

# State Games of America

## Karate Tournament Rules



### General Rules

- For safety reasons, gum chewing in the ring will be grounds for disqualification from any event!
- It is preferred that no black belt judge their own student, if a substitute judge is available.
- Under no circumstance will a black belt judge their own student(s) in sparring competition.
- If a competitor realizes that his/her instructor is the ring judge for their event, they should point it out to avoid the appearance of favoritism.
- Coaching during the action of an event will not be permitted. Furthermore, only cheering is permitted from the stands. *Jeering and negative comments will not be allowed.*
- If a competitor feels that an infraction has occurred in a match or event, they should approach the center referee politely and explain why they feel such an infraction has occurred. Any protest must be settled immediately, not after the competition is completed.
- If the person protesting a call does so in an overly belligerent manner, the center referee has the right to refuse to listen to the protest and to disqualify the competitor, if necessary.
- Gross disrespect of the judges of any match or event, name calling, or any other verbal abuse by either the competitor, *or their supporters*, shall be grounds to disqualify the competitor from the event and dismiss the competitor and/or supporters from the tournament.
- In case of any rule disputes, the decision of the tournament arbitrator will be final.

## Kata and Weapon Forms

### General Criteria

Kata and Weapon Forms are all about presentation and precision. The judges will be looking for poise, position, timing, speed, strength, balance, and focus. All forms, whether “traditional” or “gymnastic”, must demonstrate a level of self-control commensurate with the training claimed by the competitor. Foot and hand positions must be precise and intentional, stances must be recognizable, motions must be discreet but part of a coherent whole and the overall flow of the form must be apparent. *Failure to keep the following protocols in mind will almost certainly result in a lower score:*

- Bow before entering the ring—it shows respect and begins your performance.
- Present yourself to the judges: *at least* give your name and the form you intend to perform; preferably also state your “house”, or school, and instructor.
- Ask permission to begin—again, it shows respect; it also makes sure the judges are ready.
- Step back far enough before beginning so that the judges don’t have to dive out of your way halfway through your form!
- End your form clearly. It shows the judges you intended to stop rather than showing you forgot the other part of the form.

### Points and Judging

**Under Belt divisions**- Shall start with a perfect score of 9.00, from which performance deductions will be removed.

**Black Belt divisions**- Shall start with a perfect score of 10.00, from which performance deductions will be removed.

**All Belt divisions**- Examples of approximate point reductions are below. Specific reductions are the responsibility of the individual judge.

- .01 reduction, each occurrence- foot/hand/weapon obviously misplaced; loss of balance; lack of poise or excessive sloppiness; obvious loss of focus; short but obvious pause in performance.
- .10 reduction, each occurrence- failure to observe the above protocols; long pause in performance.
- 1.00 reduction, each occurrence- starting the form over, first time; dropping any wooden or rubber weapon (staff, baton, shinai, etc.); forcing a judge to move to avoid being struck.
- Disqualification, any occurrence- gross disrespect; chewing gum in the ring; dropping *any* metal weapon (sword, machete, knife, metal nunchaku, etc.); striking a judge (accidentally or intentionally); starting the form over, second time.

## Sparring

### Victor

**Under Belt divisions-** The match winner will be the first to receive at least **5** points, or have the higher score at the end of two minutes. A sudden victory point will finish the match in case of a tie at the end of the two minute time period.

**Black Belt divisions-** The match winner will be the first to receive at least **7** points, or have the higher score at the end of two minutes. A sudden victory point will finish the match in case of a tie at the end of the two minute time period.

### Target Areas and Safety Gear

#### **Targets for all belt divisions-**

- Legal targets are above the belt, front and sides only.
- No back or kidney contact is allowed.
- No contact below the belt is allowed.
- No actual face contact is allowed (see below)

#### **Safety gear for all belt divisions-**

- Foam-dipped **head, hand, and foot** gear are mandatory for all competitors.
- No stitched or un-dipped padded gear will be allowed.
- No taped gear will be allowed.
- **Mouth guards** are mandatory for all competitors.
- **Groin protectors** are mandatory in all men's divisions and highly recommended in all women's divisions.
- **Shin guards** are recommended for all competitors.

### Contact Rules

**All belt divisions-** Excessive force or inappropriate lack of control leading to bloodshed, dislocation of joints, or broken bones shall be grounds for immediate disqualification from the match and may be considered cause for dismissal from the tournament.

**Under belt divisions-** Points will be awarded for controlled (not fully extended) techniques to the face which come close enough to score (showing adequate power and focus). Contact is not **allowed**. **However, if minimal contact is made, the center judge may choose to issue a warning, rather than immediate disqualification.** If the contestant's head is moved back from the force of the blow, the attacker shall not receive the point- instead, the contestant struck will be awarded **the** penalty point. If the center referee determines there was too much force in the blow, regardless of the visual effect, he may award a penalty point or call for disqualification. Light to medium contact is permitted to other legal body targets.

**Black belt divisions -** Points will be awarded for controlled (not fully extended) techniques to the face which come close enough to score (showing adequate power and focus). Contact is not **allowed**. **However, if minimal contact is made, the center judge may choose to issue a warning, rather than immediate disqualification.** If the contestant's head is moved back from the force of the blow, the attacker shall not receive the point- instead, the contestant struck will be awarded **the** penalty point. If the center referee determines there was too much force in the blow, regardless of the visual effect, he may award a penalty point or call for disqualification. Light to medium contact is **expected** to other legal body targets. If contact is excessive, however, penalty points or disqualification will be awarded at the discretion of the center referee.

We urge contestants not to pretend to be hurt simply to gain sympathy, or to receive the penalty point. *Acting by the competitors will not be considered in the decision.* Please conduct yourselves in such a way as to lead the spectators to believe that karate *does* develop a sense of inner strength.

## **Points and Judging**

**All belt divisions-** One (1) point will be awarded for qualifying “contact” using a hand technique; two (2) points will be awarded for qualifying “contact” using a foot technique. Each match shall be judged by at least three Black belts: the center referee and two or more corner judges. Points shall be awarded by a majority of those judging calling observation of the same type of technique from the same competitor (i.e.: if one judge sees a hand technique from a competitor and another also sees a hand technique from the same competitor, that competitor would get the single point; however, if one judge sees a hand technique and another sees a foot technique, the competitor does not get a point for “doing something”). Judges shall stand in such a way as to ensure the clearest possible view of the action and shall call “no see” if they *cannot* see the action. Judges shall stand and shall signify in such a way as to *clearly* indicate which competitor is to be credited with what action. Any of the participating judges may call “halt” to the match, but the center referee shall be responsible for the final interpretation of a given “halt”: that the call is made clearly, and the proper adjustment in points noted, before the match proceeds.

## **Rules Infractions**

- 1) Attacking illegal targets
- 2) Continuing after being ordered to stop
- 3) Running out of bounds
- 4) Falling to the floor to avoid fighting
- 5) Pushing, cursing, or vindictive conduct
- 6) Using illegal techniques
- 7) Continued negligent or reckless attacks
- 8) Gross disrespect to opponents or judges (*a player’s friend, family member, etc., may cause penalty under this rule!*)

The first instance of any combination of the above infractions shall garner a warning. On the second instance, and each additional instance, the opponent will be awarded a point. *In any case involving excessive contact or unsportsmanlike conduct, all warnings may be bypassed and a penalty point awarded or the competitor disqualified.*

**Unprofessional or unsportsmanlike conduct that may mar the event will not be permitted!**