



## **Official Freestyle Football Championship**

Rule Book

*Produced by World Freestyle Football Association © 2013*

Updates:

03/12/2014

26/2/2017

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## **Basics**

### Member Subassociations:

EFFA - European Freestyle Football Association

NAFFA - North American Freestyle Football Association

SAFFA - South American Freestyle Football Association

APFFA - Asia - Pacific Freestyle Football Association

AFFA - African Freestyle Football Association

This document outlines the core components and official rules of freestyle football competitions that are acknowledged by the World Freestyle Football Association (WFFA).

This is to be seen as the minimum requirements for any event worldwide, although they can be altered to suit the needs of non-official events (events in which no world rankings points are available) if appropriate.

As world body for freestyle football development, WFFA have created criteria for a globally recognized judging structure and format. This is developed with input from freestylers across the globe to ensure accuracy.

All official national and international events in the WFFA network must adhere to these criteria and it is expected that anyone else organizing freestyle football events will incorporate this system to ensure satisfaction from all participants.

WFFA has educated a team of official judges that can be offered to any event anywhere if required. They are experienced individuals who have worked with the sport of freestyle football extensively as athletes and officials. It is understood by WFFA that any judge of any freestyle football event must be actively involved in the sport of freestyle. Judges don't always have to be active freestylers, as long as they can accurately assess the sport and understand all the criteria below well (see point 2.1.4)

## 1.0. Ranking

### 1.1. Entry details

- The season for these events runs from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December each year
- WFFA recognized events must be open for anyone to enter in the first round
- To have the right to gain points and participate in National (1-star) events, freestylers must identify themselves with their corresponding passport or ID card. Freestylers not living in their country of birth or with dual nationalities must choose whether they will represent their country of birth or another (in which they must have a valid residence permit/passport for).
- To have the right to gain points and participate in a continental (2-star) event, freestylers must identify themselves with their corresponding passport or ID card. Freestylers can only participate in the Continental championship that corresponds with the 1-star event that they have already chosen to represent
- Exceptions of this rule are taken into consideration only in unique cases of change location of athletes' residency in certain country. WFFA must be aware of the situation and will approve/deny the request.
- Freestylers cannot enter an event in a country or continent which they have not nominated for
- Player with dual nationalities are not allowed to change their country of allegiance during more than once in lifetime. Only unique cases will be taken into consideration and discussed on annual committee meeting.

### 1.2. Event Weighting

Athlete can only gather points for world ranking from maximum of 3 events in a year

- 1 x 1 Star Event – National Championship
- 1 x 2 Star Event – Continental Championship
- 1 x 3 Star Event – World Open Championship

WFFA recognizes that some countries have larger number of participants and standard of freestyler. To compensate this an Event Weighting system is be introduced on Area Level tier system. This system allows the best athletes to be recognized at any circumstances.

Area Level = how strong is local scene represented compared to the world according to different strength factors (except world open championship). Tiers are created by Sub-committee members and respected members of community.

Strength factors within areas:

- Number of world class athletes
- Number of world and continental participants
- Number of world and continental champions
- Number of athletes in country
- Number of participants on national championship
- Event history

### Area Level tiers

Tier	National	Continental
G-6	Poland, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Russia, Japan	
Strong	Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, UK, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Turkey, UAE, Vietnam, Australia, Chile, Morocco, USA	Europe, South America, Asia - Pacific
Medium	Belgium, Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belarus, Bolivia, Brunei, Croatia, Czech republic, Egypt, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kenya, KSA, Malaysia, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Thailand, Uruguay	North America, Africa
Low	Singapore, Canada, Afghanistan, Ecuador, Switzerland, Slovakia, Portugal, Kuwait...	

### **1.3.Points**

#### National

Tier	Winner	Runner up	3 <sup>rd</sup> place	4 <sup>th</sup> place	Quarter	Top 16	Elimination	Entry
G-6	125	75	55	45	25	10	5	1
Strong	115	70	50	40	20	8	4	1
Medium	100	60	45	35	15	6	3	1
Low	80	50	35	30	10	4	2	1

#### Continental

Tier	Winner	Runner up	3 <sup>rd</sup> place	4 <sup>th</sup> place	Quarter	Top 16	Elimination	Entry
Strong	250	150	110	90	45	25	10	1
Medium	220	130	90	80	35	15	8	1
Low	200	110	80	70	30	10	5	1

#### World Open

Winner	Runner up	3 <sup>rd</sup> place	4 <sup>th</sup> place	Quarter	Top 16	Top 32	Elimination	Entry
500	300	210	180	90	45	20	10	1

## 2.0 Rules and regulations

### 2.1. Qualification Stage

The stage is designed to qualify the strongest participants for the final round. It is really important to do this properly to avoid unhappy athletes and ensure all runs on time.

- For official WFFA National Events (1-star) there must be minimum of 8 participants registered.
- For official WFFA Continental Event (2-star) there must be minimum of 16 participants registered
- If your event looks like having less competitors than the minimum it can still be classed as an official event but points will be weighted lower.

Each competition will have different numbers of participants, so WFFA have identified the two following options that must be used at qualification stage:

- 1 minute Performance (up to 20 participants)
- Battle Circles (more than 20 participants)

#### 2.1.1. Qualification with up to 20 participants

- Each participant must make a 1 minute performance.
- To determine the starting order of the freestylers for this round there is a general seeding of players (this could be based on WFFA world rankings or results from previous championships for example). If no previous event has previously happened then names will be drawn out of a hat.
- Athletes perform in order from last to first in accordance with the seeding.
- There must be at least a top 8 for the 1-star events and a top 16 for 2-star events.
- Judges rank participants in order from the best to the worst performance (see point 2.2.4 for judging criteria).
- To give maximum opportunity in some countries for new freestylers to develop and learn, it could be managed so the top 12 from National rankings go through automatically and then for the final 4 places in the top 16 for battles, a qualification round can be made.
- Final top 16 order is made (see point 2.2.6 for exact order).
- In case there are exactly 16 participants, the qualification will determine only the order of athletes from 1st to 16th place.
- Qualification could be modified for top 32 battles or top 8 battles in the final stage. It all depends on time management of the event and the organisers.
- The same rules as knockout stage apply (see point 2.2.1).

#### 2.1.2. Qualification with more than 20 participants (Circle battle)

- To determine the starting order of the freestylers for this round there is a general seeding of athletes (could be based on the WFFA world rankings or results from previous championships).
- There are 4 groups of athletes created based on the seeding.
- Every athlete is in a group of four meaning they all have three opponents to compete against.
- All players are in a circle and battling each other.

- The number of circles depends on the number of athletes registered to compete.
- Every athlete has three rounds, which last 30 seconds each.
- Player number 4 starts and circle is played clockwise (4-3-2-1-4-3-2-1...)
- Athletes each take their turn in the center of the circle.
- After each round, the athlete should move from the center spot quickly back to their corner to make room for the next athlete.
- The two best athletes from every circle goes through to the next round (could be more or less depending on the number of circles).
- After each circle judges rise number of points they are giving to each athlete (host should start asking for points from athlete ranked the lowest)
- The same rules as knockout stage apply (see point 2.2.1).

System of qualification circles creation:



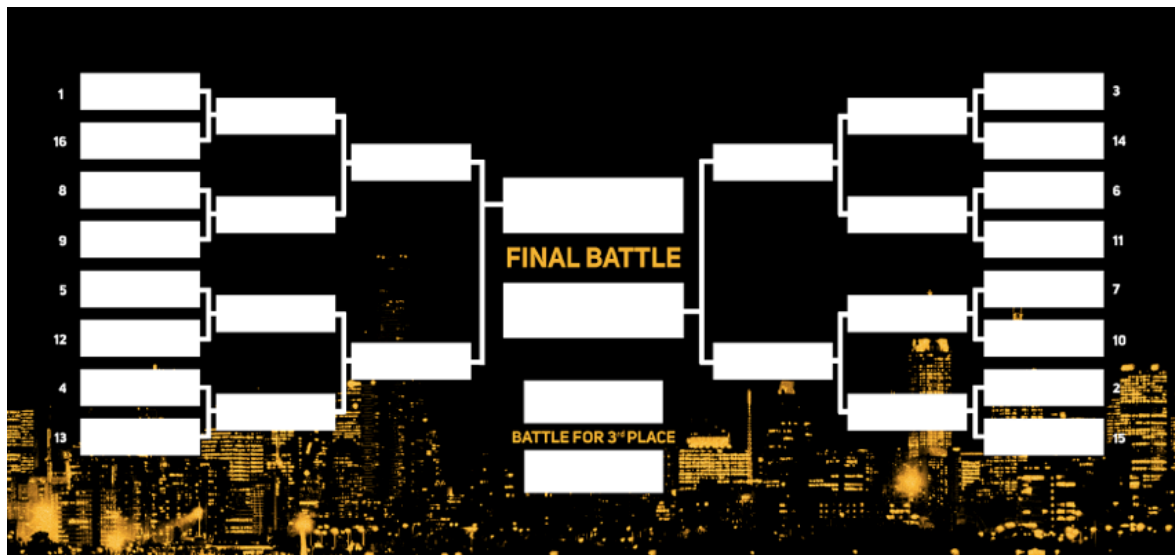
## 2.2. Knockout stage

### 2.2.1 General

- Participants can use their **own** ball (see point 2.2.2)
- Hands **are NOT** allowed (see point 2.2.3)
- Judges will be picking the winner on **overall** performance (see point 2.2.4)
- Foreign objects **cannot** be integrated into the battles (E.g. bottles, rope etc.)
- Participants must **not** leave the stage at any time during the battle
- No other people are allowed to be brought into battle

- Dropped ball after trick attempt is not considered as anything else than drop
- Any action after the time limit does not count into the performance, however if the ball is dropped it is considered as mistake
- No outside interference in holding the ball to body (E.g. glue, tape, laces etc.)
- Whilst one participant is performing, the opponent **must not perform** any moves or infringe upon their show
- Changing equipment (shoes, ball) is **not allowed** during battle
- Impersonating of the opponent is allowed, but disrespecting is **strictly forbidden**. There is a very fine line here and collectively the judges shall decide if anyone is acting inappropriately (See point 3.2)

System of creating top 16 battles based on qualification ranking



### 2.2.2      Footballs

- Every freestyler is allowed to use **his or her own** football.
- FFF recognises that ball of **size 5** is preferable choice. Nevertheless there is tolerance of 0,5 both ways (4.5 and 5.5).
- It is strictly **prohibited** to use **more than one ball** in battle.
- Surface of the ball and tricks performed with it are considered by judges
- No modification to ball is allowed.
- In case there is official ball of tournament requested to be used by all players on stage organization is **obliged to send** this ball to every participant at least 1 month before so he can get used to it. This exception must be approved by FFF and communicated to athletes in advance.



## 2.2.3 Usage of hands

- It is **forbidden** to touch the ball with hands in **battle** with no exception
- Every use of hand is considered as **mistake**
- By hand understand “**from shoulder to end of fingers**”

## 2.2.4 Judges

- There **must be** even number of judges (minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5).
- All **must be** associated with freestyle football and active in the scene for more than 4 years and approved by FFF expert in first stage of organization. FFF will make suggestions if the judges are felt to be inappropriate.
- Judges need to be perfectly aware of what they are asked to do and briefed properly following judging criteria.
- Head judge is responsible for the whole panel regarding timing, distribution of sheets and proper briefing. He is the middle man of event director towards the judging panel.
- All judges are given judging sheets and blank papers with pen so they can make notes. They are obliged to focus 100% on happening on stage.
- After every battle judges are given at least 40 seconds to decide about result of battle. If judge is not ready he needs to give clear signal to host to not require the results yet.
- When the decision is made, each judge should hold the card of winner in his hands and look directly to stage so host can see, judges are ready for announcement. In case of name cards are not present judges look to stage.
- As soon as host requires, judges show their decision.
- In case of final battle, each judge writes the name of his winner to piece of paper and hands it to Head judge. Head judge needs to write the name down as well before revealing the results from other judges. Then Head judge reveals the results and shows it to other judges so everyone is aware of final decision. Head judge then walks to stage, grabs finalists by hand, builds the suspension and on signal from host rises hand of the winner.
- Judges should all have a short explanation detailing why they made the decision they have at the time they announce the winner of a battle. In case they are asked, they must be able to defend their decision.
- Judges decision is final and cannot be changed.
- Judges are strictly not allowed to talk at any time between start of battle and announcement of result of the same battle.
- Judge is not allowed to use so called “blank vote” in case he is not sure with result.

## 2.2.5 Judging criteria

The 3 judges will be looking for 3 basic criteria in battles. Each criteria includes 5 sub-criteria. It involves a mixture of subjective opinions and technical qualifications. Judges are obliged to consider these criteria:

- **Difficulty** – Technical difficulty of tricks and combinations
  - All round skills – general ability to perform all parts of sport equally
  - Dynamics – strength and speed of movements
  - Response – reaction to opponents' round
  - Difficult moves – how difficult in general is to reach the perfection of trick
  - Combinations – ability to create difficult connection between tricks
- **Originality** – Performing with individual style, creativity and variety
  - Variety within battle – ability to not repeat tricks within the battle
  - Variety in general – ability to not repeat tricks in competition
  - Original move – unusual tricks or signature moves
  - Attitude – creating battle vibe and adding the value to performance
  - Element of surprise - surprising move which is unexpected due to circumstances
- **Execution** – Clean and controlled demonstration of each trick
  - Cleanness – clean execution of tricks
  - Control – general control of the ball on stage
  - Style – the way tricks are performed
  - Mistakes – dropping the ball or creating mistake
  - Flow – ability to move the ball around body with no hesitation

## 2.2.6 Timing

- Each battle lasts **3 minutes**
- Athletes take turns every **30 seconds** which means both athletes will have the ball 3 times during every battle
- Athlete is announced by host (or sound system) that his round is ending at least 5 seconds in advance.
- There are additional 5 seconds between single rounds for athlete to finish his round and free the space to his opponent.
- If athlete ends his round earlier opponent has advantage of **using this time** in his round.
- In case of athlete having longer round opponent has **right to take** time, which has been stolen from him, from player's next round (is announced by host)

## **3.0. Additional regulations**

### **3.1 Protesting**

- If there are any complaints or protests during the tournament, make sure you notify the tournament director straight after the event.
- If anyone is unclear about the rules, then any questions should be raised before the event begins. No complaints concerning rules will be considered once the event has started.
- The judges should never be approached at any time throughout the duration of the event. Their decision is final and all participants should respect that. Anyway every participant has right decision which influenced his performance to be explained.

### **3.2 Disrespecting opponents**

- Within the format of the battles, successful performers will react to the situation, the music being played by the DJ and to the skills presented by their opponent.
- At times there may be a fine line between impersonating the opponent and their moves and offending them in the heat of a battle.
- With the nature of any freestyle football event now, content will be produced for TV, Mobile and Internet usage almost instantly if not broadcasted live anyway. Therefore with FFF promoting Freestyle Football around the world as a healthy lifestyle choice for young people and pushing the athletes as role models for others, it is essential that the sport is perceived correctly.
- If the judges feel that any participant acts with any form of major disrespect to their opponents or judges themselves, host of the event may (after consulting the judges) highlights this by way of a warning to the participant. If he continues, then judges have the right to stop the battle and eliminate the athlete.
- Forms of disrespect could take the form of (but not be limited to) racism, negative references to opponent's family members of upbringing, general bullying and references to alcohol or drug abuse.

### 3.3 Penalty

General Penalty Committee is formed in each continent sustaining from sub-committee members. Matters of this committee is part of continental committee meeting once every second month.

#### 3.3.1 Reporting

- Violation of rules could be reported by anyone present or not present at the event where violation was spotted
- Violation against rules needs to be presented to Head judge. He then delivers the message to Event director. Event director reports to sub-committee member of his region and he then presents it as part of agenda for meeting
- Violation of rules needs to be provided with clear evidence. Assumptions are not considered as valid subject
- If the violation is spotted immediately, person who is involved is left with one warning. If the violation should repeat, person could be disqualified
- Reporter is responsible for punishment proposal

#### 3.3.2 Process

- Only serious violations and violation which is not spotted personally are worth reporting it to General Penalty Committee.
- General Penalty Committee has the right to not take unimportant violation into consideration. This needs to be announced to reporter.
- Violator must be aware of the process and has the chance to offer defence. Defence could be in form of acceptance and apology. This is taken into consideration in process of measuring punishment.
- The case is discussed with considering both punishment proposal from reporter and defence from violator. It could but does not have to be decision making factor
- After discussion and review of rules meeting leader propose the conclusion. All members must vote including meeting leader himself
- General Penalty Committee meeting report is constructed with conclusion

#### 3.3.3 Conclusion

- Result of meeting with all details is presented to both Violator and Reporter
- Both have right to request second calling with serious reasoning only
- Second calling could but does not have to happen depending on members of General Penalty Committee
- After conclusion is accepted, it is announced publicly online and archived

All you need is a ball!

[www.freestylefootball.org](http://www.freestylefootball.org)