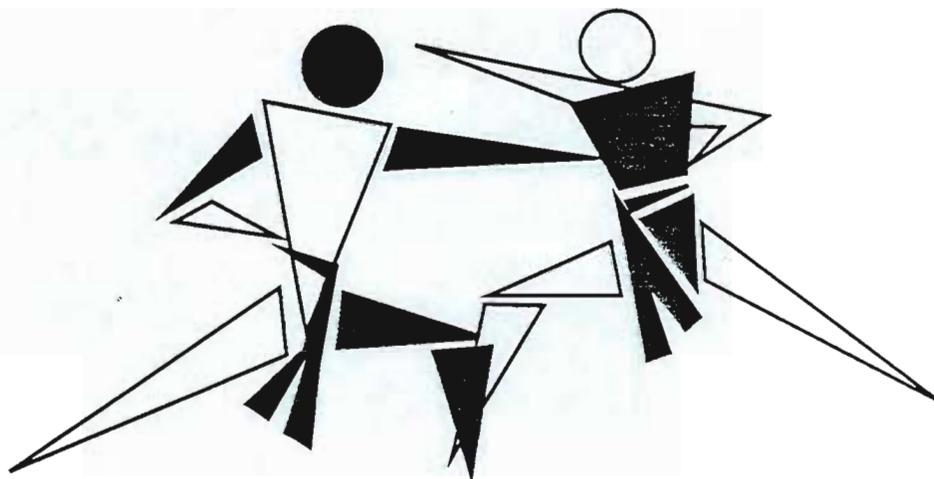


# The USA Karate Federation

## *Kumite Referee Course Notebook*



Published by: The USA Karate Federation  
1300 Kenmore Boulevard, Akron, Ohio 44314

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Member USOC

## GENERAL REFEREE COURSE GOALS

### 1 CONCEPTS EXPLANATIONS

#### A The 10 most grievous errors

Injuries in match  
Poor ring control and signals  
Incorrect use of arbitrator  
Incorrect calling of yame  
Cutting off the jogais  
Poor ability to see points  
Sloppy dress and deportment  
Poor positioning  
Bad judgement  
Doesn't understand charting

#### B The 10 marks of a superior referee

The correct person wins  
Fair and impartial  
Independent, not intimidated  
Maintains endurance  
No body language before judgement  
Proper deportment  
Knows the rules  
Technically proficient  
Constantly learning  
Properly executed calls and signals

#### C Explain:

MIAI, ZANSHIN, ATEMI, KIME

### 2 RULES

As printed, Oral precision, Seminar notes

### 3 RING OPERATIONS

Procedures, Floor positioning, Hand signals

### 4 TESTING

Kumite  
Practical, Written, Performance  
Kata  
Performance of kata, Judgement test

### 5 RING OPERATION METHODS

Reason for the standing courtesies  
Rational for the use of the mirror system  
How to take the PUKO and WUKO tests

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# NATIONAL USAKF REFEREE COURSE NOTEBOOK

## FOR USA KARATE REFEREES

Compiled by Patrick M.Hickey  
Edited by George E.Anderson  
Approved by USAKF Referee Council Chairman,Julius Thiry

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**The USA Karate Federation**

Published by USA Karate of Ohio Akron,Ohio,October,1987



## KARATE-A RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONAL SPORT

Karate is recognized as an international sport by both the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and by the General Assembly of International Sports Federations (GAISF). There have been 8 officially recognized international karate championships held since 1970, two World Games, numerous World Cup competitions, including international collegiate and junior competitions. Efforts are now being made to place karate on the Olympic Program as a demonstration sport, possibly in 1996.

In the early 1950's, universities in Japan began to hold karate competitions and rules were created so that one could compete in karate without injury. The karate which consequently developed in the universities, became a "sport" and somewhat distanced from the concepts of a martial arts.

Karate has spread rapidly among young people as a sport for improving body strength, among adults as a life enhancing exercise and also has achieved popularity with women as a method for staying trim and fit. Karate has spread across the world and has become common property of mankind everywhere. Because of its universality karate has spread from a defensive art to a physically educating sport and now perhaps a future Olympic sport. This great increase in the world popularity of karate caused the formation of an international federation for sport control.

Appreciation for karate is similar to appreciation for the arts such as music, poetry and sculptures. In sensing a great work of art there is more to perceive than the masterpiece itself, there is an appreciation of *culture* - the sense of man's achievements. The same sense applies to karate and it becomes a part of our culture through the appreciative and seeking mind of the practitioner. The practice of karate thus can be a method of inspiring creativity, sensitivity and a sense of self-development. Restated, karate, as a martial art, expresses the culture of mankind and has now developed into a contemporary sport widely practiced throughout the world.

Through the scientific research inherent in modern sports, karate has been successful in raising the level of athletic performance and abilities and also has enhanced the spiritual, mental and moral levels of its practitioners. There are two types of karate practice - *Kata* and *Kumite*. Performing *kata* generates and stimulates creativity and practicing *kumite* leads to a discovery of a genuinely human nature through the dialectic approach necessary during desperate combat situations.

Kata competition might appear similar to ice-skating or to a gymnastics performance with the contestants performing combinations of various esoteric movements. But, there is a difference between a kata performance and a gymnastic or dance show. Kata is not done to impress the judges and spectators with its appearance but is judged according to the correct understanding of the philosophical principals hidden within each movement. Each kata movement has an exact meaning as well as an associated strategy and technique which must be clearly presented by the performer. An imaginative mind is necessary for the kata practitioner just as it is for a ballet dancer who performs movements unique to ballet with expression and meaning. Kata is a means of man's expression, an expression of human nature and thus of culture and art.

During international kata competitions the contestants are expected to perform both compulsory and free selection kata, which are judged by a panel of 5 judges. Each judge displays a score by holding up a score card. Maximum and minimum scores are deleted and the remaining scores summed to determine the final tally. Competition is for both individuals and team of three in synchronized movements.

Kumite (free fighting) is competition between two contestants using free combinations of karate techniques. Points are scored when an attack is forcefully, correctly targeted, and effective against the opponent but still controlled so that no injury occurs. The types of attacks, target areas and match times are all specifically detailed in the competition rules. To avoid hazard, competitors must alter the force of a blow before it makes contact with the opponents body.

The emphasis in karate is not to solely to increase apply force in the physical sense. The greater concentration is on the ability to contribute to mankind through mental, spiritual and physical development - the antithesis of destruction. Thus, the winning contestant must also show superior karate technique, spirit and mental control and dominance over the opponent.

Karate is practiced in over 120 countries and the world-wide population of karate is now estimated to be over 50 million practitioners. The distribution of karate throughout the world and its acceptance in different cultures has necessitated the organization of international karate. The World Union of Karatedo Organizations (WUKO) was formally recognized in 1985 as the International Olympic Committee International Governing Body for sport karate throughout the world and has been recognized as an international sports federation by the General Assembly of International Sports Federations (GAISF). WUKO is composed of nationally represented karate federations of each nation and is formed without discrimination of any particular school of karate or political or religious belief. In the United States, karate is governed by The USA Karate Federation, the Karate representative to both the WUKO and the United States Olympic Committee.

The premier sporting competition event in karate is the WUKO World Championships held every two years in a different country. The first tournament was in 1970 and past hosts include Japan, France, USA, Japan, Spain, Taiwan, Holland, and in 1986 - Australia. The best amateur karate competitors from throughout the world, selected by the highest recognized sports body in their respective country compete in this tremendous international combative sport event. In the Americas, The United States hosted the 3rd World Karate Championships in Long Beach, California, in 1975. The 1988 World Championships will take place in Africa at Cairo, Egypt.

Competition at the World Championships is held in kata and kumite for both teams and individual athletes representing official flag teams of the WUKO member countries. The kata is a gruelling three rounds of individual performances with only the best making it to the third round. Kumite is scheduled in 6 weight divisions with an open weight for men; women athletes utilize 3 weight divisions and an open weight.

Team competition is included in both kata and kumite. Team kata is called synchronized kata and consists of teams of three performing kata in unison. Both male and female teams are recognized in this event. Team kumite is only for the men and consists of teams of 5 in a 5 bout match. To many, these are the most exciting events of the competitions.

The Pan American Union of Karatedo Organizations (PUKO) is the recognized continental member of WUKO and is made up of nationally represented karate federations in North America, Central America, South America and the Caribbean. The current president of PUKO is George E. Anderson, an American living in Akron, Ohio. As the Continental Governing Body, PUKO regularly hosts junior and adult continental championships and other good will events.

The USA Karate Federation (USAKF) is the USA member of WUKO and is a Group C Member of the United States Olympic Committee. USAKF is also the continental member of PUKO. The USAKF selects teams of American citizens to compete at international events and sponsors an extensive domestic sport training and competition for America's youth. The USAKF is a not-for-profit corporation and contributions are tax deductible for income tax purposes.

The national governing body for karate in the United States, USA Karate promotes and encourages civic interests of the nation through country-wide educational programs directed to all classes of individuals. Emphasis is placed on the virtues of good citizenship and sportsmanlike conduct, the cultural aspects of traditional karate and the benefits of physical fitness as derived from participation in karate amateur sport activities. USA Karate establishes and maintains throughout the United States a uniform regulation of amateur standing and uniform rules for the governing of all karate within its jurisdiction; including, but not limited to, the adoption of rules and regulations governing amateur karate competition, judging and the awarding of appropriate karate credentials to deserving individuals. In furtherance of this objective, the federation sanctions and host karate seminars, camps, and other activities designed to develop karate athletes, judges, and officials.

A major thrust of USA Karate is to serve as the coordinating body for the promotion and support of amateur karate activities in the United States. The USA Karate Federation promotes and improves amateur karate in the United States by the encouragement of systematic exercise, education and socialization and encourages physical fitness and participation in public affairs as well as karate activities. The USA Karate also does research and provides technical and historical information on physical training, equipment design, coaching and performance analysis, encourages and supports new research and develops and disseminates information about sports medicine and sports safety.

### THE REFEREE AND JUDGE IN USA KARATE

The referees and judges in USA Karate occupy important roles, controlling the entire championship environment including the results. Referee and judges are a part of the match and are expected to deport themselves accordingly. In general, people will react to the *calls* with which they do not agree and not to the *good* ones. It is recognized and understood that the officials serve without compensation and are volunteering their time and efforts in the best interests of the Federation, as do all other USA Karate personnel. In USA Karate, appreciation and recognition are extended to the conscientious workers who give so generously of their time and effort to assure the proper operations of the sport of karate. Whatever work is done, charting, refereeing, time-keeping or in any other area, each chore is vitally important to the outcome of the match and important to the overall function of the event.

It is a misconception that paying the referees and judges might assure quality officiating and is therefore necessary. The duty of experienced karate referees and judges is to contribute their talent as a service in support of the karate development efforts of the United States. Professionalism should be kept out of the USA Karate program and, for that matter, any amateur sports program. Paying referees and judges creates a play for pay operation. The USA Karate maintains the spirit of officiating as a volunteer effort in support of the amateur sports effort of United States. This is one way we can give back to karate what has been given to us. ( And I don't mean a headache! *Editor's note* ) ❀

The duties of officiating must be taken seriously and the official should aspire to do their best job and they should always be on time when assigned to a match. They should never relax in keeping control of each and every situation and in carrying out the aspects of the assignment with dignity and courage. Attire and demeanor are critical and lend much to the overall appearance of our sport. The way officials present themselves reinforces their role as a decision makers and technical authorities. Dressed in grey slacks, white shirt and red tie, officials give the image of dedicated to the job and they know how to conduct themselves.

Through being exemplary models of good conduct, USA Karate officials are esteemed and admired by the USA Karate competitors. Should the occasion arise in which coaches or players question a call or decision, the experienced referee or judge expresses this esteem by remaining calm and are never being involved in questionable incidents and outbursts. Following bouts in which some unclear situation might have occurred, the officials can offer to explain the basis within the competition rules of the WUKO for making the decision but but they must never justify their position in a judgement calls, especially at a moment when emotions are high and tempers are aroused..

The emotional response of USA Karate players, especially the young children and their parents and coaches, should be a clear concern of the entire officials section. Learn and appreciate their problems. Be interested in their concerns and offer assistance when deemed appropriate; grant a hearing or explanation when it appears there may be confusion. Whenever it can be avoided, a competitor should not be criticized in a crowd or in front of fellow competitors for something he might have said or done. Encourage friendly discussion, and remember to show understanding and kindness. In junior competition, try to make the young competitor feel that even though the official must abide by the rules and be impartial and fair, the official is his friend. Coaches are not permitted on the floor and it becomes the responsibility of the officials to look out for and to act as a "coach" for all young competitors. By being friendly and helpful to the junior competitor, you can make him relax and be more comfortable in the karate competition. For example, many times the junior competitor is not mature or responsible enough to stay by the ringside, to stay alert and listen to hear his name called, etc.. It is the official duty to protect the interests of the junior competitor and to help our young people as though they were their own children.

**PATTERN FOR CONDUCT FOR THE USA KARATE OFFICIAL**

1. **Qualifications of a good referee or judge.**

A. Good character	In the home and community
B. Leadership	Natural
C. Understanding	Unlimited
D. Honesty and fairness	Successful attributes
E. Knowledge of USA Karate; rules	Very important
F. Use of judgement when applying rules	Just as important
  
2. **Decorum.**

A. Always be on time	At least 30 minutes before match time
B. Appearance	Clean and neat in attire
C. Conduct;	Good, both on and off the mat
D. Never smoke during a match or at the site	Set a good example
  
3. **Association with competitors.**
  - A. Befriend any athlete, whenever *befitting and proper*: Never before, during, or after an event (especially with contestants that were in your judging panel's jurisdiction) discuss your actions or those actions of other officials except to offer to explain the basis for a ruling within the competition rules.
  - B. Show interest in the things they like.
  - C. Learn and appreciate their problems.
  - D. Be glad when they seek assistance; listen to them carefully.
  - E. Never brush them off or be discourteous.
  - F. Don't express displeasure in front of competitors or coaches with actions of any of the officials even if you think an error has been made or you disagree with a judgement.
  
4. **Association with USA Karate.**
  - A. Full cooperation with all aspects of the Federation
  - B. Periodically attend regional and national referee courses to keep abreast of the current trends and precisions of the rules and to retain your certification
  - B. Conduct periodic discussions regarding rules, particularly with coaches
  - C. Make sure you renew your membership every year or become a Life Member
  
5. **Association with fans.**
  - A. Never associate with any fan during the progress of a match
  - B. Be certain of interpretation then be willing to explain meaning or rules
  - C. Point out facts but do not argue
  
6. **Arbitrator of a kumite match**
  - A. Be sure you know your duties. These include the official time-keeping, score-keeping and charting functions.
  - B. Calling of plays (point judgements):
    1. You can only give an opinion or speak when requested by the referee. You cannot interfere in his match duties.
    2. If you see a blatant error, you can only remind the referees to keep alert for a re-occurrence. If it is of an administrative nature, *you* should correct it at once.
    3. If you feel the referee and judge are inadequate or cannot get along, convey this to the chief referee. It is his responsibility to make a decision on how to proceed.

C. Position:

1. Take your position and sit in a manner conveying alertness - feet flat on the floor, back straight, head up, and eyes alert.

7. **Referee of a kumite match.**

A. Be sure to know your duties

B. Calling of plays:

1. Make your calls definite and exact.
2. Make your calls clear and do not rush them.
3. Do not make your judgement signal (or lead the call) when stopping the match. This is considered poor officiating.

C. Position:

1. Assume a position to see points clearly and accurately, but not so close as to interfere with the fighters.
2. When starting or continuing the bout, step back away from the competitors and to the side so the arbitrator can see the match.
3. When calling yame, signal as you move forward indicating a separation of the fighters. A loud clear yame is required.

D. Special Considerations:

1. When signalling awards, make each signal clear and distinct and avoid wasted motions and/or mannerisms.
2. In the event of injury, remove the contestant's mouthpiece and call a doctor immediately.
3. Should a competitor fall without control, try to catch the head before it hits the floor.
4. Enforce the injury rules. These are there to protect the fighters.
5. Especially in the Junior Divisions, reward ability. Do not ignore a fighters controlled techniques if they are consistent. You invite possible contact with injury in the competitors attempt to get the referee's attention.

8. **Judge (mirror) of a kumite match.**

A. Be sure to know your duties. You are the mirror image of the referee and it is important for you to cooperate and communicate with the referee.

B. Calling of plays:

1. Make clear signals to the referee for his evaluation.

C. Position:

1. Position yourself to reflect the opposing point of view for an accurate match.

D. Special considerations:

1. These are the same as the referee's, except that you do not make the awards. All signals to the referee must clearly indicate your judgement.

9. **Kata Judge.**

A. Be sure you know your duties.

1. You must watch and at all times observe the kata performance.

B. Position

1. Take your position and sit in a manner conveying alertness - feet flat on the floor, back straight, head up and eyes alert.

C. Special considerations:

1. Take every effort to become more knowledgeable, not only about the kata in your own style, but also of kata found in the other major styles, especially those predominate in USA and World Karate-do. The better technical background you have, the more accurate your judgement will be.

**10. Cooperation between officials.**

- A. Discuss required and other possible code signals for quick communications:
  - 1. Point.
  - 2. No point.
  - 3. Foul.
  - 4. Inaccurate technique, etc.
- B. Calling of the match due to injury, considerations:
  - 1. Think of the fighters.
  - 2. Get doctor's advice.
  - 3. Consider both mental and physical condition of the fighter.
  - 4. Especially in Junior age groups, emotionally upset competitors are candidates for injury.
- C. Never discuss each other's judgements in a match with anyone except each other and only then if one should ask the other for clarification. You need not defend your judgement to anyone except the Chief Referee or his designate.

**WHAT MAKES A SUPERIOR OFFICIAL**

Referees and judges of the kumite match must forget who they are personally and who the fighters are personally. Their job is to score the fight as it occurs. The match must be safe and have the correct winner. They are transparent to the match, but can be catalysts making things happen. The referee especially should not alter the match outcome through his actions or the actions of the judge.

In order to understand what USA Karate is looking for in nationally certified referee or judge, let us first look at the 10 best marks of a superior official. This is the goal for which you should strive. Then we will look at the 10 worst marks of an official in order to know what traps to avoid falling into.

**The 10 Best Marks of a Superior Official**

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**The 10 Most Grievous Flaws in Refereeing**

The 10 worst mistakes an official can make are only too obvious. In almost every incorrect match or screwed up division, one of the below reasons was the cause. There are two basic divisions of errors that the referee and judge make. These are the areas where serious match problems occur and where mistakes in the result of the match can occur. The experienced referee must be aware of these situations and takes steps to avoid them at all costs.

**Errors in Contact Calls**

The correct application of the rules in the case of contact occurring in the match is one of the most difficult things that a referee must determine. Contact is an idea in the referee's mind and it depends on his judgement and experience. Any technique that makes contact to any target is either an ippon or waza-ari or a penalty or a no score. Not scoring a touch to the face, but not awarding a keikoku, hansoku chui, or hansoku does not necessarily mean that the technique has been overlooked. The fact that it did not score is a penalty in itself as had the contact not been made a point could have been awarded on that technique. An ippon technique may score even though it made contact, however, under the below guidelines it may only be given a waza-ari. The important point here is that a technique can be downgraded even though a penalty award was not made.

Any technique that touches is not perfect, it has a mistake in its execution. The judgement of contact depends on the attack target as the rule states: "Techniques which make excessive contact, having regard to the scoring area attacked." The footnote reads: "Control to scoring areas must be reasonable. Techniques which touch the areas may be scored but those which cause actual injury may not be scored and could incur a penalty for lack of control. In the case of kick techniques, a greater tolerance is allowed, provided that the attack is controlled and the impact does not cause obvious injury". Therefore it is important that you understand how contact is to be judged.

An observable touch is graded at different levels depending on the attack target. In the rules, lack of control and intent play a part in any decision regardless of injury or not. Remember, that mistakes do graduate in the rules for a later occurrence of a penalty action. When a mistake occurs causing contact we need to determine the degree of error. Is it major, minor or somewhere in between?

When any attack makes contact with a target area, there are three things to consider which affect the resultant award or penalty

1. Quality of the technique (ippon, waza-ari, nothing)
2. The target attacked
3. Whether it was controlled or not to that target  
(if an injury then we must also consider degree of injury)

When an observable touch to the face occurs, it is considered a mistake. We must take into account four things to make an adequate judgement:

1. Degree of injury if any
2. Quality of the technique
3. Whose fault was it
4. Intent - was it accidental, deliberate or malicious (or was it mubobi)

The above factors should also be referred to in determining the penalty award for an excessive technique to any attack target. Remember, the worst mistake of an official is to let injury occur in your ring. Controlling and award contact correctly is of utmost importance in the control of injury.

### **Other Matters Affecting the Results of the Match**

The referee cannot and must not change the match. There are certain actions of the referee that can change the results of the match and which are the result of poor officiating. The most notable of these is the incorrect use of yame. Improper use of "yame" can change the results of a match. Do not stop a match unless you have a reason to do so. Let the match develop. You can stop a match if you think it is getting out of hand but, this can be right or wrong depending on your speculation or reason. Yame can change the results of a match if you:

1. Yame too soon, preventing Ippon
2. Call "yame" when a waza-ari is observed preventing a following ippon technique
3. Yame to prevent out of bounds preventing a jogai penalty
4. Yame and destroy ring positioning when there is no reason to stop the match (this destroys any ring position advantage that a fighter may have attained)

In the evaluation of your refereeing we consider the incorrect use of yame and the cutting or of the jogai each a separate and distinct error and sign of a poor official. Do not fall into this trap.

Exerting control of the ring helps contain the chance of injury. This includes the way the referee makes decisions and indicates those decisions. To minimize injury, confusion must be eliminated in the match. The referee must not let the match get out of control nor should he interfere unnecessarily in its progress. This is a difficult combat sport and differs greatly depending on the age and skill of the competitors.

The referee must position himself so that he is in a position to see and observe what is happening in a match. He must develop his peripheral vision and prevent his mind from completing actions of

the fighters and observe what the fighters actually do. As an official, make sure you can see the atemi of the technique. Learn to go with the flow of a match and how to move in the ring to keep in proper positioning. Good officials can read the fighters and move in unison with the fight. Poor officials are always moving to keep up with the fighters and are not in position to see what is happening. You must both be in a position to observe the match correctly and you must then observe what is actually happening.

Correct signals are also important. Poor signaling shows poor karate kihon of the official. They also tend to confuse the match and show lack of the officials ability to control the match thus increasing the chance of injury. Calls and their execution must be clear and unhurried for the timekeepers and scorekeepers to correctly record the action as well as for the audience to tell what is going on. Otherwise the clock cannot be run correctly and the scorekeeper cannot keep the correct score and the spectators become disgruntled with the operation of the match. Mirrors should not overdue it with hand signal; especially- the mirror should not keep signaling to the referee and destroy his concentration by forcing him to always have to respond. Signal when there is something to signal about. Keep mannerisms out of your signals. As a karateka, you are expected to perform good kata. The hand signals are the kata of the referee and judge. Remember that the referee must see the fighters and the mirror at the same time. Extensive signals from the mirror destroy the referee's ability to observe the match creating an unnecessary diversion for the referee and are distracting to the spectators. The signals are the international match language. They are for the security of the match. Finally, referees do not "lead" the judges opinion. When you call yame, do not at that time show your judgement. You must demonstrate impartially by withholding your opinion until the correct time.

Poor judgement on behalf of the referee or judge is discouraging to competitors of any age. As a referee you must be courageous and make the correct call. Know the difference between Ippon and Waza-ari. Ai-uchi is a mutual slaying and not to be used by the referee to hide behind. Not calling jogai properly is an unforgivable error. Under the WUKO rules the fighters get what they earn and a jogai and ippon on the same play is possible. So are two jogais. Do not violate the rule structure especially do not try to even up a match if you feel you have made a mistake. Do not make the mistake in the first place. Remember the five variations or exceptions which must be considered as ippon.

Improper use of the arbitrator is another sign of a poor official. Do not use the arbitrator unless you utterly have to. He is not to be your crutch, neither should he be used as your hammer against the mirror. Again, it is the referee's and judges responsibility to properly call the match. The arbitrator has his own duties and is there if you need him - don't abuse your use of him.

Sloppy dress and deportment (the way you carry yourself and conduct yourself in the match area) impacts greatly on the judgement of yourself as an official by not only your peers, but by the competitors and spectators. How you carry yourself and conduct your affairs is an indication of the care and concern that you have for the sport and the respect you give to its participants. It is a major flaw to not be concerned about your appearance and behavior as others observe it.

Finally charting errors are perhaps the most difficult errors to correct when they occur. Fully 90% of the unsolvable problems in the championships relate to charting mistakes. The rules call for the arbitrator as the final responsible authority. It is still the responsibility of all the match officials to see that the correct matches are called, the correct winner is carried forward on the charts and, especially in the junior divisions, that the competitors do not miss their match. Whether you like it or not, if you understand the chart, you will avoid much misunderstanding, prevent errors and hard feelings. The last thing you want to do in a long day is to re-run your division for an administrative error. Errors in the administration of the tournament, especially those of a clerical nature must be immediately corrected. In the case of an improper bout, it is nullified and the chart returned to the correct bout. therefore it is incumbent upon every official to understand and be able to perform the charting function. superior official

## IPPON/WAZA-ARI CRITEREA

It is important to understand the proper application of scoring criteria to determine the value of a technique or tactic which could have a direct bearing on the outcome of the match and accordingly merits a decision of the referee and judge.

In the WUKO Rules the concept of the one point award, the ippon, is the basis upon which all consideration for judgements of scoring techniques are made. The WUKO Rules specifically describe the criteria for ippon as:

"Performance of the following criteria to a scoring area: good form, correct attitude, vigorous application, proper timing, correct distance, and zanshin. A waza-ari (or half point award) is a technique considered almost comparable to an ippon in that it is deficient in only one criteria of ippon".

There are certain situations where the difficulty of the technique makes it hard to fulfill all the criteria for ippon. Therefore a special schedule of five technical exceptions has been formulated which can be scored as ippon even if they are deficient in one of the criteria for ippon. Only these five instances have been isolated for elevation to ippon. They are:

1. Jodan kicks
2. Successfully scoring at the precise moment the opponent attacks
3. Deflecting an attack and scoring to the unguarded back of the opponent
4. Sweeping or throwing followed by a scoring technique
5. Delivering a combination technique the individual components which score in their own right

These techniques need not be fully complete in the total sense of ippon but, due to prescribed exceptions, they are elevated to the ippon award if they are slightly deficient.

Karate is a sport and is based upon the concept of budo. sport karate as exemplified by WUKO does not destroy the underlying concepts of budo but is a sport system in keeping with these traditional values. In this sense the rules reward courage, stamina, timing and technique. The original concept of ippon was based on the idea of one killing blow determining victory. Thus, the first competitor to utterly cut down the opponent was declared the victor. This was known as Ippon Shobu. With the change to a three point match (Sanbon Shobu) the principle of one killing blow was put aside. The concept of ippon needed refinement in sport karate to avoid what was becoming a 'six point match'. Because of the use of the same criteria for ippon in Sanbon Shobu as was used in Ippon Shobu matches, ippon was seldom called and the six point match was the result. Therefore, a group of techniques which should merit ippon if lacking in one of the criteria for ippon were designated. In the determination of the exceptions to full ippon requirements, an underlying consideration was whether the tactic or technique could, if carried to completion, result in the opponent being utterly cut down even if it required more than a single blow. This, and the necessity to recognize, encourage and score more difficult techniques in the match were the underlying reasons for the schedule of exceptions. These in turn were more exciting for the spectators. Certain exceptions underline specific considerations and circumstances that have been overlooked by the judges in the determination of ippon.

The criteria for ippon proposed by WUKO can be best understood by the correct comprehension of karate techniques upon which the foundation of the WUKO Rules have been established. To merit ippon, you must have correct maai so that when zanshin is broken, you can apply atemi with kime. Or, in another way, ippon is atemi with correct maai, kime, and zanshin. These statements summarize the karate concepts underlying the WUKO ippon standards. These four fundamental principles in karate must be understood by the referees and judges and be present in the competition to earn an ippon award.

It is mandatory to study and understand each concept. Direct translation of any language does not allow an exact word for word exchange of ideas. Accordingly, we will define each of these fundamental principles through examples designed to further the understanding of correct karate technique and its recognition within the WUKO procedures.

Atemi is the concept of the vital stroke. A technique in WUKO Karate is permitted as long as it is to a vital target area. Techniques to non-target areas are considered prohibited by the rules. The target areas are the head, face neck, chest, abdomen, and back. A technique must be such that it does not by its nature prejudice the safety of the opponent. Atemi is a technique targeted to strike a vital area of the body and in WUKO karate these vital areas are the only targets. Application of atemi is the execution of a such a lethal blow. In the consideration of atemi, a technique which could break an arm or otherwise disable an opponent is not considered in the same light as a technique which could lead to serious injury or death. The sport of Karate-do demonstrates this in a safe, non-injurious competition.

The correct angle of the technique, is also implied in the concept of atemi. In considering this aspect, a technique which does not strike at the correct angle cannot be considered to be a vital strike. The rotation of the opponent's body to or from the direction of the strike also affects the correctness of atemi through the angle of attack.

Maai is the correct distance and timing (interval) necessary for securing a position from which, when the opponent is at a disadvantage, atemi can be applied. Maintaining the proper offensive and defensive position in relation to the opponent so that scoring can take place is also maai. The word ma refers to timing, maai to the distancing (rhythm aspect). Much of the concept of a killing blow comes from the study of single combat within the element of swordplay. Thus ma-ai is combative distance. In the kumite match, the maintenance of a one-step interval, in which the fighter can, by correctly taking of a single step, deal a lethal blow, is important to the consideration of correct maai. The overall movement of an opponent toward or away from the direction of a strike can also affect on the judgement of proper maai (and atemi) as can the proper range of the blow. Judgement of distancing cannot only consider the extension of the attacking arm or leg, but must consider the ability to extend the body (hara) to cover further distance in the direction of the technique that is being applied. The distancing aspect is one of the major differences between the various ryu of karate.

Kime is the unification of the weapon, mind and hara in concentrated awareness. It is not merely the focusing of energy of the karate blow but is is also an awareness of what the strike is intended to do. The word focus is often incorrectly used in the sense of the a concentration of attention. In kime, energy is concentrated but awareness remains with the situation at hand. Kime requires not only synchronization of the body in karate technique, but the further support of the striking weapon by correct hara movement and the concentration of the mind in its field of awareness (the karate match). Lack of any of these three factors to act in concert will not allow kime. Kime is also applied differently by style and expressed in their kata. To judge kime correctly, a knowledge of how the various karate styles apply kime is required.

Zanshin is the most difficult concept to understand. This is because there is no exact English language equivalent equivalent for the concept. Many ill-informed karateka consider zanshin only in the physical posture and do not consider the expressions of attitude. Zanshin is a state of heightened alertness of the mind, allowing the mind to work without attachment thus denying the existence of a weakness. With a break in the opponents defense (zanshin), zanshin is the ending of a perfect action with the result - a killing blow. In this sense the karate strike could be said to relate to sword combat where the odds of winning are one out of three. Either the opponent is killed and you win, or you are killed, or it is a mutual slaying! There is only one out of three chances of surviving. Uninterrupted dominance over the enemy, both physically and mentally, is necessary for effective combat. In this sense, zanshin is the utterly cutting down of the opponent. Cutting off someone's head with a sword is not enough, you must watch him die, ready to again deal a final blow should the need arise. Take for example the famous story of the two swordsmen dueling. The one swordsman, having knocked down his opponent did not step in taking advantage of the situation to cut the other man down. He knew his opponent was an expert in fighting from the ground. Instead he invited him to stand up, and therefore cut him down as he rose after having destroyed the zanshin of his opponent.

The idea of zanshin, the ever-remaining alertness, not attaching to a moment in time, but flowing with the changing situation, can be presented by the traditional zen story of the two monks walking along a riverbank. There they encountered a young woman who wished to cross the stream. These two

monks came from a sect which forbade contact with women. However, one monk did not hesitate to immediately carry the woman over the stream and set her down on the other side. A while later as they continued their journey, the second monk said, "Brother you have sinned for we are not allowed to touch women." The first brother replied, "Ah, but I set her down on the other side of the stream. You are still carrying her".

Another consideration for zanshin is the expression of posture to dominate the opponent. These impenetrable postures provide the ability to continue and demonstrate the expression of zanshin. The projection of a superior attitude and technique is therefore vital to the presentation of one dominant lethal blow. Again, this comparison to swordplay cannot be overlooked in determining the correct application of zanshin by the competitor. It is not just the retaining of zanshin for himself, but the breaking of the opponents zanshin that is important.

### **Ippon/Waza-ari Criteria Review**

#### **IPPON ---**

Technique that is correct and proper in: Zanshin - Ma - Kime - Target - Distance - correct angle

According to WUKO, "performance of the following criteria to a scoring area:

- Good Form
- Correct Attitude
- Vigorous Application
- Proper Timing
- Correct Distance
- Zanshin

#### **WAZA-ARI---**

Technique that is not complete in one of the requirements for ippon but is still an effective technique may still merit waza-ari.

According to WUKO: "A waza-ari (or half point award) is a technique considered almost comparable to an ippon in that it is deficient in only one criteria of ippon."

#### General specifications:

To score a technique it is understood:

- Must be in bounds
- During match time (not after yame)
- Acceptable target

**Note:** To end of the match, scoring ends at the sound of the buzzer, not at the referee's yame. Penalties can still occur beyond the sound of the buzzer.

**Original Concept:**

First competitor to utterly cut down the opponent was declared the winner.  
 Sport Karate should not destroy the underlying concepts of Budo, but be a sport system in keeping with traditional values.  
 Rules should reward stamina, courage, training, and techniques.  
 Three Point match violates Budo as a competitor gets a second chance.  
 Criteria for ippon used in Ippon Shobu, if applied in Sanbon Shobu would produce few ippon and effectively a six point match would result.  
 Five scheduled exceptions were made encouraging and rewarding the more difficult techniques and to provide for an increase in the number of Ippons awarded.

**Exceptions:**

Situations where the difficulty of the technique makes it difficult to fulfill all the criteria for ippon.

Five technical exceptions has been recognized which can be scored ippon even if they are deficient in one of the criteria for ippon. They are:

1. Jodan kicks
2. Successfully scoring at the precise moment the opponent attacks
3. Deflecting an attack and scoring to the unguarded back
4. Sweeping or throwing followed by a scoring technique
5. Delivering a combination technique the components which score in their own right (consider tactics effectiveness)

(Items one and four encourage more difficult techniques. Item two recognizes go-no-sen, attacking at the same instance the opponent begins his attack and Items 3-5 put the opponent at a severe disadvantage leading to a killing instance. A referee must be careful not to stop the match on the first scoring technique as it may interrupt the fighters attack and eliminate a further technique in the combination which could merit ippon. In the instance of a combination technique you are scoring a tactics effectiveness, not just independent blows with no game plan or result in mind.)

**REMEMBER - SCOREABLE TECHNIQUES ARE CONSIDERED AN IPPON UNLESS THEY CAN BE CLEARLY EXPLAINED AS WAZA-ARI. CONSIDER IPPON IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, THEN CONSIDER WAZA-ARI! AN IPPON IS NOT A GOOD WAZA-ARI, A WAZA-ARI IS A DEFICIENT IPPON. GO TO IPPON IN THE FIRST INSTANCE.**

Ippon Consideration

To merit ippon you must have correct Maai so that when zanshin is broken, you can apply atemi with kime.

**A TEMI**

Vital stroke to a recognized target area:

Head	Face
Neck	Chest
Abdomen	Back

Non-target areas prohibited under the rules:

Techniques making any contact with the throat  
 Groin, joints, instep  
 Face with open handed techniques  
 Repeated direct attacks to the arms and legs

Other Considerations:

Correct angle of the technique

⋮

Movement of the opponents body to or from the attack  
Range of the technique  
Sport of karate should demonstrate a lethal blow in a safe non-injurious competition.

#### MAAI

Maintenance of a one-step interval in which the fighter can, by correctly taking of a single step, deal a lethal blow.

Considerations:

Correct distance and timing

Proper offensive and defensive position to score.

Movement of the opponent to or away from the blow

Proper range of the technique

Extension of weapon

Extension of hara

#### KIME

Unification of the weapon, mind, and hara in concentrated awareness.

Requirements:

Awareness of what the strike is intended to do.

Energy is concentrated but awareness remains

Requires synchronization of the body

Support of the striking weapon by correct hara movement

Concentration of the mind in its field of awareness (the karate match)

#### ZANSHIN

Concepts:

The utterly cutting down - uninterrupted dominance over the opponent.

Extending Ki.- projecting of superiority of technique and attitude. Uninterrupted dominance .

Impenetrable posture - the capacity to continue and hinders opponents capacity to continue.

Remaining Mind - Remaining with situation at hand,not with past action; able to continue.

The breaking of the zanshin of the opponent.

#### AI-UCHI

Ai-uchi in sport karate means simultaneous scoring. Too many ai-uchis show a lack of character by the referee to make decisions. The original concept was: if both competitors could score simultaneously, neither score could be accepted because the concept of correct karate technique was violated by not blocking the opponent's attack. That is, if you cannot block an opponents attack your technique is a sacrifice karate technique. Ai-uchi means mutual slaying. Within the sports concept, ai-uchi means 'at exactly the same time' and the referee is expected to determine who hit first regardless of whether there was a mutual slaying or not. The relative value between two techniques is also of no concern in an ai-uchi.**CONSIDERATION OF PENALTIES AND CONTACT**

In the WUKO Rules, as in any rules system there are situations which can affect the outcome of the match by the award of penalties. Some penalties such as jogai (leaving the match area) excessive grabbing, or attacking the wrong target area receive penalty on their own merits without regard for other actions of the competitors. That is they do not have a bearing upon a judgement of a technique for an ippon award, but can have an impact on the final outcome of a match.

In the rules, there are two situations which do have a direct bearing on target area techniques. The first is specific - no touch is allowed to the throat area. This is straight forward. Touching the throat, not neck, is a penalty. The other relates to touches to other target areas.

Almost all injuries arise from poor ring control by the referee. The referee must exert control over the match to prevent injuries. Excessive contact is not allowed. Whether the force of a blow is excessive depends on the target. Blows to the abdomen can be much stronger than those to the neck, back, or head. The face as a target is also evaluated under this rule. A technique which touches the face is not a penalty just because it touches, but a mistake or error in the technique which is a separate consideration. Obvious injury caused by a fighter is a penalty. In the consideration of head and neck contact, a stunned or dazed competitor is considered injured. Referees must be careful to note the difference between being stunned and the registering of surprise. Surprise is not being stunned. The ability to see and understand this important point is the sign of an experienced official. Watch out for feigning injury and emotional reactions versus actual injury. A substantial blow, not causing injury, need not be a penalty and need not be a score. The referee must use discretion so as to not encourage hitting of the soft target areas but he should not penalize good technique and control.

In contact to any target area, as long as the contact is reasonable with regard to the scoring area involved a point award can be made. However, observable contact to the face is considered an error in the technique and must be considered accordingly. Penalty for excessive contact deals with the intent, lack of control, or disregard for the safety of the opponent. In the consideration of contact a greater tolerance is provided in the rules for kicking techniques, assuming the attack is controlled and the impact does not cause obvious injury. In assessing the value of this or any penalty, attention should be given to whether the illegal action was deliberate (intent) and/or whether it was without regard for the opponent (lack of control). In any contact call, you are really penalizing intent and/or lack of control. In this sense, the physical injury is not the sole primary reason for the penalty.

Referees should be careful not to penalize an attacker if a prior injury is aggravated. That is, if a contestant has been injured in a previous bout and is allowed to continue, then a controlled blow which aggravates that injury should not be penalized. If the second technique by itself would not have caused the injury, then it cannot be awarded a penalty. Again, this is an area where the experience of the officials is important.

The most controversial and least understood rule on contact is that involving face and head techniques. The WUKO rules do not specifically address contact to the face. Injury lack of control, and intent is the penalty. Bumps, bruises, minor cuts or abrasions do not of themselves require a penalty. Considerations regarding the judgement of contact are discussed below.

Contact with the hands to the face is considered a mistake and an error in technique. This leads to a straight forward application of scoring criteria. As you read this, remember that the rules do allow a greater tolerance for kicking techniques and this should be considered in the application of the following criteria to contact with the foot to the face.

In understanding contact, it should be noted that karate is not a sport that encourages injury in order to gain an advantage or victory over the opponent. Some sports such as boxing, kick-boxing, and to a degree football, encourage hitting of the opponent and injury is considered a possible and welcomed outcome of competition (and sometimes an advantage to the team whose member is not injured). Certain disabling actions can thereby bring victory. Some sports like soccer and basketball have rules that are defined to discourage injury and have specific penalties to deal harshly with injury. Karate is such a sport. These sports avoid injury at all costs and the rules are designed to prevent injury by penalizing injury. The idea of karate is to show superiority over the opponent by use of controlled karate technique and demonstrating superiority without having to injure, maim or dispatch the foe. Causing or attempting to cause injury is considered against the rules of fair play and harshly dealt with by penalties leading to loss of the match or disbarment from the sport itself.

Inconsistency in the calling of ippon has been seen from match to match with the same judges and between rings with different judges. It is not uncommon to see an active match where the penalty award is used to control the match and then to see in a less active match the same situation arise but with different results. The penalty is really for lack of control in the match and not for the "contact"

itself. Many do not realize this and confusion does arise resulting in inappropriate and inconsistent application of the rules.

In order to look at how to apply a penalty it is necessary to understand what a penalty is and how it relates to injury of the opponent.

Penalties are:

Awards given for illegal acts or situations which bear on the outcome of the match.

Penalties involving target areas.

No touch to the throat -

Straight forward--it is a penalty if the technique touches.

Touch to other target areas

Reasonable contact with regard to the target area involved is permitted.

Penalty is awarded for:

Intent

Lack of Control

Lack of regard for the opponents safety

Greater tolerance for kicking techniques to the face is allowed.

Attack must be controlled

Not cause obvious injury

Any contact with the hands to the face is considered an error.

In understanding contact, it should be understood that karate is not a sport that encourages injury in order to gain an advantage or victory over the opponent. In this sense it is a non-contact sport.

**WHAT IS INJURY**

Injury occurs when something happens that makes a competitors ability to continue the match different than before the occurrence.

Injuries are:

Minor or Major

Terminating or Incapacitating

Referee and judge determine injury

Doctor decides degree and treatment.

**INCONSISTENCY**

Match to match. Between tatami

Sometimes penalty used to control match

In less active match, penalty is not used

Penalty is for lack of control or intent!

**Penalty and Award Logic**

In considering the penalty and award logic of a technique there are five propositions in scoring assessment that need attention, representative of the situations that must be dealt with in scoring karate kumite matches.

Proposition 1.

Perfect technique merits full point (ippon).

No one really disputes this statement. When we judge a technique we award ippon if all criteria are met unless it comes within the prescribed exceptions.

Proposition 2.

Technique with a minor flaw, but still effective and causing no injury, merits waza-ari.

Again, no one generally disagrees with this statement. If one criteria is lacking, the technique is a waza-ari, if two criteria are lacking it is nothing.

Proposition 3.

Observable contact to the face with hand technique which causes no injury is considered to have a minor flaw.

In the case of touch to the face, a minor error is judged.

If an ippon technique touches the face, a full point less a half-point error for the flaw gives a waza-ari.

If a waza-ari occurs, the error deducts a half-point giving a zero and no point is awarded.

Thus a full ippon is reduced to a waza-ari and a waza-ari to no point or zero award. The contact (touch) is recognized and appropriate consideration given. In this sense it is a penalty award.

(If Mubobi is involved it could change the mind of the officials. To decide correctly the judge and referee must have experience.)

Note:

Observable contact to the face with hand technique which causes no injury is considered to have a minor flaw. In the case of touch to the face, a minor error is judged and thus a full ippon is reduced to a waza-ari and a waza-ari to no point or zero award. The contact touch is recognized and appropriate consideration given. In this sense it is like a penalty award. Again, if an ippon technique touches the face, a full point less a half-point error for the flaw gives a waza-ari. If a waza-ari occurs, the error deducts a half-point giving a zero - no point is awarded. If Mubobi is involved it will change the consideration of the officials as the contestant being hit was responsible for his own error. To decide mubobi correctly the judge and referee will need experience.

Proposition 4.

Techniques which cause injury are considered to have major flaw.

Major flaws are considered a full point deduction from the award. Thus an ippon becomes no point and a waza-ari a half point penalty

Proposition 5.

All injury, major or minor injury, must be dealt with under the rules.

Under these propositions, let us consider five different cases.

Case 1.

A technique which fulfills the requirements of ippon but makes contact not causing injury is observed.

Analysis--

Full point less minimum deduction (for the minimum error) leaves 1/2 point or waza-ari (remember greater tolerance for a kick is allowed).

Case 2.

A waza-ari technique is observed but makes contact not causing injury.

Analysis--

1/2 point less minor deduction (minimum error) = 0 point and no point award is awarded

Case 3.

A technique fulfills the requirements of ippon but makes contact causing a minor injury.

Analysis--

1 point less big deduction for a major error = 0 point and no point is awarded

Case 4.

A technique fulfills the requirements of waza-ari but makes contact causing a minor injury.

Analysis--

1/2 point less for a big deduction = -1/2 PENALTY.

Case 5.

A technique fulfills the requirements of ippon or waza-ari but makes contact causing a major injury.

Analysis--

Severe deduction = severe penalty or hansoku;

There are two other important considerations in the assessing of point or penalty awards that have a direct impact on the correct judgement of a match.

The first is the assignment of fault.

Which competitor contributed to the injury?

Three assignments of fault should be considered when an injury occurs:

Was the injured contestant the cause of the injury?

Did both contestants contribute to the injury?

Was the injury directly caused by the uninjured contestant?

The second is the consideration of intent.

The technique causing injury could be either accidental, intentional or malicious.

Was the injury due to an accident, or

Was the injury intentional, or

Was the injury malicious?

Let us study three different cases that can occur in a kumite match.

Case 1. Occurrence-

Minor injury

Injured party brings it on himself

Accidental

Analysis:--

Least case penalty = nothing/warning/keikoku

If the injured contestant caused the injury then nothing.

If both contestants contributed to the injury then warning

If the injury was directly caused by the uninjured contestant then keikoku (half point penalty).

Case 2. Occurrence-

Minor injury

Both responsible or Injured party not responsible

Accidental or deliberate

Analysis:

Middle case penalty.

keikoku if accidental.

hansoku chui if deliberate.

Case 3. Occurrence-

Major injury

Injured party was not responsible

## Intentional technique

Analysis:

Worst case penalty:

Hansoku. The injured party was not responsible or the act was intentional.

These examples are not designed to be totally inclusive nor do they include other extenuating circumstances that might arise. They are designed as only a guide to the understanding of referee judgement and a firm foundation in the method of considering the application of the WUKO rules to the grading of ippon, waza-ari or penalty.

**Conclusions on Awards penalty**

For point awards:

The quality of a technique must be considered with  
Deduction for errors in execution.

To assess injury awards:

Whether there was a major or minor injury  
Who caused the injury  
Whether it was accidental or intentional  
(not malicious - this comes under consideration of shikkaku)  
Prior warnings and other such criteria must be consistent and not overlooked.

Notes:

If an injury occurs there is no ippon or waza-ari.  
Penalize injury, intent, or lack of control.  
Tactical diving (feigning injury) can be a shikkaku.  
Ten Second rule applies to head blows and must be enforced for the fighters health and safety.  
Mubobi is failure to take your own safety into regard.

Therefore in conclusion, for point awards, the quality of a technique must be considered with deduction for errors in execution. To assess injury awards, it must be considered whether there was a major or minor injury, who caused the injury, and then whether it was accidental or intentional (not malicious - this comes under consideration of shikkaku). Prior warnings and other such criteria must be consistent and not overlooked. Remember, a keikoku is imposed for minor infractions or for which a warning has been previously given in a bout. Similarly, a hansoku chui is normally imposed for major or repeated minor infractions for which a keikoku has already been given; and finally hansoku is invoked following a very serious infraction.

**PENALTY GUIDE**

The penalty system does not automatically escalate. Thus a warning for a direct attack to the arms does not mean that an open-handed technique to the face must then be a keikoku. Each fighter gets what he earns. Thus, both a score and a penalty can be awarded on the same exchange. However, if a fighter scores and also commits a penalty offense, the score is cancelled out and only the penalty is awarded. The idea that penalties for the same occurrence of a prohibited attack must escalate has been somewhat controversial. It is currently considered that a penalty for the same prohibited act be escalated. However, some feel that it should still be possible that a warning or smaller penalty be given after a major penalty for the same offense. Finally, remember that failure to obey instructions of the referee is a shikkaku offense.

## Unofficial Warning

Attempted Minor infractions. First instance of a minor infraction

## Keikoku

Minor infractions Repeated minor infractions which a warning has been given

## Hansoku Chui

Major infractions- Repeated minor infractions which a keikoku has already been given

Hansoku

Very serious infraction. When Hansoku Chui's or Keikoku's raise score to Sanbon

Shikkaku

Disqualification from tournament, competition or match.

Refer to chief referee for limit of shikkaku

Instances of Shikkaku

Act injurious to prestige and honor of karate-do.

Does not obey referee's orders.

Overexcited jeopardizing the match.

Dangerous actions deliberately violating the rules.

Refuses the doctors recommendation.

Other actions violating the rules of the tournament.

**EDITOR'S INSERT**

**FOR MEMORIZING OF THE CONCEPTS WE WILL USE THE TERMINOLOGY**

‘ **3-3s** ’ (There are → **3** basic levels of intensity)

**Top** = *greatest/worst*  
**Middle** = *medium*  
**Bottom** = *least*

**Each one of these levels has 3 additional levels**

**Top** = *greatest/worst*  
**Middle** = *medium*  
**Bottom** = *least*



**Presto- the ‘ 3-3s ’**

**When touch to face is observed, then:**

- 1 Major injury Big error Take away something big**  
1,2,3, Considerations= Quality ,Responsibility ,Intention
- 2 Minor injury Medium error Take away something medium**  
1,2,3, Considerations= Quality ,Responsibility ,Intention
- 3 No injury Small error Take away something small**  
1,2,3, Considerations= Quality ,Responsibility ,Intention

**Degrees of consideration for mitigation or aggravation in awarding scores**

**Quality of technique**

- |          |                              |
|----------|------------------------------|
| 1 Worst  | No quality in technique      |
| 2 Middle | Waza-ari if no contact error |
| 3 Least  | Ippon if no contact error    |

**Responsibility**

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 1 Worst  | Attacker did it by himself             |
| 2 Middle | Both caused incident                   |
| 3 Least  | Injured caused incident by his actions |

**Intention**

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 1 Worst  | Malicious                                       |
| 2 Middle | Meant to do it but not intended to cause mishap |
| 3 Least  | Good sportsmanship but error                    |

*End of editor's note* ♥

## PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

The following are forbidden:

- a. Techniques which make contact with the throat.
- b. Techniques which make excessive contact, having regard to the scoring area attacked.<sup>1</sup>
- c. Attacks to the groin, joints, or instep.
- d. Attacks to the face with open hand techniques ("TAISHO" or NUKITE)<sup>2</sup>
- e. Dangerous throws which by their nature preclude or prejudice the opponent's ability to land with safety.
- f. Techniques which by their nature cannot be controlled for the safety of the opponent.<sup>3</sup>
- g. Repeated direct attacks to arms or legs.<sup>4</sup>
- h. Repeated exits from the competition area (JOGAI)<sup>5</sup>, or movements which waste too much time.
- i. Purposeless grabbing of the opponent, wrestling, or violent pushing.<sup>6</sup>
- j. MUBOBI.<sup>7</sup>
- k. Any discourteous behavior
- l. Feigning of injury in order to gain advantage.<sup>8</sup>

### Notes from WUKO rule book:

1. Control to scoring areas must be reasonable. Techniques which touch the areas may be scored but those which cause actual injury may not be scored and could incur a penalty for lack of control. In the case of kick techniques, a greater tolerance is allowed, provided that the attack is controlled and the impact does not cause obvious injury.

2. Shuto is not considered an open-handed technique requiring penalty.

3. Techniques which cannot demonstrate controlled kime are excluded. Uncontrolled attacks merit penalty under this clause whether or not an injury has occurred.

4. The key words are direct and repeated. You should warn a contestant for the first transgression., It must be repeated to merit penalty. Direct is also important. If an opponent blocks by shielding his body with his arms or legs, the attacker is not to be penalized for the poor blocking of his opponent. If the attacker persists in taking advantage of this, then this is direct (deliberate) but it can be without maliciousness.

Jogai relates to a situation where a contestant's foot, or part thereof moves outside of the area. An exception is when the contestant is actually propelled from the area by his opponent.

6. Purposeless grabbing is not allowed. A competitor can grab and attack within the rules. The original concept was that an attacker could only grab the arm, but the defender could grab the karate-gi. Grabbing was never meant to be disallowed, but meaningless grabbing or clinching is a penalty.

7. Mubobimubobi relates to a situation where one, or both contestants display a lack of regard for his or their own safety. Mubobi is no defense. A contestant who attacks with no regard for his own defense commits mubobi. Mubobi permits the referee to penalize the cause or potential cause of unsafe actions. This is especially important as an injury to the attack target may not be the fault of the attacking player.

8. Feigning of injury (tactical diving) could in the fight circumstances be considered an act harming the prestige and honor of karate-do and thus a shikkaku offense. Especially if it is a premeditated conspiracy.

### CRITEREA FOR DECISIONS

It is important to understand the correct method for determining the winner of a kumite match. A match can be won on the basis of points, by penalties, in encho-sen, by hantei, or by kiken due to injury or otherwise. It is important that you understand the order of priorities that can occur in a karate match.

In regular matches:

Kiken, Hansoku, or Shikkaku?  
 First person to score Sanbon  
 Highest Score at end of match time

In tied matches:

First take Hantei:  
 Ippons or Waza-aris  
 Fighting spirit and strength  
 Superiority of tactics and techniques

If hantei is tied

Fight encho-sen  
 First to receive a score wins  
 No score at end of encho-sen  
 Referee Panel must vote.

Note: Every time a match is tied, there must be a hantei and the match judged with regard to the above 3 items. The encho-sen is not automatic. You must be alert at all times to what the fighters are doing. The competitor is on the tatami to fight and the rules discourage attempted escaping from the rigor of karate combat. The deliberate avoidance of combat demonstrates inferior tactics and can thus cause loss of a bout. This can be vital in team play because a team vying for a draw may lose the match instead for inferior tactics and techniques. The bout must be awarded to the obviously superior player.

If injury in match and contestant cannot continue:

Hansoku or Shikkaku?  
 Minor penalty raising score to sanbon?  
 Else to competitor ahead at time of injury

Note: Contestant who wins twice by disqualification of his opponent is immediately withdrawn if due to injury.

### USE OF YAME

Yame should not be used to influence the outcome of a match. The matches, especially in the adult divisions, should not be stopped too much and/or at the wrong times. Do not call yame in the middle of an attack designed to carry the opponent out of bounds and destroy the possibility of a penalty. Calling yame to bring the competitors back into the center of the ring destroys ring

positioning , and calling yame in the exact second as a technique is scored could invalidate an additional higher scoring technique or combination technique. The rules provide for yame in specific situations. The referee must not control ring strategy or destroy scoring or penalty possibilities by use of yame.

Situations when the bout may be halted.

1. Jogai
2. To adjust gi.
3. When a penalty is about to be committed
4. When a penalty has been committed
5. When the judge indicates a penalty is about to or has been committed.
6. Injuries, illness or other causes
7. Seizing or grabbing the opponent without an immediate effective technique
8. Contestant(s) fall, or are thrown and no effective techniques are immediately forthcoming.

These are in principle the only times yame should be called. Yame can be called if the referee is unclear in an award and the arbitrator needs clarification or if there is an administrative error, but these are acts of the officiating panel unrelated to the actual combat.

A referee must not control the outcome of the match by inappropriate yame. You can call yame if the fighting has become meaningless or confusion is found in the match.

Do not yame:

1. To prevent out of bounds when a competitor is about to be forced out of the competition ring or is running to escape near the boundary line.
2. To prevent a further technique from scoring such as in a combination technique, each tactic or attack should be allowed to be completed.
3. To interfere with match (ring) strategy especially when a competitor has been worked to a position near the boundary line and bring them back to the center so that they can all start over equal again.
4. After an exchange if there is nothing that happens requiring the referee to call yame. Let the match continue.

Yame for a reason. Do not torimasen (I don't take it) if there is nothing to torimasen!

### **JOGAI**

Jogai is considered whenever the foot is even partially over the boundary line, unless the fighter is pushed out or if it occurs after the yame. There is an argument over whether the old concept of the boundary line being a cliff and if you fall off you lose against the counter argument that jogai should be considered as an escape from the match and only this should be penalized. WUKO considers that the jogai be awarded whenever the boundary line is violated.

A competitor in bounds may score on a competitor who is out of bounds, but the out of bounds competitor may not score back. An exit is considered when the foot is even partially over the boundary line. For this purpose, the boundary marker is considered in bounds. Also, under the WUKO, it is possible for both a jogai and an earned award or penalty to be awarded on the same play or for both competitors to receive jogai at the same time. That is, if a contestant should score as a competitor leaves the ring he may receive the point award and his opponent may receive jogai. Jogai is not awarded whenever a competitor is pushed, if he is hit and knocked out of the ring by the blow, or if he should score immediately before exiting the ring. The latter is a precision of the application of the rules. If a fighter attempts an attack and is unsuccessful and exits the ring, he will receive the jogai. The referee should not yame to prevent the out of bounds. It is not the intent to leave the match to the

whim of the referee as to when to call yame and especially not to give the referee a chance to influence the outcome.

### INJURIES OR ACCIDENTS IN COMPETITION

Whenever someone cannot continue because of injury, it is important that the chart be drawn correctly as someone must succeed to the next round on the chart. There are three circumstances which must be considered:

If two contestants cannot continue through no fault of either:

1. The match goes to the contestant ahead in the score, or
2. if tied, hantei is required.

A contestant through the fault of his opponent is injured and cannot continue:

It is expected loss due to hansoku would be awarded the opponent.

The injured contestant would carry forward on the chart. If the injured contestant cannot continue in the next match, the new opponent would win due to kiken.

A contestant, through no fault of his opponent elects not to continue:

Kiken is awarded and the opponent wins the match.

A kiken is the decision given if a contestant:

1. refuses to continue
2. abandons the bout, or
3. is withdrawn by order of the referee.

*Please note that a kiken is worth sanbon - three points.*

It is understood the doctor will recommend that a fighter not continue if he has been stunned, dazed or knocked out. Remember, we do not consider *surprise at being hit* as being stunned.

### JUDGING PANEL

#### Chief Referee's Duties and Powers

Correct preparation for each given tournament.

To decide the allocation and appointment of arbitrators, referees and judges.

To nominate substitutes officials where such are required.

To pass the final judgement on matters of a technical nature which may arise during a given match and for which there are no stipulations in the rules.

(The composition of a panel of officials may not be changed at the sole discretion of the arbitrator, referee or judge.)

#### Arbitrator's Duties and Powers

The arbitrator is required to handle the overall ring responsibilities and is expected to keep his own independent score during the match. He cannot interfere with the referee unless he is asked by the referee to do so. Specifically, the arbitrator must:

Oversee the operation of the match and the actions of the referee and/or judge.

When requested, express his opinion to the referee.

Cast a vote only when taking part in consultation with the referee and judge or when referred to for an opinion.

Express his opinion through the intermediary of the referee who will consequently summon the judge.

Supervise and direct the time-keeper and record-keeper.

Approve the official bout record.

The arbitrator cannot interfere with the referees running of the match. If the arbitrator feels a rule infraction by the referee or judge, he must notify the chief referee of his opinion. The arbitrator may not order the referee to halt the match and demand a revision. He may call to the referee to correct or clarify an award.

### **Referee's Duties and Powers**

The referee has the sole responsibility to conduct matches:

Announce the start, the suspension, and the end of the match.

Award an ippon or waza-ari.

Give all commands and make all announcements.

Explain the basis for giving a judgement.

Impose penalties and to issue warnings (before, during, or after a bout).

Obtain the opinion (s) of the judge and arbitrator (when required).

Consider the judge's signal and give a judgement.

Announce extensions.

His authority includes:

Competition area

Immediate perimeter.

In the event the referee and judge disagree initially, the referee need not necessarily turn to the arbitrator for his opinion. It is not the intend for the arbitrator to vote every time the referee and judge may disagree because his viewpoint is prejudiced by his limited angle of viewing. As the referee, do not overuse the arbitrator. The arbitrator should only be used in the event of a disagreement between the referee and mirror (judge) and only if the referee and judge cannot resolve any difference themselves. There is no obligation to consult or discuss with the arbitrator.

The referee and judge are a unit and not separate entities. The referee, using the advantage point of a mirror to observe the opposite side of the match, must make accurate decisions. In situations where another opinion or clarification of the rules is needed, then the referee may turn to the arbitrator.

The referee can overrule a judge's opinion if he sees that is is in error. In other words, if the judge indicates a score and the referee sees that it slipped by the target, the referee need not stop the match, he merely has to cross his arms as in torimasen and announce tsuzukete. Much discussion can be avoided if the referee and judge pass each other after the yame call. The judge can then say white, kick to the head or penalty attack to the joint, etc. in passing and avoid the need for a formal huddle. Signals have been designed for the mirror to convey the severity of a penalty in consultation with the referee without without verbal discussion.

### **Judge's Duties and Powers**

Assist the referee

Take part in a consultations.

Signal an opinion by discrete gestures.

Exercise a right to vote on a decision to be taken.

Speak only if summoned by the referee.

Carefully observe the actions of the contestants and signal to the referee:

When an ippon or waza-ari is observed.

When a contestant appears about to commit, or has committed a prohibited act and/or technique.

When an injury or illness of a contestant is noticed.

When both or either of the contestant have moved out of the competition area.

In other cases when it is deemed necessary to call the attention of the referee.

General points:

The appointed arbitrators, referees and judges may not occupy other positions during the tournament.

All consultations must be kept as brief as possible.

Discussions should be strenuously avoided

Reliance is placed upon the prescribed gestures

If any situations arise which are not covered in these rules, or if there is any doubt concerning their application in a given case, the referee will immediately halt the bout and confer with the arbitrator, judge and the chief referee in order to obtain a consensus .

### **KUMITE SCORESHEET**

AKA (RED)		SHIRO (WHITE)	
NAME:		NAME:	
SCORE:		SCORE:	
OVERTIME:		OVERTIME:	
ARBITRATOR:	NOTES & SPECIAL EVENTS:		
REFEREE:			
JUDGE:			
MATCH START:	(NOTE ANY WIN DUE TO INJURY)		
MATCH FINISH:			
ACTUAL MATCH TIME:			

**Note:**

For each match we need:

The names of each official

Actual Start Time

Actual Finish Time

Actual time for length of competition

Notes of special or unusual events:

Injuries

Contestant stunned for more than 10 seconds (head blows only)

Wins due to injury

Withdrawals from competition

Changes in officials during match play

 Et cetera,  Et cetera,  Et cetera 

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