



A m e r i c a n K a r a t e A s s o c i a t i o n

American Karate Association 2015 Competition Rules



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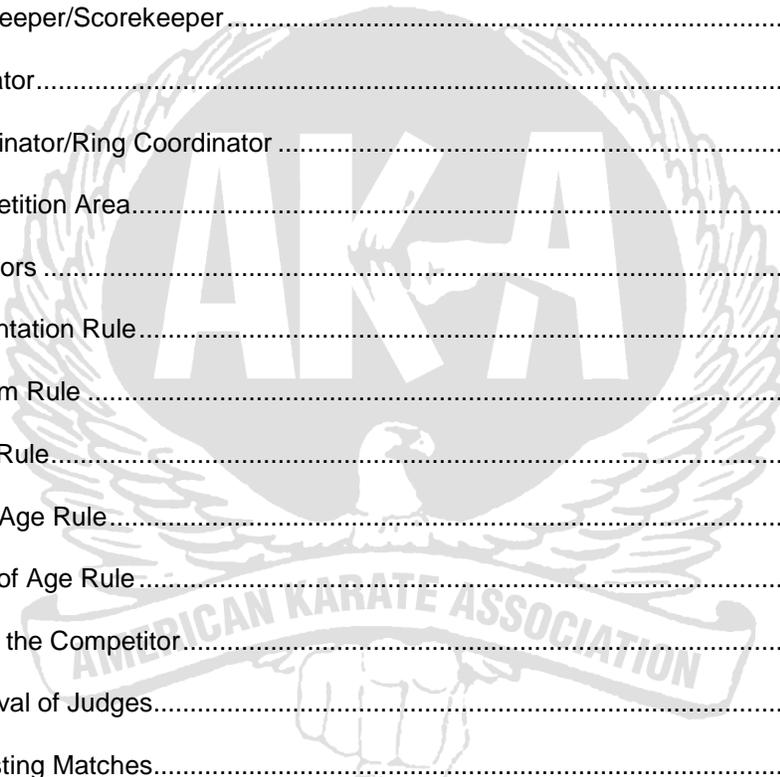
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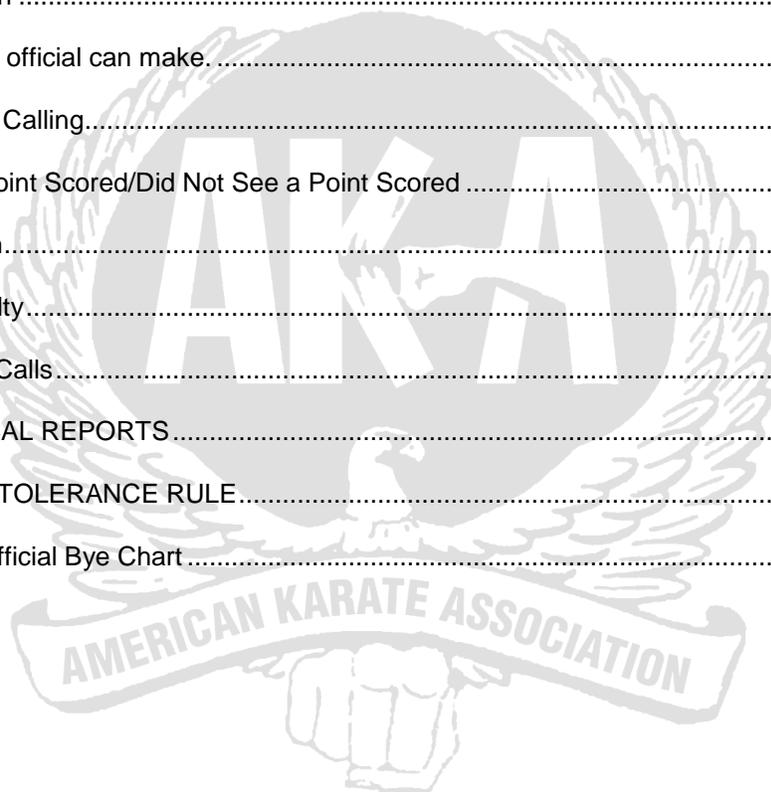
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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to establish and maintain a comprehensive rule set that will establish fair play for all for all those who compete in AKA sanctioned divisions. This document will detail all rules, and penalties for infractions of said rules. All those who compete in a tournament sanctioned by the AKA must adhere to these rules. These rules were established to inform and protect all members of the public involved in AKA events.

1.0 - Definitions

1.1 Competitor

Any male or female of any rank or age who takes part in any division of the tournament competition.

1.2 Rank

Rank is broken down into four categories: Novice, Intermediate, Advance, Jr. Black Belt, Black Belt. A novice rank is defined as one of the first three kyu/gup levels or first three belt ranks in the competitor's school. Intermediate is defined as the next two kyu/gup levels or next two belt ranks in the competitor's school. Advance is defined any kyu/gup or belt rank past intermediate level but before black belt level. All non-black belt ranks are commonly referred to as under belt ranks. A Jr. Black Belt is defined as any competitor who is under the age of 18 and competes as a black belt. An adult black belt is any competitor who is over the age of 18 and competes as a black belt.

1.3 Coach

Any male or female who is trying to help a competitor by instructing them on what to do. A coach could be but is not limited to a friend, parent, team mate or official coach.

1.4 Center Judge/Referee

The center referee is the most experienced official in the ring and is a certified black belt and thoroughly versed on the rules and order of competition. He/she promotes the safety of the competitors, enforces the rules and ensures fair play. To this end, he/she will make sure any shuffling of competitor cards is done thoroughly and fairly, all sparring matches are determined in fair manner, and all 'byes' in a sparring match are conducted in a fair manner. He/she starts and stops the match, awards points, makes penalty decisions, administrates the voting of the other judges, communicates clearly with the scorekeeper and timekeeper, and announces the winner of each match.

- 1) Match starts and ends only with his/her command (not the command of the timekeeper)
- 2) Has final decision on any disputes on scores, outside of the arbitrator.
- 3) Has the power to issue warnings and award penalty points without a majority decision
- 4) Automatically has power to disqualify a competitor who receives (3) penalty points
- 5) Has power to issue time-outs. A competitor can ask for a time-out, but it is the determination of the referee to issue one.
- 6) Can call for a rescore from other officials if he/she feels that their score is not in line with the scoring regulations of a specific division.

1.5 Corner Judge/Referee

An official is a certified person who is well versed on the rules and order of competition. Each ring must have a certified referee and two or four certified officials, and a certified timekeeper/scorekeeper. The judges call points and rule infractions as they see them. They also vote on disqualifications. It is the majority vote of the officials and center referee that determines a scoring point and a non-automatic disqualification.

- 1) Judges must be minimum age of 18 and must be a certified black belt for all black belt divisions. Judges must be a certified black belt or a certified AKA judge for all adult under belt divisions. For Jr. Under Belt Divisions judges must be a minimum of 16 years of age and minimum of black belt or a certified AKA judge.

1.6 Timekeeper/Scorekeeper

A certified timekeeper/scorekeeper may be either a martial artist or non martial artist. It is the duty of the timekeeper/scorekeeper to correctly record the names and order of competition, as determined by the center judge, as well as the scores of all referees and officials. They must also keep time of competitors during their weapons/forms routine and keep time of sparring matches.

1.7 Arbitrator

A certified arbitrator is a certified black belt and thoroughly versed on the rules and order of competition. They are there to settle any and all disputes concerning the rules of the competition.

1.8 Coordinator/Ring Coordinator

A certified coordinator may be either a martial artist or non martial artist. It is the duty of the coordinator to make sure all rings have the proper amount of judges and timekeeper/scorekeepers to run efficiently.

1.9 Competition Area

The competition area, commonly called a ring, is defined as the individual competition is for each division. The size of the fighting and form adult black belt rings shall be approximately 20'x 20'. Starting lines should be marked approximately six feet apart in the middle of the ring. Additionally, each ring should be posted with a ring number visible to competitors, officials, and medical personnel from across the floor. All youth and under black belt adult rings shall be a minimum of 16' x 16' approximately.

There will be a minimum of two corner judges and one center judge for both black belt and under belt divisions. There must be at least one person acting as a timekeeper/scorekeeper, but two people, one timekeeper and one scorekeeper is preferred.

2.0 Competitors

It is the responsibility of the competitor to know the rules and be ready for competition when called to do so. He/she must be suitably attired, weighed-in and at the appropriate ring when competition begins. If the competitor is not at his/her ring ready to compete when competition begins, he/she may not be able to compete. (See Delay of Time Rule and penalties in each individual division section of the rules)

If a competitor leaves the ring after the competition begins and is not present when his/her name is called to compete, his/her name will be called three times within 10 seconds at ringside. If

he/she is still not present to compete he/she will be disqualified (see delay of time rule for more details).

2.1 Presentation Rule

Each competitor must present him/herself to the referee suitably attired with proper uniform and equipment and physically prepared to compete. If he/she is not prepared to compete as deemed by the center referee, the competitor may be penalized for delay of time (See Delay of Time Rule and penalties in each individual division section of the rules)

It is the responsibility of the competitor to know the rules and be ready for competition when called to do so. He/she must be suitably attired, weighed-in and at the appropriate ring when competition begins.

If the competitor is not at his/her ring ready to compete when competition begins, he/she may not be able to compete (see delay of time rule and late entry rules for more details).

If a competitor leaves the ring after the competition begins and is not present when his/her name is called to compete, his/her name will be called three times within 10 seconds at ringside. If he/she is still not present to compete, he/she will be disqualified (see delay of time rule for more details).

2.2 Uniform Rule

All competitors must wear a complete (top and bottom) traditional or sport karate (Kung Fu, Tae Kwon Do, etc.) uniform in a good state of repair. The appropriate color belt or sash must be worn in competition.

- 1) **Form & Weapons:** T-shirts and, tank tops are allowed in these divisions if they are part of the competitor's official school uniform. Uniforms in the form and weapons divisions are allowed more liberties because they are not one-on-one competition where the uniform could cause a decisive disadvantage or advantage to a competitor. Removal of the uniform top is allowed if the removal is considered relevant to the artistic expression or safety of the competitor. Shoes may be worn in form competition if they do not damage or mark the competition floor.
- 2) **Sparring:** All sparring uniforms must have sleeves that reach at least to the middle of the bicep. No T-shirts, sweats, tank tops or shoes are allowed in the sparring divisions. Ringstar sparring shoes are allowed.

Anyone not wearing a proper uniform at the time of competition will be given a chance to change into a proper uniform, but will be subjected to delay of time penalty (see delay of time rule). If competitor does not have the proper uniform he/she will be disqualified from the competition.

2.3 Rank Rule

A competitor must compete at the highest rank level they have earned in the martial arts.

- 1) Competitor may choose to compete at a higher rank but once they do so they must continue to compete at that rank throughout the competition season.
- 2) Any competitor who competes as a black belt in any event within or outside the AKA, must always compete as a black belt.
- 3) An adult black belt competitor may compete down in age into another adult black belt division but cannot compete up in age.
- 4) A competitor can never compete in a lower belt division than the level of belt he/she has earned in the Martial Arts.

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Anyone found violating this rule will lose all winnings (medals, trophies, prize money, etc.) for that day and will not be allowed to submit results to the AKA. A second violation will result in suspension for the remaining of the current season and will be subjected to any consequences defined in the AKA Code of Ethics.

2.4 Legal Age Rule

All competitors have the option of competing in the same division all year long for rating purposes, by establishing a legal competition age for the year. The age a competitor is on June 30th of the current competition year establishes their legal competition age for that year. They can compete all year at that age so he/she can earn rating points in one age division all year.

- 1) A competitor does have the option of competing in his/her chronological age group
- 2) A Jr. Black Belt or any under belt that competes in an older age division cannot compete in a younger division thereafter. *Example: Competitor 'A' turns 7 years old on July 30. He can compete as a 6 year old throughout the competition season since his legal competition age was 6 years old prior to June 30th. If the competitor decides to compete as a 7 year old he may not go back to competing in the 6 year old division.*

Anyone found violating this rule will lose all winnings (medals, trophies, prize money, etc.) for that day and will not be allowed to submit results to the AKA. A second violation will result in suspension for the remaining of the current season and will be subjected to any consequences defined in the AKA Code of Ethics.

2.5 Proof of Age Rule

All competitors must have a proof of age document. If there is a legitimate reason to question a competitor's age, he/she must present a proof of age (birth certificate, driver's license, or other acceptable documents) to prove his/her age within 10 days after the event or be disqualified from the division in question and will not be allowed to compete until proof is provided.

3.0 Rights of the Competitor

3.1 Removal of Judges

If a competitor feels that an official should be removed from a forms or weapons division for good reason, he/she must file a protest before the division begins. If a competitor feels that an official should be removed from a sparring division, he/she may file a protest at any time. It is totally up to the center referee and the arbitrator to determine if an official should be removed.

3.2 Protesting Matches

A competitor has the right to protest an infraction of the rules or if a possible mistake was made in the scoring call. A competitor cannot protest a judgment call. If a competitor wishes to protest, he/she should first let the center judge know he/she believes there has been an infraction of the rules or a mistake has been made. If the center judges cannot properly settle the protest to the player's satisfaction, either the center judge or competitor can summon the arbitrator to the ring to render a decision. Video will not be allowed to be used to protest judgment calls.

All protests must be made in an orderly, proper and sportsmanlike manner. All protests must be made immediately. Protests are not allowed once competition has resumed (after the fact protest). A competitor may be penalized or even disqualified if he/she is protesting improperly or without proper cause.

4.0 Competition Rules

(Note: For the vast majority of the AKA events the following divisions are combined divisions: Extreme Forms/Weapons, Musical Forms/Weapons, Traditional/Creative Weapons. For the purpose of clarification of criteria, these divisions will be listed and explained separately.)

4.1 Definition of Form Divisions

Traditional Forms

These forms must capture the essence of classic martial arts movements, showcasing the traditional techniques, stances, footwork, and weapons. Emphasis is placed on execution of technique, application of technique, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and focus. Forms may be unmodified or modified from what a system or school considers being the original version of the form.

Performance of the following movements will result in a downgrade by the judges for all ranks, or upon unanimous vote of the judges under belts will receive the lowest score possible and black belts will be disqualified:

- Any inverted movement where the head is lower than the waist, example: front or back flips; cartwheels; front or side leg splits or any other gymnastic movements or extreme exhibitions of flexibility or agility with the body.
- Any rotation of the body that exceeds 360 degrees in one rotation.

Forward/Backward shoulder rolls and butterfly kicks are considered traditional techniques as they are utilized in some traditional martial arts and maybe used in this division. There is no Kiai/Kihap rule. Competitors may Kiai/Kihap as many times as they feel adds to the form. There is no kick rule. Competitors may kick as high as they feel necessary to add to the form regardless of style. Judges can not score competitors based on what they feel is or is not the correct version of a traditional form. Music is not allowed in this division at any time during regular elimination competition.

Creative Forms

The Creative Division allows forms to include contemporary martial arts techniques that have evolved over the years. These may be added to traditional form, or the form may be devised in its entirety by the competitor or his/her instructor. The Creative Division was formerly known as the Open and before that the *American* Division. A form in the Creative Division must **ONLY** include techniques which originate from martial arts and, like the Traditional Division, emphasis will be placed on execution of the techniques, application of the techniques, balance, speed, power, solid stances. Spinning kicks, jump spinning kicks, flying kicks, multiple kicks, splits, and other creative martial arts techniques are permitted.

Performance of the following movements will result in a downgrade by the judges for all ranks, or upon unanimous vote of the judges under belts will receive the lowest score possible and black belts will be disqualified:

- Any inverted movement where the head is lower than the waist, example: front or back flips; cartwheels; front or side leg splits or any other gymnastic movements or extreme exhibitions of flexibility or agility with the body.
- Any rotation of the body that exceeds 360 degrees in one rotation.

Forward/Backward shoulder rolls and butterfly kicks are considered traditional techniques as they are utilized in some traditional martial arts and maybe used in this division. Judges will base their scoring on the uniqueness of the form as well as the execution of its techniques. (Example: A nicely executed traditional form that adds two new moves should not score higher than a form that has been created from scratch). Music is not allowed in this division at any time during regular elimination competition.

Extreme Forms

The Extreme Divisions allow the competitor to perform any movements whether they originate from traditional or contemporary martial arts systems or otherwise. At least half of the form must originate from martial arts techniques, and the competitor must execute at least one technique that involves an inverted move or a rotation greater than 360 degrees in any single rotation of the body. Emphasis is placed on the quality of execution of techniques and movements, martial arts skills, balance, speed, power, degree of difficulty, and showmanship. The competitor must perform the required criteria of the form with their body else, under belts will face a downgrade by the judges for all ranks, or upon unanimous vote of the judges under belts will receive the lowest score possible and black belts will be disqualified. Music may be included into the routine only during Night Time Finals/Grand Championships. Music is not allowed during the regular elimination competition.

Musical Forms

The Musical Divisions requires an empty hand form to meet the above criteria for Traditional, Creative, Extreme Forms, or a combination of the three, choreographed in a general sense to the beats or rhythm of music by the competitor. Primary emphasis shall be placed on innovative choreography of moves to the music, however, the basic criteria listed above for all forms must also be observed. Simply performing a form with background music, or a form not meeting the basic criteria for all forms above, will result in a downgrade by the judges for all ranks, or upon unanimous vote of the judges under belts will receive the lowest score possible and black belts will be disqualified. Competitors must remember the following while in this division:

- Each competitor is responsible for providing their own music and a suitable way to play the music
- Each competitor must provide a music player of reasonable and non-intrusive size at ringside to play his or her music, and an attendant at the player who must be present at all times during the performance.
- As each form begins, a music volume check must be made, during which time the player attendant will look to the center judge for a nod of approval or a signal to lower the volume. Once this volume is set, it may not be increased during the performance of the form.

Failure to meet the above criteria may be subjected to delay of time penalty (See Delay of Time Rule) or disqualification from the division.

4.2 Definition of Weapon Divisions

Traditional Weapons

Traditional Weapons Division must capture the essence of classic martial arts movements, showcasing the traditional techniques, stances, footwork, and weapon execution. Emphasis is placed on execution of technique, application of technique, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and focus. Forms may be unmodified or modified from what a system or school considers being the original version of the form. Traditional Weapons Division will not have an excessive amount of spinning of the weapons, nor will it have any “releases” of the weapon.

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Performance of the following movements will result in a downgrade by the judges for all ranks, or upon unanimous vote of the judges under belts will receive the lowest score possible and black belts will be disqualified (See Weapons Safety Rule):

- Any inverted movement where the head is lower than the waist, example: front or back flips; cartwheels; front or side leg splits or any other gymnastic movements or extreme exhibitions of flexibility or agility with the body.
- Any rotation of the body that exceeds 360 degrees in one rotation.
- Releasing of the weapon
- Loss of control of the weapon
- Dropping of the weapon

Forward/Backward shoulder rolls and butterfly kicks are considered traditional techniques as they are utilized in some traditional martial arts and maybe used in this division. There is no Kiai/Kihap rule. Competitors may Kiai/Kihap as many times as they feel adds to the form. There is no kick rule. Competitors may kick as high as they feel necessary to add to the form regardless of style. Judges can not score competitors based on what they feel is or is not the correct version of a traditional form. Music is not allowed in this division at any time during regular elimination competition.

Creative Weapons

Creative Weapons Division allows forms to include contemporary martial arts techniques that have evolved over the years. These may be added to traditional form, or the form may be devised in its entirety by the competitor or his/her instructor. A form in the Creative Division must **ONLY** include techniques which originate from martial arts and like the Traditional Division, emphasis will be placed on execution of the techniques, application of the techniques, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and practical use of the weapon. Spinning kicks, jump spinning kicks, flying kicks, multiple kicks, splits, weapon twirls, weapon releases, and other creative martial arts techniques are permitted.

Performance of the following movements will result in a downgrade by the judges for all ranks, or upon unanimous vote of the judges, under belts will receive the lowest score possible and black belts will be disqualified (See Weapons Safety Rule):

- Any inverted movement where the head is lower than the waist, example: front or back flips; cartwheels; front or side leg splits or any other gymnastic movements or extreme exhibitions of flexibility or agility with the body.
- Any rotation of the body that exceeds 360 degrees in one rotation.
- Loss of control of the weapon.
- Dropping of the weapon.

Forward/Backward shoulder rolls and butterfly kicks are considered traditional techniques as they are utilized in some traditional martial arts and maybe used in this division. Judges will base their scoring on the uniqueness of the form as well as the execution of its techniques. (Example: A nicely executed traditional form that adds two new moves should not score higher than a form that has been created from scratch). Music is not allowed in this division at any time during regular elimination competition. Judges must base their scoring on the uniqueness of the form as well as the execution of its techniques. (Example: A nicely executed traditional form that adds two new moves should not score higher than a form that has been created from scratch)

Extreme Weapons

The Extreme Divisions allow the competitor to perform any movements whether they originate from traditional or contemporary martial arts systems or otherwise. At least half of the form must

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originate from martial arts techniques, and the competitor must execute at least one technique that involves an inverted move or a rotation greater than 360 degrees in any single rotation of the body. In Extreme Weapons Division, extreme is defined by what the body does, not what is done with the weapon. Emphasis is placed on the quality of execution of techniques and movements, martial arts skills, balance, speed, power, degree of difficulty, practical use of the weapon, and showmanship. Performance of the following will result in a downgrade by the judges for all ranks, or upon unanimous vote of the judges, under belts will receive the lowest score possible and black belts will be disqualified (See Weapons Safety Rule):

- Loss of control of the weapon
- Dropping of the weapon

The competitor must perform the required criteria of the form with their body else, under belts will face a downgrade by the judges for all ranks, or upon unanimous vote of the judges, under belts will receive the lowest score possible and black belts will be disqualified. Music may be included into the routine only during Night Time Finals/Grand Championships. Music is not allowed during the regular elimination competition.

Musical Weapons

The Musical Divisions requires a weapon form to meet the above criteria for Traditional, Creative, Extreme Weapons, or a combination of the three, choreographed in a general sense to the beats or rhythm of music by the competitor. Primary emphasis shall be placed on innovative choreography of moves to the music, however, the basic criteria listed above for all weapons must also be observed. Simply performing a form with background music, or a form not meeting the basic criteria for all forms above, will result in a downgrade by the judges for all ranks, or upon unanimous vote of the judges under belts will receive the lowest score possible and black belts will be disqualified. Competitors must remember the following while in this division:

- Each competitor is responsible for providing their own music
- Each competitor must provide a music player of reasonable and non-intrusive size at ringside to play his/her music, and an attendant at the player who must be present at all times during the performance.
- As each form begins, a music volume check must be made, during which time the player attendant will look to the center judge for a nod of approval or a signal to lower the volume. Once this volume is set, it may not be increased during the performance.

Failure to meet the above criteria may be subjected to delay of time penalty (See Delay of Time Rule) or disqualification from the division. Performance of the following will also result in a downgrade by the judges for all ranks, or upon unanimous vote of the judges, under belts will receive the lowest score possible and black belts will be disqualified (See Weapons Safety Rule):

- Loss of control of the weapon
- Dropping of the weapon

4.3 Forms/Weapons Rules

Presentation to Judges Rule

Out of respect to the judges, competitors should minimally announce their name and who they represent, be it a team or a school, in a loud (not screaming) voice.

- Judges will not deduct any points if the competitor messes up their introduction by forgetting the name of their form, announcing one form and then doing another, or have trouble announcing their introduction.

- Judges will not deduct any points if the competitor does not make any announcement.

Forms/Weapons Start Over Rule

If a competitor starts his/her form over because of a memory lapse or any other reason due to his/her own negligence, he/she may perform the form again.

- **Under Belts Penalty:** After the form is finished, the judge must signal to the scorekeeper that a penalty deduction will occur by holding up 5 fingers or 3 fingers to note the amount of points to deduct from their overall score
 - o First restart will result in .05 penalty deduction
 - o Second restart will result in .30 penalty deduction
 - o Third restart will result in lowest score possible from the judges.
- **Black Belts Penalty:** Black belts will not be able to restart their form

Weapons Safety Rule

Intentional release and catch or placing the weapon down on the ground in a controlled manner is allowed and will not be penalized. A competitor who unintentionally drops his/her weapon will be subject to a penalty based on their rank. If a competitor recklessly or carelessly misuses his/her weapon, he/she may be penalized or disqualified. If a competitor's weapon breaks or comes apart during his/her routine, he/she will be disqualified.

- **Under Belts Penalty:** If the weapon is dropped the competitor will have a chance to perform their form again. When the form is finished, the judge must signal to the scorekeeper that a penalty deduction will occur by holding up 5 fingers or 3 fingers to note the amount of points to deduct from their overall score
 - o First restart will result in .05 penalty deduction
 - o Second restart will result in .30 penalty deduction
 - o Third restart will result in lowest score possible from the judges
- **Black Belts Penalty:** If the weapon is dropped the competitor will be disqualified from the division.

Time limits

Each form or weapons routine must be three (3) minutes or less. The time starts once the competitor enters the competition ring. Four (4) minutes is allowed for each form or weapons routine in the Night Time Finals. Each team form and/or demo routine must be four (4) minutes or less. The timekeeper will signal the center judge that the individual or team has gone over their time limit by raising his/her hand with the stopwatch in it. Center judge will then acknowledge the signal. Any competitor, team form or team demo that goes over the allowed time limit will be penalized according to their rank:

- **Under Belts Penalty:** Under belts that go over their time limit will receive a .50 deduction.
- **Black Belts Penalty:** Black belts who go over their time limit will be disqualified from the division.

Order of Competition

Once the final call for the form and weapon divisions has been made at ring side and the divisional seeds have been taken out (if seeding is required) the competition cards will be collected and shuffled thoroughly. The competitor cards will then be drawn randomly for the order of competition. The center judge will announce the order in a loud clear voice so that the

competitors know their order. Once the order is announced the center judge will place the card with the scorekeeper to have him/her write down the order. The center judge should verify that the order written down is the same as the order which he/she announced. Competitors should be ready to compete at that time or will be subject to Delay of Time penalty. Those who come late to a division will be subject to Late Entries Rule for more details.

Delay of Time Penalty

If a competitor is not ready to compete for any reason after the order has been chosen a deduction of .05 (5/100th) of a point will be deducted from the offending competitor's final score for each minute they are not ready up to 3 minutes. If a competitor is still not ready to compete after 3 minutes, he/she will be disqualified. If a competitor is not ready to compete due to competing in another division in another ring, the penalty will not apply. Please see Late Entries rule for details.

Late Entries Rule

Once a bow in for the division is made and the order is determined, the Scorekeeper will write the word "closed" at the bottom of the sheet after the last person listed. Any competitor showing up after that, but prior to the first person competing will have to go first. Once a division has started (the first competitor has started his/her form/weapon routine) and a person shows up late due to their own negligence, they will be unable to compete in that division. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

If a competitor is competing or judging in another ring when one of their divisions begin, they must inform the ring (judges or timekeeper/scorekeeper) that they are currently competing/judging. The center judge of that ring which competitor needs to compete in has a couple of options they can execute:

- A) Center judge can run another division.
- B) Center judge can hold up the ring until the competitor is able to compete.

4.4 Scoring for Forms & Weapons

Judges can determine their own scoring range, but must adhere to the .02 deviation if only three judges are being used. (See Adjusting the Ranges for help on this).

Adjusting the Ranges: The Scoring range should be narrowed in divisions that have a small amount of competitors. (Suggestion: Count the competitors in the division and multiply that by .01 and then subtract that number from the highest allowed score for that division (Example: 10 competitors * .01 = .20. 8.99-.20 = 8.79). Therefore the range for 10 competitors would be 8.79 to 8.99, with 8.90 as your average score.

Relative Scoring: Judges will no longer wait for the first three competitors to go first before scoring. All competitors will run their form before any scoring will be done.

Deviation Rule

The deviation rule will be enacted **ONLY** if there are 3 judges on the panel. This rule was established to allow a more fair scoring process for competitors. The rule is such that no judge shall score lower or higher than .02 of any score on the panel. Prior to showing their scores to the timekeeper/score keeper, the center judge will call to see all scores. Judges must be within .02 of a point of each other.

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Example: Judge1 = 8.56, Center Judge = 8.58, Judge2 = 8.54. Each judge is within .02 of each other.

If any judge, including the Center Judge, is out of the deviation range he/she must change their score in order to be within the deviation.

Example: Judge1 = 8.56, Center Judge = 8.59, Judge2 = 8.54. In this example the Center Judge must lower his score by .01 in order to be within the deviation.

If none of the judges are within the deviation rule they must add all the scores and take the average score and use that as the basis for their scoring.

Example: Judge1 = 8.57 Center Ref = 8.60 Judge 2 = 8.53. Add all the scores and divide by the number of judges, in this example 3, $(8.57+8.60+8.53=25.70)$. Divide $25.70/3=8.56$. 8.56 would be your starting point) So the judge closest to that number would change their score accordingly, in this case Judge1 is the closest to the mean so he would change his score and the Center Judge and Judge2 would adjust their score accordingly. (Final scoring: Judge1=8.56, Center Judge = 8.58, Judge2 = 8.54)

Once the scores are confirmed within the mean they may present the scores to the timekeeper/scorekeeper.

Adding scores

- A) If five judges are used, the highest and lowest scores will be tossed out. If three judges are used all scores will be recorded.
- B) Any penalty points will be taken off of the final score.
- C) Ties for 1st through 4th place will be settled as follows:
 - 1) If five judges preside: The high and low scores will be added back into the overall scores to determine the winner.
 - 2) If a tie still exists the after the high and low scores were added back in Scorekeeper must look at the scores and determine who received the majority of the higher scores. (Example: Competitor A receives 8.82, 8.85, 8.84, 8.83, 8.86 and Competitor B receives 8.80, 8.86, 8.82, 8.85, and 8.87. Both scores add up to 44.20 but Competitor B would be the winner since Competitor B received the majority of the higher scores).
 - 3) If tie exists and one of the judges scored the same score for the two competitors who are tied, he/she will make the deciding call on who wins.
 - 4) If there is a tie between 3 or more people, judges should use the same procedure of determining the winner through majority of judges' favor. (Example: Competitor A receives 8.82, 8.84, 8.84, Competitor B receives 8.83, 8.82, 8.85 Competitor C receive 8.85, 8.83, 8.82. The first thing to do is check Competitor A's score with Competitor B's score. In this case Competitor B received the majority of the judges' favor. You would then compare Competitor B's score with Competitor C's score. The result is that Competitor C received the majority of the judges' favor so Competitor C would receive 1st place followed by Competitor B for 2nd place and Competitor A would receive 3rd place.)
 - 5) If three judges preside and a tie is determined judges will first use the method described in section above.
 - 6) Ties after 4th place are never broken.

4.5 Sparring Rules

Weighing In

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

Order of Competition

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

In the youth division, the competitors should be lined up by height (Smallest to the tallest) and split into tall and short divisions if required or offered. Determining tall and short divisions is for safety reasons, not just to split the division equally. A true break in size should be found to determine the taller competitors from the shorter competitors. Once the tall and short divisions are determined by height, determine who fights whom by random draw.

Required and Recommended Safety Gear

Headgear; hand and footpads, mouthpieces, groin cups (for male competitors only) are mandatory for all competitors in sparring divisions. The competitor's equipment will be checked and if it is deemed unsafe, he/she will be asked to change the equipment before he/she can compete.

Hand Pads

- 1) A soft padded surface must cover the fingers, wrist and any striking surface of the hand.
- 2) No open finger gloves such as Mixed Martial Arts gloves or World Taekwondo Federation sparring gloves or JKA open thumb gloves will be allowed.

Foot Pads

- 1) A soft padded surface must cover the instep, sides, toes, ankle and back of the heel of the foot.
- 2) The bottom of the foot does not have to be padded.
- 3) Ringstar foot gear is allowed as proper foot wear.
- 4) World Taekwondo Federation foot gear will not be allowed proper foot gear.

Head Gear

- 1) The front, sides and back of the head must be covered by a soft padded surface.
- 2) Face masks are recommended but not mandatory. A mouth guard must still be worn even with a face mask.

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Insufficiently padded gloves, foot, and head gear will not be allowed. Equipment must be in a good state of repair and must be free of heavy taping, tears or any other repairs that may cause injury. The tournament's official rules arbitrator ultimately determines the approval or denial of the equipment. A properly fitted mouthpiece is required. Shin pads and rib/chest guard are highly recommended, but not mandatory, for additional safety to all sparring competitors.

Competitors who do not have the proper safety equipment will not be allowed to spar. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Length of Matches

Under Belts: Two minute running time unless five points are scored before time has expired.

Black Belts: Two minute running time unless seven points are scored before time has expired.

If a match is tied at the end of two minutes, sudden victory (first person to score a point) overtime period will determine the match.

What is a Point

A point is a controlled legal sport karate technique scored by a competitor, in bounds that strikes an opponent with the allowable amount of focused contact to a legal target area. Points are awarded by a majority vote of all judges. The majority of judges do not have to agree on the same technique being scored, only that a point was scored. **A majority of the judges calling the point must call a two (2)-point kick before two points can be awarded.** Otherwise only one point is awarded.

Target Areas

Legal Target Areas

- 1) **Black Belts:** Entire head and face (controlled light contact), ribs, chest, abdomen, collarbone and kidneys.
- 2) **Under Belts:** Entire head (no face contact), ribs, chest, abdomen, collarbone and kidneys.

Illegal Target Areas

- 1) **All ranks:** Spine, back of neck, throat, sides of the neck, groin, legs, and knees.
- 2) **Under Belts:** Front of the face is considered an illegal target area even with face mask.

Non-target Areas

Hips, buttocks, arms, hands, and feet.

Contact Definition

- 1) **Light touch contact:** Means there is no penetration or visible movement of the competitor as a result of the contact. Light touch is required to all legal target areas in all black belt sparring.
- 2) **Moderate touch contact:** Means slight penetration or slight target movement. Moderate touch contact may be made to all legal target areas except the headgear and face.

Legal/Illegal Techniques

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

- 1) **Punching:** Back fist, ridge hands, and reverse punches to the legal targets area are legal techniques.
- 2) **Kicking:** Any kick above the waist line and to the legal target area are legal techniques.
- 3) **Grabbing:** A competitor may grab the uniform top of his/her opponent in an attempt to score with a sport karate technique for only one second (**immediately**), after which time he/she must release the uniform. Likewise, the uniform pants may be grabbed for one second to an upright opponent in an attempt to score.
- 4) **Sweeps:** Sweeps not to take down an opponent, but only to obstruct the balance so as to follow up with a sport karate technique can only be executed to the back of the front leg at mid-calf or below. A sweep must be deemed a proper sweep and not a kick, to be legal.

Illegal Techniques: Head butts, hair pulls, bites, scratches, elbows, knees, eye attacks of any kind, any take downs, ground fighting, any stomps or kicks to the head of a downed competitor, slapping, grabbing for more than one second, uncontrolled blind techniques such as spinning back fists or any spinning kick where the person executing the technique did not have the opponent in view, any uncontrolled-sweeps and any other uncontrolled dangerous techniques that are deemed unsafe in sport karate.

Point Values and Winner Determination

- 1) All legal hand techniques that score will be awarded one (1) point.
- 2) All legal kicking techniques that score will be awarded two (2) points.
- 3) All penalty points awarded will be awarded one (1) point.

The competitor who earns five (5) or seven (7) points, depending on the division, by the end of the two minutes or whoever is ahead at the end of the two minutes is declared the winner.

All grand championship matches are two minute running time and total points (10 point slaughter rule will be in effect).

Warnings and Penalties

If an infraction of a rule occurs, the center judge must issue a warning to the violating competitor. If the competitor violates the rule again, a penalty point will be awarded to the opponent. If a third infraction occurs, the violating competitor will be disqualified. At the beginning of the division, the center judge reserves the right to explain all the rules to the competitors and consider that their first warning. Once the matches begin and an infraction happens, a penalty point can be awarded right away. If the severity of the first rules violation is deemed by the referee to be too severe, a penalty point can be issued immediately, or, with a majority rule, competitor can be disqualified if, in the opinion of the referee and/or the medical personnel, a competitor cannot continue because of an injury caused by an illegal penalized attack executed by his/her competitor, the offending competitor shall be automatically disqualified.

- 1) A competitor cannot be penalized and still receive a point on the same call.
- 2) A competitor can receive a point for a proper technique and another point from a penalty call against his/her competitor (two points awarded).

- 3) Separate infractions are treated separately. Example: A competitor who receives a warning for running out of bounds, and then commits illegal face contact will not have a penalty point awarded to his/her opponent. The violating competitor will receive two separate warnings.

Cause for Penalization

General

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

Out-of-Bounds

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

If a competitor is fighting and goes out of bounds, they will not be penalized as running out of bounds. Center judge shall stop the match and place both competitors back to the starting point.

Delay of Time Penalty

A penalty point will be at the beginning of a match and for each minute thereafter if the competitor is not properly ready to compete. Upon 3 penalty points the offending competitor will be disqualified.

If a competitor is not ready to compete due to competing in another division in another ring, the penalty will not apply. Please see Late Entries Rule for details.

Late Entries

Once a bow in for the division is made and competitors are matched up, the Scorekeeper will write the word "closed". Any competitor showing up after this causing re-matching of competitors will be ineligible for any 'Buy' that may be available.

Once the division has started (first match has began) and the person shows up late, they will not be able to compete. NO EXCEPTIONS!

If a competitor is competing or judging in another ring when one of their divisions begin, they must inform the ring (judges or timekeeper/scorekeeper) that they are currently competing/judging. The center judge then has a couple of options they can execute:

- 1) He/she can run another division.
- 2) Hold up the ring until the competitor is able to compete.

Other Disqualification

If, in the majority opinion of the officials, it is considered that the competitors are not making an obvious attempt to fight in the true spirit of competition, both competitors will be warned and if it continues, will be disqualified.

If any competitor competes in a division he/she does not qualify to compete in due to age, weight, rank, gender, style, etc., he/she will be disqualified. The only exception is if the match is deemed an exhibition match only

Coaching

Coach

Defined as anyone who is trying to help one competitor in anyway. A coach could be but is not limited to a friend, parent, team mate or official coach. The center judge can issue a warning to a competitor if his/her coach is interfering with a match or disrupting fair play between contestants. A center judge can ask for a disqualification of a competitor whose coach is disruptive, but requires a majority vote of all judges, unless a violation of the No Tolerance Rule is committed.

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

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

Calls an official can make.

When the center judge believes there has been a significant exchange of techniques, or when signaled to do so by a corner judge(s), he/she shall call out the word, "**STOP!**" in a loud voice. The center judge shall then return the competitors to their starting marks and address the judges by saying "**JUDGES CALL!**" All judges and the center judge cast their votes simultaneously and assertively.

Point Calling

When signaled by the center judge (center judge says "Judges Call" in a loud clear voice) a judge raises the appropriate color (red or white usually) if colors are being used or points to the competitor who scores the point. If a competitor scores a two point kick, the officials should hold the competitor's color with two fingers up or point with two fingers (index and middle finger) towards the competitor that scored the point. If only one point is being called, the judge should hold up the competitor's color and one finger or point with only one finger (Index finger).

No Point Scored/Did Not See a Point Scored

An official crosses his/her wrist at waist level or holds both colors down to indicate that he/she believes that a point was not scored. If the judge did not see a score, he/she will hold their hand over their eyes indicating that a point was not seen. This indicates that the official was not in position to see if a point scored. (When using this signal, it has the same effect as saying "no point", but it indicates to the center judge, competitors, coaches and spectators the reason why a point is not being called).

Clash

Officials make a motion as though they are hitting both fists together, indicating that both competitors scored at the same time or that the competitors were mixing it up to a point that a no clean technique could be seen.

Penalty

The judge waves the color of the offending competitor in a circular motion. If no colors are used the judge will point toward the offending competitor with one finger pointing downward in his/her direction. Excessive contact call is indicated by raising color of offending competitor and striking the palm of the opposite hand towards the violated competitor. If no colors are used, the judge will strike with the back of their fist against the palm of their opposite hand towards the violated competitor.

Disqualification

A disqualification vote is taken separately from any other vote. When a disqualification vote is asked for, the referee will say, "**JUDGES CALL**". The judges will then hold the color or hold their hand up, at an angle towards the disqualified competitor. If the judge does not feel the competitor should be disqualified, he/she crosses his/her wrist or holds both colors down at waist level.

Late Calls

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

5.0 MEDICAL REPORTS

All injuries must be reported to the medical staff on hand regardless of extent of the injury.

6.0 ZERO TOLERANCE RULE

Blatant disrespect toward Officials, Timekeeper/Scorekeepers or other competitors will not be allowed. Blatant disrespect will be defined as yelling, name calling, improper gesturing, improper taunting, interrupting the ring without due process or threatening any official or competitor. Brawling or total disregard for the rules will result in immediate disqualification of a competitor be it through their own actions or actions from an outside source on their behalf. Brawling will be defined as physical confrontation between two or more people with the sole intent of causing bodily harm or damage to one another. Any fights where "street" techniques are being used (Example: Elbows, eye gouging, purposeful groin shots, hair pulling). Offenders of this rule will be dealt with in accordance to the AKA Code of Conduct documentation.

7.0 AKA Official Bye Chart

<i>Amount of Competitors</i>	<i>Total Byes Needed</i>
3	1
4	0
5	3
6	2
7	1
8	0
9	7
10	6
11	5
12	4
13	3
14	2
15	1
16	0

