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Who Are We?

The MN Black Belt League was founded in 2012 by Master Dominic Forte and Master Nathan Thorn both veterans of the competition world who wanted to see a tournament be ran where a competitor's satisfaction was the sole and main purpose behind its setup. The goal of the MN Black Belt League is to make sure that each competitor has the same experience through consistently promoting events the same way each time and providing up front and clear rules ran by educated and qualified judges who have been trained and pre-screened.

Sparring Rules

Uniforms – Traditional or Sport Karate Uniform, not Shirts will be allowed in place a uniform top. Tops should have at minimum a 3/4th length sleeve that goes to the forearm.

Sparring Equipment – All gear must be approved by M.B.B.L. If you are not sure which manufacturers make approved gear contact the M.B.B.L. for a list.

Required – Head Gear, Hand Pads, Foot Pads, Mouth Guard, Cups (for males)

17 & Under – Face Cage and Chest Guard are required

Hand Pads – must cover all fingers, wrist, back of knuckles

Foot Pads – must cover toes, top of foot, instep, back of heel

Optional – Elbow Pads, Shin Guards, (18+ face cage and rib / chest protectors)

Targets

Legal Targets – Face or Cage, Head Gear, Chest, Abdomen, Ribs, Kidneys

Illegal Targets – Back or Spine, Neck, Arms, Below the Belt line

Scoring Techniques

Legal Scoring Techniques – Closed fist strikes, Ridge hands, Kicks

Scoring techniques must be thrown with a controlled level of contact but must also have the potential to stop an opponent.

Illegal Scoring Techniques – Open hand strikes, Finger Gauges, Head Butts, Knees, Elbows, Blind Spinning Hand Techniques

Point Values – Scoring Hand Techniques are awarded 1 Point, Scoring Kicking Techniques are awarded 2 points

Receiving a Point – Competitors must receive a majority call from the judges in their favor to be awarded a point.

If there are 3 judges the competitor must get 2 of the 3 judges to call a point their way. If 2 of the 3 judges call the same way, but each call different points one calling a hand technique and one calling a kicking technique the competitor will receive the lower point value being 1 point. If there are 5 judges a competitor must receive calls from at least 3 of the judges. If the judges make different calls the competitor will receive the majority call or if it is a tie with four judges calling points the lesser point value will be given.

Winning a Match – Competitors will compete for a running time of 2 minutes. If one competitor is ahead by a margin of 7 points at any point in the match the match will be called and the ahead competitor will win by the “Spread”. If neither competitor can win by a “Spread” then the competitor with the most points at the end of the match will be deemed the winner.

Matches ending in ties

in divisional matches if the competitors are tied at the end of the match the match will be recorded as a tie and no overtime will be needed.

Eliminations

Competitors must win by 2 points. If the match ends with a 1 point difference then it will go into overtime.

Overtime – In overtime every scoring technique is worth 1 point and a competitor must win by 2 points to be the winner.

Warnings and Penalties – A competitor may be warned at any point during a match against breaking the rules.

This may be performed during a match or even before the match. Once a first warning has been given the next offense against this action will result in a Penalty point being given to the opponent. If a competitor commits penalties resulting in their opponent receiving 3 penalty points in a match they will automatically be disqualified.

Penalties – Leaving the ring to avoid fighting, Falling to avoid fighting, Excessive running to avoid fighting, Strikes to

illegal targets, Striking with Illegal techniques, Un-sportsman like conduct, and Delaying the normal running of a match by a competitor or coach.

Time Outs – A competitor or Coach may call for a 30-Second time out once per match. The timeout does not start until the Center Referee calls “Stop” and awards the timeout. Competitors who call for a timeout may be scored on until the “Stop” Call is made. If a competitor is about to score the Center Referee may decide to call stop after the next clash.

Judges

Calling of Points – If a corner referee has a call to make they may at anytime raise their hands in the air and say “Point” this does not stop the match but lets the center referee know that they have a call they would like to make. At no time can a corner referee make a “Stop” call. Fighter should continue to spar until a “Stop” call is made by the Center Referee.

The Center Referee will make a “Stop” call when they feel a quality point has been scored. Upon calling stop they will announce “Call for Points” at this time the corner referees and the center referee will all point the direction they feel there was a point with the appropriate numbers of fingers for the point they are calling. The center referee has permission to disallow a late call if they feel like the corner referee took too long to make the call.

Calls – Referees may make a variety of calls depending on what they saw. **“No See”** this is symbolized by covering the eyes with one hand to say they think something was scored but did not see the point. **“Clash”** this is symbolized by two fists colliding to say they believe both competitors scored same time. **“One”** this call is made by pointing one finger in the direction of the scoring competitor. **“Two”** this call is made by pointing two fingers in the direction of the scoring competitor. **“Excessive Contact”** this call is made by tapping the back of one fist to the palm of an open hand to say that they believe and Excessive amount of force was used. **“Out of Bounds”** this call is made by waving both hands to the waist side to say that one or both competitors were out of bounds. **“Low Strike”** this is symbolized by both hands palms down and extended down to say that a competitor struck below the belt. In order to make a call a judge must be able to see the point score. Judges may not make a call they assume hit a target.

Judge Positions – The center referee is allowed to move where ever they feel the need. Corner referees may move half way across the ring on either line from the corner they start in. At no point should a corner referee be in the middle of the ring or past half way to a different corner.

Ring Size – Rings will be no smaller than 16ft x 16ft and no larger than 20ft x 20ft.

In and Out of Bounds - A competitor is considered in Bounds as long as they still have one foot in the ring. If a competitor has no feet down in the ring they will be considered out and may not score a point. If a kicker has their standing foot out of bounds they may not score a point. If a puncher has one foot in and one foot they may still score a point. In Bounds competitors may still score points on out of bounds competitors until the center referee call stop.

Arbitration

At any point in a match a competitor or coach may call for Arbitration if they believe that the rules are not being followed. A certified representative of the MN Black Belt League will step in to hear both the official and competitors point of views. Once the Arbitrator makes a decision it is final.

Video Replay

Video replay may be used to in the following cases

- Scoring errors where the proper score is not tabulated or tracked by the score keeper.
- Forms - To figure out if an illegal move for the division was used
- To correct the amount of time left on the clock

Video Replays are not accepted in the following situations

- To overturn a judges decision or call for any reason
- To figure out if a fighter was in or out of bounds

Unsportsmanlike conduct

Any competitor that displays Unsportsmanlike man like conduct may disqualified by the center referee. unsportsmanlike conduct includes but is not limited to.

- excessive use of force
- Inappropriate language or gestures
- Urging with tournament officials
- Excessive delaying of the normal pace of the ring

Start Times

Divisions will not start before the advertised time. Divisions will also not start if a competitor in that division is currently competing in another division or ring. It is the competitors responsibility to be at the correct ring at the schedule start time for a division to check in.

Round Robin Format

Fighters will be randomly divided into 4 person divisions. Fighters will fight one round versus each person in their division. The fighter with the best record will move on to the Eliminate Bracket. If there is a tie in record the competitor with the largest spread will be the winner. I case of another tie the competitor who won their match will be the winner. In case of another tie the fighters will fight with elimination overtime rules.

Eliminate Round

Winners of the division will be placed on a bracket. If there are open spots on the bracket the fighters with the 2nd best records may be brought forward onto the bracket.