



# USA KARATE COMPETITION RULES

- Kumite
- Kata
- Kobudo
- Iai-do
- Para Karate

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## USA KARATE - COMPETITION RULES

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### ARTICLE 1: GENERAL RULES FOR USA KARATE COMPETITIONS

The competition rules for all tournaments, matches, and competitions sanctioned by USA National Karate-do Federation (USA Karate) shall be as stated herein. These rules shall be used in all sanctioned competitions, without modification or amendment except as allowed by these rules. These rules, or any part thereof, may be modified or amended by USA Karate at any time. USA Karate may authorize additional rules as needed for a particular event, tournament, match, or competition. Whenever a specific rule conflicts with a more general rule, the specific rule takes precedence. These rules shall apply to all competitors, Officials, Administrators, and other Personnel for all competitions sanctioned by USA Karate.

All USA Karate Signature Event divisions are subject to change or modification by the Referee Operations Committee for a particular event. Events which are not classified as USA Karate Signature Events are subject to modifications as approved by the Tournament Director and/or designated Chief Referee for each event. The USA Karate Referee Operations Committee shall designate a Chief Referee for all Signature Events and Team Trial Competitions.

These rules are based upon the rules adopted by the World Karate Federation (WKF) for use in international competition. For all international and elite divisions, and to select competitors for the United States National Karate Team, the WKF/international rules without modification shall be used to conduct all such team selection divisions.

### ARTICLE 2: CATEGORIES FOR USA KARATE COMPETITIONS

The Kumite and Kata competitions shall be divided into appropriate categories or divisions based upon age, gender, and experience. USA Karate may offer additional divisions for senior male and/or female athletes who are thirty-five years of age or over. USA Karate reserves the right to create categories or divisions for para-karate competitors. For USA Karate Signature Events, the bout duration and/or point spread/ceiling may be adjusted at the discretion of the Chief Referee and Tournament Director. An announcement identifying any changes shall be made at the preliminary Coach/Referee briefing.

| COMPETITION AGE CATEGORIES       |                               |                 |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| USA KARATE CATEGORIES            | AGE                           | KUMITE DURATION |
| <b>Child(ren): Male/Female</b>   | <b>11 years &amp; younger</b> | <b>1:30</b>     |
| <b>Junior Cadet: Male/Female</b> | <b>12-13 years old</b>        | <b>1:30</b>     |
| <b>Cadet: Male/Female</b>        | <b>14-15 years old</b>        | <b>1:30</b>     |
| <b>Junior: Male/Female</b>       | <b>16-17 years old</b>        | <b>1:30</b>     |
| <b>Senior: Male/Female</b>       | <b>18 years and older</b>     | <b>1:30</b>     |
| <b>Masters: Male/Female</b>      | <b>35 years and older</b>     | <b>1:30</b>     |

### ARTICLE 3: EXPERIENCE CATEGORIES

The experience categories for USA Karate competition shall be as follows:

|                     |  |                              |
|---------------------|--|------------------------------|
| <b>Beginner</b>     | 8 <sup>th</sup> Kyu & under;               | less than 1 year of training |
| <b>Novice</b>       | 7 <sup>th</sup> Kyu - 5 <sup>th</sup> Kyu; | 1 to 2 years of training     |
| <b>Intermediate</b> | 4 <sup>th</sup> Kyu - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Kyu; | 2+ to 4 years of training    |
| <b>Advanced</b>     | 1 <sup>st</sup> Kyu & higher;              | 4+ years of training         |

4<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> kyu must compete in Intermediate divisions or higher. 1<sup>st</sup> kyu and Black Belts must compete in Advanced Divisions or Elite.

An athlete who participates in an Elite Division may compete in an Advanced Division in another category. (Ex: Athletes may compete in Elite Kumite AND Advanced Kata but may not compete in Elite Kumite AND Advanced Kumite). However, an athlete who will advance in divisions due to changing ages between a Team Trial Event and a PKF/International Event may compete in their current age Advanced Division as well as the Elite Division in the same category for the next age bracket.

Athletes who medal in any skill level must move up to the next higher skill level the following year. (Ex: An Athlete who medaled in a Novice Division in 2023 must compete in the Intermediate or higher in 2024).

The placement of athletes in the correct skill level is the responsibility of both the athlete and their Coach/Instructor. Should an Athlete be found to have misrepresented their skill level actions may be taken against both the Athlete and/or the Coach/Instructor.

No competitor may compete in a division designated for members of the opposite sex unless that member has met the guidelines set forth in the USA Karate Transgender Policy.

## **ARTICLE 4: RULE VIOLATIONS**

In the event these rules are violated, USA Karate, by and through its duly authorized representatives, may impose one or more of the following sanctions: verbal reprimand, written warning, monetary fine, disqualification or suspension.

All such disciplinary sanctions imposed shall be subject to review according to Section 14 of the Bylaws of this Federation but shall be effective immediately upon imposition. Any athlete who is disqualified for violation of any regulations of prohibited substances shall forfeit any titles and/or honors awarded and shall promptly return any medal and/or other awards. Examples of prohibited behaviors that would merit the imposition of sanctions include making a false or fraudulent statement regarding age or experience, entering under an assumed name, grossly unsportsmanlike conduct, theft, or any other act contrary to the recognized principles of karate-do.

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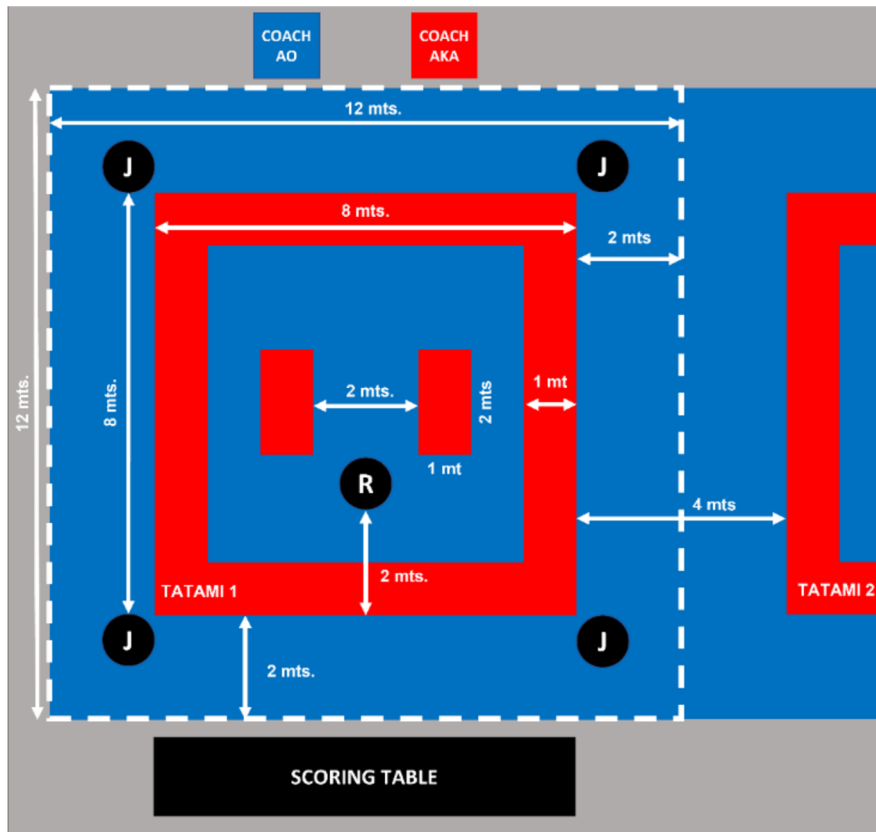
## KUMITE RULES

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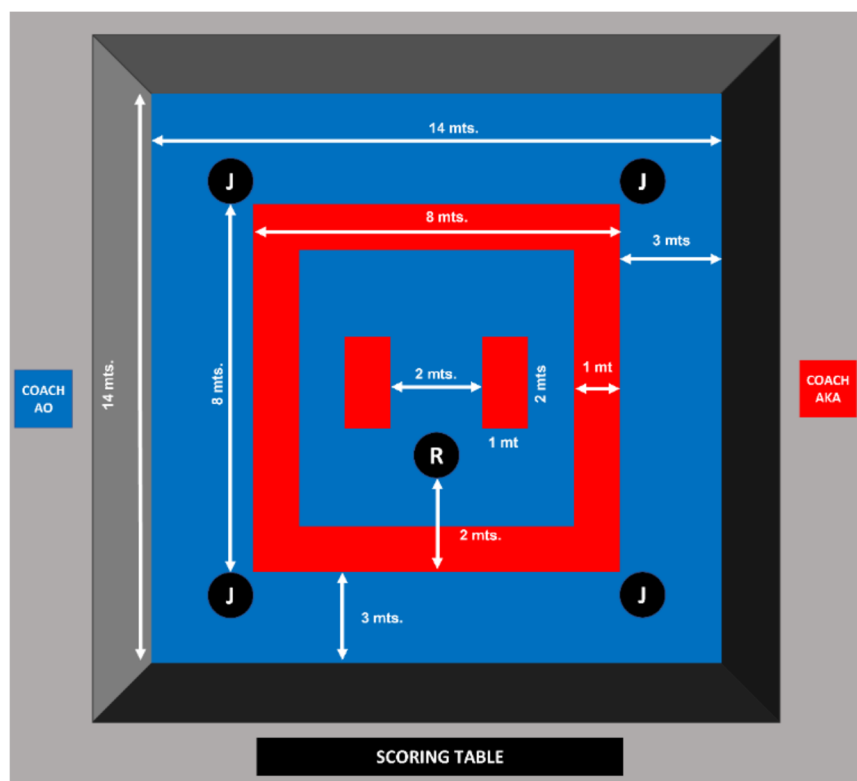
### ARTICLE 1: KUMITE COMPETITION AREA

1. The competition area must be an eight-meter matted square (measured from the outside) for USA Karate Signature Events. To mark the boundary, the mats in the outer one-meter area shall be in a different color than the rest of the competition area. For other tournaments, the use of mats is optional but strongly encouraged. Where mats are not used, the competition area may be defined by marking the boundaries with colored tape.



2. There shall be a minimum of an additional two meters on all sides of the competition area as a safety area. This may be reduced to 1.5 meters to accommodate number of Tatami where the sports hall has insufficient space for 2 meters.
3. The starting position for the competitors shall be located one meter on each side of the center of the mat. Two mats of a different color than the competition area shall be used to designate these starting positions.
4. The Referee (**SHUSHIN**) will be standing centered between the competitors at a distance of two meters from the center of the competition area.

5. Each Judge (**FUKUSHIN**) will be seated at the corners of the mat in the safety area. Each Judge will be equipped with a red and a blue flag or electronic signal device.
6. The Referee may move around the entire Tatami, including the safety area where the Judges are seated.
7. The Match Supervisor (**KANSA**) shall be seated just outside the safety area, behind and to the left or the right of the Referee, equipped with a whistle.
8. The Score Supervisor will be seated at the official score table, between the scorekeeper and the timekeeper.
9. The competition area may be elevated to a height of up to one meter above floor level. The elevated platform should measure at least twelve meters to a side, to include both the competition and safety areas. If the competition area is elevated the safety area shall be increased to a minimum of three (3) meters.



10. Coaches will be seated outside the safety area, on their respective sides at the side of the Tatami towards the official table. Where the tatami area is elevated, the Coaches will be placed outside the elevated area behind their competitors.
11. Coaches' chairs (ringside or waiting area) are provided for and should only be occupied by those credentialed Coaches whose athletes are actively engaged in competition in any given ring/tatami. Competitors may not be seated on the coaches' chairs.



## **ARTICLE 2: ATTIRE AND PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

1. All Officials, competitors and Coaches must wear the official uniform as described below. This uniform must be worn during all courses, briefings, and competitions.
2. The Chief Referee may disbar any Official, competitor or Coach who does not comply with this regulation. In cases of minor deviation from the official uniform, the Chief Referee may allow participation of the Official or competitor, provided that the deviation does not distract from the dignity of the competition or prejudice any other Official or competitor.
3. Competitors, Officials and Coaches may only wear religious headwear that has been approved by USA Karate.
4. Any attire and protective equipment approved by WKF shall also be accepted by USA Karate.

### **REFEREES AND JUDGES**

1. The official uniform for Referees and Judges shall be as follows:
  - A. A single-breasted navy-blue blazer and USA Karate Official's badge.
  - B. Plain light gray trousers without cuffs.
  - C. A white shirt with short sleeves.
  - D. Plain dark blue or black socks and black slip-on shoes for use on the match area.
  - E. An Official tie; worn without a tie pin.
  - F. A black or silver whistle with a discreet white cord (electronic whistles without cords are also permitted).
  - G. Referees and Judges may wear a plain wedding band.
  - H. Referees and Judges may wear a hair clip and discreet earrings.
2. The Chief Referee and Tournament Director reserve the right to allow the blazers to be removed during the competition or a portion of a competition.

### **COMPETITORS**

1. All competitors must wear a white unmarked Karate-Gi without stripes or piping or personal embroidery. At the USA Karate Signature Events only the approved USA Karate patch or National Flag may be worn. This must be worn on the left breast of the jacket and shall not exceed an overall size of 12cm by 8cm. These dimensions may apply to either height or width. Only the original manufacturer's labels may be displayed on the gi and in the normally accepted locations.
2. In addition, an identifying number issued by the Chief Referee and Tournament Director may be worn on the back, sleeve, or breast area of the gi jacket.
3. With prior written approval by the Chief Referee and Tournament Director, competitors may display special labels or trademarks of approved sponsors.

4. One competitor must wear a red belt and the other a blue belt. The red and blue belts must be around five centimeters wide and of a length sufficient to allow fifteen centimeters free on each side of the knot and not longer than three-quarters thigh length. The belts are to be of plain red and blue color, without any personal embroidery, advertising, or markings other than the manufacturer's label.
5. The gi jacket, when tightened around the waist with the belt, must be of minimum length that covers the hips, but must not be more than three-quarters thigh length.
6. Female competitors may wear a plain white T-shirt beneath the gi jacket.
7. Jackets without ties may not be used. The jacket ties holding the jacket in place must be tied at the beginning of the match. If they are torn off during the match, the competitor is not required to change the jacket for that bout.
8. The maximum length of the gi jacket sleeves must be no longer than the bend of the wrist and no shorter than halfway down the forearm. Jacket sleeves may not be rolled up either on the outside or inside of the sleeve.
9. The gi trousers must be long enough to cover at least two thirds of the shin, must not reach below the ankle bone, and may not be rolled up either on the outside or inside of the leg.
10. Competitors must keep their hair secured so that it does not obstruct the match or bout. Head bands (**Hachimaki**) of any kind shall not be allowed.
11. Hair slides ("scrunchies") are prohibited, as are metal hair grips ("barrettes"). Ribbons and other decorations are prohibited. One or two discreet plain hair ties on a single ponytail are permitted.
12. Competitors may wear religious headwear that has been approved by USA Karate. Such headwear may cover the hair, but not the throat area.
13. Competitors must have short fingernails and toenails and must not wear jewelry or other objects that might injure their opponents.
14. The use of orthodontic appliances or braces must be approved by the Referee and the Official Doctor. The competitor accepts full responsibility for any injury.
15. **Protective Equipment:**
  - A. USA Karate-approved fist pads, shin pads and instep protectors are required in all USA Karate divisions. Although approved red and blue fist pads are required, competitors may opt to use the white USA Karate-approved shin pads and instep protectors.
  - B. Mouthguards are required in all divisions.
  - C. Competitors may wear USA Karate-approved body protection.
  - D. Groin protectors are required in all divisions for male competitors.
  - E. Competitors 13 years old and under **must** wear a USA Karate approved helmet. **In order to provide competitors with a transition period, this requirement will be enforced effective January 1, 2024.** Facemasks and chest protectors are permitted but are not required.

- F. Glasses are forbidden; soft contact lenses may be worn at the competitor's own risk. Competitors, at their own risk, may elect to wear shatter-proof, athletic safety goggles of an approved design.
- G. The use of bandages, padding, or supports because of injury must be approved by the Referee on the advice of the Official Doctor. No braces that include any metallic parts shall be used. The Referee shall make the final decision as to the permitted use of items or products applied or adhered to the competitor related to medical treatment, such as tape or other supportive or corrective materials.
- H. If a competitor comes into the match area inappropriately dressed, the competitor shall be given two minutes to remedy matters. If the competitor is identified as inappropriately dressed, the competitor automatically forfeits the presence of their Coach during that match.

## **COACHES**

1. While on the competition floor or staging area, Coaches shall always wear a tracksuit and visibly display their official identification.
2. Cameras and phones may not be used while Coaches are on the competition floor.

## ARTICLE 3: ORGANIZATION OF KUMITE COMPETITION

1. Definitions
  - A. A “**bout**” refers to an individual competition between two competitors.
  - B. A “**match**” refers to the total of all bouts between the members of two teams.
  - C. A “**round**” is a discrete stage in a competition leading to the eventual identification of finalists. In an elimination Kumite competition, a round eliminates fifty percent of competitors within it, counting byes as competitors. In this context, the round can apply equally to a stage in either primary elimination or repechage.
2. The Kumite competition consists of individual divisions (divided by age, gender, weight, and experience categories) and team competitions divided by gender (without weight categories).
3. No competitor may be replaced by another in an individual bout.
4. Individual competitors or teams that do not present themselves when called shall be disqualified (**KIKEN**) from that category. In team matches, the score for the bout not taking place will be set to 8-0 in favor of the other team.
5. Disqualification by **KIKEN** means that the competitors are disqualified from that category, although it does not affect participation in another category. When announcing disqualification by **KIKEN** the Referee will signal by pointing his/her finger towards the side of the missing competitor or team, announcing “AKA/AO **KIKEN**”, and then “AKA/AO no **KACHI**” giving the signal for **KACHI** (win) for the opponent.
6. **Team Matches:**
  - A. Male teams must have at least three competitors, and female teams must have at least two competitors. A team with less than the required number of competitors shall forfeit the match (**KIKEN**).
  - B. The competitors are all members of a team. There are no fixed reserves.
  - C. Before each match an Official Form defining the names and fighting order of the competing team members must be presented by the Coach or team representative. If the Coach hands in the form, she/he must have the appropriate credentials, or the form may be rejected.
  - D. When lining up before a match, a team shall present the actual fighters for that round. The unused fighter(s) and the Coach shall sit in an area set aside for them.
  - E. The fighting order may be changed each round.
  - F. A team shall be disqualified (**SHIKKAKU**) if any of its members or its Coach changes the team’s composition without submitting the written fighting order before the match.
  - G. In team matches where an individual loses by **KIKEN**, **HANSOKU** or **SHIKKAKU**, the score for the disqualified competitor will be set to zero, and a score of 8-0 will be recorded for that bout in favor of the other team.

7. **Tournament Systems:** The Tournament Systems used in USA Karate include, but are not limited to, Single Elimination, Double Elimination, Repechage and Round Robin (Pool Play). The USA Karate Referee Operations Committee and the Tournament Director may adjust the tournament system used for a competition or individual divisions within the competition. The following tournament systems are planned to be used at USA Karate Signature Events:
  - A. Junior International Cup – Single Elimination
  - B. USA Open – Repechage
  - C. National Championships – Repechage

#### ARTICLE 4: THE REFEREE PANEL

1. The Referee Panel for each bout shall consist of one Referee (**SHUSHIN**), four Judges (**FUKUSHIN**), and one **KANSA**. In addition, for the purpose of facilitating the operation of matches, several timekeepers, caller-announcers, and record keepers shall be appointed.
2. As needed, due to the availability of Officials, the Referee Panel may consist of two (2) instead of four (4) Judges as determined by the Chief Referee. The two (2) Judges will sit in the Judge 2 and Judge 3 locations. In the event the two-judge system is utilized, the rules found in APPENDIX 3:.
3. At the start of a Kumite match the Referee stands on the outside edge of the match area facing toward the center of the mat. On the Referee's left stand Judges numbers 1 and 2, and on the right stand Judges numbers 3 and 4.
4. After the formal exchange of bows by the competitors and the Referee Panel (Referee and Judges), the Referee takes a step back and the Judges turn inward and all bow together then take up their positions.
5. When changing the entire Referee Panel (Referee and Judges), the departing Officials, except the **KANSA**, take up position as at the start of the bout or match, bow to each other and then leave the area together.
6. When individual Judges change, the incoming Judge goes to the outgoing Judge, they bow together and change positions.
7. In team matches, provided that the entire Panel holds the required qualification, the positions of Referee and Judges may be rotated between each bout. If one or more officials do not hold the required qualification as Referee, they will remain as sitting Judges and be omitted from the rotation.
8. **Conflicts of Interests:** Officials may not referee a competitor who is from the Official's dojo, karate organization or have any other affiliation. Officials shall not officiate any competitor with whom their relationship may project an appearance of bias or conflict of interest. Example: your best friend's son or daughter or someone with whom you vacation. It remains the duty of any official to self-report on any possible conflict of interest before the bout or match starts.

## ARTICLE 5: DURATION OF A BOUT

**Duration of kumite bouts for all USA Karate divisions are one minute thirty seconds (1:30).**

1. The bout starts when the Referee gives the signal to start and stops each time the Referee calls “**YAME.**”
2. The timekeeper shall give signals by a clearly audible gong or buzzer indicating “15 seconds to go” or “time up.” The “time up” signal marks the end of the match.
3. Time keeping shall be by “stop time,” however, the Chief Referee may determine that “running time” may be used in beginner or novice or intermediate divisions.
4. Competitors are entitled to one minute thirty seconds (1:30) between bouts for the purpose of rest and equipment changes. When the color of equipment is being changed, the time is extended to five minutes.

## ARTICLE 6: KIKEN – FAILURE TO APPEAR AT THE TATAMI

1. **KIKEN** is the decision given, when a competitor or competitors fail to present themselves when called, are unable to continue, abandon the bout, or are withdrawn on the order of the Referee. The grounds for abandonment may include injury not ascribable to the opponent's actions.
2. Forfeiture by **KIKEN** means that the competitors are disqualified from that category, although it does not affect participation in another category.

## ARTICLE 7: STARTING, SUSPENDING AND ENDING OF MATCHES

1. The terms and gestures to be used by the Referee and Judges in the operation of a match shall be as specified in the Appendices.
2. For each round there will be a bowing ceremony starting with the Referee first having competitors and officials face the United States Flag or the Head Table and bow **SHOMEN NI REI** followed by a bow to each other, **OTAGAI NI REI**. The Referee Panel will then bow to each other and shall take up their prescribed positions. At the end of the bout(s) the bowing ceremony is done in the opposite sequence.
3. At the beginning of each bout the Referee shall stand at the edge of the Competition Area. The two competitors will also stand at the edge of the Competition Area on their designated sides. At the Referee’s signal, all shall take up their prescribed positions. The competitors shall stand at the front and center of their assigned areas and the Referee shall stand two meters from the center of the Competition Area between the competitors.
4. The competitors must bow properly to each other at the start and the end of the bout – a quick nod is both discourteous and insufficient. After the competitors bow the Referee will announce “**SHOBU HAJIME**” and the bout will commence.
5. The Referee will stop the bout by announcing “**YAME.**” If necessary, the Referee will order the competitors to take up their original positions (**MOTO NO ICHI**).

6. The Referee returns to the starting position and the Judges will indicate their opinions by means of a signal. In the case of a score to be awarded the Referee identifies the competitor (**AKA** or **AO**), the area attacked (**JODAN** or **CHUDAN**), and then awards the relevant score (**YUKO**, **WAZA-ARI** or **IPPON**) using the appropriate gesture. The Referee then restarts the match or bout by calling “**TSUZUKETE HAJIME.**”
7. The bout ends where there is a clear lead of eight (8) points, or when time is up. The competitor who has the most points is declared the winner, indicated by the Referee raising a hand on the side of the winner, and declaring “**AKA/AO NO KACHI.**” The match or bout has ended at this point.
8. In the event of a tied score at the end of an inconclusive bout the Referee Panel (the Referee and the four Judges) will decide the bout by **HANTEI**. The four judges will immediately give the signal after the Referee calls for “**HANTEI**” when he/she blows the whistle. The Referee will thereafter raise his/her arm and declare the winner; “**AO (AKA) NO KACHI**”, and if necessary, by this action, break the tie.
9. When faced with the following situations, the Referee shall call “**YAME**” and halt the match or bout temporarily:
  - A. When either or both competitors are out of the match area.
  - B. When a Referee orders a competitor to adjust the Karate-Gi or protective equipment.
  - C. When a competitor has contravened the rules.
  - D. When the Referee considers that one or both competitors cannot continue with the bout due to injuries, illness, or other causes. Considering the doctor’s opinion, the Referee shall decide whether the match or bout should continue.
  - E. When a competitor seizes the opponent and does not perform an immediate technique or throw.
  - F. When one or both competitors fall or are thrown and neither competitor manages to immediately follow up with a scoring technique.
  - G. When both competitors seize or clinch with each other without immediately succeeding in executing a throw or a scoring technique or respond to **WAKARETE**.
  - H. When both competitors stand chest to chest without immediately attempting a throw or other technique and do not respond to **WAKARETE**
  - I. When one or both competitors are off their feet following a fall or attempted throw and begin to wrestle.
  - J. When a score is indicated by two or more Judges for the same competitor.
  - K. When, in the opinion of the Referee, there has been a foul committed, or the situation calls for halting the bout for safety reasons.
  - L. When requested to do so by the KANSA or the Tatami Manager.
  - M. For any other reason that the Referee deems necessary.

- N. In situations where there is more than one reason for stopping the match the Referee will address each situation in turn. For example, where there has been a score from one competitor and a contact from the other, or where there has been a **MUBOBI** and an exaggeration of injury from the same competitor. The point should be awarded first followed by the penalty.



## ARTICLE 8: SCORING

1. A score is awarded to a competitor when two or more judges indicate a score.
2. Points are scored by a traditional karate technique with the hand or foot executed with control to a permitted scoring area.
3. If a competitor scores with more than one consecutive technique before the bout has been stopped, the competitor will be awarded the successful scoring technique of the higher point value. Example: If a kick followed a successful punch, the point for the kick would be awarded regardless of whether the punch scored first, since the kick has a higher point value.
4. Scoring Areas:
  - A. **CHUDAN:** (A) Above the Pelvis, (B) Abdomen, (C) Chest, (D) Back, and (E) Side
  - B. **JODAN:** (A) Head, (B) Face, and (C) Neck
  - C. A technique that lands on the shoulder blades may score. The non-scoring part of the shoulder is the junction of the upper bone of the arms with the shoulder blades and collarbones.
  - D. The neck is a target and so is the throat. However, no contact to the throat is permitted, although a score may be awarded for a properly controlled technique which does not touch.
5. Scores are as follows:

| <i>Vocabulary</i>                          | <i>Technical Criteria</i>  |
|--|--|
| <b>IPPON</b> (3 points) is awarded for:    | 1. <b>JODAN</b> kicks. <b>JODAN</b> being defined as the head, face, and neck.<br>2. Any scoring technique which is delivered on an opponent while any part of the opponent's body, other than their feet, is on the tatami. |
| <b>WAZA-ARI</b> (2 points) is awarded for: | 1. <b>CHUDAN</b> kicks.<br>2. <b>CHUDAN</b> being defined as the abdomen, chest, back and side.  |
| <b>YUKO</b> (1 point) is awarded for:      | 1. Any punch (Tsuki) delivered to any of the seven scoring areas.<br>2. Any strike (Uchi) delivered to any of the seven scoring areas.   |

6. A score is awarded when a controlled technique is performed according to the following criteria to a permitted scoring area:
  - A. **Good Form:** Properly executed technique - having characteristics conferring probable effectiveness within the framework of traditional karate concepts.
  - B. **Sporting Attitude:** is a component of good form and refers to a non-malicious attitude of great concentration obvious during delivery of the scoring technique.
  - C. **Vigorous Application:** defines the power and speed of the technique and the palpable will for it to succeed.
  - D. **Awareness (Zanshin):** is the state of continued commitment in which the competitor maintains total concentration, observation, and awareness of the opponent's potentiality to counter-attack.

He/she does not turn his/her face away during delivery of the technique and remains facing the opponent afterwards.

- E. **Good Timing:** means delivering a technique when it will have the greatest potential effect.
- F. **Correct Distance:** similarly means delivering a technique at the precise distance where it will have the greatest potential effect. Thus, if the technique is delivered on an opponent who is rapidly moving away, the potential effect of that blow is reduced.

7. **Proper Distance:**

- A. Hand and foot techniques to the **CHUDAN** area may be delivered with controlled impact without causing injury to the opponent. A loss of breath by the recipient of a blow does not in itself indicate lack of control. When determining the amount of contact, the age and experience level of the competitors must be considered.
- B. Competitors **16 years or older:**
  - i. Techniques to the **JODAN** area can score when stopped within **5 cm** of the target for kicks and **2 cm** for hand techniques but may be delivered with light touch (skin touch) without causing impact - with exception to the throat area where no physical contact is allowed.
  - ii. “Skin touch” with hands and feet are permitted for competitors **16 years or older**.
- C. Competitors **12 to 15 years old**
  - i. For competitors **12 to 15 years old**, **JODAN** techniques can score when stopped within **10 cm** of the target for kicks and **5 cm** for hand techniques.
  - ii. For **12- to 15-year-old** competitors, “skin touch” is allowed for kicks only. Hand contact to the head will be penalized.
- D. Competitors **11 and younger**
  - i. No head contact of any kind is permitted for competitors **11 years and under**.
  - ii. For competitors **11 years old and younger**, **JODAN** techniques can score when stopped within **10 cm** of the target.
- E. “Skin touch” is defined as touching the target without transferring energy into the head or body.

8. **A technique is invalid if:**

- A. executed after the time-up signal or the Referee calling “**YAME**”.
- B. executed upon or after “**WAKARETE**” before “**TSUZUKETE**” has been called.
- C. executed when the performer is outside the competition area (**JOGAI**).
- D. followed by a foul – with the exception of **JOGAI**.
- E. the competitor turns their back to the opponent after a technique (lack of awareness).

F. it follows a violation of the rules (such as excessive contact, holding, grabbing etc.).

9. **Scoring Notes:**

- A. An effective technique delivered at the same time that the end of the bout is signaled is considered valid. A technique, even if effective, delivered after an order to suspend or stop the bout shall not be scored and may result in a warning or penalty being imposed on the offender.
- B. No technique, even if technically correct, shall be scored if it is delivered when the two competitors are outside the competition area. However, if one of the competitors delivers an effective technique while still inside the competition area and before the Referee calls “**YAME**,” the technique shall be scored.
- C. No technique, even if technically correct, shall be scored after the Referee signals **WAKARETE** and before the **TSUZUKETE** command is given.
- D. A technique, delivered by a competitor who is lying on the ground, may be awarded if it meets all six scoring criteria.
- E. The time-up bell signals the end of scoring possibilities in that bout, even though the Referee may inadvertently not halt the bout immediately. The time-up bell does not however mean that warnings or penalties cannot be imposed. Penalties can be imposed by the Referee Panel up to the point where the competitors leave that area.
- F. If two competitors hit each other at the exact same time, the scoring criterion of “good timing” has by definition not been met, and the correct judgment is to not award a point. Both competitors may however receive points for their respective scores if they each have two flags in their favor and the scores both happen before “**YAME**” and before the time signal.
- G. For reasons of safety, throws where the opponent is being grabbed below the waist, thrown without being held onto, or thrown dangerously, or where the pivot point is above the thrower’s belt level, are prohibited and shall incur a warning or penalty. Exceptions are conventional karate leg sweeping techniques that do not require the opponent to be held while executing the sweep, such as ashi-barai, kouchi-gari, kani waza, etc. After a throw has been executed the Referee will allow the competitor time to immediately attempt a scoring technique.
- H. Divisions for 11 years old and under are not permitted to attempt leg sweeps of any kind.
- I. A point may be signaled, even if the Judge cannot see the actual point of impact, if the technique itself is executed correctly and can be observed to obviously not have been obstructed in reaching its target.

## ARTICLE 9: PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

### 1. The following behaviors are prohibited:

- A. Techniques that make excessive contact, having regard to the scoring area attacked, and techniques that make contact with the throat.
- B. Attacks to the arms or legs, groin, joints, or instep.
- C. Attacks to the face with open hand techniques.
- D. Techniques executed after “**WAKARETE**” but before “**TSUZUKETE**” has been called.
- E. Dangerous or forbidden throwing techniques.
- F. Feigning, or exaggerating injury.
- G. Exit from the competition area (**JOGAI**) not caused by the opponent.
- H. Self-endangerment, such as exposing the competitor to injury by failing to take adequate measures for self-protection (**MUBOBI**).
- I. Avoiding combat as a means of preventing the opponent from having the opportunity to score.
- J. Passivity, such as not attempting to engage in combat. (Cannot be given with fewer than 15 seconds left of the bout). Passivity cannot be given to a competitor that is leading on points or **SENSHU**.
- K. Clinching, wrestling, pushing, or standing chest to chest without attempting a scoring technique or takedown.
- L. Grabbing the opponent with both hands for any other reasons than executing an immediate takedown upon catching the opponent’s kicking leg.
- M. Grabbing the opponent’s arm or Karate-Gi with one hand without immediately attempting a scoring technique or takedown.
- N. Techniques which by their nature cannot be controlled for the safety of the opponent and dangerous and uncontrolled attacks.
- O. Simulated attacks with the head, knees, or elbows.
- P. Talking to or goading the opponent, failing to obey the orders of the Referee, discourteous behavior towards Officials, or other breaches of etiquette.

### 2. Coaches Conduct:

- A. The Referee may, based solely on his/her own Judgement, ban from the competition floor any Coach failing to conform to proper conduct, or that in the opinion of the Referee interferes with the orderly conduct of the bout, and postpone the continuation of a bout until the Coach complies. The same authority of the Referee extends to the compliance of other members of the competitor’s entourage present on the competition floor.

- B. Only the Coach designated for that specific bout is allowed to coach and guide the competitor from the place allocated to the coach close to the competition area. All other registered and accredited Coaches, or other registered members of the delegation, attending the Signature Events are not allowed to interfere, coach and/or guide the competitor during the same bout at the risk of having their accreditation withdrawn.
  - C. Instructions and comments from the Coach must not interfere with the proceedings. The Coach may freely speak to the competitor when the match is halted but must at all times refrain from commenting on judgements.
3. **Excessive Contact:** Traditional karate techniques delivered with full power can cause serious injury. Karate is a contact sport; for that reason, dangerous techniques are prohibited, and all techniques must be controlled. Trained competitors can absorb relatively powerful blows on muscled areas such as the abdomen, but the fact remains that the head, face, neck, groin, and joints are particularly susceptible to injury. Therefore, any technique that results in injury must be penalized, unless caused by the recipient. The competitors must perform all techniques with control and good form. If they cannot, then regardless of the technique misused, a warning or penalty must be imposed.

## ARTICLE 10: WARNINGS & PENALTIES

### 1. Informal Warnings

- A. Informal warnings are used to facilitate the continuity of action without stopping the bout. They are not meant to replace formal warnings when these are appropriate, and the Referee should proceed with formal warnings or penalties as appropriate if the informal warning is not reacted upon by the competitors.
- B. There are two types of Informal Warnings:
  - i. **TSUZUKETE**: To urge the competitors to commence activity by gesturing in the same way as is customary for making the competitors stepping on to the **TATAMI**, combined with the instruction “**TSUZUKETE**.”
  - ii. **WAKARETE**: To break-up a clinch, using the same gesture as is customary for making the competitors step back on the **TATAMI** combined with giving the order “**WAKARETE**” to temporarily stop the action without stopping the clock. The competitors must separate – after which the order “**TSUZUKETE**” is given for resuming action.
- C. A protest addressing alleged scores shall be denied if **WAKARETE** is called by the Referee before the exchange occurs.
- D. When **WAKARETE** is called when a competitor is cornered, the Referee must ensure that the other competitor withdraws sufficiently to disengage before **TSUZUKETE** is called.
- E. **TSUZUKETE**, unless preceded by **WAKARETE**, is not used if there is fewer than 15 seconds left of the bout.
- F. An otherwise correctly executed technique will not be given a score if executed at the same time as **WAKARETE** has been called – but will not be penalized. An uncontrolled technique will be subject to warning or penalty in the normal manner.

### 2. Official Warnings

There are two degrees of official warnings: **CHUI** and **HANSOKU CHUI**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>CHUI</b><br>Warning   | is given, up to three times, for smaller infractions that do not diminish the other competitor's chances of winning.   |
| <b>HANSOKU CHUI</b><br>Warning of disqualification in the event of further infractions | is given for more serious infractions that reduces the other competitor's chances of winning, or to a competitor for any further infraction if three <b>CHUI</b> has already been given. |

### 3. Penalties

- A. There are two kinds of penalties which are two different levels of disqualification:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>HANSOKU</b><br>Disqualification from the<br>bout. | This is the penalty of disqualification following a<br>very serious infraction or when <b>HANSOKU CHUI</b><br>has already been given. |
|--|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>SHIKKAKU</b><br>Disqualification from<br>the tournament. | This is a disqualification from the entire tournament<br>including any subsequent category the offender may<br>have been registered for. <b>SHIKKAKU</b> may be<br>invoked when a competitor fails to obey the orders of<br>the Referee, acts maliciously, or commits an act<br>which harms the prestige and honor of Karate. |
|---|---|

- B. In instances where both **AKA** and **AO** are disqualified in the same bout by **HANSOKU** or **SHIKKAKU**, the opponents scheduled for the next round will win by bye (and no result is announced).
- C. Serious violation of conduct, discipline, or malicious behavior on or outside the competition area by the competitor or his entourage may cause further disciplinary action from the USA Karate Ethics Committee.
- D. When a situation appears to possibly warrant a disqualification the Referee can call one or more of the Judges for a brief consultation (**SHUGO**) before announcing any decision.

### 4. Warning and Penalty Application

- A. **Excessive contact:** Where contact is considered by the Referee to be too strong, but does not diminish the competitor's chances of winning, a warning (**CHUI**) may be given.
- B. **Contact causing injury:** Any technique that results in an injury can, unless caused by the recipient, justify a warning or penalty. The competitors must perform all techniques with control and with good form. If they cannot, then regardless of the technique misused, a warning or penalty must be imposed.
- C. **Observation after contact:** The Referee must continue to observe the injured competitor until the bout is resumed and allow adequate time for observation. A short delay in giving a judgement allows injury symptoms such as a nosebleed to develop or reveal any efforts by the competitor to aggravate slight injury for tactical advantage.
- D. **Overreaction to contact:** A slight overreaction will receive a **CHUI**. An obvious display of exaggeration will receive a **HANSOKU CHUI**. A more serious exaggeration such as staggering around, falling on the floor, standing up and falling down again, and so on, may receive **HANSOKU** directly.
- E. **Feigning an injury:** Any instance of feigning an injury, however slight, will receive a minimum warning of **CHUI** while an obvious display of exaggeration will receive a **HANSOKU CHUI**. A more serious exaggeration such as staggering around, falling on the floor, standing up and falling down again, and so on, will receive **SHIKKAKU** directly. Any feigning of an injury from a

technique that in fact has been determined by the judges as a point will, as a minimum, result in **HANSOKU CHUI**.

- F. **Contact to the throat:** Any contact to the throat, unless received by the recipient's own fault, must result in a warning or penalty.
- G. **Throwing techniques** are divided into two types. The established "conventional" karate leg sweeping techniques such as de ashi barai, ko uchi gari, etc., where the opponent is swept off-balance or thrown without being grabbed first - and those throws requiring that the opponent be grabbed by one hand or held as the throw is executed. Throws are not permitted for competitors 11 and under.
- H. **The pivotal point of the throw** must not be above the thrower's hip level and the opponent must be held onto throughout, so that a safe landing can be made. Over the shoulder throws are expressly forbidden, as are so-called "sacrifice" throws.
- I. **Catching a kick:** The only instance where a throw may be performed while holding onto the opponent with both hands is when trapping the opponent's kicking leg. Holding on with both hands is only permitted when grabbing an opponent's kicking leg for the purpose of executing a takedown, and then holding on to the opponent's leg while the other grasping the opponents Karate-Gi or body to break the fall.
- J. **Grabbing the legs:** It is forbidden to grab the opponent below the waist and lift and throw him/her or to reach down to pull the legs from under him/her. If a competitor is injured as a result of a throwing technique, the Referee will decide whether a warning or penalty is called for.
- K. **One hand grabbing:** The competitor may seize the opponent's arm or Karate-Gi with one hand for purpose of executing a throw or a direct scoring technique – but may not keep holding on for continuous techniques.
- L. **Holding on to break a fall:** Holding on to the opponent's Karate-Gi with one hand is permitted to break a fall.
- M. **Exiting the competition area: JOGAI** relates to a situation where a competitor's foot, or any other part of the body, touches the floor outside of the competition area. An exception is when the competitor is physically pushed or thrown from the area by the opponent or is exiting after having scored.
  - i. A competitor who delivers a scoring technique and then exits the area before the Referee calls "**YAME**" will be given the value of the score and **JOGAI** will not be imposed. If the competitor's attempt to score is unsuccessful the exit will be recorded as a **JOGAI**.
  - ii. If **AO** exits just after **AKA** scores with a successful attack, then "**YAME**" will occur immediately on the score and **AO**'s exit will not be recorded. If **AO** exits or has exited as **AKA**'s score is made (with **AKA** remaining within the area), then both **AKA**'s score will be awarded and **AO**'s **JOGAI** will be imposed.
- N. **Self-endangerment:**
  - i. A warning or penalty for **MUBOBI** is given when a competitor is hurt or injured through his or her own fault or negligence. This may be caused by turning their back on the opponent,



attacking without regard for the opponent's counterattack, stopping fighting before the Referee calls "**YAME**", dropping the guard or repeated failure or refusal to block the opponent's attacks.

- ii. Competitors who are hit through their own fault and exaggerate the effect in order to mislead the Judges may receive a warning or penalty for **MUBOBI** as well as an additional warning or penalty for exaggeration, since two offenses have been committed.
- iii. It should be noted that there are no circumstances in which a technique that has made excessive contact can be given a score.

O. **Passivity** refers to situations where neither competitor makes attempts to score, or a single competitor does not attempt to score despite being behind on points or the opponent has a lead because of **SENSHU**.

- i. Passivity cannot be given to a competitor that has a lead on points or **SENSHU**.
- ii. Passivity cannot be given during the first 15 seconds of a bout
- iii. Passivity cannot be given when there is fewer than 15 seconds left in the bout.

P. **Avoiding Combat** refers to a situation where a competitor attempts to prevent the opponent having the opportunity to score by using time-wasting behavior such as constantly retreating without effective counter, holding, clinching, or exiting the competition area rather than allowing the opponent an opportunity to score. Avoiding combat with fewer than 15 seconds of the bout (**ATO SHIBARAKU**) will, as a minimum, result in **HANSOKU CHUI** and loss of **SENSHU**.

Q. **Not following instructions:** A competitor who refuses to follow the instructions of the Referee or displays a loss of temper will automatically receive **SHIKKAKU**. This penalty may be imposed before, during or after the bout.

R. **Foot and Leg Sweeps:** Foot sweeps can cause injury. The Referee must distinguish between a valid leg sweep, or an attack to the leg which must immediately be warned or penalized. Leg sweeps are not permitted for 11 & under divisions

S. Open hand techniques to the face are forbidden due to the danger to the competitor's sight.

T. When a competitor scores immediately followed by another technique which makes excessive contact, the Judges do not award the score and instead the Referee signals for a Category 1 warning or penalty (unless it is the recipient's own fault).

U. Any discourteous behavior from a member of an Official delegation can earn the disqualification of a competitor, the entire team, or delegation from the tournament.

5. **Excessive celebration, political or religious demonstration:** Competitors are expected to respect the ceremony of salutations before and after the bout or match. Any excessive celebration, such as falling on one's knees etc., political, or religious expressions, during or immediately after the bout or match, are prohibited and may be subject to a fine equal to the amount determined by the Board of Directors for the protest fee.

6. **Disqualification of individual competitors in team matches**

- A. **HANSOKU** or **SHIKKAKU**: In team matches the offended competitor's score will be set at eight points and the offender's score will be zeroed.

## ARTICLE 11: INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS IN COMPETITION

1. An injured competitor who wins a bout through disqualification due to injury is not allowed to fight again in the Competition without permission from the doctor. No such permission can be given to a competitor that suffered loss of consciousness or otherwise have any symptoms of concussion.
2. **Procedures for Handling Injuries**
  - A. When a competitor is injured, the Referee shall at once halt the bout and call the doctor. The doctor is authorized to diagnose and treat injury only.
  - B. If physically able to do so, the injured competitor should be directed off the mat for examination and treatment by the doctor.
  - C. A competitor who is injured during a bout in progress and requires medical treatment will be allowed three minutes in which to receive it. The Tatami Manager is responsible for instructing the timekeeper to start the 3-minute count. If treatment is not completed within the time allowed, the Referee will decide whether an extension of treatment time shall be given.
  - D. **10 Second Rule:** Any competitor who falls, is thrown or knocked down and does not fully regain his/her feet within ten seconds is considered unfit to continue fighting and shall be automatically withdrawn from all Kumite events in that tournament. If a competitor falls, is thrown or knocked down and does not regain his/her feet immediately, the Referee will stop the bout, call the doctor, and at the same time start a verbal count to ten in the English language indicating his count showing a finger for each second. In all cases where the 10 second count has been started the doctor will be asked to examine the competitor before the bout can resume. For incidents falling under this 10 second rule, the competitor may be examined on the mat. The Tatami Manager must notify the Chief Referee when a competitor has been stopped from further competition based on the 10-second rule. The 10 second rule shall not apply to divisions for ages 11 and younger.
  - E. The Tournament Doctor is authorized to give an opinion on the injured competitor's fitness for continuation only. The Referee will decide the winner on the basis of **KIKEN**, **HANSOKU**, or **SHIKKAKU** as the case may be.
  - F. When the Tournament Doctor declares the competitor unfit, the appropriate entry must be made on the competitor's monitoring card.
  - G. The Referee must be aware of pre-existing injuries.
  - H. Before the start of a match or bout, the Tatami Manager must examine the medical cards and ensure that the competitors are fit to fight. The Referee must be informed if a competitor has been treated for injury.
  - I. The opponent should not be penalized for any pre-existing condition.

### 3. **Injury of Both Competitors:**

- A. If two competitors injure each other or are suffering from the effects of previously incurred injury and are declared by the Tournament Doctor to be unable to continue, the bout is awarded to the competitor who has amassed the most points or has a lead by **SENSHU**.
- B. In individual bouts, if the point score is equal, then a vote (**HANTEI**) will decide the outcome of the bout, unless one of the competitors has **SENSHU**. In team matches, the Referee will announce a tie (**HIKIWAKE**), unless one of the competitors has **SENSHU**. Should the situation occur in an extra bout for deciding a team match, a vote (**HANTEI**) will determine the outcome, unless one of the competitors has **SENSHU**.

### 4. **Notes on Injuries**

- A. The Referee must constantly observe an injured competitor until the bout is resumed. A short delay in giving a judgment allows injury symptoms such as a nosebleed to develop. Observation will also reveal any efforts by the competitor to aggravate slight injury for tactical advantage. Examples of this are blowing violently through an injured nose or rubbing the face roughly.
- B. An injured competitor who has been declared unfit to fight by the tournament doctor cannot fight again in that competition. This will not prevent the competitor from competing in another category such as Kata or Kubodo.

## ARTICLE 12: CRITERIA FOR DECISION

### 1. General

- A. When two or more Judges signal a score for the same competitor, the Referee will stop the bout and render the decision accordingly. Should the Referee fail to stop the bout the Match Supervisor will blow his/her whistle. When the Referee decides to halt the bout for any reason, he/she will call “**YAME**” at the same time using the required hand signal.
- B. If both competitors have a score signaled by two Judges, both competitors will be awarded their respective points.
- C. If one competitor has a score indicated by more than one Judge and the score is different between the Judges, the **higher** will be applied. The same applies if there are two judges for each competitor with different scores.
- D. If there is majority, but disagreement, among the Judges for one level of score, the majority opinion will always overrule the principle of applying the highest score.
- E. When explaining the basis for a decision after the bout or match, the Referee Panel may speak to the Tatami Manager, the Chief Referee, or the Appeals Jury. They will explain themselves to no one else.

### 2. Criteria for Deciding the Winner of a bout

- A. The result of a bout is determined by a competitor obtaining a clear lead of eight points; at time-up, having the highest number of points; at equal score having the first unopposed point advantage (**SENSHU**); obtaining a decision by **HANTEI** or by a **HANSOKU**, **SHIKKAKU**, or **KIKEN** imposed against a competitor.
- B. By “first unopposed score advantage” (**SENSHU**) it is understood that one competitor has achieved the first instance of scoring on the opponent without having the opponent also score before the signal. In instances where both competitors score before the signal, no “first unopposed score advantage” is awarded and both competitors retain the possibility of **SENSHU** later in the bout.
- C. No individual bout can be declared a tie. Only in team competition, when a bout ends with equal scores, or no scores, and neither competitor has obtained **SENSHU**, will the Referee announce a tie (**HIKIWAKE**).
- D. In any bout, if after time-up the scores are equal, but one competitor has obtained **SENSHU**, that competitor will be declared the winner.
- E. In any individual bout, where no score has been obtained by either competitor, or the score is equal without any competitor having obtained **SENSHU** the decision will be made based on the following criteria in order of application:
  - i. The higher number of **Ippon** scored in the bout.
  - ii. The higher number of **Waza Ari** scored in the bout.

- F. Should the above not provide a winner, the decision will be by **HANTEI**.
- i. A decision in favor of one or the other competitor is required and is taken based on the following criteria, as evaluated during the entire bout:
    1. The attitude, fighting spirit, and strength demonstrated by the competitors,
    2. The superiority of tactics and techniques displayed and
  - ii. When deciding the outcome of a bout by vote (**HANTEI**) at the end of an inconclusive bout, the Referee will move to the match area perimeter and call **HANTEI** followed by a two-tone blast of the whistle. The four judges will then immediately give their decision. The Referee will then give a short blast on his/her whistle, return to his/her original position, and will thereafter raise his/her arm and declare the winner; “**AO (AKA) NO KACHI**”, and if necessary, by this action, break the tie.
- G. Should a competitor who has been awarded **SENSHU** receive a warning for avoiding combat (**JOGAI**, running away, clinching, grabbing, wrestling, pushing, or standing chest to chest) when there is fewer than 15 seconds left in the bout the competitor will automatically forfeit this advantage. To indicate the loss of **SENSHU** the Referee will first show the type of infraction and type of warning or penalty given to the competitor, then the Referee shall give the signal for **SENSHU** followed by the signal for annulment (**TORIMASEN**) at the same time announcing **AKA/AO SENSHU TORIMASEN**.
- H. If **SENSHU** is withdrawn with fewer than 15 seconds left of the bout, no further **SENSHU** can be awarded to either competitor.
- I. In cases where **SENSHU** has been awarded, but a successful protest determines that also the other opponent scored, and that a score in fact is not unopposed, the same procedure is used for nullification of **SENSHU**.
- J. In instances where both **AKA** and **AO** are disqualified in the same bout by **HANSOKU**, the opponents scheduled for the next round will win by bye (and no result is announced), unless the double disqualification applies to a medal bout, in which case the winner will be declared by **HANTEI**, unless one of the competitors has **SENSHU**.

3. **Criteria for Deciding the winner of a team match:**

- A. The winning team is the one with the most bout victories including those won by **SENSHU**. Should two teams have the same number of bout victories, then the winning team will be the one with the most points, taking both winning and losing bouts into account. The maximum point difference or lead recorded in any bout will be ten points.
- B. If the two teams have the same number of bout victories and points, then a deciding bout will be held. Each team may nominate one competitor of their team for the purpose of fighting the extra bout, regardless of whether that person already has fought in a previous bout between the two teams.
- C. If the extra bout does not produce a winner based on superiority of points, nor any of the competitors receiving **SENSHU**, the extra bout will be decided based on **HANTEI** according to

the same procedure as individual bouts. The result of the **HANTEI** for the extra bout will also determine the result of the team match.

- D. In team matches when a team has won sufficient bout victories or scored sufficient points as to be the established winner, then the match is declared over, and no further bouts will take place.
- E. In team matches, should a team member be disqualified (**HANSOKU** or **SHIKKAKU**), their score for that bout, if any, will be zeroed and the opponent's score will be set at eight points.
- F. In instances where both **AKA** and **AO** are disqualified in the same bout by **HANSOKU**, the opponents scheduled for the next round will win by a bye (and no result is announced), unless the double disqualification applies to a medal bout, in which case the winner will be declared by **HANTEI**, unless one of the competitors has **SENSHU**.

#### 4. Scorekeeping

The Score Supervisor will use the following symbols for registration of points, warnings, and penalties:

|    |                        |                                  |
|----|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 3  | IPPON                  | Three-point score                |
| 2  | WAZA ARI               | Two-point score                  |
| 1  | YUKO                   | One point score                  |
|    |                        |                                  |
| ✓  | SENSHU                 | First unopposed point advantage  |
| □  | KACHI                  | Winner                           |
| X  | MAKE                   | Loser                            |
| ▲  | HIKIWAKE               | Draw                             |
|    |                        |                                  |
| 1C | CHUI (first instance)  | 1 <sup>st</sup> warning          |
| 2C | CHUI (second instance) | 2 <sup>nd</sup> warning          |
| 3C | CHUI (third instance)  | 3 <sup>rd</sup> warning          |
| HC | HANSOKU CHUI           | Warning of disqualification      |
| H  | HANSOKU                | Disqualification from bout       |
| S  | SHIKKAKU               | Disqualification from tournament |

## ARTICLE 13: OFFICIAL PROTEST

### 1. General Provisions

- A. No one may protest about a judgment to the members of the Referee Panel. Any protest must be submitted to the Tatami Manager.
- B. If a Refereeing procedure appears to contradict the rules, the competitor's Coach is the only one allowed to make a protest.
- C. The protest shall take the form of a written report submitted immediately after the bout in which the protest was generated. The sole exception is when the protest concerns an administrative malfunction.
- D. In case of an administrative malfunction during a bout in progress, the Coach can notify the Tatami Manager directly. In turn, the Tatami Manager will notify the Referee.
- E. Any protest concerning application of the rules must not necessarily impede the progression of the competition and the intent to protest must be announced by the Coach immediately after the end of the bout.
- F. Once a protest is made, any subsequent bouts that might involve either of the competitors must be postponed until the appeal is decided. Other bouts in the round, or the next round, that will not be affected by the outcome of the protest, may continue.
- G. The Coach will request the official protest form from the Tatami Manager and will be expected to have it completed, signed, and delivered to the Tatami Manager within **5 minutes** after announcing the intent to protest. The protest fee of **\$350 (USD cash)** must be submitted to the Tatami Manager at this time.
- H. Failure of a Coach to deliver a protest in a timely manner can lead to its rejection if such delay, in the opinion of the Appeals Jury, is without reasonable justification and impedes the progression of the competition.
- I. The protest must list the name, state and country of the competitors and the precise details of what is being protested. No general claims about overall standards will be accepted as a legitimate protest. The burden of proving the validity of the protest lies with the complainant.
- J. The Tatami Manager will complete any information regarding implicated officials. The Tatami will then immediately turn the protest form and the Protest Fee over to a representative of the Appeals Jury.
- K. The Appeals Jury will, without delay, review the circumstances leading to the protested decision and will study the evidence available in support of the protest. Having considered all the facts available, they will produce a report and shall be empowered to take appropriate action to address the situation.
- L. The decision of the Appeals Jury is final and may only be overruled by a unanimous decision of the three Referee Committee Chairpersons, the Chairperson of the Board of Directors and the USA Karate CEO.



- M. The Appeals Jury may not impose sanctions or penalties. Their function is to pass judgment on the merit of the protest and to submit their report to the Referee Committees for any remedial action that may be necessary to rectify any Refereeing procedure found to contravene the rules.

## **2. Composition of the Appeals Jury:**

- A. The Referee Operations Committee will assign three senior Officials as members of Appeals Jury for all USA Karate Signature Events. No two members may be appointed from the same state or karate organization.
- B. The Referee Operations Committee should also appoint three additional members with designated numbering from 1 to 3 that automatically will replace any of the originally appointed Appeals Jury members in a conflict-of-interest situation where the jury member is of the same, state, sports organization, karate organization or has a family relationship by blood or marriage with any of the parties involved in the protested incident.

## **3. Appeals Evaluation Process:**

- A. It is the responsibility of the Tatami Manager receiving the protest to gather the Appeals Jury and deposit the protest sum with the USA Karate Operations Chairperson for any declined protest.
- B. The Appeals Jury will immediately make such inquiries and investigations, as they consider necessary to validate the merit of the protest.
- C. Each of the three members is obliged to give his/her verdict as to the validity of the protest. Abstentions are not acceptable.

## **4. Declined and Accepted Protests**

- A. If a protest is found invalid, the Appeals Jury will appoint one of its members to verbally notify the protester that the protest has been declined, mark the original document with the word “**DECLINED**”, have it signed by each of the members of the Appeals Jury, and inform the protester of the decision.
- B. If a protest is accepted, the Appeals Jury will confer with the Referee Operations Committee and Chief Referee to take such measures as can be practically carried out to remedy the situation including the possibilities of:
  - i. Reversing previous judgments that contravene the rules.
  - ii. Voiding results of the affected rounds from the point before the incident.
  - iii. Redoing such bouts that have been affected by the incident.
  - iv. Issuing a recommendation to the Referee Certification Committee for any involved Judges evaluated for sanction.
- C. The responsibility rests with the Appeals Jury to exercise restraint and sound judgment in taking actions that will disturb the program of the event in any significant manner. Reversing the process of the eliminations is a last option to secure a fair outcome.

- D. If the protest is accepted, the Appeals Jury will appoint one of its members who will verbally notify the protester that the protest has been accepted, mark the original document with the word “**ACCEPTED**”, and have it signed by each of the members of the Appeals Jury, before depositing the protest with the Chief Referee, and returning the Protest Fee to the protester.

5. **Incident report**

- A. After handling the incident in the above prescribed manner, the Appeals Jury will meet again and elaborate a simple protest incident report, describing their findings and state their reason(s) for accepting or rejecting the protest.
- B. The report should be signed by all three members of the Appeals Jury and submitted to the Chief Referee and the Referee Operations Committee Chairperson.

## ARTICLE 14: POWERS AND DUTIES

### REFEREE COMMITTEES

#### 1. REFEREE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

##### A. OBJECTIVE:

To develop and implement educational programs, materials, and activities to provide members with access and opportunity to achieve knowledge and skills to work as Officials with competence, confidence, and professionalism.

##### B. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- i. Maintain and edit USANKF Rules of Competition with input from the **Technical Committee, Medical Committee**, and other **Referee Committees**.
- ii. Define and develop curriculum for the training and education of Referees.
- iii. Create appropriate materials and manuals to assist Referees.
- iv. Coordinate, develop and administer seminars and clinics for Referees and Referee Instructors.
- v. Prepare and present educational curriculum, teaching modules and/or courses at Signature Events and Team Trials including kata and kumite video presentations.
- vi. Develop and maintain test process, questions, answers, and test results in accordance with the most current USA Karate Rules of Competition.
- vii. Maintain and provide literature for Officials' tables at Signature Events and Team Trials such as the Approved Kata list, Protest forms and any other pertinent information for the specific tournament.
- viii. Provide USA Karate with the training agenda for each day, including website and postings for the event.
- ix. Operate the Referee Training Program including the following:
  - a. Create, review, and revise the structure of the program including the certification requirements and process.
  - b. Provide ongoing support and oversight.
  - c. Prepare and maintain training materials.
  - d. Prepare and maintain training/educational materials on the USA Karate website.
- x. Create and send all education/course related announcements and/or bulletins to Referees.
- xi. Recruit Referee volunteers including for each Signature Event and Team Trials.

xii. Participate in Mandatory Referee Briefing at Signature Events and Team Trials.

xiii. Work collaboratively with the **Certification** and **Operations** Committees.

## 2. REFEREE CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE

### A. OBJECTIVE:

To maintain standards for the licenses offered through USA Karate; to manage and implement the processes for issuing of licenses for the highest USA Karate license levels; to be the examination panel for the highest USA Karate licenses to ensure quality. The highest USA Karate license levels are defined as Kata Judge A, Kata Judge B, Kumite Referee A, and Kumite Referee B.

### B. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- i. Assist the Education Committee with the maintenance of the USA Karate Rules of Competition.
- ii. Develop, operate, and monitor a certification program to augment training and education at Signature Events and Team Trials.
- iii. Develop, maintain, verify, and distribute materials for licensing evaluations at Signature Events and Team Trials.
- iv. Develop and evaluate the criteria required to pass tests for each level.
- v. Serve as the Examination Panel for the highest USA Karate licenses.
- vi. Maintain records of testing and provide evaluation results to candidates and National Office.
- vii. Document, maintain, and communicate the process used for determining priority and eligibility for officials to test at PKF and/or WKF events.
- viii. Maintain and share with all Officials the selection list of USA Karate Officials for the purpose of determining priority and eligibility for Officials to test at PKF and/or WKF events.
- ix. Provide notice to candidates to test at PKF and/or WKF events with sufficient time to make travel and work accommodations.
- x. Complete the required PKF/WKF paperwork for candidates to test at PKF and/or WKF events.
- xi. Participate in Mandatory Referee Briefing at Signature Events and Team Trials.
- xii. Recruit Referee volunteers including for each Signature Event and Team Trials.
- xiii. Work collaboratively with the **Education** and **Operations** Committees.

### 3. REFEREE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

#### A. OBJECTIVE:

To manage, oversee and coordinate the Referee-related environment and operations of Signature Events and Team Trials.

#### B. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- i. Assist the Education Committee with the maintenance of the USA Karate Rules of Competition.
- ii. Plan, organize and manage Officials at USA Karate Signature Events and Team Trials.
- iii. Recruit Referee volunteers including for each Signature Event and Team Trial.
- iv. Ensure the smooth operation of Referees within Signature Events and Team Trials.
- v. Work with the USA Karate National Office and Event Staff to understand the requirements and details of each event location.
- vi. Coordinate with Event staff to determine how many rings (elite and non-elite) will be needed for each event.
- vii. Conduct Officials' morning briefing at Signature Events and Team Trials.
- viii. Participate in Mandatory Referee briefing at Signature Events and Team Trials.
- ix. Work closely with Officials, Coaches, Athletes and spectators at Signature Events and Team Trials to ensure customer satisfaction.
- x. Provide updates for Operational event-related Referee material on the USA Karate website.
- xi. Work collaboratively with the **Certification** and **Education** Committees.

## CHIEF REFEREE

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

1. To facilitate the smooth operation of the tournament and to make any necessary adjustments to the tournament operations.
2. To act as the liaison between the Appeals Jury and the Coach or Official Representative when a protest is submitted.
3. To work with the Tournament Director to adjust divisions and ring procedures based on participation of competitors and availability of Officials.
4. To pass the final judgment on matters of a technical nature that may arise during a given bout and for which there are no stipulations in the rules.
5. At the conclusion of the Tournament to prepare a written report regarding the event which will be presented to the USA Karate Operations Committee for evaluation

## TATAMI MANAGERS

The Tatami Managers' powers and duties shall be as follows:

1. To delegate, appoint, and supervise the Referees and Judges for all matches in areas under their control.
2. To oversee the performance of the Referees and Judges in their areas, and to ensure that the Officials appointed are capable of the tasks allotted them.
3. To order the Referee to halt the match when the **KANSA** signals a contravention of the Rules of Competition.
4. To prepare a daily written report on the performance of each Official under their supervision, together with their recommendations, if any, to the Referee Operations Committee.
5. To provide Protest Forms to Coaches or Official representatives and to interact with the Appeals Jury as necessary.

## REFEREES

The Referee's powers shall be as follows:

1. The Referee ("SHUSHIN") shall have the power to conduct bouts/matches including announcing the start, the suspension, and the end of the match.
2. The Referee shall give all commands and make all announcements.
3. To award points based on the decision of the Judges.
4. To stop the bout when an injury, illness, or inability of a competitor to continue is noticed.

5. To stop the bout when it is in the Referee's opinion there has been a foul committed, or to ensure the safety of the competitors.
6. To call **FUKUSHIN** (**SHUGO** - summoning the judges) when, in the opinion of the Referee is deemed necessary, for giving **SHIKKAKU**, applying the 10 seconds rule, when the doctor wants to stop the bout, or when directly giving **HANSOKU**.
7. To indicate fouls observed, and impose warning and penalties as required by the rules.
8. To explain to the Tatami Manager, Chief Referee or Appeals Jury, if necessary, the basis for giving a judgment.
9. To announce and start an extra bout when required in team matches.
10. To conduct voting of the Judges, including his own vote (**HANTEI**), and announce the result.
11. To announce the winner.
12. The authority of the Referee is not confined solely to the competition area but also to its entire immediate perimeter, including controlling the conduct of Coaches, other competitors, or any part of the competitors' entourage present on the competition floor.

## JUDGES

1. The Judges' (**FUKUSHIN**) powers shall be as follows:
  - A. To signal point(s) scored, on their own initiative.
  - B. To exercise their right to vote on any decision to be taken.
  - C. To advise the Referee on possible disqualifications if called by the Referee for a **SHUGO**.
2. The Judges shall carefully observe the actions of the competitors and signal to the Referee an opinion when a score is observed.

## KANSA

1. The **KANSA** will assist the Tatami Manager by overseeing the match or bout in progress. Should decisions of the Referee and/or Judges not be in accordance with the Rules of Competition, the **KANSA** will immediately blow the whistle.
2. Records kept of the match or bout shall become Official records subject to the approval of the **KANSA**.
3. Before the start of each match or bout the **KANSA** will ensure that competitor's equipment and Karate-Gi are in accordance with the USA Karate rules of competition. Even if the organizer has a check-up of equipment before line-up, it is still **KANSA'S** responsibility to ensure that the equipment is in accordance with the rules. The **KANSA** will not rotate during Team matches.

### **KANSA Guideline:**

In the following situations, the **KANSA** will blow his/her whistle:

1. The Referee forgets to indicate **SENSHU**.
2. The Referee forgets to remove the **SENSHU**.
3. The Referee gives a score to the wrong competitor.
4. The Referee gives warning/penalty to the wrong competitor.
5. The Referee gives a score to a competitor and a warning for exaggeration to the other.
6. The Referee gives a score to a competitor and **MUBOBI** to the other.
7. The Referee gives a score for a technique done after **YAME** or after the time is up.
8. The Referee gives a score made by a competitor when he/she is outside the Tatami.
9. The Referee gives a warning or penalty for passivity during **ATO SHIBARAKU**.
10. The Referee gives the wrong warning or penalty during **ATO SHIBARAKU**.
11. The Referee doesn't stop the bout and there are two or more flags showing point for the same competitor.
12. The Referee doesn't follow the majority of the flags.
13. The Referee doesn't call the doctor in a 10 second rule situation.
14. The Referee gestures **HANTEI/HIKIWAKE** but **SENSHU** has been obtained.
15. A Judge(s) is holding the flags or electronic device in the wrong hand.
16. The score board is not showing the right information.
17. The technique requested by the Coach was done after **YAME** or after the time was up.
18. A score is awarded during a period of **WAKARETE**.
19. For any other unforeseen situation that reasonably requires the bout to be halted.



**In the following situations Kansa will not get involved with the Referee Panel's decision:**

1. The Judges don't signal for a score.
2. **KANSA** has no vote or authority in matters of judgments such as whether a score was valid or not.
3. If the Referee does not hear the time-up bell, the Score Supervisor will blow his/her whistle, not the **KANSA**.

**SCORE SUPERVISOR**

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

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## KATA RULES

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### ARTICLE 1: KATA COMPETITION AREA

1. The competition area must be flat and devoid of hazard, with sides of eight meters, (measured from the outside). There will be a clear safety area of two meters on each side. Where an elevated competition area is used, the safety area should be of an additional one (1) meter on each side.
2. For kata competition, the mats turned over to mark the red area starting points for kumite competitors are to be turned back over to form a uniformed colored surface.

### ARTICLE 2: OFFICIAL DRESS

1. Competitors and Judges must wear the official uniform as defined in the USA Karate Kumite Rules of Competition.
2. Any person who does not comply with this regulation may be disbarred.
3. The karate-gi jacket may not be removed during the performance of Kata.
4. Competitors who present themselves incorrectly dressed shall be given **two-minutes** in which to remedy matters.

### ARTICLE 3: ORGANIZATION OF KATA COMPETITION

1. **General**
  - A. Kata is not a dance or theatrical performance. It must adhere to the traditional values and principles. It must be realistic in fighting terms and display concentration, power, and potential impact in its techniques. It must demonstrate strength, power, and speed, as well as grace, rhythm, and balance.
  - B. Competitors must at all times follow the instructions given by the Chief Judge.
2. **Definitions**
  - A. A “**performance**” refers to an individual’s, or a team’s, performance of a kata.
  - B. A “**round**” is a discrete stage in a competition leading to the eventual identification of finalists. In an elimination Kumite competition, a round eliminates fifty percent of competitors within it, counting byes as competitors. In this context, the round can apply equally to a stage in either primary elimination or repechage. In a matrix, or “Round-robin” competition, a round allows all competitors in a group one performance against each of the other competitors.
3. **Competition Formats**
  - A. Kata competition takes the form of team and individual bouts. Team matches consist of competition between three person teams. The team composition is defined by the categories established for the event and are not limited to all participants being the same gender.

- B. The individual Kata competition consists of individual performance in separate male and female divisions.

#### 4. **Permissible Kata**

- A. Any traditional karate kata may be performed in kata divisions with the exception of weapons kata (**KOBUDO**), which can only be performed in weapons kata divisions.
- B. Variations as taught by the competitor's style (**RYU-HA**) of Karate will be permitted.
- C. In all Advanced divisions, of every age category, competitors must perform a different kata in the "medal" round. Competitors in all other divisions may repeat the same kata in every round.
- D. Beginner and Novice divisions may perform only the following Katas:
  - i. Taikyoku
  - ii. Heian – Pinan
  - iii. Gekisai
  - iv. Fukyu Kata
  - v. Kihon Kata
- E. Intermediate divisions may **only** perform the Kata identified as Beginner Kata or Intermediate Kata on the **Official Kata List**.
- F. Advanced divisions may perform any kata from the **Official Kata List** contained in the Appendix.
- G. When Intermediate and Advanced divisions are combined the competitors may perform any kata from the Official Kata List and may repeat the same kata in every round.
- H. It is the sole responsibility of the Coach or the competitor to ensure that the Kata as notified to the score table is appropriate for that round.

#### 5. **Team Kata**

- A. Kata teams consist of 3 or 4 competitors, of which 3 compete in each round. When a team has 4 competitors, any 3 may be used for any round.
- B. In Team Kata, all three team members must start the Kata facing in the same direction and towards the Judges. In the event of injury or illness a Kata team may have one reserve to replace the person injured or ill.
- C. The members of the team must demonstrate competence in all aspects of the Kata performance, as well as synchronization.

## ARTICLE 4: THE JUDGING PANEL

1. In USA Karate Signature Events, if sufficient personnel are available, a panel of five (5) Judges for each match shall be designated by the Tatami Manager. Otherwise, at the discretion of the Chief Referee, a panel may consist of three (3) Judges.
2. A scorekeeper and a caller/announcer timekeeper will be appointed.
3. Judge 1 will sit in the center position facing the competitor and the other four Judges will be seated at the corners of the competition area. Each Judge will be holding a red and a blue flag.
4. Officials may not Judge a competitor who is from the Official's dojo, karate organization or have any other affiliation. Officials shall not officiate any competitor which whom their relationship may project an appearance of bias or conflict of interest. Example: your best friend's son or daughter or someone with whom you vacation. It remains the duty of any official to self-report on any possible conflict of interest before the bout or match starts.

## ARTICLE 5: CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

### 1. Assessment:

- A. The performance is evaluated from the bow starting the Kata until the bow ending the Kata.
- B. Variations as taught by the competitor's style (**RYU-HA**) of Karate will be permitted.

### 2. Criteria for Evaluation:

| Kata Performance   |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Stances</li><li>2. Techniques</li><li>3. Transitional movements</li><li>4. Timing and synchronization</li><li>5. Correct breathing</li><li>6. Focus (KIME)</li><li>7. Conformance: Consistence in the performance of the KIHON</li><li>8. Strength</li><li>9. Speed</li><li>10. Balance</li></ul> |

### 3. Fouls:

The following six (6) fouls, if apparent, must be considered.

- A. Minor loss of balance.
- B. Performing a movement in an incorrect or incomplete manner (the bow is for this purpose considered part of the movements of the Kata), such as failure to fully execute a block or punching off target.
- C. Asynchronous movement such as delivering a technique before the body transition is completed, or in the case of a team Kata, failing to do a movement in unison.
- D. Use of audible cues (from any other person, including other team members) or theatrics such as stamping the feet, slapping the chest, arms, or Karate-Gi, or inappropriate exhalation must be considered very serious fouls by the Judges in their evaluation of the performance of the kata on the same level as one would penalize a temporary loss of balance.
- E. Belt coming loose to the extent that it is coming off the hips during the performance.
- F. Time wasting, including prolonged marching, excessive bowing, or prolonged pause before starting the performance.

4. **Disqualification:**

A competitor or team of competitors may be disqualified for any of the following nine (9) reasons:

- A. Performing the wrong Kata or announcing the wrong Kata.
- B. Failing to bow at the beginning and completion of the Kata performance.
- C. A distinct pause or stop in the performance.
- D. Omitting or adding movements - or otherwise substantially change the performance from its original form.
- E. A clear loss of balance causing a fall or recovery step.
- F. Belt falling off during the performance.
- G. Interference with the function of the Judges (such as the Judge having to move for safety reasons or making physical contact with a Judge).
- H. The failure to follow the instructions of Judge 1, or other misconduct.
- I. An Advanced competitor in a medal round who repeats the previously performed Kata.

## ARTICLE 6: OPERATION OF MATCHES

1. At the start of each bout and in answer to their names, the two competitors, one wearing a red belt (**AKA**) and the other wearing a blue belt (**AO**), shall line up at the match area perimeter facing Judge 1.
2. The Tournament Director shall determine if competitors will perform Kata Individually or Simultaneously.
3. The starting point for Kata performance is anywhere within the perimeter of the competition area.
4. **Individual Execution:**
  - A. Following a bow by both competitors to the Judging Panel, and then to each other, **AO** shall then step back out of the match area.
  - B. After moving to the starting position, **AKA** will bow and make a clear announcement of the name of the Kata that is to be performed and begin the Kata.
  - C. On completion of the Kata and after bowing at the end of the Kata, **AKA** shall leave the area to await the performance of **AO** who will follow the same procedure. After **AO's** Kata has been completed, both shall return to the match area perimeter and await the decision from the Panel.
5. **Simultaneous Execution:**
  - A. Following a bow by both competitors to the Judging Panel, and to each other, both competitors shall enter the match area and space themselves to avoid collision or interference in the performance of their Kata.
  - B. After moving to their starting positions, both will bow and then make a clear announcement of the names of their Kata to be performed, and both competitors shall begin their Kata.
  - C. On completion of their Kata and bow at the end of the Kata, the competitors shall stand side-by-side in the match area and await the decision from the Panel.
6. **Disqualification:**
  - A. If Judge 1 is of the opinion that a competitor should be disqualified, if the Kata does not conform to the rules, or there is some other irregularity, Judge 1 may call the other Judges (**SHUGO**) in order to reach a verdict.
  - B. If a competitor is disqualified Judge 1 shall cross and uncross the flags (as in Kumite Torimasen signal) and raise the flag indicating the winner.
7. **Procedure for Decisions**
  - A. Kata competition may be conducted using the flag system of judging. Unless otherwise decided by the Tournament Director and Chief Referee, the flag system shall always be used.
  - B. After completion of both Kata, the competitors will stand side by side on the perimeter. Judge 1 shall call for a decision (**HANTEI**) and blow a two-tone blast on the whistle whereupon the Judges will cast their votes. The flags shall be raised at the same time.

- C. Judge 1 shall blow a further short blast on the whistle, whereupon the flags shall be lowered.
- D. The decision shall be for **AKA** or **AO**. No ties are permitted. The competitor who receives the majority of votes shall be declared the winner by the caller/announcer.
- E. The competitors shall bow to each other, then to the Judging Panel, and leave the area.
- F. In instances where both **AKA** and **AO** are disqualified in the same match, their opponents scheduled for the next round will win by Bye (and no result is announced), unless the double disqualification applies to a medal bout, in which case the winner will be declared by **HANTEI**.

8. **Kiken**

- A. Individual competitors or teams that do not present themselves when called will be disqualified (**KIKEN**) from that category. Disqualification by **KIKEN** means that the competitors are disqualified from that category, although it does not affect participation in another category.
- B. When announcing disqualification by **KIKEN** the Chief Judge will be required to signal by pointing with the flag towards the starting position of the competitor in question, and then signal **KACHI** (win) for the opponent.



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## KOBUDO RULES

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### ARTICLE 1: APPLICABILITY OF KATA RULES

The provisions of the Rules of Kata Competition, except for the rules concerning flag-system matches, also apply to Kobudo competition, with the modifications provided in these Kobudo rules.

### ARTICLE 2: OFFICIAL DRESS

Article 2 of the USA Karate Kata Rules applies, but for Kobudo competition, competitors may elect to wear a white, blue, or black jacket and hakama. The jacket and hakama colors may differ. However, if the competitor chooses to wear a Karate-Gi, both the jacket and the trousers must be solid white without stripes or piping. No emblem or logo indicating the competitor's affiliation may be worn in either case. An Official USA Karate patch shall be worn at USA Karate Signature Events.

### ARTICLE 3: ORGANIZATION OF COMPETITION

1. Kobudo competition consists of long-weapons competition and short-weapons competition. Eku (also called "Kai" or "Kai Bo") is regarded as a type of Bo and is included in Bo competition. Short weapons include traditional Okinawan weapons of Sai, Tonfa, Kama, and Nunchaku.
2. Kobudo competition takes the form of team and individual matches. Team matches consist of competition between 3-person teams. The individual match consists of individual performance in separate male and female divisions.
3. In Kobudo competition the competitors must perform a traditional Kobudo Kata.

### ARTICLE 4: WEAPON SPECIFICATIONS

1. Weapons must be of traditional design and any decision as to a weapon's eligibility will be made by the Chief Referee and Tournament Director.
2. In short weapons competition, the competitors must use the following traditional Okinawan weapons: Kama (2) (wooden handle), Sai (2), Tonfa (2), or Nunchaku (1 or 2). No weapons variations are allowed unless otherwise approved in advance by the Chief Referee and Tournament Director.

### ARTICLE 5: THE JUDGING PANEL

1. The panel of three or five (3 or 5) Judges for each match shall be designated by the Tatami Manager before the match.
2. Judges sit in the same positions as Kata Judges, whether three or five Judges are used.
3. In addition, for the purpose of facilitating the operation of Kobudo competitions, scorekeepers and caller/announcers shall be appointed.
4. The panel should, as far as availability permits, contain a cross section of both regional affiliations and Kobudo styles.

## ARTICLE 6: SCORING

### 1. Point System Scoring:

- A. The following scoring range shall be used for the specified experience levels:

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| Beginner:     | 5.0 – 7.0 |
| Novice:       | 5.0 – 7.0 |
| Intermediate: | 6.0 – 8.0 |
| Advanced:     | 7.0 – 9.0 |

- B. The Kobudo competition is organized into a single round.
- C. Each Kobudo Judge displays the score by means of points. The card bearing the points is held in the right hand.
- D. To minimize point score ties generally, a wider variation in point scores is encouraged.
- E. When the scorekeeper summates the scores of five Judges for each competitor in a round, the highest and lowest scores awarded are deleted for all further purposes, and the remaining three scores are added to produce a final score. When only three Judges are used, all three scores shall be counted.
- F. When all competitors have performed, the highest scores shall determine the first, second, third and (and if applicable) fourth place winners.
- G. In the event of a point score tie, the low score from the remaining scores shall be added into the final score. If the tie persists, the high score from the remaining scores is added into the final score. In the event of a continuing tie, the competitors must perform a further Kata. If the point scores for the tiebreaker Kata are tied, Judge 1 shall call for a decision by **HANTEI**, at which time the Judges shall each indicate their choice of either **AKA** or **AO** as the winner.
- H. If Judge 1 is of the opinion that a competitor should be disqualified, or the Kata does not conform to the rules, or there is some other irregularity, Judge 1 may call the other Judges to reach a verdict.

2. **Flag System Scoring:** Flag system scoring, if implemented, shall be conducted in accordance with USA Karate Rules of Kata Competition. Competitors may repeat the same Kobudo Kata in each round, including the final/medal rounds.
3. The Chief Referee and Tournament Director shall decide what precise system will be used for each competition.

## ARTICLE 7: CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

### 1. **Assessment:**

In assessing the performance of a competitor or team the Judges will evaluate the performance based on:

| <b>Kobudo Performance</b>                                   |
|---|
| 1. Stances  |
| 2. Techniques   |
| 3. Transitional movements                                   |
| 4. Timing and synchronization                               |
| 5. Correct breathing  |
| 6. Focus (KIME)   |
| 7. Conformance: Consistence in the performance of the KIHON |
| 8. Strength   |
| 9. Speed  |
| 10. Balance   |

### 2. **Assessment - Kobudo Team Kata:**

- A. In team competition, the competitors must start their Kata with all three team members facing the same direction, toward Judge 1. In addition, the competitors must use the same types of weapons.
- B. All those ingredients inherent in the criteria for Individual Kata must be present.
- C. The Kata must not alter in rhythm or timing for the sake of synchronization. It must demonstrate correct dynamics of Kata as if performed by an individual.
- D. No external cues (e.g., audible breathing) should be given during the Kata as an aid to synchronization.
- E. A mistake in synchronization of Team Kata requires the same numerical deduction as a technical mistake in individual Kata. The movements must initiate in unison as well as end in unison.

### 3. **Penalty/Disqualification Criteria:**

In assessing the performance of a competitor or team in a Kobudo division, the following criteria must be considered:

- A. The competitor must always maintain control of the weapons during the performance. A competitor shall be disqualified if he/she drops a weapon during the performance.
- B. A competitor shall be disqualified if he/she interrupts or varies the Kata or performs a Kata different from that drawn or announced. The competitor shall also be disqualified if the performance is brought to a halt.
- C. If the competitor loses balance completely and/or falls, a disqualification shall result.

- D. A competitor shall be disqualified if he/she uses a dangerous technique that jeopardizes the safety of the Judges or other competitors.
4. When assessing how many points should be deducted for a foul, the following is recommended:
- A. For a momentary hesitation in the smooth performance of the Kata, quickly remedied, 0.1 should be deducted from the final score.
  - B. For a momentary but discernible pause, 0.2 points should be deducted.
  - C. For a distinct halt, disqualification results.
  - D. Momentary imbalance with barely a wobble, quickly remedied, shall result in a deduction in the range of 0.1 – 0.3 points.
  - E. Actual instabilities where there is a distinct but recoverable loss of balance shall merit a deduction in the range 0.2 – 0.4.
  - F. If the weapon touches the floor anytime during the performance, 0.2 – 0.3 points should be deducted (unless the touch is called for by the Kata, as in some Bo Katas).
  - G. If the competitor momentarily loses a grip of the weapon, 0.1 – 0.3 points should be deducted.

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## IAI-DO RULES

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### ARTICLE 1: APPLICABILITY OF KATA RULES

1. The provisions of the Rules of Kata Competition, except for the rules concerning flag-system matches, also apply to Iai-Do competition, with the modifications provided in these Iai-Do rules.

### ARTICLE 2: OFFICIAL DRESS

1. USA Karate Kata Rules applies, but for Iai-Do competition, competitors may elect to wear a traditional gi (jacket and pants), or a gi jacket and hakama.
2. The jacket and hakama colors may differ.
3. The use of a Sageo (fastening cord) is optional.
4. Tabi are allowed but are not required.

### ARTICLE 3: ORGANIZATION OF COMPETITION

1. Iai-Do competitions will follow a similar structure as Traditional/Classical Karate Kata (forms) competition.
2. Iai-Do competition takes the form of individual matches. The individual match consists of individual performance in separate male, female, or mixed gender divisions.
3. In Iai-Do competition the competitors must perform a traditional Iai-Do Kata.

### ARTICLE 4: WEAPON SPECIFICATIONS

1. Sword (**KATANA**) should be an Iaito (unsharpened sword) and must be of traditional design.
2. Shinken (sharpened sword) are not allowed.

### ARTICLE 5: THE JUDGING PANEL

1. The panel of three or five (3 or 5) Judges for each match shall be designated by the Tatami Manager before the match.
2. Iai-Do Judges sit in the same positions as Kata Judges, whether three or five Judges are used.
3. The panel should, as far as availability permits, contain a cross section of both regional affiliations and Iai-Do styles.
4. In addition, for the purpose of facilitating the operation of Iai-Do competitions, scorekeepers and caller/announcers shall be appointed.

## ARTICLE 6: SCORING

### 1. Point System Scoring:

The following scoring range shall be used for the specified experience levels:

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| Beginner:     | 5.0 – 7.0 |
| Novice:       | 5.0 – 7.0 |
| Intermediate: | 6.0 – 8.0 |
| Advanced:     | 7.0 – 9.0 |

2. A maximum of 4 traditional Iai-do kata may be performed by each competitor.
3. It is not necessary to announce the names of the kata.
4. Competitors will begin their competition with a standing bow (**RITSUREI**) for purposes of saving time.
5. A formal seated bow (**ZAREI**) may be used once a competitor has completed his/her kata set.
6. In the case of a tie, after all normal tie-breaking procedures have been followed, a single kata may be performed by each tied competitor to determine the winner.

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## PARA KARATE RULES

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### ARTICLE 1: PARA KARATE KATA COMPETITION

1. Para Karate is the modality of Karate adapted for Athletes with disabilities. The Para Karate Kata Competition Rules and Regulations have been formulated to preserve Athlete safety, as well as to promote fair competition by means of a transparent and consistent set of standards. These rules are applicable to and must be followed by all Athletes, Coaches, Judges, and other Support Personnel who organize and/or participate in any USA Karate-recognized Para Karate Competition.
2. The following Rules and Regulations are mandatory for all USA Karate Para Karate events, as well as for other USA Karate recognized competitions. Any competition that does not follow the standards of these sets of Rules cannot be recognized as a USA Karate Para Karate Competition.
3. The Chief Referee and Tournament Director may create additional categories and sport classes, and may publish additional rules or regulations, to accommodate the needs of any specific tournament or circumstances.

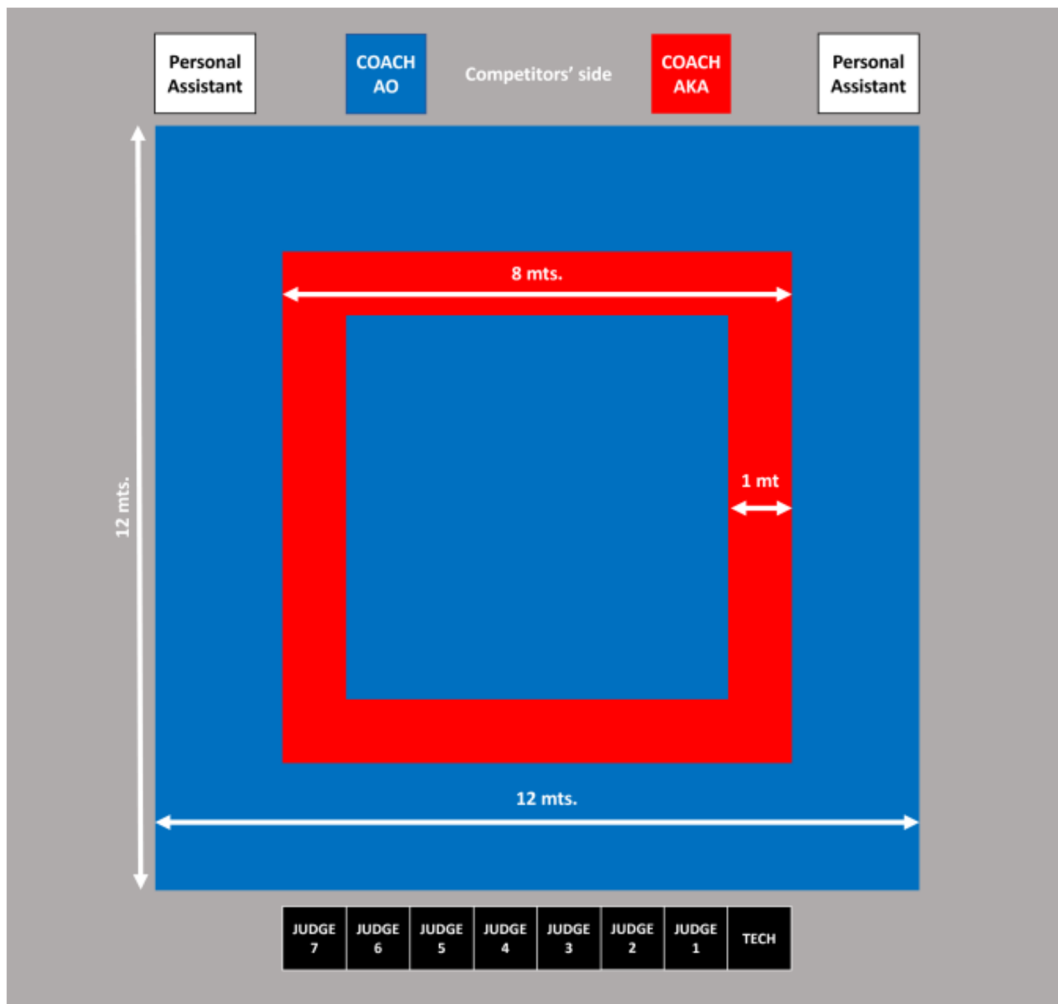
### ARTICLE 2: DISCIPLINE, CATEGORIES, AND SPORT CLASSES

1. In Para Karate competitions, only Individual Kata is performed. There are three general categories for Individual Kata in Para Karate:
  - A. Visually Impaired Athletes (K10)
  - B. Intellectually Impaired Athletes
    - i. Athletes with IQ less than 75 (K21)
    - ii. Athletes with Down Syndrome (K22)
  - C. Physically Impaired Athletes – Wheelchair users (K30)
2. Athletes with more than one type of impairment will be allowed to compete only in one sport class during the championships. Athletes will be classified strictly according to the impairment criteria of the category in which they are registered.
3. Blindfolds are required for all Visually Impaired Athletes during the kata performance.
4. Intellectually Impaired athletes must perform their kata standing up.
5. Physically Impaired athletes will perform their kata using Wheelchairs.

### ARTICLE 3: KATA COMPETITION AREA

1. The competition area must be flat and devoid of hazard, with sides of eight meters, (measured from the outside). There will be a clear safety area of two meters on each side. Where an elevated competition area is used, the safety area should be of an additional one (1) meter on each side.
2. For kata competition, the mats turned over to mark the red area starting points for kumite competitors are to be turned back over to form a uniformed colored surface.
3. Coaches and personal assistants will be seated outside the safety area, on their respective sides of the TATAMI towards the official table. Where the TATAMI area is elevated, the Coaches will be placed outside the elevated area behind their respective Competitors.
4. Should medal bouts or competitions take place on a platform, or because of the athletes' safety, the Accompanying Person (Coach or Assistant, if necessary) will bring the Athletes onto the platform via steps or a ramp and take them to the competition perimeter. After the bout, the Athletes will be taken back to the exit of the platform and guided from the platform by the Accompanying Person. In case the Athlete is guided to the platform only by the Coach who stays sitting on the platform next to the Athlete, the Coach's chair next to the platform remains empty.





## ARTICLE 4: OFFICIAL DRESS AND EQUIPMENT

### 1. General Rules

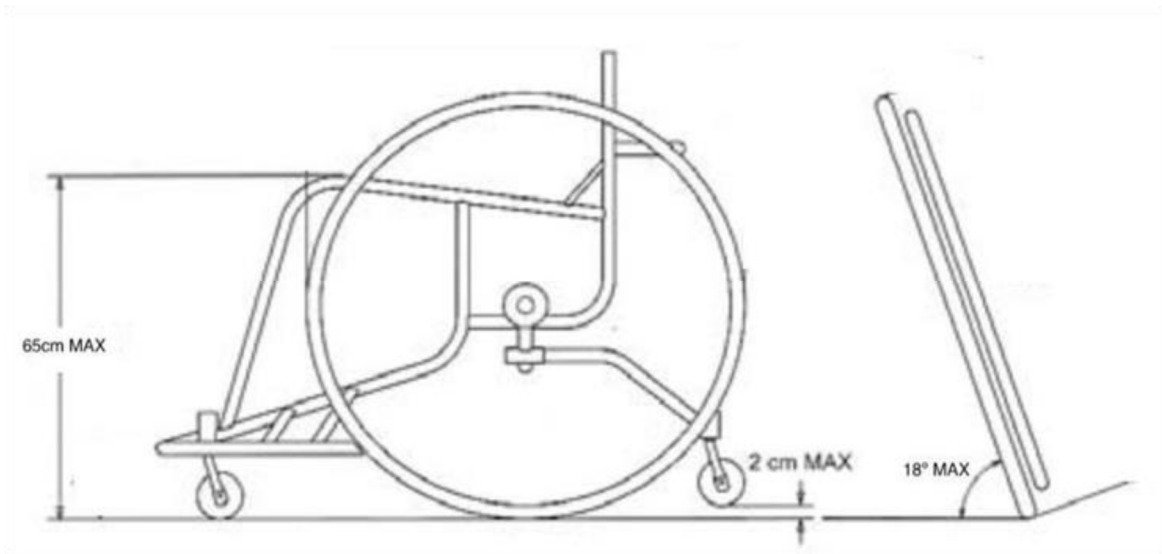
- A. Competitors and Judges must wear the official uniform as defined in the USA Karate Kumite Rules of Competition.
- B. Any person who does not comply with this regulation may be disbarred.
- C. Competitors who present themselves incorrectly dressed shall be given **two-minutes** in which to remedy matters.

### 2. Competitors - Athletes' equipment and medical service animals

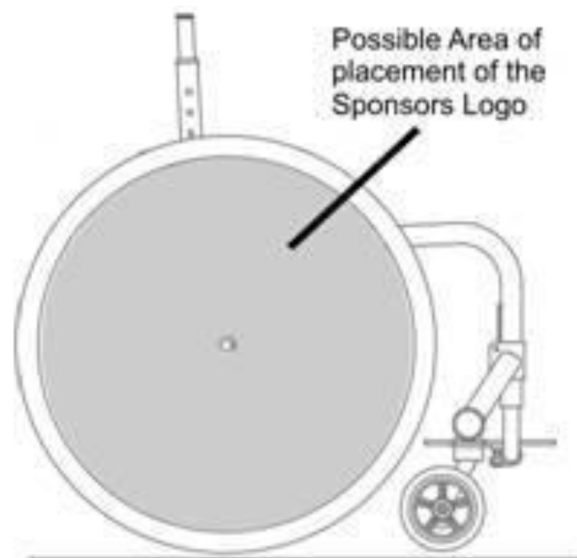
- A. The International Paralympic Policy (IPC) Policy on Sports Equipment (outlined in the IPC Handbook) applies to all recognized competitions. The approved equipment should offer similar conditions between Athletes in the same Sport Class (as well as offering safety, in some cases), to allow a fair comparison between the Athletes and their actual physical-technical abilities.

- B. The accepted accessory equipment are blindfolds (class K10), sports glasses (classes K21, K22 and K30), and in wheelchairs leg straps (class K30). Prostheses, canes, crutches, and other equipment used for physical support are not allowed in Competition and Classification.
- C. The use of bandages, padding, or supports because of injury, must be approved by Judge 1 on the advice of the Tournament Doctor.
- D. Blindfolds
  - i. Blindfolds should be of a dark and discrete color (grey, blue, black) and should not have any logos or markings of sponsors or manufacturers.
  - ii. Blindfolds must also remain firmly placed on the Athlete's face and head by means of an adjustable elastic or strap that must not become loose or undone during the performance of the Kata.
  - iii. All blindfolds must be approved by the Para Karate Commission during the Classification Session prior to competition.
- E. Wheelchairs
  - i. All types of wheelchairs which allow the athletic and undisturbed presentation of a Kata will be allowed. Only the following types and variations are not permitted:
    - 1. Walkers.
    - 2. Wheelchairs with electric drive support (e.g., electric motors integrated into wheel hubs).
    - 3. Electric wheelchairs.
  - ii. Wheelchair features:
    - 1. The underside of the footrests must be designed to prevent damage to the tatami.
    - 2. One or two anti-tip castor(s) attached to the back of the wheelchair for safety purposes is permitted. They can be attached to either the frame or the rear axle and located at the rear of the wheelchair; castors that frequently or even continuously come into contact with the floor can be added to the wheelchair. The width between castors must be limited to the distance between the inside of the two big wheels. When the Athlete is sitting in the wheelchair in a forward driving position, the maximum permissible distance between the bottom of the castor(s) and the tatami is 2 cm. The anti-tip castor(s) must not protrude beyond the vertical plane that touches the rearmost points of the driving wheels. This alignment should be Judged with the wheelchair in its forward driving position.
    - 3. Large rear wheels may have a maximum camber of 18 degrees.
    - 4. The large wheels may be of any color, as long as they do not stain or damage the tatami. Tires or castors that mark the tatami are not permitted. Exceptions may be made where it can be demonstrated that the marks can be easily and quickly removed.

5. The maximum height from the floor to the top of the cushion, when a cushion is used, or to the top of the seat platform (when a cushion is not used) must not exceed 65cm.
6. There must be one hand rim on each wheel.
7. No steering devices or gears are allowed on the wheelchair.



- iii. Leg straps to fix the legs of Wheelchair Athletes (K30) are allowed. They must be of white color and without logos and must be made from material that is not elastic or otherwise stretchable. A maximum of three (3) straps may be used; these must be placed between the ankles and the hip. Fixation of the upper body is not allowed.
- iv. Multiple sponsor logos at the positions and in the sizes specified in the rules are allowed.
- v. Multiple sponsor logos and advertising may be placed on the main wheels. The logo may take up to the size of the circle formed by the spokes. Both wheels may be used:



- vi. Any identification, logo, or items that promote or advertise political or religious views, or that provide illegal or false impressions of the sport, are prohibited. Content that disparages the identity or reputation of the competition, USA Karate, or of any Local Organizing Commission, Major Games Organizing Committee (such as the International Olympic Committee or the International Paralympic Committee), National Federation or competitor is also strictly forbidden. Advertising of products which harm the integrity of the sport or its Athletes (e.g., tobacco or alcohol) or that violate the WADA Anti-Doping Code or local laws is also prohibited.
- vii. USA Karate will have the general discretion to object to any form of advertising which hurts the integrity of the sport, and its Athletes or lends a negative image to the competition. All such cases will be forwarded to the Disciplinary and Legal Commission.
- viii. Placement of Sponsor Logos or advertisements is prohibited in the following places of the wheelchair:
  - 1. the backrest
  - 2. the side guards or armrests
  - 3. the footplate
  - 4. the castors
  - 5. the frame

F. Service animals

- i. Service animals are animals trained to aid people with disabilities and to perform specific functions, such as seeing-eye dogs, or dogs trained to detect seizures or hypoglycemia.
- ii. Medical service animals are allowed to accompany Athletes within the competition venue, but only those animals trained and certified to detect life-threatening conditions will be allowed at the external perimeter of the Competition Area, where they must remain without causing interference. Service animals may not enter the Competition Area. Therapy animals, emotional-support animals, or pets that are not medical service animals will not be allowed in the Competition Area or its perimeter.

### 3. **Coaches and personal assistants**

- A. Should bouts or competitions take place on a platform, the competitor may be guided to the platform by the Coach or the Assistant if it is necessary.
- B. Coaches and Competitors' Assistants have to ensure that the athlete is accompanied throughout the competition.
- C. Coaches and Competitors' Assistants have to ensure that any medication that may be required is accessible.

## **ARTICLE 5: THE JUDGING PANEL**

- 1. In USA Karate Signature Events, if sufficient personnel are available, a panel of five (5) Judges for each match shall be designated by the Tatami Manager. Otherwise, at the discretion of the Chief Referee, a panel may consist of three (3) Judges.
- 2. Judge 1 will sit in the center position facing the competitor and the other four Judges will be seated at the corners of the competition area. Each Judge will be holding a red and a blue flag.
- 3. Officials may not Judge a competitor who is from the Official's dojo, karate organization or have any other affiliation. Officials shall not officiate any competitor which whom their relationship may project an appearance of bias or conflict of interest. Example: your best friend's son or daughter or someone with whom you vacation. It remains the duty of any official to self-report on any possible conflict of interest before the bout or match starts.

## **ARTICLE 6: SCORING**

### 1. **Permissible Kata**

- A. Any traditional karate kata may be performed in kata divisions with the exception of weapons kata (**KOBUDO**), which can only be performed in weapons kata divisions.
- B. Variations as taught by the competitor's style (**RYU-HA**) of Karate will be permitted.
- C. In all Advanced divisions, of every age category, competitors must perform a different kata in the "medal" round. Competitors in all other divisions may repeat the same kata in every round.
- D. Beginner and Novice divisions may perform only the following Katas:

- i. Taikyoku
- ii. Heian – Pinan
- iii. Gekisai
- iv. Fukyu Kata
- v. Kihon Kata

- E. Intermediate divisions may **only** perform the Kata identified as Beginner Kata or Intermediate Kata on the **Official Kata List**.
- F. Advanced divisions may perform any kata from the **Official Kata List** contained in the Appendix.
- G. When Intermediate and Advanced divisions are combined the competitors may perform any kata from the Official Kata List and may repeat the same kata in every round.
- H. It is the sole responsibility of the Coach or the competitor to ensure that the Kata as notified to the score table is appropriate for that round.

## 2. **Assessment:**

- A. The performance is evaluated from the bow starting the Kata until the bow ending the Kata.
- B. Variations as taught by the competitor's style (**RYU-HA**) of Karate will be permitted.
- C. Deviations may be acceptable due to the type of impairment.
- D. Kata must have recognizable content and characteristics of the original kata.
- E. Alterations may serve as alternatives for non-executable techniques (for example, hand techniques or raising the wheelchair, instead of kicks, for Wheelchair Athletes, Hikite to wheelchair wheel instead of to hip, etc.). Turns may be used instead of jumps, for Athletes of all Classes.
- F. Kata must have recognizable content and characteristics of the original kata.
- G. Competitors from the Intellectually Impaired category (Sport Classes K21 and K22) may perform the same Kata in each round; thus, repetition of the Kata is allowed. All other Sport Classes (K10 and K30) must perform a different Kata in each round – unless the Kata is performed as a tiebreaker. Only Kata listed in the official Kata list are permitted.

## 3. **Criteria for Evaluation:**

| Kata Performance  | Technical performance specification according to the sport class  |
|---|---|
| 1. Stances<br>2. Techniques<br>3. Transitional movements<br>4. Timing and synchronization<br>5. Correct breathing | 1. Visually Impaired Athletes (K10) – space orientation and embusen (line of the performance) of the kata |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 6. Focus (KIME)<br>7. Conformance: Consistence in the performance of the KIHON<br>8. Strength<br>9. Speed<br>10. Balance | 2. Intellectually Impaired Athletes (K21-22) - fluidity of techniques<br><br>3. Physically Impaired Athletes (K30) - skill, control, and maneuverability of the wheelchair |
|--|--|

#### 4. **Fouls:**

The following nine (9) fouls, if apparent, must be considered.

- A. Minor loss of balance.
- B. Asynchronous movement such as delivering a technique before the body transition is completed, or in the case of a team Kata, failing to do a movement in unison.
- C. Use of audible cues (from any other person, including other team members) or theatrics such as stamping the feet, slapping the chest, arms, or Karate-Gi, or inappropriate exhalation must be considered very serious fouls by the Judges in their evaluation of the performance of the kata on the same level as one would penalize a temporary loss of balance.
- D. Belt coming loose to the extent that it is coming off the hips during the performance.
- E. Blindfolds coming off the face and uncovering one or both eyes during the performance.
- F. Other equipment, such as leg straps or sports glasses falling off their proper places during the performance.
- G. Time wasting, including prolonged marching, excessive bowing or prolonged pause before starting the performance.
- H. A distinct pause or stop in the performance.
- I. A clear loss of balance causing a fall or recovery step.

#### 5. **Disqualification:**

A competitor or team of competitors may be disqualified for any of the following eleven (11) reasons:

- A. Not announcing the kata, announcing the wrong kata – or performing another kata than pre-announced to the official table.
- B. Failing to bow at the beginning and completion of the Kata performance.
- C. Not starting the Kata facing the Judges.
- D. Omitting or adding movements - or otherwise substantially change the performance from its original form.

- E. Belt falling off during the performance.
- F. Blindfolds falling off the face and uncovering one or both eyes during the performance.
- G. Failure to follow the instructions of the Chief Judge or other misconduct (**SHIKKAKU**).
- H. Use of the non-affected leg during the wheelchair kata (K30) performance.
- I. Coach instructions during the kata performance.
- J. Use of the different equipment that was used and approved during the classification session.
- K. Misrepresentation of the disability during the classification session.

Reasons for disqualification in the evaluation should be treated with care, as some clinical conditions can cause or influence certain behaviors, or problems may occur.  
The Judges should be given the possibility of a meeting (Shugo) here, without necessarily resulting in a consequence. The Para Karate Commission can offer assistance at such times.

#### 6. Excessive celebration and political or religious demonstrations

Competitors are expected to respect the ceremony of salutations before and after the performance. Any excessive celebration, such as falling on one's knees etc., or political or religious expressions, during or immediately after the performance is, prohibited and will be subject to a fine equal to the amount determined by the Board of Directors for the protest fee. The Tatami Manager or Chief Referee will notify the official table.

## ARTICLE 7: OPERATION OF MATCHES

1. At the start of each bout and in answer to their names, the two competitors, one wearing a red belt (**AKA**) and the other wearing a blue belt (**AO**), shall line up at the match area perimeter facing Judge 1.
2. The Tournament Director shall determine if competitors will perform Kata Individually or Simultaneously.
3. The starting point for Kata performance is anywhere within the perimeter of the competition area.
4. **Individual Execution:**
  - A. Following a bow by both competitors to the Judging Panel, and then to each other, **AO** shall then step back out of the match area.



- B. After moving to the starting position, **AKA** will bow and make a clear announcement of the name of the Kata that is to be performed and begin the Kata.
- C. On completion of the Kata and after bowing at the end of the Kata, **AKA** shall leave the area to await the performance of **AO** who will follow the same procedure. After **AO's** Kata has been completed, both shall return to the match area perimeter and await the decision from the Panel.

5. **Simultaneous Execution:**

- A. Following a bow by both competitors to the Judging Panel, and to each other, both competitors shall enter the match area and space themselves to avoid collision or interference in the performance of their Kata.
- B. After moving to their starting positions, both will bow and make a clear announcement of the names of the Kata to be performed, and both competitors shall begin their Kata.
- C. On completion of their Kata and bow at the end of the Kata, the competitors shall stand side-by-side in the match area and await the decision from the Panel.

6. **Disqualification:**

- A. If Judge 1 is of the opinion that a competitor should be disqualified, if the Kata does not conform to the rules, or there is some other irregularity, Judge 1 may call the other Judges (**SHUGO**) in order to reach a verdict.
- B. If a competitor is disqualified Judge 1 shall cross and uncross the flags (as in Kumite Torimasen signal) and raise the flag indicating the winner.

7. **Procedure for Decisions**

- A. Kata competition may be conducted using the flag system of judging. Unless otherwise decided by the Tournament Director and Chief Referee, the flag system shall always be used.
- B. After completion of both Kata, the competitors will stand side by side on the perimeter. Judge 1 shall call for a decision (**HANTEI**) and blow a two-tone blast on the whistle whereupon the Judges will cast their votes. The flags shall be raised at the same time.
- C. Judge 1 shall blow a further short blast on the whistle, whereupon the flags shall be lowered.
- D. The decision shall be for **AKA** or **AO**. No ties are permitted. The competitor who receives the majority of votes shall be declared the winner by the caller/announcer.
- E. The competitors shall bow to each other, then to the Judging Panel, and leave the area.
- F. In instances where both **AKA** and **AO** are disqualified in the same match, their opponents scheduled for the next round will win by Bye (and no result is announced), unless the double disqualification applies to a medal bout, in which case the winner will be declared by **HANTEI**.

8. **Kiken**

- A. Individual competitors or teams that do not present themselves when called will be disqualified (**GIKEN**) from that category. Disqualification by **GIKEN** means that the competitors are disqualified from that category, although it does not affect participation in another category.
- B. When announcing disqualification by **GIKEN** the Chief Judge will be required to signal by pointing with the flag towards the starting position of the competitor in question, and then signal **KACHI** (win) for the opponent.

## APPENDIX 1: TERMINOLOGY

|                          |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| <b>ATO SHIBARAKU</b>     | A little more time left                             | An audible signal will be given by the timekeeper 15 seconds before the actual end of the bout and the Referee will announce “ <b>ATO SHIBARAKU.</b> ”  |
| <b>CHUI</b>              | Warnings  | The Referee shows the signal for the type of offense towards the offender followed by showing 1 to 3 fingers depending on if this is the 1st, 2nd or 3rd warning.   |
| <b>HANSOKU-CHUI</b>      | Warning of Disqualification                         | The Referee shows the signal for the type of offense towards the offender followed by pointing with one finger towards the offender’s belt.   |
| <b>HANSOKU</b>           | Disqualification                                    | The Referee indicates an offense then points with his index finger upwards at 45 degrees in the direction of the offender and announces a win for the opponent.   |
| <b>HANTEI</b>            | Decision  | Referee calls for a decision at the end of an inconclusive match. After a short blast of the whistle, the Judges render their vote by flag signal and the Referee indicates the outcome by raising his/her arm. |
| <b>HIKIWAKE</b>          | Draw  | In case of a tied bout, the Referee crosses his/her arms, then extends them with the palms showing to the front.  |
| <b>AKA (AO) IPPON</b>    | Red (Blue) scores three points                      | The Referee raises his/her arm up at 45 degrees on the side of the scorer.  |
| <b>JOGAI</b>             | Exit from the match area not caused by the opponent | The Referee points his/her index finger on the side of the offender to indicate to the Judges that the competitor has moved out of the area.  |
| <b>KIKEN</b>             | Renunciation  | The Referee points downwards at 45 degrees in the direction of the competitor’s starting line.  |
| <b>MOTO NO ICHI</b>      | Original position                                   | Competitors and the Referee return to their starting positions.   |
| <b>MUBOBI</b>            | Self-Endangerment                                   | The Referee touches his/her face then turning his/her hand edge forward   |
| <b>AKA (AO) NO KACHI</b> | Red (Blue) wins                                     | The Referee raises his/her arm on the side of the winner.   |

|                          |                                      |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>SENSHU</b>            | First unopposed point advantage      | After awarding the point(s) in the regular fashion, the Referee calls “ <b>AKA (AO) SENSHU</b> ” while holding lifting his/her bent arm with the palm facing the Referee’s own face.  |
| <b>SHIKKAKU</b>          | Disqualification<br>“Leave the Area” | The Referee points first upwards at 45 degrees in the direction of the offender then motions out and behind with the announcement “ <b>AKA (AO) SHIKKAKU!</b> ” He/she then announces a win for the opponent.   |
| <b>SHOBU HAJIME</b>      | Start the Match or Bout              | After the announcement, the Referee takes a step back.  |
| <b>SHUGO</b>             | Judges Called                        | The Referee calls the Judges at the end of the match or bout, or to recommend <b>SHIKKAKU</b> .   |
| <b>TORIMASEN</b>         | Annulment                            | The point or decision is annulled. The Kumite Referee or Kata Judge 1 crosses his/her hands in a downward movement.<br><br>The Referee crosses his/her arms then makes a cutting motion, palms downward.  |
| <b>TSUZUKETE</b>         | Fight on                             | Resumption of fighting ordered when an unauthorized interruption occurs.  |
| <b>TSUZUKETE HAJIME</b>  | Resume fighting – Begin              | The Referee stands in a forward stance. As he/she says “ <b>TSUZUKETE</b> ” he/she extends his/her arms, palms outwards towards the competitors. As he/she says “ <b>HAJIME</b> ” he/she turns the palms and brings them rapidly towards one another, at the same time stepping back. |
| <b>WAKARETE</b>          | Separation of competitors            | The Referee gets between the competitors and signals for them to separate. The <b>TSUZUKETE</b> command is immediately given to resume the bout.  |
| <b>AKA (AO) WAZA-ARI</b> | Red (Blue) scores two points         | The Referee extends his/her arm at shoulder level on the side of the scorer.  |
| <b>YAME</b>              | Stop                                 | Interruption, or end of the bout. As he makes the announcement, the Referee makes a downward chopping motion with his/her hand.   |
| <b>AKA (AO) YUKO</b>     | Red (Blue) scores one point          | The Referee extends his/her arm downward at 45 degrees on the side of the scorer.   |

## APPENDIX 2: ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GESTURES OF THE REFEREE

### STARTING AND STOPPING THE BOUT



**Shomen Ni Rei (1/3)**



**Shomen Ni Rei (2/3)**



**Shomen Ni Rei (3/3)**



**Otagai Ni Rei (1/3)**



**Otagai Ni Rei (2/3)**



**Otagai Ni Rei (3/3)**



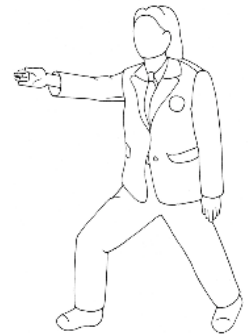
**Shobu Hajime**



**Moto No Ichi**



**Yame (1/2)**



**Yame (2/2)**

## POINTS AND CANCELLATIONS



**Yuko (1/2)**



**Yuko (2/2)**



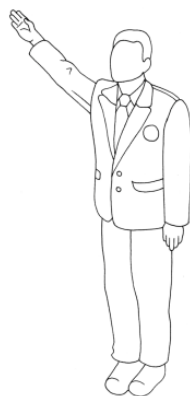
**Waza Ari (1/2)**



**Waza Ari (2/2)**



**Ippon (1/2)**



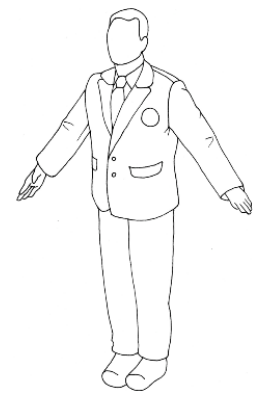
**Ippon (2/2)**



**Senshu**

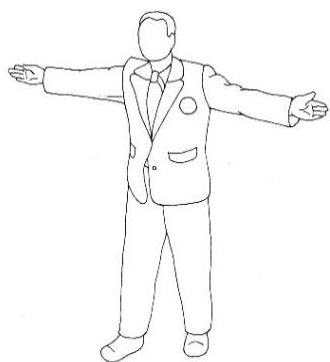


**Torimasen (1/2)**

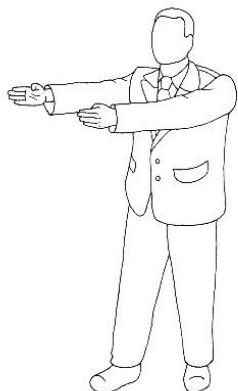


**Torimasen (2/2)**

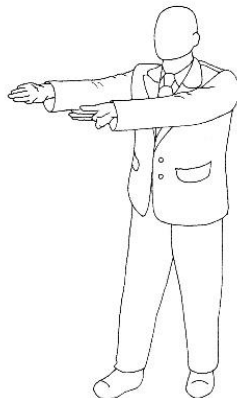
## WARNINGS



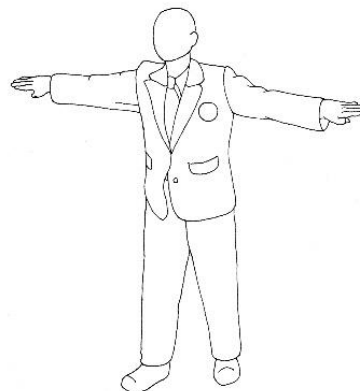
**Tsuzukete (1/2)**



**Tsuzukete (2/2)**



**Wakarete (1/2)**



**Wakarete (2/2)**



**Passivity (1/2)  
One Competitor**



**Passivity (1/2)  
One Competitor**



**Passivity (1/2)  
Both Competitors**



**Passivity (21/2)  
Both Competitors**



**Excessive Contact**



**Exaggerating Injury**



**Feigning Injury**



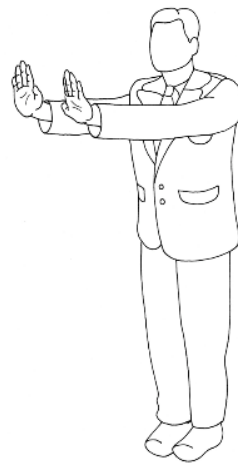
**Jogai**



**Mubobi**



**Avoiding Combat**



**Pushing**



**Grabbing**



**Uncontrolled Attack**



**Simulated Attack (Elbow)**



**Simulated Attack (Head)**



**Simulated Attack (Knee)**



**Goading or Talking**



**Chui #1**



**Chui #2**



**Chui #3**





**Hansoku Chui (1/2)**



**Hansoku Chui (2/2)**

## DECISION



**Shugo (1/2)**



**Shugo (2/2)**



**Aka (Ao) Kiken**



**Hantei**



**Hansoku (1/2)**



**Hansoku (2/2)**



**Shikkaku (1/3)**



**Shikkaku (2/3)**



**Shikkaku (3/3)**



**Hikiwake (1/2)**



**Hikiwake (2/2)**

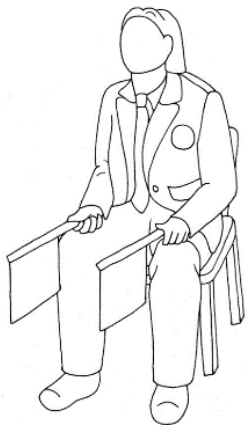


**Aka (Ao) No Kachi (1/2)**



**Aka (Ao) No Kachi (2/2)**

## **FLAG SIGNALS**



**Sitting Position**



**Yuko**



**Waza Ari**



**Ippon**

### APPENDIX 3:       PROCEDURE FOR REFEREEING KUMITE WITH ONLY TWO CORNER JUDGES

1. When using the Two Corner Judge system, the Corner Judges and the Referee all have responsibility for singling points.
2. In addition to showing points, the Corner Judges will assist the Referee by giving signals for Jogai, excessive contact, and skin touch for categories where this contravenes the rules. The Referee remains autonomous in applying warnings and penalties.
3. Flags are used by the Corner Judges for signaling points and penalties.
4. Points will be awarded if two Judges, or one Judge and the Referee, agree on the score.
5. The Referee should never position him/herself on the same side of the **TATAMI** as the two Judges.
6. The Coaches shall be seated in front of the Referee and not behind.
7. The Referee's signals for Yuko, Waza-ari, and Ippon are the same as in the USA Karate Kumite Rulebook, with the exception that the Referee's elbow is touching his/her torso while indicating the appropriate signal. If support is received the point shall be awarded.
8. If one Judge signals for a point and the other for a warning or penalty, the Referee will make the final decision by supporting one of the Judges.
9. If two Judges, or one Judge and the Referee, show different points for the same competitor, the higher score will be given.
10. When only one Judge signals, if the Referee disagrees, he/she may ask for reconsideration. If there is no agreement the bout resumes.
11. The Referee cannot go against the opinion of both Judges showing points for the same Competitor. It is only in the case of skin touch or any other warning or penalty that the Referee can ask the Judges to reconsider and change their opinion.
12. If both Judges signal a point, but for different Competitor, the Referee will award both points.

## APPENDIX 4: USA KARATE – PROTEST FORM

| Date | Event/Location | Time of Protest |
|------|----------------|-----------------|
| / /  |                |                 |

| Division # | Division Name |
|------------|---------------|
|            |               |

| Competitors |               |     |               |
|-------------|---------------|-----|---------------|
| Ao          | Country/State | Aka | Country/State |
|             |               |     |               |

| Protest Description |
|---------------------|
|                     |
|                     |
|                     |
|                     |
|                     |
|                     |
|                     |
|                     |
|                     |

If you require more space, please use the other side of this form

| Protester's Name | Title | Signature |
|------------------|-------|-----------|
|                  |       |           |

For Official Use Only:

| Tatami #      |         |         | MS/Kansa |         |         |
|---------------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| Panel         | Referee | Judge 1 | Judge 2  | Judge 3 | Judge 4 |
| Name          |         |         |          |         |         |
| Country/State |         |         |          |         |         |

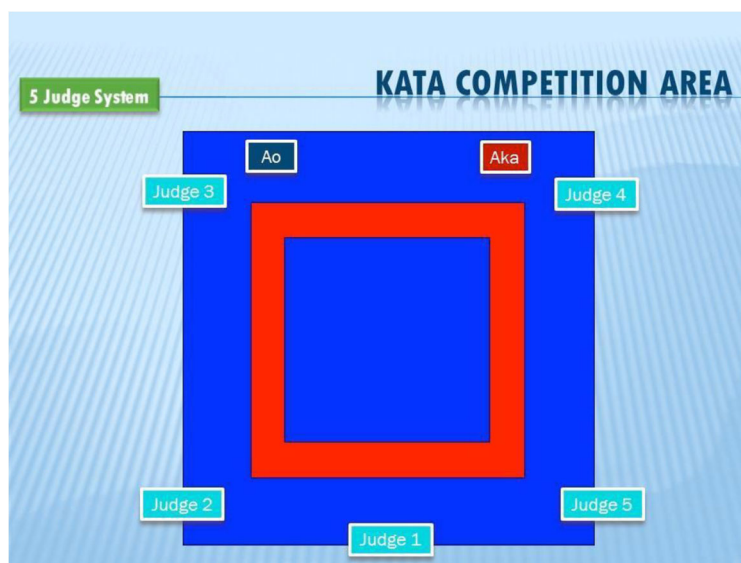
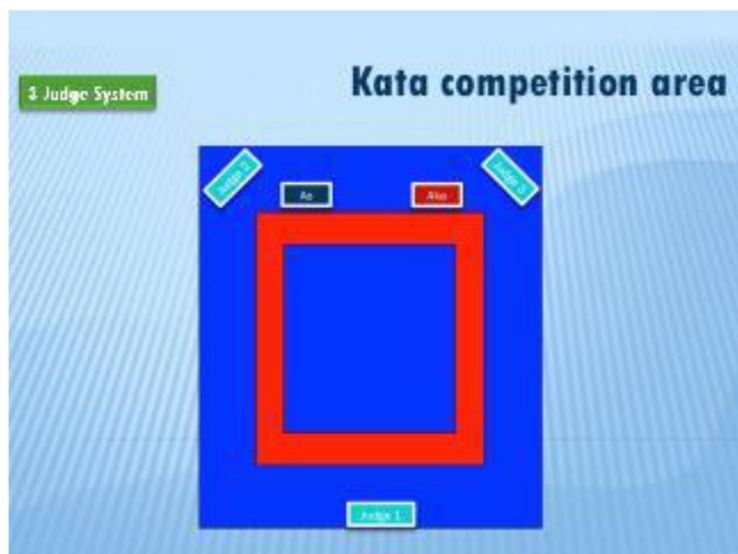
| Appeal Jury   | # _____ | # _____ | # _____ |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Country/State |         |         |         |
| Signature     |         |         |         |

| Protest Accepted | Protest Denied |
|------------------|----------------|
|                  |                |

**APPENDIX 5: OFFICIAL TEAM KUMITE COMPETITION FORM**

|  |                          |                     |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Team/Club Name:</b>                   |                          |                     |
| <b>AKA/AO</b>                            | <b>Division:</b>         | <b>Round:</b>       |
| <b>Order</b>                             | <b>Competitor's Name</b> | <b>Competitor #</b> |
| 1.                                       |                          |                     |
| 2.                                       |                          |                     |
| 3.                                       |                          |                     |
| 4.                                       |                          |                     |
| 5.                                       |                          |                     |
| <b>Coach/Representative's Signature:</b> |                          |                     |

## APPENDIX 6: LAYOUT OF THE KATA COMPETITION AREA



## APPENDIX 7: OFFICIAL KATA LIST

### USA Karate - Official Kata List

Only Kata from this official list may be performed

| Beg/Nov | Intermediate | Adv/Elite |                               |
|---------|--------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
|         | X            |           | 1 Anan                        |
|         | X            |           | 2 Anan Dai                    |
| X       | X            |           | 3 Ananko                      |
| X       | X            |           | 4 Aoyagi                      |
| X       | X            |           | 5 Bassai                      |
| X       | X            |           | 6 Bassai Dai                  |
| X       | X            |           | 7 Bassai Sho                  |
|         | X            |           | 8 Chatanyara Kusanku          |
|         | X            |           | 9 Chibana No Kusanlu          |
| X       | X            |           | 10 Chinte                     |
|         | X            |           | 11 Chinto                     |
| X       | X            |           | 12 Enpi                       |
| X       | X            | X         | Fukui Kata                    |
| X       | X            | X         | 13 Fukyugata Ichi             |
| X       | X            | X         | 14 Fukyugata Ni               |
|         | X            |           | 15 Gankaku                    |
|         | X            |           | 16 Garyu                      |
| X       | X            | X         | 17 Gekisai (Gekisai Dai) Ichi |
| X       | X            | X         | 18 Gekisai (Gekisai Dai) Ni   |
|         | X            |           | 19 Gojushiho                  |
|         | X            |           | 20 Gojushiho Dai              |
|         | X            |           | 21 Gojushiho Sho              |
|         | X            |           | 22 Hakucho                    |
| X       | X            |           | 23 Hangetsu                   |
| X       | X            | X         | 24 Haufa (Haffa)              |
| X       | X            | X         | 25 Heian Shodan               |
| X       | X            | X         | 26 Heian Nidan                |
| X       | X            | X         | 27 Heian Sandan               |
| X       | X            | X         | 28 Heian Yondan               |
| X       | X            | X         | 29 Heian Godan                |
|         | X            |           | 30 Heiku                      |
| X       | X            |           | 31 Ishimine Bassai            |
| X       | X            |           | 32 Itosu Rohai Shodan         |
| X       | X            |           | 33 Itosu Rohai Nidan          |
| X       | X            |           | 34 Itosu Rohai Sandan         |

| Beg/Nov | Intermediate | Adv/Elite |                          |
|---------|--------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| X       | X            |           | 35 Jiin                  |
| X       | X            |           | 36 Jion                  |
| X       | X            |           | 37 Jitte                 |
| X       | X            |           | 38 Juroku                |
|         | X            |           | 39 Kanchin               |
| X       | X            |           | 40 Kanku Dai             |
|         | X            |           | 41 Kanku Sho             |
| X       | X            |           | 42 Kanshu                |
| X       | X            | X         | Kihon kata               |
|         | X            |           | 43 Kishimoto No Kushanku |
| X       | X            |           | 44 Kousoukun             |
|         | X            |           | 45 Kousoukun Dai         |
| X       | X            |           | 46 Kousoukun Sho         |
|         | X            |           | 47 Kururunfa             |
| X*      | X            |           | 48 Kusanku               |
|         | X            |           | 49 Kyan No Chinto        |
|         | X            |           | 50 Kyan No Wanshu        |
| X       | X            |           | 51 Matsukaze             |
|         | X            |           | 52 Matsumura Bassai      |
| X       | X            |           | 53 Matsumura Rohai       |
| X       | X            |           | 54 Meikyo                |
| X       | X            |           | 55 Myojo                 |
| X       | X            |           | 56 Naifanchin Shodan     |
| X       | X            |           | 57 Naifanchin Nidan      |
| X       | X            |           | 58 Naifanchin Sandan     |
| X       | X            |           | 59 Naihanchi             |
| X       | X            |           | 60 Nijushiho             |
|         | X            |           | 61 Nipaipo               |
| X       | X            |           | 62 Niseishi              |
|         | X            |           | 63 Ohan                  |
|         | X            |           | 64 Ohan Dai              |
|         | X            |           | 65 Oyadomari No Passai   |
| X       | X            |           | 66 Pachu                 |
|         | X            |           | 67 Paiku                 |
|         | X            |           | 68 Papuren               |

| Beg/Nov | Intermediate | Adv/Elite |                           |
|---------|--------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| X       | X            |           | 69 Passai                 |
| X       | X            | X         | 70 Pinan Shodan           |
| X       | X            | X         | 71 Pinan Nidan            |
| X       | X            | X         | 72 Pinan Sandan           |
| X       | X            | X         | 73 Pinan Yondan           |
| X       | X            | X         | 74 Pinan Godan            |
|         | X            |           | 75 Rohai                  |
|         | X            |           | 76 Saifa                  |
|         | X            |           | 77 Sanchin                |
|         | X            |           | 78 Sansai                 |
| X       | X            |           | 79 Sanseiru               |
| X       | X            |           | 80 Sanseiru               |
| X       | X            |           | 81 Seichin                |
| X       | X            |           | 82 Seienchin (Seiyunchin) |
| X       | X            |           | 83 Seipai                 |
| X       | X            |           | 84 Seiryu                 |
|         | X            |           | 85 Seishan                |
| X       | X            |           | 86 Seisan (Sesan)         |
| X       | X            |           | 87 Shiho Kousoukun        |
| X       | X            |           | 88 Shinpa                 |
| X       | X            |           | 89 Shinsei                |
| X       | X            |           | 90 Shisochin              |
| X       | X            |           | 91 Sochin                 |
|         | X            |           | 92 Suparinpei             |
| X       | X            |           | 93 Tekki Shodan           |
| X       | X            |           | 94 Tekki Nidan            |
| X       | X            |           | 95 Tekki Sandan           |
| X       | X            |           | 96 Tensho                 |
| X       | X            | X         | Taikyoku                  |
|         | X            |           | 97 Tomari Bassai          |
|         | X            |           | 98 Unshu                  |
|         | X            |           | 99 Unsu                   |
|         | X            |           | 100 Useishi               |
| X       | X            |           | 101 Wankan                |
| X       | X            |           | 102 Wanshu                |

\* Only Wado

Note: Names of some kata are duplicated due to the variations customary in spelling in Romanization.

In several instances a kata may be known under a different name from style (Ryu-ha) to style

In some instances an identical name may, in fact, be a different kata from style to style.