WORLD KARATE FEDERATION
KUMITE COMPETITION RULES

Valid from 1.1.2026.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Kumite Rules is to provide standardized rules for all levels of Championships promoted or recognized by the World Karate Federation (WKF), WKF Continental Federations, and WKF Member National Federations. The Competition Rules are intended to ensure that all matters related to competitions are conducted in a safe, fair, and orderly manner.

ARTICLE 1: KUMITE COMPETITION AREA

1.1 The competition area will be a WKF Approved matted square, with sides of eight metres (measured from the outside) with the mats in the outer one-metre area in another colour, marking the boundary. There will be a 2 metres safety area surrounding the competition area.

1.2 There will be a minimum of 2 metres between competition areas.

1.3 There must be no advertisements, signs, walls, pillars, etc. within one metre of the safety area's outer perimeter.

1.4 Where monitors or displays are placed between the competition areas, these must be placed far enough from the competition areas to allow a safety area of 2 metres between competition areas on all sides. (The monitors must be placed at a minimum of 2 metres from the outside of the outer different coloured warning area.)

1.5 Two mats are inverted with the red (or otherwise coloured) side turned up in one metre distance from the mat centre to form a boundary between the Athletes. When starting or resuming combat, the Athletes will be standing front and centre on the mat facing each other.

1.6 The Referee (SHUSHIN) will be standing centred between the two mats, facing the Athletes at a distance of two metres from the boundary of the competition area. Each Judge (FUKUSHIN) will be seated at the designated area. If seated on the TATAMI, they will be placed approximately 1.5 metres off the corners in the safety area.

1.7 The Referee may move around the entire Tatami, including the safety area where the Judges are seated. Each Judge will be equipped with a red and a blue flag or an electronic signal device.

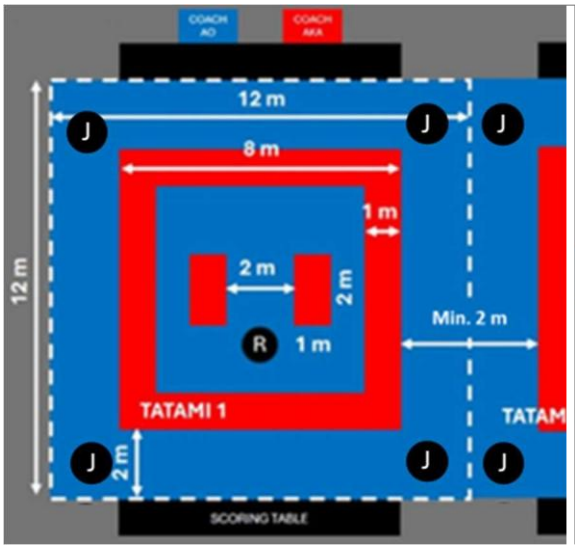
1.8 The Match Supervisor (KANSA) will be seated at the official table. They will be equipped with a whistle.

1.9 The Score Supervisor will be seated at the official score table beside the score/timekeeper, and where video is deployed, so will the Video Review Judge.

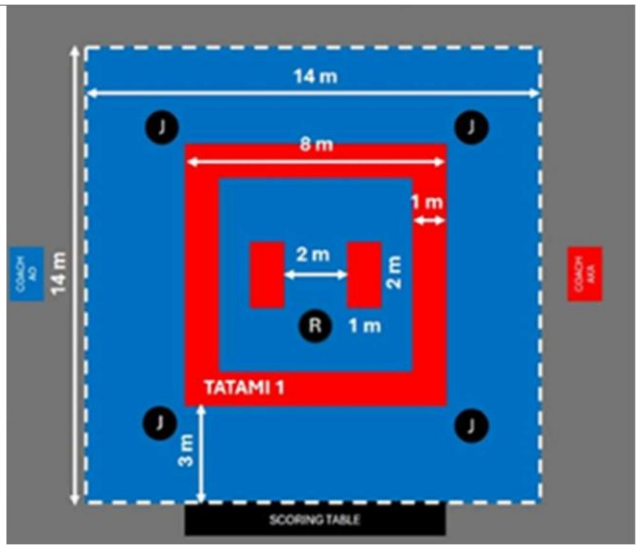
1.10 Coaches will be seated outside the safety area, on their respective sides of the TATAMI towards the official table. In cases where the configuration of Tatami makes it impractical to place the Coaches facing the official table, they may instead be placed on each side of the official table. If in such cases, video review is used, Coach supervisors must be deployed.

Flag System Competition Set Up

Initial Rounds

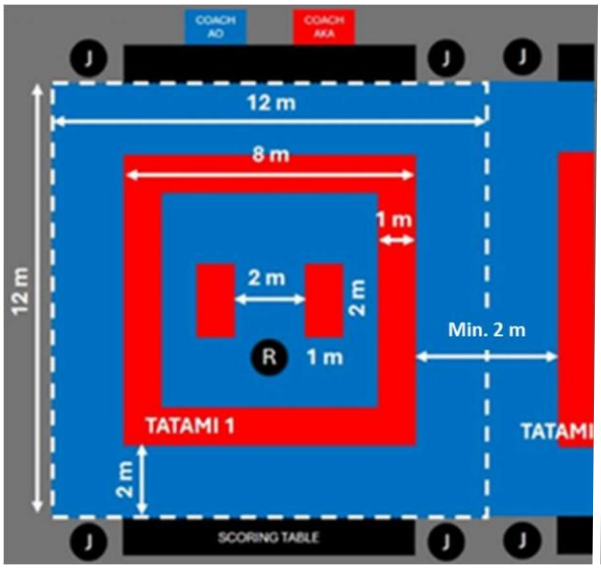


Medal bouts

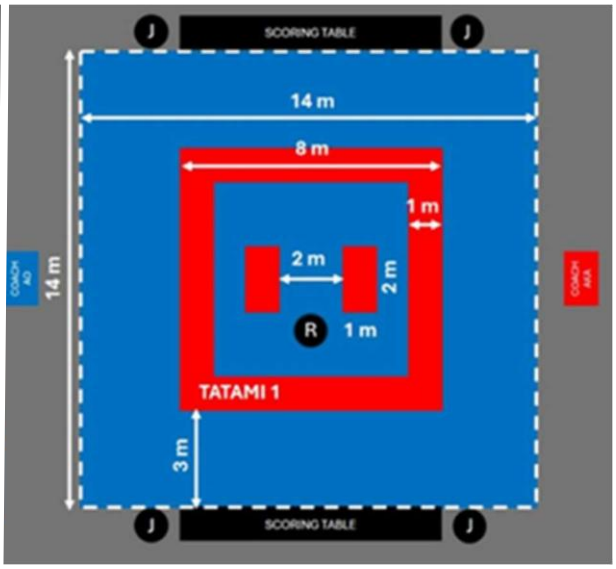


Joysticks System Competition Set Up

Initial Rounds



Medal bouts



ARTICLE 2: ATTIRE AND PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

2.1 Referees and Judges

2.1.1 The official uniform will be as follows:

a) A single-breasted navy-blue blazer (colour code 19-4023 TPX)
b) Plain light-grey trousers without turn-ups (colour code 18-0201 TPX)
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 tiepin
f) A black whistle with a discreet white cord for the whistle

2.1.2 The following additions to attire are allowed:

a) A plain wedding band
b) Voluntary religious headwear approved by the WKF
c) A hairclip and discreet earrings
d) Hair must be worn off the shoulders and make-up must be discreet
e) Heels of more than 4 cm may not be worn with the uniform

It is strictly forbidden for officials to use phones, wear smartwatches, or make use of private electronic devices within the confines of the field of play. Sunglasses are not allowed.

2.1.3 Referees and Judges must wear the official uniform at all tournaments, seminars, briefings, and courses.

2.1.4 For multisport events where a cross-sport uniform is provided for Referees at the cost of the LOC with the feel and look of the specific event, the official uniform for Referees might be substituted by that common uniform, provided that it is requested in writing to the WKF by the event organiser and formally approved by the WKF.

2.1.5 If the Chief Referee agrees, refereeing officials may be allowed to remove their blazers.

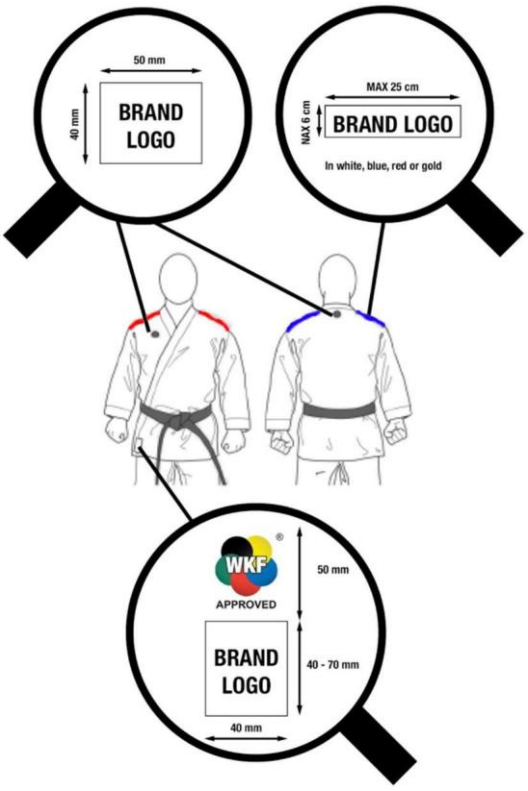
2.1.6 The Referee Commission or Chief Referee may refuse the participation of any official who does not comply with these rules.

2.2 Athletes

2.2.1 Athletes must wear a WKF Approved white Karategi without piping or personal embroidery other than allowed explicitly by the WKF EC and specified in the bulletin for the competition:

a) For all official WKF events (World Championships and Karate 1 - Premier League, Series A and Youth League), the Karategi must have embroidered brands on the shoulders in red or blue, respectively, according to the draw. Exceptions include the grand winners of the previous Premier League season, who should wear a gold shoulder embroidery in current Premier League events, and the incumbent Senior World Champion, who should wear a gold shoulder embroidery in the current Senior World Championship. This applies equally to individuals and teams. There is no WKF requirement for the Team members wearing the same brand of Karategi.

b) Only the original manufacturer's labels may be displayed on the Karategi.



The national emblem or flag of the country will be worn on the left breast of the jacket and may not exceed an overall size of 12cm by 8cm.

In addition, identification issued by the Organising Committee will be worn on the back. The back number is mandatory for Karate 1 – Premier League, Karate World Championships and Karate World Cup.

c) Athletes or Teams must wear a WKF Approved red belt (AKA) or blue belt (AO) as allocated by the draw, without any personal embroideries, advertising or markings other than the customary label from the manufacturer. Belts of grade cannot be worn during the bout.
d) The red and blue belts must be around five centimetres wide and of a length sufficient to allow fifteen centimetres free on each side of the knot, but not longer than three-quarters of thigh length.
e) The jacket, when tightened around the waist with the belt, must be of a minimum length that covers the hips, but must not be more than three-quarters of thigh length.
f) Female Athletes can wear a plain white T-shirt beneath the Karate jacket.
g) Jackets without ties cannot be used. The jacket ties holding the jacket in place must be tied at the beginning of the bout. If they are torn off during the bout, the Athlete is not required to change the jacket.
h) The maximum length of the jacket sleeves must be no longer than the bend of the wrist and no shorter than halfway down the forearm.
i) Jacket sleeves cannot be rolled up.
j) The trousers must be long enough to cover at least two-thirds of the shin and must not reach below the anklebone. Trouser legs cannot be rolled up.
k) The Karategi must not be altered or manipulated to change its shape.

2.2.2 The WKF Executive Committee can authorise the display of special labels or trademarks (brand logos) of approved sponsors.

2.2.3 Athletes must keep their hair clean and cut to a length that does not obstruct smooth bout conduct. Hachimaki (headband) will not be allowed.

2.2.4 Hair slides are prohibited, as are metal hairgrips. Ribbons, beads and other decorations are prohibited. One or two discreet rubber bands on a single ponytail are permitted.

2.2.5 Athletes may, according to their own individual choice, use religious headwear approved by the WKF: A black plain fabric head scarf covering the hair, but not the neck or throat area.

2.2.6 Athletes must have short fingernails and must not wear metallic or other objects, which might injure their opponents. The use of metallic teeth braces must be approved by the Referee and the Tournament Doctor. The Athlete accepts full responsibility for any injury.

2.2.7 The following protective equipment is compulsory:
a) WKF Approved mitts, one Athlete wearing red and the other wearing blue.
b) Gum shield.
c) WKF Approved body protector for males. Females are to use a chest and body protector or the integrated chest/body protector.
d) WKF Approved shin pads, one Athlete wearing red and the other wearing blue.
e) WKF Approved foot protection, one Athlete wearing red and the other wearing blue.
f) WKF Approved groin guards for male Athletes.
g) For Athletes under 14 years of age, the use of a WKF Approved helmet and external body protector is compulsory.
h) For Female Athletes under 14 years of age, the use of WKF Approved chest protector is also compulsory.

2.2.8 Glasses are forbidden. Soft contact lenses can be worn at the Athlete's own risk.

2.2.9 The wearing of any unauthorised apparel, clothing or equipment is forbidden.

2.2.10 It is the duty of the Match Supervisor to ensure, before each match or bout, that the Athletes are wearing the approved equipment. All protective equipment must be WKF Approved.

2.2.11 In the case of Continental Federations, they will limit themselves to providers and brands already approved for WKF. National Federations must also accept all WKF Approved equipment for all local, regional or national competitions.

2.2.12 The use of bandages, padding, or supports because of injury must be approved by the Referee and done or approved by the Tournament Doctor.

2.2.13 In case that deformities or amputations that do not allow for safe and secure fitting of the protective equipment or could represent a risk to the athlete or their opponents, competitive Kumite will not be permitted. In any doubt, the Referees should ask the doctor for the decision.

2.2.14 Athletes that appear at the competition area with unauthorized equipment or irregular Karategi will be given two minutes to correct the attire, and the Coach based on the report from the Chief Referee may have their coaching license suspended for a period of up to 6 months starting the date after the applicable tournament unless the equipment and attire has been checked beforehand by a WKF Controller.

2.3 Coaches

2.3.1 Coaches must at all times during the tournament, briefing, and courses wear the official tracksuit of their National Federation, wear shoes, and display their official identification. The exception is bouts/matches for medals in official WKF events, where male Coaches are required to wear a dark suit, shoes covering the feet, shirt and tie. Female Coaches may choose to wear a dress, pantsuit, or a combination of jacket and skirt in dark colours and shoes. Sandals, or any other open-toe shoes, are prohibited. Sunglasses are not allowed.

2.3.2 In addition, the following additions to attire are allowed:

a) A plain wedding band.
b) Religious headwear approved by the WKF.

2.3.3 The Chief Referee can allow Coaches to use the federation's official Team t-shirt or a plain coloured t-shirt without writing or logos instead of the tracksuit jacket.

ARTICLE 3: ORGANISATION OF KUMITE COMPETITIONS

3.1 Definitions

3.1.1 A “bout” refers to an individual bout between two Athletes.

3.1.2 A “match” is the total of all bouts between the members of two Teams.

3.1.3 The term “group” is here used about the Athletes participating in one of the eight or more groups in the Round-robin phase for individual competition or the group of five Teams participating in round-robin Team competition.

3.1.4 The term “pool” is used for each of the two halves of the total number of Athletes in a category, forming the two paths of advancement towards competing for the medals.

3.1.5 A “runner-up” refers to the second place Athlete in a Round-robin group.

3.2 Weigh-in procedure

3.2.1 Rehearsal weighing

Athletes shall be allowed to check their weight on the official weigh-in scales (that will be used for the official weigh-in) from one hour before the official weigh-in commences. There is no limit to the number of times each Athlete may check their weight during the time of the unofficial weigh-in.

3.2.2 Official weighing:

a) Place:
The weight control will always take place in only one location. The possibilities to host this control are the competition venue, the official hotel or the village (To be announced for each event). Organizers must provide separate rooms for men and women.

b) Scales:
If the official scale shows a higher weight than the scale provided for test weighing, the Athlete can demand to be weighed again, applying the weight shown on the test scale as the official result of the weigh-in.
The host NF should provide enough calibrated electronic scales (at least 4 units) showing only one decimal place, e.g. 51.9 kg, 104.6 kg. The scale should be placed on a solid floor that is not carpeted.

c) Time:
Weigh-in must take place no later than the day before the competition for the category, unless specified otherwise for a specific competition. The official weigh-in time for WKF events will be duly announced on the bulletin. For any other events, this information will be distributed in advance through the OC communication channels. It is the responsibility of the Athlete to be aware of this information. An Athlete who does not turn up for the weigh-in period or fails to weigh within the prescribed limits for the category in which the Athlete is registered will be disqualified (KIKEN).

d) Tolerance:

The tolerances admitted are 0.2 kg for all male categories and 0.5 kg for all female categories. The same tolerance applies to both the upper and lower limits of a weight class.

e) Procedure:

A minimum of two WKF officials are required at the weigh-in for each gender. One to check the accreditation/passport of the Athlete, and one to record the exact weight on the official weigh-in list. An additional six staff members (officials/volunteers) supplied by the host NF should also be available to control the flow of Athletes. Twelve chairs must be supplied. To protect the privacy of the Athletes, officials, as well as the staff members supervising the weigh-in, must be of the same gender as the Athletes.

1. The official weigh-in will be done category by category and Athlete by Athlete.
2. All Coaches and other Team delegates must leave the weigh-in room before the start of the official weigh-in.
3. The Athlete is allowed to stand on the scales only once during the official weigh-in period.
4. Each Athlete shall bring to the weigh-in their accreditation card issued for the event and shall present it to the official, who will verify the identity of the Athlete.
5. The official then invites the Athlete to stand on the scales.
6. The Athlete shall weigh-in wearing only underclothing (men/boys – underpants, women/girls – underpants and bra). Any socks or additional complements must be removed.
7. The official supervising the weigh-in shall note and record the Athlete's weight in kilograms (accurate to one decimal point of a kilogram).
8. The Athlete steps off the scales.

NOTE: Photography or filming is not permitted in the weigh-in area. This includes the use of mobile phones and all other devices.

3.3 Seeding

3.3.1 For the Phase 2 of the WKF World Championships, the four highest ranked Athletes present at the competition are seeded by their respective ranking in the WKF World Ranking as per the day before the competition.

3.3.2 For World Cup competition, the medallist plus the loser of the bronze medal from the previous World Cup will be seeded.

3.3.3 For other WKF competitions, refer to the respective organising rules regarding seeding procedures."

3.4 Competition formats

3.4.1 Karate Kumite competition takes the form of individual competition divided by gender, age groups, and weight categories or Team competition by gender without weight categories or mixed teams, either with or without weight categories, and can be organised in several formats:

a) Elimination system with repechage for Individuals or Teams. (Used unless otherwise specified for the competition).

b) Round-robin in groups followed by Elimination for individuals or Teams. (Used for individual Premier League competitions and the Senior World Championships for both individuals and Teams).

c) Two-pool Round-robin system (used for multisport games).

3.4.2 The Elimination system with repechage will be applied unless otherwise pre-determined for a specific competition or series of tournaments.

3.4.3 For individual competition in Premier League, the Senior Individual World Championships and the World Team Championships, the Round-robin system followed by Elimination is applied.

3.4.4 For multisport games, such as continental games, Olympic Games, or other multisport events, the format of competition will be determined for each event depending on modalities included and restrictions on participation. The format used is normally a two-pool system where the winners of the pools go to the final.

3.5 Composition of Kumite Teams

TEAM COMPOSITION TABLE	Bouts Initial round	Bouts per subsequent rounds	Compulsory back-up Team Members	Optional back-up Team members	Toatal Team Members
Male Teams Round-robin	5	5	2	1	7 to 8
Male Teams Elimination	5	Minimum 3	0	2	5 to 7
Female Teams Round-robin	3	3	1	1	4 to 5
Female Teams Elimination	3	Minimum 2	0	1	3
Mixed Teams Elimination	4	Minimum 3	0	2 *)	4 to 6
Mixed Teams Elimination with Weight Categories	6	Minimum 4	0		6

**) One of each gender*

3.5.1 Matches in Kumite for male Teams consist of 5 bouts. The Team must present 5 participants for the initial match. To participate in Round-robin competition, the Team must also have 2 additional back-up Athletes registered for possible participation in subsequent bouts and may also have a third optional back-up Athlete - bringing the maximum size of the Team to 8 Athletes. For any elimination matches, the Team must always have a minimum of 3 participants in order to compete.

3.5.2 Matches in Kumite for female Teams consist of 3 bouts. The Team must present 3 participants for the initial match. To participate in Round-robin competition, the Team must also have 1 additional back-up Athlete registered for possible participation in subsequent bouts and may also have a second optional back-up Athlete - bringing the maximum size of the Team to 5 Athletes. For any elimination match, the Team must always have a minimum of 2 participants in order to compete.

3.5.3 In Team Kumite competition without weight categories, the Team change which of the Team members should participate in each match. For a tie-break bout, the Team may submit a single name as they would normally do for a new round.

3.5.4 During Round-robin competition, the Team must complete all bouts in order to remain in the competition. If it does not, all bouts and matches will be voided, and no victory points or scoring points will be counted. Likewise, all victory points and scoring points earned by other Teams in meeting the Team eliminated will be voided.

3.5.5 In the second match of an Elimination tournament, and in the Elimination phase following Round-robin, male Teams can never present fewer than 3 Athletes for a match and female Teams can never present fewer than 2.

3.5.6 Matches in Mixed Team Competition consist of 4 or 6 bouts, with an equal number of Athletes of each gender. The Team must present a full team for the initial round. For any subsequent rounds the team must present a number of Athletes sufficient to win by the number of bouts won.

3.5.7 In Mixed Team Competition by weight categories each team must present all Athletes in all designated weight categories, both male and female.

3.5.8 The designated weight categories for Mixed Team Competition are those used for multiple sport games, 3 male and 3 female to a total of 6 weight categories.

3.6 Fighting order for Teams

3.6.1 Before each match, a Team representative must hand to the official table an official form defining the names and fighting order of the competing Team members.

3.6.2 The fighting order form can be presented by the Coach or a nominated Athlete from the Team. If the Coach hands in the form, they must be clearly identifiable as such; otherwise, it can be rejected. The list must include the name of the country, the belt colour allocated to the Team for that match and the fighting order of the Team members. Both the Athletes' names and their tournament numbers must be included, and the form must be signed by the Coach or a nominated person.

3.6.3 Coaches must present their accreditation together with that of their Athlete or Team to the Coach Supervisor or Kansa Assistant. For Team competition, it is allowed to use two Coaches, but only one Coach can actively be coaching in each bout, while the other must sit in the chair provided without interfering with the progress of the bout.

3.6.4 When lining up before a match, a Team will present the actual fighters for that round. The unused fighter(s) and the Coach will not be included and shall sit in an area set aside for them.

3.6.5 The participants can be selected for each round from the full Team. Their fighting order can be changed for each round, provided the new fighting order is notified before the round, but once notified, it cannot be changed until that round is completed.

3.6.6 The Team will be disqualified (SHIKKAKU) if any of its members or its Coach changes the Team's composition or fighting order without written notification prior to the round.

~~3.6.7 If, through an error in charting, the wrong Athlete/Team competes, then regardless of the~~

outcome, that bout/match is declared null and void. To reduce such errors, the Score Supervisor must confirm the winning Athlete/Team with the software technician immediately after the bout/match.

3.6.8 In Team matches where an individual loses on account of receiving KIKEN, HANSOKU or SHIKKAKU, any score for the disqualified Athlete will be set to zero, and a score of 8-0 (counted as YUKO) will be recorded for that bout in favour of the other Team.

3.7 Round-robin, Individual Competition

3.7.1 In individual Premier League events, Round-robin competition using groups of 4 Athletes, the maximum 32 participants are divided into 8 groups of 4 Athletes or fewer. The winner of each of the eight groups go on to regular quarterfinals, semi-finals and final. The losers to the finalists in the quarter- and semi-finals compete for the bronze medals. While in Individual World Senior Championship Phase 2, the winners and runners-up of each of the 8 groups advance to the regular round 16, quarterfinals, semi-finals and final. The losers to the finalists in the quarter- and semi-finals compete for the bronze medals.

3.7.2 According to the number of Athletes (32 or less), the allocation to groups will be as per the following table:

Number of Athletes/Groups	Athletes per group								Notes
8 Groups	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Participation: 24-32 Athletes**
Seed ►		**3**		**2**		**4**		**1**	
32	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
31	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	
30	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	
29	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	
28	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	The first of each Group qualify.
27	4	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	
26	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	
25	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	
24	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
6 Groups	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Participation:18-23 Athletes**
Seed ►		**3**		**2**		**4**		**1**	
23	4	4		4	4	4		3	
22	4	4		3	4	4		3	
21	4	3		3	4	4		3	
20	4	3		3	4	3		3	The first of each Group and the two best runners-up qualify.
19	4	3		3	3	3		3	
18	3	3		3	3	3		3	
5 Groups	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Participation: 17 Athletes**
Seed ►		**3**		**2**		**4**		**1**	
17		3		3	4	4		3	The first of each Group and the best three runners-up qualify.
4 Groups	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Participation: 12-16 Athletes**
Seed ►		**3**		**2**		**4**		**1**	
16		4		4		4		4	
15		4		4		4		3	
14		4		3		4		3	The first and runner-up of each Group.
13		3		3		4		3	
12		3		3		3		3	
3 Groups	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Participation: 9-11 Athletes**
Seed ►		**3**		**2**				**1**	
11		4		4				3	
10		4		3				3	The first and runner-up of each Group, as well as the best two number-threes qualify.
9		3		3				3	
2 Groups	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Participation: 6-8 Athletes**
Seed ►				**2**				**1**	
8				4				4	
7				4				3	The first and runner-up of each Group, will compete directly in the semi-finals.
6				3				3	
1 Group	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Participation: 3-5 Athletes**
Seed ►								**1**	
5								5	
4								4	Final between first and runner-up of the Group, and only one bronze medal bout.
3								3	

3.7.3 If an individual is disqualified or is unable to complete all bouts in the Round-robin, the scores of completed or current bouts will be nullified, and their victory points forfeited, unless it is the last bout of the Round-robin, in which case, all previous results and points remain unchanged.

3.7.4 The winner and runner-up of each group are determined by whoever has the most victory points by counting wins as three points per win, one point for a draw where points are scored. Bouts lost or draws with no scores give zero points.

3.7.5 The winners of the semi-finals will then go on to the final, where they compete for gold and silver.

3.7.6 Those who have lost to the finalists in the quarter finals and semi-finals will compete for the bronze medals (One for groups 1-4 and one for groups 5-8).

3.8 Phase 1 of the Individual World Championships

For Phase 1 of the Individual World Championships, there is no limitation to 32 Athletes per category, and when required, the number of groups will be increased as well as the number of Athletes within the same group. Additional rounds of Round-robin will be fought until the number of winners qualified to proceed is 24 or less, after which straight Elimination bouts will determine the 6 winners that will qualify for Phase 2.

3.9 World Cup for National Teams

For the World Cup, the Round-robin system followed by quarterfinals, semi-finals and final is applied. 5 Teams are allocated to each group. The winners and the runners-up of each group then compete in quarter-finals, semi-finals, and the final. After the Group Phase, the Group Winners and runners-up advance to the quarter-finals, where the bout winners head to the Semi-Finals and the winner to the Finals. Those who have lost to the finalists in the semi-finals will compete for one bronze medal. The winner of the finals receives the gold medal while the loser receives a silver medal. The winner of the bronze match will take bronze, while the losing Team is not awarded a medal.

3.10 Variations to competition formats

If a variation of the competition format other than described in these rules is to be applied for a particular tournament, this must be clearly announced in the tournament bulletin.

3.11 Coaching

3.11.1 In World Championships, Kumite Coaches need to be part of a National Federation delegation and have the required Coach certification level when acting during the bout of an Athlete.

3.11.2 Exceptionally, in competitions with Video Review and upon prior request of the NF, WKF may authorize a Coach from a different delegation to act as a Coach for their delegation in the situations herein, provided that they comply with the dress code as established in art. 2.3.1, in order to cover the special circumstances arising from the need to have a Coach to request Video Review:

- A NF having registered one or more Coaches in Kumite categories, but the Coach(es) cannot attend the event due to visa problems, transport incidents, sudden health issues or any other justified cause,
- A NF that, for budgetary reasons or being part of the WKF development programme, does not have funds to include Kumite Coach(es) within their delegation,
- A Refugee athlete, or
- A Coach being disqualified from competition, and as a result, the Athletes of their NF do not have any Kumite Coach.

3.11.3 If a NF is in any of the above-mentioned situations, and only during a World Championships, the OC Chair may authorize (subject to the President's ratification) to make an exception.

3.11.4 In official WKF events, with the exception of Youth League, it is not permitted to change the Coach during a bout. In team matches, it is allowed to change the Coach between bouts.

ARTICLE 4: THE REFEREE PANEL

4.1. Composition

4.1.1 The Refereeing Panel for each bout shall consist of one Referee (SHUSHIN), four Judges (FUKUSHIN), one Match Supervisor (KANSA), a Score Supervisor, and, where video review is used, a Video Review Judge.

4.1.2 The Referee, Judges, Match Supervisor, Score Supervisor, and Video Review Judge of a Kumite bout must not have the nationality or be from the same National Federation of either of the participants or have any other conflict of interest. It remains the duty of any official to self-report on any possible conflict of interest before the bout or match starts.

4.2 Referees and Judges' deployment and panel allocation

4.2.1 For the eliminatory rounds, the RC Secretary will deliver to the software system technician handling the electronic drawing system a list containing the Referees and Judges available per TATAMI. This list is done by the RC Secretary once the Athletes' draw is finished and at the end of the Referees' Briefing. This list must only contain Referees present at the Briefing and must comply with the above-mentioned criteria. Then, for the Referees draw, the software technician will enter the list in the system, and 4 Judges, 1 Referee, 1 Match Supervisor (KANSA), and 1 Score Supervisor out of each TATAMI deployment will be randomly allocated as Referee Panel for each bout.

4.2.2 Where video review is used, a Video Review Judge is allocated in the same manner.

4.2.3 For medal bouts, the Tatami Managers will provide the RC Chairman and Secretary with a list containing 8 officials from their own TATAMI after the last bout of the eliminatory rounds is finished. Once the list is approved by the RC Chairman, it will be given to the software technician to be entered into the system. The system will then randomly allocate the Referee panel, which will only contain 5 out of the 8 officials from each TATAMI.

4.3 Supporting officials

4.3.1 In addition, for facilitating the operation of bouts/matches, 1 Tatami Manager, 3 Tatami Manager Assistants, and 1 Score/Timekeeper shall be appointed plus 2 Kansa Assistants for checking the Athlete's equipment and 2 Coach Supervisors in instances where the configuration of TATAMI makes it necessary to see the Coaches requests for video review, or for any other reason deemed necessary by the Chief Referee.

4.3.2 Before the start of each match or bout, Kansa Assistants will ensure that Athletes' equipment and Karategi are in accordance with the WKF rules of competition. In competitions where Kansa Assistant is not applicable or available, it is KANSA`s responsibility to ensure that the equipment is in accordance with the rules before each bout.

4.4 Formalities and change of judges

4.4.1 At the start of a Kumite match, the Referee stands on the outside edge of the match area. On the Referee's left stand Judges numbers 1 and 2, and on the right stand Judges numbers 3 and 4.

4.4.2 After the formal exchange of bows by Athletes and the Referee panel, the Referee takes a step back, the Judges turn towards the Referee, and all bow together. All then take up their positions.

4.4.3 When changing the Judges, the departing Officials, except the Match Supervisor, line up, bow together (REI), and then leave the area.

4.4.4 When individual Judges change, the incoming Judge goes to the outgoing Judge, they bow together and change positions.

4.4.5 In Team matches, provided that the entire panel holds the required qualification, the positions of Referee and Judges must 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.

4.5 Procedure for refereeing Kumite with only two corner Judges

4.5.1 For Youth League competitions, the use of only two corner Judges is allowed. This procedure is described in APPENDIX 5.

ARTICLE 5: DURATION OF BOUT

5.1 Duration of the Kumite bout is:

- Senior Male and Female categories: 3 minutes effective time
- Under 21 Male and Female categories: 3 minutes effective time
- Cadet and Junior Male and Female categories: 2 minutes effective time
- Under 14 years 1.5 minutes effective time

5.2 For tournaments without limitation to participation, the duration of Elimination bouts may be reduced from 3 minutes to 2 minutes and from 2 minutes to 1.5 minutes, provided that this is announced prior to tournament start in a meeting for both Coaches and officials.

5.3 The timing of the bout starts when the Referee gives the signal to start and stops each time the Referee calls “YAME", when two or more judges give the electronic signal for a score, or at the signal for full time.

5.4 The timekeeper shall give a signal, indicating “15 seconds to go” by one short burst with the buzzer, and “time up” by two short bursts with the buzzer. The “time up” signal marks the end of the bout.

5.5 Athletes are entitled to a rest period between bouts, equal to the standard duration time of the bout. The exception is in the case of a change of equipment colour, where this time is extended to five minutes.

ARTICLE 6: KIKEN – FAILURE TO APPEAR AT THE TATAMI

6.1 KIKEN is the decision given when an Athlete or Athletes fail to present themselves when called, are unable to continue, abandon the bout, or are withdrawn on the order of the Tournament Doctor. The grounds for abandonment may include injury not ascribable to the opponent’s actions.

6.2 Individual Athletes or Teams that do not present themselves when called will be disqualified (KIKEN) from that category. In Team matches, the score for the bout not taking place will then be set to 8-0 (counted as YUKO) in favour of the other Team. In Individual Round-robin, the score for the bout will be set to 4-0 (counted as YUKO).

6.3 Points earned as a result of the opponent’s disqualification are always counted as YUKO.

6.4 Disqualification by KIKEN means that the Athletes are disqualified from that category, although it does not affect participation in another category.

6.5 When announcing disqualification by KIKEN, the Referee will signal by pointing their finger towards the side of the missing Athlete or Team, announcing “AKA/AO KIKEN”, and then “AKA/AO no KACHI”, giving the signal for KACHI (win) for the opponent.

ARTICLE 7: STARTING, SUSPENDING AND ENDING OF MATCHES

7.1 The terms and gestures to be used by the Referee and Judges in the operation of a bout/match shall be as specified in APPENDIX 2.

7.2 For each round, there will be a bowing ceremony starting with the Referee first having Athletes and officials face the audience and bow SHOMEN NI REI, followed by a bow to each other, OTAGAI NI REI. At the end of the bout(s), the bowing ceremony is done in the opposite sequence.

7.3 The Referee and Judges shall take up their prescribed positions and, following an exchange of bows between the Athletes who are positioned at the front on their assigned mats nearest their opponent, the Referee will announce "SHOBU HAJIME!" and the bout will commence.

7.4 The Athletes must bow properly to each other at the start and the end of the bout – a quick nod is both discourteous and insufficient.

7.5 The Referee will stop the bout by announcing "YAME". If necessary, the Referee will order the Athletes to take up their original positions: "MOTO NO ICHI" and return to their position.

7.6 In the case of a score to be awarded, the Referee identifies the Athlete (AKA or AO), the area attacked (JODAN or CHUDAN), the technique (TSUKI, UCHI or KERI), and then awards the relevant score (YUKO, WAZA-ARI or IPPON) using the prescribed gesture. The Referee then restarts the bout by calling "TSUZUKETE HAJIME".

7.7 When an Athlete has been awarded a score that results in a lead of eight points or more, the bout is over. The winner is declared by the Referee raising a hand on the side of the winner and declaring "AO (AKA) NO KACHI".

7.8 When time is up, the Athlete who has the most points is declared the winner, indicated by the Referee raising a hand on the side of the winner, and declaring "AO (AKA) NO KACHI". The bout has ended at this point.

7.9 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" and blows the whistle. The Referee will thereafter raise their arm and declare the winner, "AO (AKA) NO KACHI", and if necessary, by this action, break the tie.

7.10 When faced with the following situations, the Referee will call "YAME!" and halt the bout temporarily:

a) When either or both Athletes are out of the Competition area, with the exception of allowing an Athlete to immediately score on an opponent who has exited the competition area.
b) When the Referee orders the Athlete to adjust the KARATEGI or protective equipment.
c) When an Athlete has contravened the rules.
d) When the Referee considers that one or both of the Athletes cannot continue with the bout owing to injuries, illness or other causes, in accordance with the Tournament Doctor's opinion, the Referee will decide whether the bout should be continued.

e) When an Athlete seizes the opponent and does not perform an immediate technique or throw.
f) When one or both Athletes fall or are thrown, and neither Athlete manages to immediately follow up with a scoring technique.
g) When both Athletes seize or clinch with each other without immediately succeeding in executing a throw or a scoring technique, or do not immediately respond to WAKARETE.
h) When both Athletes stand chest to chest without immediately attempting a throw or other technique and do not respond to WAKARETE.
i) When both Athletes 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 Athlete.
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 KANSA or the Tatami Manager.
m) When a Coach, or both Coaches, request a video review.
n) For any other reason that the Referee deems necessary.

7.11 In the event that a bout starts without the time being recorded and the bout is then halted, and the remaining time is agreed upon between both coaches, the issue of the duration of the bout can no longer be protested.

ARTICLE 8: SCORING

8.1 A score is awarded to an Athlete when two or more judges indicate a score or when the Video Review Judge agrees on a score after a Coach has raised a Video Request.

8.2 Points are scored by a traditional karate technique with the hand or foot executed with control to the scoring area.

8.3 Only the first correctly executed technique of an exchange will score, with the exception of an effective combination of techniques, in which case the highest scoring technique will count regardless of the sequence of techniques in the combination.

8.4 The scoring areas are the body above the pelvis, up to and including the collarbone (CHUDAN), excluding the junction of the upper bone of the arm with the shoulder blades and collarbones, and the area above the collarbone (JODAN).

8.5 In order to be considered a score, the technique must have the potential to be effective if it had not been controlled, and must also fulfil the criteria of:

1) Good form (Properly executed technique).
2) Sporting attitude (Delivered without intent to cause injury).
3) Vigorous application (Delivery with speed and power).
4) Maintaining awareness of the opponent both during and after execution of the technique (Not turning away or falling down after completing a technique – unless the fall is caused by a foul by the opponent).
5) Good timing (Delivery of the technique at the correct moment).
6) Correct distance (Delivery at a distance where the technique would be effective).

In order to be a valid score, a technique has to fulfil <u>all</u> the six scoring criteria.

8.6 The following scale is used for awarding of points:

- **YUKO** (1 point) is awarded for TSUKI (straight punch) or UCHI (strike) to a scoring area.
- **WAZA ARI** (2 points) is awarded for CHUDAN kicks.
- **IPPON** (3 points) is awarded for JODAN kicks or any legal technique against an opponent whose any part of the body other than the feet is in contact with the mat, with the exception of HIZA GAMAE (One knee touching the mat while executing a technique).

8.7 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.

8.8 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 the exception of the throat area, where no physical contact is allowed. For Cadet and U14 competitions, techniques to the JODAN area can score when stopped within 10 cm of the target for kicks and 5 cm for hand techniques, but may be delivered with light touch (skin touch), without causing impact.

8.9 “Skin touch” is allowed in all age categories. “Skin touch” is defined as touching the target without transferring energy into the protected helmet or head of the Athlete.

8.10 Correctly executed techniques landed at the moment the time runs out are valid. When using electronic judging, points must be signalled within 1.5 seconds of time expiring.

8.11 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 of excessive contact or otherwise causing injury.
e) One turns one’s back to the opponent after a technique (lack of awareness).
f) It in itself is, or follows, a violation of the rules (such as excessive contact, holding, grabbing, etc.).

ARTICLE 9: PROHIBITED BEHAVIOUR

9.1 Types of prohibited behaviour

9.1.1 The following behaviours are prohibited:

1) Techniques that make excessive contact, having regard to the scoring area attacked, and techniques that make contact with the throat.
2) Attacks to the arms, legs, groin, joints, or instep.
3) Attacks to the face with open-hand techniques.
4) Techniques executed after “WAKARETE” and before “TSUZUKETE” have been called.
5) Dangerous or forbidden throwing techniques.
6) Feigning or exaggerating injury.
7) Exit from the competition area (JOGAI) not caused by the opponent or following a score.
8) Self-endangerment by indulging in behaviour that exposes the Athlete to injury by the opponent, or failing to take adequate measures for self-protection (MUBOBI).
9) Avoiding combat as a means of preventing the opponent from having the opportunity to score.
10) Passivity – not attempting to engage in combat (Cannot be given in the first 15 seconds of the bout, after there are less than 15 seconds left of the bout, or to someone having a lead by points or SENSHU).
11) Clinching, wrestling, pushing, or standing chest to chest without attempting a scoring technique or takedown.
12) Grabbing the opponent with both hands for any reason other than executing a takedown upon catching the opponent’s kicking leg.
13) Grabbing the opponent’s arm or Karategi with one hand without immediately attempting a scoring technique or takedown.
14) Techniques, which by their nature, cannot be controlled for the safety of the opponent and dangerous and uncontrolled attacks.
15) Simulated or actual attacks with the head, knees, or elbows.
16) Kicking techniques against a downed opponent who is lying flat on the floor.
17) Talking to, or goading the opponent, failing to obey the orders of the Referee, discourteous behaviour towards the Refereeing officials, or other violations of etiquette.

9.1.2 An Athlete 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 Athlete’s attempt to score is unsuccessful, the exit will be recorded as a JOGAI.

9.1.3 An Athlete staying within the TATAMI can score on an opponent that is exiting, or has exited, provided that the Athlete making the score remains within the TATAMI at the moment of scoring. In such instances, the Athlete scored upon will not receive JOGAI.

9.1.4 A Referee may, based solely on their 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 Athlete’s entourage present on the competition floor. Coaches banned from the competition are not allowed to coach or guide the Athletes, in or out of the field of play.

9.1.5 Only the Coach designated for that specific bout is allowed to coach and guide the Athlete from the place allocated to the Coach, close to the competition area. All other registered and accredited Coaches, or other registered member of the delegation, attending the Championships are not allowed to interfere, coach and/or guide the Athlete during the same bout at the risk of having their accreditation withdrawn.

9.1.6 Instructions and comments from the Coach must not interfere with the proceedings. The Coach may freely speak to the Athlete when the match is halted, but must at all times refrain from commenting on judgements.

9.1.7 The Athlete may discreetly signal to the Coach the wish for them to request a video review.

ARTICLE 10: WARNINGS & PENALTIES

10.1 Informal Warnings

10.1.1 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 Athletes do not react upon the informal warning.

10.1.2 There are two types of Informal Warnings:

TSUZUKETE for encouraging activity	To urge the Athletes to commence activity by gesturing in the same way as is customary for making the Athletes stepping on to the TATAMI, combined with the instruction "TSUZUKETE".
WAKARETE for breaking up a clinch	To break-up a clinch, using the same gesture as is customary for making the Athletes step back on the TATAMI combined with giving the order "WAKARETE" to temporarily stop the action without stopping the clock. The Athletes must separate – after which the order "TSUZUKETE" is given for resuming action.

10.1.3 When WAKARETE is called when an Athlete is cornered, the Referee must ensure that the other Athlete withdraws sufficiently to disengage before TSUZUKETE is called.

10.1.4 TSUZUKTETE, unless preceded by WAKARETE, is not used if there is less than 15 seconds left of the bout.

10.1.5 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 penalised. An uncontrolled technique will be subject to warning or penalty in the normal manner.

10.2 Official Warnings

10.2.1 There are two degrees of official warnings - CHUI and HANSOKU CHUI:

CHUI Warning	is given, up to three times, for smaller infractions that do not diminish the other Athlete's chances of winning.
HANSOKU CHUI Warning of disqualification in the event of further infractions	Is given for more serious infractions that reduces the other Athlete's chances of winning or to an Athlete for any further infraction if three CHUI has already been given.

10.3 Penalties

10.3.1 There are two kinds of penalties, which are two different levels of disqualification:

HANSOKU	Disqualification from the bout.

This is the penalty of disqualification following a very serious infraction or when HANSOKU CHUI has already been given.

SHIKKAKU Disqualification from the tournament.	This is a disqualification from the entire tournament including any subsequent category the offender may have been registered for. SHIKKAKU may be invoked when an Athlete fails to obey the orders of the Referee, acts maliciously, or commits an act, which harms the prestige and honour of Karate.

10.3.2 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).

10.3.3 Serious violation of conduct, discipline, or malicious behaviour on or outside the competition area by the Athlete or their entourage may cause further disciplinary action from the WKF Disciplinary Commission or Executive Committee.

10.3.4 When a situation appears to possibly warrant a disqualification, the Referee can call one or more judges for a brief consultation (SHUGO) before announcing any decision. SHUGO is obligatory before imposing disqualifications based on time-wasting situations or in order to impose SHIKKAKU.

10.4 Warning and penalty application

10.4.1 **Excessive contact**: Where contact is considered by the Referee to be too strong, but does not diminish the Athlete's chances of winning, a warning (CHUI) may be given.

10.4.2 **Contact causing injury**: Any technique that results in injury can, unless caused by the recipient, cause a warning or penalty. The Athletes 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.

10.4.3 **Observation after contact:** The Referee must continue to observe the injured Athlete until the bout is resumed and allow adequate time for observation. A short delay in giving a judgment allows injury symptoms such as a nosebleed to develop or reveal any efforts by the Athlete to aggravate a slight injury for tactical advantage.

10.4.4 **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.

10.4.5 **Feigning an injury**: Any instance of feigning an injury, however slight, will receive a minimum warning of CHUI, while an obvious display of feigning will receive a HANSOKU CHUI. A more serious display of feigning, such as feigning 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.

10.4.6 **Contact to the throat:** Any contact to the throat, unless received by the recipient's own fault, must result in a warning or penalty.

10.4.7 **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. Both are allowed.

10.4.8 **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.

10.4.9 **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 grabs the opponent’s Karategi or body to break the fall.

10.4.10 **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 an Athlete is injured as a result of a throwing technique, the Referee will decide whether a warning or penalty is called for.

10.4.11 **One hand grabbing:** The Athlete may seize the opponent’s arm or Karategi with one hand for the purpose of executing a throw or a direct scoring technique – but may not keep holding on for continuous techniques.

10.4.12 **Holding on to break a fall:** Holding on to the opponent’s Karategi with one hand is permitted to break a fall.

10.4.13 **Exiting the competition area:** JOGAI relates to a situation where an Athlete's foot, or any other part of the body, touches the floor outside of the competition area. An exception is when the Athlete is physically pushed or thrown from the area by the opponent or is exiting after having scored.

10.4.14 **Self endangerment:** A warning or penalty for MUBOBI is given when an Athlete is hit or injured through their 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.

If an Athlete has been asked before the bout starts, and confirms wearing a groin guard, and it later proves that this is not so, the Athlete will receive SHIKKAKU. If the Athlete has not been asked, but it is discovered that the Athlete does not wear a groin guard, the Athlete will be given two (2) minutes to correct the matter and will automatically receive a warning for MUBOBI.

10.4.15 **Passivity** refers to situations where neither Athlete makes attempts to score, or a single Athlete does not attempt to score despite being behind on points or the opponent has a lead because of SENSHU. The Referee, before stopping the bout to give passivity, must first announce TSUZEKETE as an informal warning, using the appropriate signal and command. Passivity cannot be given during the first or last 15 seconds of a bout.

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

10.4.17 **Not following instructions:** An Athlete 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.

10.5. Excessive celebration, political or religious demonstration: Athletes 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 Executive Committee for the protest fee.

10.6 Disqualification of individual Athletes in Team matches

10.6.1 HANSOKU or SHIKKAKU: In Team matches, the offended Athlete's score will be set at 8 points, and the offender's score will be zeroed.

10.7 Disqualification in Round-robin competition.

10.7.1 If an Athlete receives HANSOKU, KIKEN or SHIKKAKU in a Round-robin bout, the offender's score for the bout is set to zero while the opponent's score is set to the higher of 4 points or points earned by techniques. Points scored by techniques retain their original value as respectively IPPON, WAZA-ARI or YUKO. Points added other than scored are all measured as YUKO.

10.7.2 If an Athlete receives KIKEN or SHIKKAKU in Round-robin competition, all previous bouts are voided from the result unless it is the last scheduled bout for the disqualified Athlete, in which case the result of the bout is recorded in the usual manner without consequence for the results of the previous bouts.

ARTICLE 11: INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS IN COMPETITION

11.1 Athletes declared unfit to fight

11.1.1 An injured Athlete who wins a bout through disqualification due to injury is not allowed to fight again in the competition without permission from the tournament doctor. No such permission can be given to an Athlete who has suffered a loss of consciousness or otherwise has any symptoms of concussion.

11.1.2 An injured Athlete, permitted to continue, may also win a second bout by disqualification due to injury, but is immediately withdrawn from further Kumite competition in that tournament.

11.2 Procedure for handling injuries

11.2.1 When an Athlete is injured, the Referee shall at once halt the bout and call the doctor by raising his hand and verbally call out “doctor”.

11.2.2 If physically able to do so, the injured Athlete should be directed off the mat for examination and treatment by the doctor.

11.2.3 An Athlete 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 if the Athlete shall be declared unfit to fight, or whether an extension of treatment time shall be given.

11.2.4 **10-second rule:** Any Athlete who lies flat on the floor after a fall, being thrown, or knocked down, and does not fully regain their feet within ten seconds, is considered unfit to continue fighting and will be automatically withdrawn from all Kumite events in that tournament. In the event that an Athlete lies flat on the floor after a fall, being thrown, or knocked down and does not regain their feet immediately, the Referee will stop the match, call the doctor, and at the same time start a verbal count to ten in the English language, indicating his count by 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 Athlete before the bout can resume. For incidents falling under this 10-second rule, the Athlete may be examined on the mat. The Tatami Manager must notify the central table when an Athlete has been stopped from further competition based on the 10-second rule.

11.2.5 The tournament doctor is authorised to give an opinion on the injured Athlete’s fitness for continuation only. The Referee will decide the winner on the basis of HANSOKU, KIKEN, or SHIKKAKU as the case may be.

11.2.6 **The Referee must be aware of pre-existing injuries** when evaluating to what degree the present state of injury could be attributed to actions by the opponent. The opponent should not be penalized for any pre-existing condition.

11.2.7 **Should an Athlete in Round-robin competition have to withdraw because of injury,** all previous bouts are voided from the result unless it is the last scheduled bout for the injured Athlete, in which case the result of the bout is recorded in the usual manner without consequence for the results of the previous bouts.

11.3 Injury to both Athletes

If two Athletes 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 decided as one normally would at full time.

ARTICLE 12: CRITERIA FOR DECISION

12.1 General

12.1.1 When two or more Judges signal a score for the same Athlete, the Referee will stop the bout and render the decision accordingly. Should the Referee fail to stop the bout, the Match Supervisor will blow their whistle. When the Referee decides to halt the bout for any reason, they will call "YAME" at the same time using the required hand signal.

12.1.2 In the event that both Athletes have a score signalled by two Judges, both Athletes will be awarded their respective points.

12.1.3 If one Athlete has a score indicated by more than one Judge, and the score is different between the Judges, the higher score will be applied. The same applies if there are two judges for each Athlete with different scores.

12.1.4 If there is a majority, but disagreement, among the Judges for one level of score, the majority opinion will always overrule the principle of applying the highest score.

12.1.5 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.

12.2 Criteria for deciding the winner of a bout

12.2.1 The result of a bout is determined by an Athlete obtaining a clear lead of 8 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 an opponent.

12.2.2 By first unopposed score advantage (SENSHU), it is understood that one Athlete has achieved the first instance of scoring on the opponent without having the opponent also score before the signal. In instances where both Athletes score before the signal, and there is an indication of score by two judges for each of the two Athletes, no 'first unopposed score advantage' is awarded, and both Athletes retain the possibility of SENSHU later in the bout.

12.2.3 In any individual bout (Individual, Round-robin, and Teams) where no superior score has been obtained by either Athlete, or the score is equal without any Athlete having a 'first unopposed score advantage' (SENSHU), the decision will be made based on the following criteria in order of application:
a) The higher number of IPPON scored in the bout.
b) The higher number of WAZA ARI scored in the bout.

12.2.4 Should the number of IPPON and WAZA ARI be equal, the decision will be made by HANTEI, a final majority vote of the four Judges and the Referee, each casting their vote based on their individual judgement of which Athlete displayed superiority of tactics and techniques. In Round-robin and Team bouts, HIKIWAKE will be given unless it is an extra bout to decide a match outcome.

12.2.5 Individual elimination bouts cannot be declared a tie, with the exceptions of Team competition, or Round-robin competition, when a bout ends with no scores, equal scores, no

superiority in IPPON or WAZA ARI, and neither Athlete has obtained SENSHU, the Referee will announce a tie (HIKIWAKE).

12.2.6 The only time HANTEI is applied to a bout in Team competition is for an additional bout to break a tie.

12.2.7 When deciding the outcome of a bout by vote (HANTEI) at the end of an inconclusive bout, the Referee will move to the competition area perimeter and call "HANTEI", followed by a blast of the whistle. The Judges will signal their opinions, and the Referee will declare the winner. The Referee will then indicate the winner by hand signal and the order (AKA/AO NO K ACHI), and by this action also resolve any tie.

12.2.8 Should an Athlete who has been awarded SENSHU receive a warning for avoiding combat for the following incidents: JOGAI, running away, clinching, grabbing, wrestling, pushing or standing chest to chest when there is less than 15 seconds left of the bout – the Athlete will automatically forfeit this advantage. The Referee will then first show the type of infraction and type of warning or penalty the Athlete did, then show the sign for SENSHU, followed by the sign for annulment (TORIMASEN) and at the same time announcing "AKA/AO SENSHU TORIMASEN".

12.2.9 In cases where SENSHU has been awarded, but a successful video request determines that the other opponent also scored, and that a score in fact is not unopposed, the same procedure is used for nullification of SENSHU.

12.2.10 If SENSHU is withdrawn when it is less than 15 seconds left of the bout, *no* further SENSHU can be awarded to either Athlete.

12.2.11 In instances of Elimination competition, where both AKA and AO are disqualified in the same bout by HANSOKU, KIKEN or SHIKKAKU, 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 based on the scores at the moment of disqualification, SENSHU, or if none of these conditions are present; by direct HANTEI. No medal can be awarded to an Athlete disqualified by SHIKKAKU.

12.3 Determining the winner of a round-robin group and resolving ties in individual competition

12.3.1 The winner of a group in Individual round robin-competition, is the Athlete having the most victory points gained by 3 points for won bouts and 1 victory Point for draws, where points are scored. In cases where there is a tie between two or more Athletes in a group, having the same number of victory Points, the criteria below will be applied in the specified order. This means that if a winner is found after one of the criteria, the following criteria will not have to be applied.

1) Winner of the bout between the Athletes involved in the tie.
2) Higher number of total scores obtained in favour through all bouts.
3) Lower number of total scores against through all bouts.
4) Higher number of IPPON obtained in favour through all bouts.
5) Lower number of IPPON against through all bouts.

6) Higher number of WAZA ARI obtained in favour through all bouts.
7) Lower number of WAZA ARI against through all bouts.
8) The highest World Ranking at the date of the competition.
9) Extra bout allowing HANTEI.

For each pair compared, the criteria must be considered from the beginning of the list.

12.3.2 It is possible for an Athlete to be disqualified from a bout (HANSOKU) and continue the competition. In this case, their opponent wins that bout by either 4-0 (counted as YUKO) or for any score obtained exceeding 4 points.

12.3.3 If an already qualified Athlete is disqualified for misconduct (SHIKKAKU) at the end of the Round-robin round, the -final opponent will advance to the semi-final by bye ("walkover").

12.4 Determining the winner of a Round-robin group and resolving ties, in Team competition

12.4.1 The winner of a group in Team Round-robin competition is the Team having the most victory Points gained by 3 points for won matches and 1 point for draws where points are scored. In cases where there is a tie between two or more Teams in a group, having the same number of victory Points, the criteria below will be applied in the specified order. This means that if a winner is found after one of the criteria, the following criteria will not have to be applied.

1) Winner of the match between teams involved in tie.
2) Highest number of bouts won during the entire Round-robin phase.
3) Largest number of points scored during the entire Round-robin phase.
4) Least number of points scored against the Team during entire the Round-robin phase.
5) Largest number of IPPON scored by the Team during the entire Round-robin phase.
6) Least number of IPPON scored against the Team during the entire Round-robin phase.
7) Largest number of WAZA ARI scored by the Team during the entire Round-robin phase.
8) Least number of WAZA ARI scored against the Team during the entire Round-robin phase.
9) An additional bout between one of the members of each Team – if necessary, decided by HANTEI.

For each pair compared, the criteria must be considered from the beginning of the list.

12.5 Criteria for deciding the winner of a Team match using Elimination

12.5.1 The winning Team is the one with the most bout victories, including those won by SENSHU. Should the two Teams have the same number of bout victories, then the winning Team will be the one with the most points.

12.5.2 If the two Teams have the same number of bout victories and points, then a deciding bout will be held. Each Team may nominate any one Athlete of their Team for the purpose of fighting the extra bout, regardless of whether that Athlete has already fought in a previous bout between the two Teams.

12.5.3 If the extra bout does not produce a winner based on superiority on points, nor any of the Athletes receive SENSHU, the extra bout will be decided based on HANTEI according to the same procedure as for individual bouts. The result of the HANTEI for the extra bout will then also determine the result of the Team match.

12.5.4 In Team matches, when a Team has won sufficient bout victories or scored sufficient points to be the established winner, then the match is declared over, and no further bouts will take place, except in Round-robin, where all bouts must be fought.

12.5.5 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.

12.6 Scorekeeping

The Score Supervisor will use the following symbols for registration of points:

3	IPPON	Three-point score
2	WAZA ARI	Two-point score
1	YUKO	One-point score

u	SENSHU	First unopposed point advantage
▭	KACHI	Winner
X	MAKE	Loser
▲	HIKIWAKE	Draw
KK	KIKEN	Renunciation (absence)

1C	CHUI (first instance)	1st warning
2C	CHUI (second instance)	2nd warning
3C	CHUI (third instance)	3rd warning
HC	HANSOKU CHUI	Warning of disqualification
H	HANSOKU	Disqualification from bout
S	SHIKKAKU	Disqualification from tournament

ARTICLE 13: OFFICIAL PROTEST

13.1 General provisions

13.1.1 No one may protest about a Judgement to the members of the Refereeing Panel.

13.1.2 If a Refereeing procedure appears to contravene the rules, the Athlete's Coach or their official representative are the only ones allowed to make a protest.

13.1.3 The protest will 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.

13.1.4 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 or NF representative immediately after the end of the bout.

13.1.5 If the protest involves Athletes in an ongoing category, then the next round that could involve the Athletes must be postponed until the appeal is decided.

13.1.6 The Coach / NF representative will request the official protest form from the Tatami Manager. The written protest must be completed, and the protest fee submitted, within 5 minutes after receiving the protest form from the Tatami Manager.

13.1.7 Failure of a Coach / NF representative 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.

13.1.8 The Tatami Manager will complete any information regarding implicated officials and immediately hand the completed protest form to a representative of the Appeals Jury. The Appeals Jury will, without delay, review the circumstances leading to the protested decision. Having considered all the facts available, they will produce a report and shall be empowered to take such action as may be called for. The protest will be reviewed by the Appeals Jury, and as part of this review, the Jury will study the evidence available in support of the protest.

13.1.9 The protest may also be directly decided and announced to the Appeals Jury by the RC Chairman or the Chief Referee of the event, in which case no payment of a protest fee will be applicable.

13.1.10 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 Match Supervisor (KANSA).

13.1.11 The protest must give the name and country of the Athletes and the precise details of what is being protested. The information of officials implicated is completed by the Tatami Manager. 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. The protest must be submitted to a representative of the Appeals Jury by the Tatami Manager. In due course, the Jury will review the circumstances leading to the protested decision.

13.1.12 The protester must deposit a Protest Fee as agreed by the WKF EC, and this, together with the protest, must be given to the Tatami Manager, who will turn it over to a representative of the Appeals Jury.

13.1.13 The intent to protest must be declared as soon as the bout is finished. The written protest must be completed, and the protest fee submitted, within 5 minutes after receiving the protest form from the Tatami Manager.

13.1.14 The decision of the Appeals Jury is final and may only be overruled by a decision of the Executive Committee upon request of the WKF President.

13.1.15 The Appeals Jury may not impose sanctions or penalties. Their function is to pass judgment on the merit of the protest to start required actions from the RC and OC to take remedial action to rectify any Refereeing procedure found to contravene the rules.

13.2 Composition of the Appeals Jury

13.2.1 The Appeals Jury is comprised of three Senior Referee representatives appointed by the Referee Commission (RC) or the Chief Referee. No two members may be appointed from the same National Federation. They will be numbered from 1 to 3.

13.2.2 The RC will also appoint three additional members with designated numbering from 4 to 6 that automatically will replace any of the originally appointed Appeals Jury members in a conflict-of-interest situation. i.e., where the jury member is of the same nationality, has a family relationship by blood or as an In-Law with any of the parties involved or any other reasonable conflict or potential conflict of interest in the protested incident, including all members of the Refereeing panel involved in the protested incident.

13.3 Appeals Evaluation Process

13.3.1 It is the responsibility of the Tatami Manager to receive the protest, to gather the Appeals Jury, and deposit the protest sum with WKF for any declined protest.

13.3.2 The Appeals Jury will immediately make such inquiries and investigations as they consider necessary to validate the merit of the protest.

13.3.3 Where video review is used, the Appeals Jury may request to examine the video recording of the incident before rendering a verdict.

13.3.4 Each of the three members is obliged to give their verdict as to the validity of the protest. Abstentions are not acceptable.

13.4 Declined and accepted protests

13.4.1 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.

13.4.2 If a protest is accepted, the appeals Jury will liaise with the Organising Commission (OC) and the Chief Referee to take such measures as can be practically carried out to remedy the situation, including the possibilities of:

- Reversing previous judgments that contravene the rules.
- Voiding results of the affected rounds from the point before the incident.
- Redoing such bouts that have been affected by the incident.
- Issuing a recommendation to the RC for any involved Judges evaluated for sanction.

13.4.3 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.

13.4.4 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.

13.4.5 An accepted protest does not mean that a bout or match will automatically be redone.

13.5 Incident report

13.5.1 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 stating their reason(s) for accepting or rejecting the protest.

13.5.2 The report should be signed by all three members of the Appeals Jury and submitted to the Chief Referee and the Organising Commission.

ARTICLE 14: VIDEO REVIEW REQUEST

14.1 In WKF World Championships, Premier League, Olympic Games, Youth Olympic Games, Continental Games, World Games, and multisport games of this nature, the use of video review of bouts is required. Use of video review is also recommended for other competitions whenever possible.

14.2 The video review is initiated when a Coach raises their video review card (manually or by electronic device as applicable) to signal that a possible score of their Athlete that was missed by the judges. If a Coach pushes the joy stick's button and then immediately regrets it, the procedure will not be stopped, and the video review will take place accordingly. The Coach should stand up during the video review to make the Referee aware and avoid continuation of the bout if the system malfunctions.

14.3 In competitions where Coaches are provided electronic equipment that allows requesting review for specifically YUKO, WAZA ARI or IPPON, the Video Review Judge is only required to evaluate a possible score for the type of point requested. The Coach may change the level of the score up until the Referee finishes the signal for video review.

14.4 If the Athlete wishes to have the Coach request a video review or refrain from raising a review, this must be discreetly signalled without disturbing the progress of the bout.

14.5 The video review can be requested by the Coach in instances where the Judges awarded a lower score than, in the opinion of the Coach, should be for a higher scoring technique.

14.6 The Video Review Judge may only award points if the Athlete for whom the request was raised had a valid score, i.e. scoring before or simultaneously with the other Athlete.

14.7 An exception from above sub article is when neither Athlete has been awarded a point by the corner Judges, only one of the Coaches calls a Video review, the other Coach has no card or do not wish a video request – in which case only the techniques of the Athlete whom video review is called for will be considered for scoring.

14.8 The last 6 seconds before the bout was stopped for the request will always be evaluated, but additional time can be added as deemed necessary to make the best possible decision. The sequence must be reviewed at normal speed but can in addition be viewed in slow motion or zoom if necessary. The review must always first be done at full speed, although slow motion may subsequently be used to determine details. The total time used for reviewing the video is not to exceed 30 seconds, after which a decision must be rendered.

14.09 If both Coaches request video review at the same time, the Video Review Judge may only award the point to whoever is deemed to score first. The only exception being simultaneous scoring techniques, in which case points can be awarded to both Athletes.

14.10 If one Coach shows the card for video review and the other Coach wants a review of the same instance, the second Coach must raise his card before the review starts in order not to lose his right to request video review for that instance. The video review is considered started when the Referee makes the gesture.

14.11 If the request is found valid, a red or blue card, with the number 3 for IPPON, 2 for WAZA ARI or 1 for YUKO is raised or the outcome displayed on the monitor. The Referee will then award the score in the usual manner. If the request is found invalid, the Coach will lose the right to raise another video request for the remainder of the bout.

14.12 The Video Review Judge may not overrule any decision by the corner judges with the exception of SENSHU.

14.13 If the Video Review Judge is unable to observe the technique(s) due to camera angle, they will signal this by doing the gesture for MIENAI, and the Coach will retain the card. In the case of technical problems (electricity, camera, or computer malfunctions etc.) it is not possible to analyse the video and make a decision, the same procedure will apply, and the Coach will retain the card.

14.15 If a Coach requests VR, but in the opinion of the Referee the technique was uncontrolled or too hard, a warning or penalty must be applied, and the Coach will retain the card.

14.16 Once WAKARETE is called by the Referee, the Coaches do not have the opportunity to make a video request, unless the technique happened before WAKARETE was called.

14.17 It remains the duty of the Coach to protest if a VR card is not returned whenever the Coach has the right to have the card returned by the Tatami Manager.

14.18 The following table determines the video review cards allowable per phase for WKF events:

Phase 1 - WORLD INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS Coach will have 1 VR card for groups with 3 - 4 Athletes in the Group Phase. Coach will have 2 VR card for groups with 5 -6 Athletes in the Group Phase. Coach will have 1 VR card for the Elemination Phase 1st Round (24 groups). Coach will have 1 VR card for the Elemination Phase - Qualification Bout.	**TEAM WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS** **Mens's Team** Coach will have 3 VR card per match in the Group Phase. Coach will have 3 VR card per match for the Quarterfinals. Coach will have 3 VR card per match for the Semi-Finals. Coach will have 3 VR card per match for the Medal Match. **Women's Team** Coach will have 2 VR card per match in the Group Phase. Coach will have 2 VR card per match for the Quarterfinals. Coach will have 2 VR card per match for the Semi-Finals. Coach will have 2 VR card per match for the Medal Match.
Phase 2 - WORLD INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS Coach will have 1 VR card for the Group Phase. Coach will have 1 VR card for the Round 16 . Coach will have 1 VR card for the Quarterfinals. Coach will have 1 VR card for the Semi-Finals. Coach will have 1 VR card for the Medal bouts.	
PREMIER LEAGUE Coach will have 1 VR card for the Group Phase. Coach will have 1 VR card for the Quarterfinals. Coach will have 1 VR card for the Semi-Finals. Coach will have 1 VR card for the Medal-Bouts.	**ELIMINATION WITH REPECHAGE - TEAM COMPETITION** Coach will have 1 VR card per Competitor for the Eliminations. Coach will have 1 VR card per Competitor for the Semi-Finals. Coach will have 1 VR card per Competitor for the Repechages. Coach will have 1 VR card per Competitor for the Medal-Bouts.
ELIMINATION WITH REPECHAGE - INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION Coach will have 1 VR card for the Eliminations. Coach will have 1 VR card for the Semi-Finals. Coach will have 1 VR card for the Repechages. Coach will have 1 VR card for the Medal-Bouts.	***Only 1 VR Card can be used for any individual bout***

ARTICLE 15: POWERS AND DUTIES OF OFFICIALS

15.1 Chief Referee and the Referee Commission

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

1) To ensure the correct preparation for each given tournament in consultation with the Organising Commission, with regard to competition area arrangement, the provision and deployment of all equipment and necessary facilities, bout/match operation and supervision, safety precautions, etc.
2) To appoint and deploy the Tatami Managers and Tatami Manager Assistants to their respective areas and to act upon and take such action as may be required by the reports of the Tatami Managers.
3) To supervise and coordinate the overall performance of the refereeing officials.
4) To nominate substitute officials where such are required.
5) To pass the final Judgement on matters of a technical nature which may arise during a given bout or match and for which there are no stipulations in the rules.
6) To appoint the Appeals Jury for the competition.

15.2 Tatami Managers and Tatami Manager Assistants

15.2.1 The Tatami Manager's powers and duties shall be as follows:

1) To delegate, appoint, and supervise the Referees and Judges for all bouts and 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 to them.
3) To supervise that KANSA stops the bout to instruct the Referee regarding 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 Commission.
5) To appoint one Referee with WKF **Referee A** Qualification to act as Video Review Judge. (VRJ).

15.3 Referees

15.3.1 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 bout or 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 an Athlete to continue is noticed.
5) To stop the bout when, in the Referee's opinion, a foul has been committed, or to ensure the safety of the Athletes.
6) To call FUKUSHIN SHUGO (summoning the judges) for giving SHIKKAKU and disqualification for wasting time - or when in the opinion of the Referee it is deemed necessary to call FUKUSHIN SHUGO for; applying the 10-second rule; when the doctor wants to withdraw an Athlete; or when directly giving HANSOKU.
7) To indicate fouls observed and impose warnings and penalties as required by the rules.
8) To explain to the Tatami Manager, Referee Commission, or Appeals Jury, if necessary, the basis for giving a Judgement.
9) To announce and start an extra bout when required in Team matches.

10) To conduct voting of the Judges, in the event of a tied bout, and if necessary, including their own vote (HANTEI) to break a tie.
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 Athletes, or any part of the Athletes' entourage, present on the competition floor.

15.4 Judges

15.4.1 The Judges (FUKUSHIN) powers shall be as follows:
1) To signal points scored on their own initiative.
2) To exercise their right to vote on any decision to be taken.
3) To advise the Referee on possible disqualifications if called by FUKUSHIN SHUGO.

15.4.2 The Judges shall carefully observe the actions of the Athletes and signal to the Referee an opinion when a score is observed.

15.5 Match Supervisors (KANSA)

15.5.1 The Match Supervisor (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 Match Supervisor will immediately signal by blowing their whistle.

15.5.2 Records kept of the match shall become official records subject to the approval of the Match Supervisor.

15.5.3 Before the start of each match or bout, Kansa Assistants will ensure that Athletes' equipment and Karategi are in accordance with the WKF rules of competition. In competitions where Kansa Assistant is not applicable or available, it is the responsibility of the KANSA to ensure that the equipment is in accordance with the rules before each bout.

15.5.4 In the following situations, the Match Supervisor (KANSA) will signal by blowing their 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 Athlete.
4) The Referee gives a warning/penalty to the wrong Athlete.
5) The Referee gives a score to an Athlete and a warning for exaggeration to the other.
6) The Referee gives a score to an Athlete 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 an Athlete when the Athlete is outside the fighting area.
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 gives a direct HANSOKU CHUI during ATO SHIBARAKU, but the incident happened just before ATO SHIBARAKU signal.
12) The Referee doesn't stop the bout, and there are two or more judges signalling a point scored.
13) The Referee doesn't stop the bout when a Video Review is requested by a Coach.
14) The Referee doesn't follow the majority of scores signalled by the judges.
15) The Referee doesn't call the doctor in a 10-second rule situation.
16) The Referee does HANTEI/HIKIWAKE, but SENSHU has been obtained.

17) A Judge(s) is holding the flags or electronic device in the wrong hand.
18) The scoreboard is not showing the correct information.
19) The technique requested by the Coach was done after YAME or after the time was up.
20) The Referee did not observe a JOGAI.
21) For any other unforeseen situation that reasonably requires the bout to be halted.
22) In instances where KANSA is in doubt about a verdict, KANSA has the right to check the video review recording.

15.5.5 In the following situations, the Match Supervisor 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, unless there has been an error in the application of the rules.

15.6 Score Supervisors

15.6.1 The Score Supervisor will keep a separate record of the scores and warnings awarded by the Referee and, at the same time, oversee the actions of the appointed score/time-keeper.

15.6.2 In the event that the Referee does not hear the time-up bell, the Score-Supervisor will blow his whistle, not KANSA.

ARTICLE 16: ELIGIBILITY TO COMPETE

16.1 Age

16.1.1 Allocation of age category is determined by the age of the Athlete on the first day of competition of the event.

16.1.2 In the senior Kumite categories, Athletes must be 18 years old.

16.1.3 Participants in Under 21 categories must be 18, 19 or 20 years old, Junior categories must be 16 or 17 years old, Cadet categories must be 14 or 15 years old, and Under 14 categories must be 12 or 13 years old.

16.2 NF Quota per Event

16.2.1 Each National Federation at the Cadet, Junior, & U21 World Championships, Individual World Senior Championships - ¨Final Phase¨, and the Team World Senior Championships is limited to 1 Athlete per category.

16.2.2 Specific limitations may apply at the Individual Senior World Championships - ¨Qualification Phase. ¨ If an NF already has a qualified athlete in a category of the Individual Senior World Championships - ¨Final Phase¨, they may not register another athlete for the same category in the Individual World Championships - ¨Qualification Phase.

16.2.3 Karate 1 -Events are open competitions where all WKF members are permitted to participate without restriction of 1 Athlete per NF. Notwithstanding, participants must be members of a National Federation that is recognized by the WKF.

16.2.4 Multi-sport Events like the ANOC- Beach Games, World Games, and Olympics may apply other criteria, to be defined in their respective Qualification System.

16.3 Nationality

16.3.1 With the following exceptions, only Nationals of a country may take part in the World Championships and WKF official events representing their country.

16.3.2 As a general rule, an Athlete who has represented one country in a WKF official event or World Championships cannot represent another country at an official WKF event or a World Championships.

16.3.3 Nevertheless, if an Athlete who has taken part in one of those events obtains by marriage the nationality of the spouse, they may represent the spouse’s country.

16.3.4 An Athlete who possesses dual nationality (i.e. one by virtue of the law of one country, the other by virtue of the law of another country) may only represent one or another country as the Athlete in question selects. Once having represented both countries, WKF EC approval will be necessary for a further change, following a reasoned written demand by the relevant NF to the WKF President.

16.3.5 An Athlete may represent the country of their birth and of which the Athlete is a National unless they opt to take the nationality of their father or mother.

16.3.6 A naturalized Athlete (or one who has changed their nationality by naturalization) may not participate in the World Championships representing their new country until three years after their naturalization. The period following naturalization may be reduced or even cancelled with the agreement of the two NFs concerned and the final approval of the WKF EC.

16.3.7 If an associated State, Province or Overseas Department, a Country or former Colony acquires independence, or a country incorporated within another country by reason of a change of border, or if a new NF is recognized by WKF, an Athlete may continue to represent the country to which they belong or belonged. However, they may choose to represent their new country or their new NF in the World Championships.

16.3.8 In instances where the WKF has recognized more than 1 (one) NF for which members hold the same national passport (i.e., for a country and its protectorates with separate governing national sporting bodies), the Athlete may only compete for the NF of residence, provided that has not yet competed for the other (s) NF(s) in WKF official events.

16.3.9 In order to get the transfer to another NF of which the nationals hold the same passport, it will be enough with the agreement between the 2 (two) NFs involved to confirm any change to the WKF concerning the status of an Athlete. In case of disagreement between the NFs, any change will have to be approved by the WKF EC. In this case, the Athlete, through the NF concerned, will have to prove to the WKF's satisfaction the residency in the territory governed by the other NF, or failing this, the relationship with the other NF that makes the change justifiable.

16.3.10 Once the Athlete has represented all the NFs involved, the WKF EC approval will be necessary for any further change.

ARTICLE 17: ADAPTATION OF THESE RULES TO EVENTS OUTSIDE THE WKF OFFICIAL EVENT PROGRAMME

17.1 National Federations may modify these rules for the purpose of national competitions or other competitions not on the official WKF programme, as long as no alterations are made to rules pertaining to the safety of the Athletes, use of protective equipment, scoring, prohibited behaviour, warning and penalties, injuries and accidents in competition, or criteria for decision.

17.2 National Federations are encouraged to consult their national sports authorities for guidance on national law and/or guidelines for competitive sports for children under 12 years of age.

17.3 Any deviation from the Competition Rules applied to a competition must be announced in the official bulletin or invitation to the event.

ARTICLE 18: ISSUES NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED BY THE RULES

From time to time, situations may occur where the rules fall short of giving specific instructions to resolve an issue. In such instances, the Chief Referee for the competition has the authority to resolve the issue by applying analogous resolutions to similar cases found in the rules or their best judgment. Before making a decision, the Chief Referee may consult the assigned WKF Representative for the tournament or escalate the issue to the Sports Commissioner for consultation before taking a decision.

APPENDIX 1: THE TERMINOLOGY

SHOBU HAJIME	Start the Match or Bout	After the announcement, the Referee takes a step back.
ATO SHIBARAKU	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 "Ato Shibaraku".
YAME	Stop	Interruption, or end of the bout. As they make the announcement, the Referee makes a downward chopping motion with his hand.
MOTO NO ICHI	Original position	Athletes and Referee return to their starting positions.
TSUZUKETE	Fight on	Resumption of fighting ordered after WAKARETE, when an unauthorised interruption occurs – or when the Referee gives an informal order to commence fighting due to lack of activity
TSUZUKETE HAJIME	Resume fighting – Begin	The Referee stands in a forward stance. As they says "Tsuzukete" they extend their arms, palms outwards towards the Athletes. As they says "Hajime" they turn the palms and brings them rapidly towards one another, at the same time stepping back.
FUKUSHIN SHUGO	Judges called	The Referee calls the Judges to assemble.
HANTEI	Decision	Referee calls for a decision at the end of an inconclusive bout. After a two-tone short blast of the whistle, the Judges signal their votes, and the Referee indicates the winner by raising their arm.
HIKIWAKE	Draw	In case of a tied bout, the Referee crosses his arms, then extends them with the palms showing to the front.
AKA (AO) NO KACHI	Red (Blue) wins	The Referee raises their arm on the side of the winner.
AKA (AO) IPPON	Red (Blue) scores three points	The Referee raises their arm up at 45 degrees on the side of the scorer.
AKA (AO) WAZA-ARI	Red (Blue) scores two points	The Referee extends their arm at shoulder level on the side of the scorer.
AKA (AO) YUKO	Red (Blue) scores one point	The Referee extends their arm downward at 45 degrees on the side of the scorer.
CHUI	Warning	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.
HANSOKU-CHUI	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.
HANSOKU	Disqualification	The Referee points to the face of the offender and announces a win for the opponent.
JOGAI	Exit from the competition area not caused by the opponent	The Referee points their index finger to the side of the offender to indicate that the Athlete has moved out of the area followed by the applicable warning or penalty.
SENSHU	First unopposed point advantage	After awarding the point in the regular fashion, the Referee calls "AKA (AO) SENSHU" while holding lifting their bent arm with the palm facing the Referee' s own face.
SHIKKAKU	Disqualification from the tournament	The Referee points to the face of the offender, then away from the competition area, and announces a win for the opponent.
TORIMASEN	Cancellation	A decision is annulled. The Referee crosses their hands in a downward movement.
KIKEN	Renunciation	The Referee points downwards at 45 degrees in the direction of the Athlete's or Team's side of the Tatami.
MUBOBI	Self-Endangerment	The Referee touches their face then turning their hand edge forward, moves it back and forth to indicate that the Athlete endangered himself.
WAKARETE	"Separate"	The Referee motions for the Athletes to separate from a clinch, or standing chest to chest, by separating his hands with a motion with the palms outward while giving the verbal order. The Athletes halts action and separate until receiving the order "Tsuzukete".

APPENDIX 2: GESTURES AND FLAG SIGNALS

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

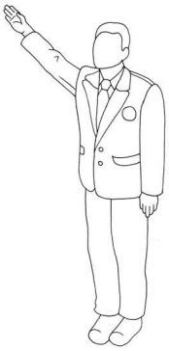
YUKO (1/2)

YUKO (2/2)

WAZA ARI (1/2)

WAZA ARI (2/2)

IPPON (1/2)



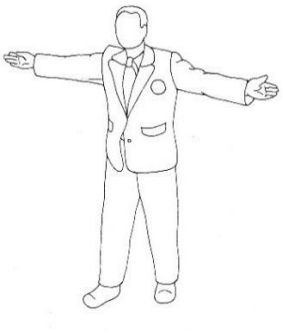
IPPON (2/2)

SENSHU

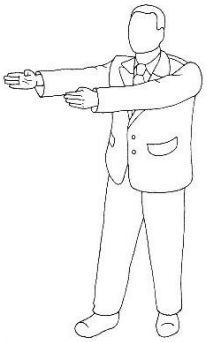
TORIMASEN (1/2) CANCELLATION

TORIMASEN (2/2) CANCELLATION

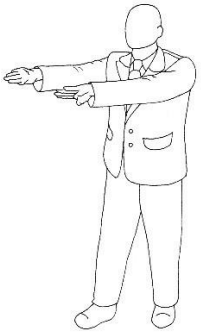
WARNINGS



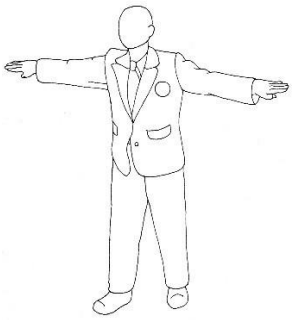
TSUZUKETE (1/2)



TSUZUKETE (2/2)



WAKARETE (1/2)



WAKARETE (2/2)

PASSIVITY (1/2)

PASSIVITY (2/2)

HARD CONTACT OR DANGEROUS THROWS

EXAGGERATING INJURY

FEIGNING INJURY

JOGAI

MUBOBI

AVOIDING COMBAT

PUSHING

GRABBING

UNCONTROLLED ATTACK

SIMULATED ATTACK (ELBOW)

SIMULATED ATTACK (HEAD)`

SIMULATED ATTACK (KNEE)

GOUDING OR TALKING

CHUI #1

CHUI #2

CHUI #3

HANSOKU CHUI (1/2)

HANSOKU CHUI (2/2)

DECISION

FUKUSHIN SHUGO (1/2)

FUKUSHIN 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)

VIDEO REVIEW SIGNALS

VIDEO REVIEW (1/4)

VIDEO REVIEW (2/4)

VIDEO REVIEW (3/4)

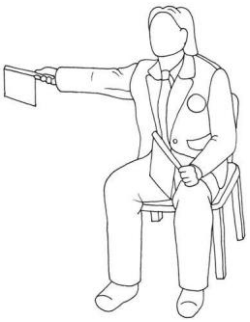
VIDEO REVIEW (4/4)

MIENAI

FLAG SIGNALS

SITTING POSITION

YUKO



WAZA ARI

IPPON

APPENDIX 3: CATEGORIES, AGE & WEIGHT DIVISIONS

Male Senior (18+ years)	- 60 kg	Female Senior (18+ years)	- 50 kg
Male Senior (18+ years)	- 67 kg	Female Senior (18+ years)	- 55 kg
Male Senior (18+ years)	- 75 kg	Female Senior (18+ years)	- 61 kg
Male Senior (18+ years)	- 84 kg	Female Senior (18+ years)	- 68 kg
Male Senior (18+ years)	+ 84 kg	Female Senior (18+ years)	+ 68 kg
Male U21 (18 to <21 years)	- 60 kg	Female U21 (18 to <21 years)	- 50 kg
Male U21 (18 to <21 years)	- 67 kg	Female U21 (18 to <21 years)	- 55 kg
Male U21 (18 to <21 years)	- 75 kg	Female U21 (18 to <21 years)	- 61 kg
Male U21 (18 to <21 years)	- 84 kg	Female U21 (18 to <21 years)	- 68 kg
Male U21 (18 to <21 years)	+ 84 kg	Female U21 (18 to <21 years)	+ 68 kg
Male Junior (16 to <18 years)	- 55 kg	Female Junior (16 to <18 years)	- 48 kg
Male Junior (16 to <18 years)	- 61 kg	Female Junior (16 to <18 years)	- 53 kg
Male Junior (16 to <18 years)	- 68 kg	Female Junior (16 to <18 years)	- 59 kg
Male Junior (16 to <18 years)	- 76 kg	Female Junior (16 to <18 years)	- 66 kg
Male Junior (16 to <18 years)	+ 76 kg	Female Junior (16 to <18 years)	+ 66 kg
Male Cadet (14 to <16 years)	- 52 kg	Female Cadet (14 to <16 years)	- 47 kg
Male Cadet (14 to <16 years)	- 57 kg	Female Cadet (14 to <16 years)	- 54 kg
Male Cadet (14 to <16 years)	- 63 kg	Female Cadet (14 to <16 years)	- 61 kg
Male Cadet (14 to <16 years)	- 70 kg	Female Cadet (14 to <16 years)	+ 61 kg
Male Cadet (14 to <16 years)	+ 70 kg		
Male U14 (12 to <14 years)	- 40 kg	Female U14 (12 to <14 years)	- 42 kg
Male U14 (12 to <14 years)	- 45 kg	Female U14 (12 to <14 years)	- 47 kg
Male U14 (12 to <14 years)	- 50 kg	Female U14 (12 to <14 years)	- 52 kg
Male U14 (12 to <14 years)	- 55 kg	Female U14 (12 to <14 years)	+ 52 kg
Male U14 (12 to <14 years)	+55 kg		

APPENDIX 4: OFFICIAL PROTEST FORM

WKF OFFICIAL PROTEST FORM

The protest must be prepaid

KUMITE

DATE	COMPETITION	PLACE
……../ ……../ ……..		CATEGORY:

COMPETITOR'S COUNTRIES	
AO	AKA
Country:	Country:

PROTEST DESCRIPTION
……
……
……
……
……
……
……
……

NAME OF COACH / NF REP.	COUNTRY	*Valid as receipt by the WKF*
SIGNATURE :		

TATAMI nr.			KANSA :		
PANEL	REFEREE	JUDGE 1	JUDGE 2	JUDGE 3	JUDGE 4
NAME					
COUNTRY					

RESPONSIBLE TM	SCORE SUPERVISOR	VR JUDGE

APPENDIX 5: TWO JUDGE SYSTEM

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 mutual responsibility for points. Flags are used by the Corner Judges for signalling.

2. In addition to showing points, the Corner Judges will assist the Referee by giving signals for JOGAI and excessive contact, but the Referee remains autonomous in applying warnings and penalties, and will only be overruled by two judges indicating the same foul.

3. Points are awarded if two Judges, or one Judge plus the Referee, agree on the score.

4. In order to be able to cover all three angles of view, the referee should never position themselves on the same side as the two Judges.

5. The Coaches should be placed in front of the Referee and not behind.

6. The Referee can show and ask for support for points that are made in their field of play. In this case, the Referee´s signals for YUKO, WAZA ARI and IPPON are the same as in the regular Kumite rules, with the exception that the Referee's elbow is touching their torso while indicating the respective signal. After the Referee has received support, the signals when giving points are the same as for bouts under regular rules.

7. If one Judge signals for a point and the other for a warning or penalty, the Referee will take the final decision by supporting one of the Judges.

8. If the two Judges, or one Judge and the Referee, show different points for the same Athletes, the higher will be given.

9. If one judge indicates a score but the Referee disagrees, the Referee will show the gesture for TORIMASEN without stopping the bout.

10. If both Judges signal a point, but for different Athletes, the Referee may award both points.

ADDITIONAL FLAG SIGNALS FOR TWO JUDGE SYSTEM

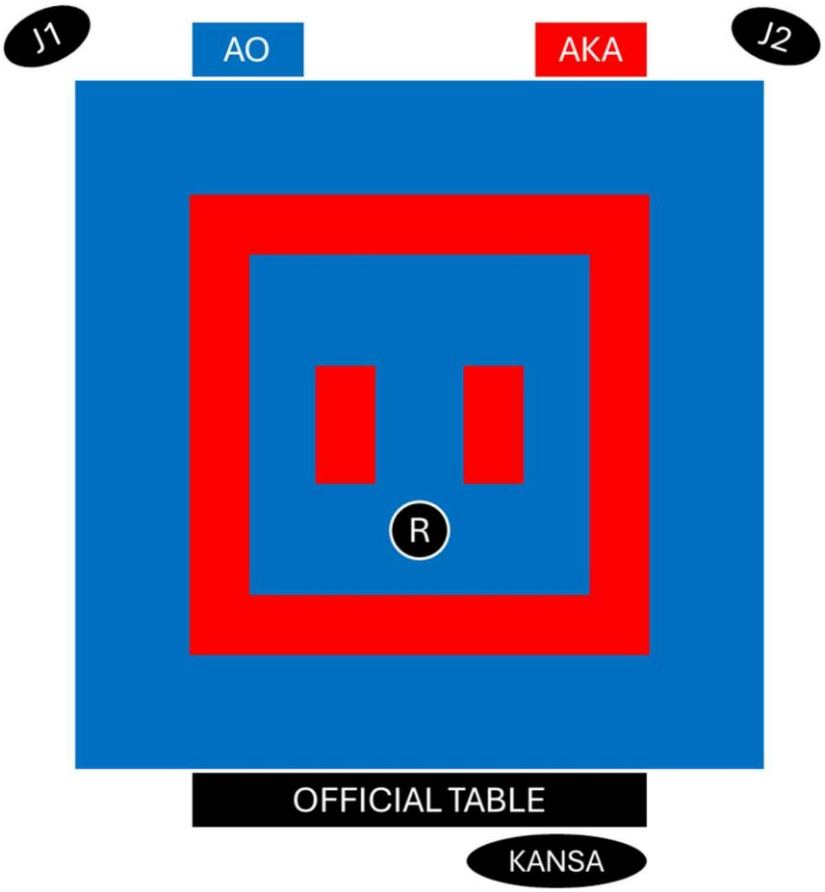
JOGAI

Tapping the floor to the side

CONTACT

Crossing the flags to the side of the face

COMPETITION AREA LAYOUT



APPENDIX 6: SUMMARY TABLE OF WINNING CRITERIA AND TIE RESOLUTION

KUMITE			
Individual		Teams	
Round-robin	Elimination	Round-robin	Elimination
Criteria for winning a bout between two individuals			
1. Most scored points	1. Most scored points	1. Most scored points	1. Most scored points
2. Senshu	2. Senshu	2. Senshu	2. Senshu
3. Highest in Ippon	3. Highest in Ippon	3. Highest in Ippon	3. Highest in Ippon
4. Highest in Waza-ari	4. Highest in Waza-ari	4. Highest in Waza-ari	4. Highest in Waza-ari
5. Draw (Hikiwake)	5. Vote by Judges (Hantei)	5. Draw (Hikiwake)	5. Draw (Hikiwake) or Hantei in the case of extra bout
Criteria for winning a team match			
		1. Most bouts won	1. Most bouts won
		2. Most scored points by team	2. Most scored points by team
		3. Draw (Hikiwake)	3. Extra bout allowing Hantei
Criteria for winning Round-robin group and resolving ties			
1. Most victory points		1. Most victory points	
2. Winner of bout between the two in the tie		2. Winner of the match between the teams in the tie	
3. Most total scored points in favor		3. Highest number of bouts won, all matches	
4. Least points scored against		4. Most total points scored in favor, all bouts	
5. Most total Ippon scored in favor		5. Least points scored against the team, all bouts	
6. Least total Ippon against		6. Most total Ippon scored in favor, all bouts	
7. Most total Waza-ari scored in favor		7. Least total Ippon against the team, all bouts	
8. Least total Waza-ari against		8. Most total Waza-ari scored in favor, all bouts	
9. Highest World Ranking		9. Least total Waza-ari against the team, all bouts	
10. Extra bout allowing Hantei		10. Extra bout allowing Hantei	
For each pair compared, the criteria must be considered from the beginning of the list.		For each pair compared, the criteria must be considered from the beginning of the list.	

By "total" is understood all points scored in all bouts of the Round-robin.

All winning criteria are listed numerically in order of precedence from the top down.

Updated 14-AUG-2026 GN