



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES LUTTES ASSOCIEES  
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATED WRESTLING STYLES

**FILA**

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# **INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS**

## **FOR THE**

# **GRAPPLING REFEREEING BODY**

*Updated in September 2009*



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## **SECTION ONE – INTRODUCTION**

### **Article 1 – Objectives**

The following Regulations have as their aim to determine:

- The conditions of attribution of the title of international grappling referee
- The categories and zone of competence of the international grappling referees
- The methods of assessment and improvement of the international grappling referees
- The rights and duties of the international grappling referees during FILA sanctioned events
- The status of the international refereeing body and the obligations of the National Grappling Federations or Committees affiliated to FILA towards their referees.

### **Article 2 – Competent Authority**

FILA is the only competent authority that can give the title of international referee for the sport of grappling and can issue referees' licences and badges.

### **Article 3 – Reference and Classification**

For reference purposes, FILA will keep an annual record of all international referees' names and categories. The evaluations received during their participation in international competitions will be recorded and used to establish the annual classification of international referees.

### **Article 4 – General Conduct**

The FILA international referees are expected to represent FILA in all sanctioned events and uphold the values of fairness and sportsmanship in all their actions. They must also show firmness in their decisions and have a respectable appearance when stepping on the mat in order to gain absolute respect from the participating athletes. The three F slogan can be used to endeavour the FILA refereeing philosophy: FAIR – FIRM – FIT.

In addition to have a perfect knowledge of the International Grappling Regulations, the FILA international referees must master the various competitions systems used at FILA sanctioned events, be able to conduct drawing of lots and subsequent pairing, know how to properly fill in grappling score sheets and be able to apply proper refereeing on the mat.

The FILA international referees shall never show any type of bias towards a particular competitor. If referees are assigned competitors with whom they have a personal relationship (family member, teammate, friend, etc.), they must withdraw from the match and ask to be replaced. In addition, referees shall never engage in any form of gambling that would infringe on their duties.



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## **SECTION TWO – ATTRIBUTION OF THE TITLE AND CATEGORIES**

### **Article 5 – Preliminary Conditions**

Only referees who possess the highest qualification at their national level and who have their country's nationality can be presented as candidates for the international examination by their National Federation or Committee.

Candidates for the title of international referee may not be younger than 21. They must have followed and passed a training course in their country, during which they must have covered all the significant matters in the international referees' examination programme. To be allowed to participate in the FILA training courses, the candidates will have to provide an authorization letter signed by their National Federation/Committee President.

It is specified that grapplers or coaches will not be allowed to pass an international referees' examination during a competition in which they are participating.

### **Article 6 – Attribution of the Title**

The title of international referee will be awarded to any candidate who has fulfilled the conditions listed above and who has successfully followed a course for new candidates organised by FILA during an international competition. The examination in French or English will consist of:

- An oral test with questions related to the technical regulations of grappling
- A written test with questions related to the content of the course and technique identifications
- A practical test during a FILA sanctioned competition

The examination fee of CHF 100 will be collected by the FILA instructor(s) prior to the course and will include the licence fee of CHF 70 for the current year.

The candidates who succeed in the various examination phases will be awarded the title of international referee of category-III and will receive their annual FILA licence and the necessary set of accessories to enable them to conduct their duty as international grappling referee.

### **Article 7 – Categories & Field of Competence**

Following the suggestion made by the FILA grappling instructors, international referees are classified by FILA in the categories indicated hereafter, in ascending order:

- **Category-III referee:** allowed to officiate at all national tournaments and at FILA sanctioned international tournaments upon written authorization by a FILA grappling instructor.
- **Category-II referee:** allowed to officiate at all FILA sanctioned international tournaments.
- **Category-I referee:** allowed to officiate at all FILA Continental and World Championships and at Regional, Continental, and World Games. Category-I referees can also be appointed as Head Referees to international tournaments and evaluate the work of the referees present.
- **FILA Instructors:** allowed to officiate at all FILA sanctioned events and evaluate the work of the referees present. Responsible for conducting the FILA referees' course and for appointing the referees to the matches at Continental and World Championships.



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### **Article 8 – Maintaining or Changing Categories**

The international referees' courses are governed by FILA and placed under the responsibility of FILA appointed instructors. They are organised during international competitions and must be preceded by theoretical training in order to standardize the refereeing.

#### **- Control courses**

To maintain their category, international referees of category II and I must attend at least one international competition per year during which a control course is organized. The appointed FILA instructors will be in charge of evaluating the referees' work and will be entitled to downgrade a referee whose performance is too poor.

The category I and II referees who fail to get controlled once during the current year will maintain the title of international referee but will be downgraded to the lower category. In order to obtain a higher category again, they will have to successfully pass the corresponding promotion course.

#### **- Promotion courses**

The international referees who wish to be promoted by one category must attend a course especially set up for this purpose by FILA and pass the corresponding exam. The interested parties will have to pay an examination fee of CHF 50.

### **Article 9 – Renewal of the FILA Licence**

At the end of each year, FILA will send an invoice to the National Federations or Committees pertaining to the renewal of their international referees' licences. The annual licence fee per referee is CHF 70.

Referees of any category will not be allowed to enter any FILA sanctioned event if they are unable to present their valid licence for the current year.

Referees who fail to renew their licence or voluntarily stop their activity for one year or more will be required to pass a candidates' exam if they want to regain their title of international referee. No matter what their previous category was, they will receive the category III and will have to attend promotion courses to be upgraded again.

## **SECTION THREE – INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY**

### **Article 10 – Nomination of the Referees**

The National Federations or Committees are entirely responsible for their international referees as per their nomination to the various FILA sanctioned events or referees' courses.

It is reminded that category-III referees must receive a written approval from a FILA Instructor to be allowed to participate in FILA international tournaments, provided that no promotion course from category III to II is organized during the said competition.

Similarly, referees of category II can be nominated to Continental and World Championships if a promotion course from category II to I is organized.



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### **Article 11 – International Obligations**

For international tournaments with three or more participating countries, a Head Referee will be appointed by FILA and be in charge of coordinating the competition, selling the FILA licences to the athletes, evaluating the referees' work, and arbitrating any litigious situation. The tournament organizer will be responsible for covering the Head Referee's travel and accommodation fees and for paying a representation fee of CHF 70 per day to him.

If an organizer does not register an international competition in the FILA calendar in due time (i.e., at least three months before the date of the competition) and/or does not accept to cover the expenses related to the Head Referee's participation, the National Federation or Committee will be sanctioned as provided in the FILA Disciplinary Regulations and FILA Financial Regulations.

### **Article 12 – Participation in Major Competitions**

Independently from the provisions laid down in article 8 above and in order to obtain the most homogenous refereeing at major competitions such as Continental and World Championships, a training course for participating referees will obligatorily take place and will be led by the FILA appointed instructors. In addition, each day, the referees will be convened to discuss any litigious point that may have arisen. In addition to the reminder of major refereeing rules, videos on delicate officiating situations will be showed and the referees will be questioned on their interpretation of these situations.

It is reminded that, at major competitions, referees and mat judges cannot be of the same nationality as the competing grapplers. The referee and mat judge responsible for each match will be appointed by the FILA instructors in charge of the competition in order to ensure the most impartial refereeing.

## **SECTION FOUR – DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS AND ENDING OF FUNCTION**

### **Article 13 – Disciplinary Sanctions**

The international referees who are subject to a complaint for infringement of the International Refereeing Regulations will receive a warning if the complaint is recognised as justified by the WGC Refereeing Department. If the offence is repeated, the referees will be demoted to a lower category. However, in case of serious offences, the referees can be suspended for the duration of the competition or be immediately demoted by FILA.

The international referees who make an unjust decision under pressure or in agreement with a third party will be disqualified and excluded for life, as provided for in the FILA Disciplinary Regulations.

The final sanction imposed on the referees at fault will be subject to a decision by FILA on the basis of the results of an ordered investigation.



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#### **Article 14 – Permanent Ending of Function**

The title and function of international referee ceases irremediably in the following cases:

- When the referee reaches 60 years of age.
- Resignation of the interested party.
- Removal of the interested party by his/her National Federation or Committee.
- Exclusion of the interested party by for disciplinary reasons.

#### **Article 15 – Honorary Membership**

The category-I referees who participated in 4 senior World Championships and who cease their activity can receive, upon proposal of their National Federation or Committee, the title of Honorary referee. This title offers them a lifelong licence, a special badge and a diploma. Upon presentation of their licence, they will have free access to all FILA sanctioned events (except the Olympic Games).

### **SECTION FIVE – APPOINTED HEAD REFEREES**

#### **Article 16 – Head Referees’ Competences**

The category-I referees appointed by FILA as Head Referees for international competitions must:

- Make sure that the competition is organized in compliance with the FILA regulations.
- Sell the FILA licences to the competitors before the beginning of the competition.
- Supervise the organization of the weigh-in, draw, and pairing.
- Check that all athletes are wearing a regulatory competition uniform.
- Check that all participating referees are holding their annual FILA licence.
- Appoint the referees to each match.
- Evaluate the work of all referees present and send a report to FILA within three days after the end of the competition at the following address: [info@fila-grappling.com](mailto:info@fila-grappling.com).
- Suggest, if necessary, the immediate suspension of a referee in the event of irregularity or serious offence.

#### **Article 17 – Head Referees’ Technical Functions**

The Head Referees must also comply with their technical functions under the following conditions:

- Make sure that all the requirements to begin a match are met.
- Ensure that all the referees are always present near the mats.
- Not intervene but simply control that the referees and mat judges work in unison.
- Ask for the match to be interrupted and invite the referees and mat judges to provide their explanations if they transgress the rules.
- Have the casting vote and make the final decision in case of a dispute between the referees and mat judges concerning the points awarded for an action, the issuing of a warning, disqualification or the result of the match.
- Immediately examine the video evidence in case of an obvious dispute in the presence of the referees and mat judges.



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## **SECTION SIX – THE REFEREEING BODY**

### **Article 18 – General Duties**

The refereeing body shall perform all the duties set forth in the regulations governing grappling competitions and in any special provision that might be established for the organization of a particular competition. The referees and the mat judges assigned to each match are required to use the basic FILA vocabulary and signals appropriate to their respective roles when conducting the matches. The referees' main duty consists in starting and interrupting the match, awarding the points and impose the penalties in order to determine the legitimate winner and loser. The referees' decisions prevail, but in case of doubt, they may consult the mat judges. In case no agreement can be reached, the Head Referee in charge of the competition will have the final say. The referees and the judges are forbidden to speak to anyone during the match, except amongst themselves when they must consult so as to perform their tasks properly.

All the points shall be announced to the public by the mat judges, either by hand signal, by means of bats or by an electronic/manual scoreboard. The mat judges' score sheets are used to tally all the holds executed by the two opponents, including the points, cautions, and warnings for passivity which shall be recorded with the greatest accuracy in the order corresponding to the various phases of the match. At the end of the match, the referee and the mat judge shall sign the score sheet.

### **Article 19 – Referees' Rights**

The duly accredited FILA international referees have the right to:

- Officiate at all FILA sanctioned events.
- Wear the FILA badge and the regulatory uniform that consists in black trousers, black polo shirt (with the FILA badge) and black approved shoes.
- Be promoted to a higher category at the time of the promotion courses organized by FILA.
- Receive decorations, diplomas, badges, medals, golden whistle, etc.
- Receive from event organizers, when they are assigned as Head Referees by FILA, the reimbursement of accommodation and travelling expenses and a per diem of CHF 70 for the duration of the competition.
- Open procedures, as outlined in the FILA Disciplinary Regulations, in case of disputes in which they might be involved.

### **Article 20 – Referees' Duties**

When officiating at FILA sanctioned events, the international referees do not represent their country and must show impartiality. In addition to the provisions applicable to the function of referee as defined in the International Grappling Regulations, the international referees must:

- Always be able to present their valid licence for the current year.
- Wear the regulatory uniform that consists in black trousers, black polo shirt (with the FILA badge) and black approved shoes.
- Permanently be available to the Head Referee for the duration of the competition.
- Carry out the tasks, which they are given to them in the pure spirit of justice and impartiality, and demand the integral compliance with the Grappling International Regulations.
- Lead and work as referees at their national competitions.
- Be available as often as possible for international competitions.



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The referees are responsible for the orderly conduct of the match that they shall direct according to the FILA International Grappling Regulations. They shall command the respect of the contestants and exercises full authority over them so that they immediately obey their orders and instructions. Similarly, they shall conduct the match without tolerating any irregular and outside interventions. The referees' whistle shall begin, interrupt and end the match. After the execution of a hold (if it is valid and if it has been executed within the limits of the mat surface), they shall indicate with their fingers the points corresponding to the value of the hold by raising the wrist corresponding to the color of the grappler who scored.

#### Referees' technical duties:

- Shake the grapplers' hand when they enter the mat and before they leave it.
- Inspect the grapplers' skin for perspiration or any greasy or sticky substance.
- Not get too close to the grapplers when they are in standing position, but stay close if they are in ground position.
- Be able to change position from one moment to the next, on the mat or around it, and in particular move onto the knees or stomach to obtain a better view of an impending submission.
- Not obstruct the mat judges' view by standing so close to the grapplers (particularly if a submission appears imminent).
- Not turn their back to the competitors at any point and risk to lose control over the situation.
- Stimulate passive grapplers without interrupting the match and award the necessary cautions.
- Ensure that the grapplers do not rest during the match on the pretense of wiping their bodies, blowing their nose, feigning injury, etc. In such case, the referees shall stop the match and ask for a caution to be issued to the grappler at fault and 1 point to the opponent.
- Brush off grapplers' hand or give a verbal warning if they are pulling their opponent's uniform.
- Uphold penalties for violations of the rules or for brutality.
- Be ready to blow the whistle if the grapplers approach the edge of the mat.
- Indicate whether a hold executed at the edge of the mat is valid.
- Break action and bring the grapplers back into starting position when the action goes out of bounds (i.e. when no body part of either grappler is touching the competition area or when any body part of either grappler is out of the protection area).
- Rapidly and clearly order the position in which grappling must be resumed.
- Whistle to stop the action after a grappler has signaled submission either physically (by a tap) or verbally. The referees shall also put a hand on each competitor to further ensure the grapplers' safety.
- Except for Continental and World Championships, the referees are expected to stop the action if upon observing a submission attempt, they feel that a grappler will not be able to escape without harm.
- Upon intervention by the mat judges, interrupt the match and proclaim victory by technical superiority when the grapplers' scores are 10 points apart. In such situation, they shall wait for the action, either an attack or counter attack, to be complete.
- Interrupt the match at exactly the right time when necessary.
- Ensure that the grapplers remain on the mat until the result of the match is announced.
- Proclaim the winner (by raising the winner's hand) after agreement with the mat judge.

#### Article 21 – Mat Judges' Duties

The mat judges shall follow the course of the match very closely without allowing themselves to be distracted in any way. Following each action and on the basis of the referees' indications, they shall write the corresponding points on the score sheet. They shall in particular:

- Keep the official record of the match scoring on the score sheet.
- Make sure that the scoreboards are visible to both the spectators and the grapplers.
- Assist in maintaining the proper score and time.
- Make the referee aware of any possible scores, infractions, or submissions.



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## **SECTION SEVEN – SCORING AND REFEREEING ON THE MAT**

### **Article 22 – Points and Scoring Abbreviations**

If the Heracles competition software is not used to run the competition, the mat judges must fill in the first section of the score sheet, indicating the referee's and judge's name for each match, the date, the match number, the weight category, the style (Gi or No-Gi), the round, and the mat number. They shall then indicate the name of each competitor, their nationality, and bracket number.

The points and passivity cautions shall be written in the corresponding spaces following the order of their awarding. For example, if a grappler receives 1 point for a takedown and 2 points for holding a side mount, the mat judge shall indicate 1, 2 and not 3. This accuracy in keeping score is essential in case of a tie at the end of the regulation time, since the value of points will be used as a criterion to determine the grappler who can choose the position for the overtime restart.

At the end of the match, the mat judge shall report the total number of points received by each competitor, cross out the loser, and enter the total time of the match. The type of victory and the corresponding classification points shall also be reported in the winner's specified space according to the following abbreviations:

- **SBC 5:0** Submission by choke
- **SBL 5:0** Submission by lock
- **DF 5:0** Default
- **DQ 5:0** Disqualification
- **FT 5:0** Forfeit
- **TS 4:1** Technical superiority (10-point difference), the loser with points
- **TS 4:0** Technical superiority (10-point difference), the loser without points
- **DS 3:1** Decision (less than 10-point difference), the loser with points
- **DS 3:0** Decision (less than 10-point difference), the loser without points
- **OT 2:0** Victory in overtime

Once the score sheet is properly filled in, the referee and the mat judge shall sign it and the score sheet shall be transferred to the competition secretariat to be entered in the competition software. The score sheets of the entire competition shall be collected by the organizer and be kept for a month of time in case a mistake occurred in the final results.

### **Article 23 – Verbal Commands and Hand Signals**

All verbal commands shall be expressed in a clear loud voice so that the competitors, the mat judge, and the public can understand them and shall be accompanied by the proper gestures and hand signals. When issuing a verbal command, the referees shall make sure that the hand used to point at the grappler corresponds to the grappler's color.

- **“Action”** Command used to start the match or resume the action
- **“Stop”** Command used to stop the action or the match
- **“Up”** Command used to order the grapplers to resume the fight in standing position
- **“Red/Blue Down”** Command used to order the grapplers to the restart position
- **“Attention”** Command used to correct a wrong restart position



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- **“Red/Blue Contact”** Command used to order the grapplers to enter in contact
- **“Red/Blue Open”** Command used to promote action without penalizing the grapplers
- **“Red/Blue Action”** Command used to promote action without penalizing the grapplers. The call should first be directed to the athlete. If the athlete does not respond, the call should be directed to the corner as well in order to give him a chance to stimulate the athlete into action. If there is still no active attempt, the referee can issue the passivity caution.
- **“Red/Blue Passive”** Command used to indicate a passivity caution
- **“Red/Blue Illegal”** Command used to indicate a passivity caution
- **“Do you give up?”** Question used in submission situations before declaring a catch

In order to standardize the refereeing, the referees shall always use the same hand signals and be very clear in their gestures so that no ambiguity can arise at the mat table or among the public.

## **SECTION EIGHT – FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 24 – Ejection Procedures**

The World Grappling Committee refers to the FILA Code of Ethics and strongly condemns any form of brutality, violence, or harassment on the competition site. If an athlete, coach, or spectator goes beyond the acceptable in his words, gestures, or actions, it is the referees' responsibility to judge if that behaviour is deemed as a conduct violation. Once the referees have declared the behaviour to be a violation, they shall issue a yellow card to the individual at fault as a warning prior to being ejected. A yellow card will deduct one classification point to the team the individual is representing. If the violation continues, a red card will be issued and the individual at fault will be ejected from the competition. A red card will cause 2 classification points to the team. If the referees feel that the behaviour goes well beyond the normal violation, they may skip the yellow card and directly issue a red card.

Examples of conduct violations:

- Cursing during the match
- Being aggressive towards the referee
- Threaten the referee
- Physical contact with the referee
- Throwing objects
- Arguing an interrupting the match
- Refusing to stay on the mat for the winner's declaration

### **Article 25 – Protest and Challenge**

No protest may be lodged at the end of a match. A challenge can be called for during the match if the Head Referee or a grappler's coach deems that a refereeing mistake has been made, but the result of a match may under no circumstances be modified after victory has been declared on the mat.

The challenge is the action through which a coach is allowed, on behalf of the grappler, to stop the action and request the refereeing body to watch the video evidence and reconsider its judgment. It is specified that this possibility is only offered during competitions in which the video control is formally established by FILA and the organizing committee.



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The coach who wishes to request a challenge shall throw a soft object and remain seated, immediately after the refereeing body has awarded points or cautions to the contested situation. The mat chairman shall then interrupt the match as soon as the ongoing action is completed. If the grappler disagrees with his/her coach's decision, then the match continues.

The refereeing body is then invited to watch the video evidence and render its final decision along with the Head Referee in charge of the tournament who will have the final say in case of disagreement.

Each grappler is entitled to 1 challenge per match. If after reviewing the video evidence, the refereeing body modifies its decision, then the challenge can be used again during the match. If the refereeing body confirms its initial decision, the grappler loses the challenge and 5 points are awarded to his/her opponent.

#### **Article 26 – Field of application**

The present Regulations apply to the international referees who are regularly qualified by FILA and to all affiliated National Federations or Committees, and more particularly with regards to their obligations of education, further training and retraining of their international referees. It is recommended that the National Federations or Committees follow the spirit of these Regulations so that their referees offer quality refereeing that conforms to the FILA/WGC expectations.

#### **Article 27 – Modification of the rules**

In the event of a question concerning the interpretation of any of the articles of these Regulations, only FILA is qualified to interpret them. In addition, upon suggestions made by the WGC Refereeing Department, FILA has the right to make any changes it deems necessary in order to improve the smooth running of international refereeing.