

RULES

COMPETITOR: Each competitor must present him/herself to the referee suitably attired with proper uniform and equipment and physically prepared to compete. If he/she is not prepared to compete as deemed by the center referee, the competitor may be penalized for delay of time.

DELAY OF TIME PENALTY: Sparring: An automatic warning will be issued to the competitor. A penalty point will be issued for each minute the competitor is not properly ready to compete. Upon 3 penalty points the offending competitor will be disqualified.

Form: .01 points will be deducted from the offending competitor's final score. Each minute the competitor is not ready to compete, .01 points will be deducted for his/her final score. If a competitor is still not ready to compete after 3 minutes, he/she will be disqualified.

RANK RULE: A competitor must compete at the highest belt level they have earned in the martial arts. A competitor can never compete in a division of which he/she had not earned that rank. Once a competitor competes as a black belt legally, he/she must always compete as a black belt. A

competitor can never compete in a lower belt division than the level of belt he/she has earned in the Martial Arts.

PROOF OF AGE RULE: All competitors must have a proof of age document. If there is a legitimate reason to question a competitor's age, he/she must present a proof of age (birth certificate, driver's license, or other acceptable documents) to prove his/her age.

UNIFORM: All competitors must wear a complete (top and bottom) traditional or professional sport karate (Kung Fu, Tae Kwon Do, etc.) uniform in a good state of repair. The appropriate color belt or sash must be worn in competition. Sparring: All sparring uniforms must have sleeves that reach at least to the middle of the forearm. No T-shirts, sweats, tank tops or shoes are allowed in the sparring divisions.

Form & Weapons: T-shirts, tank tops and sweatshirts are allowed in form if they are part of the competitor's official school uniform. Uniforms in the form and weapons divisions are allowed more liberties because form is not one-on-one competition where the uniform could cause a decisive disadvantage or advantage to a competitor. Removal of the uniform top is allowed if the removal is considered relevant to the artistic expression or safety of the competitor. Shoes may be worn in form competition if they do not damage or mark the competition floor.

COMPETITOR RESPONSIBILITIES: It is the responsibility of the competitor to know the rules and be ready for competition when called to do so. He/she must be suitably attired, weighed-in and at the appropriate ring when competition begins. Three calls will be made for competition at ringside. If the competitor is not at his/her ring ready to compete when competition begins, he/she will not be able to compete (see delay of time rule). If a competitor leaves the ring after the competition begins and is not present when his/her name is called to compete, his/her name will be called three times at ringside. If he/she is still not present to compete, he/she will be disqualified (see delay of time rule).

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED SAFETY EQUIPMENT: Approved headgear; hand and footpads, mouthpieces, groin cups (for male competitors only) and chest guards (for all competitors 17 year old and younger) are mandatory for all competitors in sparring divisions. The competitor's equipment will be checked and if it is deemed unsafe, he/she will be asked to change the equipment before he/she can compete.

Hand Pads: A soft padded surface must cover the fingers, wrist and any striking surface of the hand.

Foot Pads: A soft padded surface must cover the instep, sides, toes, ankle and back of the heel of the foot. The bottom of the foot does not have to be padded.

Head Gear: The front, sides and back of the head must be covered by a soft padded surface.

Chest Guard: All 17 and younger competitors must wear an approved chest protector in sparring. The chest guard must sufficiently cover the abdomen and upper chest such that the sternum is completely protected. Rib guards that cover only the abdomen area are not approved chest guards. Insufficiently padded gloves, foot, chest and head gear will not be allowed. Equipment must be in a good state of repair and must be free of heavy taping, tears or any other repairs that may cause injury. The tournament's official rules arbitrator ultimately determines the approval or denial of the equipment. A properly fitted mouthpiece is required. Shin pads and rib/chest guards are highly recommended for additional safety to all sparring competitors.

REFEREES: The referee is the most experienced official in the ring and is thoroughly versed on the rules and order of competition. He/she promotes the safety of the competitors, enforces the rules and ensures fair play. To this end, he/she starts and stops the match, awards points, makes penalty

decisions, administrates the voting of the other judges, communicates clearly with the scorekeeper and timekeeper, and announces the winner of each match.

Added Powers of the Referee:

- 1) Match starts and ends only with his/her command (not the command of the timekeeper);
- 2) Has final decision on any disputes on score;
- 3) Has the power to issue warnings and award penalty points without a majority decision;
- 4) Can overrule a majority call only to issue a warning or a penalty point;
- 5) Automatically has power to disqualify a competitor who receives (3) penalty points;
- 6) Has power to issue time-outs. A competitor can ask for a time-out, but it is the determination of the referee to issue one. The disqualification of a competitor, where disqualification is not automatic, is determined only by a majority vote of the judges.

OFFICIALS: Each ring should have a REFEREE, two or four JUDGES, a TIMEKEEPER/SCOREKEEPER. The judges call points and rule infractions as they see them. They also vote on disqualifications. The referee also calls points and rules infractions but is also in complete control of the ring and ring personnel. Referees make all final decisions on penalty points and warnings (except for disqualifications) but can consult judges before making their decisions. The majority vote of the judges and referee determines a scoring point and/or a competitor's disqualification.

CALLS AN OFFICIAL MAY MAKE: When the referee believes there has been a significant exchange of techniques, or when signaled to do so by a corner a judge/s, he/she shall call out the word, "STOP!" in a loud voice. The referee shall then return the competitors to their starting marks and addresses the judges by saying "JUDGES CALL!" All judges and the center referee cast their votes simultaneously and assertively in the following manner.

1. Judge Sees a Point - He/she should hold up both colors or hold up one arm if colors are not being used. At the same time, he/she yells out the word "CALL!" in a loud, clear voice to let the referee know he/she has a call.

2. Point Calling - When signaled by the referee (referee says "Judges Call" in a loud clear voice) a

judge raises the appropriate color (red or white usually) if colors are being used or points to the competitor who scores the point. If a competitor scores a two point kick, the officials should hold up or point with two fingers (index and middle fingers). If only one point is being called, the judge should

point with only one finger (Index finger).

3. No Point Scored - An official crosses his/her wrist at waist level or holds both colors down to indicate that he/she believes that a point was not scored.

4. Did Not See If A Point Was Scored - The official holds his/her hand over his/her eyes indicating that he/she could not see whether a point was scored or not. Indicates the

official was not in position to see if a point scored. (When using this signal, it has the same effect as saying "no point", but it indicates to the referee, competitors and fans the reason why you are not calling the point).

5. Clash - Officials make a motion as though they are hitting both fists together, indicating that both competitors scored at the same time.

6. Penalty - The judge waves the color of the offending competitor in a circular motion. If no colors are used the judge waves the hand and arm in a circular motion while pointing at the offending competitor.

7. Disqualification - A disqualification vote is taken separately from any other vote. When a disqualification vote is asked for, the referee will say, "JUDGES CALL". The judges will then hold the color or point to the competitor who is to be disqualified. If the judge does not feel the competitor

should be disqualified, he/she crosses his/her wrist or holds both colors down at waist level.

LATE CALLS: All officials should make their calls at the same time. If, in the opinion of the referee, the corner judges are making a late call intentionally, the referee can disqualify the call and/or judge (noise not allowing the judges to hear the referee and the honest mistake of raising the wrong color or pointing at the wrong competitor should be taken into consideration not to disqualify the call or judge).

NUMBER OF OFFICIALS: Two certified judges and one certified referee is allowed in all Black Belt weapon, form and sparring divisions. If the approved certified

judges and referees are not available, four judges and one referee are required in all black belt form and weapon divisions. At least two judges and one referee are required in all sparring divisions and under black belt form and weapon divisions.

REMOVAL OF OFFICIALS: If a competitor feels that an official should be removed from a form or weapon division for good reason, he/she must file a protest before the division begins. If a competitor feels that an official should be removed from a sparring division, he/she may file a protest at any time.

It is totally up to the center referee and the rules arbitrator to determine if an official should be removed.

PROTEST: A competitor has the right to protest an infraction of the rules or if a possible mistake was made (not a judgment call). If a competitor wishes to protest, he/she should first let the referee know he/she believes there has been an infraction of the rules or a mistake has been made. The referee

will summon the arbitrator to the ring (if the referee cannot properly settle the protest to the players

satisfaction) to render a decision. All protests must be made in an orderly, proper and sportsmanlike manner. All protests must be made immediately. Protests are not allowed once competition has resumed (after the fact protest). A competitor may be penalized or even

disqualified if he/she is protesting improperly or without proper cause.

LATE ENTRIES: Once a division has started (the first competitor has started his/her form/weapon routine or the first divisional fight has started) no competitor/s can be added to that division. BE ON TIME!

WEIGHING-IN: It is mandatory for all adult fighting competitors - who are in weighed divisions – to weigh in before competition. Only one official weigh-in is required. All competitors must fight in his/her weight division. A competitor cannot fight up or down in another weight division for which he/she has not made the proper weight. It is the responsibility of the tournament personnel to weigh and properly record the competitor's weight. If a competitor is caught falsifying their weight, they may be disqualified.

ORDER OF COMPETITION:

Form: Once the final call for the form and weapon divisions has been made at ring side and the divisional seeds have been taken out (if seeding is required) the competition cards will be collected and shuffled thoroughly. The competitor cards will then be drawn randomly for the order of competition. The first three competitors will perform before any scores are awarded. After the third competitor is finished, the first competitor will be called to come back for scoring followed by the second and third competitors. All competitors in the division will be judged in comparison to these first three competitors.

Sparring: Once the final call for the sparring division has been made at ring side and the seeds have been taken out (if seeding is required) the division is ready to be set up. The competition cards should be collected and counted (if competition cards are not used, count the competitors) to see if byes are needed. If byes are needed, they will be picked randomly (See bye chart to see how many byes are needed). Matches should always be selected by random, but certain allowances may be given to competitors from the same school or team that is matched up in the first round of competition. They may be separated randomly from each other in the first round if possible. **(Competitors cannot pick whom they want or do not want to fight.)**

In the youth division, the competitors should be lined up by height (Smallest to the tallest) and split into tall and short divisions if required or offered. Determining tall and short divisions is for safety reasons, not just to split the division equally. A true break in size should be found to determine the taller competitors from the shorter competitors. Once the tall and short divisions are determined by height, determine who fights whom by random draw. Consideration should be given to competitors who are from the same school or team that have been drawn to fight each other in the first round.

SPARRING RULES

LENGTH OF MATCH: Two minute running time unless five points are scored before time has expired. If a match is tied at the end of two minutes, sudden victory (first person to score a point) overtime period will determine the match.

POINT VALUES AND WINNER DETERMINATION: All legal hand techniques that score will be awarded one (1) point. All legal kicking techniques that score will be awarded two (2) points. All penalty points awarded will be awarded one (1) point. The competitor who earns five (5) points by the end of the one minute or whoever is ahead at the end of the two minutes is declared the winner. All Grand Champion fighting matches shall be two (2) minutes after which the fighter with the most amount of points will be declared the winner.

MAJORITY VOTE: Points are awarded by a majority vote of all judges. The majority of judges do not have to agree on the same technique being scored, only that a point was scored. A majority of the judges calling the point must call a two (2)-point kick before two points can be awarded.

Otherwise only one point is awarded.

WHAT IS A POINT: A point is a controlled legal sport karate technique scored by a competitor inbounds and up-right (not considered down) without time being called that strikes a competitor with the allowable amount of focused touch contact to a legal target area.

LEGAL TARGET AREAS: Entire head and face, ribs, chest, abdomen, collarbone and kidneys.

ILLEGAL TARGET AREAS: Spine, back of neck, throat, sides of the neck, groin, legs, knees and back.

NON-TARGET AREAS: Hips, shoulders, buttocks, arms, and feet.

LEGAL TECHNIQUES:

Legal techniques are all controlled sport karate techniques, except those listed as illegal.

ILLEGAL TECHNIQUES: Head butts, hair pulls, bites, scratches, elbows, knees, eye attacks of any kind, take

downs on a hard surface floor, ground fighting on a hard surface, any stomps or kicks to the head of a downed competitor, slapping, grabbing for more than one second, uncontrolled blind techniques, any uncontrolled throws, takedowns or sweeps and any other uncontrolled dangerous techniques that are deemed unsafe in sport karate.

GRABBING: A competitor may grab the uniform top of his/her opponent in an attempt to score with a sport karate technique for only one second (immediately), after which time he/she must release the uniform. Likewise, the uniform pants may be grabbed for one second to an upright opponent in an attempt to score.

SWEEPS, TAKEDOWNS, GRABS AND GROUND FIGHTING: Sweeps not to take down an opponent, but only to obstruct the balance so as to follow up with a sport karate technique can be used. A sweep must be deemed a proper sweep and not a kick, to be legal. Controlled Takedowns and sweeps that are meant to take down an opponent are allowed only a declared approved padded surface. A point is awarded only when the legal sweep or takedown is followed up effectively legally and immediately with an appropriate sport karate technique. Only a hand technique or a carefully controlled kick or stomp to the body is allowed on a downed competitor. One Foot must be on the ground throughout the stomp or kick. Never, under any circumstances, may a competitor stomp or kick to the head of a downed competitor.

LIGHT TOUCH CONTACT: Means there is no penetration or visible movement of the competitor as a result of the contact. Light touch is required to all legal target areas in all black belt sparring divisions.

The face shield of a head gear is a legal target area.

MODERATE TOUCH CONTACT: Means slight penetration or slight target movement. Moderate touch contact may be made to all legal target areas except the headgear, face shield and face.

WARNINGS AND PENALTIES: One and only one warning is allowed for breaking the rules before a penalty point is awarded. After the first warning is given, a penalty point is awarded for each and every rules violation. If a competitor receives four warnings (three penalty points) in any one match, he/she will be disqualified. If the severity of the first rules violation is deemed by the referee to be too severe, a penalty point can be issued immediately.

Other Cause for Penalization: Attacking illegal and non-target areas, using illegal techniques, running out of the ring to avoid fighting, falling to the floor to avoid fighting, continuing after being ordered to stop, excessive stalling, blind, negligent or reckless attacks, uncontrolled techniques, showing unsportsmanlike behavior by the competitor, his/her coaches, friends, etc., excessive contact, and delay of time are examples of possible penalization.

DISQUALIFICATION: Requires a majority vote by all officials, unless it is an automatic disqualification.

Wrong Division: If any competitor competes in a division he/she does not qualify to compete in due to age, weight, rank, gender, style, etc., he/she will be disqualified.

COACHING: The luxury of having a coach is something that most competitors do not have access to.

Therefore, it sometimes can become an unfair advantage over a competitor who does not have a coach. The rules are made and enforced so no one competitor has an advantage or disadvantage over another competitor. Therefore, coaching is allowed but only under the following guidelines:

1. Never, at any time, can a coach enter the ring without the referee's permission.
2. No abusive, violent, unsportsmanlike or overzealous coaching;
3. Coaches cannot ask for a time out (only the competitor may ask for a time out),
4. Coaches can never, at any time, interfere with the proper running of the ring or the decisions of the judges.

A Coach is defined as anyone who is trying to help one competitor in anyway. A coach could be but is not limited to a friend, parent, team mate or official coach. The center referee can issue a warning to a competitor for each time his/her coach is interfering with a match or disrupting fair play between contestants. A referee can ask for a disqualification of a contest, but requires a majority vote of all judges.

OUT-OF-BOUNDS: A competitor is out-of-bounds as soon as he/she does not have at least one foot touching inside or on the boundary line. An out of bounds competitor cannot score a point while out of bounds. In bounds competitor can score on an out of bounds competitor if the center referee has not called stop.

FORM RULES

TIME LIMIT: Each form or weapons routine must be three (3) minutes or less. The time starts once the competitor enters the competition ring. Four (4) minutes is allowed for each form or weapons routine in the Night Time Finals. Each team form and/or demo routine must be five (5) minutes or less. Any competitor, team form or team demo that goes over the allowed time limit is penalized a deduction of 0.1 points from each judge.

Mandatory Average Rule – To Be Used in All Divisions

The Mandatory Average Rule helps insure that all three judges begin their scoring in each division using the same general range of scores. This not only keeps judges in the same general range of the scoring spectrum, but also helps prevent scores from “creeping” upward or downward during the division as a judge tries to get into the same range as the other judges.

If there are more than ten competitors, the first three competitors are always run first before any are scored. After the first three are run, they will return one by one to receive their scores then the rest of the competitors perform in singular fashion receiving their scores immediately after.

TIES: If there is a tie for 1st Thru 4th place, the majority of the judge’s scores determine the winner. If with the scores that were given, there is still not a majority of judges for one competitor, they must be asked, on the center referee command, to point to the competitor who they find should win. All judges must make a decision for only one competitor. Ties for 5th through 8th place are never broken. They will remain tied and all will receive points and awards.

TRADITIONAL AND CREATIVE DIVISIONS: Competitors in these divisions must exhibit a form or weapon routine that reflects the essence and values of the division name in which they are competing. Otherwise the competitor risks disqualification for down grading.

Traditional forms and weapons must capture the essence of classic martial arts movements, showcasing the traditional techniques and stances.

Creative form and weapons allows contemporary martial arts techniques that have evolved over the last 30 years. No extreme gymnastic-type movements are allowed in the creative form and weapons divisions.

Extreme forms and weapons: - The Extreme Divisions allow the competitor to perform any movements whether they originate from traditional or contemporary martial arts systems or otherwise. However

WEAPON DIVISIONS: Safety Rule: A Black Belt competitor who unintentionally drops his/her weapon will be automatically disqualified. If a competitor recklessly or carelessly misuses his/her weapon, he/she may be penalized or disqualified. If a competitor's weapon breaks or comes apart during his/her routine, he/she will be disqualified.

STARTING A FORM OVER: In under black belt divisions if a competitor starts his/her form over because of a memory lapse or any other reason due to his/her own negligence, he/she may perform the form again. The officials will score as though there was not a mistake. The three-minute time limit will start over. A competitor can only start over one time for scoring. If a competitor has to start over not due to his/her negligence, he/she will not be penalized on the start over.

Traditional Forms and Weapons:

Time limit three (3) minutes. Competitors must announce their name, style or system and the name of their Form.

Advanced Forms: (please see TIME IN DIVISION below)

The form does not have to be a "classical form" but shouldn't deviate too far in form and content from the classical forms associated with the competitors announced style or system. Competitors exhibiting forms that are too "free", have gymnastics or other non martial arts techniques in them, or are comprised of elements from more than one style, should probably enter the "open" division. Otherwise the competitor risks downgrading or disqualification from the traditional division.

Intermediate Forms: (please see TIME IN DIVISION below)

All the restrictions and conventions from the advanced division apply.

Beginner forms: (please see TIME IN DIVISION below)

All the restrictions from the advanced and intermediate divisions apply.