

## Karate Kung Fu Illustrated Exclusive Tournament Analysis

Karate KungFu Illustrated has spent many years reporting about major competitions and competitors. But not much time has been spent looking at the tournament structure itself. How do tournaments compare? In what ways are they like? How do tournaments vary? What can we tell the competitor to help him in finding just the right tournament for him. There are many different rules systems and divisions found between tournaments. Some tournaments are style restricted, some include only one branch of the martial art, and others include multi-arts. Some events like the United States Taekwondo Union (USTU) Championships and The USA Karate Federation (USA Karate) Championships are run under the international standards of the martial sports organizations approved by the International Olympic Committee. Well, below is a survey of 11 carefully selected tournaments to review. The information on each tournament was provided by each of the tournament promoters from a survey supplied to them by Karate KungFu Illustrated. There information has been taken at face value - no independent confirmation of the information provided was performed. This survey while not completed in a scientific sense nevertheless gives a good review of the tournaments sanctioned by the major karate tournament structures and thus gives a good insight into the current structure of tournaments. The topics reviewed included facilities, spectator costs and entry fees, medical and insurance, equipment, referee and rules, registration - number of divisions, entries, grand champions, etc and awards.

Karate KungFu Illustrated received replies from 11 tournaments:

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Traditional Karate Tournament International	3/29/91
USTU National Championships	5/1/91
Heart Of Texas State Championships	8/10/91
AAU/USA National Chinese Martial Arts Championships	8/9/91
Vancouver Internationals	3/16/91
All American Open Karate/Taekwondo/Kung Fu	3/16/91
John Burdryck's Battle Of Baltimore	10/20/90
Diamond Nationals	10/13/90
New Hampshire Nationals	11/10/90
Honolulu International Karate-do Championships	11/24/90
USA Karate Championships	8/9/91

Other events such as the AAU Karate Championships, International Chinese Martial Arts Championships, Battle of Atlanta, U.S. Open, East Coast Nationals, Ed Parker International Karate Championships, Femio Demurai's Championships, Aaron Banks' Tournament, and Hwang Kee Tang Soo Do Championships were contacted but failed to respond.

## OVERVIEW

In general, the number of years the events had been held ranged from 2 - 32 years with the average being 14 years and the mean also being 14 years. Some events like the USTU Championships and the USA Karate Championships move around the country while the other tournaments are held in the same place or city each year. The events responding were held in colleges, hotels, arenas, gymnasiums. The type of flooring included wood as well as carpet over concrete. One event used a hard rubber surface and only the two National Governing Bodies' (NGB's) -United States Taekwondo Union - USTU and The USA Karate Federation - USA Karate - used matted rings at their championships. International rules call for matted rings.

Of the events responding, all but two - Ozawa's Traditional Karate Tournament International and the All American Open Karate/Taekwondo/Kung Fu Championships - are recognized or sanctioned by an organization. Organizations sanctioning the tournaments surveyed included : USTU, AOK & SKI, AAU, NBL,SKI, PKC, AKL, ECPA, NASKA, PKA AKC, AAU, and USA KARATE. The largest tournament reporting was the Diamond Nationals with 1400 competitors and 2400 entries in events. The USAKF Championships came in second with 1200 competitors and 2000 entries. Other tournaments reported 1000 or less competitors. Most of the tournaments are run on only one day but 4 events cover three

days. Each of these 4 events claim 1000 or more competitors. But 3 of the largest 4 - the Diamond Nationals, Honolulu International Karate-do Championships, and the John Burdryck's Battle Of Baltimore - were run all on one day. The AAU/USA National Chinese Martial Arts Championships, the smallest tournament reporting was held over three days. The USA Karate Federation noted that its tournament is a pre-qualification event and not everyone who attends a qualifying event is eligible to attend its championships. This is done to keep the size of its championships down.

## COSTS AND EXPENSES

Most tournaments charged \$6 or less for spectators and some even less - as low as \$1.50 for children. Other tournaments like the Diamond Nationals charge \$15 for adults and children. Two other events charged \$10 fees for adults and one of these charged \$5 for kids, the other \$10. In respects to equipment we looked at hand pads, foot pads, chest protectors, headgear, mouthpieces, and groin cups. Hand pads and groin cups were required at all competitions. The USTU National Championships was the only tournament not requiring mouthpieces - they were optional which is interesting with their contact rules. However the USTU National Championships was the only tournament requiring chest protectors and foot pads. Foot pads and chest protectors were optional at all other events. Headgear was required at all but the Honolulu International Karate-do Championships, USA Karate Championships, and the Traditional Karate Tournament International events. All tournaments indicated that the cost of equipment must be born by the competitor. The only exception was the New Hampshire Nationals which reported it supplied optional chest protectors.

Entry fees averaged \$30 for one event \$38 for 2 events and \$44 for three events. The most expensive entry fee was USTU at \$45 for one and \$60 for two and \$70 for three events. The Vancouver Internationals had the lowest single event entry fee with the USA Karate Championships being next low. The Battle of Baltimore and the Diamond Nationals had the second highest entry fees - \$35, \$45, & \$50. Two events - the AAU Chinese Martial Arts Championships and the Heart of Texas Championships charged the same for one or two events. Six events had pre-registration discounts. Four had pre-registration discounts of \$5 and two of \$10. USA Karate used a late fee penalty to encourage early entry.

## MEDICAL, FACILITIES AND INSURANCE

As for medical coverage, all events but the New Hampshire Nationals stated a doctor was present. All but Honolulu International Karate-do Championships had paramedics, and all but three also provided athletic trainers. Four events had ambulances on site and all but 3 claim they use medical report forms (USA Karate is computerized). Four events state they do not keep medical statistics.

In terms of insurance coverage carried, three events reported that they do not carry any spectator liability insurance and three do not carry participant legal liability coverage. Four events state they carry accidental medical expense insurance and of those four only two claim primary coverage. Two events carry no insurance whatsoever.

By way of explanation, spectator Liability covers only bodily injury and property damage to spectators at events. Participant legal liability covers liability to participants in the tournaments. Medical Expense Insurance pays for accidental medical injuries arising from an injury in a tournament without regardless of fault or negligence. Primary coverage pays regardless of other insurance, secondary coverage pays if there is no primary payee. While we determined that coverage was provided at certain events, we did not look into the limits of coverage or to see if the coverages would also protect referees and officials at the event or coaches and instructors who have students competing in the competitions.

## RULES AND REFEREES

A large variety of rules were used at the various events. Some used their own while the rest reported JKA, USTU, AAU Kung Fu, NBL, PKA, AKC, NASKA, PKA, AKL, AAU/WUKO, and WUKO. Only the United States Taekwondo Union had full contact rules and only USA Karate reported no contact rules in all divisions. Most tournaments used a combination of light and semi-contact rules in their divisions. All but two events - the All American Open Karate/Taekwondo/Kung Fu and John Burdryck's Battle Of Baltimore claim they use certified officials. While

all had rules meetings, meetings were reported mandatory at all but the Heart Of Texas State Championships, AAU/USA National Chinese Martial Arts Championships, the Vancouver Internationals and the Diamond Nationals (which is the largest event reporting). Various sources of referee certification were reported by the responders: WUKO, USTU, AOK, AAU, NASKA, PKA, USA KARATE, Pacific Northwest Referee Association, and the JKA. Four events used a 4 flag system, two a 2 flag system and two the mirror (WUKO) system. AAU Kung Fu used its own system and USTU uses the international Taekwondo rules. Most events were single elimination with AAU Kung Fu and USA Karate reporting other elimination systems (repechage and double eliminations). All but USTU and the Vancouver Internationals claim divisions are charted - a deficiency in our eyes. Vancouver also was the only one who did not use kata scoresheets. All tournaments claim they keep records for at least one year with some for as long as 15 years. The NGB's (USA Karate and USTU) keep an official permanent record.

Most tournaments use a 20x20 ring size. The USSTU which uses a large ring 40x40 feet. Those using the WUKO rules use a ring size of 26x26 (8 meters). Of interest, the Battle of Baltimore reports twenty-five 400 sq foot rings in a 15000 sq ft facility which provides for a rather packed condition but would be necessary to process 1775 entries in one day. The Diamond Nationals claims to process 2400 entries in twenty-seven 20x20 rings in one day in a 35000 sq ft facility. Other larger events used smaller numbers or rings but ran the event over 3 days. Another interesting interesting fact notices was the Honolulu International claims 6 rings and 1900 entries in one day.

## DIVISIONS

In the sex category, all tournaments reported kumite separated by sex. All but the Battle of Baltimore, Heart of Texas, and AAU Kung Fu do not separate kata by sex. Of the 9 tournaments who had weapons kata, Ozawa's Traditional Karate Tournament and USTU did not have weapons events, only 4, the Battle of Baltimore, Diamond Nationals, Hawaii International, and USA Karate separated weapons kata by sex. While no tournaments separated kumite by style, only the traditional karate tournaments, Ozawa's and USA Karate, and the USTU made no style distinctions for kata. This is an unfair question for single art events such as USA Karate, USTU and AAU Kung Fu which administer only one martial art. In kata, style separations were general - by Karate, Taekwondo and Kung Fu. Except that AAU Kung Fu made style distinctions in the various Kung Fu styles. Style distinctions in weapons kata were not found in USA Karate, Heart of Texas, AAU Kung Fu and interestingly enough in the All American Open Karate/Taekwondo/Kung Fu Championships.

Grand Champions were declared for all but AAU, USTU, and USA Karate. Ozawa's tournament only had one male and one female grand champion. Heart of Texas only had men and women kata and kumite grand champions and the Honolulu International only had a men's kumite grand champion. The Diamond Nationals had grand champions in men and women and youth\ kata and weapons kata, and in all but youth kumite. Burdryck's Battle of Baltimore equaled the Diamond Nationals except that it did not have a youth weapons grand champion. The New Hampshire Nationals had grand champions in all but women's' weapons kata (shy girls?) even though they have weapons separated by sex.

## AWARDS & PRIZES

For awards, the Traditional Karate Tournament International, USTU, AAU, and USA Karate gave medals. All the others gave trophies. Only the Heart of Texas (\$600), Diamond Nationals (\$5000) New Hampshire Nationals (\$3100) and Battle of Baltimore (\$5000) had any prize money. Only the Heart of Texas included prize money for below black belt divisions and only the New Hampshire Nationals included junior black belt divisions. All the others included only black belt divisions. As for merchandise, the Heart of Texas, All American Open, and New Hampshire Nationals gave merchandise - tv sets, bicycles, or jacks with a cost of \$200-900 dollars only to certain grand champion divisions only. Only the New Hampshire Nationals reported it provided any support money to competitors and this only totaled \$1000.

**Chart #1 - Number of Competitors and Entries with a look at the chance to get a first place award**

How does your event compare with the the ones we looked at? The USA Karate Federation offers the greatest number of events for juniors and seniors to be champions as well as the greatest overall number of events. The Diamond Nationals offers the greatest number of events for adults. The USTU Championships has only competition for adults and seniors and not for children. AAU Kung Fu offers the second largest number of events. Ozawa's Karate Tournament International offers the least amount of divisions.

	Traditional Karate Tournament International	USTU National Championships	Heart Of Texas State Championships	AAU/USA National Chinese Martial Arts Championships	Vancouver Internationals	All American Open Karate/Taekwondo/Kung Fu	John Burdryck's Battle Of Baltimore	Diamond Nationals	New Hampshire National
Number of Individuals Entered	1000	1000	300	212	600	900	1000	1400	
Number in 2 or more events	900	600	260	180	400	300	725	800	
Total Entries All Events	1900	1600	746	550	1000	1200	1725	2400	
Total Number of Divisions	62	80	103	215	85	91	89	197	
# Adult Divisions	NR	44	38	77	NR	43	55	82	
# Children's' Divisions	NR	0	53	89	NR	43	25	99	
# Senior Divisions	NR	36	12	49	NR	5	9	16	
<sup>1</sup> Divisions per Competitor	.062	.080	.343	1.01	.141	.101	.089	.141	
<sup>2</sup> Divisions per Entry	.033	.050	.138	.391	.085	.076	.052	.080	
<sup>3</sup> Number of Black Belt Divisions			15	30		12			

<sup>1</sup>We wanted to look at how many divisions were offered in relationship to the number of competitors entered. This would give some idea of what the odds were to win a first place award. Our problem is that some tournaments like the AAU Kung Fu offer many divisions, but are not large events. There were actually more divisions then events! The above comparison is meaningful however for those events of 1000 or more where we can really get a comparison. Note, the higher the number the more divisions offered per competitor.. Ozawa has only 62 divisions per 1000 competitors of a ration of .062. The most divisions offered per competitor was the USA Karate Championships of with a ration of .221.

<sup>2</sup>Looking at divisions per entry (which considers those entered in two or more events) we use a similar measure and we get similar results. On the larger events, USA Karate has the most divisions per entry, Ozawa's tournament the least. You can draw your own conclusions. <sup>3</sup>Not all tournaments reported the number of black belt divisions, but we included for your information what was reported.

**Chart #2 Attendance: Number of Divisions vs Number of Adult Competitors**

<i>Name of Tournament</i>	<i>Number of Divisions</i>			<i>Number of Competitors</i>			<i>Win P #Divis</i>	
	<i>#Kata</i>	<i>#Kumite</i>	<i>#Weapons</i>	<i># Adult Divisions</i>	<i>Total Adult Men</i>	<i>Total Adult Women</i>		<i>Total Adult</i>
Traditional Karate Tournament International					62		0	
USTU National Championships	12	32			44	700	300	1000
Heart Of Texas State Championships	13	20	5		38	75	40	115
AAU/USA National Chinese Martial Arts Championships	27	28	22		77	176	4	180
Vancouver Internationals						250	100	350
All American Open Karate/Taekwondo/Kung Fu	18	23	2		43	400	100	500
John Burdryck's Battle Of Baltimore	22	22	9		55	600	100	700
Diamond Nationals	32	40	10		82			0
New Hampshire Nationals	12	16	2		30	100	60	160
1991 Honolulu International Karate-do Championships	13	13	11		37	200	100	300
USA Karate	12	25	6		43	274	151	425

This chart shows the number of adult competitors and the number of reported divisions for both male and female adults by kata, kumite, and weapons kata. We did not attempt to reconcile these figures with those in Chart #1 or with the charts below. In parts of the survey it was apparent that estimates were given and where detail was requested more exact data was given. As long as the numbers were close, we used the figures. This applies to the Senior and Youth Charts below. Note, the higher the percentage in the win potential column, the greater the chances of winning at the championships. Like those figures in Chart #1 above, the percentages are skewed for the smaller events.

**Chart #3 Attendance: Number of Divisions vs Number of Children Competitors**

<i>Name of Tournament</i>	<i>Number of Divisions</i>				<i>Number of Competitors</i>			<i>Win P #Divis</i>
	<i>#Kata</i>	<i>#Kumite</i>	<i>#Weapons</i>	<i>#Children</i>	<i>Total Junior Men</i>	<i>Total Junior Women</i>	<i>Total Juniors</i>	
Traditional Karate Tournament International								0
USTU National Championships								0
Heart Of Texas State Championships	18	30	5		53	85	30	115
AAU/USA National Chinese Martial Arts Championships	57	28	4		89	20	2	22
Vancouver Internationals						200	150	350
All American Open Karate/Taekwondo/Kung Fu	10	33	0		43	250	50	300
John Burdryck's Battle Of Baltimore	14	18	3		25	200	60	260
Diamond Nationals	32	56	7		115			0
New Hampshire Nationals	10	24	4		38	300	100	400
1991 Honolulu International Karate-do Championships	20	20	15		55	500	250	750
USA Karate	84	84	14		182	415	264	679

**Chart #4 Attendance: Number of Divisions vs Number of Senior Competitors**

*Number of Divisions* *Number of Competitors*

<i>Name of Tournament</i>	#Kata	#Kumite	#Weapons	#Senior	Total Senior Men	Total Senior Women	Total Seniors	Win P #Divis
Traditional Karate Tournament International								0
USTU National Championships	20	16			36	70	40	110
Heart Of Texas State Championships	6	6	0		12	50	20	70
AAU/USA National Chinese Martial Arts Championships	21	28	0		49	10	0	10
Vancouver Internationals						50	25	75
All American Open Karate/Taekwondo/Kung Fu	2	3	0		5	75	25	100
John Burdryck's Battle Of Baltimore	4	4	1		9	100	20	120
Diamond Nationals	6	8	2		16			0
New Hampshire Nationals	2	2	1		5	30	20	50
1991 Honolulu International Karate-do Championships	4	4	4		12	70	50	120
USA Karate	16	16	8		40	64	39	103