



Last Revision 11/07/2024

#### RECENT REVISIONS:

- **[First Timer's Kata Scoring, Page 4]** No scores will be given by officials. Rather, officials will provide brief verbal feedback and offer Positive Reinforcement & Constructive Tips when awarding the competitor with their award. [10/23/24]
- **[First Timer's Sparring Time Limit, Page 5]** First Timer's Sparring Time Limit is 1:00 minute.
- **[Calls a Referee Can Make, Page 8] One Point Both Ways:** judges will point both ways, indicating that both competitors scored at the same time. [11/7/24]
- **[Penalties, Page 9]** Penalties will be assessed by deducting points of the offending competitor for each infraction. [10/23/24]
- **[Doubles Tag Team Sparring, Page 11]** A team must tag in a minimum of four (4) times. If this requirement is not met, the team is disqualified.
- **[Exit Penalty, Page 10]** An Exit Penalty subtracts one point from the offending players' current score. [10/23/24]

If a player is "**Forced Out**" (i.e. punched or kicked out of bounds by their opponent) this DOES NOT count as an EXIT. **Judges will signify a "Force Out" with two palms thrusting forward.**

When an "Exit" Penalty is confirmed, the Center Referee will: **(1) call time out (2) will verbally notify the offending player of the penalty (3) instruct the scorekeeper to deduct (minus) one point from their current total score (4) The match and regulation time will resume on Center Referee's command**

If a player has '0' points and receives an Exit, then their score goes to '-1'.

- **[Relative Ranking Kata Scoring, Page 12]**  
**Relative Ranking Scoring Guide:**

All judges must use the scoring worksheet provided by the Ring Coordinator.

After each competitor completes their kata, they are given a place number relative to the competitor(s) who have already performed.

After the first competitor performs their kata, each judge will mark a '1'. When the second competitor completes their form, each judge will need to determine if they were better than the first competitor. The second competitor gets a '2' if their form was not as good OR a '1' if it was better (first competitor gets his '1' changed to a '2' in this case). [Judges may use tally marks rather than numbers: I, II, III, IIII, etc. ]

The third competitor then gets a number that grades their form relative to the first two competitors.

At the completion of the division, the Judges Scoring Worksheet will have numbers next to their names that reflect their place relative to each other:

John	III	9.97	3rd place
Eric	I	9.99	1st place
Tim	IIII	9.96	4th place
Andy	II	9.98	2nd place

Each judge determines how high to score their number '1' competitor. If it was a strong divisional field, usually a 9.99 is appropriate. The number '2' competitor then receives a score one-hundredth lower at 9.98. The number '3' competitor will get a score one-hundredth lower than competitor '2' at 9.97.

Judges cannot give the top four competitors the same score. They may give the same score to players 5th place and lower.

- **[Katas: Stepping Out of the Ring, Page 13]** If a judge confirms an out-of-bounds penalty, a deduction of 0.02 points will be marked off of the referee's Total Score for that player. [10/25/24]

## General rules

**Competitor Responsibilities:** It is the responsibility of the competitor to know the Rules and be ready for competition when called to do so.

If the competitor is not at his/her ring when their division is called three times by the ring coordinator/announcer, he/she can be disqualified.

If a competitor leaves the ring after their division begins and is not present when his/her name is called to compete, his/her name will be called again at ringside. If he/she is not present to compete, he/she will be disqualified.

No division/ring will be held up waiting for another competitor to get finished with another division in another ring. (absolutely no refunds)

**Uniform:** All competitors must wear a complete top and bottom (karate, kung fu, tae kwon do, or sport martial arts uniform). Uniform must be in good state of repair. The appropriate color belt must be worn in competition.

T-shirts and Sweatshirts are allowed in sparring if they are a part of the competitors official school uniform.

Shoes may be worn in forms competition if they do not damage or mark the competition floor. Sparring shoes are not allowed in sparring divisions.

**Ring coordinator:** the designated ring coordinator is in charge of the ring. They will determine the order of performance and determine sparring matchups. They will also settle initial arbitrary issues. Any further arbitrary decisions will be settled by the designated kata/sparring arbitrator.

**Arbitrators:** If a competitor has an issue with an official or a decision call, the events' designated ring arbitrator can be called upon for final resolution. All decisions by an arbitrator are final. If Event Arbitrator is not available, the Final Majority Decision between the Ring Coordinator & Ring Officials will preside.

**Number of Officials:** 3 officials are required for all divisions.

**Protests/Arbitrations:** all protests must be made in an orderly, professional and sportsmanlike manner.

All protests must be made immediately. Protests are not allowed once division has been completed and division has been closed. A competitor may be penalized or even disqualified if he/she is protesting improperly or without proper cause.

A "competitor accommodation" may be made by arbitrator/ring coordinator/event promoter if inquiry was due to staff error and division has been completed or closed. This "Accommodation" may include awarding of a higher placing, earned competitor points for that said event, or inclusion in grand runoffs.

**Removal of officials:** No removal of officials may be executed at the request of a competitor or parent.

**Late Entries:** Once a division has started, no additional competitors can be added.

**Weighing-in:** it is mandatory for competitors in divisions that are classified by weight, to weigh in before competition. All competitors must fight in his/her weight division. A competitor cannot fight up or down in another weight division for which he/she has not made proper weight. It is the responsibility of the tournament personnel to weigh and properly record the competitors' weight.

## Competition Age

**Competition Age:** All competitors must enter and remain in divisions based upon the age they were on January 1<sup>st</sup> of that said year at 12:00am.

Competitors who desire to move up an age category during the circuit season (Jan 1<sup>st</sup> to Dec 31<sup>st</sup>) are allowed to move up and compete in those divisions if the competitor will be turning that age.

All Competitors may NOT compete up and down multiple age brackets and must compete in only one age category they qualify for.

\* Petitions can be made to the Governing Board regarding Juniors fighting up age brackets due to safety reasons based upon body size/body weight.

**Proof of Age Rule:** All competitors must have proof of age, if requested.

If there is a legitimate reason to question a competitors' age, he/she must present the League Staff with a document of proof of age: a copy of competitor's birth certificate, driver's license, passport or other acceptable documents.

- Any discrepancies with the age of another player must be reported before the last tournament of the regular season. After the last tournament of the regular season, all players at The Finals will be locked in their respective divisions they have been competing in all season long.

## Rank rules

**Rank Rule:** A competitor must compete at the highest belt level they have earned in the martial arts & the highest belt level they competed in a sport martial arts tournament.

A competitor may compete in a division of which he/she has not earned a rank in, as long as they are going up in division . A competitor can never compete in a lower belt division than the level of belt he/she had earned in the martial arts.

For competitors switching schools/teams, although they may be of lower rank at the new school, they **MUST COMPETE** in the highest division they have competed in a LEAGUE event.

A competitor who promotes to a higher rank mid-season must compete in the higher ranked division. Any participation points accumulated previous to their rank promotion can be transferred to the new division. Placing points (1st/2nd/3rd place) cannot be transferred.

**Competing on Other Circuits:** If a competitor participates in another circuit at a higher belt level, they must stay competing at that belt level. For example, a competitor is a purple belt, but competed in a black belt division on another circuit or tournament, they must compete at that higher belt division.

### **Belt Colors:**

Novice- White, yellow, Gold, Orange  
 Intermediate- Purple, Blue, Green  
 Advance- Red, Brown  
 Expert- Black

**Split Belt or Colored Striped Rank Belts Rule:** Vinyl tape on the ends of belts does not change rank status. It is recommended that all competitors wear a solid color belt to avoid any discrepancies and misplacement. Competitors wearing a belt with a black solid stripe will be moved up to the next ranking (example: orange belt with a purple stripe will be moved up to intermediate; green belt with a brown stripe will be moved up to advanced level).

## First timer divisions

**First Timer Divisions:** All Belts, except Black Belts, are allowed in these divisions.

For regular season events, a competitor **MAY** compete in BOTH First Timer (Kata,Point Sparring) and Regular (Kata,Point Sparring) Divisions.

For League Finals, a competitor **MAY NOT** compete in both First Timers and Regular Divisions. The competitor must choose to compete in only one of those divisions.

Participation points are tracked in the LEAGUE point standings for FIRST TIMER divisions.

First timer divisions are intended for competitors competing in their first full season in the LEAGUE circuit. It is our goal to make their first few tournaments a fun and motivating experience. The emphasis of these divisions is participation and gaining competition experience.

The LEAGUE Board of Governors may disallow competitors to compete in First Timer Divisions based upon superior skill level at their discretion throughout the regular season. If this is executed, participation points that have been accumulated will be transferred to the regular division the competitor is placed at.

#### **First Timer Rules**

**Kata:** each competitor will perform their kata once. **No scores will be given by officials. Rather, officials will provide brief verbal feedback and offer Positive Reinforcement & Constructive Tips when awarding the competitor with their award. [10/23/24]**

**Sparring:** each competitor will fight a minimum of (2) matches, paired with another first time competitor.

First Timer Sparring Rules:

- 1:00 minute Time Limit
- 5 point ceiling
- All scoring techniques are 1 point each

## General Sparring rules

**Sparring Safety Equipment:** Only approved foam type sport martial arts sparring gear will be allowed.

Mandatory Equipment include: headgear, hand gear, feet gear, mouthpiece, and groin area protectors are mandatory.

Hard plastic pads used for other sports are not allowed (i.e. soccer shin pads). The competitors' equipment will be checked and if it is deemed unsafe, he/she will be asked to change the equipment before he/she can compete.

Equipment must be in good state of repair and must be free of heavy taping, tears or any other repairs that may cause injury. All fingers must not protrude the hand pads, and all toes must not protrude on footpads as well.

MMA type gloves are not allowed.

No ringstars type foot shoes are allowed in LEAGUE events.

The groin area is not a legal target. Since this is a sport of semi-contact, it is advised and recommended that all competitors, including females, wear a groin area guard. Females may, at their own risk, elect not to wear one.

No eyeglass spectacles are allowed. A player may wear Prescription Sport Goggles or eye contact lens.

Failure to observe these rules will result in forfeiture if a competitor cannot conform.

#### **Length of Match:**

UNDERBELT DIVISIONS: 2-minute running time, No timeouts allowed, 10 point ceiling, 7 point spread

BLACK BELT DIVISIONS: 2-minute running time, No point ceiling, 10-point spread rule

**30-Second Sparring Over Time Period:** If a match is tied at the end of 2 minutes, an extended 30-second overtime period will ensue. Player with most points in overtime wins the match

In the result of a tie after the first overtime period, a second 30-second overtime period will take place. 30-second overtime periods will continue until a fighter has more points than his competitor.

After (3) overtime periods, the match will be determined by Next-Point-Wins decision.

**Sparring Elimination Matches:** Once the final call for the sparring division has been made at ringside and the division is ready to be set up, the competition cards should be collected by the ring coordinator only. Center referees or side judges may not pair up competitors, touch the player cards, or determine matchups.

The scorekeeper/ring coordinator will make sure the competitors from the same school are not paired up with each other in EACH round. This is determined by players wearing the same uniform or containing the same patch/emblem/logo. Although scorekeepers will do their best, there will be no guarantees regarding same school matchups after the first round.

Associated schools or teams training together does not equate in two players from the same school/team.

### **Point values and winner determination:**

**For all under belt/black belt divisions:** all legal hand techniques, and kicks to the body will be awarded (1) one point. Any kicks to the head, jump kicks, and any spinning kicks to the body/head from a standing position will be awarded (2) two points.

**Grand Champion Bouts:** In the Grand Champion Elimination Runoffs, elimination matches are 10 point ceiling, 7 point spread

Point Sparring Open Weight Divisions will be included to each of the age specific Grand Champion Runoffs.

All Grand Champion Finale matches are **one 2-minute round**. There is a 10 point spread, No Point Ceiling rule in effect.

**Six Point Sparring Equipment Check:** All side judges will perform a fighter equipment check for all fighters at the fight line before the beginning of each match. They will check for:

- 1) head gear: gear is strapped and fitted snug on the fighter's head.
- 2) No Jewelry: No earrings, bracelets, or necklaces allowed.
- 3) Mouthguard: every fighter must wear a mouthpiece.
- 4) Hand gear: All fingers must fit snug into the hand and strapped on.
- 5) Groin cup: fighters will be asked to knock on their groin cup and prove they are wearing a groin protector.
- 6) Feet gear: toes must be covered and not sticking out and gear strapped snug.

Any gear with loose Velcro will not be allowed and gear must be replaced.

Any violation of the above equipment check, fighters will be given 2 minutes to get the appropriate equipment to the level of approval of the league.

## Coaching & Time Outs

**Coaching Time outs:** there are no coaching timeouts allowed in sparring matches. Coaches may not stop a fight mid-match to communicate with their player.

**Sparring Equipment Time outs:** All equipment adjustment timeouts must be handled by the center referee. If a player needs a pause in the match to fix strapping or thereto of feet equipment, hand equipment, head equipment, etc, it must be directly handled by the center referee and not the player or coach. Penalty points may be given for this delay.

If there are any Sparring Equipment Adjustment timeouts during live action play, then center referee will (1) call for stoppage (2) center referee will fix/adjust gear (3) players will be positioned in the ring where they were at last before stoppage was called. [4] Fight will resume on Center Referee's command.

**Injury Time outs:** When an injury occurs, the center referee will request for the head scorekeeper to start the injury clock. The injury clock stops when the fight reconvenes. The scorekeeper will record this accumulation of injury time. If the same player gets injured again later in the match, they only have the difference of time remaining from 5 minutes subtracted by the amount of time used in the previous injury.

The opposing player may confer with their coach during an injury timeout.

If the injured player cannot continue after the allotted time, they must forfeit due to injury.

Any injured player must have medical clearance to continue.

**Official time outs:** A center ref may consult with their scorekeeper staff and call an officials time out to resolve match up issues/scoring issues.

A center ref may also issue an official's time out in order to calm down an escalating fight in which players are on the brink of unsportsmanlike behavior.

During this timeout, players may confer with their coaches.

**Coaching:** coaching is allowed but only under the following guidelines-

- never, at any time, can a coach enter the ring without the referee's permission
- no abusive, violent, unsportsmanlike or overzealous coaching
- coaches can never interfere with the proper running of the ring or the decisions of the judges
- Only one coach is allowed per fighter and they must be positioned in the appropriate coaches box
- Center referee has the added power to remove a coach for constant abuse/rule infraction

## Referees

**Center referees:** certified league center referees are the most experienced person in the ring and are thoroughly versed on the rules and order of competition. He/she promotes the safety of competitors, enforces the rules, and ensures fair play. To this end, he/she starts and stops the match, awards points, makes penalty decisions, administers the voting of the other judges, communicates clearly with the scorekeeper and timekeeper, and announces the winner of each match.

Added powers of the Center Referee:

- 1) match starts/stops with his/her command, not the command of the timekeeper, scorekeeper or coach
- 2) has final decision on any disputes on score unless an arbitrator is called
- 3) has the power to issue warnings and award penalty points without a majority decision
- 4) automatically has power to disqualify a competitor
- 5) has power to issue competitor time out or officiating time out

**Side Judges:** the side judges call points/penalties as they see them. The center referee, to help in determining penalties or warnings, may consult them, although the center referee may not persuade them. It is the majority vote of the side judges and center referee that determines a scoring point.

Side judges may border around the outer edges of the ring. They may maneuver in a 'L' shape along the edges of the ring, but may never step into the actual ring of play. The only judge allowed in the ring of play is the center referee.

**Real Time Scoring Point Calls:** when the center referee believes there has been a significant exchange of techniques or when signaled to do so by a side judge, he/she shall call out the word, "stop!" in a loud voice.

At the moment the "stop!" command is made, all referees judging the fight must make their call, otherwise their call may be disqualified. Judges do not wait for fighters to come back to the fight line to make their point call. All judges must make their call at the moment the point is scored.

As the players return back to their starting fight lines the decision on if a point confirmation by the judges should have already been made.

**Calls a referee may make:** when the center referee believes there has been a significant exchange of techniques, or when signaled to do so by a side judge, he/she shall call out the word, "Stop!" in a loud voice. The center referee shall then return the players to their starting fight lines and simultaneously and assertively in the following manner:

- **Point calling:** a judge points to the competitor who scores the point. If a competitor scores a one point technique the judge should point with only one finger. If a two point technique is being called, the judge should point with two fingers.
- **No point scored:** a center referee or side judge crosses his/her wrists at waist level pointing downward (arms forming a 'X') to indicate that he/she believes that a point was not scored.
- **One Point Both Ways:** judges will point both ways, indicating that both competitors scored at the same time. [11/7/24]
- **Penalty:** the center referee or judge points his arm towards the offending competitor with his thumb pointing down.
- **Disqualification:** A disqualification vote is taken separately from any other vote. The center ref will request to huddle with the two side judges and without persuading or influencing the side judges, inform them to make a decision on whether a fighter should be disqualified for an improper infraction. When a disqualification vote is asked for, the referee will say, "judges call". The judges will then hold their arms out with a circular motion with their finger point towards the competitor who is to be disqualified.
- **Exit Penalty:** An exit penalty will be signaled by judges by waving 5 fingers in a downward swaying motion below the hip. A majority of judges ( 2 out of 3 judges) must call the exit penalty. A center judge alone may not issue an exit penalty.

**Late Calls:** all judges should make their calls at the same time. A center referee can disqualify a late call. Center referee/arbitrator may make an exception, such as the honest mistake of raising the wrong hand or pointing at the wrong competitor should be taken into consideration not to disqualify the call.

Should a late call affect the score of a clash, the center ref may request for a re-call in which the judges will re-score the current clash.

Should a specific judge continue to make late calls, they may be requested to be removed by a center referee



**Majority vote:** points are awarded by a majority vote of all judges. The majority of judges do not have to agree on the same technique being scored, only that a point was scored. A majority of the judges calling the point must call a (2) point technique before points can be awarded, otherwise only one point is awarded.

**What is a point?:** a point is a controlled legal sport karate technique scored by a competitor in bounds and up-right that strikes a competitor's legal scoring area with the allowable amount of focused touch contact.

**Legal Target/Scoring Areas:** Light touch to the helmet, ribs, chest, abdomen, kidneys

## Sparring Penalties

**Infraction Rule:** A sparring match can never be determined and end by an infraction/penalty. If a match is tied, and player 'a' receives their last point by a penalty point before regulation time, and the penalty point decides the winner of the fight, the match must continue. In order to complete the bout, either: (scenario 1) player 'a' must score one (1) more point **OR** (scenario 2) player 'b' must score two (2) points. First player to complete either of those options will end the match.

If the match goes above the allowable point ceiling or allowable point spread, and the infraction rule comes into play, the match will continue as outlined above.

If, at the end of regulation time either player has more points than the other without the penalty point as the deciding point, then the player with the most points wins the bout.

**Illegal target areas:** spine, back of the neck, throat, sides of the neck, knees, groin, and back

### Illegal techniques:

(illegal techniques warranting a penalty & a deduction of one (1) point if executed)

- groin kick
- head butts
- hair pulls
- bites
- scratches
- elbows
- knees
- take downs or sweeps
- uncontrolled blind techniques
- body throwing/tossing
- any uncontrolled or dangerous techniques deemed unsafe by center ref/arbitrator
- cartwheel kicks

**Ground Fighting:** There is absolutely no ground fighting. Any stomps, punches or kicks to the head or body of a downed competitor is grounds for penalty points or disqualification. Match play must be stopped by the center referee once a player falls to the ground or has a knee/elbow/hip touching the floor.

If a player has a hand(s) touching the floor while kicking (i.e. supporting balance hands for execution for a kick) that is deemed ground fighting and no points by the falling player can be counted. The match will continue exactly where the fighters are positioned in the ring of play before the initial stoppage.

**Penalties:** there are no warnings for breaking the rules. **Penalties will be assessed by deducting points of the offending competitor for each infraction.** After the 4<sup>th</sup> penalty point is given, a competitor can be disqualified. If

the severity of the first rules violation is deemed by the center referee to be too severe/excessive a disqualification can be issued immediately.

A competitor cannot be penalized and still receive a point on the same call. A competitor can receive a point for a proper technique and receive another point on a penalty call called on their opponent. If, in the opinion of the referee and/or medical personnel, a competitor cannot continue because of an injury caused by an illegal penalized attack executed by his/her opponent, the offending competitor shall be automatically disqualified regardless of score.

### **Sparring Penalties:**

- attacking illegal and non target areas
- running out of the ring to avoid fighting
- falling to the floor to avoid fighting
- continuing after being ordered to stop
- blind, negligent or reckless attacks
- displaying unsportsmanlike behavior by the competitor, coach
- using illegal techniques
- excessive stalling
- uncontrolled techniques
- delay of time
- excessive contact

**Blood Rule:** A player may be disqualified for drawing blood if the blow to the head is deemed excessive. If the blow was not deemed excessive, yet blood is drawn: (1) a penalty is assessed to the offending fighter and one point is deducted from their total score, (2) the match continues (with the approval of medical personnel).

In the case of an equal clash where two fighters collide with equal contact, no disqualification is given if blood is drawn.

**Point Sparring Exit Rule:** An Exit Penalty is when a player willingly and voluntarily exits out of the ring during live action without being “forced out”. **An Exit Penalty subtracts one point from the offending players’ current score. [10/24/24]**

An EXIT PENALTY is defined as a player going out of bounds moving backwards or laterally. There are NO FORWARD EXITS (A player attacking forward and going out of bounds). An “exit” is also defined as a player having the entire foot past the ring line boundary. Stepping on the line with only half the foot out of bounds is not considered as an Exit..

If a player is “**Forced Out**” (i.e. punched or kicked out of bounds by their opponent) this DOES NOT count as an EXIT. **Judges will signify a “Force Out” with two palms thrusting forward.**

A majority of judges ( 2 out of 3 judges) must call the exit penalty. A center judge alone may not issue an exit penalty. An exit penalty will be signaled by:

- Judges by waving 5 fingers in a downward swaying motion below the hip.
- A majority of judges { 2 out of 3 judges) must call the exit penalty.
- **When an “Exit” Penalty is confirmed, the Center Referee will: (1) call time out (2) will verbally notify the offending player of the penalty (3) instruct the scorekeeper to deduct (minus) one point from their current total score (4) The match and regulation time will resume on Center Referee’s command**

**If a player has ‘0’ points and receives an Exit, then their score goes to ‘-1’.**

A player will be disqualified after 4 exit penalties.

**Upright Scoring Rule:** A competitor cannot score a point if they fall after connecting on a score (i.e. diving forward and falling after a hand attack/blitz or falling after a fading kick, etc.).

“Falling” is defined as a knee, elbow, hand or gluteus hitting the ground.

If a player is pushed/thrown down by the opponent then this rule does not apply and the player's score will be counted.

## Team Sparring & Specialized Sparring Divisions

### **Flag Sparring:**

- [A] Regulation Time: 90 seconds
- [B] First player to **5 points** OR player with the most points at the end of Regulation Time
- [C] Each player will be provided a Flag Belt
- [D] Players must provide their own Foam Head Gear & Mouth Piece
- [E] The objective is to maneuver and pull and possess the entire Flag off of your opponent
- [F] No Flag Holding, No Ground Fighting, No Kicks or Punches is allowed

### **4 Corners Sparring:**

- [A] 2 Minutes, 4 individual players (no less than 2 players) compete simultaneously and stationed at each corner of the squared ring
- [B] Regular point sparring rules apply.
- [C] player(s) with the most points at the end of regulation time wins or proceeds onto the next round. Placings will be dependent upon how many points scored in the final four championship round.
- [D] ties will be broken with all four players still in play. First player to score amongst the tied competitors wins the tie breaker. Only ties for first place will constitute a tie breaker runoff. Ties for 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place will result in multiple winners for that placing.

### **Doubles Team Sparring:**

- [A] Coin flip to determine which team will send up first
- [b] Regular point sparring rules apply
- [c] 2 minutes each round
- [d] team with the most points at the end of two rounds wins
- [e] if there is a tie after two rounds, both teams may send up any fighter and fight in a 30 second overtime period. Fighters will continue to fight 30 second overtime periods until a team is up by one point at the end of o.t..
- [f] If an injury is caused by an infraction from the opposing team (contact, misconduct, late hit, etc) and the injured player cannot continue, then the 2<sup>nd</sup> player may fill in for the injured player for the remaining amount of time left in that round.

### **Doubles Tag Team Sparring:**

- [A] 2:00 each round
  - [b] Players may tag at any point during the match including on point calls and during live fight action
  - [c] A tag is constituted by any body contact between two team members.
  - [d] Any ties at the end of regulation time will result in a "Sudden Point" Next-Point-Wins clash. Players may tag in/tag out during the Sudden Point clash
  - [e] No Point Ceiling, 10 point spread rule applies
  - [f] **A team must tag in a minimum of four (4) times. If this requirement is not met, the team is disqualified.**
- [11/7/24]

### **Chess Team Sparring:**

- [A] 3:00 minutes or until entire team is eliminated
- [B] When a player gets scored upon they are eliminated from match play for that round

- [C] When a judge makes a call, they will point to the fighter that got scored upon
- [D] Round ends when one team is completely eliminated OR after the 3-minute time limit runs out
- [E] If the round exceeds the 3-minute time limit, then the Team with the most fighters remaining wins the round.
  - If there are an equal amount of players left, the remaining players will fight to a Sudden Victory Overtime
- [F] Best 2 out of 3 Rounds
- [G] Any excessive contact results in the penalized player being eliminated and the inclusion of an eliminated player from the opposite team
- [H] 5 players maximum per team (4 players in play, 1 substitute that can enter play in between rounds)

## Kata rules

**Order of competition:** Once the final call for the kata and weapon divisions has been made at ringside the competition cards will be collected and shuffled thoroughly. The competitor cards will then be drawn randomly for the order of competition. All competitors will perform before any scores are awarded.

**Kata attire:** Each competitor must present him/herself to the center referee and judges suitably attired with proper uniform and equipment and physically prepared to compete.

**Kata introductions:**

- [A] All kata introduction presentations in all kata divisions (presenting judges competitor name, coach, team/dojo, style, etc) **ARE NOT** be permitted.
- [b] When it is a players turn to perform, they will bow into the ring and locate their starting point where they can announce the name of their kata and proceed to execute their kata performance.
- [d] If a player executes a kata introduction, they will be marked .01 points off of each judges scorecard

**Ring size:** Standard Rings are 20' x 20' when possible and ring borders will be clearly marked

Competitors cannot be marked off negative points if they step out of an irregular sized ring.

**Scoring Ranges:**

- All Ranks                                      9.90- 10.0

**Relative Ranking Scoring Guide:** [10/24/24]

All judges must use the scoring worksheet provided by the Ring Coordinator.

After each competitor completes their kata, they are given a place number relative to the competitor(s) who have already performed.

After the first competitor performs their kata, each judge will mark a '1'. When the second competitor completes their form, each judge will need to determine if they were better than the first competitor. The second competitor gets a '2' if their form was not as good OR a '1' if it was better (first competitor gets his '1' changed to a '2' in this case). [Judges may use tally marks rather than numbers: I, II, III, IIII, etc. ]

The third competitor then gets a number that grades their form relative to the first two competitors.

At the completion of the division, the Judges Scoring Worksheet will have numbers next to their names that reflect their place relative to each other:

John	III	9.97	3rd place
Eric	I	9.99	1st place
Tim	IIII	9.96	4th place

Andy II 9.98 2nd place

Each judge determines how high to score their number '1' competitor. If it was a strong divisional field, usually a 9.99 is appropriate. The number '2' competitor then receives a score one-hundredth lower at 9.98. The number '3' competitor will get a score one-hundredth lower than competitor '2' at 9.97.

Judges cannot give the top four competitors the same score. They may give the same score to players 5th place and lower.

**Ties:** to break ties for 1<sup>st</sup> place competitors must perform a second time.

The player has the option to perform the same form or use a different form in the tie breaker placing rounds.

For Tiebreaker Scoring, judges must choose a winner and cannot give the same score.

Any ties for 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> place will result in multiple winners for that placing.

## Kata Penalties

**Coaching:** Coaching is not allowed in any forms division.

### **Starting a form over penalties:**

No restart option throughout all divisions (beginner, intermediate, advanced, black belt) because of a memory lapse/slip or fall or any other reason due to his/her own negligence,

Referees will score the player at the lowest base score (9.90).

**Time Limit:** Each kata, weapon, or creative routine must be 3 minutes or less. Any kata that goes over the allowed time limit will have a deduction of .05 off of each judge's scorecard. The time starts and judging begins once the competitor enters the competition ring.

The deduction will be marked off after judges give their scores.

**Stepping out of the ring:** A player stepping out of bounds is defined as the entire foot stepping outside the ring boundary.

**If a judge confirms an out-of-bounds penalty, a deduction of 0.02 points will be marked off of the referee's Total Score for that player. [10/25/24]**

Even at the request of a competitor, no stepping out of the ring is allowed.

**Late entries:** once a division has started no additional competitors can be added.

### **Dropping Your Weapon:**

In Traditional Weapon divisions, a dropped weapon will result in a Base Score 9.90.

In Creative Weapon/Musical Weapon divisions, a dropped weapon will result in a deduction marked off of each referee's scorecard at each judge's discretion

# Specific Kata Guidelines

**Japanese/Okinawan/Chinese/Korean/Traditional/etc:** competitors in these divisions must exhibit a kata or weapon routine that reflects the essence and traditional values of the division name in which they are competing. The kata does not have to be a classical form handed down over the years, but should not deviate too far in form and content from the style's classical form movements, otherwise the competitor risks disqualification or downgrading.

**Creative/Extreme Divisions:** competitors in these divisions must display dynamic, gymnastic, extreme movements in their routine. The routine must reflect a mixture of a strong sense of basic martial art moves/stances, creativity, a high level of difficulty in movement and a risk factor must be involved.

No music is allowed in this division. No traditional katas are allowed in this division.

**Creative/Extreme Musical divisions:** all competitors are responsible for their own music and player (battery operated only, no extension cords). All music boxes must stay outside the competition area and can only be placed in a ring if allowed by the ring coordinator.

Competitors in musical divisions must design & execute their form in harmony with their music choice.

- Creative Extreme and Musical Extreme Kata performances must contain **one** of the following: (1) Jump Spin Kick (2) Invert Move (3) Three Jump Kicks. Failure to include at least one of these elements will result in a base score.

**Traditional Weapon divisions:** weapons that the competitor is being judged on for ability to use, must have a resemblance and evolution to traditional martial arts weaponry.

Throwing of a weapon, unless using a chain/rope, is not allowed. However tossing of a weapon upward with intent to catch is allowed.

A competitor who drops his/her weapon will be automatically disqualified. If a competitor recklessly or carelessly misuses his/her weapon, he/she may be penalized or disqualified.

**Extreme Weapon divisions:** please follow the same guidelines outlined above in 'extreme/creative kata'. No traditional weapon katas are allowed.

- Extreme weapon and musical extreme weapon performances must contain one of the following: (1) Jump Spin Kick (2) Three Jump Kicks (3) Invert Move (4) a Weapon Release & Catch. Failure to include at least one of these elements will result in a base score.

**Weapon Inspections:** all weapon inspections will be conducted prior to the division starting by the center referee. Any disputes about an ineligible weapon must be settled before the division begins. A player cannot be disqualified for an ineligible weapon once a division has started.

No sharp bladed weapons are allowed. All swords, kamas, and similarly bladed weapons must be dulled.

**Traditional Synchronized Katas:** The members of the team must demonstrate competence in all aspects of the traditional kata performance, as well as synchronization. No more than 3 members are allowed per Synchronized Team.

**Creative Synchronized Katas:** The members of the team must demonstrate competence in all aspects of the creative performance, as well as synchronization. No traditional katas are allowed in this division. No more than 3 members are allowed per Synchronized Team.

**Traditional Self Defense:**

A player in the self defense division cannot have more than 4 attackers.

3 minute time limit for the entire self defense presentation. Official time will begin when player(s) step into the ring.

Player must meet requirement to demonstrate the moves in slow motion first then in real time (fast) motion afterwards.

competitors must demonstrate proficiency in 3 self defense aspects:

- 1) a open hand grab
- 2) an impact weapon (i.e. Knife/club)
- 3) a strike (punch or kick)

**Choreographed Self Defense:**

A player in the self defense division can have unlimited number of attackers. Music and props are allowed.

3 minute time limit for the entire self defense presentation. Official time will begin when player(s) step into the ring.

No need to display self defense moves slow motion like in traditional self defense.

competitors must demonstrate proficiency in martial arts and self defense tactics.

**Self Defense scoring:**

Scoring aspects for self defense divisions include:

- (1) Realism/Intensity (0 to 3) [Are attacks authentic & Threatening? Are Self defense moves authentic?]
- (2) Effectiveness (0 to 2) [Would Self defense moves really work?]
- (3) Difficulty (0 to 2) [How challenging are Attacks vs How sophisticated are counters?]
- (4) Technique (0 to 3) [ did competitor display a variety of techniques including blocking, jamming, throwing opponent off balance, and evasion? Did competitor display a variety of counter attacks?]

<h2>Qualifying for the LEAGUE FINALS</h2>
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Competitors may receive LEAGUE Seeding Points in their particular division and respective Conferences by:

- (1) Participation Points: 35 points
- (2) Placing in the top 3 placing positions of a division. A competitor receives (7) points for placing first place, (5) points for placing second place, and (3) points for placing 3<sup>rd</sup> place in a regular league event.
- (3) Win a Grand champion division. A competitor will receive an additional 20 points for winning their respective grand champion division.

**Qualifying Point Total for League Finals:**

The League Finals is an open tournament in which all competitors are eligible to compete.

Any player who competes at a League sanctioned Regular Season Tournament will receive a seed for League Finals. The determination of the seed depends on the Overall Season Point Total accrued in their respective Conference.

Any competitor who has not competed at any League sanctioned event will need to compete as a Wildcard at League Finals.

## LEAGUE FINALS ELIMINATIONS

**Finals – Point Sparring Double Elimination for seeded players:** all seeded competitors in sparring divisions receive double elimination status. A competitor must lose twice before being officially eliminated from the division.

The only exception where a player is eliminated without losing twice is if a player is disqualified for an excessive misconduct. If a player is disqualified for an excessive misconduct and have no losses to their name, they are automatically dq'd from the division.

**Finals – Point Sparring Wildcards (single elimination throughout all rounds):**

Wildcard competitors receive only single elimination throughout all rounds. Wildcards do not earn double elimination status, regardless if they win the wildcard round or not. Once a wildcard loses one match, they are eliminated.

**Finals Eliminations – point sparring:** all competitors in sparring divisions who meet the qualifying point total will be seeded #1-10 in each of their respective conferences in the League Finals.

Any players who meet the qualifying point total and is seeded #11 and lower in their conference will automatically receive a #10 seed in the World League Finals.

In the Finals, eliminations begin with the wildcard seeds (if any). Wildcard seeded competitors continue fighting off in a single elimination runoff until there is only one wildcard competitor left. Remember, wildcard seeds receive single elimination status throughout the entire division, even throughout the seeded rounds.

Once the wildcard seed is determined, that competitor joins all competitors rated #10 in each of the various conferences in the LEAGUE. All #10 rated competitors compete in a double elimination runoff.

Each #10 seed is ranked with a corresponding letter (i.e. IOA, IOB, IOC, IOD, etc). The letter corresponds to the overall ranking that player has in their seeded bracket. Thus, IOa is the highest ranking #10 seed, IOB is the second highest #10 seed, etc. These seeded rankings for each bracket is determined by a number of factors including (1) seeds earned from a second and/or third conference, and (2) overall points earned.

These letter rankings assist with the initial pairings within each seeded bracket and the double elimination process. They also assist with determining byes, with the highest ranking player receiving byes when necessary.

When there is only one player left after the #10 seeded bracket, that player moves up to the #9 seeded bracket and the process repeats itself.

When there is only one player left after the #9 seeded bracket, that player moves up to the #8 seeded bracket and the process once again repeats itself. This process continues until the division climbs all the way through the #1 seeded bracket and only one player is left. That one player left standing is the divisional winner in the LEAGUE FINALS.



**Finals Eliminations – FIRST TIMERS Kata:** This division will run just like the regular kata divisional format. No seeds in this division. All qualifiers will be randomly drawn to determine order of performance.

**Finals Eliminations – FIRST TIMERS Sparring:** This division will be a double elimination division. No seeds in this division. All Qualifiers will be randomly drawn to determine matchups.

**Finals Order Of Performance – Katas/Weapons/Open:** all competitors in kata divisions will compete in Inverse Order based upon their Overall Seeds. For example, Wildcards will perform first, then the #10 seeds, then #9 seeds, etc.