

GAMMA

GLOBAL ASSOCIATION OF

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

USA 

2025 U18 MMA

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

Competition Handbook

FEBRUARY 28 - MARCH 2

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YOUTH NATIONALS



ARNOLD  SPORTS

FESTIVAL
1200+ ATHLETES | 50+ STATES | 100+ EVENTS

3, 2 MINUTE RDS
NO HEAD STRIKES
NO LEG LOCKS
10 PT MUST SYSTEM
FOR AGES 6-17

REGISTER AT GAMMAUSA.ORG

ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST BE A REGISTERED MEMBER OF GAMMA USA

COST \$100

THE OHIO EXPO CENTER
717 E 17TH AVE | COLUMBUS OH 43211



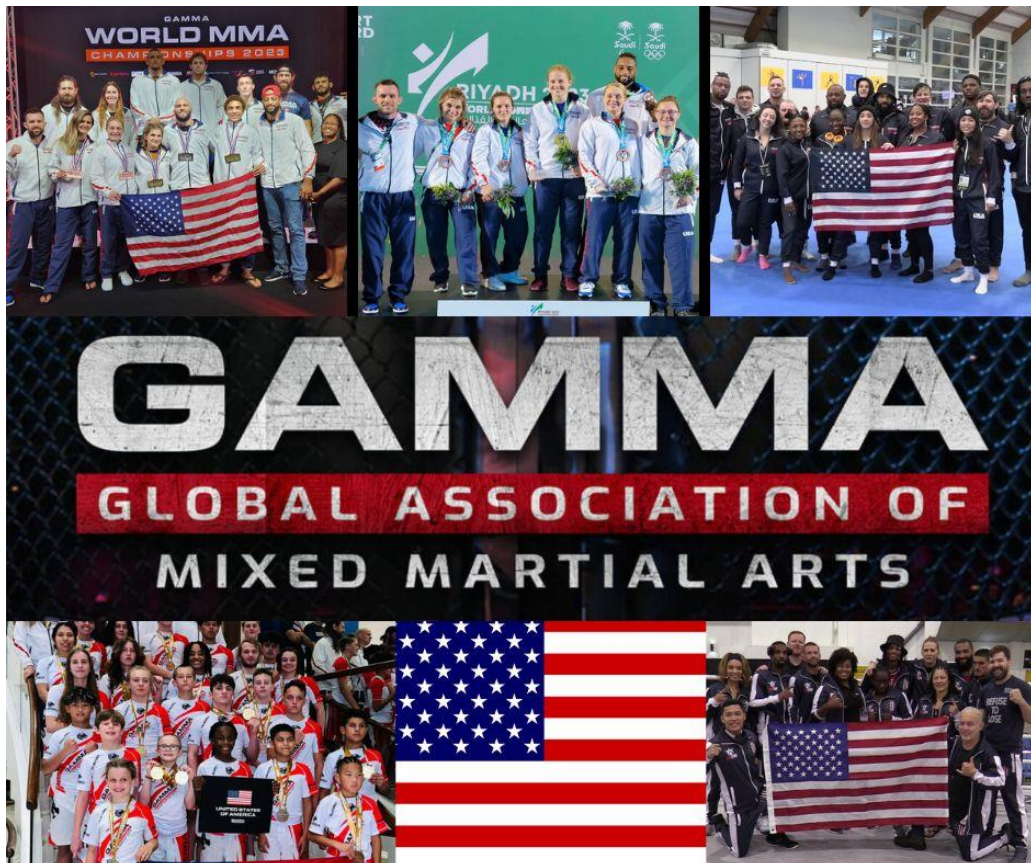
WELCOME MESSAGE

"Dear GAMMA USA Membership,

We are excited to welcome you to our annual Youth MMA National Championship Tournament in 2025! This is the first time we will be in partnership with the Arnold Sports Expo to host this event. The Arnold is a premier global sporting showcase which takes place all over the city of Columbus, Ohio.

This is the premier Youth MMA Championship in the USA focusing on ages 6-17 in a safe competitive format. Those of you who place 1st and 2nd will have the opportunity to showcase your skills against the best in the world at the GAMMA World Championship tournament coming up in June in Sao Paulo, Brazil as well as the upcoming PanAm Championships to be announced! With GAMMA USA recognized as the Sole USA Federation able to represent the sport of Pankration/MMA on the Olympic Platform under UWW, this will be a ground breaking event for our athletes and teams!

It is our mission to show the world that Youth MMA can be done in a safe competitive manner and that these skills can help sustain a quality of life whether you chose to progress in athletics or any of your future endeavours. I wish everyone the best of luck and Ill see you at the Arnold Feb 28th-March 2nd!"





General Information about Columbus, OH

Columbus is a city built on bold ideas and fueled by relentless optimism. Here you'll find a welcoming and forward-thinking city in the heart of the Midwest. In fact, we're the 14th largest city in the U.S., Ohio's capital and one of the fastest growing cities in the Midwest. From world-class museums like COSI, named the best science museum in the country for four consecutive years by *USA Today 10Best*, to unique neighborhoods like the Short North Arts District, historic German Village and the Arena District — where three professional sports teams live on one street — Columbus has so much to offer.

Take a walk through the beautiful campus of The Ohio State University and be sure to pop into any number of cultural institutions on site. The Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum is home to the world's largest collection of comic and cartoon related materials in the world, while the nearby Wexner Center for the Arts welcomes college students and guests under 18 for free to enjoy its world-renowned exhibitions. Don't miss the larger-than-life dinosaur skeletons at the Orton Geological Museum.

Downtown offers numerous free arts and cultural experiences, starting with the Ohio Statehouse at the heart of the city. Nearby, the Columbus Museum of Art is free on Sundays, but you can explore free art any day of the week at the Riffe Gallery, Columbus Public Library, Beeler Gallery at Columbus College of Arts and Design, King Arts Complex, Elijah Pierce Gallery, the halls of the Greater Columbus Convention Center or any of the Short North Arts District galleries. Those looking for a self-guided experience can take on the Short North Arts District Art Trail or Columbus Art Walks.

And of course one of the largest sporting expo's in the world is HQ'd right here in Columbus, OH- The Arnold Expo and Sports Festival.

Information was gathered from ExperienceColumbus.com. Please visit their website for additional info and planning your visit to the city!



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Organizer

GAMMA USA

Diana Thomas & Justin Brown

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2024 Championship Belt

Emergency Contact (Non-Medical)

Name: Diana Thomas or Justin Brown

Email:

Diana@GAMMAUSA.org

Justin@BiomedicalRS.com



Weigh-Ins & Venue

Weigh Ins will be inside the Competition Venue

Competition Venue:

Ohio State Fairgrounds- Voinovich Building

717 E 17th Ave Columbus, OH 43211



2 – About GAMMA

GAMMA is an international Non-Profit Organization working for the development of mixed martial arts. Our mission is to develop, promote, and lead mixed martial arts toward full Olympic Recognition as the pinnacle of combat sports. With over 120+ National Federations recognized by GAMMA throughout the world, we are leading the effort to standardize programs for Youth, Novice and advanced competitive MMA.

GAMMA USA is a domestic Non-Profit Organization founded inside the USA to support the efforts of developing Olympic Recognition for the sport of MMA and Pankration nationally. We are directly responsible for creating programs that support the US National team objectives as well as developmental programs to broaden the base of support for the sport of MMA and Pankration nationally.

3 - Schedule

Attention: The schedule may be modified according to the total number of entries and circumstances of competition however, competition days will not increase. We will have 2 options for weigh ins due to travel schedules.

Monday Feb 24th Midnight – Registration Deadline

This will be your deadline for registration so preliminary brackets/planning can be completed based on # of athletes.

Friday February 28th – 7-9PM Preliminary Check-in/Weigh-ins

Official Weigh-ins will take place from 7-9pm inside the competition venue. All athletes MUST be at the competition venue to weigh-in and do a gear check during this time. All athletes must be on scratch weight with no allowance given. All brackets will be random draw and finalized after weigh-ins and made public.

NOTE- As mentioned, all brackets are random draw. Should there be an odd number of participants in a weight bracket, a random 'Bye' will be awarded to 1 or more competitors as necessary to complete the bracket schedule.

Sat March 1st - 8:00-9:00am FINAL Check in/Weigh-ins

Final option for Check in and Weights will be Sat morning 8-9am. This will allow time for final brackets to be adjusted and made prior to rules briefing. This will be done inside the competition venue space.



Sat March 1st - 11am Mandatory Rules Briefing

Rules Briefing at 11:00 am inside the competition venue *All athletes will be present at this time or may be disqualified from competition

Sat March 1st 12:00 Competition Starts

Competition starts at 12 Noon until schedule is completed for registered athletes. All Preliminary rounds up through Qtr Finals will be completed on Saturday.

Sun March 2nd – 8:00 Check in and 9:00am – Competition (Until completed)

All athletes still competing must report to the venue by 8am. Competition starts promptly at 9 am (until schedule is completed)

Medals/Belts will only be awarded on Sunday upon the completion of your bracket final match

NOTES: National Championship Belts will be awarded to each winner of a bracket ages 6-17. Medals will be awarded for 2nd and 3rd place.

NO Championship belts will be given to brackets with only 1 athlete. If only 1 athlete is registered in a given age/weight bracket, that athlete has earned their spot by default to represent the USA National team at GAMMA Worlds (ages 8-17 only) but is not given the title or award of National Champion. If the athlete wants to compete for a belt in addition to their default placement for Worlds, they must compete in a bracket offered by GAMMA USA leadership. If an athlete does accept to compete in an alternate bracket, they will still retain their default position on the National team for Worlds regardless of the outcome of the new bracket. This will be done as fairly as possible with GAMMA USA having the final say in which bracket is offered. Keep in mind, this athlete has already been given a default placement at Worlds for their given age/weight and subsequent competition is done only for experience and potential awards.

4 –Competition Venue

Competition Venue will be inside the Ohio State Fairgrounds inside the Voinovich Building 717 E 17th Ave Columbus, OH 43211. Should you need any additional gear, Potential Gear manufacturers should have additional supplies available on site for purchase.

5 - Eligibility

All athletes must be USA Citizens or Residents as this event serves as our national team qualifier. All athletes and clubs MUST be registered members of GAMMA USA. Club membership is currently free. Athletes is an annual membership of \$35 on each Calendar year. Currently coaches are recommended to register as members but its not required yet, unless they travel with the National team to International competition then it will become mandatory.

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Ages allowed to represent at Nationals will be 6-17 yrs old on the day of competition. The bracket for 6/7 yr old is for competitive familiarity only. This is a single bracket for Male/Female mixed and all weights. Teams may register as many athletes per age/weight as they wish.

NOTE: IF an athlete is going to be a different age/weight by the time of the World Championship Tournament (June 16th-22nd), they may risk not having an open position as they would be taking away from another USA Champion who earned their position. In this case, it is recommended that the athlete compete at Nationals in either the age/weight bracket they will be at for Worlds or both brackets (current class and next age class).

6 – Age/Weight Classes

MALE:

FEMALE

Age	Weight (lbs)
8/9	-60
8/9	61-70
8/9	71-80
8/9	80+
10/11	-70
10/11	71-80
10/11	81-90
10/11	91-100
10/11	100+
12/13	-80
12/13	81-90
12/13	91-100
12/13	101-110
12/13	111-120
12/13	120+
14/15	-90
14/15	91-100
14/15	101-110
14/15	111-120
14/15	121-130
14/15	131-140
14/15	140+
16/17	-100
16/17	101-110
16/17	111-120
16/17	121-130
16/17	131-140
16/17	140+



Age	Weight (lbs)
8/9	-60
8/9	61-70
8/9	71-80
8/9	80+
10/11	-70
10/11	71-80
10/11	81-90
10/11	91-100
10/11	100+
12/13	-80
12/13	81-90
12/13	91-100
12/13	101-110
12/13	111-120
12/13	121-130
12/13	131-140
12/13	140+
14/15	-110
14/15	111-120
14/15	121-130
14/15	131-140
14/15	141-155
14/15	156-170
14/15	170+
16/17	-115
16/17	116-125
16/17	126-135
16/17	136-145
16/17	146-155
16/17	156-170
16/17	171-185
16/17	186-205
16/17	205+



7 - GAMMA Youth Registration/Tournament Fee

All participants (Athletes) are required to pay the tournament registration fee to compete. Deadline for Registration is Monday June 10th at midnight. The registration fee schedules are as follows:

- \$100 for Athlete Registration ages 6-17

- \$75 for 2nd division (Can only register for a heavier weight class or older in age by 1 bracket)

An Athlete or Coaches registration is not secured into the tournament until after the tournament fee is fully paid. A link to registration and payment of the tournament fee can be found at on our website or: [https://admin.myuventex.com/#info;id=332117\](https://admin.myuventex.com/#info;id=332117)

ALL Spectators (aged 14 and over) and Coaches will need to have a wristband to enter the Venue which is issued by the Arnold Sports Festival team. We do not control that cost but that will grant you access to not only the GAMMA USA tournaments but full access to the Arnold Sport Festival and Sport Expo held in all buildings throughout Columbus.

NOTE: All proceeds/fees are solely meant to be used to help offset the expenses of the tournament only. We wish to provide a first-class engaging experience, nice awards, full medical team support and a safe environment for all competitors. Thank you for your support and understanding of the fee structure as we work to develop Youth MMA globally.

8 - Key Deadlines

Registration Deadline—Feb 24th at midnight. No further registrations will be allowed after this time due to planning needed for staff, venue layout, tournament gear, etc. Unless requested early with pending issues under review by the GAMMA Leadership.

If you are traveling into Columbus, it is highly suggested that you have your lodging booked by June Feb 10th to ensure there are no issues with a shortage of lodging prior to competition.

Refund of Tournament fees 100%- if requested by Feb 15th 2025 before midnight

Refund of Tournament fees 50%- Feb 24th (No refunds of Tournament fees after Feb 24th without medical verification of injury or other family emergency)

Weigh-ins will be done in 2 time slots onsite at the competition venue for ease of travel teams. Friday night Feb 28th 7pm-9pm and Sat March 1st 8-9am. All participants are required to make one of these times.

9 - Weigh-in Policy

The ONLY official weigh-in times are stated above and will be inside the competition venue. All athletes must make proper weight with no allowance. If official weight is missed, an athlete will be notified and immediately moved to the next appropriate bracket with no exceptions.

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Any athlete who does not show up within the designated weigh-in times will be excluded from competition. A test scale will be available for one hour before the official weigh-in Friday night and on site for Sat. This is to facilitate athletes who wish to check their weight before stepping onto the official weigh-in scales.

No athletes are permitted to use I.V. for rehydration. Youth athletes must be mindful of their weight cutting practices and are urged to register at a stable healthy weight they can sustain. If at any point the medical team feels an athlete has gone into an unsafe level of weight cutting, the athlete will be removed from competition.

10 - Competition Rules

The competition will be conducted in accordance with the latest GAMMA U18 International rules. Each bout will consist of 3 rounds 2 min each unless stopped by the Referee. Each athlete will be allowed up to 2 coaches to be ring side and they **MUST** have an issued wristband from GAMMA USA.

Follow the link and click the red tab on top for updated tournament rules: [GAMMAUSA.org/events](https://gammausa.org/events)

11 - Referees & Judges

All Officials will be current GAMMA USA trained officials and work in a volunteer capacity for the duration of the Tournament.

All Officials will be provided with a Proper GAMMA USA Shirt for officiating but you must provide your own black pants. No latex gloves are needed as we have a no-blood rule for youth. Referees must clean their shoes before entering the mat surfaces.



12 – Competition Gear

All athletes are required to provide their own competition equipment. The list is as follows:

- #1) All athletes must wear competition shorts. No pockets, zippers, metal tabs, etc. No spats allowed. Long strings must be tucked in prior to competition.
- #2) All athletes must wear rash guard type fitted top. No loose or baggy T-Shirts allowed. Sleeve length doesn't matter can be long, short or sleeveless.
- #3) All athletes must wear a properly fitted mouthguard
- #4) All athletes must wear shin guards. It is advisable that you use the thin shin guards as opposed to the bulky ones as it doesn't lend itself well for grappling.
- #5) All male athletes must wear groin protection.
- #6) All athletes must bring and use FRONT padded sparring gloves. Standard MMA gloves will not be allowed. Most of your home clubs have these available. If not, we recommend you purchase from a reputable gear distributor such as Combat Corner.



MMA Spar Gloves
 Adult & Youth Sizes | 3 Colors



HMIT MMA Training Gloves
 Adult Sizes | 3 Colors



MMA Spar Shin Guards
 Adult & Youth Sizes | 2 Colors



Slip-On Elastic Shin Pads
 Adult & Youth Sizes | 3 Colors



Elite Spar MMA Training Gloves
 Adult Sizes | 1 Color



Youngstar MMA Training Gloves
 Youth Size | 1 Color



13 – Lodging, Transport & Food

Athletes & Coaches will be responsible for their own Lodging and Transportation for the 2025 Youth National Championship Tournament. Registered Officials (Refs and Judges only) will have accommodations covered in a shared capacity for Fri & Sat night only. I would stress that accommodations and transportation be booked early as possible, as lodging space may become limited in the area.

Participants will be responsible for their own meals. You are welcome to bring your own food/cooler into the venue plus the venue will have a concessions area.

14 - Medical Clearance

Competitors and their legal guardian have agreed that they are in proper medical health for competition by registering and attending this event. Athlete may need to have a medical clearance done on site for competition. No blood work is required for youth competition. All athletes may also be subject to post bout physicals at the discretion of the medical team or personal request. The medical team will be on-site during the duration of the competition day should anyone need any additional medical attention.



15 - Media

This tournament will be open to all forms of media including Live Streaming, Photographers, PR and Journalists. Registration by a participant grants full permission to GAMMA USA for the open and free use of any content gathered during this event.

16 - Live Streaming

At this time Live Streaming is being planned and will be offered through GAMMA USA. Updates will be maintained on our social media accounts when the link is available.

17 – Tournament T Shirt

We will be offering a tournament T shirt Co-branded with Combat Corner Professional the leader in combat sports appare! The T-shirts range in pricing based on size and are listed as a pre purchase item on the tournament registration link. All T Shirts pre-ordered will be handed out at the event. Any Pre-Purchase T Shirt prior to Feb 14th will add the athletes name on the back of the shirt. Any custom name changes requested, please message prior to Feb 14th.

NOTE- Anyone can order a tournament T shirt without registering. The link will remain active and open to the public for orders until Feb 28th (no names added after Feb 14th).



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18 - Shameless Plug

When you get an opportunity, please make sure to follow and like the GAMMA USA social media pages. You'd be surprised how much that helps by simply showing our outreach to future sponsors, promotions, regulatory bodies, WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency), The I.O.C., etc. Plus we always have great information being posted up regularly! Stay up to date with MMA news, local events, regulatory/safety discussions, global changes, GAMMA partnerships, International GAMMA Tournaments, Anti-doping policies, etc.

Upcoming Youth World Championship in Sao Paulo, Brazil June 16th-22nd



Special Thanks and love goes out to our corporate supporters:

