athletes are set and neither is moving, the referee will blow the whistle to start the overtime period.

(d) **Calling an Escape** - A defensive athlete escapes in overtime 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.

(e) **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.

(f) **Determining a Winner by Overtime Criteria** - An overtime period can be won by fastest submission or by longest combined ride time:

- (i) *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.

- (ii) *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.
- (g) **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.

12. 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 Draft.

13. Super Fights

- 13.1. Championship Super Fights: Championship Super Fights will follow the same format as Individual Playoff Matches. (See [Section 11.3](#))
- 13.2. Other Matches: To be defined.

Any matches not defined within the official PGF rulebook shall adhere to the additional rules and guidelines provided by the League.

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

14. Officials

A complete PGF officiating crew consists of a Head Official, a Referee, a Judge, an Umpire, and a Scorekeeper. Depending on staffing availability at an event, some of these roles may be combined, but the core responsibilities of each position remain distinct:

Head Official: The Head Official serves as the ultimate authority, overseeing the entire match and managing dispute resolutions. They have the power to change or overturn decisions made by other officials and conduct replay reviews.

Contingency: If there is no separate, dedicated Head Official assigned to a match, the officiating crew will decide who assumes this role prior to the start (this is usually designated to the Judge).

Referee: Positioned directly on the mat, the Referee manages the physical action. They start and stop the match with a whistle, direct the mat action, execute out-of-bounds resets, and officiate the Penalty Position. The Referee determines if a submission is a "Kill" or a "Break," calling it aloud immediately. They also give courtesy warnings for inactivity and enforce all non-inactivity fouls.

Contingency: If there is no Umpire present for the match, the Referee assumes all Umpire responsibilities.

Judge: Positioned at the table, the Judge's primary responsibility is managing the pace of the match and ensuring continuous action. They monitor the

athletes for stalling, resolve stalemates, control the shot clock, and administer all penalties for inactivity.

Contingency: If there is no dedicated Scorekeeper available, the Judge will assume the Scorekeeper's duties.

Umpire: Positioned on the sideline, the Umpire assists in keeping the action in the center of the mat. The Umpire is responsible for actively tracking all fouls and warnings throughout the match and they may enforce non-inactivity fouls.

Scorekeeper: Positioned at the table, the Scorekeeper operates the game clock and the shot clock. They are responsible for ensuring accurate timing and recording all official match data, including points, submission types, and accumulated fouls.

All officials must be certified by the PGF.

15. 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.

16. Athlete Attire

Athletes are required to compete in a tight fitting rash guard and shorts with no external pockets, zippers, 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

Level 1 - Training level, may not work without Level 3 oversight.

Level 2 - Certified to work each position on an officiating team. May work without Level 3 oversight.

Level 3 - All duties of lower levels, may act as the Head Official in the PGF Regular Season, and may oversee Level 1 officials.

League Commissioner: Brandon McCaghren

Level 3

Massery, Heath

Murilo, Andrew

Norton, Jacob

Level 2

Carpenter, Roger

Montano, PJ

Level 1

Marvin, Brian

Marvin, Luke

Tarr, Makayla

Vasquez, Jesse