

# WKF KUMITE RULES

---

## ARTICLE 1: KUMITE COMPETITION AREA

---

1. The competition area must be flat and devoid of hazard.
2. The competition area will be a matted square, of a WKF approved type, with sides of eight metres (measured from the outside) with an additional two metres on all sides as a safety area. There will be a clear safety area of two metres on each side.
3. A line half a metre long must be drawn two metres from the centre of the competition area for positioning the Referee.
4. Two parallel lines each one metre long and at right angles to the Referee's line, must be drawn at a distance of one and a half metres from the centre of the competition area for positioning the competitors.
5. The Judges will be seated in the safety area, one directly facing the referee, and one behind each of the fighters, and one metre towards the Referee. Each will be equipped with a red and a blue flag.
6. The Arbitrator will be seated at a small table just outside the safety area, behind, and to the left of the Referee. He will be equipped with a red flag or sign, and a buzzer.
7. The score-supervisor will be seated at the official score table, between the scorekeeper and the timekeeper.
8. The one metre border should be in a different colour from the rest of the matted area.

### EXPLANATION:

- I. There must be no advertisement hoardings, walls, pillars etc. within one metre of the safety area's outer perimeter.
- II. The mats used should be non-slip where they contact the floor proper but have a low co-efficient of friction on the upper surface. They should not be as thick as Judo mats, since these impede Karate movement. The Referee must ensure that mat modules do not move apart during the competition, since gaps cause injuries and constitute a hazard. They must be of approved WKF design.

---

ARTICLE 2: OFFICIAL DRESS

---

1. Contestants and their coaches must wear the official uniform as herein defined.
2. The Referee Commission may disbar any official or competitor who does not comply with this regulation.

REFEREES

1. Referees and Judges must wear the official uniform designated by the Referee Commission. This uniform must be worn at all tournaments and courses.
2. The official uniform will be as follows:
  - A single breasted navy blue blazer bearing two silver buttons.
  - A white shirt with short sleeves.
  - An official tie, worn without tiepin.
  - Plain light-grey trousers without turn-ups.
  - Plain dark blue or black socks and black slip-on shoes for use on the match area.
  - Female referees and judges may wear a hairclip.

CONTESTANTS

1. Contestants must wear a white karate gi without stripes or piping. The national emblem or flag of the country will be worn on the left breast of the jacket and may not exceed an overall size of 12cm by 8cm (see Appendix 9). Only the original manufacturer's labels may be displayed on the gi. In addition, identification issued by the Organising Committee will be worn on the back. One contestant must wear a red belt and the other a blue belt. The red and blue belts must be around five centimetres wide and of a length sufficient to allow fifteen centimetres free on each side of the knot.
2. Notwithstanding paragraph 1 above, the Directing Committee may authorise the display of special labels or trademarks of approved sponsors.
3. The jacket, when tightened around the waist with the belt, must be of a minimum length that covers the hips, but must not be more than three-quarters thigh length. Female competitors may wear a plain white T-shirt beneath the Karate jacket.
4. The maximum length of the jacket sleeves must be no longer than the bend of the wrist and no shorter than halfway down the forearm. Jacket sleeves may not be rolled up.
5. The trousers must be long enough to cover at least two thirds of the shin and must not reach below the anklebone. Trousers legs may not be rolled up.
6. Contestants must keep their hair clean and cut to a length that does not obstruct smooth bout conduct. Hachimaki (headband) will not be allowed. Should the Referee consider any contestant's hair too long and/or unclean, he may disbar the contestant from the bout. In Kumite matches hair slides are prohibited, as are

metal hairgrips. In Kata, a discreet hair clip is permitted. Ribbons and other decorations are prohibited.

7. Contestants must have short fingernails and must not wear metallic or other objects, which might injure their opponents. The use of metallic teeth braces must be approved by the Referee and the Official Doctor. The contestant accepts full responsibility for any injury.
8. The following protective equipment is compulsory:
  - 8.1 WKF approved mitts, one contestant wearing red and the other wearing blue.
  - 8.2. Gum shield
  - 8.3. The female chest protector approved by the WKF
  - 8.4. The shin pads approved by the WKF, one contestant wearing red and the other wearing blue
  - 8.5. The foot protection approved by the WKF, one contestant wearing red and the other wearing blue

Groin Guards are not mandatory but if worn must be of approved WKF type

9. Glasses are forbidden. Soft contact lenses can be worn at the contestant's own risk.
10. The wearing of unauthorised clothing or equipment is forbidden.
11. All protective equipment must be W.K.F. homologated.
12. It is the duty of the Arbitrator (Kansa) to ensure before each match or bout that the competitors are wearing the approved equipment. (In the case of Continental Union, International, or National Federation Championships it should be noted that WKF approved equipment, must be accepted and cannot be refused).
13. The use of bandages, padding, or supports because of injury must be approved by the Referee on the advice of the Official Doctor.

#### COACHES

1. Coaches shall at all times during the tournament, wear the official tracksuit of their National Federation and display their official identification.

#### EXPLANATION:

- I. The contestant must wear a single belt. This will be red for AKA and blue for AO. Belts of grade should not be worn during the bout.
- II. Gum shields must fit properly. Groin protectors using a removable plastic cup slipped into a jockstrap are not permitted and persons wearing them will be held at fault.
- III. There may well be a religious basis for the wearing of certain items such as turbans or amulets. Persons wishing, by virtue of their religion, to wear what would otherwise be construed as unauthorised clothing must notify the Referee Commission in advance of a tournament. The Referee Commission

will examine each application on its merit. No accommodation will be made for people who just turn up on the day and expect to participate.

- IV. If a contestant comes into the area inappropriately dressed, he or she will not be immediately disqualified; instead the fighter will be given one minute to remedy matters.
- V. If the Referee Commission agrees, Refereeing Officials may be allowed to remove their blazers.

---

ARTICLE 3: ORGANISATION OF KUMITE COMPETITIONS

---

1. A Karate tournament may comprise Kumite competition and/or Kata competition. The Kumite competition may be further divided into the team match and the individual match. The individual match may be further divided into weight divisions and open category. Weight divisions are divided ultimately into bouts. The term “bout” also describes the individual Kumite competitions between opposing pairs of team members.
2. No contestant may be replaced by another in an individual title match.
3. Individual contestants or teams that do not present themselves when called will be disqualified (KIKEN) from that category.
4. Male teams comprise seven members with five competing in a round. Female teams comprise four members with three competing in a round.
5. The contestants are all members of the team. There are no fixed reserves.
6. Before each match, a team representative must hand into the official table, an official form defining the names and fighting order of the competing team members. The participants drawn from the full team of seven, or four members, and their fighting order, can be changed for each round provided the new fighting order is notified first, but once notified, it cannot then be changed until that round is completed.
7. A team will be disqualified if any of its members or its coach changes the team's composition or fighting order without written notification prior to the round.

EXPLANATION:

- I. A “round” is a discrete stage in a competition leading to the eventual identification of finalists. In an elimination Kumite competition, a round eliminates fifty percent of contestants within it, counting byes as contestants. In this context, the round can apply equally to a stage in either primary

elimination or repechage. In a matrix, or “round robin” competition, a round allows all contestants in a pool to fight once.

- II. The use of contestants' names causes problems of pronunciation and identification. Tournament numbers should be allotted and used.
- III. When lining up before a match, a team will present the actual fighters. The unused fighter(s) and the Coach will not be included and shall sit in an area set aside for them.
- IV. In order to compete male teams must present at least three competitors and female teams must present at least two competitors. A team with less than the required number of competitors will forfeit the match (Kiken).
- V. The fighting order form can be presented by the Coach, or a nominated contestant from the team. If the Coach hands in the form, he must be clearly identifiable as such; otherwise, it may be rejected. The list must include the name of the country or club the belt colour allotted to the team for that match and the fighting order of the team members. Both the competitor's names and their tournament numbers must be included and the form signed by the coach, or a nominated person.
- VI. If, through an error in charting, the wrong contestants compete, then regardless of the outcome, that bout/match is declared null and void. To reduce such errors the winner of each bout/match must confirm victory with the control table before leaving the area.

---

ARTICLE 4: THE REFEREE PANEL

---

1. The Refereeing Panel for each match shall consist of one Referee (SHUSHIN), three Judges (FUKUSHIN), and one arbitrator (KANSA).
2. The Referee and Judges of a kumite bout must not have the nationality of either of the participants.
3. In addition, for facilitating the operation of matches, several timekeepers, caller announcers, record keepers, and score supervisors shall be appointed.

EXPLANATION:

- I. At the start of a Kumite match, the Referee stands on the outside edge of the match area. On the Referee's left stand Judges numbers 1 and 2, and on the right stands the Arbitrator and Judge number 3.
- II. After the formal exchange of bows by contestants and Referee Panel, the Referee takes a step back, the Judges and Arbitrator turn inwards, and all bow together. All then take up their positions.

- III. When changing the entire Referee Panel, the departing Officials take up position as at the start of the bout or match, bow to each other, then leave the area together.
- IV. When individual Judges change, the incoming Judge goes to the outgoing Judge, they bow together and change positions.

---

ARTICLE 5: DURATION OF BOUT

---

1. Duration of the Kumite bout is defined as three minutes for Senior Male Kumite (both teams and individuals) and two minutes for Women's, Junior, and Cadet bouts.
2. The timing of the bout starts when the Referee gives the signal to start, and stops each time the Referee calls "YAME".
3. The timekeeper shall give signals by a clearly audible gong, or buzzer, indicating "Ø seconds to go" or "time up". The "time up" signal marks the end of the bout.

---

ARTICLE 6: SCORING

---

1. Scores are as follows:
  - a) SANBON Three points
  - b) NIHON Two points
  - c) IPPON One point
2. A score is awarded when a technique is performed according to the following criteria to a scoring area:
  - a) Good form
  - b) Sporting attitude
  - c) Vigorous application
  - d) Awareness (ZANSHIN)
  - e) Good timing
  - f) Correct distance
3. SANBON is awarded for:
  - a) Jodan kicks.
  - b) Throwing or leg sweeping the opponent to the mat followed by a scoring technique.
4. NIHON is awarded for:

- a) Chudan kicks.
- b) Punches on the back, including back of the head and neck.
- c) Combination hand techniques, the individual components of which each score in their own right.
- d) Unbalancing the opponent and scoring.

5. IPPON is awarded for:

- a) Chudan or Jodan Tsuki.
- b) Uchi.

6. Attacks are limited to the following areas:

- a) Head
- b) Face
- c) Neck
- d) Abdomen
- e) Chest
- f) Back
- g) Side

7. An effective technique delivered at the same time that the end of the bout is signalled, is considered valid. A technique even if effective, delivered after an order to suspend or stop the bout shall not be scored and may result in a penalty being imposed on the offender.

8. No technique, even if technically correct, will be scored if it is delivered when the two contestants are outside the competition area. However, if one of the contestants delivers an effective technique while still inside the competition area and before the Referee calls “YAME”, the technique will be scored.

9. Simultaneous, effective scoring techniques delivered by both contestants, the one on the other (AIUCHI) shall not score.

EXPLANATION:

In order to score, a technique must be applied to a scoring area as defined in paragraph 6 above. The technique must be appropriately controlled with regard to the area being attacked and must satisfy all six scoring criteria in paragraph 2 above.

Vocabulary Technical Criteria	
Sanbon (3 Points) is awarded for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jodan kicks. Jodan being defined as the face, head and neck.</li> <li>2. Any scoring technique which is delivered after legally throwing, leg sweeping, or taking the opponent down to the mat.</li> </ul>
Nihon (2 Points) is awarded for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Chudan kicks. Chudan being defined as the abdomen, chest, back and side.</li> <li>2. Punches(Tsuki) delivered to the opponent’s back, including the back of the head and neck.</li> <li>3. Combinations of punching and striking (tsuki and uchi) the individual components of which each score in their own right, delivered to any of the seven scoring areas.</li> </ul>

	4. Any scoring technique (other than Jodan Kicks) delivered after permissible physical action of the contestant has caused the opponent to lose balance as the score is made.
Ippon (1 Point) is awarded for:	1. Any punch (tsuki) delivered to any of the seven scoring areas excluding the back, the back of the head and neck. 2. Any strike (uchi) delivered to any of the seven scoring areas.

- I. For reasons of safety, throws where the opponent is thrown without being held onto, or thrown dangerously, or where the pivot point is above hip level, are prohibited and will incur a warning or penalty. Exceptions are conventional karate leg sweeping techniques, which do not require the opponent to be held while executing the sweep such as de ashi-barai, ko uchi gari, kani waza etc. After a throw has been executed the referee will allow the contestant two to three seconds in which to attempt a scoring technique.
- II. When a contestant slips, falls, or loses balance as a result of their own action and is scored upon by the opponent the score will be given as if the contestant had been standing upright.
- III. A technique with “Good Form” is said to have characteristics conferring probable effectiveness within the framework of traditional Karate concepts.
- IV. Sporting Attitude is a component of good form and refers to a non-malicious attitude of great concentration obvious during delivery of the scoring technique.
- V. Vigorous Application defines the power and speed of the technique and the palpable will for it to succeed.
- VI. Awareness (ZANSHIN) is that criterion most often missed when a score is assessed. It is the state of continued commitment in which the contestant maintains total concentration, observation, and awareness of the opponent's potentiality to counter-attack. He does not turn his face away during delivery of the technique, and remains facing the opponent afterwards.
- VII. Good Timing means delivering a technique when it will have the greatest potential effect.
- VIII. Correct Distance similarly means delivering a technique at the precise distance where it will have the greatest potential effect. Thus if the technique is delivered on an opponent who is rapidly moving away, the potential effect of that blow is reduced.
- IX. Distancing also relates to the point at which the completed technique comes to rest on or near the target. A punch or kick that comes somewhere between skin touch and 2½ centimetres from the face, may be said to have the correct distance. However, Jodan punches, which come within a reasonable distance

of the target and which the opponent makes no attempt to block or avoid will be scored, provided the technique meets the other criteria.

- X. A worthless technique is a worthless technique — regardless of where and how it is delivered. A technique, which is badly deficient in good form, or lacking power, will score nothing.
- XI. Techniques, which land below the belt may score, as long as they are above the pubic bone. The neck is a target area and so is the throat. However, no contact to the throat is permitted, although a score may be awarded for a properly controlled technique, which does not touch.
- XII. A technique, which lands upon the shoulder blades, may score. The non-scoring part of the shoulder is the junction of the upper bone of the arm with the shoulder blades and collarbones.
- XIII. The time-up bell signals the end of scoring possibilities in that bout, even though the Referee may inadvertently not halt the bout immediately. The time-up bell does not however mean that penalties cannot be imposed. Penalties can be imposed by the Refereeing Panel up to the point where the contestants leave that area after the bout's conclusion. Penalties can be imposed after that, but then only by the Referee Commission.
- XIV. True Aiuchis are rare. Not only must two techniques land simultaneously, but both must be valid scoring techniques, each with good form etc. Two techniques may well land simultaneously, but seldom are both, if indeed either, effective scores. The Referee must not dismiss as Aiuchi, a situation where only one of the simultaneous pair is actually a score. This is not Aiuchi.

---

ARTICLE 7: CRITERIA FOR DECISION

---

The result of a bout is determined by a contestant obtaining a clear lead of eight points, or at time-up, having the highest number of points, obtaining a decision (HANTEI), or by a HANSOKU, SHIKKAKU, or KIKEN, imposed against a contestant.

1. When a bout ends with equal scores, or no scores, the Referee will announce a tie (HIKIWAKE) and the start of the ENCHO-SEN if applicable.
2. In individual bouts, if there is a tie, an extension not exceeding one minute will be fought (ENCHO-SEN). An ENCHO-SEN is an extension of the bout, and all penalties and warnings issued still apply. The first competitor to obtain an award will be declared the winner. In the event that neither competitor is awarded a score, during the ENCHO-SEN, the decision will be made by a final vote of the Referee and three Judges (HANTEI). A decision in favour of one or the other competitor is obligatory and is taken on the basis of the following:
  - a) The attitude, fighting spirit, and strength demonstrated by the contestants.
  - b) The superiority of tactics and techniques displayed.
  - c) Which of the contestants has initiated the majority of the action.

3. In team competition, there will be no extension (ENCHO-SEN) in the event of drawn bouts except as stated in paragraph 5 below.
4. The winning team is the one with the most bout victories. Should the two teams have the same number of bout victories then the winning team will be the one with the most points, taking both winning and losing bouts into account. The maximum points difference or lead recorded in any bout will be eight.
5. If the two teams have the same number of bout victories and points, then a deciding bout will be held. In the event of a continuing tie, there will be an extension (ENCHO-SEN) not exceeding one minute. The first competitor to obtain an award will be declared the winner. In the event that there is no score the decision will be made by vote of the Referee and three Judges (HANTEI).
6. In team matches when a team has won sufficient bout victories or scored sufficient points as to be the established winner then the match is declared over and no further bouts will take place.

#### EXPLANATION:

- I. When deciding the outcome of a bout by vote (HANTEI) at the end of an inconclusive ENCHO-SEN, the Referee will move to the match area perimeter and call "HANTEI", followed by a two-tone blast of the whistle. The Judges will indicate their opinions by means of their flags and the Referee will at the same time indicate his own vote by raising his arm on the side of the preferred contestant. The Referee will give a short blast on his whistle, return to his original position and announce the majority decision.
- II. In the event of a tied vote, the Referee will resolve the tie by use of his casting vote. On returning to his original position, the Referee will place one arm across his chest and raise his bent arm on the side of the preferred choice to show he is using his casting vote. He will then indicate the winner in the normal way

---

#### ARTICLE 8: PROHIBITED BEHAVIOUR

---

There are two categories of prohibited behaviour, Category 1 and Category 2.

##### CATEGORY 1.

1. Techniques which make excessive contact, having regard to the scoring area attacked, and techniques which make contact with the throat.
2. Attacks to the arms or legs, groin, joints, or instep.
3. Attacks to the face with open hand techniques.
4. Dangerous or forbidden throwing techniques.

## CATEGORY 2.

1. Feigning, or exaggerating injury.
2. Repeated exits from the competition area (JOGAI).
3. Self-endangerment by indulging in behaviour, which exposes the contestant to injury by the opponent, or failing to take adequate measures for self-protection, (MUBOBI).
4. Avoiding combat as a means of preventing the opponent having the opportunity to score.
5. Clinching, wrestling, pushing, or seizing, without attempting a throw or other technique.
6. Techniques, which by their nature, cannot be controlled for the safety of the opponent and dangerous and uncontrolled attacks.
7. Attacks with the head, knees, or elbows.
8. Talking to, or goading the opponent, failing to obey the orders of the referee, discourteous behaviour towards the refereeing officials, or other breaches of etiquette.

### EXPLANATION:

- I. Karate competition is a sport, and for that reason some of the most dangerous techniques are banned and all techniques must be controlled. Trained competitors can absorb relatively powerful blows on muscled areas such as the abdomen, but the fact remains that the head, face, neck, groin and joints are particularly susceptible to injury. Therefore any technique, which results in injury, may be penalised unless caused by the recipient. The contestants must perform all techniques with control and good form. If they cannot, then regardless of the technique misused, a warning or penalty must be imposed.

### FACE CONTACT — SENIORS AND JUNIORS

- II. For Senior and Junior competitors, non-injurious, light, controlled “touch” contact to the face, head, and neck is allowed (but not to the throat). Where contact is deemed by the referee to be too strong, but does not diminish the competitor’s chances of winning, a warning (CHUKOKU) may be given. A second contact under the same circumstances will be penalised by KEIKOKU and IPPON (one point), given to the opponent. A third offence will be given HANSOKU CHUI and NIHON (two points), to the injured competitor. A further offence will result in disqualification by HANSOKU.

### FACE CONTACT — CADETS

- III. For Cadets, all hand techniques to the head, face, and neck must have absolute control. Should the glove touch the target the Referee Panel will not award a score. Kicking techniques to the head, face and neck, are allowed to make a light “skin touch” only. In the case of techniques, which make contact considered to be more than a “glove” or “skin” touch, the Referee Panel will give a warning or penalty. Any technique to the head, face or neck, which causes injury no matter how slight, will be warned or penalised unless caused by the recipient.
- IV. The Referee must constantly observe the injured contestant. A short delay in giving a judgement allows injury symptoms such as a nosebleed to develop. Observation will also reveal any efforts by the contestant to aggravate slight

injury for tactical advantage. Examples of this are blowing violently through an injured nose, or rubbing the face roughly.

- V. Pre-existing injury can produce symptoms out of all proportion to the degree of contact used and referees must take this into account when considering penalties for seemingly excessive contact. For example, what appears to be a relatively light contact could result in a competitor being unable to continue due to the cumulative effect of injury sustained in an earlier bout. Before the start of a match or bout, the Match Area Controller must examine the medical cards and ensure that the contestants are fit to fight. The Referee must be informed if a contestant has been treated for injury.
- VI. Contestants who over-react to light contact, in an effort to have the referee penalise their opponent, such as holding the face and staggering about, or falling unnecessarily, will be immediately warned or penalised themselves.
- VII. Feigning of an injury, which does not exist, is a serious infraction of the rules. SHIKKAKU will be imposed on the contestant feigning injury i.e., when such things as collapse and rolling about on the floor are not supported by evidence of commensurate injury as reported by a neutral doctor. Exaggerating an injury, which does exist is less serious. A warning or penalty should be imposed for exaggerating injury.
- VIII. Competitors, who receive SHIKKAKU for feigning injury will be taken from the competition area and put directly into the hands of the W.K.F. Medical Commission, who will carry out an immediate examination of the competitor. The Medical Commission will submit its report before the end of the Championship, for the consideration of the Referee Commission. Competitors who feign injury will be subject to the strongest penalties, up to and including suspension for life for repeated offences.
- IX. The throat is a particularly vulnerable area and even the slightest contact will be warned or penalised, unless it is the recipient's own fault.
- X. Throwing techniques are divided into two types. The established "conventional" karate leg sweeping techniques such as de ashi barai, ko uchi gari, etc., where the opponent is swept off-balance or thrown without being grabbed first — and those throws requiring that the opponent be grabbed or held as the throw is executed. The pivotal point of the throw must not be above the hip and the opponent must be held onto throughout, so that a safe landing can be made. Over the shoulder throws such as seio nage, kata garuma etc., are expressly forbidden, as are so-called "sacrifice" throws such as tomoe nage, sumi gaeshi etc. If an opponent is injured as a result of a throwing technique, the Referee Panel will decide whether a penalty is called for.
- XI. Open hand techniques to the face are forbidden due to the danger to the contestant's sight.

- XII. JOGAI relates to a situation where a contestant's foot, or any other part of the body, touches the floor outside of the match area. An exception is when the contestant is physically pushed or thrown from the area by the opponent.
- XIII. A contestant who delivers a scoring technique then exits the area before the Referee calls "Yamae" will be given the value of the score and Jogai will not be imposed. If the contestant's attempt to score is unsuccessful the exit will be recorded as a Jogai.
- XIV. If AO exits just after Aka scores with a successful attack, then "Yame" will occur immediately on the score and AO's exit will not be recorded. If AO exits, or has exited as Aka's score is made (with Aka remaining within the area), then both Aka's score will be awarded and AO's Jogai penalty will be imposed.
- XV. The contestant who constantly retreats without effective counter, who clinches unnecessarily, or who deliberately exits the area rather than allow the opponent an opportunity to score must be warned or penalised. This often occurs during the closing seconds of a bout. If the offence occurs with ten seconds or more of the bout time remaining the referee will warn the offender. If there has been a previous Category 2 offence or offences, this will result in a penalty being imposed. If however, there is less than ten seconds to go, the referee will penalise the offender with Keikoku (whether there has been a previous Category 2 Chukoku or not) and award an Ippon to the opponent. If there has been a previous Category 2 Keikoku the Referee will penalise the offender with Hansoku Chui and award Nihon to the opponent. If there has been a previous Category 2 Hansoku Chui the Referee will penalise the offender with Hansoku and award the bout to the opponent. However, the referee must ensure that the contestant's behaviour is not a defensive measure due to the opponent acting in a reckless or dangerous manner, in which case the attacker should be warned or penalised.
- XVI. An example of MUBOBI is the instance in which the contestant launches a committed attack without regard for personal safety. Some contestants throw themselves into a long reverse-punch, and are unable to block a counter. Such open attacks constitute an act of Mubobi and cannot score. As a tactical theatrical move, some fighters turn away immediately in a mock display of dominance to demonstrate a scored point. They drop their guard and lapse awareness of the opponent. The purpose of the turn-away is to draw the Referee's attention to their technique. This is also a clear act of Mubobi. Should the offender receive an excessive contact and/or sustain an injury and the fault is considered to be the recipient's, the referee will issue a Category 2 warning or penalty and may decline to give a penalty to the opponent.
- XVII. Any discourteous behaviour from a member of an official delegation can earn the disqualification of a competitor, the entire team, or delegation from the tournament.

---

ARTICLE 9: PENALTIES

---

WARNING: (CHUKOKU) May be imposed for attendant minor infractions or the first instance of a minor infraction.

KEIKOKU: This is a penalty in which IPPON (one point), is added to the opponent's score. KEIKOKU is imposed for minor infractions for which a warning has previously been given in that bout, or for infractions not sufficiently serious to merit HANSOKU-CHUI.

HANSOKU-CHUI: This is a penalty in which NIHON (two points), is added to the opponent's score. HANSOKU-CHUI is usually imposed for infractions for which a KEIKOKU has previously been given in that bout although it may be imposed directly for serious infringements, which do not merit HANSOKU.

HANSOKU: This is imposed following a very serious infraction or when a HANSOKU CHUI has already been given. It results in the disqualification of the contestant. In team matches the fouled competitor's score will be set at eight points and the offender's score will be zeroed.

SHIKKAKU: This is a disqualification from the actual tournament, competition, or match. In order to define the limit of SHIKKAKU, the Referee Commission, must be consulted. SHIKKAKU may be invoked when a contestant fails to obey the orders of the referee, acts maliciously, or commits an act which harms the prestige and honour of Karate-do, or when other actions are considered to violate the rules and spirit of the tournament. In team matches the fouled competitor's score will be set at eight points and the offender's score will be zeroed.

EXPLANATION:

- I. Category 1 and Category 2 penalties do not cross-accumulate.
- II. A penalty can be directly imposed for a rules infraction but once given, repeats of that category of infraction must be accompanied by an increase in severity of penalty imposed. It is not, for example, possible to give a warning or penalty for excessive contact then give another warning for a second instance of excessive contact.

- III. Warnings (CHUKOKU) are given where there has clearly been a minor infraction of the rules, but the contestant's potential for winning is not diminished (in the opinion of the Referee Panel) by the opponent's foul.
- IV. A KEIKOKU may be imposed directly, without first giving a warning. KEIKOKU is normally imposed where the contestant's potential for winning is slightly diminished (in the opinion of the Referee Panel) by the opponent's foul.
- V. A HANSOKU CHUI may be imposed directly, or following a warning, or KEIKOKU and is used where the contestant's potential for winning has been seriously reduced (in the opinion of the Referee Panel) by the opponent's foul.
- VI. A HANSOKU is imposed for cumulative penalties but can also be imposed directly for serious rules infractions. It is used when the contestant's potential for winning has been reduced virtually to zero (in the opinion of the Referee Panel) by the opponent's foul.
- VII. Any competitor who receives HANSOKU for causing injury, and who has in the opinion of the Referee Panel and Match Area Controller, acted recklessly or dangerously or who is considered not to have the requisite control skills necessary for WKF competition, will be reported to the Referee Commission. The Referee Commission will decide if that competitor shall be suspended from the rest of that competition and/or subsequent competitions.
- VIII. A SHIKKAKU can be directly imposed, without warnings of any kind. The contestant need have done nothing to merit it — it is sufficient if the Coach or non-combatant members of the contestants' delegation behave in such a way as to harm the prestige and honour of Karate-Do. If the Referee believes that a contestant has acted maliciously, regardless of whether or not actual physical injury has been caused, Shikkaku and not Hansoku, is the correct penalty.
- IX. A public announcement of Shikkaku must be made.

---

ARTICLE 10: INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS IN COMPETITION

---

- 1. KIKEN or forfeiture is the decision given, when a contestant or contestants fail to present themselves when called, are unable to continue, abandon the bout, or are withdrawn on the order of the Referee. The grounds for abandonment may include injury not ascribable to the opponent's actions.
- 2. If two contestants injure each other, or are suffering from the effects of previously incurred injury, and are declared by the tournament doctor to be unable to continue, the bout is awarded to the contestant who has amassed the most points. In Individual Matches if the points score is equal, then a vote (HANTEI) will decide the outcome of the bout. In Team Matches the Referee will announce a tie

(HIKIWAKE). Should the situation occur in a deciding Team Match ENCHO-SEN then a vote (HANTEI) will determine the outcome.

3. An injured contestant who has been declared unfit to fight by the tournament doctor cannot fight again in that competition.
4. An injured contestant who wins a bout through disqualification due to injury is not allowed to fight again in the competition without permission from the doctor. If he is injured, he may win a second bout by disqualification but is immediately withdrawn from further Kumite competition in that tournament.
5. When a contestant is injured, the Referee shall at once halt the bout and call the doctor. The doctor is authorised to diagnose and treat injury only.
6. A competitor who is injured during a bout in progress and requires medical treatment will be allowed three minutes in which to receive it. If treatment is not completed within the time allowed, the Referee will decide if the competitor shall be declared unfit to fight (Article 13, Paragraph 9d), or whether an extension of treatment time shall be given.
7. Any competitor who falls, is thrown, or knocked down, and does not fully regain his or her feet within ten seconds, is considered unfit to continue fighting and will be automatically withdrawn from all Kumite events in that tournament. In the event that a competitor falls, is thrown, or knocked down and does not regain his or her feet immediately, the referee will signal to the timekeeper to start the ten second count-down by a blast on his whistle, at the same time calling the doctor if required. The timekeeper will stop the clock when the referee raises his arm.

#### EXPLANATION:

- I. When the doctor declares the contestant unfit, the appropriate entry must be made on the contestant's monitoring card. The extent of unfitness must be made clear to other Refereeing Panels.
- II. A contestant may win through disqualification of the opponent for accumulated minor Category 1 infractions. Perhaps the winner has sustained no significant injury. A second win on the same grounds must lead to withdrawal, even though the contestant may be physically able to continue.
- III. The referee should only call the doctor when a contestant is injured and needs medical treatment.
- IV. The doctor is obliged to make safety recommendations only as they relate to the proper medical management of that particular injured contestant.
- V. When applying the "Ten Second Rule" the time will be kept by a timekeeper appointed for this specific purpose. A warning will be sounded at seven seconds followed by the final bell at ten seconds. The timekeeper will start the

clock only on the referee's signal. The timekeeper will stop the clock when the competitor stands fully upright and the referee raises his arm.

- VI. The Referee Panel will decide the winner on the basis of HANSOKU, KIKEN, or SHIKKAKU as the case may be.
- VII. In team matches, should a team member receive KIKEN, their score, if any, will be zeroed and the opponent's score will be set at eight points.

---

ARTICLE 11: OFFICIAL PROTEST

---

1. No one may protest about a judgement to the members of the Refereeing Panel.
2. If a refereeing procedure appears to contravene the rules, the President of the Federation, or the official representative is the only one allowed to make a protest.
3. The protest will take the form of a written report submitted immediately after the bout in which the protest was generated. (The sole exception is when the protest concerns an administrative malfunction. The Match Area Controller should be notified immediately the administrative malfunction is detected).
4. The protest must be submitted to a representative of the Appeals Jury. In due course the Jury will review the circumstances leading to the protested decision. Having considered all the facts available, they will produce a report, and shall be empowered to take such action as may be called for.
5. Any protest concerning application of the rules must be made in accordance with the complaints procedure defined by the WKF EC. It must be submitted in writing and signed by the official representative of the team or contestant(s).
6. The complainant must deposit a Protest Fee as agreed by the WKF EC, and this, together with the protest must be lodged with a representative of the Appeals Jury.

#### 7. Composition of the Appeals Panel

The Appeals Jury is comprised of three senior referee representatives appointed by the Referee Commission (RC). No two members may be appointed from the same National Federation. The RC should also appoint three additional members with designated numbering from 1 to 3 that automatically will replace any of the originally appointed Appeals Jury members in a conflict of interest situation where the jury member is of the same nationality or have a family relationship by blood or as an

In-Law with any of the parties involved in the protested incident, including all members of the refereeing panel involved in the protested incident.

#### 8. Appeals Evaluation Process

It is the responsibility of the party receiving the protest to convene the Appeals Jury and deposit the protest sum with the Treasurer.

Once convened, the Appeals Jury will immediately make such inquiries and investigations, as they deem necessary to substantiate the merit of the protest. Each of the three members is obliged to give his/her verdict as to the validity of the protest. Abstentions are not acceptable.

#### 9. Declined Protests

If a protest is found invalid, the Appeals Jury will appoint one of its members to verbally notify the protester that the protest has been declined, mark the original document with the word "DECLINED", and have it signed by each of the members of the Appeals Jury, before depositing the protest with the Treasurer, who in turn will forward it to the Secretary General.

#### 10. Accepted Protests

If a protest is accepted, the appeals Jury will liaise with the Organizing Commission (OC) and Referee Commission to take such measures as can be practically carried out to remedy the situation including the possibilities of:

- Reversing previous judgments that contravene the rules
- Voiding results of the affected matches in the pool from the point previous to the incident
- Redoing such matches that have been affected by the incident
- Issuing a recommendation to the RC that involved referees are evaluated for correction or sanction

The responsibility rests with the Appeals Jury to exercise restraint and sound judgment in taking actions that will disturb the program of the event in any significant manner. Reversing the process of the eliminations is a last option to secure a fair outcome.

The Appeals Jury will appoint one of its members who will verbally notify the protester that the protest has been accepted, mark the original document with the word "ACCEPTED", and have it signed by each of the members of the Appeals Jury, before depositing the protest with the Treasurer, who will return the deposited amount to the protestor, and in turn forward the protest document to the Secretary General.

#### 11. Incident Report

Subsequent to handling the incident in the above prescribed manner, the Jury Panel will reconvene and elaborate a simple protest incident report, describing their findings and state their reason(s) for accepting or rejecting the protest. The report should be signed by all three members of the Appeals Jury and submitted to the Secretary General.

## 12. Power and Constraints

The decision of the Appeals Jury is final, and can only be overruled by a decision of the Executive Committee.

The Appeals Jury may not impose sanctions or penalties. Their function is to pass judgment on the merit of the protest and instigate required actions from the RC and OC to take remedial action to rectify any refereeing procedure found to contravene the rules.

### EXPLANATION:

- I. The protest must give the names of the contestants, the Referee Panel officiating, and the precise details of what is being protested. No general claims about overall standards will be accepted as a legitimate protest. The burden of proving the validity of the protest lies with the complainant.
- II. The protest will be reviewed by the Appeals Jury and as part of this review, the Jury will study the evidence submitted in support of the protest. The Jury may also study videos and question Officials, in an effort to objectively examine the protest's validity.
- III. If the protest is held by the Appeals Jury to be valid, the appropriate action will be taken. In addition, all such measures will be taken to avoid a recurrence in future competitions. The deposit paid will be refunded by the Treasury.
- IV. If the protest is held by the Appeals Jury to be invalid, it will be rejected and the deposit forfeited to WKF.
- V. Ensuing matches or bouts will not be delayed, even if an official protest is being prepared. It is the responsibility of the Arbitrator, to ensure that the match has been conducted in accordance with the Rules of Competition.
- VI. In case of an administrative malfunction during a match in progress, the Coach can notify the Match Area Controller directly. In turn, the Match Area Controller will notify the Referee.

---

## ARTICLE 12: POWERS AND DUTIES

---

### REFEREE COMMISSION

The Referee Commission's powers and duties shall be as follows:

1. To ensure the correct preparation for each given tournament in consultation with the Organising Commission, with regard to competition area arrangement, the provision and deployment of all equipment and necessary facilities, match operation and supervision, safety precautions, etc.

2. To appoint and deploy the Match Area Controllers (Chief Referees) to their respective areas and to act upon and take such action as may be required by the reports of the Match Area Controllers.
3. To supervise and co-ordinate the overall performance of the refereeing officials.
4. To nominate substitute officials where such are required.
5. To pass the final judgement on matters of a technical nature which may arise during a given match and for which there are no stipulations in the rules.

#### MATCH AREA CONTROLLERS

The Match Area Controllers powers and duties shall be as follows:

1. To delegate, appoint, and supervise the Referees and Judges, for all matches in areas under their control.
2. To oversee the performance of the Referees and Judges in their areas, and to ensure that the Officials appointed are capable of the tasks allotted them.
3. To order the Referee to halt the match when the Arbitrator signals a contravention of the Rules of Competition.
4. To prepare a daily, written report, on the performance of each official under their supervision, together with their recommendations, if any, to the Referee Commission.

#### REFEREES

The Referee's powers shall be as follows:

1. The Referee ("SHUSHIN") shall have the power to conduct matches including announcing the start, the suspension, and the end of the match.
2. To award points.
3. To explain to the Match Area Controller, Referee Commission, or Appeals Jury, if necessary, the basis for giving a judgement.
4. To impose penalties and to issue warnings, before, during, or after a bout.
5. To obtain and act upon the opinion(s) of the Judges.
6. To announce extensions.
7. To conduct voting of the Referee Panel (HANTEI) and announce the result.
8. To resolve ties
9. To announce the winner.
10. The authority of the Referee is not confined solely to the competition area but also to all of its immediate perimeter.
11. The Referee shall give all commands and make all announcements.

#### JUDGES

The Judges (FUKUSHIN) powers shall be as follows:

1. To assist the Referee by flag signals.
2. To exercise a right to vote on a decision to be taken.

The Judges shall carefully observe the actions of the contestants and signal to the Referee an opinion in the following cases:

- a) When a score is observed.
- b) When a contestant has committed a prohibited act and/or techniques.
- c) When an injury or illness of a contestant is noticed.
- d) When both or either of the contestants have moved out of the competition area (JOGAI).

- e) In other cases when it is deemed necessary to call the attention of the Referee.

#### ARBITRATORS

The Arbitrator (KANSA) will assist the Match Area Controller by overseeing the match or bout in progress. Should decisions of the Referee and/or Judges, not be in accordance with the Rules of Competition, the Arbitrator will immediately raise the red flag or sign and sound the buzzer. The Match Area Controller will instruct the Referee to halt the match or bout and correct the irregularity. Records kept of the match shall become official records subject to the approval of the Arbitrator. Before the start of each match or bout the Arbitrator will ensure that the contestants' are wearing approved equipment.

#### SCORE SUPERVISORS

The Score Supervisor will keep a separate record of the scores awarded by the Referee and at the same time oversee the actions of the appointed timekeepers and scorekeepers.

#### EXPLANATION:

- I. When three judges give the same signal, or indicate a score for the same competitor, the referee will stop the bout and render the majority decision. Should the referee fail to stop the bout the arbitrator will raise the red flag or sign and sound the buzzer.
- II. When two judges give the same signal, or indicate a score for the same competitor, the referee will consider their opinions but may decline to stop the bout if he believes them to be mistaken.
- III. However, when the bout is halted, the majority decision will prevail. The referee may ask the judges to re-consider, but may not give a decision against two judges, unless he has the positive support of the other judge. In the case of the two judges indicating "Mienai" and one Judge indicating an opinion contrary to that of the Referee then the Referee's decision will take precedence
- IV. When the Referee sees a score he will call "YAME" and halt the bout using the prescribed signal. He will then indicate his preference by holding his bent arm palm upwards on the side of the scoring contestant.
- V. In the event of a two/two decision the Referee will indicate with the appropriate signal why the other contestant's score is not considered to be valid and then award the score to the opponent.
- VI. The referee may ask the judges to re-consider when he believes them mistaken, or when implementation would be a violation of the rules.
- VII. When three judges each have different opinions, the referee may give a decision, which is supported by one of the judges.
- VIII. At HANTEI the referee and judges each have one vote. In the event of a tied ENCHO-SEN the Referee will have a casting vote.

- IX. The Judges must only score what they actually see. If they are not sure that a technique actually reached a scoring area, they should signal that they did not see, (MIENAI).
- X. The role of the Arbitrator is to ensure that the match or bout is conducted in accordance with the Rules of Competition. He is not there as an additional Judge. He has no vote, nor has he any authority in matters of judgement, such as whether a score was valid or if JOGAI occurred. His sole responsibility is in matters of procedure.
- XI. In the event that the Referee does not hear the time-up bell, the Score-Supervisor will blow his whistle.
- XII. When explaining the basis for a judgement after the match, the Referee Panel may speak to the Match Area Controller, the Referee Commission, or the Appeals Jury. They will explain to no one else.

---

ARTICLE 13: STARTING, SUSPENDING AND ENDING OF MATCHES

---

1. The terms and gestures to be used by the Referee and Judges in the operation of a match shall be as specified in Appendices 1 and 2.
2. The Referee and Judges shall take up their prescribed positions and following an exchange of bows between the contestants; the Referee will announce “SHOBU HAJIME!” and the bout will commence.
3. The Referee will stop the bout by announcing “YAME”. If necessary, the Referee will order the contestants to take up their original positions (MOTO NO ICHI).
4. The Referee returns to his position and the Judges indicate their opinion by means of a signal. In the case of a score to be awarded the Referee identifies the contestant (Aka or AO), the area attacked (Chudan or Jodan), the scoring technique (Tsuki, Uchi, or Keri), and then awards the relevant score using the prescribed gesture. The Referee then restarts the bout by calling “TSUZUKETE HAJIME”.
5. When a contestant has established a clear lead of eight points during a bout, the Referee shall call “YAME” and order the contestants back to their starting lines as he returns to his. The winner is then declared and indicated by the Referee raising a hand on the side of the winner and declaring “AO (AKA) NO KACHI”. The bout is ended at this point.
6. When time is up, the contestant who has the most points is declared the winner, indicated by the Referee raising a hand on the side of the winner, and declaring “AO (AKA) NO KACHI”. The bout is ended at this point.

7. When time is up and scores are equal, or no scores have been awarded, the Referee shall call “YAME” and return to his position. He will announce a tie (HIKIWAKE) and start the ENCHO-SEN if applicable.
8. At HANTEI the Referee and Judges each have one vote. In the event of a tied vote at the end of an inconclusive ENCHO-SEN the Referee will have a casting vote which will be used to break the tie.
9. When faced with the following situations, the Referee will call “YAME!” and halt the bout temporarily.
  - a. When either or both contestants are out of the match area.
  - b. When the Referee orders the contestant to adjust the karate- gi or protective equipment.
  - c. When a contestant has contravened the rules.
  - d. When the Referee considers that one or both of the contestants cannot continue with the bout owing to injuries, illness, or other causes. Heeding the tournament doctor's opinion, the Referee will decide whether the bout should be continued.
  - e. When a contestant seizes the opponent and does not perform an immediate technique, or throw within two to three seconds.
  - f. When one or both contestants fall or are thrown and no effective techniques are made within two to three seconds.
  - g. When both contestants are off their feet following a fall or attempted throw and begin to wrestle.
  - h. When a score is observed.
  - i. When three judges give the same signal, or indicate a score for the same competitor.
  - j. When requested to do so by the Match Area Controller.

#### EXPLANATION:

- I. When beginning a bout, the Referee first calls the contestants to their starting lines. If a contestant enters the area prematurely, they must be motioned off. The contestants must bow properly to each other — a quick nod is both discourteous and insufficient. The Referee can call for a bow where none is volunteered by motioning as shown in Appendix 2 of the rules.
- II. When restarting the bout, the Referee should check that both contestants are on their lines and properly composed. Contestants jumping up and down or otherwise fidgeting must be stilled before combat can recommence. The Referee must restart the bout with the minimum of delay.

---

#### ARTICLE 14: MODIFICATIONS

---

Only the WKF Sports Commission with the approval of the WKF Directing Committee can alter or modify these rules.

