

Combat Sambo Policies for the BSF rev 1

Head contact Policy - Reducing potential for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Background and reason for policy statement

A number of injuries and fatalities relating to TBI/Concussion injury in a number of contact sports has made the need for a policy evident.

Research has shown that head impact leads to TBI and that headguards do not minimise the development of brain injury, from a skills standpoint headguards lead to complacency, overconfidence in the equipment, raised head temperature and lessening of peripheral vision, which can all lead to more head impact than would occur normally.

Combat sports involving striking will lead to head impact, a policy will not remove the risks, however, can assist in minimising the events and improving after care and recovery.

Under 18s bodies are constantly developing and can be susceptible to injury, as an example hands are not fully developed until approximately 18 years old and may therefore be injured by hard contact to a solid surface e.g. pad, elbow, head, growth spurts can have an effect on the bodies response to strikes to the torso and shock can be transmitted by the interconnected muscles and tissues to other organs.

Consent

In UK Law there are a variety of methods of consent for activities, informed consent, implicit/ implied consent and explicit consent. Generally it is considered that partaking in a combat sport including striking indicates consent to the potential for injury if actions carried out are within the rules, this is not as clear in sparring and under 18s cannot give consent to injury related to the UK legal definitions of competence to make decisions.

Policy Boundary and conclusion

Given the information in the above sections, the BSF require that there are no head strikes for juniors and impact to the torso is reduced. Adults sparring and drilling in the gym are to be closely supervised and competition medics are to have trauma and TBI knowledge with support for transfer to hospital.

Summary of rule set for Juniors/minors (under 18)

No head contact

No headbutts

No Elbows

No submissions for under 12yrs old

Reduced power on strikes