

# PANCRASE Official Rules

– 2025 Updated Edition (Effective February 11, 2025) –

King of Pancrase Council

## General Provisions

### Hybrid Wrestling

Under these rules, Hybrid Wrestling (MMA) is a professional sport in which competitors effectively use punches, kicks, elbow strikes, throws, and submissions, testing their technique, physical strength, mental strength, intelligence, and luck.

Therefore, competitors must strictly observe the rules, and matches must be conducted in accordance with the spirit of sportsmanship.

## Chapter 1: Weight Classes

### Article 1: Weight Class System

Matches shall be conducted in the following 11 weight classes:

- 1.1 Super Heavyweight – 120.2 kg and above
- 1.2 Heavyweight – 93.0 kg to 120.2 kg
- 1.3 Light Heavyweight – 83.9 kg to 93.0 kg
- 1.4 Middleweight – 77.1 kg to 83.9 kg
- 1.5 Welterweight – 70.3 kg to 77.1 kg
- 1.6 Lightweight – 65.8 kg to 70.3 kg
- 1.7 Featherweight – 61.2 kg to 65.8 kg
- 1.8 Bantamweight – 56.7 kg to 61.2 kg
- 1.9 Flyweight – 52.2 kg to 56.7 kg
- 1.10 Strawweight – 47.6 kg to 52.2 kg
- 1.11 Atomweight – 47.6 kg and below

For non-championship matches, a tolerance of 0.45 kg (1 pound) is allowed. In championship matches, competitors must not exceed the designated weight specified above.

The Council may, at its discretion, approve catchweight matches. If it determines that a match is fair, safe, and competitively appropriate, it may set an upper weight limit and conduct the match at an agreed contracted weight, regardless of the standard weight class divisions.

### Article 2: Weigh-In

Competitors must pass the official weigh-in, conducted at the date and time specified by the Council, in the presence of the refereeing department.

If a competitor fails the official weigh-in, a re-weigh may be conducted within 2 hours of the official weigh-in start time.

2.1 If the competitor still fails and the two competitors are in different weight classes, the weight difference must not exceed 2.2 kg (5 pounds).

2.2 If the difference exceeds 2.2 kg, the competitor who failed the weigh-in is disqualified, and the match will not take place.

2.3 If the excess weight is within 2.2 kg, the match may proceed at a catchweight only with the opponent's approval.

For matches conducted at a contracted weight, no weight tolerance is allowed.

Male competitors must weigh in bare-chested with minimal lower-body clothing; female competitors must wear light clothing on both the upper and lower body.

If a competitor fails both the official weigh-in and the re-weigh, contractual penalties will apply. Additional penalties may be imposed if a competitor willfully ignores the weigh-in, refuses to attempt a re-weigh, or gains weight before the re-weigh, thereby failing to make a good-faith effort to compete. Jurisdiction for disputes regarding penalties for weigh-in failures shall lie with the Tokyo District Court or the court corresponding to the promoter's address.

Rules regarding weigh-in failures for championship matches are specified in Article 39(6).

## **Chapter 2: Competition Venue**

### **Article 3: Competition Venue**

Matches shall be conducted inside a cage or a ring.

#### **Cage specifications:**

2.1 The cage must be circular with at least six equal sides, and the diagonal must be at least 7 meters to provide adequate space.

#### **Ring specifications:**

3.1 The ring must be square, with sides of at least 5 meters, enclosed by three or more ropes.

The floor of the competition area must be padded with at least 2 cm of urethane material and covered with canvas on the surface. The padding material must be uniform throughout, and materials that are uneven, too hard, or create bumps must not be used.

No obstacles may be placed on the floor of the competition area.

In official Pancrase numbered series matches, an octagonal cage (octagon) with a diagonal of approximately 7.5 meters is used.

Any other competition venue may be used as an official venue if approved by the Council.

## **Chapter 3: Competition Equipment**

### **Article 4: Mandatory Competition Equipment**

#### **Open-Finger Gloves**

In competition, gloves approved by the Council are provided by the promoter to the competitors. Competitors are not allowed to use their own gloves.

#### **Mouthpiece**

A round cannot begin without a mouthpiece being worn.

If the mouthpiece accidentally comes out during the match, the referee shall call a timeout, clean the mouthpiece promptly, and return it to the competitor's mouth.

#### **Protective Cup (Male Competitors)**

A protective cup must be worn and approved by the referee as not interfering with the competition.

#### **Costume**

Competitors must wear shorts, MMA shorts, Vale Tudo shorts, kickboxing shorts, or similar attire meeting the following requirements. If short spats are worn under the shorts, they must not extend beyond the shorts.

- i) No metal or plastic parts
- ii) Designed to prevent slipping during wear
- iii) No pockets or strings on the outside
- iv) Length above the knee
- v) Clean and free from damage
- vi) Any other item deemed acceptable by the referee as not interfering with the competition

### **Female Competitor Costume**

Female competitors may wear rash guards (short-sleeved or sleeveless), separates, one-piece suits, or similar attire.

## **Article 5: Optional Competition Equipment**

### **Bandages and Taping**

- i) Competitors may wrap their hands with bandages or tape, but taping on the front of the knuckles or metacarpal area is prohibited. Narrow tape may be placed between the fingers.
- ii) Bandages or tape must not contain any core, paper twine, or other foreign objects inside.
- iii) Bandages or tape must not be applied so thickly that the shape of the knuckles cannot be seen.
- iv) Taping on other body parts is allowed only on the knees and ankles. Knee or ankle supports may be worn over the tape if approved by the referee, provided they do not protrude outward.

### **Taping on Body Parts Other Than Ankles and Knees**

Taping may be allowed under the following conditions:

1.1 If the competitor has a permanent injury that requires taping for every match, a medical certificate must be submitted at the time of contract submission and approved by the official Pancrase doctor.

1.2 Bandages or tape must not extend beyond the wrist from the gloves.

1.3 Bandages used for hand wraps must be soft, white gauze, approximately 5 cm (2 inches) wide and no longer than 13.7 m (15 yards). Only one roll may be used per hand.

1.4 Tape used for taping must be approved by the referee as not interfering with the competition (e.g., white athletic tape), approximately 3.8 cm (1.5 inches) wide and no longer than 13.7 m (15 yards), and only one roll may be used per hand.

### **Supporters**

2. Competitors may wear supporters on the knees and ankles if they are made of fabric or neoprene, do not contain metal, plastic, hard rubber, strings, or Velcro, and are approved by the referee as not interfering with the competition.

### **Abdomen Guard (Female Competitors)**

### **Chest Padding (Female Competitors)**

## **Article 6: Non-Approved Items and Substances**

The use of any equipment other than those specified in Articles 4 and 5, or equipment not meeting the required specifications, is prohibited.

Competitors may only use protective cups; no hard objects or jewelry, including piercings, are allowed.

Male competitors must be bare-chested. Wearing shirts or gi tops during the match is not allowed.

Competitors may not apply any substances such as vaseline, oils, hair products, or grip-enhancing agents, except for vaseline applied to the face by the referee. Female competitors may wear makeup as long as it does not cause discomfort to the opponent or interfere with the competition.

Before the match and during the intervals between rounds, the referee may apply an appropriate amount of vaseline to the face (from the eyebrows to the upper cheeks).

## **Article 7: Measures Against the Use of Non-Approved Items or Substances**

Competitors must not use equipment that has not been checked by the referee, bandages or tape without the referee's signature, or prohibited substances such as vaseline (Articles 21(28) and 21(29)).

If the referee discovers or suspects the use of non-approved items or substances, they must be removed.

## **Article 8: Measures for Equipment Damage**

If a competitor's equipment or clothing becomes unusable, the referee may temporarily stop the match in order to address the situation as quickly as possible.

If equipment is damaged in a way that interferes with the match, whether accidentally or intentionally, the referee shall stop the match and take the best possible action. However, if the damage is caused by the competitor's own responsibility and makes continuing the match impossible (e.g., costume, mouthpiece, protective cup), the competitor may be disqualified.

**Note:** To prepare for the situation described in Article 8(2), it is recommended that spare costumes, mouthpieces, and protective cups be made available.

## **Chapter 4: Matches**

### **Article 9**

For official matches other than championship bouts, the match duration is 3 rounds of 5 minutes each, with a 1-minute interval between rounds. However, this does not apply to special matches.

Championship matches consist of 5 rounds of 5 minutes each, with a 1-minute interval between rounds.

### **Article 10: Match Outcome**

The result of a match is determined by knockout (KO), tap-out (TO: submission), technical knockout (TKO), technical submission (TS), decision, or disqualification.

### **Article 11: Knockout (KO)**

A knockout is declared when a competitor is rendered unable to continue fighting or loses consciousness due to the opponent's attack, as determined by the referee.

### **Article 12: Tap-Out (TO: Submission)**

When a competitor verbally expresses submission (verbal tap-out).

When a competitor taps the opponent or the mat two or more times to indicate submission (physical tap-out).

When a competitor performs an action that the referee judges as indicating submission.

### **Article 13: Technical Knockout (TKO)**

When the referee determines that the match cannot continue (e.g., one competitor is significantly disadvantaged due to legal attacks or injured through their own responsibility; referee stoppage).

When the doctor informs the referee, from a professional perspective, that the competitor cannot safely continue, and the referee stops the match.

When a competitor loses control of bodily functions during a round (e.g., vomiting, incontinence, defecation).

When a corner throws the designated towel into the competition area to indicate surrender.

### **Article 14: Technical Submission (TS)**

When a competitor becomes unconscious, suffers a fracture, dislocation, or similar injury due to a legal choke or joint lock.

When the referee determines that the match cannot continue due to a legal choke or joint lock.

### **Article 15: Decision**

If no outcome is reached within the allotted time, the winner is determined by the scores of the three designated judges. Each judge scores each round, and the competitor judged superior by at least 2 of the 3 judges is declared the winner.

### **Scoring Criteria**

The standard system is the 10-Point Must System. Under this system, the winner of the round receives 10 points, and the loser receives 9 points or fewer (10-10 even rounds are rare).

i) Judges evaluate MMA techniques based on three elements: effective striking/grappling (Plan A), effective aggressiveness (Plan B), and control of the fighting area (Plan C). Plan B and Plan C are considered only if Plan A is equivalent.

ii) Effective striking/grappling is the first priority in evaluating each round. Effective aggressiveness is considered only if effective striking/grappling is equivalent, and fighting area control is considered only if the other criteria are equivalent.

### **Effective Striking**

Effective striking refers to impactful strikes that influence the outcome of the match. Heavier strikes that affect the match outcome are rated higher than cumulative strikes with less decisive impact.

### **Effective Grappling**

Effective grappling is evaluated based on the impact it has toward deciding the outcome of the match (e.g., takedowns that create impact, submission attempts, reversals, gaining advantageous positions). Heavy impact that advances the match outcome is valued more than cumulative minor impact.

For example, in exchanges between competitors in top and bottom positions, the focus is on the magnitude and effectiveness of the actions rather than the position itself.

### **Effective Aggressiveness**

Effective aggressiveness refers to actively pursuing the outcome of the match. It is considered only when both competitors' effective striking/grappling are equivalent.

Actions that merely follow the opponent without producing effective results or impact should not be considered effective aggressiveness.

### **Fighting Area Control**

Fighting area control is evaluated based on which competitor controlled the pace, location, and positioning of the match.

It is considered only if both competitors are equivalent in effective striking/grappling and effective aggressiveness.

### **Scoring Guidelines for Each Round**

i) **10-10:** Both competitors are evenly matched, with no clear advantage.

10-10 rounds are rare, usually occurring if a round is not fully completed. If even a slight difference exists between competitors, 10-10 should not be used.

ii) **10-9:** One competitor demonstrates slightly superior effective striking, grappling, or other techniques.

10-9 is the most commonly used score. Even a small advantage in effective striking or grappling over the opponent warrants a 10-9 score. The 9 points are not automatically assigned; the judge must evaluate relative effectiveness.

This score reflects a close round with a minor edge in impact or dominance.

iii) **10-8:** One competitor overwhelmingly controls the round through striking or grappling.

10-8 is applied when one competitor wins the round by a large margin. If a competitor shows clear superiority in at least two of the three elements—impact, dominance, and duration—a 10-8 score should be considered.

If a competitor shows little or no offensive action, judges should consider awarding 8 points rather than 9.

### **Elements for 10-8 Evaluation:**

a) **Impact:** Large, decisive strikes or grappling that significantly affect the match outcome are evaluated, including visible effects such as cuts or swelling. Effective strikes or grappling that reduce the opponent's energy, technique, confidence, or mental state are also considered.

Visible injuries should be evaluated as a result of impact but not overvalued. If a competitor is bleeding but otherwise superior in striking/grappling, that superiority should be weighted more heavily than the injury alone.

b) **Dominance:** MMA and Hybrid Wrestling are aggression-based. A competitor on the defensive, unable to counter, or exposing openings demonstrates the opponent's clear dominance. In grappling, dominance is shown when controlling a position leads to potential match-ending attacks such as submissions. Simply holding a position is not sufficient; judges must consider what the competitor does from that position.

c) **Duration:** Duration measures how long one competitor is able to attack effectively while the opponent shows minimal offensive ability. Judges evaluate the relative time of control or effective offense during the round. This applies to both standing and ground positions.

iv) **10-7:** One competitor totally dominates the round through striking or grappling.

A 10-7 round occurs when a competitor completely overwhelms the opponent with effective striking or grappling, to a degree that could justify a referee stoppage.

This score requires overwhelming superiority and extremely high impact, and is very rare, used only when judges believe a referee stoppage could have been warranted.

If a match cannot continue due to accidental fouls, injuries, or other accidents, the outcome is determined according to Article 26.

In tournament or deciding matches, all decisions must be must-decide, ensuring that a winner is determined.

## **Article 16: Draw**

When no winner is determined within the allotted time, and at least 2 of the 3 judges do not score the same competitor as superior.

When the referee determines that both competitors were knocked out almost simultaneously.

Technical draw (see Article 26(4)).

## **Article 17: Disqualification (Loss by Foul)**

When a competitor commits a foul defined in Chapter 5 and the referee, at their discretion, rules disqualification.

When a corner violates the rules in Chapter 7 in a significant way, and the referee, at their discretion, rules disqualification.

Any other action that seriously undermines the match, such as failing to make weight or damaging competition equipment.

## **Article 18: No Contest**

As defined in Article 2(5).

As defined in Article 26(6).

When the referee or the Council, or both in consultation, determine that the match cannot be validly continued.

## **Article 19: Instant Replay and Holding Match Results**

The referee may request instant replay if there is a possibility that a foul influenced a critical moment leading to the match outcome. The referee may use information from the replay to decide the match result. However, the match cannot be resumed based on this information.

If the facts cannot be clarified through replay, or if the competition area lacks replay equipment, and the match cannot be fairly adjudicated on the spot, the referee may withhold the result and submit it to the

Council for review.

If the facts necessary to determine the outcome are unclear at the time of the match, the referee may provisionally decide the result. Any provisional decision must be confirmed and finalized by the Council within two weeks after the facts are verified.

## Chapter 5: Fouls

### Article 20: Definition of Positions Related to Fouls

#### Start Position

The position at the start of the match or after the referee calls "Break."

#### Ground Position

Any position in which a part of the body other than the hands and feet is touching the floor.

#### Reference 1: Examples of being in a ground position

- i) Either knee is touching the floor.
- ii) The back or buttocks are touching the floor.
- iii) Either elbow is touching the floor.

#### Reference 2: Examples of not being in a ground position

- i) One or both feet and one or both hands are touching the floor.

#### Stand Position

Any position that is not a ground position.

### Article 21: Fouls and Penalties

The following acts are considered fouls. If committed, the referee may impose an appropriate penalty at their discretion:

Headbutting

Any form of eye gouging

Biting

Spitting at the opponent

Hair pulling

Fish hooking

Any attack to the groin

Inserting fingers into an opponent's openings, wounds, or cuts

Small joint manipulation (hands or fingers)

Strikes to the spine or back of the head

The back of the head is defined as the area 2.5 cm (1 inch) laterally from the top of the head to the back-of-head junction.

Strikes to the throat or grabbing the trachea

Accidental strikes to the throat while standing are not considered fouls

Pointing fingers at the opponent's face or eyes with an open hand

Grabbing, pinching, or twisting the skin

Kicking the head of an opponent in a ground position

Knee strikes to the head of an opponent in a ground position

Stomping on an opponent in a ground position

Grabbing the fence or any part of the competition area

Grabbing the opponent's costume or gloves

Using abusive language in the competition area

Any unsportsmanlike action that may cause injury to the opponent

Attacking an opponent during a "Break"

Attacking an opponent while the referee is checking them

Attacking an opponent after the round-ending signal

Any passive behavior intended to avoid contact with the opponent (e.g., intentionally dropping the mouthpiece, faking injury)

Throwing the opponent outside the competition area

Significantly ignoring referee instructions

Driving the opponent's head or neck into the canvas (spiking or piledriver)

**Exception:** Lifting an opponent during a submission hold may be done as long as they are safely placed on the mat.

Applying any substance other than referee-applied vaseline

Wearing taping or equipment that has not been checked by the referee before the match

Making false appeals or statements to the referee

Damaging competition equipment such as costume, mouthpiece, or groin protector so as to make continuation of the match impossible

## Chapter 6: Procedures for Fouls and Injuries

### Article 22: Referee Actions Regarding Fouls

The referee may take action against a competitor who commits a foul based on the severity of the act and at their discretion. Possible actions include verbal caution, caution, warning, or disqualification (loss due to foul). The referee must clearly indicate the foul and the action taken using appropriate signals or gestures.

Disqualification may be declared at the referee's discretion if multiple fouls occur or after particularly serious fouls.

Points may be deducted from a competitor who commits a foul at the referee's discretion.

The referee indicates deductions using two types of cards: yellow card = caution = 1 point deduction, red card = warning = 2 point deduction.

Only the referee may assess fouls. Judges may not evaluate or score fouls that have not been called by the referee.

When a foul occurs, especially one causing injury or damage, the referee shall generally:

- a. Call a timeout.
- b. Direct the competitor who committed the foul to a neutral area.
- c. Check the condition and safety of the competitor who received the foul.
- d. Evaluate the severity of the foul and apply an appropriate point deduction. The referee must notify the judges, corner, and announcer of the decision, including whether the foul was accidental, intentional, or required a deduction.

If a competitor in the lower (inferior) position commits a foul and the upper (superior) competitor is not injured, the match continues. The referee shall:

- a. Verbally notify the lower-position competitor of the foul.
- b. At the end of the round, evaluate the severity of the foul and notify the judges, corner, and announcer.
- c. End the match if the foul was severe. A competitor committing a gross foul will be disqualified and lose.

If a competitor in the lower position commits a foul and the upper competitor is injured, the referee shall call "Stop, Don't Move," take appropriate action regarding the foul, and either restart the match from the same position or adjust the position at the referee's discretion.

The referee may allow the match to continue without interruption in the case of minor accidental fouls or minor injuries, at their discretion.

### **Article 23: Fouls Before and After the Match**

If a foul occurs before the match begins, the competitor may start the match with a point deduction or may be ruled a loss due to foul, depending on the severity.

If a foul occurs after the match, or if a foul that occurred before or during the match is discovered afterward, the match result may be changed depending on the nature of the foul.

### **Article 24: Low Blow Fouls**

A competitor who receives a low blow may be allowed up to 5 minutes to recover, as long as the doctor determines that they can safely continue.

If the competitor is able to continue before 5 minutes have passed, the referee shall restart the match as soon as possible.

If the competitor cannot continue after the 5-minute allowance, the match is ended based on the result up to the round and time at which the match was stopped.

### **Article 25: Fouls Other Than Low Blows**

If the match is stopped due to an accidental foul, the referee must determine whether the fouled competitor can continue. If the competitor's chance of winning has not been severely affected and the foul did not deliver a concussion-like impact to the head, the referee may order the match to continue after a recovery interval of up to 5 minutes.

If a competitor receives a foul, the referee stops the match and calls a timeout. The injured competitor is handed over to the ring doctor, who examines whether the competitor is fit to continue. The doctor is allowed up to 5 minutes to make this determination. If the ring doctor deems the competitor able to continue, the referee must immediately restart the match. Unlike low blow fouls, the competitor cannot use the 5-minute interval at their own discretion and must continue when instructed by the referee.

If a competitor injured by a foul other than a low blow is judged by the referee to be unfit to continue, the referee must immediately stop the match. Even if there is time remaining within the 5-minute period, the competitor may not object, and the match must end.

If the referee stops the match and requests a medical examination, the doctor's evaluation must not exceed 5 minutes. If it does, the match cannot resume and must be considered finished.

### **Article 26: Treatment of Injuries Resulting from Legal Attacks or Fouls**

If a competitor is injured during the match as a result of a legal technique and the injury is sufficient to end the match, the injured competitor loses by TKO.

If a competitor is injured during the match due to an intentional foul, and the injury is deemed sufficient to end the match, the competitor who committed the foul is disqualified.

If a competitor is injured during the match due to an intentional foul and the match is allowed to continue, 2 points are deducted from the fouling competitor.

If a competitor is injured during the match due to an intentional foul, the match continues, and the injured competitor later becomes unable to continue, the competitor leading on the scorecards at that time wins by technical decision. If the score is tied or the injured competitor is behind, the match is ruled a technical draw.

If a competitor attempting to commit a foul injures themselves, the referee shall treat the injury as if it resulted from a legal attack.

If the referee judges a competitor's injury to be the result of an accidental foul and immediate match termination is appropriate, the following applies: in a 3-round match, if 2 rounds are not complete, or in a 5-round match, if 3 rounds are not complete, the result is a no contest.

If the referee judges a competitor's injury to be the result of an accidental foul and immediate match termination is appropriate, the following applies: in a 3-round match, if 2 rounds are complete, or in a 5-round match, if 3 rounds are complete, the competitor leading on the scorecards at that time wins by technical decision.

Unfinished rounds must be scored using the same criteria as completed rounds, up to the point at which the round was stopped.

### **Article 27: Intentional Fouls**

If a foul is judged intentional, in addition to point deductions during the match, the competitor may be suspended and fined. The duration of the suspension and the amount of the fine will be decided by the commission based on the severity and malice of the foul.

## **Chapter 7: Cornermen**

### **Article 28: Seconds**

Seconds must have passed the certification examination designated by the commission, and each corner may have up to 2 seconds. They must wear clean disposable gloves on both hands and may not leave their corner area during the match. They must ensure that they do not obstruct spectators.

During the match, seconds are only allowed to give verbal advice to their competitor. They may not touch the competitor, hit the mat, grab or touch the fence or ring ropes, stand up, or leave the corner area.

During intervals, seconds may give the competitor water only. They must not wet the mat.

Seconds may not throw anything into the fighting area except the official towel indicating surrender of the match.

Seconds must not engage in any other behavior that interferes with the progress of the match.

If a second notices a competitor's injury and wants the match to end, they must report it through a sub-referee or judge, who will signal the referee with a whistle to stop the match.

Only one second may enter the fighting area during the interval.

Seconds who tamper with the competitor's equipment or apply oils or other substances to the body during the interval will be removed from the area, and the competitor may be disqualified.

For violations by seconds in each corner, the first offense results in a warning and the second results in removal. If any object is thrown into the fighting area or a severe violation occurs, the competitor may be disqualified.

Seconds may not place anything on the ring, ring apron, or fighting area during the match.

Seconds must not give advice, protest, insult, or commit violent acts toward the opponent or referees.

Once the competitor is handed over to the referee before the match begins, the second may no longer touch the competitor.

Seconds may not speak to the competitor during a time stoppage.

## **Chapter 8: Referees**

### **Article 29: Referees**

Referees must have at least two years of practical experience, or be recognized by the commission as having equivalent or higher qualifications, be well-versed in the Pancrase Official Rules and their application, and

maintain a neutral and impartial position in all matters.

The Chief Referee, having been delegated authority by the Chairman of the Commission and the commission, may make rulings, give directions, and apply rules regarding match results.

A match is officiated by at least three referees, with the standard system being four officials: one main referee and three judges. One or two assistant referees may also be appointed. Judges can serve as assistant referees, and assistant referees can serve as judges.

The main referee manages the match inside the fighting area, assistant referees support the main referee from outside the area, and judges score the match according to Article 14.

Referees not assigned to a match may provide advice when requested by the Chief Referee or the assigned referees.

If the main referee encounters an accident, the match is paused and resumed once another referee enters the fighting area.

If an assistant referee or judge encounters an accident, the match is paused, and officials are reassigned to ensure that the match can continue without disruption.

If a referee applies the rules incorrectly or commits a serious error, they may face license revocation, suspension, or other appropriate penalties.

Referees must attend meetings when requested by the commission or Chief Referee in order to improve officiating skills, interpret rules and unresolved officiating issues, and study procedures for handling such matters.

If an unclear situation arises during or after a match in which the referee was involved, they may respond to questions from the media or the public only with the commission's permission.

## **Chapter 9: Ring Doctor**

### **Article 33: Doctor**

The Doctor must be a physician well versed in sports medicine and is responsible for managing the health of competitors and match officials. Decisions made by any doctor other than the designated Doctor are not considered official.

The Doctor sits at ringside during the match and, when requested by the referee, reports the condition of injured competitors and provides first aid as necessary.

The Doctor may assess a competitor's injury and, at their discretion, request the referee to pause or stop the match.

Before or after a match, if the Doctor determines that a competitor is medically unfit to compete, they must immediately report this to Pancrase and may recommend a suspension for a certain period.

## **Chapter 10: Timekeeper**

### **Article 34: Timekeeper**

The Timekeeper sits in the front row at ringside and must strictly manage all timekeeping using an accurate stopwatch.

The Timekeeper signals the start and end of the match, as well as the beginning and end of each round, using a gong or horn.

If an unavoidable situation occurs, such as an accident involving the referee or any other reason causing a match interruption, the Timekeeper may immediately sound the gong or horn to pause the match, even without instructions from the referee.

The gong must be at least 25 cm in diameter and securely fixed horizontally at ringside headquarters.

## **Chapter 11: Announcer**

## **Article 35: Announcer**

The Announcer manages the proceedings of the match. All announcements made by the Announcer are considered official by the Commission.

Before the match begins, the Announcer announces the names, height, weight, affiliation, corner color, ranking, titles, Pancrase record of both competitors, and the names of the match officials. After the match, the Announcer announces the decision, finishing techniques, and match duration.

The Announcer must not make any announcements that are not authorized by the Commission or the promoter.

## **Chapter 12: King of Pancrase Council**

### **Article 36: King of Pancrase Commission**

The Commission has final authority over all matters related to championship operations and the ranking of competitors participating in official Pancrase matches.

The Commission convenes within 10 days after each Pancrase event to make its decisions.

The Chairman of the Commission approves the decisions of the commissioners and officially recognizes titles.

### **Article 37: Rankings in Pancrase**

The Commission establishes rankings and titles for each weight class. Competitors participating in official Pancrase matches are classified as follows:

#### **King of Pancrase (Champion):**

The competitor at the top of Pancrase.

- i. The King of Pancrase must demonstrate the highest skill in official Pancrase matches and be recognized for both match performance and character.
- ii. The King of Pancrase must strive to maintain the qualifications specified above.
- iii. If the King of Pancrase competes in non-Pancrase matches and performs in a way that is deemed unfit for a champion, the Commission may require a title defense (mandatory match) within four months, or the champion must vacate the title.

#### **Ranker:**

Competitors eligible to challenge the King of Pancrase in each weight class. The Commission may rank competitors from 1st to 15th. The #1 ranked competitor has priority to challenge for the title within one year.

#### **Non-Ranker:**

Competitors who do not fall under categories 1 or 2.

### **Article 38: Ranking Changes**

The Commission updates rankings within 10 days after each event based on competitors' wins and losses, number of matches, win rates, achievements, and records in other organizations or sports. Rankers who have not participated in an official Pancrase match within 365 days of their last appearance are automatically removed from the rankings.

### **Article 39: Championship**

Challengers are selected by the Commission from rankers or champions in other weight classes. The open-weight division is exempt from this rule.

Championships are conducted according to the Pancrase Official Rules.

In the case of a draw, the King of Pancrase retains the title.

The champion and interim champion must defend their title within one year of becoming champion.

Matches that determine a new champion (title-deciding fights, tournaments, etc.) must always declare a winner by mandatory decision.

Competitors who fail the weigh-in cannot compete for the title. Championship matches are conducted under the conditions of Article 2(2) as follows:

- i. If the champion fails to make the official weight, the title becomes vacant.
- ii. If the champion, not at the official weight, loses to a challenger who made weight (excluding forfeits), the title transfers to the challenger.
- iii. If the champion, not at the official weight, wins or draws against a challenger at the official weight, the title becomes vacant.
- iv. If the champion makes weight and the challenger does not, the champion may choose whether the match is recognized as a championship match.
  - a. If recognized and the champion wins or draws, the title is defended.
  - b. If recognized and the champion loses, the title becomes vacant.

#### **Article 40: When an Officially Announced Title Match Cannot Take Place**

If a championship cannot occur for unavoidable reasons attributable to the King of Pancrase, the champion must defend the title within one year from the originally scheduled date. If unable to do so, the champion must vacate the title.

If the championship cannot take place due to serious fault on the part of the King of Pancrase, the champion must promptly vacate the title. The new champion is determined by a King of Pancrase decision match designated by the Commission.

For all other unforeseen cases, the Commission must be convened promptly, and the situation shall be handled according to its decision.

## **Chapter 13: Filing of Protests**

### **Article 41: Filing Complaints**

Competitors, seconds, and gym representatives may file a complaint with the Commission for the following reasons:

- i. Incorrect application of the rules
- ii. Significant factual errors that affected the match result

All complaints must be submitted in writing within two weeks after the match; oral complaints are invalid. The Commission will notify the result of its judgment in writing.

Appeals regarding match decisions must be submitted to the Commission, not to the referee, judges, or other match officials.

Appeals against judges' decisions are not accepted (judges' decisions are final, and the Commission will not change them). However, submitting suggestions for future improvements to judging is permitted.

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