

## 2021 IMMAF Amateur MMA Eligibility to Compete

Chapter 1 in the IMMAF rules outline what makes an athlete eligible to compete in Amateur MMA (and Youth World Championships):

- The contestant shall be of legal age according to the laws of the country where the competition is held.
- The contestant shall be in good physical and mental condition. The contestant will be examined during the medical check.
- The contestant shall be well prepared to compete in MMA.
- The contestant shall have experience from competing in full contact martial arts.
- When entering a competition, the contestant is responsible for ensuring that all relevant martial arts experience is reported.
- Passport validity minimum timeframe required 2 year cooling off period.

### Competitors for:

#### **Youth category C 12 – 13 years old**

The player must not be under the age of 12 years or over the age of 14 years before 1<sup>st</sup> day of competition and must be within this age band until the competition has been completed.

#### **Youth category B 14 – 15 years old**

The player must not be under the age of 14 years or over the age of 16 years before 1<sup>st</sup> day of competition and must be within this age band until the competition has been completed.

#### **Youth category A 16-17 years old**

The player must not be under the age of 16 years or over the age of 18 years before 1<sup>st</sup> day of competition and must be within this age band until the competition has been completed.

#### **Juniors Under 21 years old**

The player must be between 18 years of age and 20 years of age by the 1st day of competition. The junior player cannot be over 21 years by the 1st day of competition and must be within this age band until the competition has been completed.

#### **Seniors 18 years old and above.**

The player must be 18 years of age by the 1st day of competition. There is no upper age limit.

To ensure the safety of the athletes, all national teams may be asked to provide documentation of an athlete's previous martial arts experience, including any applicable video footage for review by the IMMAF.

## 2021 Championships

### **AMATEUR VS. PROFESSIONAL LEVEL ATHLETES**

When IMMAF held its inaugural World Championships in 2014 in Las Vegas, Nevada, there was no existing international standard for Amateur MMA rules. It therefore proved necessary that an athlete's historic records were viewed by IMMAF with respect to the country in which bouts took place. As an example, in 2014 athlete records were presented to the Nevada State Athletic Commission.

Regional rulesets included French Pankration, Italian FILA rules matches, Finnish B-Class and UK Semi-Pro among others. IMMAF fine-tuned its definition of an Amateur athlete following the 2014 Worlds and introduced a stricter clearance process ahead of every competition.

IMMAF Championship competitions are open to Amateur athletes only, i.e. not athletes who have competed at a professional level.

The IMMAF considers an athlete to be on a professional level and thus not eligible for participation if he/she meets any one of the following criteria:

- Holds a pro MMA or professional combat sports license issued by any sanctioning body.
- Is under contract with a Pro MMA or professional combat sport promotion.
- Has received a purse for participating in an MMA or professional combat sports match.\*
- Has competed in a professional level MMA or combat sport bout regardless of non-payment or absence of contract.\*\*
- Has participated in a professional MMA match under the Unified Rules of MMA or equivalent in the country where the bout took place.\*\*\*
- Has competed against an opponent with a Pro MMA record at the time the bout took place.\*\*\*\*
- Has a professional combat sport (not just MMA) record published anywhere, subject to confirmation.

Please note that IMMAF – WMMAA criteria for Amateur MMA eligibility supersedes the potentially differing criteria of the national federation.

\*See here for further details on expenses, prize money and financial gain: <https://bit.ly/2tC68E5>

\*\*Non-payment or absence of contract does not preserve eligibility if the athlete has competed in a bout that contributes to a professional record.

\*\*\*Due to ongoing status of MMA in France and significantly limit rules, historic cases of French Pankration bouts are subject to review of the athlete's level of experience.

\*\*\*\*National federations may apply for case-by-case review of amateur athletes affected by bouts taken against professional veterans in an amateur setting.

Each national federation will be held responsible for making sure only Amateurs are entered into IMMAF Championships.



The IMMAF and the host MMA Federation will review applications and make necessary background checks.

If you have any queries about an athlete please contact Jorden Curran, [curran@immaf.org](mailto:curran@immaf.org), in advance of submitting your team application, so that their case may be reviewed.

We ask that all national federation representatives take this eligibility criteria very seriously and implement the required action **PRIOR** to a Championship, as to avoid any potential issues or eligibility challenges during an IMMAF event.