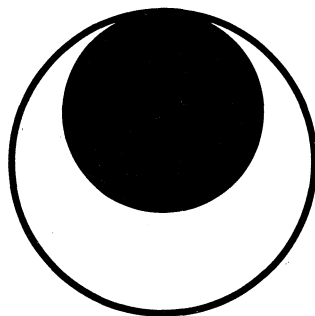


TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS

TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS FOR OFFICIALS



THE JAPAN KARATE ASSOCIATION

Updated by C. Toryu, April 2025

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TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS

CHAPTER 1 GENERAL RULES

Item 1 – Goal and Objective

The goal of establishing these rules and regulations is to promote a fair and smooth course of occurrence of all events in any given tournament.

Item 2 – Applicants Concerned

1. These rules and regulations shall apply to the following JKA related events:
 - a) World Championships, All Japan Championships and National Championships hosted by The JKA Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan.
 - b) Regional Tournaments/Championships hosted by JKA Regional Headquarters.
 - c) District Tournaments/Championships hosted by JKA District Headquarters.
 - d) Local Tournaments hosted by JKA Dojos.
2. All tournaments in all countries shall abide by this present document.

Item 3 – Rules of Conduct for All Participants

All participants shall act in accordance to the highest standards of ability and of fair play in the spirit of *Karate Do* and strive to the utmost respect and dignity towards others participants.

In Accordance to this, all gestures and posturing indicating victory or winning are strictly prohibited.

Item 4 – Additional Information

If there arises a situation undefined by this present document, the decision shall be given by the Master Chief Judge.

CHAPTER 2 TOURNAMENT OPERATIONS

Item 5 – Preparation Set-up Prior to Event

1. Prior to holding a tournament, the Host Organization shall notify all concerned of its proposed plan for the upcoming tournament.
2. Also, it is necessary to provide the following support personnel:
 - a) Timekeepers
 - b) Scorekeepers
 - c) Directors of Operations
 - d) Official Doctor
 - e) Medical Attendants
3. As well, the following officials must be provided:
 - a) Arbitrators
 - b) Master Chief Judge
 - c) Head Judges and Judges

Item 6 – Arbitrators

1. One Arbitrator shall be stationed at a *Kumite* Event.
2. An Arbitrator is responsible for the following:
 - a) that the Head Judge and the Judges have appropriate qualifications for tournament
 - b) that the competitors have appropriate qualifications as well
 - c) that the rules and regulations are being followed
3. An Arbitrator is responsible to provide appropriate guidance and decisions to the Head Judge and the Judges, timekeepers and scorekeepers in the following situation: the Arbitrator can interrupt a match by a sharp whistle blow to intervene if there is a breach of any of the Tournament Rules and Regulations or if the Head Coach has a protest or a question which makes it necessary to interrupt a match.
4. An Arbitrator is to only participate in a Judges' conference in which disqualification (*Hansoku*) is being considered.
5. The Arbitrator is responsible for insuring that proper record keeping is done.
6. The Arbitrator can request any explanations deemed necessary from any officials.
7. The Arbitrator is selected and appointed to that position by the Master Chief Judge.

Item 7 – Master Chief Judge

1. The Master Chief Judge is responsible to maintain a fair and smooth course of occurrence of all events in a given tournament.

2. The Master Chief Judge is responsible to provide appropriate decisions in the following situations:
 - a) if there is an issue with the rules and regulations or if unfairness has been identified
 - b) if a judge is requesting advice or guidance
 - c) if there is a matter exceeding this present document
 - d) if there is an accident
3. If a situation has occurred, after consulting with the Head Judge and the Judges, the Master Chief Judge will take action as per the following:
 - a) give special advise or instructions
 - b) banish from the tournament
 - c) disqualify a competitor from the tournament
4. After consultation with the Judges, the Master Chief Judge will decide the duration of disqualification and if it applies to further tournaments. A letter confirming this decision is then forwarded to the involved individual or group.
5. The Master Chief Judge is appointed by the Host Organization. If necessary, the Host Organization will also select an Assistant Chief Judge.
6. As a general rule, the JKA Chief Instructor is the person that is selected as the Master Chief Judge in the All Japan Championships as well as the World Championships.

Item 8 - Head Judge & Judges

1. The Head Judge and the Judges are responsible for a match or event and make decisions during a given match or event.
2. The Head Judge and the Judges exert control over the surroundings of the match or event as well.
3. The Head Judge and the Judges are solely responsible for the outcome of a match of event and cannot be challenges with the exception of the Arbitrator.
4. The Head Judge coordinates the match or event and gives the final decision regarding the outcome of the match or event.
 The final decision is either red side or white side declared winner
 (Aka No Kachi, Shiro No Kachi)
 In the case of a full point or *Ippon*, red side or white side full point is declared
 (Aka *Ippon*, Shiro *Ippon*)
5. The Judges, previously called Corner Judges assist the Head Judge by indicating their own decisions during the match or event.
6. The Head Judge and the Judges are selected amongst the pool of certified Judges and appointed to their positions by the Host Organization.

Item 9 - Competitors

1. If the competitors are qualified, the Host Organization cannot refuse their participation in a tournament **and cannot force them to participate.**
2. As a general rule, the competitors are active members of the JKA or members of an affiliated organization approved by the JKA. However, non members can apply and be approved by the Host Organization.

Item 10 - Head Coach

1. One Head Coach can be present for his competitor during a match or event, whether individual or team event.
2. A Head Coach must be registered with the Host Organization prior to the tournament.
3. If a Head Coach has a question or protest regarding a match or event, it has to be addressed to the Arbitrator. No appeals can be done at the decision time (*Hantei*) now being called.
4. A Head Coach gives advice to the competitor from a designated area, with no disruptions or disturbances to other competitors or Judges during that match or event. If a Head Coach does not abide by this, the Chief Judge and the Arbitrator will deal with this disruptive behavior immediately, on that court.
5. A head coach must has to hold both qualification of instructor and judge.

Item 11 - Timekeepers

A timekeeper is responsible to keep time of a match or event, as well as notify the Head Judge of elapsed time during the match or event as per set procedure.

Item 12 - Scorekeepers

A scorekeeper is responsible for keeping a record of all scores during a match or event, as well as announcing or presenting those scores publicly. If necessary, the scorekeeper shall notify the Head Judge of these scores.

Item 13 - Directors of Operations

A director of operations is responsible for good communication between all competitors and officials to ensure smooth occurrence of the tournament.

Item 14 - Official Doctor

1. The Official Doctor is selected by the tournament officials.

2. The Official Doctor in conjunction with the Master Chief Judge, is responsible for all medical decisions that may occur during the course of an incident involving injury, whereas the candidate is to continue or withdraw from a match.

Item 15 – Medical Attendants

A medical attendant is responsible to treat and support an illness or injury that may occur during the course of a tournament, in order to maintain a safe environment for all participants.

Item 16 – Dress Code for Participants

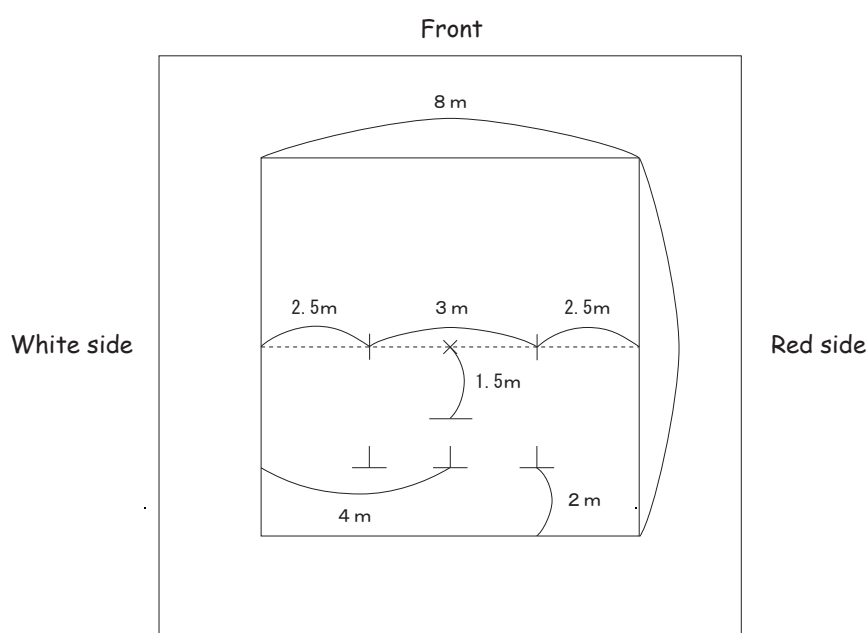
1. A competitor wears an all plain white karate uniform.
 - a) crests that are recognized by the Host Organization may be worn on the left chest side
 - b) sleeves of the jacket length should be at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of the forearm but no longer than the wrist, and folding of the cuffs is not permitted; however if folded inward, that fold must be sown; the length of the top, after the belt is tied, is up to half of the thigh
females must wear a plain white t-shirt under the top
length of the pants must be $\frac{2}{3}$ of the calf down from the knee but no longer than the top part of the ankle, and folding of the cuffs is not permitted; however if folded inward, that fold must be sown
 - c) crests and numbers given by the Host Organization must be worn at the designated area
 - d) in order to differentiate between opponents, one of the competitors shall wear a thin red band of cloth around the waist
 - e) general appearance must not provoke any feelings or injury to the opponent
all nails must be cropped short, hair must be clean and not of any weird colors, its length must not interfere or distract; when tied there should be no plastic, metal or colorful ribbons that has an aim to beautify; rubber bands or cloth bands are permitted
 - f) medical needed aids such as teeth braces, soft contact lenses are to be worn at the own risk of the competitor; however, during a *Kumite* match, glasses are not permitted; glasses can be worn during a *Kata* match but held in place securely
 - g) medical aids used for a past sustained injury, whether taping, bandages or support pads must not be cause of injury to the opponent, and are to be approved by the Head Judge prior to the match
 - h) medical aids that are made of a hard material such as casts, wood, hard plastic, steel are not permitted
 - i) otherwise, designated safety equipment should be used
2. A competitor wears nothing more than is mentioned in the prior statement unless specified by either the Head Judge or the Master Chief Judge.

3. A Head Coach must wear an identifying item on a designated area.
4. The Head Judges, the Judges and the Arbitrators must wear the JKA official dress wear. An identifying item is worn on a designated area.
5. All other support staff is easily identified as such by wearing a similar dress wear.

Item 17 – Set-up of Courts

1. The court area is a square measuring 8 meters X 8 meters, marked off by a 4-5 centimeters wide line. The outer edges of this line measure 8 meters. If mats are used, the boundary may be marked by mats of a different color.
2. For a *Kumite* Match or Event, the starting positions of the competitors are on the center line, indicated by two parallel lines both 1 meter long, and that are 3 meters apart from each other. In general, when facing what is called the Front or *Shomen*, the right line is red and the left line is white.
3. For a Flag System Kata Match or Event, the starting lines of the competitors are 2 meters from the back line and 3 meters apart from each other. These lines are designed in the shape of a short inverted T; the horizontal line is 70 centimeters long and the vertical line is 35 centimeters long. As for a Point System Kata Match or Event, the inverted T starting lines are 2 meters back from the center of the court.
4. For safety reasons, a court shall not be raised for more than 1 meter above the ground level and there is a 2 meters wide safety area around the court.
5. The surface of the court should be flat and smooth. It may be made of wood, resin, urethane mats or *Tatami* mats.
6. To indicate the position of the Head Judge, a line is drawn 1.5 meters back from the center of the court.

Set-up & Dimensions of Courts



Item 18 – Events & Categories

1. The events are as follow:
 - a) *Kumite* Events - Individual and Team
 - b) *Kata* Events - Individual and Team
2. It is possible to hold different events as well.

CHAPTER 3 KUMITE EVENTS

Item 19 – Definition of *Kumite* Event

1. In a *Kumite* Event, two competitors enter the court and within the allotted time, perform various kinds of techniques freely against each other hoping to hold victory. There are two different kinds of scoring system:
 - a) 1 Point Match or *Ippon Shobu*: The competitor who has scored one full point or 2 half points first, within the allotted time, is declared the winner.
 - b) 3 Points Match or *Sanbon Shobu*: The competitor who has scored 2 full points first, within the allotted time, is declared the winner.
2. In a match or event, all techniques - punches, kicks, strikes, have to be done with control. The distance required to do the techniques should be close enough to be able to be effective. There should be no damage done to the opponent. A light touch to the target is permitted.

Item 20 – Definition of Team *Kumite* Event

1. A team consists of an odd number of competitors.
2. As a general rule, all team members have to be present at the first round of a match or event. The team that is seeded or placed in order to not face each other in the first round, have to be present at the second round of a match or event. Subsequently, if the team is missing a member or members, that missed person or persons must be placed last in the sequencing of competitors of that match.
3. Prior to the event, the order in which the competitors will perform must be reported by the Head Coach or Team Leader. This must be done for each round of a match.
4. The winning team is determined by the number of individual performances that are won.
5. There are two kinds of team competition.

The first one is when an equal amount of competitors from each team face each other, determining a number of wins.

- a) Match by Elimination: Each team member has one performing bout each. The individual results are then added up to determine which team has won. If there is a draw, the highest score determines the win, as per the following **priority order**: (1) 1 point or *Ippon*, disqualification or *Hansoku*, absolute disqualification or *Shikkaku*, withdrawal by disqualification or *Kiken*, out of bounds or *Jogai Hansoku*, volunteer non defending or *Muboubi Hansoku*, (2) 2 half points, (3) decision by Judges.

The table below shall apply to a team competition match with five members in a team.

Furthermore, the loser's Waza-Ari will not be reflected in the outcome.

	Red	White
Senpou (1st competitor)	◎	×
Jihou (2nd competitor)	△	△
Chuken (3rd competitor)	×	○○
Fukusho (4th competitor)	○	×
Taisho (5th competitor)	×	○○

Victory goes to white

- b) If there is still a draw, a match is held with a competitor chosen by each team, in order to determine the win. This is called a Decision Match by Team Choice or *Daihyosha Ketteisen*. This match continues until there is a winner. In this case, a team member that has performed before may compete, but no more than twice.

Decision Match by Team Choice or *Daihyosha Ketteisen*, is conducted the same as an Individual Match or *Kojinsen*, thus following the order of Re-Match (*Sai-Shiai*) and Second Re-Match (*Sai-Sai-Shiai*) with Sudden Death.

The second kind of team competition is when an equal amount of competitors from each team face each other, the winner of a match remains to fight each competitor of the opposing team in turn, until a loss. The competitor who loses a match is eliminated from this process. No mixed team of males and females are allowed.

- c) Round Robin Elimination Match: The winner of the first match stays in the court and keeps fighting until he loses. The loser steps out and the next team member steps in. When all members of the team have lost, the team itself loses.
- d) Mixed teams are not permitted.

Item 21 – Definition & Criteria for Scoring Points

1. The areas of attacks are defined as follow:

- a) head and neck area or *Jodan*

- b) stomach, sides of the abdomen and back, in this case *Chudan*
- 2. Criteria for scoring points are as follow:
 - a) proper execution and power of the technique
 - b) proper distance and timing
 - c) correct posture and proper frame of mind
 - d) concentrated mind and spirit
 - e) execution to the proper target
- 3. If all the criteria mentioned above have been reached in the execution of either a punch, a kick or a strike, this constitute what is scored as 1 point or *Ippon*.
- 4. A 1 point or *Ippon* can be scored even if some of the above mentioned criteria are not reached, in the following situations:
 - a) successfully evading an attack while executing a effective counterattack or *Deai*
 - b) knocking the opponent off balance and executing an effective attack
 - c) a consecutive series of attacks that all reach their target
 - d) the opponent is without any defense
- 5. A technique that is well executed but does not qualify as a 1 point or *Ippon*, is defined as a half point or *Waza-Ari*.
- 6. 2 half points become 1 point or *Ippon*.
- 7. If both competitors move and execute a technique at the same time and with similar intensity, this is called *Aiuchi*. In this instance, the attacks cancel each other and no points are scored.
- 8. If, after the announcement of "Waza-Ari/Ippon", it is determined that the opponent has clearly been injured by a blow without control, the announced "Waza-Ari/Ippon" may be revoked. However, this only applies if the player who was attacked remains within the court. Additionally, the player who attacked without control may be given a "Keikoku," "Hansoku Chuui," or "Hansoku." In this case, the judgement of the tournament doctor shall be taken precedence.

Item 22 – Criteria for Reaching an Outcome in a Match

1. If none of the two competitors reach the full score within the allotted time, each Judge indicate their decision as to the outcome of the match or event. The outcome of the match or event is determined by the decision of all the Judges together. See Item 11 of the Tournament Rules & Regulations for Officials. The Head Judge will then decide the outcome of the match or event.
2. If both competitors get injured or for other reasons cannot continue the match, the Judges will indicate their decision as to the outcome of the match or event. The Head Judge will then decide the outcome of the match or event.
3. The following elements help to determine the outcome of a match:
First elements of decision
 - a) if any points are scored

Second elements of decision

- b) if there are warnings or *Hansoku Chui* that have been given
- c) if there are out of bounds warnings or *Jogai Chui* that have been given
- d) if there are volunteer non defending warnings or *Muboubi Chui* that have been given

Third elements of decision

- e) if one competitor has dominated more in that match
 - f) skill and strength of the techniques displayed
 - g) fighting spirit and effort shown by a competitor; if there has been any caution or *Keikoku* given
 - h) proper frame of mind shown by a competitor
 - i) the amount of attacks performed by one competitor as compared to the other
4. The Judges must carefully take into consideration all the elements if a competitor who has a half-point or *Waza-Ari* , as well as has more than one warning that are of different categories of warning.

Item 23 – Re-Match (Sai-Shiai) & Second Re-Match (Sai-Sai-Shiai)

If the outcome of the match or event cannot be decided, a draw or *Hikiwake* is then declared.

The Host Organization decides prior to the Tournament if there should be a “sudden death” match within a second re-match situation.

- 1. If there is a draw, another match will be held. This re-match is called *Sai-Shiai*. If this re-match ends up in a draw, a second re-match called *Sai-Sai-Shiai* will be held. However, the Head Judge may order that this second re-match is a “sudden death” match meaning that the competitor that scores first is declared the winner.
- 2. After a second re-match the Judges must determine a winner.
- 3. In the World Championships as well as the National Championships, the **Men's Individual** final match of the adult individual kumite will have as many re-matches as needed to determine a winner.

Item 24 – Criteria Leading to Disqualification (Hansoku)

- 1. The following elements are forbidden:
 - a) excessive contact, going beyond the target, “wild” swinging techniques
 - b) performing or intent to perform dangerous throws
 - c) grabbing, holding on, or wasting time by not attacking
 - d) using provocative language and attitude, verbal taunting or not following the orders of a Judge
 - e) continuing to attack after stop (*Yame*) or out of bounds (*Jogai*) is called
 - f) head butt attack or intent to use head butt attack

- g) spear hand or *Nukite* attack to the eyes
 - h) purposely attacking the groin area or the joints
2. If there has been any of the above that have been perpetrated, the following decisions will be made:
- a) If an element has been identified but not severe as to cause injury or damage to a competitor, a caution or *Keikoku* is then given. This caution does not affect judging decision but if a second caution is given, called warning or *Hansoku Chui*, in the same match, this could result in disqualification (*Hansoku*) of the perpetrator and the other competitor is declared the winner.
 - b) If an element has been identified as severe and there is obvious malicious intent or if a competitor is seriously injured or damaged, a warning (*Hansoku Chui*) or a disqualification (*Hansoku*) can be given to the perpetrator and the other competitor is declared the winner.
3. Any Any competitor who receives twice a loss by disqualification (*Hansoku*) or a win by disqualification (*Hansoku*) during a tournament cannot continue competing in Individual or Team Kumite. However, participation in Kata Events is possible.
The competitor who receives the first loss by disqualification is to wrap red tape, and the first win by disqualification is to wrap blue tape around the upper arm sleeve..
4. When a *Hansoku* is announced by the Head Judge, the scorekeeper will record this on a specific document that is submitted to the Master Chief Judge.

Item 25 - Out of Bounds (Jogai)

If a competitor touches the ground outside the borders of the court with any part of the body, a caution indicative of out of bounds or *Jogai Keikoku* is then announced. If this happens a second time, an out of bounds warning or *Jogai Chui* is given. If this happens a third time, a disqualification by out of bounds or *Jogai Hansoku* is given to the perpetrator and the other competitor is declared the winner.

If a competitor scored before being out of bounds, his score will prevail.

Item 26 - Criteria for Volunteer Non Defending (Muboubi)

1. A caution for volunteer non defending called *Muboubi Keikoku*, a warning for volunteer non defending called *Muboubi Chui* and a disqualification for volunteer non defending called *Muboubi Hansoku* can be given in the following situations:
 - a) if it is obvious that a competitor does not provide any defensive effort and gets hit, then that competitor receives the appropriate level of volunteer non defending and the other competitor the appropriate level of reprimand or *Hansoku*
 - b) if it is identified that a competitor shows no fighting effort

2. Although not necessarily hit, a competitor can receive a non defending reprimand, either caution, warning or disqualification as the referee may judge the present situation dangerous. In that case the other competitor is declared the winner.

Item 27 - Absolute Disqualification (Shikkaku)

1. An absolute disqualification or *Shikkaku* is given in the following situations that the Head Judge and the Judges have already discussed, and therefore the other competitor is declared the winner:
 - a) non compliance to the orders of the Head Judge
 - b) display of poor and unacceptable attitude and frame of mind and use of unacceptable verbal or body language as a *Karate* competitor
 - c) if it is deemed inappropriate for the match to continue

An absolute disqualification or *Shikkaku* can be given without any prior warnings and to any person within the tournament site.

2. After absolute disqualification has been given to a competitor, that competitor cannot continue to participate in that tournament, whether *Kumite* or *Kata*.
3. The details of an absolute disqualification must be discussed by the involved Judges and given to the pertinent scorekeepers who enter these specified details on the appropriate form which is given to the Master Chief Judge.
4. If a team has perpetrated a serious offense, the whole team is given an absolute disqualification and the other team is declared the winner.
5. An absolute disqualification also can be given in a *Kata* match or event.

Item 28 - Withdrawal (Kiken)

1. Withdrawal or *Kiken* is given by the Head Judge in the following situations:
 - a) failing to report when the match or event is being called
 - b) volunteer withdrawal
 - c) competitor cannot continue a match
2. If a competitor or team withdraws, the other competitor or team is declared the winner.
3. A competitor who voluntarily withdraws with no obvious physical reasons, cannot compete in any other matches or events.
4. Withdrawal or *Kiken* also can be given in a *Kata* match or event.

Item 29 - In the Case of an Injury

1. If a competitor is injured, the Head Judge will consult with the doctor and will await a diagnosis of the injury. The match is thus stopped until the doctor has finished the care of the injured competitor. If a competitor is unable to continue a match due to that injury, the Judges will decide if a withdrawal or *Kiken* is to be given. If that is

the case, without calling a disqualification or *Hansoku*, then the other competitor is declared the winner. If both competitors are injured and there are no disqualifications or *Hansoku* issued, then the match is stopped and a decision as to the outcome of the match will be called.

2. If a competitor is unable to continue a match due to an injury, then a withdrawal or *Kiken* will be given and the other competitor has been issued a disqualification or *Hansoku*, the injured competitor is declared the winner. This decision prevails even if the disqualified competitor has scored a half point or *Waza-Ari*.
3. In case of an injury, the doctor will discuss the injury with the Master Chief Judge and can request that the injured or incapacitated competitor withdraw from *Kumite* events. That competitor could participate in *Kata* events at the doctor's recommendation.

Item 30 – Required Judges & Arbitrators

The following officials are required per court:

- a) 1 Arbitrator
- b) 1 Head Judge
- c) 4 Judges

Item 31 – Time of the Event

1. The allotted time for a match or event is 2 minutes.
At a World Championships or National Championships, the adult male final *Kumite* match is 5 minutes. However, the Host Organization can decide otherwise.
2. The Head Judge starts the match with a verbal cue that ends with the word: begin or *Hajime* at which time the countdown is started. Countdown is interrupted when stop (*Yame*) or out of bounds (*Jogai*) is called. Countdown resumes when the verbal cue: resume or *Tsuzukete Hajime* is pronounced. If the allotted time for the match has elapsed, the timekeeper will announce this to the Head Judge and the match is thus finished.

Item 32 – Required Equipment

1. Whistles – one per official
2. Red and white flags – a pair for each Judge
3. A stopwatch
4. A bell
5. A number board indicating scored points and various warnings
6. Official forms for scorekeepers including a copy for the Arbitrator

7. Red bands of cloth to differentiate the competitors - the dimensions of this red band of cloth worn around the waist should not hinder the match in any way
8. Red and white tape to prepare the court
9. Red tape to identify a competitor that has received a disqualification or *Hansoku*

Item 33 – Safety Equipment

1. Gloves for the hands
2. A transparent mouth guard
3. A chest protector

* as recognized by the JKA

CHAPTER 4 KATA EVENTS

Item 34 – Definition & Guidelines for Kata Event

1. In a Kata Event, a Kata is performed in a court. The Judges make a decision in order to declare a winner. The different types of Kata Events or Matches are as follow:
 - a) Red and White Flag System: 2 competitors simultaneously perform the same Kata that is chosen by the Head Judge and a winner is declared. The competitors must clearly repeat back to the Head Judge the name of the chosen Kata. The Head Judge will acknowledge this and the match or event begins.
 - b) Point System: 1 competitor at a time perform a Kata and each Judge gives points on the performance of that competitor. The points are added up for a total score and a winner is declared.
 - c) Team Kata: 3 competitors perform the same Kata and start by facing the Front or *Shomen*, at a starting position of their choice. The team is given a total score according to the Point System. The 3 competitors have a choice to form a triangle or a reversed triangle.
A competitor on reserve may be substituted at any match but must be registered as a participant prior to the start of the tournament.
2. Each competitor or team chooses a Kata from the following list that has been approved by the Masters Committee or *Shihan-Kai*:
*Heian Shodan . Heian Nidan . Heian Sandan . Heian Yondan,
 Heian Godan . Tekki Shodan . Tekki Nidan . Tekki Sandan,
 Bassai Dai . Kanku Dai . Enpi, Jion . Jitte, Hangetsu, Gankaku, Bassai Sho, Kanku Sho,
 Chinte, Unsu, Meikyo, Wankan, Sochin, Nijushiho, Gojushiho Dai, Gojushiho Sho.*

3. The types of Kata matches are as follow:

- a) Matches by Designated Basic Kata or *Shitei Kata* - the Head Judge chooses at random one of the Kata from the following list and the winner is declared by Red and White Flag System:

*Heian Shodan . Heian Nidan . Heian Sandan . Heian Yondan
Heian Godan . Tekki Shodan*

- b) Matches by Designated Intermediate Kata or *Sentei Kata* - the Head Judge chooses at random one of the Kata from the following list and the winner is declared by Red and White Flag System:

Bassai Dai, Kanku Dai, Enpi, Jion

- c) Match by Designated Intermediate Kata or *Sentei Kata* in the Point System -the competitor chooses one Kata from the Designated Intermediate Kata list to perform and the winner is declared by point system:

Bassai Dai, Kanku Dai, Enpi, Jion

- d) Match by Favorite Kata or *Tokui Kata* - The competitor chooses a Kata from the list as seen in the above #2 with exception of all the Kata in the Designated Basic Kata list, and the winner is declared by point system.

Item 35 - Required Judges

The following Judges are required per court:

- a) 1 Head Judge
b) 4 Judges for the Red and White Flag System events
&
6 or 4 Judges for the Point System events

Item 36 - Criteria for Judging Kata

1. Criteria for judging a Kata Event are as follow:

- a) proper sequence of movement
b) observing the 3 key elements of Kata: levels of strength, contraction and expansion of the body and change in the speed of the techniques
c) power and accuracy in performance of basic techniques; posture, balance, stance and accuracy in reaching the point of target
d) following the proper course of direction and accuracy in returning to the starting position or *Embusen*
e) overall performance and illustrating the essential characteristics of the chosen Kata
f) displaying courtesy in attitude, fighting spirit and effort, and correct eye contact or *Chakugan*
g) proper use of stance and posture or *Kamae* and the ability to focus the mind or *Zanshin*

- h) accuracy in transforming the body parts into "weapons" of attack and defense
 - i) if there are any exaggerated movements or intentional change to the set flow of the *Kata*
 - j) synchronization of performance in Team *Kata*
2. For Point System, 10 is the highest score. The Master Chief Judge decides what the average or median score will be. The Judges and the Head Judge decide and indicate their scores on their respective score boards. The highest and the lowest scores are dropped and the rest is added up, forming the total score.

Item 37 – Criteria for Point Deduction & for Disqualification

1. Points are deducted as per the following situations:
 - a) the competitor makes a mishap, but continues to smoothly perform
 - b) the competitor pauses for no apparent reason but continues afterwards
 - c) execution of a movement in the wrong order, or a wrong movement but the competitor continues to perform
 - d) the competitor makes breathing sounds or creates sound with the uniform while executing the *Kata*
 - e) the competitor is outside the 1 step allowance for coming back to the starting position (*Embusen*). This can represent 0.1 to 0.3 deduction in scoring.
 - f) In Team *Kata*, from the moment the court is entered and exited, the name of the *Kata*, Ready or *Yoi*, Start or *Hajime* and Recover or *Naore*, are the only spoken words allowed. At anytime, verbal or non verbal cues to encourage synchronization are subject to deduction.
 - g) In team and individual competitions, going outside the bounds of the court will result in a deduction of points. In this case, if the player goes outside the bounds of the court by within their one-foot-length, 0.1 points will be deducted. If the player goes outside the bounds of the court by more than their one-foot-length, 0.2 to 0.3 points will be deducted.
2. The competitor is disqualified as per the following situations:
 - a) the competitor does not finish the *Kata*
 - b) the competitor does a different *Kata* from the one announced

Item 38 – Re-Match (Sai-Shiai) & Second Re-match (Sai-Sai-Shiai)

1. If there is a draw in a Red and White Flag System match or event, the Head Judge will choose another *Kata* to be performed by the 2 competitors. This is called re-match or *Sai-Shiai*. The outcome of this re-match must be decided.
2. If there is a draw in a Point System match or event, the competitors will perform the same *Kata* again. This is called re-match or *Sai-Shiai*. If there is still a draw, the lowest score that was dropped is now added up for a total score. If there is still a draw, the highest score that was dropped is now added up as well for a total score. If

finally there is still a draw, the competitors will perform a different *Kata*. This is now called second re-match or *Sai-Sai-Shiai*. The outcome of this second re-match must be decided by different scoring points by each Judge.

Item 39 – Required Equipment

1. Whistles - one per Judge
2. Red and white flags - a pair for each Judge
3. Score boards or score cards - a set per Judge
4. Record keeping forms
5. *Kata* cards: a set of Designated Basic *Kata* and a set of Designated Intermediate *Kata* - a set of the appropriate ones for the Head Judge
6. Red bands of cloth to differentiate the competitors - the dimensions of this red band of cloth worn around the waist should not hinder the match in any way
7. Red and white tape to prepare the court

CHAPTER 5 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Item 40 – Boys & Girls Tournaments and Adult Female Tournaments

1. The Boys & Girls Divisions are as follow:
Elementary School - 7 to 12 years old
Junior High School - 13 to 15 years old
High School - 16 to 18 years old
The Host Organization may make variations of the divisions.
2. Adult Females are considered so after junior high school graduation. The Host Organization may decide on variations of the divisions.
3. Boys & Girls tournament events are as follows:
 - a) 1 step basic fighting (*Kihon Ippon Kumite*)
 - b) semi-free fighting (*Jiyu Ippon Kumite*)
 - c) free fighting (*Jiyu Kumite*) from Elementary school third grade or 9 years old and up
 - d) *Kata*

Item 41 – Seniors Tournaments

This tournament is to follow the Tournament Rules & Regulations guidelines. The Host Organization may make varying decisions regarding these tournaments.

Item 42 – Revision of Document

The revision of this document is done by the Masters Committee also called *Shihan-Kai* with a majority of two thirds of the members present.

Additional Clause

Date of Revision: May 11 1996

Date of revision: August 14 2004

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TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

CHAPTER 1 GENERAL RULES

Item 1 - Goal and Objective

1. The goal of establishing these rules and regulations for officials is to promote standardized guidelines to ensure a fairness and smoothness flow in decision-making.
2. This document is to be used as a supplement to the Tournament Rules & Regulations document.

Item 2 - Guide for Use

All official tournaments sponsored by The Japan Karate Association are to follow these rules and regulations.

Item 3 - Rules of Conduct for Officials

1. All judging officials are to be neutral and fair.
2. All judging officials should make their decisions freely and based on the Tournament Rules & Regulations documents.
3. All judging officials are to behave in a dignified and professional manner.
4. All judging officials give their decisions promptly and accurately.

Item 4 - Additional Information

If there arises a situation undefined by this present document, the decision shall be given by the Master Chief Judge.

CHAPTER 2 PROCEDURES FOR JUDGING

Item 5 – Procedures for Kumite Tournaments

1. The Head Judge calls the competitors to line up. Then to bow to the Front or *Shomen Ni Rei* and to each other or *Otagai Ni Rei*.
2. Two competitors move to their respective designated positions and bow to each other.
3. At the end of the match or event, the Head Judge calls the competitors to line up, then will tell them to bow to each other and to the Front.
4. When the Head Judge gives the signal to start the match, the countdown starts. When the Head Judge calls the match to stop or *Yame*, as well as in the case of out of bounds or *Jogai*, the countdown stops and will resume when the Head Judge gives the signal to resume or *Tsuzukete Hajime*.
The Head Judge will call the match to stop, *Yame* or out of bounds, *Jogai* and interrupt the match, in the following situations:
 - a) if there is a 1 point or *Ippon* or a half point or *Waza-Ari*
 - b) if the competitors need to fix their uniform or if the Head Judge needs to give them advice
 - c) if there are any elements that can lead to disqualification
 - d) an injury or accident
 - e) if the Arbitrator is indicating to interrupt the match or event
 - f) at a Judge's indication and the Head Judge considers it necessary
 - g) if a match or the surroundings of a match is considered dangerous
 - h) if too much closeness in such that a proper technique cannot be executed
 - i) if a competitor touches the ground outside the borders of the court with any part of the body
 - j) when the allotted time for a match or event has elapsed
5. During the match or event if any of the above is identified, the Judges will signal the identified element by whistle and a corresponding flag gesture to the Head Judge.
6. If necessary, the Head Judge will confer with the Judges to discuss an element and make appropriate recommendations or corrections. This takes place within the presence of the Arbitrator. If the Judges are not agreeing, then a decision is taken with a majority rule and the Head Judge will declare the final decision. Conferring should be kept to a minimum.
7. The Head Judge then gives the command to resume the match or *Tsuzukete Hajime* and the match is thus pursued.
8. A competitor may request to have the match interrupted by calling a time-out for the following situations that may not have been noticed by the Head Judge: accident, injury or sickness. However, the match is not interrupted until the Head Judge chooses to call the interruption, saying stop or *Yame*.

9. When it is time to decide the outcome of the match or event, the Head Judge will use either voice command or whistle command to indicate that it is decision time or *Hantei*. The Judges will then indicate their decision by using a flag or flags.
10. After taking notice of the decision of each of the Judges, the Head Judge will indicate by whistle to the Judges to lower their flag or flags and then announces the outcome of the match or event. The Head Judge will use step 9 and 10 in the occurrence that all allotted time has elapsed.
11. The timekeeper is seated at a designated location and monitors with a stopwatch the elapsing time during a match and uses a bell to indicate to the Judges by ringing once and announcing that 30 seconds are remaining, as well as by ringing twice, and announcing that all allotted time has elapsed. The announcement of this always prevails.
12. The scorekeepers use the pertinent official forms to keep records of all scores and outcome of all matches or events, following the Head Judge's announcements.

Item 6 – Procedures for Kata Tournaments

1. The Head Judge calls the competitors to line up. Then to bow to the Front or *Shomen Ni Rei* and to each other or *Otagai Ni Rei*.
2. Two competitors move to their respective designated positions and bow to each other.
3. For a **Red and White Flag System** match or event, both competitors before entering their designated positions in the court, bow to the Front or *Shomen*, then each competitor moves to their respective starting positions and bow to each other or *Otagai Ni Rei*. The Head Judge then chooses at random a *Kata* and announces the name of the *Kata* to the competitors. The red side repeats the name of that *Kata* first then the white side does the same. The Head Judge will confirm the name of the *Kata*, and creates a pause. Both competitors will then begin their performance at the Head Judge's command to start either by using the voice command "ready.. start" (*Yoi.. Hajime*) or by whistle. For Designated Basic *Kata* or *Shitei Kata*, the Head Judge chooses at random a *Kata* from the set of Designated Basic *Kata* cards then announces the name of that *Kata* to the 2 competitors. The red side repeats the name of that *kata* first then the white side does the same. The 2 competitors begin at the Head Judge's voice or whistle command to start.
4. For **Point System** match or event, for either Designated Intermediate *Kata* (*Sentei Kata*) or Favorite *Kata* (*Tokui Kata*), the competitor before entering the *Kata* designated starting point in the court, bows to the Front or *Shomen*, then moves to the *Kata* starting position, and announces the name of the chosen *Kata*, in a loud and clear voice. The Head Judge will repeat the name of that *Kata* and the competitor will then start their performance at their own timing. In Team *Kata*, only 1 of the team competitors announces the *Kata*.
The scorekeepers use the pertinent official forms to keep records of all the names of the *Kata* chosen by each competitor.

5. For a **Red and White Flag System**, when the performance is finished, the competitors return to the starting position following a voice command from the Head Judge to recover or *Naore*, and wait for the decision of all the Judges. After the final decision is announced, both competitors bow to each other or *Otagai Ni Rei*, exit the court, then bow to the Front or *Shomen*.

For **Point System** match or event, after the final decision, the competitor bows to the Front, exits the court, and bows to the Front again. Team Kata competitors follow this procedure as well.

6. If necessary, the Head Judge will confer with the Judges to discuss and make appropriate recommendations as well as decisions arising from Judges vote if there is a disagreement, as per the following:

a) making a mistake, improper behavior leading to disqualification
(*Hansoku*)

b) injury or accident

c) questionable issue prior to scoring

d) at a Judge's indication and the Head Judge considers it necessary

7. If any of the above have been identified, the Judges will indicate it to the Head Judge by whistle command.

8. For a **Red and White Flag System**, when it is time to decide the outcome of the match or event, the Head Judge will use either voice command or whistle command to indicate that it is decision time or *Hantei*. The Judges will then indicate their decision by using a flag or flags.

For **Point System** match or event, when it is time to decide the outcome of the match or event, the Head Judge will use whistle command to indicate that it is

decision time or *Hantei*. The Judges will then raise their score boards or score cards with their choice of score.

One of the scorekeepers reads in a loud and clear voice, each score, starting from the Head Judge and moving clockwise. The other scorekeepers write the announced scores on the appropriate official forms, make the necessary calculations for a total score.

A scorekeeper will announce the final score to the Head Judge, in a loud and clear voice and the Head Judge repeats this score to the competitors.

The Head Judge will then use whistle command to indicate to the Judges to lower their score boards or score cards.

Item 7 - Voice Commands for the Head Judge

1. The following commands are to be used by the Head Judge:

Senshu - calling **competitors** or asking to line up

Seiretsu - **line-up**, at beginning or end of the match or event

Shomen Ni Rei - asking a competitor or competitors to **bow to the Front**

Otagai Ni Rei - asking competitors to **bow to each other**
Shobu Ippon or Shobu Sanbon - identifying **1 Point** or **3 Point Match**
Hajime - **begin**
Yoi..Hajime - for a Flag System, **ready..begin**
Naore - in a Flag System *Kata* match, at the end of performance, to **recover** and return to the starting position
Yame - **stop**, to interrupt or end a match or event
Moto No Ichi - **return to your exact position**, in a *Kumite* match before resuming, prompting competitors to return to their exact starting positions
Tsuzukete Hajime - to **resume** the match
Tsuzukete - **continue**, when a competitor or competitors spontaneously stop, to continue the match
Ato Shibaraku - letting the competitors know that there is **30 seconds** time remaining
Aka / Shiro - indicating **red** or **white**
Jodan - to indicate a **face** level attack
Chudan - to indicate a **chest** level attack
Tsuki - to indicate a **punch**
Keri - to indicate a **kick**
Uchi - to indicate a **strike**
Waza-Ari - to indicate a **half point**
Ippon - to indicate a **full point** or **1 point**
Awasete Ippon - to indicate that score added **together making a full point**
Torimasen - indicating **no points**
Hayai - indicating **faster** attack
Aiuchi - indicating **simultaneous attacks**
Maai - indicating **distance** not sufficient
Ukete-Masu - indicating a **blocked** attack
Nukete-Masu - indicating an **off target** attack
Yowai - indicating a **weak** attack
Keikoku - indicating a **caution**
Chui - indicating a **warning**
Hansoku - indicating to **disqualify**
Muboubi - indicating a **non defending**
Jogai - indicating **out of bounds**
Hantei - indicating **decision time**
Aka / Shiro No Kachi - indicating **red** or **white** is the **winner**
Hikiwake - indicating a **draw**
Sai-Shiai - indicating a **re-match**
Sai-Sai-Shiai - indicating a **second re-match**
Sakidori - indicating a **"sudden death"** match, in a second re-match situation
Shobu Hajime - to begin a **"sudden death"** match

Shugo - indicating a **call to confer**

Kiken - to indicate a **withdrawal** of competitor/competitors

Shikkaku - to indicate an **absolute disqualification**

2. For the following verbal commands, the Head Judge clearly announces to which competitor, either the red or the white one, the command is addressed to.

*When announcing a score, the announcement is as follow:

Red or White (*Aka/Shiro*), Area of Attack, Technique Used, Points Awarded

*When issuing a warning or a disqualification, the announcement is as follow:

Red or White (*Aka/Shiro*), Type of Warning, Severity of Warning

*When issuing a withdrawal of competitor(s) or an absolute disqualification, the announcement is as follow:

Red or White (*Aka/Shiro*), Identify the Command

3. If a competitor scores with consecutive techniques called *Renzoku Waza*, the Head Judge announces the target area and the kind of attack as well as announces either a half point by consecutive techniques or *Renzoku Waza Waza-Ari*, or a 1 point by consecutive techniques or *Renzoku Waza Ippon* given.

Item 8 Whistle Commands

_____ indicates the length of whistling

1. The following are the whistle commands used by the Head Judge:
 - a) _____ start - *Hajime*
 - b) ____ stop - *Yame*
 - c) _____ call to confer - *Shugo*
 - d) _____ decision time - *Hantei*
 - e) ____ lower flags or score boards
2. The following are the whistle commands used by the Arbitrator:
 - a) _____ stop the match
3. The following are the whistle commands used by the Judges:
 - a) _____ 1 point or *Ippon* has been scored
 - b) ____ half point or *Waza-Ari* has been scored
 - c) _____ attention call to Head Judge

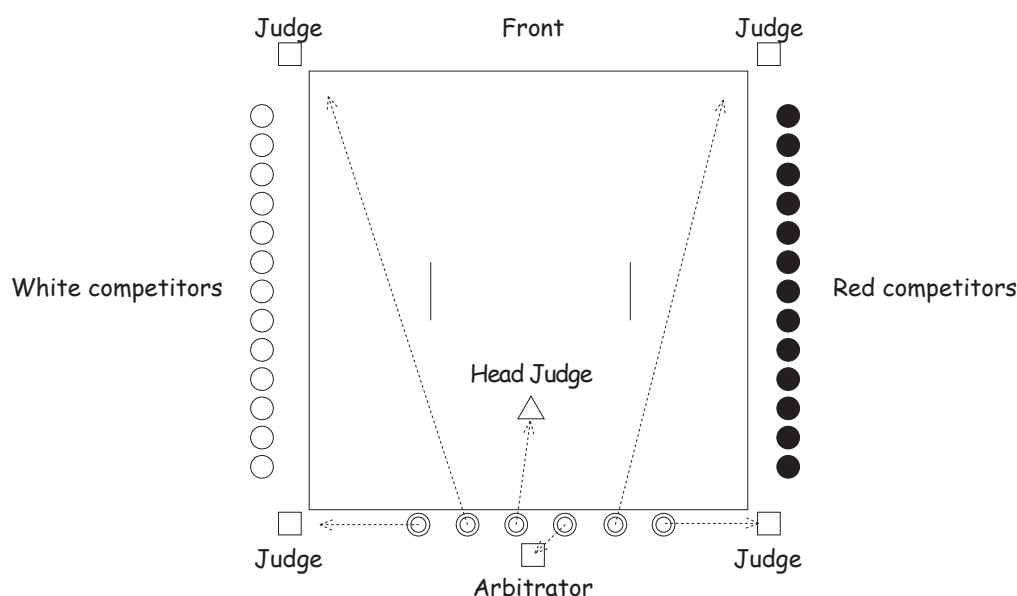
Item 9 - Hand & Flag Signals for Court Officials

The Judges use specific gestures when expressing their judgments and decisions. See Appendix 6 for illustrated table.

CHAPTER 3 TO JUDGE KUMITE

Item 10 – Location of Court Officials

1. The Head Judge during a match or event is positioned as seen below and moves according to the competitors.
2. The Judges hold a whistle in their mouth and a red and white flag in each hand. They are positioned as seen below.



Note: For a Red and White Flag System, please see above diagram. The red competitors are situated at the right side of the Head Judge while the white competitors area at the left side. For the Head Judge and the Judges, please follow the arrows to see where the competitors are positioned after initial bowing and when the match or event is over, to see them come back to their original positions for the final bowing.

The Arbitrator sits facing the Front or *Shomen*, for observation of the match or event.

Item 11 – Criteria for Decisions

The Head Judge decides the outcome of the match following the indications of all the Judges. Please see the table below for all possible decisions in a Red and White Flag System both for *Kumite* or *Kata* Events.

	Decisions by the Judges				Decisions by the Head Judge
1	O	O	O	●	White is the winner
2	O	O	O	●	White is the winner
3	O	O	O	X	White is the winner
4	O	O	X	●	White is the winner / Draw
5	●	●	●	●	Red is the winner
6	●	●	●	O	Red is the winner

7	●	●	●	X	Red is the winner
8	●	●	X	O	Red is the winner / Draw
9	X	X	X	X	Draw
10	O	X	X	●	Draw
11	O	X	X	X	Draw
12	X	X	X	●	Draw
13	O	O	●	●	Draw / Red is the winner / White is the winner
14	O	O	X	X	White is the winner / Draw
15	X	X	●	●	Red is the winner / Draw

Symbols: ● Red is the winner
O White is the winner
X Draw

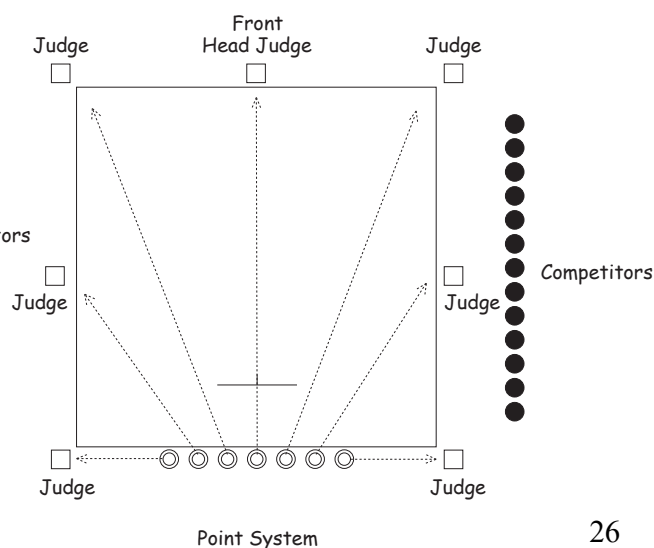
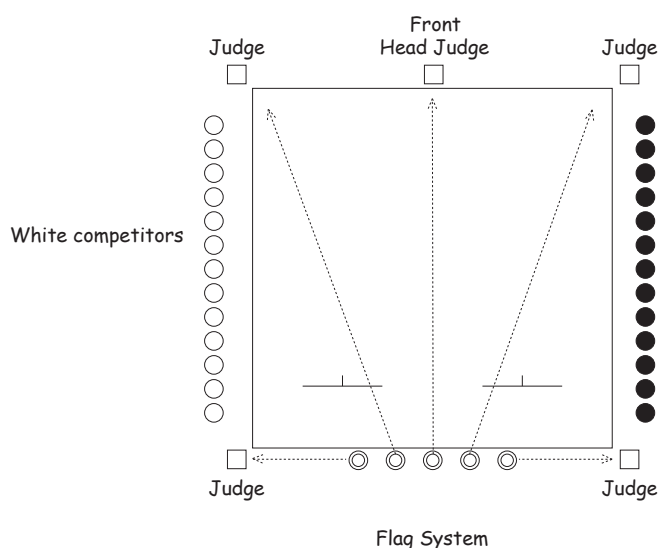
CHAPTER 4 TO JUDGE KATA

Item 12 - Location of Court Officials

Please see the diagrams below for the location of the Head Judge and the Judges as part of a Red and White Flag System as seen on the left hand side and a Point system as seen on the right hand side. For the Head Judge and the Judges, please follow the arrows to see where they are positioned after initial bowing and after the match or event is over, to see them come back to their original positions for the final bowing.

~~The Arbitrator sits facing the Front or Shomen, for observation of the match of event.~~

Correction: There is no Arbitrator for kata.



Item 13 – Criteria for Decisions

Points are awarded according to the following elements as seen below:

1	Frame of mind, spirit and eye contact
2	Perfection overall
3	Levels of strength
4	Contraction and expansion of the body
5	Change in the speed of the techniques
6	Line of performance or <i>Embusen</i>
7	Smoothness of feet movements
8	Understanding of the meaning of techniques
9	Illustrating the essential characteristics of the chosen <i>Kata</i>
10	Overall smoothness of movements

Elements as Part of *Kata* Sequence

1	Did not return to the starting point
2	Mistake is made, but immediately corrected and <i>Kata</i> is resumed
3	Movement is missed, but <i>Kata</i> is continued
4	Major mistake is made and several movements are missed
5	Stopped in the middle of the performance
6	Being interrupted by the Head Judge

Fundamental Criteria for Decisions

1	Posture
2	Balance
3	Stances <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Width and lengthb) Adherence of the feet to the floorc) Position of the hipsd) Rotation of the hips
4	Basics or <i>Kihon</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Transforming the body parts into "weapons"b) Strength and focus of techniquesc) Aiming for the proper targetd) Proper course of techniques

CHAPTER 5 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Item 14 – Boys & Girls Tournaments / Adult Female Tournaments

Regarding the rules and regulations that concern these tournaments, please refer to the previous document.

Item 15 – Seniors Tournaments

Regarding the rules and regulations that concern these tournaments, please refer to the previous document.

Item 16 – Revision of Document

The revision of this document is done by the Masters Committee also called *Shihan-Kai* with a majority of two thirds of the members present.

Additional Clause

Date of Revision: May 11 1996

Date of revision: August 14 2004

Date of revision: May 29 2011

Date of revision: August 31 2015

Date of revision: April 1 2018

Last date of revision: September 7 2024

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR 1 POINT BASIC FIGHTING OR KIHON-IPPON KUMITE

TO START A MATCH OR EVENT

1. When called, the 2 selected competitors move forward to their designated starting positions and bow to each other.
2. The Head Judge starts the match with the vocal command: begin or *Hajime*.
Note: Red side always starts first. Then, the attacks alternate between each side.

ATTACKING TECHNIQUES

1. Punch to the face or *Jodan Oi-Zuki* - aiming for either just below the nose and in this particular situation, as well for the lower part of the chin.
2. Punch to the stomach or *Chudan Oi-Zuki* - aiming for the solar plexus.
3. Front kick to the stomach or *Chudan Mae-Geri* - using the back leg, aiming for the solar plexus.

Note: The above techniques are done with the right hand and the right foot. If there is a draw, the above techniques are repeated but with the left hand and the left foot.

4. There must be appropriate distance to attack. The attacking competitor steps the leg back and forms a downward block or *Gedan-Barai*. Each attack must be clearly announced before execution.

Note: For the execution of front kick or *Mae-Geri*, both arms are extended and kept on each side of the body.

5. After the completion of an attack and defense sequence, both competitors simultaneously return to the natural position or *Shizentai*. The attacking competitor takes a step back to return to the natural position while the defending competitor takes a step forward to do the same.

Note: If the distance between the competitors is not appropriate, the Head Judge or the Judges will tell the competitors to adjust their distance appropriately.

DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES

1. Any kind of blocking techniques and body shifting can be used.
2. Any kind of counterattack to the target areas as mentioned above, can be used but only a single counterattack is allowed.

ADDITIONAL POINTS

1. An attack or defense technique can only be used one time.
2. There is to be one sudden vocal release of energy or *Kiai* per attack and per counterattack.

OUTCOME OF A MATCH OR EVENT

1. The outcome of the match or event is decided by the Head Judge and 4 Judges.
2. If there is a draw, the same attacks are done with the left side initiating the attacks. Following this, a decision to declare a winner must be reached.

PROHIBITED ELEMENTS

Pertinent to Attack

1. Faking a movement in order to have the opponent move, and then attack that opponent.
2. Lunging the body towards the opponent or taking more than one basic step forward to attack.
3. From the natural position or *Shizentai*, the attack must follow a straight line forward and not follow the opponent who may have moved prior to completion of the attack. Attention: The foot of the attacking competitor that has stepped forward, should end up positioned between the opponent's legs. Fundamental basic technique must be applied during execution.
4. Face level and stomach level attacks that are executed with forceful motions such as pressing the arm downward while the opponent is executing a blocking technique.
5. Withdrawing too quickly the hand that is executing an attack.

Pertinent to Defense

1. Contact or hitting the attacking competitor other than the blocking technique that should be executed. Attention: There is no contact to the other competitor except to execute the blocking technique.
2. Any combination techniques; sweeping the attacking competitor - *Ashi-Barai*; any projection techniques or holds involving the joints.
3. During the execution of a blocking technique to the stomach, to be blocking at the other competitor's elbow. Attention: Proper blocking is done at the wrist of the attacking competitor.
4. During the execution of a blocking technique to the face, any forceful motions that may cause a loss of balance of the attacking competitor.

5. During the execution of a blocking technique to the stomach, to be using any forceful downward motions.
6. Withdrawing too quickly the hand that is executing a counterattack.

REGARDING CRITERIA LEADING TO DISQUALIFICATION

1. When a prohibited element has been identified, the Head Judge and the Judges will confer and indicate their decision regarding the degree of severity and give the appropriate reprimand, either a caution or *Keikoku*, a warning or *Chui*, a disqualification or *Hansoku*, and pronounce absolute disqualification or *Shikkaku*.
2. Please refer to the section Criteria Leading to Disqualification (HANSOKU) as part of the Tournament Rules & Regulations document for additional information.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR SEMI-FREE FIGHTING OR JIYU-IPPON KUMITE

TO START A MATCH OR EVENT

1. When called, the 2 selected competitors move forward to their designated starting positions and bow to each other.
2. The Head Judge starts the match with the vocal command: begin or *Hajime*. As both competitors step forward in their ready to fight positions or *Kamae*, the red side always starts first. After each attack, block and counterattack sequence is completed, the competitors pause in ready to fight positions or *Kamae* at a proper distance or *Maai*, then return to their starting points, still in ready to fight positions or *Kamae*. The 2 competitors then wait for the Head Judge's command to resume fighting, either the red side or the white side initiating.
3. The competitors may choose their ready to fight positions or *Kamae*. However it is recommended that in a Junior Tournament the competitors hold their arms in front of their body.
4. After all attacks are executed from both sides, the competitors return to their designated starting positions and wait for decision of the Judges.
5. Both competitors must wear guards for the hands as per the Tournament Rules & Regulations document.

ATTACKING TECHNIQUES

1. Punch to the face or *Jodan Oi-Zuki* - aiming for either just below the nose and in this particular situation, as well for the lower part of the chin.
2. Punch to the stomach or *Chudan Oi-Zuki* - aiming for the solar plexus.
3. Front kick to the stomach or *Chudan Mae-Geri* - using the back leg, aiming for the solar plexus.

Note: The above techniques are done with the right hand and the right foot. If there is a draw, the above techniques are repeated but with the left hand and the left foot.

4. There must be appropriate distance to attack and each attack must be clearly announced before execution.

Note: If the distance between the competitors is not appropriate, the Head Judge or the Judges will tell the competitors to adjust their distance appropriately.

DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES

1. Any kind of blocking techniques and body shifting can be used.
2. Any kind of counterattack to the target areas as mentioned above, can be used but only a single counterattack is allowed.

ADDITIONAL POINTS

1. An attack or defense technique can only be used one time.
2. There is to be one sudden vocal release of energy or *Kiai* per attack and per counterattack.
3. When there is proper distance or *Maai* to attack, the competitor must initiate that attack. It has been seen that proper distance or *Maai* has been reached and no attack is initiated. This must not be done.
4. The defending competitor must not back away creating a longer distance from the attacking competitor.
5. Faking a movement or *Kensei* is not allowed.

PROHIBITED ELEMENTS

Pertinent to Attack

1. Distance is too short, and lunging the body towards the opponent.
2. Withdrawing too quickly the hand that is executing an attack.
3. Contact or hitting the opponent.
4. Blocking or shifting the body during the counterattack.
5. Grabbing or holding the opponent.

Pertinent to Defense

1. Stepping out of the court for 3 times. A caution or *Keikoku* is given for the first time, a warning or *Chui* is given for the second time and a disqualification or *Hansoku* is given for the third time.
2. Blocking and counterattacking at the same time.

Note: Please refer to the section Criteria leading to Disqualification (*HANSOKU*) as part of the Tournament Rules & Regulations document for additional information.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING 1 POINT BASIC FIGHTING OR *KIHON-IPPON KUMITE* AND SEMI-FREE FIGHTING OR *JIYU-IPPON KUMITE*

FRAME OF MIND OF COMPETITORS

1. Proper manners
2. Fighting spirit and effort
3. Eye contact
4. Poise and readiness

DISTANCE OR *MAAI*

1. Proper distance and angle of the techniques towards the target area.
2. Proper timing when blocking and if the attacks are properly blocked at the wrist and ankle of the opponent as well as the attack being properly diverted and the body moved from the line of attack.
3. If the blocking technique is practical and body shifting is done according to the opponent.
4. Proper choice of counterattack from the defending position and according to distance and the rapidity of execution of this element.
5. Motionless of supporting leg when initiating a blocking or attacking sequence.

FOCUS OF POWER

1. Degree of use of the body to generate this focus of power.
2. Hip rotation and feet movement are smooth and proper direction of body and techniques.
3. Proper stance and posture and the degree of transforming the body parts into "weapons" of attack and defense.
4. Proper sudden vocal release of energy or *Kiai*, spirit and power as a unit.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR FREE FIGHTING OR JIYU KUMITE FOR BOYS & GIRLS TOURNAMENTS

1. Free fighting (*Jiyu Kumite*) can be done from Elementary school third grade or 9 years old and up.
2. Tournament Rules & Regulations as per previous document is to be followed or as decided by the Host Organization.
3. Boys and girls are not permitted to participate together in Team Events.
4. Large age gaps between young and older competitors are not permitted.
5. During all *Kumite* matches or events, touching the face area or *Jodan* is not permitted.
6. Criteria of decision regarding techniques is based essentially on safety as well as timing and distance.
7. 1) During all *Kumite* matches, delivering a kick or showing an intent to kick a competitor who is on the ground is prohibited. If a kick is delivered, it will be considered a *HANSOKU*, and if contact is confirmed, the competitor will be disqualified and barred from further participation in both *Kumite* and *Kata* in the given match.
2) Win brought by the opponent's *Hansoku* (Disqualification) is allowed up to twice. After getting win by *Hansoku* twice, the competitor will not be allowed to attend the next match except *Kata* match.
When a competitor won by *Hansoku* he/she should wear a blue tape on the upper arm after each *Hansoku* win.
8. Boys and girls are required to wear a transparent mouth guard, gloves and a chest protector.

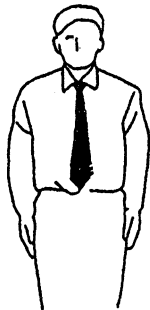
SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR KATA TOURNAMENTS FOR BOYS & GIRLS TOURNAMENTS

This applies to Elementary school children and Junior High school students:

1. The Red and White Flag System will be used up to the best 8 competitors, using this Designated Basic Kata list or *Shitei Kata*:
Heian Shodan . Heian Nidan . Heian Sandan . Heian Yondan
Heian Godan . Tekki Shodan
The competitor who finishes the *Kata* earlier than the other, must wait until the Head Judge indicates the competitors to recover or *Naore*.
2. Boys and girls are not permitted to participate together in Team Events.
3. Large age gaps between young and older competitors are not permitted.
4. For all other pertinent items, please refer to the Tournament Rules & Regulations.

HAND & FLAG SIGNALS FOR COURT OFFICIALS

1. Hand Signals for the Head Judge



1 Point Match begin
Shobu Ippon Hajime



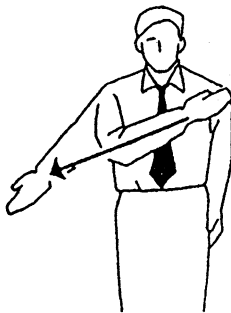
Stop
Yame



Back to your positions
Moto No Ichi



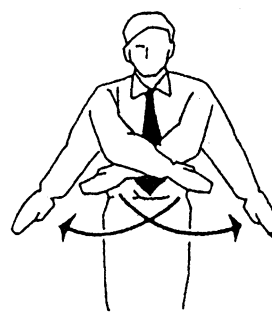
Resume the match
Tsuzukete Hajime



Half point
Waza-Ari



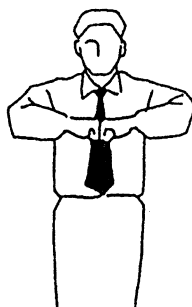
1 Point
Ippon



No point
Torimasen



Faster attack
Hayai



Attacks at same time
Aiuchi



Distance not sufficient
Maai



Blocked attack
Ukete-Masu



Off target attack
Nukete-masu



Off target attack

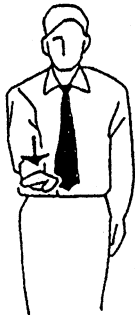


Off target attack

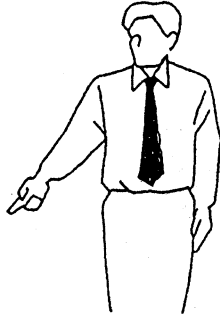


Off target attack

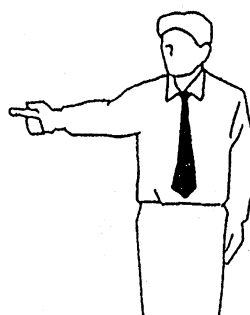
1. Hand Signals for the Head Judge



Weak attack
Yowai



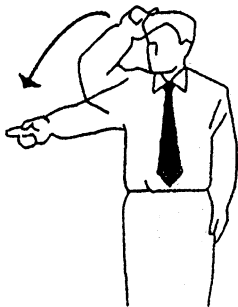
Caution
Keikoku



Warning
Chui



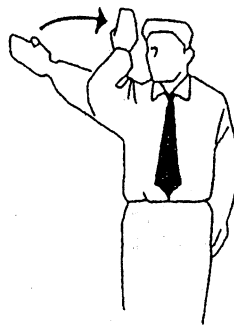
Disqualification
Hansoku



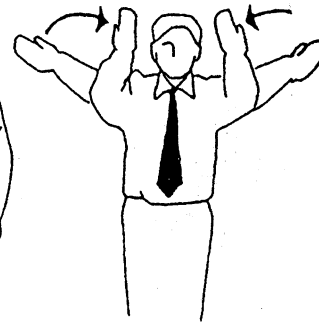
Out of bounds
Jogai



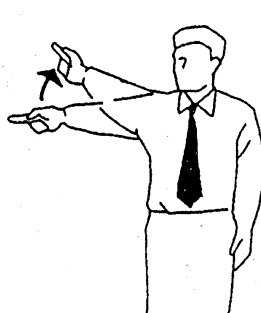
Draw
Hikiwake



Calling Judges to confer
Shugo



Volunteer withdrawal
Kiken



Absolute disqualification
Shikkaku



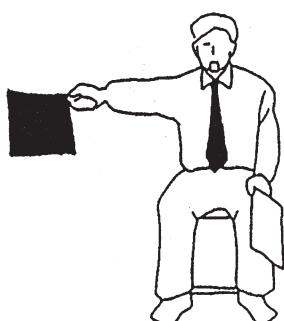
Volunteer non defending
Muboubi

2. Flag Signals for the Judges

dark flag is red, pale flag is white



Ready, begin
Yoi, Hajime



Half point
Waza-Ari



1 Point
Ippon



Attacks at same time
Aiuchi



Blocked attack
Ukete-Masu



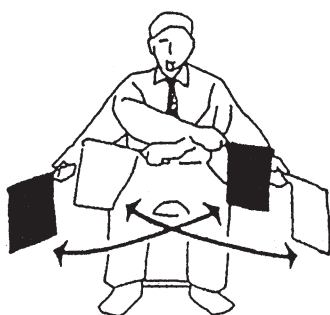
Off target attack
Nukete-masu



Off target attack



Off target attack



No point
Torimasen



Unable to see
Mienai



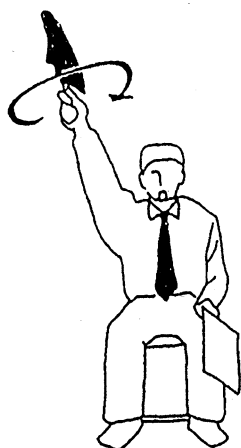
Caution
Keikoku



Warning leading to disqualification
Hansoku Chui

2. Flag Signals for the Judges

dark flag is red, pale flag is white



Disqualification
Hansoku



Out of bounds
Jogai



Weak attack
Yowai



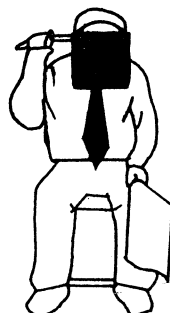
Draw
Hikiwake



Faster attack
Hayai



Distance not sufficient
Maai



Volunteer non defending
Muboubi

March 11, 2025

To: All representatives of
JKAWF member countries and organizations

Notification of Shihankai resolutions

Dear Sir/Madam

We are pleased to hear that you are in good health.

We would like to inform you that the followings were approved at the Shihankai committee meeting held on February 15th, 2025.

1. Amendments and additions to the match rules

① Chapter 3 Kumite Events Item 21 - Definition & Criteria for Scoring Points

Following clause is added as No.8.

【If, after the announcement of "Waza-Ari/Ippon", it is determined that the opponent has clearly been injured by a blow without control, the announced "Waza-Ari/Ippon" may be revoked. However, this only applies if the player who was attacked remains within the court. Additionally, the player who attacked without control may be given a "Keikoku," "Hansoku Chuui," or "Hansoku." In this case, the judgement of the tournament doctor shall be taken precedence.】

② Chapter 2 Tournament Operations Item 10 - Head Coach

Clause No.5 is amended as below

【A head coach must have to hold both qualification of instructor and judge】

③ Chapter 3 Kumite Events Item 20 – Definition of Team Kumite Event

Following words are added to No.5 Clause –a)

【Furthermore, the loser's Waza-Ari will not be reflected in the outcome.】

④ Chapter 4 Kata Events Item 37 – Criteria for Point Deduction & for Disqualification

Following words are added as point No. g)

【In team and individual competitions, going outside the bounds of the court will result in a deduction of points. In this case, if the player goes outside the bounds of the court by within their one-foot-length, 0.1 points will be deducted. If the player goes outside the bounds of the court by more than their one-foot-length, 0.2 to 0.3 points will be deducted.】

※This will come into effect on April 1, 2025.

2. About the Judge Seminar for renewal of A-Judge qualification

Currently, Judge Seminar for renewal of A-Judge qualification has been held at JKA joint training camps in the spring and autumn, regardless of license level, and A-class judges are considered to have renewed their licenses by attending these seminars.

However, from now on, this training sessions will be held for exclusively for renewal of A-class judges as below;

① Judge Seminar for renewal (Must attend once a three years):

Spring and Autumn Joint training camp seminars

Seminars organized by Regional HQ

② Contents: Judges techniques for Kumite and Kata matches.

Regards,

Japan Karate Association
Chief Instructor Takeshi Oishi



2025 Corrections and Updates

Cynthia Toryu
Apr 27, 2025

This version of the JKA Tournament Rules and Regulations has been modified to improve provide missing information and improve clarity, as follows:

- Added title page and table of contents
- Page 4 – Chapter 2, Item 9 - translation correction
- Page 6 – Chapter 2, Item 17- diagram correction
- Page 8 – Chapter 3, Item 20 - translation correction
- Page 10 – Chapter 3, Item 23 - translation correction
- Page 15 – Chapter 4, Item 34 - translation correction
- Page 25 – Chapter 3, Item 10 - diagram correction
- Page 25-26 – Chapter 3, Item 11 – changed red to solid circle in table
- Page 26 – Chapter 4, Item 12 - translation and diagram correction
- Page 37-40 – Added Hand & Flag Signals
- Added Notification of Shihankai resolutions, which lists amendments and additions to the match rules

TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS

TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

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