

# *U.S. Association of Martial Artists*

## *Rulebook*



*January 2026 edition*



# The US Association of Martial Artists

## RULEBOOK

The U.S. Association of Martial Artists is a member organization for martial artists of all disciplines, styles, and levels. We are founded on the principles and ideals of Grandmaster Robert A. Trias and Master James H. Hawkes.

The organization was established in 2013, by Ms. Sue Hawkes, wife of the late James H. Hawkes, at the request of, and with the blessings of, numerous highly regarded martial artists from across the country in order to preserve the vision of Master Hawkes and Grandmaster Trias. The association provides a venue for martial artists to come together to share ideas, further their knowledge through seminars, receive recognition of individual accomplishments, and to compete in a fair and safe environment.



In order to provide a standard of judging at our tournaments based on integrity and safety for all competitors, our tournament officials are offered continuous training on our rules and regulations and undergo certification classes.

Our Chief Referees are Sensei's Ron White, Steve St. Pierre, and Maria Evans. Sensei Ron White is Chairman of the Rules Committee. Our State Representatives serve on our Rules Committee as well as our Medical Director, Dr. Rick Fields, and our Points Coordinator, Sensei Cassandra Shults.

Each year, our USAMA Members submit proposed rule changes and/or additions to the rules at least 60 days prior to our World Championships (held late in the summer). There is a 30 day period during which members can comment on the proposed changes; all comments are passed on to the Rules Committee Members. At the World Championships, the Rules Committee votes on the proposed changes. Those proposals that pass become effective January 1<sup>st</sup> of the next year.

Competitor Safety is Paramount! We strive to be a leader in martial arts competitor safety. Therefore, all safety rules are rigorously enforced and only light head contact is allowed with the goal of eliminating concussions.

We strive for Safety, Fairness, & Fun!

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## Section A – General Tournament Information

1. The U.S. Association of Martial Artists (USAMA) utilizes five levels of tournament sanctions. They are:

<b>1 Star *</b>	Medals only Tournament (Not certificates)	Awards: Awards must be of good quality and commensurate to entry fee charged for competition. If not sure if awards are suitable, please contact headquarters.
<b>2 Star **</b>	Local Tournament	
<b>3 Star ***</b>	State Level Tournament	
<b>4 Star ****</b>	Multi-State Level Tournament	
<b>5 Star *****</b>	Grand Internationals, World Championships, & National Level Tournaments	

Tournaments may only be sanctioned by USAMA Gold level schools. Promoters will contact the USAMA in writing or by e-mail at least sixty day prior to the date of the proposed tournament. Tournament sanction fees are due no later than the day of the tournament. **Note: First and second time tournament promoters** must remit the sanction fee and agreement at least 60 days prior to their event.

Tournament promoters **must** obtain **tournament insurance** which includes the USAMA as additional insured. All competitor waiver forms must include the US Association of Martial Artists in the waiver.

Awards for one and two star tournament shall be given for 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> places; Awards for three – five star events shall be given for 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> places.

All Grand Champion points must be determined by a Grand Champion round of competition between all 1<sup>st</sup> place winners.

Tournament results must be submitted within 7 days of the tournament. Copies of all tournament bracket sheets and entry forms should be submitted personally to USAMA staff, by email to [info@usamartialartists.org](mailto:info@usamartialartists.org) or mailed to 3167 San Mateo Blvd NE #217, Albuquerque, NM 87110.

2. Tournament officials:
  - a. Chief Referee – a USAMA sanctioned tournament shall have current certified referee appointed as chief referee for the tournament and should be noted on the tournament flyer.
  - b. Center Referee – each ring will have a center referee who is responsible for directing the competition in the ring and insuring adherence to the USAMA rules. The center referee shall be a USAMA certified referee, unless none are available; in which case the center referee shall be a certified judge, unless none are available.
  - c. Corner judge – each ring should have four judges assist the referee for a comprised board of 5 judges. A three judge panel may only be used if there are not enough qualified judges for a five person panel, and the division is not an Adult black belt division; however, a three judge panel should be avoided if at all possible. Adult black belt divisions must have a five person panel (or more). Grand Champion rounds may utilize seven judges (or more; must be uneven number).
  - d. Timekeeper – will keep time for each match and inform the center referee when time has expired.
  - e. Scorekeeper – will write down scores for kata & kumite as well as penalties for fighting divisions.
  - f. Medical personnel – a qualified medical professional (such as physician, nurse, EMT, etc. or other licensed medical professional, as required by the tournament liability insurance policy for the event) shall be present at each tournament and will make the final decision as to the whether an injured competitor may continue.

3. All judges should wear a Navy Blue Blazer or Sport Coat, Gray dress pants or skirt with white dress shirt or, if competing, a clean martial arts uniform corresponding to their style. We appreciate your professionalism.
4. A judge may not judge a family member or significant other or ex-significant other, unless there are no other judges available.
5. Judges & Referees at 5 Star rated tournaments shall be Adult Black Belts (18 years or older.)
6. Competitors will wear a clean martial arts uniform corresponding to their style. T-shirts and sleeveless tops are not permitted.
7. Rings will be clearly marked with tape on the floor or in a similar fashion. Rings shall be square and no less than 16 feet square nor more than 24 feet square. Inside the ring, two lines will be placed in parallel fashion and maybe marked one with red tape and one with white tape for the competitors to line up. These lines will each be at least 1 meter (40 inches) apart and centered on the center point of the ring.
8. Tournament Divisions/National Point Standings Divisions (based on tournament rating)
  - a. Required divisions for 1 Star & 2 Star rated tournaments AND for the National Points Competition are:

<b>Forms</b>	<b>Sparring</b>
Black Belt Men Forms	Black Belt Men Sparring
Black Belt Women Forms	Black Belt Women Sparring
Brown Belt Men Forms	Brown Belt Men Sparring
Brown Belt Women Forms	Brown Belt Women Sparring
Senior Kyu Men Forms	Senior Kyu Men Sparring
Senior Kyu Women Forms	Senior Kyu Women Sparring
Colored Belt Men Forms	Colored Belt Men Sparring
Colored Belt Women Forms	Colored Belt Women Sparring
Novice Men Forms	Novice Men Sparring
Novice Women Forms	Novice Women Sparring
16 – 17 yr. Forms Beg. & Adv.	16 - 17 yr. Men Sparring Beg. & Adv.
14 - 15 yr. Forms Beg. & Adv.	16 - 17 yr. Women Sparring Beg. & Adv.
12 - 13 yr. Forms Beg., Int., & Adv.	14 - 15 yr. Boys Sparring Beg. & Adv.
10 - 11 yr. Forms Beg., Int., & Adv.	14 - 15 yr. Girls Sparring Beg. & Adv.
8 - 9 yr. Forms Beg., Int., & Adv.	12 - 13 yr. Boys Sparring Beg., Int., & Adv.
6 - 7 yr. Forms Beg. & Adv.	12 - 13 yr. Girls Sparring Beg., Int., & Adv.
5 & under Forms	10 - 11 yr. Boys Sparring Beg., Int., & Adv.
<b>Weapons</b>	10 - 11 yr. Girls Sparring Beg., Int., & Adv.
Black Belt Men Weapons	8 - 9 yr. Boys Sparring Beg. & Adv.
Black Belt Women Weapons	8 - 9 yr. Girls Sparring Beg. & Adv.
Adult Kyu Weapons	6 -7 yr. Sparring Beg. & Adv.
14 – 17 yr. Weapons Beg, Int & Adv	5 & under Sparring
10 - 13 yr. Weapons Beg, Int & Adv	
9 yrs. & under Weapons Beg & Adv	

b. Required divisions for all 3, 4, & 5 Star rated tournaments:

<b>Forms</b>	<b>Sparring</b>
Black Belt Men Forms	Black Belt Men Sparring
Black Belt Women Forms	Black Belt Women Sparring
Brown Belt Men Forms	Brown Belt Men Sparring
Brown Belt Women Forms	Brown Belt Women Sparring
Senior Kyu Men Forms	Senior Kyu Men Sparring
Senior Kyu Women Forms	Senior Kyu Women Sparring
Colored Belt Men Forms	Colored Belt Men Sparring
Colored Belt Women Forms	Colored Belt Women Sparring
Novice Men Forms	Novice Men Sparring
Novice Women Forms	Novice Women Sparring
16 – 17 yr. Forms Beg., <b><u>Int.</u></b> & Adv.	16 - 17 yr. Men Sparring Beg. <b><u>Int.</u></b> & Adv.
14 - 15 yr. Forms Beg., <b><u>Int.</u></b> & Adv.	16 - 17 yr. Women Sparring Beg. <b><u>Int.</u></b> & Adv.
12 - 13 yr. Forms Beg., Int., & Adv.	14 - 15 yr. Boys Sparring Beg. <b><u>Int.</u></b> & Adv.
10 - 11 yr. Forms Beg., Int., & Adv.	14 - 15 yr. Girls Sparring Beg. <b><u>Int.</u></b> & Adv.
8 - 9 yr. Forms Beg., Int., & Adv.	12 - 13 yr. Boys Sparring Beg., Int., & Adv.
6 - 7 yr. Forms Beg., & Adv.	12 - 13 yr. Girls Sparring Beg., Int., & Adv.
5 & under Forms	10 - 11 yr. Boys Sparring Beg., Int., & Adv.
<b>Weapons</b>	10 - 11 yr. Girls Sparring Beg., Int., & Adv.
Black Belt Men Weapons	8 - 9 yr. Boys Sparring Beg. & Adv.
Black Belt Women Weapons	8 - 9 yr. Girls Sparring Beg. & Adv.
Adult Kyu Weapons	6 - 7 yr. Sparring Beg. & Adv.
14 – 17 yr. Weapons, <b><u>Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.</u></b>	5 & under Sparring
10 - 13 yr. Weapons, <b><u>Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.</u></b>	
9 yrs. & under Weapons, <b><u>Beg. &amp; Adv.</u></b>	

9. The above divisions are the minimum required divisions to be offered at US Association of Martial Artists Sanctioned Tournaments. A promoter may offer more divisions provided that there is a minimum of three competitors in the required division and the additional division.
- A division may be split at the tournament promoter's discretion, however, there must be a minimum of 3 competitors in each division that results from the split. Criteria that may be used to split a division include, but are not limited to, age, rank, gender, martial arts experience time, etc.
  - Beginning divisions are comprised of students who are a 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> kyu, gup, kup or grade in their system (based on a 10 kyu system) or have been continuously training for 1.5 years or less, whichever is more restrictive.
  - Intermediate divisions are comprised of students who are a 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup> kyu, gup, kup or grade in their system or who have been continuously training 1.5 – 4 years, whichever is most restrictive.
  - Advanced divisions are comprised of students who are a 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup> kyu, gup, kup or grade in their system or who have been continuously training for more than 4 years.

- e. If no intermediate division is offered, beginning divisions remain as stated above; advanced division is comprised of competitors who are 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 1<sup>st</sup> kyu, kup, gup or grade in their system (in other words, those competitors who would have competed in an intermediate division, had one been offered, will compete in the advanced division.)
10. Grand Champion competition may be held at the tournament promoter’s discretion. All first place winners of a particular event will compete against each other based on age/rank divisions as designated by the promoter. For adult black belts, there should be a grand champion round for kata, men’s kumite and women’s kumite. There may also be an adult kyu kata grand champion and youth kata grand champion. Youth Grand Champion should be further divided by rank; intermediate/advanced may be combined for Grand Champion only. Similarly, Weapons Grand Champion rounds may also be held. Weapons will not be used in kata Grand Champion rounds.
  11. All competitors must compete in the division that corresponds to their age/rank on the day of the tournament. For a multiple day event, the competitor’s age on the first day of the tournament will be the age division he/she will compete in for the entire tournament.

## **Section B – National Points Competition**

1. The U.S. Association of Martial Artists (USAMA) offers its’ competitors the opportunity to participate in a National Points Competition. In the USAMA National Points Competition, a competitor earns points for placing first, second, or third (and sometimes fourth) at USAMA-sanctioned tournaments in the events included in our National Points Competition. The USAMA’s National Point year runs January 1 – December 15<sup>th</sup> of each calendar year. Awards for the National Points Competition are presented at the Annual Awards Banquet during our Grand Nationals Tournament & Annual Seminars held each Spring. The top 10 competitors in each division are recognized, and the top 3 receive an award.
2. Point values for each tournament level are as follows:

USAMA-Sanction:	1 Star *	2 Stars **	3 Stars ***	4 Stars ****	5 Stars *****
1st Place	10	20	25	30	40
2nd Place	7	15	20	25	30
3rd Place	5	10	15	20	20
4th Place	0	0	5	7	10
Grand Champion	3	5	5	5	10

3. In the National Points Competition, a competitor will compile points in the division in which they first placed during the point year. If the competitor moves up a division due to rank or age, he/she will move up and compete in the new appropriate age/rank division, however, any points won in the new age/rank division will automatically continue to accrue in the lower age/rank division in which the competitor first placed during the point year. A competitor may elect to move up to the new age/rank division for national points, however, all points earned in the lower

age/rank division for the point year will be forfeited and only points earned in the new higher age/rank division will be counted. A competitor must elect make this election in writing to headquarters.

4. Current National Points standings may be found on the USAMA website at [www.usamartialartists.org](http://www.usamartialartists.org). Inquiries may be emailed to [points@usamartialartists.org](mailto:points@usamartialartists.org) or sent via regular mail.
5. USAMA National Points Divisions:

<p><b>Forms</b></p> <p>Black Belt Men Forms          Black Belt Women Forms          Brown Belt Men Forms          Brown Belt Women Forms          Senior Kyu Men Forms          Senior Kyu Women Forms          Colored Belt Men Forms          Colored Belt Women Forms          Novice Men Forms          Novice Women Forms          16 – 17 yr. Forms Beg. &amp; Adv.          14 - 15 yr. Forms Beg. &amp; Adv.          12 - 13 yr. Forms Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.          10 - 11 yr. Forms Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.          8 - 9 yr. Forms Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.          6 - 7 yr. Forms Beg. &amp; Adv.          5 &amp; under Forms</p> <p><b>Weapons</b></p> <p>Black Belt Men Weapons          Black Belt Women Weapons          Adult Kyu Weapons          14 – 17 yr. Weapons Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.          10 - 13 yr. Weapons Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.          9 yrs. &amp; under Weapons Beg. &amp; Adv.</p> <p><b>Chanbara</b></p> <p>Adult Black Belt Chanbara          Adult Kyu Chanbara          14-17 yr. Boys Chanbara          14-17 yr. Girls Chanbara          10-13 yr. Boys Chanbara          10-13 yr. Girls Chanbara          8-9 yr. Chanbara          7 &amp; under Chanbara</p>	<p><b>Sparring</b></p> <p>Black Belt Men Sparring          Black Belt Women Sparring          Brown Belt Men Sparring          Brown Belt Women Sparring          Senior Kyu Men Sparring          Senior Kyu Women Sparring          Colored Belt Men Sparring          Colored Belt Women Sparring          Novice Men Sparring          Novice Women Sparring          16 - 17 yr. Men Sparring Beg. &amp; Adv.          16 - 17 yr. Women Sparring Beg. &amp; Adv.          14 - 15 yr. Boys Sparring Beg. &amp; Adv.          14 - 15 yr. Girls Sparring Beg. &amp; Adv.          12 - 13 yr. Boys Sparring Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.          12 - 13 yr. Girls Sparring Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.          10 - 11 yr. Boys Sparring Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.          10 - 11 yr. Girls Sparring Beg., Int., &amp; Adv.          8 - 9 yr. Boys Sparring Beg. &amp; Adv.          8 - 9 yr. Girls Sparring Beg. &amp; Adv.          6 -7 yr. Sparring Beg. &amp; Adv.          5 &amp; under Sparring</p> <p><b>Take Down Sparring</b></p> <p>Adult Men TDS          Adult Women TDS          14-17 yr. TDS          10-13 yr. TDS          9 &amp; under TDS</p> <p><b>Koshiki</b></p> <p>Adult Koshiki          Youth Koshiki</p>
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6. The following points divisions are not required - These events may be held at the Promoter's Discretion. If a promoter chooses to hold any of these events, the following list is the minimum divisions which must be offered in order for competitor's points to count. A promoter may offer more divisions provided that there is a minimum of three competitors in the required division and the additional division.

**Koshiki** - Adult & Youth

**Chanbara** – Adult Black Belt, Adult Kyu & Youth (14-17) Boys, (14-17) Girls, (10-13) Boys, (10-13) Girls, (8-9) & (7 & under)

**Take Down Sparring** – Adult Men, Adult Women; Youth (14-17), (10-13) & (9 & under)

7. Ties will be broken by using the following calculations in the event in which the tie has occurred:
  1. Total 1st place points at five star tournaments
  2. Total points at five star tournaments
  3. Total 1st place points at four star tournaments
  4. Total 1st place points at three star tournaments
  5. Total 1st place points at two star tournaments.
  6. If after all 5 tie breakers are utilized, they are still tied, it will remain a tie.

### **Section C –Forms (Kata)**

1. Forms are judged considering the following elements: balance, focus, power, consistency, transition, and intensity.
2. Competitor's forms will be varied in their styles. Judges must be careful Not to compare a competitor's form to the way "you, the judge" does the form. Different schools and styles perform the same form in different ways. Judge the Competitor's Presentation.
3. Judging Panels shall be comprised of an odd number of judges. It is recommended at least five judges be used, however, if there are not enough qualified judges, three may be used except for Adult black belt divisions. For Grand Champion rounds, at least **five judges must be used**, but a promoter may choose to use seven or nine judges.
4. Judging panels should be comprised of judges from different schools and styles and be as varied as possible. Optimally, there should be no more than one judge from a school or instructor on a judging panel, if possible.
5. A ten point scoring system with decimal points shall be utilized. The center referee will decide the scoring range for each division and should be a full point such as 7.00 to 7.99. Two decimal places should be utilized. No judges shall score outside the range given by the center referee.
6. Judges will all score simultaneously when the score is called for by the center referee. If there are four or more competitors in a division, the judges should watch the first three forms before scoring any of the competitors. The first three competitors scores should be separated sufficiently so that the remaining competitors left to compete can be placed anywhere between the competitors, before the highest score, or below the lowest score.
7. Competition order will be determined by the "luck of the draw". (Defending Grand Champions may be seeded into competition at the tournament promoter's discretion.) Late competitors will

compete first. If the division has begun, the late competitor will be the next to compete, provided less than 50% of the competitors in the division have competed. If more than 50% of the competitors have already competed, the division is closed and the competitor will not be allowed to compete.

8. When the judging panel is comprised of five or more judges, the high and the low score shall be dropped. The scorekeeper shall draw a single line through these scores. The remaining scores will then be added together. When the judging panel is comprised of three judges, all three scores are added together.
9. If, after the scores have been computed, there is a tie, the competitors who have tied will be required to perform another form. Beginning students may perform the same form or a different form of their choosing; intermediate and advanced students are required to perform a different form of their choosing and will be penalized for not doing so.

### **Section D – Weapons (Kobudo)**

1. All procedures previously described for forms competition will be utilized for weapons competition.
2. Authentic weapons should be utilized for competition. All weapons to be used in competition will be inspected by the judging panels, primarily for safety, prior to the beginning of the division. If the judging panel deems a weapon is unsafe, the competitor will not be allowed to use it in competition.

### **Section E – Sparring (Kumite)**

1. Kumite –General information
  - a. All kumite matches will be 2 minutes, running time except for team sparring in which each team member's match will be one minute, running time, in length.
  - b. All matches will go to 5 points, except for team sparring in which each team tries to score as many points as possible.
  - c. Competition is single elimination and will utilize a bye system. Matches will be determined by the "luck of the draw". Competitors from the same school or team, will be separated in the first round, if possible, and should be separated as often as possible. Out of state competitors from the same state will be treated the same as teammates. (Promoters may elect to make the Adult Black Belt Divisions double elimination, but it must be so advertised in their tournament flyer)
  - d. If there are 3 competitors, a modified bye system will be utilized. (See Appendix H for Sample.)

- e. Late competitors may be added to the division, provided the first round has not yet been completed. Once the first round is completed, the division is closed and a late competitor will not be allowed to compete.
- f. Protective equipment is required. A mouthpiece, Soft dipped foam or USNKF (or similar) headgear, hand gear and foot gear are required. Ringstar shoes are not allowed. Groin protection is required for all male competitors. Shin guards are not required, however if they are utilized, they must be soft dipped foam, cloth or similar; hard plastic shin guards are not allowed.
- g. **No** regular eyeglasses are allowed for the safety of the competitor. (safety glasses only) Casts, metal or hard plastic braces etc. are not allowed. All medical braces or wraps must be approved by the medical personnel and chief referee.
- h. Competitors will bow to the center referee and to each other prior to, and at the conclusion of the match.
- i. The center referee will start the match and when appropriate call stop when the center or one of the corner judges sees a point score or rule infraction.

## 2. Kumite - scoring

- a. To score a point, a competitor must execute a controlled punch or kick to a scoring area. Scoring areas are: Head (excluding top of head), face (adult brown and black belts may lightly touch the face; all youth competitors and adult competitors below the rank of brown belt may score to the face, provided there is no contact), sides of the neck (throat and back of neck are not allowed) chest, abdomen, back (excluding shoulders and spine) and groin.
- b. To score a point, a competitor must get a majority of flags
- c. Foot sweeps are allowed but do not in themselves score a point. They must be boot to boot, and are only allowed to the back of the front foot of the person being swept. The competitor must control the person being swept to the ground and follow up with a scoring technique within 3 seconds. The person on the ground may also score with an effective technique.
- d. Grabbing the foot, arm or uniform with purpose is allowed, however it must be followed up with an effective scoring technique. If a competitor goes to the ground, both the standing competitor, as well as the competitor on the ground, have the option of scoring. If neither have scored and the competitor remains on the ground after 3 seconds, the center referee will stop the match and reset the competitors.
- e. The competitor throwing the technique is responsible for its control and contact. All techniques thrown must have pull back. Competitor must maintain control of distance, timing, and force of technique. Techniques deemed wild, blind, excessive, or uncontrolled by referee/judges will result in a penalty.

- f. If, after time has expired the score is tied, the match will continue until the first point is scored, which will determine the winner.

3. Kumite – illegal techniques and penalties

- a. Illegal techniques include, but are not limited to: strikes to legs, joints, throat or spine, elbow or knee strikes, head butting, choking; any technique which causes redness, swelling, bruising, laceration, bleeding, unconsciousness, rocking of the head, blind techniques, any technique that involves excessive contact or is thrown with bad intent; or unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to: disrespectful behavior by the competitor, coach or relative directed at an opponent, judge or other official.
- c. If a competitor wins due to a disqualification for excessive force, the injured competitor must be cleared by medical personnel in order to continue to compete.
- d. A competitor who is disqualified in a fighting event may not be allowed to compete in any further fighting events for the remainder tournament (or that day, if multi-day event) if the DQ is for unsportsmanlike behavior or being grossly out of control or wild. The Chief Referee will make that determination after reviewing the incident with the center referee of the match in which the DQ occurred. If the competitor was fighting for 1st/2nd or 3rd/4th place, he/she is still awarded the place he/she has earned as the loser of the fight, i.e. if the competitor fighting for 1st/2nd or 3rd/4th place, the disqualified competitor is the loser and is awarded 2nd or 4th place respectively.
- e. If a competitor is disqualified in the same event twice in any six month period, it will be reviewed by the rules and referee committee and the competitor may be suspended for a period of time to be determined by the rules committee.
- f. All rule infractions (except out of bounds) are one category. Penalty sanctions include warning, penalty point and disqualification. Penalties may start at any level (if the first infraction is severe enough, the judges may start at penalty point or disqualification) however, penalties always escalate from the level at which they started. In order to impose a penalty sanction, a majority of the judges must agree that the penalty occurred and on which sanction will be imposed. This will be determined during a brief conference of the judges, during which, “stop time” is called. Malicious/unsportsmanlike behavior will be taken into consideration by the judges when deciding a sanction and may result in a more severe penalty being assessed.
- g. Rocking of the head will result in **at least a one point penalty**. Blood, bruising, swelling, unconsciousness etc. will result in an automatic disqualification. If blood is discovered after the conclusion of a match, but prior to the start of the next match (or the award of trophies if it were the last match of the division), the judges will meet again. If the judging panel determines that the blood was due to contact during the match, the other competitor will be disqualified.

- h. Any injury not caused by an opponent (i.e. the competitor slips and falls down when contact is not being made) will not result in a penalty.
- i. Out of bounds – is a penalty that accumulates separately from other rules infractions. If the competitor is “fighting out,” i.e. contact is being made, when a competitor goes out of bounds, there is no infraction. If it is not “fighting out,” it is an infraction and the first time this occurs a warning will be issued. All subsequent infractions in which no contact is being made will result in a penalty point being awarded to the other competitor. Out of bounds penalties do not escalate to disqualification.

## **Section F - Team Sparring**

1. Team sparring follows the same guidelines as individual sparring except for the amount of time, points, and number of team members.
2. Team Members - The number of members on each team shall be determined by the promoter. If teams consist of a mix of males and females, 8 yr olds and up must be paired with a competitor of the same sex.
3. Points - The criteria for a point is the same as individual sparring, however, a competitor may score as many points as possible within their allotted time. If, after all team members have competed, the score is tied, then each team shall send out one competitor to break the tie. The team who scores the first point will break the tie and win.
4. Penalties - Penalties are enforced in the same way as in individual sparring with the exception of disqualification. If a competitor is disqualified, then the points the disqualified member scored are removed, and two points are added to the opposing team score.
5. Match - Each round of team sparring shall be one minute in duration.

## **Section G - Take Down Sparring (TDS)**

Take Down Sparring (TDS) is a combination of Karate, Kickboxing, Judo, Jiu Jitsu and submission Grappling techniques allowing the competitor to showcase a multitude of skillsets in a sparring/grappling match.

### **Gear**

Competitors must wear headgear, open fingered padded grappling gloves, shin guards, groin cup (males), sport bras (females) and mouthpiece. No torn or worn equipment may be used as it may cause injury. If headgear comes off while on ground fighting, the headgear may stay off until they stand up or break is called.

### **Attire**

Competitors may wear contact pants, yoga pants, mid-thigh shorts, or fight shorts (MMA, Muay Thai, Boxing) with rash guard or T-shirt or a full martial arts uniform.

## Targets

Target areas are below the neck, and include the **mid-section** (chest and abdomen), and the **kidney area** (excluding spine and shoulder blades). Kicks to the legs are allowed, but not to the groin. Punches are allowed when grappling and during clinches, but must be below the neck.

## Prohibited Areas

The head, groin, and throat are **Not** targets. Strikes are not allowed to the joints.

## Penalties

**1. Illegal techniques** include, but are not limited to:

\*Grabbing of apparel (rash guard, spandex, shorts), face-shield, headgear, or gloves

(Grabbing opponent's Gi top is allowed)

\*Groin shots, elbows and knee strikes

\*Open hand techniques; hand strikes must be made with a closed fist. (No palm heel strikes)

\*Kicks to the neck or spine

\*Strikes to joints

\*Blind techniques

\*Neck cranks or slamming opponent

\*Rocking of the head (Immediate penalty or disqualification will result depending upon the severity)

\*Techniques thrown with bad intentions, maliciousness, excessiveness, or out of control are not allowed. (Warning, penalty, or disqualification will result depending upon the severity.)

**2.** Kicks are Not allowed to a downed opponent nor are up-kicks allowed by a downed opponent. A downed opponent may only use their legs to push their opponent for defense.

**3.** Good sportsmanship must be upheld inside and outside of the ring. If there is any unsportsmanlike behavior, a competitor may be disqualified and/or asked to leave the event.

**4.** Coaching a competitor is Not allowed.

## Scoring

Competitor is judged on striking, take downs, and grappling. Domination of the round by technical and tactical superiority is also considered by the judges.

## Center Referee

Only the Center Referee may start or stop time, even if a competitor's gear malfunctions. The Center Referee will stop the fight at the end of the round, if submission is in a locked-in position, if a competitor "taps out," if a competitor is at risk of injury, or because of unanswered punches. Competitors are asked to "Tap out" at any time during the match if needed for safety. The Center Referee's decision must be accepted and respected for the safety of the competitor.

## Matches

There will be **two** - 1 minute rounds with a 30-second break in between rounds. After each round, the center referee and the corner judges will hold up the flag for the competitor they feel dominated that round, unless the winner of that round was declared by a "Tap out" or "lock out." If, after two rounds, there is a tie, there will be a 30-second overtime round. At the end of that round, the center referee and corner judges will hold up the flag for the competitor they feel dominated that overtime round and declare a winner. "Tap outs" and "lock outs" also end that round just like the previous rounds and decide a winner.

## **Section H – Chanbara**

Chanbara competition involves combat with weapons made of the new piston-flex plastic with cushioned padding covering the striking surface. The Chanbara matches at this event will be with the sword (provided). Helmets will also be provided. The first competitor to reach five points shall be declared the winner.

### **Targets**

Target areas are:

- A. Men – the head and face
- B. Kote – the arm from the wrist up to the shoulder
- C. Do – the trunk of the body, chest and stomach
- D. Ashi – the area of the ankle to the hip
- E. Kata – the area from the neck to the shoulder
- F. Tsuki – thrust or stab (the scoring area for a stab is the Do and the Men) (No points for stabbing arms and legs) – Sword must bend to be an acceptable point

**Out of bounds** – Out of bounds is called when BOTH feet are out of bounds

### **Penalties:**

- A. Penalty sanctions are: warning, ½ point penalty, one point penalty
- B. Dropping weapons is automatic one point penalty

## **Section I - Koshiki**

A competitor may score with hands, feet, elbows (except to the head), or knees. At the end of two minutes, whichever competitor has the most points wins.

### **Gear**

Headgear and Chest Protector will be provided. Approved gloves are allowed and may be provided.

### **Points**

Two points will be awarded for a properly executed, scoring kick to the head. All other properly executed, scoring techniques will be awarded one point.

### **7 year olds & under All Belts (Boys & Girls)**

Full contact to the chest protector.

No sweeping or projections allowed.

Control to the head allowed; but No Contact.

### **8 year olds and up Beginners Youth and Adults (Boys & Girls)**

Light contact to the bubble (headgear)

Full contact to the chest protector

No sweeping or throws allowed.

### **8 year olds and up Intermediate Youth and Adults (Boys & Girls)**

Moderate contact to the bubble (headgear). Same contact as defined in the rules for the Black Belt.

Full contact to the chest protector

Sweep and throws allowed on the mats.

### **For advanced (Brown and Black Belt) Youth and Adults (Boys & Girls)**

See rules in Koshiki Panamerica website: <http://www.koshikipanam.com/spip.php?article26&lang=fr>



# U.S. Association of Martial Artists



## Appendix A

### Summary of Rules

#### Forms (Kata)

Forms are judged considering the following elements: balance, focus, power, consistency, transition, and intensity. Competitor's forms will be varied in their styles. Judges must be careful **not** to compare a competitor's form to the way "you, the judge" does the form. Different schools and styles perform the same form in different ways. Judge the Competitor's Presentation.

#### **Judging Panels**

Forms judging panels shall be comprised of an odd number of judges. A ten point scoring system with decimal points shall be utilized. Judges will all score simultaneously when the score is called for by the center referee. When the judging panel is comprised of 5 or more judges, the high and the low score shall be dropped. The remaining scores will then be added together for a total score to determine placements. If after the scores have been computed there is a tie, the competitors who have tied will be required to perform an additional form. Beginning students may perform the same form; intermediate and advanced students are required to perform a different form and will be penalized for not doing so.

#### Individual Point Sparring (Kumite)

Point sparring is an artful game of tag consisting of techniques which have the potential of doing damage or being devastating to the opponent, but have been executed with control to a point target. The competitor throwing the technique is responsible for its control and contact. All techniques thrown must have pull back. Competitor must maintain control of distance, timing and force of technique. Techniques deemed wild, blind, excessive, or uncontrolled by referee/judges will result in a penalty.

#### **Gear**

Proper sparring gear must be worn. This includes dipped foam (or similar) head gear, hand gear, foot gear; mouthpiece, and groin protection for males. Please see more details on gear in Rule Book.

#### **Targets**

Target areas are head (excluding top of head), mid-section (chest and abdomen), groin, kidney area (excluding spine and shoulder blades). The face may not be touched by 17 year olds and under or by adults under the rank of brown belt. Adult brown and black belts may touch the face. No rocking of the head. Rocking of the head, bruising, bleeding, and excessive contact, even to the body, may be cause for disqualification.

#### **Points**

Points are earned by a competitor executing a proper hand or foot technique which lands in a controlled manner to one of the target areas listed above. When multiple techniques are being thrown, it is the first technique which lands on a target area which is scored. A majority of judges in the ring must have seen the score, and raised their flag for a score in order for the point to be awarded.

#### **Penalties**

There are three levels of penalties; Warning, Point Awarded, and Disqualification. Infractions of contact rules and unsportsmanlike conduct are subject to the above penalties depending on the severity of the

infraction. Exception: Rocking of the head is an automatic one point penalty. Additionally, these penalties escalate with each infraction incurred for that competitor during their match. A competitor may be disqualified on the very first infraction if it is warranted by the severity.

Out of bounds is a separate type of penalty and does not escalate with the others. Fighting out (making contact) is not a penalty. The competitors are just brought back to the center of the ring and the match is continued. If a competitor steps out of bounds without fighting out, then the first time is a warning, the second time is a point for the other competitor, and the third time is another point and so on for each infraction thereafter.

### **Matches**

Matches are two minutes in duration or the first to five points. If at the end of two minutes, the competitors are tied, then the next one to score, wins.

### **Weapons (Kobudo)**

All procedures previously described for forms competition will be utilized for weapons competition. Authentic weapons should be utilized for competition. All weapons to be used in competition will be inspected by the judging panels, primarily for safety, prior to the beginning of the division. If the judging panel deems a weapon is unsafe, the competitor will not be allowed to use it in competition.

### **Team Sparring**

Team sparring follows the same guidelines as individual sparring except for the amount of time, points, and number of team members.

### **Team Members**

The number of members on each team shall be determined by the promoter.

### **Points**

The criteria for a point is the same as individual sparring, however, a competitor may score as many points as possible within their allotted time. If, after all team members have competed, the score is tied, then each team shall send out one competitor to break the tie. The team who scores the first point will break the tie and win.

### **Penalties**

Penalties are enforced in the same way as in individual sparring with the exception of disqualification. If a competitor is disqualified, then the points the disqualified member scored are removed, and two points are added to the opposing team score.

### **Match**

Each round of team sparring shall be one minute in duration.

### **Take Down Sparring (TDS)**

Take Down Sparring (TDS) is a combination of Karate, Kickboxing, Judo, Jiu Jitsu and submission Grappling techniques allowing the competitor to showcase a multitude of skillsets in a sparring/grappling match.

### **Gear**

Competitors must wear headgear, open fingered padded grappling gloves, shin guards, groin cup (males), sport bras (females) and mouthpiece. No torn or worn equipment may be used as it may cause injury. If

headgear comes off while on ground fighting, the headgear may stay off until they stand up or a break is called.

### **Attire**

Competitors may wear contact pants, yoga pants, mid-thigh shorts, or fight shorts (MMA, Muay Thai, Boxing) with rash guard or T-shirt or a full martial arts uniform.

### **Targets**

Target areas are below the neck, and include the **mid-section** (chest and abdomen), and the **kidney area** (excluding spine and shoulder blades). Kicks to the legs are allowed, but not to the groin. Punches are allowed when grappling and during clinches, but must be below the neck.

### **Prohibited Areas**

The head, groin, and throat are **Not** targets. Strikes are not allowed to the joints.

### **Penalties**

1. **Illegal techniques** include, but are not limited to:
  - \*Grabbing of apparel (rash guard, spandex, shorts), face-shield, headgear, or gloves (Grabbing opponent's Gi top is allowed)
  - \*Groin shots, elbows and knee strikes
  - \*Open hand techniques; hand strikes must be made with a closed fist. (No palm heel strikes)
  - \*Kicks to the neck or spine
  - \*Strikes to joints
  - \*Blind techniques
  - \*Neck cranks or slamming opponent
  - \*Rocking of the head (Immediate penalty or disqualification will result depending upon the severity)
  - \*Techniques thrown with bad intentions, maliciousness, excessiveness, or out of control are not allowed. (Warning, penalty, or disqualification will result depending upon the severity.)
2. Kicks are Not allowed to a downed opponent nor are up-kicks allowed by a downed opponent. A downed opponent may only use their legs to push their opponent for defense.
3. Good sportsmanship must be upheld inside and outside of the ring. If there is any unsportsmanlike behavior, a competitor may be disqualified and/or asked to leave the event.
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- E. Kata – the area from the neck to the shoulder
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Full contact to the chest protector

No sweeping or throws allowed.

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Full contact to the chest protector

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