



RCFA Tournament – Coach Rules and Guidelines

A. Purpose

This policy sets out the standards of behaviour expected from all coaches affiliated with RCFA. It aims to promote a safe, respectful, and empowering environment for athletes, officials, and the broader community.

B.Scope

The RCFA Coach Conduct Policy establishes comprehensive guidelines for coaches participating in Ring Contact Fighting Arts (RCFA) tournaments. It applies to all coaches, whether representing clubs, provinces, or national teams, across all competition formats (Semi Contact, Millennium Mode, and Full Contact). The policy governs professional behaviour, attire, access, qualifications, responsibilities, and ethical standards to ensure fair, safe, and respectful competition. It includes provisions for penalties to address misconduct, aiming to uphold the integrity of RCFA tournaments and promote sportsmanship, safety, and adherence to rules.

C.Definitions

- a) Bout: A competitive match between two fighters in a ring or on a tatami, governed by RCFA rules.
- b) Coach: An individual officially registered with RCFA to guide and support fighters during tournaments.
- c) Designated Coaching Area: The specific area (red or blue corner) assigned to a coach during a bout, as defined by tournament officials.
- d) Fighter: A registered athlete participating in an RCFA tournament bout.
- e) Neutral Corner: A corner of the ring or tatami designated by the referee for a fighter to move to during specific situations, such as a stoppage.
- f) Official: Referees, judges, or other RCFA personnel responsible for managing and overseeing tournament activities.

- g) Ring: The enclosed competition area used for RCFA bouts, which may have four, six, or eight corners, constructed with ropes and a padded floor, as specified by tournament rules.
- h) Tatami: A padded mat used as the competition surface for certain RCFA bouts.
- i) Tournament: An organised RCFA event consisting of multiple bouts across various formats (e.g., Semi Contact, Millennium Mode, Full Contact).

D.Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed annually or as required. Amendments must be approved by the RCFA Executive Committee.

1. Coach Conduct

1.1 Professional Attire

- 1.1.1 Coaches must wear appropriate athletic attire, such as a RCFA Gi/ Coach shirt/ tracksuit and clean sport shoes. All coaches must wear the designated neon yellow RCFA Coach Cap for identification.
- 1.1.2 Officials who wish to coach may not do so while wearing official clothing. They must wear a Coach shirt over their official uniform and the designated neon yellow RCFA Coach Cap.

1.2 Discipline & Behaviour

- 1.2.1 Coaches must remain in the designated coaching area and behave in a disciplined, professional manner.
- 1.2.2 Excessive, disruptive, or inappropriate coaching is prohibited.
- 1.2.3 While a fighter is competing in the ring, coaches are strictly prohibited from touching any part of the ring—including the apron, ropes, or platform. This includes leaning on, sitting on, or slapping the ring area, even if outside the ropes. Coaches must remain in their designated corner—red or blue—and may only stand or sit within that area without making physical contact with the ring.
- 1.2.4 When a referee directs a fighter to the neutral corner for any reason, the coach is prohibited from following the fighter to the neutral corner and or providing any form of coaching, instruction or communication.

1.3 Non-Interference

- 1.3.1 Coaches may not interfere with the bout via words, gestures, or actions. Entering the ring or tatami during active competition is strictly prohibited unless authorized by officials.

1.4 Respect for Officials and Opponents and their Coaches

- 1.4.1 Coaches must display respect toward referees, judges, fighters (including opponents and their coaches), and all tournament staff. Unsportsmanlike behaviour will not be tolerated.

1.5 Penalties for Misconduct

- 1.5.1 Inappropriate conduct may result in the following disciplinary measures:
- (a) 1st Offense – Verbal warning
 - (b) 2nd Offense – Point deduction for the fighter
 - (c) 3rd Offense – Disqualification of the fighter and/or removal of the coach from the venue
- 1.5.2 If the offense is deemed severe, the fighter may be immediately disqualified, and/or the coach may be immediately removed from the venue, including removal from the event.
- 1.5.3 Additionally, the coach may face suspension of coaching privileges at future RCFA competitions for a period of up to 3 months, and in extreme cases, permanent revocation of coaching rights.

2. Coach Access and Placement

2.1 General Access

- 2.1.1 During tournaments, whether representing a club, province, or national team, only one coach is allowed for every five fighters.

2.2 Semi Contact Bouts

- 2.2.1 Only one coach is allowed per fighter.
- 2.2.2 No assistants are permitted at ringside or next to the tatami.
- 2.2.3 No coach may enter the ring at any time.
- 2.2.4 During rest periods:
- 2.2.4.1 Fighter must remain standing — sitting, leaning on ropes, or resting arms/gloves on the coach is not allowed.
 - 2.2.4.2 No stools or physical support may be used.

2.3 Millennium Mode

- 2.3.1 One coach and one assistant coach are permitted.
- 2.3.2 Neither coach nor assistant may enter the ring, including during rest periods.
- 2.3.3 Fighter must remain standing — no stools, leaning, or resting on the coach.

2.4 Full Contact Bouts

- 2.4.1 One head coach may enter the ring during rest periods.
- 2.4.2 Up to two assistant coaches are allowed at ringside.
- 2.4.3 Athletes may sit on a short-legged stool (must fit under the bottom rope).

2.5 Cleanliness and Safety Rule (Applies to All Modes)

Whether in Semi Contact, Millennium, or Full Contact:

- 2.5.1 Coaches (and assistants) are responsible for ensuring the ring or tatami is clean and dry between rounds.
- 2.5.2 Any spilled fluids (e.g., water, blood, sweat) and all foreign objects or debris must be cleaned up immediately.
- 2.5.3 All equipment (e.g. stool, bucket, towels, etc.) must be removed before the next round begins.

2.6 Throwing in the Towel

- 2.6.1 A coach may signal to end the bout by throwing a towel into the ring or on the tatami. This must be a clear, intentional act in the fighter's best interest.

3. Coach Qualifications**3.1 Technical Proficiency**

- 3.1.1 Coaches must demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of Ring Contact Fighting Arts techniques, tournament rules, and coaching practices.

3.2 Registration

- 3.2.1 Coaches must be officially registered with the tournament organizers and may be required to present credentials upon request.

3.3 Tournament Rule Briefing

- 3.3.1 Coaches must attend the officials', coaches', and fighters' briefing prior to any tournament to ensure they are fully informed about the rules, their application, and any recent updates or changes.

4. Important Considerations

4.1 Athlete Equipment

- 4.1.1 Coaches are responsible for ensuring that fighters wear the correct, approved gear and that all equipment is in safe and working condition.

4.2 Pre-Bout and Pre-Tournament Check-In

- 4.2.1 Coaches must accompany their fighters for:
- 4.2.1.1 Pre-tournament weigh-in
 - 4.2.1.2 Pre-bout check-in and equipment inspection

4.3 Medical Responsibility

- 4.3.1 Coaches must monitor their fighters for signs of distress or injury. Any concerns must be reported to officials or on-site medical personnel immediately.

4.4 Time Management

- 4.4.1 It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that their fighter is present and ready for all scheduled bouts, weigh-ins, and briefings.
- 4.4.2 In situations where an athlete is required for a bout but is currently competing on another ring or tatami, the coach must immediately inform the Head Table Official at the relevant ring or tatami where the athlete is expected.
- 4.4.3 Communication is essential to avoid unnecessary disqualifications. Coaches are expected to actively monitor bout progress across all assigned areas and manage their fighter's schedules accordingly.

5. Coach Code of Ethics

- 5.1 As mentors, instructors, and leaders, RCFA Coaches are expected to uphold the highest standards of behaviour, both in and out of the ring or tatami.
- All RCFA Coaches must:

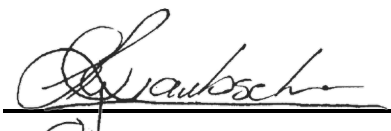
- 5.1.1 Promote respect, honour, and discipline at all times
- 5.1.2 Place the health and safety of the fighter first
- 5.1.3 Lead by example in speech, conduct, and sportsmanship
- 5.1.4 Avoid conflicts of interest and act with impartiality
- 5.1.5 Never engage in abuse, intimidation, or harassment
- 5.1.6 Support the rules and authority of RCFA officials
- 5.1.7 Encourage learning and growth, regardless of win or loss
- 5.1.8 Uphold and teach the values of humility, perseverance, integrity, and self-control

5.2 Violations of this Code of Ethics may result in sanctions, including removal from the event and loss of coaching privileges at future RCFA competitions.

6. Conclusion

The RCFA Coach Conduct Policy is designed to foster a safe, fair, and respectful environment for all participants in Ring Contact Fighting Arts tournaments. By adhering to these guidelines, coaches play a critical role in upholding the values of sportsmanship, discipline, and integrity that define RCFA competitions. Compliance with this policy ensures the well-being of fighters, the smooth operation of tournaments, and the promotion of a positive competitive culture. Coaches are expected to lead by example, prioritizing fighter safety and respect for all involved, thereby contributing to the success and reputation of RCFA events.

Approved at Pretoria on 26 September 2025.



 Signature

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 Signature

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Ring Contact Fighting Arts (RCFA) Executive Committee