

GENERAL TOURNAMENT RULES

TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

International Ryukyukan Tournaments are directed by Okinawa Ryukyukan Karate Kobudo Federation. The International Ryukyukan representative and the local Ryukyukan tournament director preside over the tournament. Tournament Directors make efforts to replicate Ryukyukan tournaments held in Okinawa, Japan. Modifications to the Okinawa way are made as necessary to respect local customs, rules and laws. Ryukyukan promotes international friendship through training and competing in the martial arts. We invite all participants to join in the spirit of respect and camaraderie, and work to build lasting relationships. Ryukyukan strives for every competitor to understand the tournament process, and to leave the tournament knowing that they were treated fairly.

JUDGING

Judges for Ryukyukan Tournaments are picked for their experience, and fair attitude. The head referee for each ring (Shushin) is given full authority to apply the rules to a ring and determine the winner. No arguing or disputes are allowed. Issues concerning safety or blatant rule errors should be brought to the tournament director.

BEHAVIOR, COMPETITOR

As a traditional karate-do tournament, all competitors are expected to display respectful behavior at all times. The judge's decision is final.

Display an attitude which shows the best in the martial arts.

BEHAVIOR, SPECTATOR

Positive cheering is encouraged.

Foul language or disrespectful behavior is not allowed.

No food allowed in the competition and spectator areas, water only please.

Spectators are asked to help keep the aisle-ways clear for public safety.

Spectators must not enter the competition area without express Director permission.

No coaching during the morning events, positive cheering is encouraged.

Afternoon knockdown events allow up to 2 coaches at mat side (coach area designated by judge), positive cheering and/or verbal coaching from the spectator areas is encouraged.

KATA AND KOBUDO RULES

Kata and Kobudo competition will follow the procedures used at the Ryukyukan Karatedo/Kobudo tournament held annually in Okinawa, Japan.

A ring will be designated with mats or floor tape, usually 8 meters by 8 meters.

Three judges, one Shushin (head judge) and two Fukushin (judges) lined up on one side of the ring, will be seated facing toward the competition area. Each judge will hold a set of score cards.

Competitors and judges will begin the division with the following bowing procedure as announced by Shushin: Shomen ni rei (bow to the head table), Otogai ni rei (bow to each other), judges then silently bow together and are seated.

Optional Test Kata (Shushin's decision): A test kata may be performed followed by a private judges meeting to determine the average score.

This practice prior to the first competition kata of the day is used to allow ring judges from different areas to calibrate their scores. This test score will not be the official score for the competitor who performs a test kata.

The score table will ensure that all competitors are present, and call the first competitor, and announce the competitor who will follow (on deck).

The first competitor will enter the ring facing the judges when summoned by Shushin, bowing at the ring entry. The competitor will bow again at ring center, clearly announce the kata name, and begin the kata. The competitor will bow again at the end of the kata and wait in Yoi (ready/at ease stance) for the judges' decision.

Shushin will make a two tone sound with a whistle. On the second tone, all judges will raise their score cards so the score table can see the scores.

Scoring range will be 6.0 to 8.5, 7.0 being the average score. 6.0 will be used for those who do not complete the kata, or in the case of kobudo, when a competitor is disqualified for an act such as unsafe weapon handling.

Kata scoring is based on the following criteria:

Performance of a traditional karate kata with clear lineage from
Okinawa Shuri-te, Naha-te, or Tomari-te
Ring entry, manners, clear voice

Technical skill and accuracy of dachi (stance), kicks, punches, blocks
Sharpness of movement, speed, power, kiai
Eye focus, expression of the real situation

Kobudo scoring is based on the above kata criteria plus:
Safe weapon handling

Weapon handling as it would apply to real combat

The score table will clearly announce the individual judges scores followed by the average score.

The Shushin will dismiss the competitor, who will then rei, exit the ring with an additional rei at ring's edge, and be seated.

The table will then announce the next competitor, following the same procedure until the division is complete.

Shushin will examine the results, ensuring that there is a clear winner for first, second, and third place.

In the case of a tie, the scores will be re-calculated dropping the highest score to determine the winners. If after dropping the high score, a tie still exists, the scores will be re-calculated dropping the low score. If a tie still exists, the two tied competitors will each perform their kata again to determine a winner.

Competitors will then line up, and first place, second place and third place will be announced.

Shushin will close the division by conducting the following procedure:
Otogai ni rei, Shomen ni rei, judges then silently bow to each other.

KNOCKDOWN KUMITE RULES

COMPETITION AREA

The standard competition area is an 8 x 8 meter mat. Ring size can be adjusted as determined by the Tournament Director.

JUDGES

The Shushin (head judge) begins standing on the mat between the competitors and jogai (out of bounds) and may move about freely during the match.

Fukushin (judges) are seated at the four mat corners. At the tournament director's discretion, two Fukushin may be used, seated at diagonal corners of the mat.

COMPETITION UNIFORM

All Knockdown competitors must wear a traditional karate gi including top, pants, and belt (obi). Uniform exceptions may be made for competitors from different styles, as approved on a case by case basis by the Tournament Director.

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (KNOCKDOWN DIVISIONS)

All protective gear must be approved by the head referee prior to competition.

Mouthpiece (gum shield) is mandatory for all divisions

Groin protectors are mandatory for men, all divisions

Soft protective head gear is mandatory for all divisions

Face shields are optional for all divisions except men's advanced (men's advanced knockdown is mandatory soft headgear only). Safety headgear face protection may include (other than men's advanced) clear plastic face protection designed for full contact, or padded cross pieces to protect the face.

Soft hand guards (cloth kumite hand pads or mma competition gloves) are mandatory for all divisions. Punching bag gloves with grip bars or thin padding are not allowed. Wearing cloth boxer's hand wraps in lieu of gloves is not allowed..

Soft cloth or soft leather shin and instep protection is mandatory for all divisions.

Soft chest protectors are optional. Men's advanced knockdown may not wear any chest protection or additional padding other than the mandatory shin/instep, hand, and head gear.

Boxer's wraps or supportive tape is not allowed. Taping due to injury must be approved by the medic and also by the Tournament Director.

Jewelry is not allowed.

KNOCKDOWN MATCH DURATION

Note: Match duration may be adjusted as determined by the Tournament Director, any changes must be described before a division begins.

Junior divisions will be 1.5 minute rounds. In the case of a first round tie, an additional 1 minute round will be conducted. At the end of the second round, judges must determine a match winner.

Teen, women's divisions, and men's beginner and intermediate divisions will all begin with a 2 minute round. In the case of a first round tie, an additional 1 minute round will be conducted. At the end of the second round, judges must determine a match winner.

Advanced men's knockdown division will begin with a 3 minute round.

In the case of a first round tie, an additional 1 minute round will be conducted. At the end of the second round, judges must determine a match winner.

SCORING TECHNIQUES

Fist (SEIKEN) strikes to the torso including front, back and sides, except the spine are allowed. Torso is defined as above the hip bones, and below the neck.

Kicks (KERI) using any part of foot or leg below the knee. Striking with the knee is not allowed. Kicks may be used to strike the head, torso, or legs. Intentional thrusting kicks to damage the knee joint are prohibited, round kicks (mawashigeri) which strike the knee are allowed.

KNOCKDOWN SCORING CRITERIA

Waza-ari is a recognized scoring technique. Ippon is a match winning point. Two Waza-ari will equal ippon, the winning point. When Ippon is awarded, the match stops and the winner is declared.

Ippon Criteria

Ippon will be awarded for a knockdown. A knockdown is defined as a legal technique which causes a competitor to fall to the mat (not able to stand on two feet), when the competitor cannot stand up completely within 5 seconds, OR cannot return to the start line in a safe fighting posture within 10 seconds.

Ippon will also be awarded upon the second Waza-ari, ending the match. When Ippon is awarded, the match stops and the winner is declared.

Waza-ari Criteria

Waza-ari is a recognized point, not in itself sufficient to win the match. Two Waza-ari will add together for Ippon. Waza-ari is scored when a legal technique causes the opponent to temporarily stop fighting, or fall to the mat for a short period of time. If the technique causes enough damage that the competitor cannot stand up within 5 seconds, or cannot return safely to the fighting line within 10 seconds, or the Shushin (head judge) determines that the competitor cannot safely continue, Ippon will be awarded, not Waza-ari.

Scoring to the head

Unblocked Jodan Geri (head kicks) will score at least Waza-ari regardless of the reaction shown by the opponent. It is not good karate to withstand head kicks without blocking; Ryukyukan Knockdown rules are designed so that competitors guard their head.

Hantei (Vote)

When Ippon is awarded, the match stops and the winner is declared. If Ippon has not been awarded by the end of round one, the Shushin will announce "Hantei" followed by a two tone whistle blast. Judges may vote for Aka (red), for Shiro (white), or cross their flags to designate a tie. If the first round is a tie, a second round will be conducted. After the second round, another Hantei will be called by Shushin, but this time judges must determine the winner. Judges look fist to score when voting. If a tie score, then judges weigh penalties and fighting spirit.

PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS AND TECHNIQUES

The head judge (SHUSHIN) will be control the ultimate decision as to whether a technique or behavior is legal and how warnings are issued, no arguing is permitted.

Fouls will be penalized as a Chui (warning). Two Chui will cause a Waza-ari to be added to the opponents score. Another two Chui will cause another Waza-ari to be awarded to the opponent, amounting to Ippon Kachi (winning point).

Prohibited Behaviors:

Retreating out of bounds (JOGAI) or avoiding combat. Grabbing, wrestling, or holding an opponent. Obvious pushing with hands, fists or body. Unsportsmanlike behavior as determined by the referee.

Prohibited Techniques:

Any hand attack to the opponents head, face, or neck is prohibited, whether the attack makes contact or not. (A hand feint to the face is prohibited and will be penalized.). Punching across the face area while striking at the torso is prohibited. Striking with the knee is prohibited.

Kicks to the groin, spine, throat, thrusting kicks to the knee joint are prohibited. Strikes using parts of the body such as head butts or elbows, not described as legal strikes above are prohibited. Striking or kicking an opponent who has been downed is prohibited. Attacking from the floor after having been downed by the opponent is prohibited.

(This should not be confused with an opponent defending himself while on the floor).

Jogai (out of bounds)

Judges will call jogai when a competitor leaves the ring by tapping their flags on the floor. The Shushin (head judge) will call Yame (stop).

Shushin has the option to ignore jogai if competitors move quickly across the jogai line and back, depending on safety considerations. Four jogai warnings will cause the opponent to be award Waza-ari. It is important to note that constant retreating is considered negatively during the judges vote (Hantei) regardless of jogai penalties.

DISPUTES

The Ryukyukan Shushin (head judge) and the Ryukyukan Tournament Director's decisions are final. No arguing over decisions is allowed.

KNOCKDOWN COMPETITION PROCEDURE

Judges are seated and Shushin (head judge) is stands. Competitors stand at the edge of the ring in Yoi (at ease stance). Competitors will be designated as Aka (red) and Shiro (white). Aka will begin on the Shushin's right side. Shushin signals for the competitors to enter the

ring at which time competitors bow and walk to the start line. Shushin will initiate the bowing procedure as follows: Shomen ni rei (bow to the head table), Shushin ni rei (bow to the head judge), Otogai ni rei (competitors bow to each other). The Shushin will then instruct the competitors to stand in a guarded stance (kamaete) and give the command of Hajime (begin). Fighting continues until the Shushin calls Yame in events such as a possible point, jogai (out of bounds) or a foul. Shushin will call for vote to determine fouls or points. The Shushin is in charge of the match and in charge of the judges (Fukushin). The decision of the Shushin is final. Competitors will be alerted when there are 30 seconds remaining in the round. Shushin will call for Hantei after the first round. A win by Hantei at the end of the first round is the end of the match. If Hantei is a tie, a second round is conducted. At the end of the second round, a winner will be selected by judge's vote. Shushin will initiate the exit bowing procedure as follows: Shomen ni rei (bow to the head table), Shushin ni rei (bow to the head judge), Otogai ni rei (competitors bow to each other). Competitors leave the ring, bowing at the edge of the ring.

NOTE

Ryukyukan rules may differ from country to country to respect local customs, rules and laws.