

## **XIX. SOMBO COMPETITION**

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### ARTICLE 1 - SELF DEFENSE JACKET WRESTLING

**Introduction...** Sombo wrestling is a composite style of jacket wrestling originally developed in Russia to serve as a common form of sport wrestling for the fifteen different republics of the former Soviet Union, each of which had one or more of its own distinct styles of folk wrestling, with widely varying rules. It was also used as a form of hand to hand combat by Soviet soldiers for use in unarmed self-defense. Sombo today is practiced in two forms,; Sport sombo, generally referred to as sombo wrestling (termed "borba camba" in the Russian language) and martial art sombo, called combat sombo.

The term "SOMBO" (also spelled sambo or camba in other languages) is an acronym for the Russian phrase meaning self-defense without weapons (SOM-oborona Bes Oruszhia). Until the official adoption of the term "SOMBO", the sport had also been referred to as SAM or SAMOS. The correct, official English spelling is SOMBO.

Although the roots of sombo go back to the ancient origins of the various folk styles of wrestling in the Soviet republics, the birth of modern sombo is generally considered to be 16, November, 1938, the date upon which it was recognized as an official sport by the National Committee of Physical Culture of the USSR. Sombo was accepted as an international sport and recognized as

the third style of international wrestling by FILA, the international Amateur Wrestling Federation at the FILA Congress held during the 1966 FILA Wrestling Championships held in Toledo, Ohio.

The first World Sombo Championships took place in Teheran, Iran in 1972. In 1975, Sombo was introduced into the U.S. by the Wrestling Committee of the AAU, then the National Governing Body (NGB) for wrestling in the United States. The AAU Wrestling Committee established the first Sombo Committee chaired by Freestyle World Silver medalist Bobby Douglas (AZ), Vice Chair Ivan Olsen (CA) and Secretary Josh Henson (DC). Sombo separated from FILA and USA Wrestling in 1984 and today is governed by the International Amateur Sombo Federation (FIAS) at the world level. Since 1994, Sombo in the United States has been governed by the U.S. Sombo District (USSA), which is affiliated with the AAU and works with the AAU Wrestling Committee. Since 1993 other organizations have also promoted sombo competition. Well known wrestlers who have excelled in sombo include Olympian Greg Gibson (USMC), World Champion Wade Schalles and Ultimate Fighting Champion Dan Severn.

## ARTICLE 2 - RULES OF COMPETITION

**Uniform**...a sombo uniform consists of shoes and both a red jacket (kurtka) with red belt and red shorts or singlet, plus a blue jacket, blue belt and blue shorts or singlet. Each competitor must have one complete red and one complete blue uniform. Jackets, shorts and belt must be matching colors (all red or all blue, not mixed). The jacket should be made of canvas or other heavy material. Sleeves must extend to the wrists and wide enough to allow four fingers held side by side to fit into the end of the sleeve. The jacket should be tight fitting and extend no more than eight inches below the belt. The belt must be wrapped snugly around the body and must pass through belt loops on the jacket. Club or national patches may be attached to the left side of the chest area. The jacket must have cuffs or epaulets (braces) sewn onto the shoulder of the jacket, perpendicular to the shoulder at the uppermost point of the arm. A judo jacket is not the same and is unacceptable for official competitions. Shorts should be tight fitting and cover at least one-third of the hip. Wrestling singlets (red or blue) may be used, although strapless trunks are preferred. Shoes should be made of soft leather or other pliable material and should have a soft leather sole with seams on the inside. Rubber soled wrestling shoes are acceptable, although soft soled shoes are preferred.

**Duration of the Match**...the match is one period of six minutes in length for seniors, five minutes for espoirs and juniors and four minutes for schoolboy and cadets. Matches will be stopped and athletes returned to the center of the mat for a standing start (there is no ground or parterre positioning in sombo) in the following situations:

1. Athletes are out of bounds (one foot touching the protection area standing or half of the a body in submission holds).
2. Time out for injury or adjusting uniforms.
3. No activity by athletes while on the ground.
4. Athlete cautioned for illegal hold.
5. Total victory or submission hold is earned.

**Winning the Match**...a match can be won in any one of three ways.

1. By total victory (a perfect throw or submission hold), which ends the match immediately.
2. By technical superiority (12 point difference in score) which ends the match immediately.
3. By point difference at the end of the match if there has been no total victory or technical superiority (the athlete with the most points wins, no minimum point score required). Tie matches are decided by a one minute overtime period or, if there is no winner at the end of overtime, by majority decision of the officials.

**Illegal Holds**...holds not permitted in sombo include (1) bending arms behind the back (hammer lock or chicken wing), (2) submission hold on shoulder, wrist, neck, fingers or toes, (3) gripping

the mat or the opponent below the belt or inside of the sleeve, (4) twisting or squeezing the opponents head, (5) pressure to the face, (6) twisting arms, legs, fingers, toes or ankles, (7) punching or slapping, (8) driving the opponent's head in the mat, (9) standing or throwing submission holds, (10) gouging or (11) strangling or choking holds.

### ARTICLE 3 - SCORING

Three types of technical moves will score points and result in Total Victory. They are...

**1. HOLD DOWN:** (Immobilization or Predicament): Similar to a hold down in Judo or Near Fall in wrestling. One athlete must hold the back of the other athlete toward the mat in a danger position (less than 90 degrees), with either unbroken chest, side or back contact with the chest of the opponent to score. A hold down is "broken" when (a) Contact between the athletes is broken when space is created between them, or (b) the defending athlete

**2. SUBMISSION HOLD:** A pressure hold (arm or leg lock) applied to the arm or leg of the opponent which makes the opponent surrender or submit by calling out or tapping the mat at least twice. It cannot be applied in standing position. A submission hold ends the match by total victory.

**3. THROW:** A throw is scored anytime one athlete takes another to the mat in a single, continuous and uninterrupted action. A sombo throw is more than a simple wrestling takedown however, like a judo or Greco-Roman throw, it must (1) start with both athletes on the feet, (2) one athlete must unbalance the other and (3) take the opponent directly to the mat with one action without stopping. A throw must knock the defender off their feet either by lifting or tripping them, not merely dragging them down. A throw is scored based on two factors: (1) How the thrown athlete lands and (2) Whether the thrower remains standing (the throw scores twice as much if the thrower remains standing). A perfect throw results in total victory and stops the match when the attacker throws the defender to the back and remains standing. Other throws will score 4 points, 2 points, or 1 point, depending upon the impact point of the thrown athlete.

### SOMBO POINT SCORING CHART

ATHLETES STARTING BOTH ATHLETES STANDING ATTACKER UP - DEFENDER LOW + POSITION LIFT

ATTACKER THROWS Without Falling With a Fall Without Falling With a Fall

On back / bridge Total Victory 4 Points 2 Points 1 Point

DEFENDER On the side 4 Points 2 Points 1 Point

LANDS On stomach/buttock 2 Points 1 Points

PERFECT THROW = TOTAL VICTORY 0 - 9 Second HOLD DOWN = 0 Points

SUBMISSION HOLD = TOTAL VICTORY 10 - 19 Second HOLD DOWN = 2 Points

TWELVE POINT LEAD = TOTAL VICTORY 20 Second HOLD DOWN = 4 Points

OPPONENT DISQUALIFICATION = TOTAL VICTORY ONLY ONE HOLD DOWN CAN BE SCORED PER MATCH