



## USA Taekwondo 2026 Rules & Interpretation

### World Taekwondo General Assembly in Wuxi, China

This document outlines the Kyorugi rules and interpretations as of January 1, 2026, which are effective for all USATKD events beginning with U.S. Team Trials.

## Rule Updates

### Removed IVR for Head Kicks

**Coaches can no longer request video replay for head kicks.** The center referee may still request video replay only after counting for a strong head kick which did not score. As before, the referee must see one or more of the following criteria in order to count:

- Strong impact
- Staggering
- Bleeding
- Injury to the eye(s)
- Knocked to the ground

### PSS Punch Scoring

A semi-automatic scoring method may be used for punch points. Punch sensors have been added to all PSS systems. When sensing gloves are employed, the impact of the punch will be detected by the PSS, and the correct technique shall be validated by the technical judge.

When a punch with **sufficient strength** is detected by the PSS, the judge box will vibrate, and the judge has a 1-second window to confirm the **correct technique**.

If the judge is late to confirm the punch, they may stand up and award the point. The judge may **not** award the point if the punch was **not** detected by the PSS.

When sensing gloves are not employed, punches will be scored as before by judges.

### Technical Judge Replaces Corner Judges

Due to the addition of PSS punch detection, the role of the corner judge is more limited. Going forward, when PSS punching is in use, there will only be one corner judge, which has been renamed to technical judge.



## Updated Technical Points

Technical points (turning kicks) are now double of their base score (instead of +2).

Technique	Old Point Value	New Point Value
Turning Body Kick	4 points	4 points (double points)
Turning Head Kick	5 points	6 points (double points)

## Updated Guidelines for Coach Protests

For the following technical issues, the coach may request video replay with or without a quota:

- Hardware test
- Phantom points
- Scoreboard entry
- Time issue
- Punch misidentification
- Restoring points scored before a Gam-jeom
- Invalidation of points scored after a Gam-jeom

If the coach has a quota, the referee will play the coach's quota. If rejected, the coach will **lose their quota** and their player will receive a **Gam-jeom for Misconduct**. If the coach does not have a quota, the referee will play their own card. If rejected, the player will receive a Gam-jeom for Misconduct. The only exception is for a hardware test in the 1st round; as before, the referee will use their own card and there is no Gam-jeom given.

## Interpretation Updates

### Less Unnecessary Gam-jeoms

Although the written rules have not changed, World Taekwondo is strongly emphasizing to referees that Gam-jeoms should only be given when absolutely necessary, to facilitate continuous action. The rule of thumb is **let them fight**.

**Objective** Gam-jeoms (e.g. falling down, crossing the boundary line, attacking after Kal-yeo, attacking the fallen opponent) must be given immediately.

**Subjective** Gam-jeoms (e.g. grabbing, lifting the leg, attacking below the waist, etc.) should only be given when there is a clear impact on the match.