

VICTORIAN AMATEUR BOXING LEAGUE INCOPRORATED

RULE BOOK

REVISED & ADOPTED: 2024

Rules for the conduct of amateur boxing
contests in Victoria



These rules now form the official Victorian amateur boxing rules with the former AABLI National rules only being in use for AABLI sanctioned events within Victoria

These rules only cover the State of Victoria

If a Victorian Boxer obtains a clearance to compete in another jurisdiction they will adhere to those rules in operation within their territory

Contents

1. Purpose	5
2. General	5
3. Definitions	5
4. Weight divisions	7
<i>Weight divisions – boxing contestants</i>	7
<i>Age divisions – boxing contestants</i>	7
<i>Duration of bouts</i>	8
<i>Duration of bouts – Titles</i>	8
5. Kid's Bouts	8
6. Novice Boxers	9
<i>Definition of a Novice Boxer</i>	9
<i>Amateur Boxers competing in Novice Events</i>	9
<i>Novice Rules</i>	9
7. Elite Boxers	9
<i>An Elite Boxer requirements</i>	9
<i>Elite Boxing Bouts</i>	10
8. The weigh-in	10
<i>The ring</i>	11
<i>Contestants' gloves</i>	11
9. The contestant	12
<i>General requirements</i>	12
<i>Contestant attire</i>	12
<i>Jewellery</i>	12
<i>Bandages</i>	12
<i>Non-fight periods</i>	13
<i>Concussed contestants</i>	13
<i>Non-fight periods and return to contest requirements</i>	14
10. Concussion management guidelines	15
<i>Return to fight strategy</i>	16
11. The trainer	17
<i>General requirements</i>	17
<i>Bandages</i>	17

12. The referee	18
<i>General requirements</i>	18
<i>The referee's attire</i>	18
<i>Duties of the referee before a contest commences</i>	18
<i>Duties of a referee during a contest</i>	19
<i>Powers of a referee</i>	19
<i>Accidental low blow</i>	20
<i>Mandatory eight count</i>	20
<i>Calling time for medical examination</i>	21
<i>Stopping the contest</i>	21
13. The medical practitioner	23
<i>General requirements</i>	23
<i>Medical equipment for use by the Medical Practitioner</i>	22
<i>Before the commencement of a contest</i>	22
<i>Pre-contest examination</i>	22
<i>During the contest</i>	24
<i>Authority to stop a contest</i>	24
<i>Post-contest examination</i>	24
14. The judges	25
<i>General requirements</i>	25
<i>The judge's attire</i>	25
<i>Judges' responsibilities and obligations</i>	25
<i>The judging guidelines – evaluation criteria</i>	26
<i>10 Point Must System</i>	27
15. The timekeeper	30
<i>General requirements</i>	30
<i>A timekeeper's attire</i>	30
<i>The timekeeper's equipment</i>	30
<i>The role of the timekeeper</i>	30
<i>Cessation of a count</i>	30
16. Code of conduct	31
17. Contact information	31

Purpose

Boxing is a full contact sport of fist fighting. The sport requires the use of boxing gloves and limits legal blows to those striking above the waist and on the front or sides of the opponent.

The purpose of these rules is to supplement the requirements of the Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Act 1985 (the Act) and the Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Regulations 2008 (the Regulations) that apply to professional boxing contests in Victoria but within the amateur boxing framework.

These rules are issued by the Victorian Amateur Boxing League Incorporated in the interests of safety and integrity of amateur boxing in Victoria.

General

It is a condition of any license or registration issued by the Victorian Amateur Boxing League that all license or registration holders comply with these rules.

A breach of any such condition may result in a license or registration being cancelled or suspended or any license or registration conditions being varied.

The Victorian Amateur Boxing League Incorporated may vary, revoke or waive these rules at any time.

Definitions

the Act means the Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Act 1985 (Vic).

approved singlet & shorts means competitor's attire approved by the VABL

the VABL means the Victorian Amateur Boxing League Incorporated

a foul means any of the following:

- striking below the waist;
- striking the opponent while they are down or in the process of getting up;
- holding an opponent with one hand and striking with the other;
- holding or deliberately maintaining a clinch;
- wrestling or kicking;
- butting with the head or shoulder or using the knee;
- hitting with an open glove, butt of the hand, wrist or elbow, and all backhand blows;
- hitting an opponent who is partly out of the ring and prevented by the ropes from assuming a position of defence;
- intentionally going down without being hit;
- intentionally striking at the kidney region;
- the use of the pivot blow or kidney punch;
- jabbing at an opponent's eyes with the thumb of the glove;

hitting on the break, or the back of the head or neck;
hitting after the bell ending the round has sounded;
pushing an opponent about the ring or onto the ropes;
persistently ducking below the waistline;
any dangerous or unsportsmanlike conduct;
intentionally spitting out the mouthguard; and
using substances forbidden by the World Anti-Doping Association.

tournament means an event consisting of amateur or amateur & professional contests

VABL Representative means a member of the VABL or a delegate appointed by the VABL who records the judges' scores and provides final results to the announcer.

judge means a person appointed by the Board who determines the points scored by each contestant in a professional contest.

referee means a person appointed by the Board who controls, or exercises any form of control, over the conduct of professional contestants during a professional contest.

match-maker means a person who acts on behalf of the VABL to arrange contests between amateur contestants.

a knockdown occurs when a contestant is punched and:

- (a) a part of his or her body other than the feet touch the canvas; or
- he or she cannot protect him or herself and, for whatever reason, is in a position where he or she cannot fall.

seconds means a licensed trainer or the corner of the contestant.

timekeeper means a person appointed by the VABL who measures time with the assistance of a clock or stopwatch for the purposes of signalling the beginning and end of a round of a professional contest.

trainer means a person who supervises the training or instruction of a contestant or who accompanies a contestant in the ring to give advice or assistance during a contest.

Weight divisions

Weight divisions are the currently recognised weight divisions for boxing contestants in Victoria as set by the VABL.

Weight classes are defined in maximum allowable kilograms.

The current weight divisions for boxing contestants in Victoria are as follows:

Weight divisions – boxing contestants

Weight class	Minimum (kgs)	Maximum (kgs)
Straw weight		up to 47.62
Light Flyweight	over 47.62	up to 48.98
Flyweight	over 48.98	up to 50.80
Super Flyweight	over 50.80	up to 52.16
Bantamweight	over 52.16	up to 53.52
Super Bantamweight	over 53.52	up to 55.25
Featherweight	over 55.34	up to 57.15
Super Featherweight	over 57.15	up to 58.96
Lightweight	over 58.96	up to 61.23
Super Lightweight	over 61.23	up to 63.50
Welterweight	over 63.50	up to 66.67
Super Welterweight	over 66.67	up to 69.85
Middleweight	over 69.85	up to 72.57
Super Middleweight	over 72.57	up to 76.20.
Light Heavyweight	over 76.20	up to 79.37
Cruiserweight	over 79.37	up to 90.89
Heavyweight	over 90.89	No Limit

Age divisions – boxing contestants

Age class	Minimum	Maximum
Juniors	15 years	16 years
Intermediate	17 years	18 years
Seniors	19 years	39 years
Masters	40 years	No limit – discretion of VABL

Duration of Bouts – Males & Females

Class	Break	Rounds
Juniors	1 minute	3 x 2 minute rounds
Intermediate	1 minute	3 x 2 minute rounds
Seniors	1 minute	3 x 2 minute rounds
Masters	1 minute	At discretion of matchmaker and ability. Generally 3 x 2 minutes
Elites	1 minute	4 x 3 minute rounds

Duration of Bouts – For Titles

Class	Break	Rounds
Juniors	1 minute	3 x 2 minute rounds
Intermediate	1 minute	4 x 2 minute rounds
Seniors	1 minute	4 x 2 minute rounds
Masters	1 minute	4 x 1.5min or 4 x 2min rounds

Kid's Bouts

Male and Female Bouts under 15 years

- Children 10 to 12 years of age cannot compete in contests with head contact with all other rule considerations using the novice rules. Bouts will be 3 x 1 minute rounds
- Children 13 – 14 years of age will compete under novice rules. Bouts will be 3 x 1.5 minute rounds
- It is recommended that children compete in specific Children's tournaments with similar rules to novice competitions with no punching to the head permitted. Matchmaking must take into account age, weight, male or female and training experience.
- Children's bouts are recommended not to have a judge's decision with the minimum requirement for officials attending a special kid's event being a referee, timekeeper and qualified Doctor.
- Only a referee who has been certified by the Head of Referee & Judges are permitted to referee kid's bouts. If a certified referee is unavailable then kid's bouts are not permitted.

Novice Bouts

Definition of a Novice Boxer

- Have had no experience or deemed to have inadequate skills in both offensive and defensive technique

Amateur Boxers competing in Novice Contests

- Amateur boxers are able to compete in novice bouts provided they compete within the novice rules and follow the direction of the referee. Permission for Amateur Boxers competing in a novice bout will be at the discretion of the State Matchmaker.
- Potential reason that an amateur boxer may compete in a novice bout could be a return to competition after a long layoff, competitors from other Amateur Combat Sports trying Boxing or assistance with exhibition style bouts. Novice matching is always at the discretion of the State Matchmaker with no specific set criteria.

Novice Rules

- Bouts will have a referee, 3 judges, a timekeeper and qualified Doctor same as regular tournaments.
- Rounds will be 3 x 1 minute and 20 seconds with 20 second or 30 second break. However at the discretion of the matchmaker novice bouts can be 2 x 1 minute and 30 seconds with 30 second break. Novice bouts can have 1 minute rounds with the maximum allowable to be 3 round x 1 minute and 30 seconds.
- Judging criteria will be similar to the normal rules except that a boxer are to be judged upon skill and technique and is not based on power or aggression. Boxers must not use force or try to knock out their opponent. Boxers will be disqualified if they do not compete within the novice rules and the spirit of learning which will be at the referee's discretion (or even the Doctor).

Elite Boxers

An Elite Amateur Boxer must be

- Over 18 years of age
- Be fully registered with the their State Boxing Commission
- Have had a minimum of 10 amateur boxing bouts (other combat sports may be considered)
- Must be approved by the Executive Selection Committee of the VABL to be able to compete as an Elite Boxer
- There are no automatic criteria for elite selection with each individual boxer requiring approval from the selection committee prior to competing as an elite boxer (This includes any interstate or overseas boxers wishing to compete as an elite in Victoria)
- Elite Amateur Boxing Status may be revoked at any time without notice or reason from the Executive Selection Committee or a Medical Officer

Elite Boxing Bouts

- Bouts are 4 rounds x 3 minutes (1 minute breaks)
- No Headgear
- Vaseline permitted (not on headgear or clothing)

Please note: *Elite Boxing bouts must follow the above rule additions otherwise it cannot be classed as elite. Under no circumstances can boxers compete without headgear unless it is under the elite program's rules.*

The weigh-in

There will be one official weigh-in unless otherwise approved by the VABL.

The weigh-in will be held no more than 24 hours before the scheduled start time of the promotion unless otherwise approved by the VABL.

If any bout of a promotion is postponed for more than 24 hours after the original scheduled date, all contestants for those bouts postponed must weigh in again.

The scales used for weigh-ins shall be provided by the VABL.

All contestants must be at the official weigh-in unless otherwise approved by the VABL.

Contestants who do not attend the weigh-in at the commencement time, without prior notice and approval from the supervising VABL Rep may be unable to weigh in and compete.

Contestants are to weigh in wearing only underwear (including a sports bra or like for female contestants) and/or shorts or attire as otherwise approved by the VABL. For the avoidance of doubt no shoes will be permitted to be worn on the scales when a contestant is being weighed in on the scales.

A contest will only be permitted to proceed if the contestant falls within the following weight restrictions:

If the lighter contestant's weight is less than 57.15 kilograms then the difference in weight between the two contestants must be no more than two kilograms;

If the lighter contestant's weight is between 57.15 and 72.57 kilograms then the difference in weight between the two contestants must be no more than five kilograms;

If the lighter contestant's weight is between 72.57 and 79.38 kilograms then the difference in weight between the two contestants must be no more than six kilograms; or

If the lighter contestant's weight is between 79.38 and 90.72 kilograms then the difference in weight between the two contestants must be no more than eight kilograms.

Contestants are allowed two hours after the official weigh-in commencement time to make the required weight and are allowed any number of times on the scales during that time.

If a contestant is unable to make the agreed weight, the trainer of that contestant's opponent may accept or refuse the bout at their sole discretion.

For a title contest, if either contestant fails to make weight the VABL should follow the approved protocols of the relevant title sanctioning organisation.

The ring

All amateur boxing contests in Victoria must be conducted in a ring that meets the specifications below.

The ring used in professional boxing contests must not be less than 4.9 metres squared nor more than 6.1 metres squared by measurement taken inside the ropes.

The platform must be strongly constructed, level and free from any obstructing projections.

The platform must extend for at least 0.5 metres outside the line to the ropes and not be more than 1.2 metres above the floor.

The platform must have:

- a rubber (jig-saw) mat or similar material not less than 0.015 metres thick; and

- a canvas apron which must be stretched tightly and secured to the outer edges of the platform.

The ropes must:

- be four in number and each not less than 0.025 metres in diameter;

- be tightly drawn from the corner post and heights at approximately 0.32 metres, 0.65 metres, 0.97 metres and 1.3 metres from the ring floor;

- be covered in a soft, smooth material; and

- where sisal or similar ropes are used they must be joined vertically on each side at equal distance by two pieces of close textured canvas 0.03 to 0.04 metres wide which must not slide along the ropes.

The turnbuckle must be well padded.

Contestants' gloves

Gloves are to be supplied by the VABL.

Gloves must adhere to the colour of the corner (Red or Blue) and weigh 16oz

All gloves used for any bout of a promotion must be approved by the VABL.

The thumbs of all gloves should be fixed to the main body of the glove.

All gloves are to be sufficiently clean to the satisfaction of the VABL prior to being supplied to the contestants.

All gloves must be approved by the Board prior to each bout.

No liquid, powder or any other substance (other than tape to secure the gloves around the wrist as approved by the VABL) is to be applied to a contestant's gloves.

For AABLI Sanctioned events glove sizes for divisions will the adhere to the AABLI Rule Book

The contestant

General requirements

Contestants must ensure compliance with all conditions of their registration, including the Code of Conduct.

A contestant must not be under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs.

A contestant must comply with any drug testing requirement required by the VABL from time to time.

At all times during a bout, a contestant must wear a mouth piece that fits properly. It is recommended that a mouth piece is fitted by a dentist or an advanced dental technician.

All male contestants must wear an approved groin protector.

Long hair shall be secured with soft and non-abrasive materials.

A contestant must not commit a foul during a bout.

The contestant must not leave the ring during the rest period between rounds. If this occurs the contestant will be disqualified and the contest will be deemed to be over.

Contestants will not be permitted to start their bout until such time as the VABL has approved of their bandages, and their gloves.

No liquid, powder or any other substance (other than tape to secure the gloves around the wrist as approved by the VABL) is to be applied to a contestant's gloves. The contestant and the trainer will be held jointly and severally responsible if there is a breach of this rule.

Contestant attire

All contestants shall compete in boxing shorts, singlet and light boxing boots without spikes or heels and Olympic approved headgear in accordance to the corner they are competing from (Red or Blue). Elite Boxers will compete without headgear

All female contestants must compete in a sports bra, fitted lycra rash guard or equivalent or other attire as approved by the VABL.

No clothing can be comprised of any solid or hard material of any kind.

Jewellery

A contestant is not permitted to wear any jewellery or other piercing accessories while competing in a contest.

Bandages

A soft surgical bandage, commercially made hand wraps or similar material not exceeding 5 centimetres in width may be worn on each hand of the contestant.

Tape can only be used to secure the bandages on the wrist

No liquid, powder or any other substance is to be applied to the hands before or after they are bandaged.

All bandaging and taping must be performed in the dressing room and be approved and signed off by a VABL Rep, Glove Steward or a person delegated by the VABL to perform this function.

Non-fight periods

Contestants must comply with all non-fight periods imposed by a medical practitioner or the VABL.

Any non-fight period imposed by the VABL will supersede any shorter non-fight period imposed by a medical practitioner.

A non-fight period will begin from the day after the date of the relevant competition unless otherwise specified.

The applicable non-fight periods are set out in the table below titled Non-Fight Periods and Return To Contest Requirements.

For the purposes of calculating a non-fight period following a knockout, technical knockout or concussion, 'successive' means a knockout, technical knockout or concussion (or any combination of each) occurring within 12 months of any preceding knockout, technical knockout or concussion.

The VABL may suspend a contestant's registration when the VABL considers this to be in the interests of the contestant's health or safety.

Contestants must comply with any direction given by a medical practitioner or the VABL to obtain a medical clearance or undertake medical testing.

Concussed contestants

The ringside doctor's finding that a contestant is concussed is final. Any reference to a 'concussed contestant' in these rules includes contestants who are found to be concussed by the ringside doctor.

A concussed contestant must follow the concussion management guidelines set out below or as otherwise prescribed, in writing, by a health care professional who has experience in treating brain injuries (e.g. ringside doctor or concussion specialist).

Where a concussed contestant is required to obtain a medical clearance before the contestant's next contest, the medical clearance shall be completed in accordance with any guidelines or direction made by the VABL.

Non-fight periods and return to contest requirements

Outcomes	Concussion status	Applicable to	Minimum non-fight period	Medical review after contest	Concussion management guidelines	Medical clearance	Successive KO, TKO &/or concussion
KO	Concussed	Loser	60 days in total 30 days for recovery 30 days for preparation	As directed by the Board or ringside doctor.	Observe concussion management guidelines	Need for medical clearance at ringside doctor's discretion	90 then 120 days
TKO	Concussed (as diagnosed by ringside doctor or other medical practitioner)	Loser	60 days in total 30 days for recovery 30 days for preparation	As directed by the Board or ringside doctor.	Observe concussion management guidelines	Need for medical clearance at ringside doctor's discretion	90 then 120 days
TKO	Not concussed (as diagnosed by ringside doctor)	Loser	30 days	As directed by the Board or ringside doctor.	Observe concussion management guidelines	Need for medical clearance at ringside doctor's discretion	60 then 90 days
Concussed	Concussed (as diagnosed by ringside doctor or other medical practitioner)	Winner / loser / draw	60 days in total 30 days for recovery 30 days for preparation	As directed by the Board or ringside doctor.	Observe concussion management guidelines	Need for medical clearance at ringside doctor's discretion	90 then 120 days
Heavy punishment, lacerations, fractures and other injuries where there is no concussion	Not concussed	Winner / loser / draw	15 days or at ringside doctor's discretion	As directed by the Board or ringside doctor.		Need for medical clearance at ringside doctor's discretion	
Not concussed	Not concussed	Winner / loser / draw	15 days				
Four knockouts, technical knockouts or concussions (or any combination of each) in 12 months			12 month suspension or as otherwise agreed by the Board				
Four consecutive knockouts, technical knockouts or concussions (or any combination of each)			12 month suspension or as otherwise agreed by the Board				

Concussion management guidelines

Concussed contestants must:

not drink alcohol while symptoms persist, particularly not after a contest;

get as much rest as possible (physical and cognitive) – avoid physically demanding activities (e.g. training, heavy physical work) or those that require a lot of thinking or concentration (e.g. computer work or video games) while symptoms persist;

not return to sparring until medical clearance has been obtained from a medical practitioner;

immediately attend a hospital emergency department if the following symptoms are experienced:

repeated vomiting

increasing and persistent headache

loss of consciousness

inability to stay awake during times when usually awake

confusion

restlessness

agitation

convulsions

seizures

difficulty walking

difficulty balancing

weakness or numbness

blurring or difficulty with vision

slurred speech

see a health care professional who has experience in treating brain injuries (e.g. ringside doctor or other concussion specialist) if symptoms persist for more than 10 days; and

observe the Return To Fight Strategy set out below or as otherwise prescribed by a health care professional who has experience in treating brain injuries (e.g. ringside doctor or concussion specialist).

Return to fight strategy¹

Stage 1: Initial period

An initial period of **24/48 hours** of both relative **physical and cognitive rest** is recommended before beginning Phase 1 of this graduated strategy.

There should be at least **48 hours (or longer) for each step of the progression**. If any symptoms worsen during exercise, contestants should go back to the previous step.

Stage	Activity type	Description
1.	Return to symptom limited activity	Daily activities that do not provoke symptoms

Stage 2: Return to general fitness

A fighter may only advance to this stage once concussion symptoms have resolved. It is recommended that Stage 2 not be commenced for **at least one week**.

Stage	Activity type	Description
2.1	Light aerobic activity	Walking, elliptical, stationary cycling at slow to medium pace. No resistance training.
2.2	Moderate aerobic activity	Jogging, swimming, skipping, other aerobic activities. No head impact activities.
2.3	Sport-specific activity	Sprinting, mitts, bag/footwork, walk-through grappling. No partner work. May start progressive resistance training.

Stage 3: Return to non-contact fighting activities

Stage	Activity type	Description
3.1	Bag/mitt work with movement	Tests fighter ability to punch and/or kick in multiple planes.
3.2	Shadow boxing/drills	Re-introduces fighter to sport environment and re-establishes footwork.
3.3	One-sided sparring & grappling	Fighter begins to spar without the concern of contact. Reacts to opponents movements and begins to get timing back for punches, kicks and body position.

Stage 4: Return to contact fighting activities

A fighter may only advance to this stage when **medical clearance has been obtained** from a medical practitioner fully appraised of the concussion episode.

Stage	Activity type	Description
4.1	Sparring – short duration	First step of live sparring. Rounds of short duration with long breaks. Number of rounds is small to begin with but can be increased as tolerated.
4.2	Sparring – longer duration	Rounds at this stage can begin to lengthen in duration while breaks between can shorten. Number

¹ Adapted from Nalepa B, Alexander A, Pardini J, et al. 'Fighting to keep a sport safe: Toward a structured and sport-specific return to play protocol', *The Physician and Sports Medicine*. February 2017.

Stage	Activity type	Description
		of rounds can increase as fatigue allows.
4.3	Full contact practice	Full return to normal training. Return to normal rounds and time limits based on sport and next potential bout. Contestant should be able to tolerate normal parameters of training/sparring and it training without a return of symptoms.
4.4	Return to fight/contest	

The trainer

General requirements

A trainer must comply with all of the conditions of their trainer's licence, including the Code of Conduct.

A trainer must have their license available all times during events.

Only one licensed trainer can accompany the contestant to the centre of the ring during the referee's instructions.

During each round all trainers must be seated or crouched down.

Before the round begins one trainer must remove any towels, buckets, stools, etc. from the platform of the ring and wipe away all excess water and/or ice from the platform.

Between rounds only one licensed trainer can enter the ring and communicate directly to the contestant.

Trainers must remain out of the ring during rounds.

A trainer may seek to terminate a bout by throwing a towel into ring. The referee or medical practitioner will be the final arbiter of the termination of the bout.

Trainers must ensure that no excessive use of grease or any other foreign substance is to be used on the face or body of a contestant.

Bandages

The trainer is responsible for ensuring that the contestant's bandages comply with the rules set out below.

A soft surgical bandage, commercially made hand wraps or similar material not exceeding 5 centimetres in width may be worn on each hand of the contestant.

Tape can only be used to secure the bandages on the wrist

No liquid, powder or any other substance is to be applied to the hands before or after they are bandaged.

All bandaging and taping must be performed in the dressing room and be approved and signed off by a VABL Rep, Glove Steward or a person delegated by the VABL to perform this function.

The referee

General requirements

The referee must comply with all of the conditions of their referee licence, including the Code of Conduct.

A referee must not be under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs whilst officiating.

A referee must not consume alcohol or take prohibited drugs while officiating.

A referee must be in possession of their license during a promotion.

The referee's attire

A referee must wear the following clothing during a promotion:

- long, black trousers;

- a long or short sleeved, black or white collared shirt; and

- closed toe, non-slip shoes.

A referee's attire should not feature any distinguishing badges, pockets, names, logos, trademarks, or distinctive signs of any kind, except where prior approval of the Board has been granted.

A referee must not wear spectacles during a bout.

Contact lenses may be worn.

Duties of the referee before a contest commences

Prior to the start of a contest the referee must:

- Give a briefing to all contestants and coaches prior to the start of competition

- inspect the contestants and the contestants' gloves to make sure that no foreign substance or substances have been applied to either the bodies or the gloves of the contestants to the possible detriment of their opponent;

- examine each contestant to ensure they are wearing a groin guard (if applicable) and a mouth piece;

- not allow a bout to commence until the contestant is wearing a groin guard (if applicable) and mouth piece;

- ascertain where the timekeeper, judges and medical practitioner are seated;

- not allow a contest to commence without a medical practitioner being seated at the ring side;

- agree with the medical practitioner on a clear, pre-determined means, whether by bell, hammer, prescribed hand signal or another method, by which:

 - the medical practitioner can indicate the need for or desirability of a medical examination of a contestant during the contest;

 - the medical practitioner can stop the contest; and

 - the referee can indicate to the medical practitioner the need for or desirability of a medical examination of a contestant during the contest.

Duties of a referee during a contest

During a contest, a referee must:

- observe and assess at all times the contestants' ability to defend him or herself;
- see that the rules are strictly observed by contestants;
- maintain control of the contest at all times;
- in the event that a contestant's gloves or dress become undone or displaced during the contest, stop the contest and have it attended to;
- when the referee has disqualified a contestant or stopped a contest, inform the recorder which contestant they have disqualified or the reason they have stopped the contest to enable the recorder to correctly instruct the announcer;
- call 'Time' at the first opportune moment without interfering with the immediate action if a mouthpiece is involuntarily dislodged during competition. The referee shall have the coach reinsert the mouthpiece and may instruct the corner to clean the mouthpiece if the referee deems necessary. Contest to the restart immediately
- only assist a knocked down contestant if the referee has signalled the termination of the contest.

A referee must carry out all actions in a definite manner so that there is no doubt as to their intention.

Powers of a referee

A referee may issue a warning to a contestant if that contestant commits one or more fouls but whose conduct does not merit disqualification.

A referee may direct the judges to deduct a penalty point in the event that a contestant commits one or more fouls.

If a contestant is cut by a deliberate foul and the bout is not stopped, the referee must deduct one point from the offending contestant.

If the referee applies a penalty point, the referee must:

- order 'Stop' and instruct the time keeper to call 'Time';
- point to the offending contestant and demonstrate the nature of the offence; and
- take hold of the offending contestant and point vertically to each judge in turn to indicate that they are to deduct a penalty point.

Only one penalty point can be deducted for any one incident.

If a referee believes a contestant is only displaying defensive skills, the referee must call time and administer a warning. If the contestant continues to only show defensive skills, the referee may award a penalty and can terminate the contest.

If a referee believes a contestant is intentionally refusing to engage an opponent for a prolonged period of time, the referee must call time and administer a warning. If the contestant continues to utilise passive tactics after receiving a warning during a round, points will be deducted from the contestant's total score as determined by the referee.

A referee must also disqualify a contestant in the following instances:

- upon the third point deduction for the same foul; or

where the contestant commits a deliberate foul which causes an injury to their opponent rendering the opponent unable to continue.

The referee has the power to;

call 'Time' for a medical examination of a contestant by the medical practitioner; and
stop the fight,
as set out below.

Accidental low blow

If a contact results in an accidental low blow the referee must ask the contestant if they are able to continue immediately whether they require a rest.

In the case of the requirement of a rest, the referee will call 'Time' and the rest period will commence.

The contest will resume at the end of the 'Time' period as determined by the referee which can be up to a maximum of five minutes.

If the contestant cannot continue after the maximum five minutes, the referee will count to 10 over the contestant. If the contestant rises before the end of the count the bout will continue. If the contestant does not move that contestant is deemed to have lost the contest by technical knockout.

Mandatory eight count

The mandatory eight count applies in all contests.

When there is a knockdown, the referee must require that contestant to take a count of eight seconds whether or not the contestant arises before the count of 8 has been reached.

The count is for the benefit of the fallen contestant and the knockdown is scored against that contestant regardless of the length of the count. If the referee is of the opinion that the 'downed' contestant cannot continue with the contest, the referee must count out that contestant.

In the case of a knockdown, the time keeper must immediately start counting off the seconds and count the time until the contestant has been counted out by the referee or the referee has ordered the contestant to continue.

The referee must direct the contestant who delivered the knockdown to the neutral corner, then pick up the count from the time keeper and audibly continue the count, indicating each second by a clean motion of his or her arm or hand, until the eight count is completed or the contestant has been counted out.

If the opponent fails to remain in the neutral corner, the referee must cease counting until the opponent has returned to that corner and then the referee must continue the count from the point at which it was interrupted.

If a contestant is knocked down and displays behaviour such that the referee believes a count is unnecessary because the contestant cannot continue with the contest, the referee must wave both arms around their head and indicate the contest has been ceased.

The referee's count is the official count.

A mandatory standing 8 count is only in use for novice, amateur or Master's events which the count will continue to 8 after a knock regardless if the boxer is fit to continue immediately or not

Calling time for medical examination

The referee must call 'Time' for a medical examination of a contestant if the medical practitioner indicates to the referee the desirability of a medical examination of a contestant during the contest.

The referee must, at any time, request the medical practitioner to examine a contestant during the contest if, in the view of the referee:

- there may be a serious impairment of a contestant's ability to defend him or herself;
- there may be a likelihood of serious injury to a contestant's health; or
- it may be desirable to do so in the interests of the safety or welfare of a contestant.

To call time for a medical examination, the referee must:

- order 'Stop', and instruct the time keeper to call 'Time'; and
- communicate to the medical practitioner using the pre-determined, agreed method that he or she is to examine a contestant.

The referee must confer with the medical practitioner about the need for a medical examination following any round in which a contestant receives:

- heavy punishment;
- a significant number of heavy blows to the head; and/or
- appears to be suffering from signs and symptoms consistent with a concussion.

If a medical examination occurs during the course of a round, the clock will be stopped until the examination is completed.

If a medical examination occurs between rounds, the clock will continue to run. If the medical examination is not complete by the sounding of the bell for the next round, the clock will be stopped until the examination is completed.

Stopping the contest

The referee must stop a contest if:

- a contestant is knocked down and is unable to rise within a count of 10 seconds;
- a contestant is clearly knocked down three times in any round;
- in the view of the referee there is a serious impairment of a contestant's ability to defend him or herself;
- there is a likelihood of serious injury to a contestant's health if the contest were to continue;
- it is desirable to do so in the interests of the safety or welfare of a contestant;
- so instructed by the medical practitioner; or
- so instructed by a member of the Board.

To stop the contest, the referee must:

- order 'Stop';
- take effective steps to prevent physical contact between the contestants if required; and
- then wave both arms in the air to indicate that the contest is stopped.

Subject to the paragraph below, if the contest is stopped due to injuries to a contestant and, in the opinion of the referee, the injury was caused:

by a legitimate blow, the contestant delivering the blow must be declared the winner of the contest; or

by a deliberate foul, the contestant who committed the foul must be disqualified and the opponent declared the winner of the contest; or

accidentally and the contest is stopped:

in Round 2 of a 6 round or less bout;

in Round 3 of a 7 to 10 round bout; or

in Round 4 in an 11 to 12 round bout,

the bout must be declared a technical draw; or

at any later time, the contestant ahead on points must be declared the winner of the contest.

When a contestant is cut by a deliberate foul and the contest continues but where the injury is later worsened to the point that the contest is stopped, the outcome will be as follows:

where the injury is worsened by another deliberate foul, the referee must disqualify the offending contestant and declare the injured contestant the winner of the contest; or

where the injury is worsened by a legitimate punch and the contest is stopped:

in Round 2 of a 6 round or less bout;

in Round 3 of a 7 to 10 round bout; or

in Round 4 in an 11 to 12 round bout,

the bout must be declared a technical draw; or

at any later time, the contestant ahead on points must be declared the winner of the contest.

The referee determines, and must advise the judges and timekeeper, whether an injury was caused by legitimate, illegal or accidental action.

Should the contest be stopped because of impairment or injury to both contestants, the referee will declare the contest a technical draw.

Contestant not competing honestly

If the referee is of the opinion that one or both of the contestants are not honestly competing through collusion, stalling or faking, the referee must stop the contest after the end of the last round to render no decision.

If the referee is of the opinion that a knockdown is not legitimate or a fall is pre-arranged, the referee must stop the bout and give no decision.

The referee must report in writing to the Board on the above matters or if there has been a dispute involving a disregard of the Act, Regulations or Rules.

The medical practitioner

General requirements

The medical practitioner is required to show proof of medical registration if requested by the VABL Rep.

The medical practitioner must not be under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs.

The medical practitioner must be easily identifiable such as a Hi Vis Vest or Arm Band

Medical equipment for use by the Medical Practitioner

The medical practitioner is responsible for supplying all necessary medical equipment (except where indicated below). The list below sets out minimum equipment requirements – it is the responsibility of the attending medical practitioner to supplement this as he or she sees fit.

basic doctor's bag kits, including disposal gloves and gauze swabs;

auriscope and ophthalmoscope;

airway support equipment; oxy-viva mask; and oxygen.

The spinal board is provided by the VABL or Tournament Coordinator. The medical practitioner must consult with the Tournament Coordinator to determine the location of the spinal board before the first contest begins.

Pre and post contest examination forms are provided by the VABL.

Before the commencement of a contest

The medical practitioner and the referee must agree on a clear, pre-determined means, whether by bell, hammer, prescribed hand signal or another method, by which:

the medical practitioner can indicate the need for or desirability of a medical examination of a contestant during the contest; and

the medical practitioner can stop the fight.

The medical practitioner is to inspect the evacuation route with the VABL prior to the commencement of the contest.

The medical practitioner must nominate a person who will contact emergency services if required. The medical practitioner and the nominated person must agree on a clear, pre-determined means, whether by prescribed hand signal or another method, by which the medical practitioner will instruct the person to call emergency services. The nominated person must know the name and street address of the venue.

Pre – contest examination

The medical practitioner is required to undertake a pre-contest examination of each contestant using Pre-Post Medicals 2022 Part A. The form must be completed prior to each contestant's bout.

To allow time to complete pre-contest contestant examinations, the medical practitioner should arrive at the venue of the promotion at least one hour before the first bout.

The pre-contest contestant examination may be completed at the weigh-in if the medical practitioner is in attendance.

The relevant form will be provided to the medical practitioner by the VABL at the event or weigh in.

During the contest

A contest can only start or continue when a medical practitioner is at ringside.

The medical practitioner must sit ringside in a position:

- adjacent to the stairs to allow prompt access to the ring;
- that allows effective communication with the referee; and
- that ensures that they have an unobstructed view of the combatants at all time during a contest, including between rounds.

Injuries may not be treated by the medical practitioner during the contest without stopping the contest; however, treatment of injuries requiring the stopping of the contest should begin immediately upon being identified.

The medical practitioner may examine a contestant at any time during the contest in order to determine if:

- there is a serious impairment of the contestant's ability to defend him or herself;
- there is a likelihood of serious injury to the contestant's health if the contest were to continue; or
- it is desirable to do so in the interests of the safety or welfare of the contestant.

The medical practitioner will indicate the need to examine a contestant to the referee using the predetermined agreed method.

If the medical practitioner wishes to examine a contestant at the end of a round or during the break, the medical practitioner must wait until the bell for the next round has sounded before conducting the examination.

Epistaxis or lacerations may be evaluated with gentle pressure to determine the severity of bleeding and extent of injury without disqualifying the contestant unless specific treatment is necessary.

The referee must confer with the medical practitioner about the need for a medical examination following any round in which a contestant:

- heavy punishment;
- a significant number of heavy blows to the head; and/or
- appears to be suffering from signs and symptoms consistent with a concussion.

Authority to stop a contest

The medical practitioner has the authority to stop a contest at any time if, in the view of the medical practitioner:

- there is a serious impairment of a contestant's ability to defend him or herself;
- there is a likelihood of serious injury to a contestant's health if the contest were to continue; or
- it is desirable to do so in the interests of the safety or welfare of a contestant.

The medical practitioner will stop a contest by communicating to the referee using the predetermined agreed method.

Post – contest examination

The medical practitioner is required to undertake a post-contest examination for each Contestant using Pre-Post Medicals 2022 form, Part B at the completion of each bout, and return the form to the VABL Representative.

The judges

General requirements

A judge must comply with all of the conditions of their judge's licence, including the Code of Conduct.

The Board will appoint three licensed judges for each bout of a promotion.

A judge must not be under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs whilst officiating.

A judge must not consume alcohol or take prohibited drugs while officiating.

A judge must display their license at all times during a promotion.

The judge's attire

A judge must wear the following clothing:

long black trousers; and

long or short sleeved, black or white collared shirt or VABL approved Attire

A judge's clothing should not feature any distinguishing badges, pockets, names, logos, trademarks, distinctive signs etc. of any kind, except where prior approval of the VABL has been granted.

Judges' responsibilities and obligations

Judges must be absolutely impartial. Each judge must independently judge the merits of the two contestants and shall decide the winner according to the rules of the bout.

Judges must know and apply the judging guidelines set out below.

Judges must apply 100% concentration for the whole of each round.

Judges must have reasons for the score given in each round and be able to communicate those reasons if later questioned about a given score. This should be in terms of the criteria laid out in the guidelines set out below.

Judges must treat each round independently. Judges are not to keep a running total of the scores given and are not to be influenced by scores for previous rounds.

Judges must not speak to a contestant, nor to another judge/or other persons seated around the ring during the bout.

Under no circumstances are judges to discuss the contest during or between rounds.

Judges are to behave in professional manner at all times. Judges must appear relaxed, self-confident and free from outside influences and distractions.

The number of points awarded to each contestant must be entered by the judge on their score card immediately after the end of each round.

The judge must sign the scorecard at the end of the bout.

The referee will collect the scorecards from each judge and hand them to the recorder for official scores and final results.

If a point or points are deducted before a round is completed, these points will be taken off the tally at the end of the bout. The point or points to be deducted are noted by the judge in the relevant section of the scorecard, but are only deducted by the official recorder.

The judging guidelines – evaluation criteria

The primary criterion of assessment is Effective Work Rate. This relates solely to the cumulative value of punches landed accounting for both quantity and quality. This criteria is discussed below.

If the contestants cannot be separately on the primary criterion of Effective Work Rate, then the judge should consider their relative performance in terms of Ring Generalship and Technique. The key here is how these attributes assisted in making the fight and allowing the contestant to perform. These are discussed in turn below.

Primary Criteria – Work Rate

Effective Work Rate is the primary criteria in scoring. Effective Work Rate relates to scoring punches landed and nothing else.

The accumulated value of legal punches landed is assessed in terms of the number and quality of the punches landed (as described below). Clean punching is the essence to performance and scoring. The order in which the action occurs has no relevance to scoring.

Legal punches

12.24 For a punch to score it must be a legal punch. Legal punches are those that:

- strike with the knuckle part of the glove;
- land within the scoring zone; and
- in which the contestant is not fouling in any way.

The scoring zone is defined by an imaginary line from the top of the head splitting the ears down to the shoulders. Then mentally take away the arms and run the imaginary line from the shoulders down the side of the body to the trunk having the navel as the foul limit.

Quality of punches

The quality of a punch is measured in terms of the following factors. Higher quality punches score more highly.

Knuckle part of the glove

Punches using the knuckle part of the glove.

Punches that are scrappy or slightly open handed (but still have some knuckle contact) should be marked down. Punches with no knuckle contact (i.e. slapping) do not score.

Accuracy

Punches landing on the main targets within the scoring zone. These are face, jaw, head, solar plexus and liver.

Clean / Power

Punches that are not partially blocked, do not glance off an evading opponent, and are landed with weight whether thrown in close or at range.

Damage

Legal punches that are clean (obvious) score the highest.

Damage through legal punches landed in association with one or more of the following:

- a level of debilitation;

staggering;
 disruption (a change in what the opponent is doing);
 change of complexion; or
 a weakening a of the contestant.

Damage is not associated with cuts or bruisers. Cuts and bruises are incidental and should not be a factor in scoring.

Valuing power and damage

Valuing the relative worth of punches of different power and damage is possibly the key area of greatest divergence between judges. Examples of the value of different punches would be as follows:

one solid clean punch might be worth four or five light jabs, possibly two slightly heavier jabs or one stiff jab delivered with power;
 a power punch that results in damage might be worth two or even three clean punches;
 pitty pat punches are of very low value.

Secondary criteria – ring generalship and technique

If it is not possible to separate the contestants on the primary criteria of Effective Work Rate then the secondary criteria of Ring Generalship and Technique should be used. These are defined as follows:

Ring Generalship

This is to manoeuvre the opponent so they cannot use their own skill whether against the ropes, in the corners or in the centre of the ring. The imposition of the style could be the aggressor not permitting the opponent to perform, or a contestant not allowing a puncher to punch, making them miss and stumble or the contestant who dominated the round.

Technique

Technique is displayed by a contestant who persistently pursues whilst easily evading the opponent's punches. The technical contestant constantly moves forward against the opponent who spends the round attempting to evade the contestant instead of throwing punches and is therefore not competitive in the round.

If there is nothing else to evaluate, then pure aggressiveness in terms of the contestant constantly moving forward should decide the round.

10 Point Must System

The judges must score all contests and determine the winner through the use of the 10-point must system.

Assessment of fouls and knockdowns

The ruling of fouls and knockdowns is the responsibility of the referee.

Judges should not mark down the performance of a contestant due to fouls or behaviour such as excessive holding. Only the referee can deduct points due to fouls. Deductions by the referee must be entered in the box provided on the judge's score card.

Knockdowns are adjudicated by the referee and must be scored as such, irrespective of whether a judge considers it to be otherwise.

Scoring

The principles of scoring are as follows:

Winner receives 10 points.

The winner of the round must be given 10 points and the opponent a score from 10 (in the case of an even round) to 7 points. If a contestant has an advantage, no matter how small, that contestant should win the round.

The score card of the judge is final.

Application of the scoring criteria

The scoring criteria are applied to assess the performance of the contestants.

For the winning contestant, the advantage in 'effective work rate' can be defined in terms of the dominance in the quality and quantity of legal punches landed.

The secondary criteria is used when the contestants cannot be separated on the primary criteria of effective work rate. This includes any resulting disruption to the other contestant.

No knockdown rounds

The scores available are 10 / 10 (Even), 10 / 9, and 10 / 8. A score of 10 / 8 requires that the winning contestant dominated most of the round and caused damage to the opponent.

Knockdown rounds

Unless one of the contestants is very clearly winning the round, the score for a single knockdown shall be 10 / 8 to the standing contestant, regardless on when in the round it occurred and regardless of how 'severe' the knockdown was.

The knocked down boxer can recover to a 10 / 9 lost round by clearly winning the round excluding the knockdown, or to 10 / 10 by dominating the round (excluding the knockdown) and must include a high level of damage to the other boxer.

The summary of the rules for scoring are presented in Table 1 below.

Score	Assessment of the round
10 - 10	To be awarded in the following circumstances: When a judge is unable to separate the contestants after considering both primary and secondary criteria. This should rarely occur. When a knocked down boxer gets up and then knocks down his rival, with the round excluding the knock downs being somehow even.
10 - 9	To be awarded in the following circumstances: When the winning contestant has a slight advantage. When the winning contestant has a clear advantage. A clear advantage would typically require the winning contestant to be three to five clean punches ahead. When the winning contestant has more than a clear advantage but not to the level that would be classified as dominant. This might have the winning contestant ahead up to 10 clean punches but none that visibly hurt the opponent. To the contestant who knocks the opponent down but clearly losses the round excluding the knock down. When both contestants are knocked down but one of them clearly wins the round excluding the knock downs. To the contestant who is knocked down once but knocks the opponent down twice when neither contestant dominated the round excluding the knockdowns.

Score	Assessment of the round
10 - 9	To be awarded in the following circumstances: When one contestant totally dominates the round with repeated and consistent clean punching without a knockdown. This might require the winning contestant on average to score with clean punches every 10 to 15 seconds throughout the round (being ahead at least 12 to 15 quality punches over a three minute round). When there is a knockdown and the rest of the round, excluding the knock down, is somewhat even or if there is a slight to almost clear advantage for either contestant.
10 - 8	To be awarded in the following circumstances: When a contestant is knocked down twice. When there is only one knockdown and the knocked down contestant is subject to repeated clean and power punches for most of the round. This would be to at least a level defined as domination above – i.e. the losing contestant receives heavy punishment during the round, excluding the knockdown No round can be scored lower than 10 – 7 with the referee should be making a consideration to stopping the bout for being outclassed

There will be no score recorded in an unfinished round.

Official outcomes

The official outcome of a contest is determined by the combination of judges' scores or if the contest is stopped by the referee or the medical practitioner due to the condition of a contestant.

The possible outcomes are set out in the below table:

Outcome	Circumstances
Unanimous points	Three judges giving a contestant the win
Split points	Two judges give the same contestant a win
Draw	All three judges score the contest a draw
Majority draw²	Two judges score the contest a draw and one judge awards the decision to either contestant on a points decision
Split draw²	Two judges score opposite contestants as the winner, and the third judge scores the contest a draw
TKO	The referee stops the contest without counting to ten
KO	A contestant is knocked down and is unable to get to their feet within the standard 10-second countdown
Disqualification	The referee disqualifies a contestant after three warnings or if a contestant is injured and unable to continue due to a deliberate illegal technique from their opponent.
No contest²	Both contestants commit a violation of the rules, or a contestant is unable to continue due to an injury from an accidental illegal technique or accidental head clash

In the case of a majority draw, split draw or no contest occurring in a title contest the champion will retain the title.

² In the case of a majority draw, split draw or no contest occurring in a title contest the champion will retain the title.

The timekeeper

General requirements

A timekeeper must comply with all of the conditions of their timekeeper's licence, including the Code of Conduct.

The timekeeper must not be under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs whilst officiating.

The timekeeper must not consume alcohol or take prohibited drugs while officiating.

The timekeeper must display their license at all times during a promotion.

A timekeeper's attire

The timekeeper must wear the following clothing:

long black trousers;

long or short sleeved, black or white collared shirt or VABL approved Attire

A timekeeper's clothing should not feature any distinguishing badges, pockets, names, logos, trademarks, distinctive signs etc. of any kind, except where prior approval of the VABL has been granted.

The timekeeper's equipment

The timekeeper is responsible for providing their own equipment for a contest which comprises:

a bell;

two stopwatches; and

The role of the timekeeper

During a contest, the timekeeper is required to:

sound the bell at the end of each round;

stop the time if a contest has been stopped by the referee by calling 'stop';

restart the time when the referee calls 'fight' to restart the contest;

start the second stopwatch if the referee calls 'time' for a foul or a medical practitioner to enter the ring; and

advise the announcer to call 'Seconds out' and announce the number of the ensuing round before sounding the whistle.

Cessation of a count

If at the end of any round, except for the final round, a contestant is down and the referee is in the course of counting over the fallen contestant, the bell indicating the end of the round must not be sounded by the timekeeper.

If the fallen contestant rises before the count of 10 and the referee gives the command to continue indicating the continuation of the bout, the bell must then be sounded by the timekeeper.

Code of conduct

The following behaviours at a promotion or at an event related to a promotion may result in the suspension or cancellation of a license or registration:

- violent, threatening, obscene, indecent or abusive language or behaviour;
- vilification of any kind towards another person;
- discrimination against another person based on their age, gender or sexual orientation;
- discrimination against another person based on their race, culture, religion or any other irrelevant personal characteristic;
- sexual harassment, intimidation or victimisation of another person; and/or
- conduct that is detrimental to the reputation or interests of the boxing or combat sports industries.

Contact information

The Victorian Amateur Boxing League Incorporated can be contacted during business hours on:

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Any written correspondence regarding these Rules and information should be addressed to:

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