



UNITED WORLD
WRESTLING

REGULATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL REFEREEING BODY





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CHAPTER 1 - OBJECT

Article 1 - Introduction

These Regulations have as their aim to determine:

- conditions of attribution of the title of international referee for the Olympic Wrestling discipline.
- rights and duties of the international referee
- categories and zones of competence of the international referee
- methods of assessment and control of the international referee
- structure of the refereeing at United World Wrestling

They lay down the statute of the body of international refereeing and the obligations which result from it for the people concerned and their National Federations as well as for United World Wrestling. It defines the conditions of use of the refereeing body during Championships and competitions organised by or under the control of United World Wrestling.

CHAPTER 2 - ATTRIBUTION OF THE TITLE - CONDITIONS

Article 2 - Competent authority

United World Wrestling (henceforth UWW) is the only qualified authority which can give the title of international referee for the disciplines of Olympic Wrestling, Beach Wrestling, Grappling, Amateur MMA and Pankration and can issue referees' licences and badges.

Article 3 - Candidature

Only national referees who possess the highest qualification laid down in the Regulations of their National Federation and who have their country's nationality can be presented by their National Federation as candidates for the title of international referee.

Article 4 - Preliminary conditions

Any candidate for the title of international referee must be an individual who have followed and passed a training course in their own country during which they must have covered all the significant matters in the international referee examination programme.

Candidates needs to be at least **18 years old** and **maximum 40 years old** in the calendar year in which they apply their candidacy. All candidates must have a basic knowledge and communication skills in English. A referee who has not a sufficient knowledge in English will not be selected.



Article 5 - Conditions of attribution

The title of international referee will be attributed to any candidate who has fulfilled the preliminary conditions and has satisfactorily passed all exams organized by the UWW during an official competition.

Article 6 - Exam

The examining panel for the examination outlined in article 5 is composed of nominated UWW Refereeing Commission Members or educators. The exam consists of:

- a. a written test (English), consisting of:
 - i. theoretical questions relating to the Rules
 - ii. test on video examples
- b. a practical test: refereeing of matches on the mat during an official international competition

Any candidate for the title of referee needs to have a referee license of the current year.

Article 7 - Nomination

The candidate having successfully passed the above-described exam will be awarded the title of category III international referee.

It is however specified that a wrestler or an active coach cannot be allowed to pass an international referee examination during a competition in which they are participating.

CHAPTER 3 - RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL REFEREE

Article 8 - Rights

The duly accredited UWW international referee has the right:

- a. to wear the UWW badge and the regulatory emblem on their uniform
- b. to be nominated by UWW to referee international competitions
- c. to be nominated by the UWW to act as UWW Refereeing Commission member, referee delegate, neutral referee, educator, referee or mat chairman
- d. to be promoted to a higher category
- e. to receive personally, decorations, diplomas, badges, medals, golden whistle etc.
- f. to receive from event organisers, when assigned as referee delegate, the reimbursement of accommodation and travelling expenses and to receive an allowance per day (refer to UWW Financial Regulations) for the duration of the competition, plus two days before and one day after the competition, in a convertible currency. However, this provision is not applicable to the Olympic Games and other Games.



- g. to open procedures outlined in the UWW Disciplinary Regulations in case of dispute in which they are involved (serious infringement noticed in exercising their duties).
- h. Waiver request:
 - a. In case of pregnancy, women referees can request a two-year maximum waiver.
 - b. Any referee can request a one-year waiver in specific cases.

This waiver request needs to be solicited by the National Federation of the referee in question and must be approved by the UWW Refereeing Commission.

Article 9 - Duties

When working as such, international referees do not represent their country, but United World Wrestling.

In addition to their duties and being the subject of the provisions applicable to the function of referee as defined in the Rules, the international referee must:

- a. always be able to present their license, or prove that they have a validated license for the current year
- b. wear the UWW homologated uniform
- c. permanently be available for the duration of the competition
- d. carry out the tasks which he is given in the pure spirit of justice and impartiality, and demand the integral compliance with the International Rules
- e. lead the national competitions of their Federation and also work as referee at these competitions
- f. be available as often as possible as referee for international competitions he is capable of refereeing
- g. Respect all the conditions and obligations written in the International Wrestling Rules, specifically those referring to the Referee, the Judge, and the Mat Chairman.

Article 10 - Permanent ending of function

Besides death, the function of international referee ceases irremediably and the title is withdrawn in the following cases:

- when the referee reaches **60 years of age** (note: age limit for Commission Members is set to 65 years of age) For example, a referee who is born in 1970 stopped their career the 31st of December 2030
- resignation of the interested party
- removal from the official list of international referees following the provisions of the UWW Disciplinary Regulations being applied
- removal of the interested party by their National Federation (note: UWW Commission Members are nominated by UWW. They are therefore independent from their National Federations and their term ends upon the decision of UWW)
- If a referee exercises an executive function within their National Federation or a political position at an organisation within the wrestling community, UWW is to be immediately and formally notified. Each case will be analysed on a case-by-case basis evaluating the potential risk of affecting the neutrality of the concerned referee.



Article 11 - Consequences of inactivity

An international referee may voluntarily cease their activity, be removed from the list of referees by their National Federation, or be removed due to inactivity. To regain their international category and the corresponding rights, the referee must pass the examination mentioned in Article 6 and meet the requirements set out in Article 4.

A Category III referee who does not participate in at least one international tournament within a period of two consecutive years will lose their international title.

Article 12 - Honorary membership

The international referee who participated in four (4) Senior World Championships or once in the Olympic Games and who is willing to cease their refereeing activity has the possibility of receiving, at the suggestion of their National Federation or the UWW Refereeing Commission, the title of honorary referee and will receive a diploma in a form of recognition for their career.

Honorary referees will have free access to all the competitions organised under UWW's control (except the Olympic Games and all other Games). The most recent list can be found on the UWW website.

Article 13 - Particular positions of the international referee

Notwithstanding article 10, the title of international referee can be withdrawn on a provisional basis and be temporarily removed from the official list of international referees, in the cases outlined in the UWW Disciplinary Regulations or if the international referee has not settled their annual licence fee for more than two consecutive years.

The international referee whose licence is not validated for the current year will not be able to referee.

IS category international referee must take part in minimum two (2) control competitions of the following: the Senior Continental Championship of their own Continent (mandatory), World Cups, U17, U20 or U23 World Championships otherwise they will be downgraded to a lower category. For the World Championships, IS referees will be selected by the UWW Refereeing Commission.

Category I international referee must take part (minimum) either two (2) international tournaments or one competition with a level 4 clinic (control) during the calendar year otherwise they will be downgraded to a lower category.

Category II international referee have the obligation to participation in at least one (1) international tournament organized by and under United World Wrestling's control during the calendar year otherwise they will be downgraded.

Category III international referee have the obligation to participate in at least one (1) international tournament in calendar year.

For all international referees, except those classified as Category III, if a referee does not participate in any international tournament during a consecutive two (2)-year period, a warning letter shall be issued through the National Federation, informing that the title of international referee may be withdrawn in case of continued inactivity. If the referee does not officiate in any international tournament for three (3) consecutive years, they shall automatically lose the title of international referee.

The international referee whose refereeing activity is recognised as insufficient or as unsatisfactory can be demoted to one lower category at the suggestion of the UWW Refereeing Commission and/or the Refereeing Advisory Board and by decision of the UWW Executive Committee.

A Category IS international referee can't act as a coach at any international event.



CHAPTER 4 - CATEGORIES - CONDITIONS OF OBTENTION AND ZONE OF COMPETENCE

Article 14 - Categories

Following the suggestion made by the UWW Refereeing Commission, international referees are classified in the categories indicated hereafter, in descending order:

- a. Category IS referee
- b. Category I referee
- c. Category II referee
- d. Category III referee

Article 15 - Conditions for obtaining categories

a) Candidate Course – Level I

The national referee who wishes to obtain the title of international referee must fulfil the conditions described in Article 4 and 5 of these Regulations, attend a Level I course and successfully pass the exam (described in Article 6 of these Regulations).

b) Promotion course – Level II, III and IV

The international referee who wishes to be promoted to a higher category must attend a course especially set up for this purpose by United World Wrestling (level II, III and IV) during competitions and pass the exam.

The referees who were demoted to a lower category needs to work minimum one year in the present category before trying to be promoted again.

Referees can attend only one promotion clinic per year. Referees attending level 4 clinic may attend multiple clinics.

The results of all Level I (course to cat. III) and II (course to cat. II) will be communicated at the end of each year quarter.

The results of level III (course to cat. I), of Level IV (course to cat. IS) and Level V (control for cat. IS) will be announced at the end of the year.

c) Control courses

International referees can remain in their category, after decision of the UWW Executive Committee, depending on the marks awarded by the UWW Refereeing Commission during competitions in which they referee. On the basis of the same criteria, they can be demoted.

d) Selection course for Olympic Games

A specific Qualification pathway will be prepared for the referee selection for the Olympic Games.



Article 16 - Zones of competence

The international referee is qualified to referee according to their category:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| a) category IS | all competitions under United World Wrestling's control: Olympic Games*, World Championships* and Cups, Continental Championships and Cups, Regional Games and Continental Games (all age groups) and all International Tournaments. |
| b) category I | all the competitions under the United World Wrestling's control except Olympic Games, European Games, Senior European Championship and Senior World Championship.
<i>Exceptions can be only made by United World Wrestling</i> |
| c) category II | all the international tournaments under the United World Wrestling's control except for the Olympic Games, World Championships and Cups (all age groups) and Continental Championships (all age groups). However, they will be authorised to referee at these competitions if a promotion course to category I is organised or if it is specifically stated in the Competition Regulations. |
| d) category III | all the international tournaments under the United World Wrestling's control except for the Olympic Games, World Championships and Cups (all age groups) and Continental Championships (all age groups). However, they will be authorised to referee at these competitions if a promotion course to category II is organised or if it is specifically stated in the Competition Regulations. |

* For the Olympic Games and the World Championships, the category IS referees will be selected according to the evaluation received and on the basis of a quota fixed by United World Wrestling.

Article 17 - Nominations procedure for referees

Any National Federation remains free to choose and send to any Championships and competitions those referees of their choice subject to imperatively satisfy the nature of the competition (article 16) and further requirements of the UWW Regulations for International Championships and Competitions which lay down the number of referees of one country who can be presented.

At the Olympic Games and Senior World Championship, only referees who are on the list drawn up by the UWW can work.

Any National Federation willing to invite a referee from another country to attend a national or international competition organised by the said Federation, must seek approval from the UWW Refereeing Commission prior to the event. Any referee attending such event without approval will be subject to disciplinary actions.

Article 18 - Limitations on the participating number of referees

There are limitations on the number of referees from one country allowed to participate at a certain UWW competition. These limitations differ depending on the type of competitions, as follows:

- For the Olympic, Continental/Regional Games (if applicable) and Senior World Championships, only the referees on the list drawn and approved by UWW are allowed to participate.



- For the U23, U20, U17 and Veteran World Championships a maximum of one (1) referee per mat and per country can participate. For Continental Championships and Senior World Cups a maximum of two (2) referees per mat from the same country can participate, provided that they satisfy the conditions laid down in Article 16.
- The number of referees allowed to participate at Level I - Level V official referee courses are explained in APPENDIX - LEVEL OF COURSES FOR REFEREES. For Level I, II, and III courses, each country may enter up to the maximum quota indicated, with the host country allowed to register one additional referee per course, provided the conditions of Article 16 are met. In all Level I-III courses, one additional quota is also granted if at least one of the nominated referees is a woman.
- For all other UWW international tournaments a maximum of three (3) referees per mat from same country can participate. Only the host is excluded from this limitation.

Article 19 - International obligations

Although the National Federations remain entirely responsible for their international referees, the composition of the refereeing body planned for competitions under the control of UWW must meet the following requirements:

- a) In international tournaments with more than 5 participating countries, a referee delegate nominated by the United World Wrestling will work as coordinator for the competition.
- b) The UWW nominated referee delegate must redeem the competition report within 3 days after the competition by email to sports@uww.org.
- c) The referee delegates are designated by the UWW at the beginning of each year.
- d) The referee delegate shall control that all participants have a valid UWW licence before starting the competition.

CHAPTER 5 - REFERENCE AND CONTROL OF INTERNATIONAL REFEREES

Article 20 - Reference

For reference purposes, UWW keeps a record of the activities of their international referees and their evaluation. Referees are filed according to their activity and their competence. This facilitates application of the provisions of articles 10 and 13 above.

Article 21 - Control procedure

International referees who take part in competitions under UWW's control, are examined and evaluated by the UWW designated referees (as mentioned above in article 19).

The evaluations and comments are recorded by the Refereeing Commission and used to establish the annual classification of international referees, which is then submitted for approval to the UWW Executive Committee. For the Olympic Games, specific evaluation criteria are established by the Refereeing Commission and approved by the UWW Executive Committee.



Article 22 - Consequences of infringement of the rules

The international referee subject of a complaint for infringement of the rules will receive a warning if the complaint is recognised as justified by the competent authority. If the offence is repeated, the referee will be downgraded to a lower category. However, if the offence is serious, the referee could be suspended for the duration of the competition or be immediately demoted by the UWW Executive Committee.

The international referee acting intentionally against the Fair Play under pressure or in agreement with other persons will automatically lose the title of international referee and excluded for life according the provisions of the UWW Disciplinary Regulations.

The suspension can be imposed during the competition in which the offences were reported.

The final sanction is subject of an ulterior investigation and final decision by UWW Bureau.

Article 23 - Improvement, courses and examination

National Federations must attach particular importance to national training courses as a means of improvement for their referees. Bearing in mind provisions of article 15 above, all international referee will be examined for control or for promotion to a higher category during special examinations run by UWW Refereeing Commission during competitions indicated for this purpose in the UWW calendar.

As far as possible, such training courses and exams will take place in all continents.

Article 24 - Information during major competitions

Independently of the training courses offered exclusively to candidates (Level I to IV courses), a course will be offered for all referees prior the competition by the assigned referee delegate.

For all major events, the assignment of referees for every match will be done randomly using a software created by the UWW, which is to be used with ARENA. In case of the use of another service provider for the results (during Games or Multi-sport events), a similar software has to be developed to fulfil this task.

In addition, a daily clinic will be conducted by the referee delegate every morning prior to the competition to review and analyse actions and situations happened in the previous day.

In a given match, the referee, mat chairman and judge cannot be of the same nationality as the competing wrestlers. In exceptional circumstances, this may not apply - this shall be identified in the Delegate report.



CHAPTER 6 - OTHER PROVISIONS

Article 25 - Penalties against the Refereeing Body

The UWW Bureau, which constitutes the supreme jury, shall collectively have the right to take the following disciplinary measures against the member(s) of the refereeing body technically at fault, upon report by the competition referee delegates and/or by the refereeing Advisory Board:

- Warning
To be given if the referee:
 - disregards the official schedule
 - acts disruptively
 - harms other referees or any official
 - performs poorly on the mat (insufficient knowledge of rules, lack of concentration etc.)
 - is found in areas of the venue where he is not allowed to be
 - using social media to communicate and/or disclose about Wrestling actions and procedures
- Suspension from one or more of the competition's sessions
To be pronounced if the referee:
 - repeatedly acts as described above
 - makes major mistakes during a bout
 - criticizes the judging decisions of other referees
 - applies inappropriately the weigh-in procedure
- Suspension from the competition
To be pronounced if the referee:
 - repeatedly acts as described in the previous paragraph
 - makes critical mistakes that directly influence the outcome of a bout
 - acts contrary to fair play and the UWW Disciplinary Regulations
 - is strongly suspected to have intentionally acted as to manipulate the result of a bout (disciplinary steps should be taken immediately)
 - adversely affects the prestige and spirit of refereeing
 - shows in their behaviour or speech disrespect against the decisions of authorized persons
 - misinforms third parties about refereeing decisions

Other sanctions as decided by the UWW Disciplinary Chamber may apply depending on the seriousness of the fault.

Article 26 - Rewards for the Refereeing Body

a) Objective

Considering as an essential element to all UWW competitions, the international referee must continuously acquire more and more knowledge, be always honest and blameless.

In order to stimulate the quality and the development of the international refereeing body, the UWW has set up a reward system. This system will annually reward those referees being the best in the world in their particular field.

b) Nature of the reward

On the occasion of the World Championship, the Olympic Games, or the last major event of the year, will be awarded:

- Maximum 3 gold whistles per year, based on the performance.



Article 27 - Scope of regulations

International referees depend on the UWW Financial Regulations with regard to their financial obligations and on the UWW Disciplinary Regulations with regard to sanctions and penalties.

Article 28 - Field of application

The provisions of these Regulations apply to all the international referees and to all the affiliated National Federations.

It is recommended that the National Federations follow the spirit of these Regulations so that their referees offer quality refereeing which conforms to the UWW Rules and Regulations.

Article 29 - Miscellaneous

In the event of a question concerning the interpretation of any of the articles in these Regulations, only the UWW Bureau is qualified to interpret them. In addition, the same UWW Bureau has the right, with a view to the Constitution, to make any changes it deems necessary in order to improve the smooth running of international refereeing.

CHAPTER 7 - THE STRUCTURE OF THE REFEREEING AT UWW

Three entities are working together to manage the Refereeing at United World Wrestling:

1. The UWW Refereeing Commission
2. The UWW Refereeing Advisory Board
3. The UWW Educators - The Development Department

The UWW Refereeing Commission

Purpose:

Manage and coordinate the **operational running** of officiating at the competitions.

Composition:

The UWW Refereeing Commission is directly nominated by the UWW Bureau and lead by the Head of the UWW Refereeing Commission.

The Commission should be staffed by experienced referees (minimum 1 Olympic Games) with outstanding knowledge of the rules and didactical experience.

Two positions at minimum shall be occupied by a woman.

All members of the UWW Refereeing Commission are requested to work proactively, independently or in teamwork to fulfil the objectives and numerous tasks assigned by the UWW Bureau.

Members of the Referee Commission will be continuously assessed based on their work and quality. A rotation of the Members could take place upon decision of the UWW Bureau / UWW President.

The Head of the Refereeing Commission and UWW Bureau reserves their right to suspend, promote or substitute any member based on the assessment.



Responsibilities:

- Promote refereeing as high and reliable activity among the wrestling community.
- Ensure that a sustainably and sufficient level of quality and performance is provided to all UWW international competitions.
- Prepare a group of top referees for the Olympic Games.
- Ultimately responsible for the operational course of the competitions and the Challenge evaluation.
- Propose the assignments of referee delegates for the competitions to the Sports Department.
- Select referees for World Championships Senior, U23, U20, U17-.
- Work as referee delegate in all major UWW events.
- Work as mat-chairman at major events (under 60 years old members can also be requested to work as referee on the mat).
- Conducts performance reviews of referees during competitions.
- Evaluation of referees and assignation of categories.
- Propose the Referee Board with Up- and Downgrades.
- Propose and assist young referee talents.
- Support and promote the development of young talented referees in all regions.
- Promote and increase the overall female quota on all UWW competitions.
- Review, update, and propose changes to the Refereeing Body Regulations for submission to the UWW Executive Committee.
- Conduct theoretical and practical Level Courses.
- Assist the development department in creating educational material for referees.

Obligations :

All commission members must fulfil their obligations to maintain their status, which involves the same requirements as those for 1S referees.

The UWW Refereeing Advisory Board

Purpose:

Under the control and guidance of the Bureau, provide **strategic direction** and oversee the functioning of the Referee Commission.

Composition:

- Chairperson
- 2 Members

This Board should be staffed by 2 highly experienced referee Instructors with excellent leading skills.

The interests of the athletes should be represented by the UWW Athlete Commission.

Responsibilities:

- Advisory function to the UWW President and UWW Bureau.
- Ensure fairness and neutrality in competition, overseeing and monitoring the work of the Referee Commission and referees (*Quality Management*).
- Integrate Coach and Athlete advisory panel, serving as a communication channel between athletes, coaches, and the Commission to address concerns or suggestions regarding refereeing practices.
- Collaborate with the UWW Technical Commission in the development and implementation of rules and future modifications.
- Provide the UWW Bureau with their position and analysis of the situation upon receipt of complaint letters.

Commission Coordinator

Purpose:



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Relieve the Board with bureaucratic burden to gain efficiency and speed in their activities. The Commission Coordinator can be a member of the Referee Commission.

Responsibilities:

- Administrative coordination of tasks and functions of the Refereeing Commission.
- Prepare and submit compliance reports, performance evaluations, and other required documentation to UWW governing bodies.

Data and Technology Unit

Purpose: Leverage technology to enhance refereeing accuracy and transparency.

Responsibilities:

- Manage the Challenge video system and other technologies used in competitions. This person is not involved in the Challenge decision process.
- Assist Referee Delegates during the competitions preparing and cutting videos.

UWW Educators - The Development Department

Responsibilities:

- Education and training of referees at national level.
- Referee Course level I, II and III: content and delivery.

Note: International Educators are trained and certified by the UWW Development Department.

UWW Educators are:

- Highly educated and experienced referees with strong skills in teaching and communicating techniques.
- They are assigned to run courses and seminars in countries aiming to improve certain areas and competencies of their national referees.
- They can be assigned to work and assist the referee delegates in major competitions, as e.g. the World or Continental Championships.



APPENDIX - TYPES OF COURSES FOR REFEREES

Level	Description of the course	Referees authorised to participate* <i>*in addition to the number of referees specified in article 18</i>
I	promotion from National to Category III	Max 2 referees per country (one additional quota if a woman is included)
II	promotion from category III to category II	Max 2 referees per country (one additional quota if a woman is included)
III	promotion from category II to category I	Max 2 referees per country (one additional quota if a woman is included)
IV	annual control for category I and promotion to category IS	According to Article 18 above
V	annual control for category IS and selection course for Olympic Games	According to Article 18 above

Corsier-sur-Vevey, 1st of January 2026



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