

MIGHTY RIVER CLASSIC TOURNAMENT RULE BOOK



OFFICIAL RULE BOOK

2026 Edition

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I. General Criteria

Players

Each Player must present themselves to the event in proper attire and physically and mentally prepared to compete. Finger and toenails must be cut properly or covered to prevent possible injury to the opponent. It is the responsibility of the Player to be ready to compete as deemed by the Center Referee. Players will have five (5) minutes to make any required changes or risk being penalized for “**Delay of Contest**”.

Penalty:

A Player not ready to compete after the allotted “Readiness Time Out” has expired, shall be penalized one (1) point at the time of the infraction in Sparring and will receive a deduction of 0.01 point from their final score in Forms. After the expiration of the allotted time, a Player who remains unready to compete shall be given two (2) minutes to report or will be disqualified.

Readiness Time Out:

Allotted time period for a Player to correct their uniform, replace a weapon, or replace Safety Equipment. Does not include Injury or Medical time outs.

Legal Age:

Players may compete at the age they are on January 1st of the competition year or the age they will become during the competition year and must compete at that age for the entire competition year.

UNDER BLACK BELT RANK CHART			
# Of UBB Ranks	Novice	Intermediate	Advanced
3	1	1	1
4	2	1	1
5	2	2	1
6	2	2	2
7	3	2	2
8	3	3	2
9	3	3	3
10	4	3	3

Rank:

A Player must compete at the highest belt rank that they have attained in the martial arts. Once a Player competes at a rank, they are not allowed to compete in lower rank divisions. We also highly discourage Players to compete up in higher rank divisions.

Definition of Rank:

The color of the belt may sometimes be confusing due to the fact that different systems of martial arts may use different colors of belts to represent ranking. The Tournament Arbitrator will make all final decisions, if there is a complaint. The following is a basic format of most ranking systems.

Uniform Requirements

(For Specific Criteria Advanced & Black Belt see page 22)

Players must wear a proper uniform including belt. Uniforms can be themed but cannot be “regular” clothing. Cotton t-shirts are not allowed as a uniform top. Belts / Sashes must be worn when competing.

Uniforms Must Be Clean and Have NO Offensive Language or Graphics

Japanese / Okinawan:

- Full School Uniforms Only.

Korean:

- Full School Uniforms Only.

Chinese:

- Full School Uniforms Only. T-Shirts are allowed as long as they are school or team logoed. Must have sleeves.
- **Optional:** Shoes which do not mark the competition floor.

Creative / Sparring:

- Full School and Team Uniforms Allowed. T-Shirts are allowed as long as they are school or team logoed.
- Uniforms must have sleeves.

Jewelry:

Jewelry must be removed or completely covered during competition.

Correcting a Uniform:

Players whose uniform has been deemed improper by the Head Referee or Arbitrator will have five (5) minute to correct or replace the uniform or risk being disqualified.

Penalty:

If a Player's uniform is deemed to have foul or inappropriate language, they will be given the required five (5) minutes to change before risk of disqualification. Unsightliness of uniforms is at the discretion of the Arbitrator.

Forms Division Information

Time Limit:

Forms Players have three (3) minutes from start to finish. Time starts when the Player enters the ring and ends at the completion of the Form.

Forms: Bracket and Point: (See Addendum, page 31 for a list of which Forms Divisions will use Bracket or Point Scoring)

Bracket Forms:

Bracket Forms is single elimination where two (2) Player compete either side-by-side or individually but scored simultaneously.

Novice & Intermediate Players:

Are not required to “know” more than one (1) form and can perform the same form throughout the competition.

Option: May perform a different form on their discretion, but only one (1) form is required.

Split Divisions: Divisions can be split if the division has more than 12 competitors.

Advanced & Black Belt Players: (See section II. SPECIFIC CRITERIA: ADVANCED & BLACK BELT DIVISION - Forms Division Information, page 24)

Bracket Scoring:

The winner is determined by a majority vote of three (3) or five (5) Judges by a show of hands or flags.

Point Forms:

Point Forms is a single elimination Forms Competition where each Player performs individually and receives point score from each judge.

Points Scoring:

Scoring will be based on Number of Players in the division. Where applicable the first three

(3) Players (first three rule) will perform and be scored after to determine an “average” performance.

Each Judge will present their score after a Player’s performance. With three (3) judges, all three (3) scores are totaled to determine a final total score. With five (5) judges, one (1) of the highest and one (1) of the lowest scores are eliminated and three (3) remaining scores are totaled to determine a final total score.

Novice / Intermediate Divisions

Number of Competitors

2 - 6
7 - 12
13+

Point Range

8.90 - 9.00
8.85 - 9.00
8.80 - 9.00

Restarts:

Players may request a one (1) restart without penalty only if requested before completion of their form. A restart is not allowed once the Player has completed their form. Novice and Intermediate Divisions ONLY.

Division Definitions

Traditional: (Bracket Scoring)

Any Form with classical techniques from any commonly accepted art or style.

Hard (external): (Bracket Scoring)

Forms created from a Japanese / Okinawan or Korean origin, utilizing mostly linear “hard” style techniques.

Soft (internal): (Bracket Scoring)

Forms created from Chinese or similar style, utilizing mostly circular “soft” style techniques.

Creative / Open: (Point Scoring)

The Form must have been created by the Player and cannot be a traditional Form. The Form must be dominated by martial arts techniques. It may also include gymnastics and/or music (must be choreographed). If the Form is named, it must have a unique name.

Creative Forms that include music will be scored the same as Creative Forms without music.

NOTE: Forms that include music may be assumed to have a higher degree of difficulty.

Definitions of Styles

Japanese / Okinawan:

Forms with traditional Japanese / Okinawan techniques only. Indicative of “hard” linear movements, emphasis on hand techniques, low kicks, breathing techniques, and hip rotation. Forms with traditional Japanese / Okinawan or Korean origins, utilize mostly linear “hard” style techniques.

Korean:

Typically Forms with traditional Korean techniques only. Indicative of linear movements, high stances, and with an emphasis on kicks.

Kenpo / Kajukenbo / Polynesian:

Forms with traditional Kenpo, Kajukenbo, or Polynesian techniques only.

Chinese:

Forms with traditional Chinese techniques only, utilizing mostly circular “soft” style techniques. Kenpo, Kajukenbo, and Polynesian Forms are not allowed in a soft style traditional division if the tournament has a Soft Style Contemporary Forms division or has any divisions specifically for any of those three (3) styles.

Penalty:

A Player competing in the incorrect style, division, using weapons in a non-weapons division, or Creative Form in a non-creative Forms division, shall be moved to the correct division, if possible, or be disqualified if intentional, at the discretion of the Arbitrator. Although the Arbitrator shall make the final decision regarding the correctness of the Forms, they may also rely on the expertise of the ring’s Judges to assist with their determination.

Weapons

Weapons Requirements

(For Specific Criteria Advanced & Black Belt see page 22)

Traditional Divisions

(Bracket Scoring)

Bo:

- Wood Only
- Head height or taller

Kama:

- Non-Sharp Metal Blades

Tonfa:

- Wood Only

Sai:

- Metal Only

Katana / Swords / Bladed Weapons:

- Non-Sharp if metal

Oar / Eku /Kai:

- No specific requirement

Nunchaku:

- Wood, No Foam

NOTE: For all other weapons, please email shinzokaizendojo@yahoo.com if you have a question about the weapon.

Creative Divisions (Point Scoring)

- All weapons must be unsharpened and safe for use.
- No Throwing Weapons.

The Arbitrator has final approval of all weapons.

Dropping the Weapon:

Novice & Intermediate Players who drop their weapon may request one (1) restart without penalty only if requested before completion of the form. A restart is not allowed once the Player completes the form.

Weapon Breaks:

If the Player's weapon breaks and is able to continue without a break in performance, they will be scored based on their performance. The Center Referee will determine the safety of continuing the performance and render a decision whether to allow the performance to continue.

If the Player's weapon breaks and they are unable to continue, they shall receive no score.

Defective Weapons:

If the Center Referee has deemed the weapon defective, the Player will be given five (5) minutes to correct or replace the weapon or risk being disqualified.

Replacing a Weapon:

A Player's weapon is disallowed for competition or breaks during performance shall have five (5) minutes to correct or replace the weapon with the same or similar weapon and return or risk being disqualified.

Penalty:

The intentional use of an unapproved weapon will result in disqualification.

Team Synchronized Form

(Point Scoring)

Team Synchronized Form is defined as a group of three (3) members, organized to function cooperatively in a joint effort.

Synchronized:

- Working at same time or pace
- Moving together or executing simultaneously.
- Working in unison
- Techniques in a Domino effect

Requirements:

- Traditional Forms Rules will apply
- Traditional Empty Hand Forms Only

Number of Players:

- Teams are comprised of three (3) members

Time Limit:

Five (5) Minutes Maximum - Time starts when the first team member steps into the competition ring and ends when the team has obviously finished the form.

Scoring:

Same as Forms. Ad-Pts (see pg 30) for a Team will be based on the Team's ranking member.

ATTACK AWARENESS

(Point Scoring)

Time Limit:

Same as Forms.

Uniform:

The Player must be suitably attired in martial arts clothing.

Performance:

The Player may perform a maximum of ten (10) defense techniques within the given time limit. The Player may use people and weapons in their Attack Awareness performance.

Scoring:

Same as Forms.

Contemporary:

Routines which are performed as a skit will follow the same rules as above.

Sparring

Flag Sparring Rules and Information

Safety Gear:

Helmet and Mouth Guards are mandatory.

Officials:

One (1) Official required.

Time Limit:

One (1) minute Rounds. Running Time.

Amount of Points to Win:

Most Points Win.

Coaching:

No Coaching, No Timeouts.

Flag Guarding:

Flag Guarding (holding of your own flags) is not allowed.

Point Sparring Rules and Information

Number of Judges:

Each ring must have either three (3) or five (5) Officials.

Location of Judges:

Judges will stand at the corners of the ring, placed to get the best view of the match. The Center Referee will be standing between the Players, facing the Scorekeeper and may move about inside the ring.

For General Criteria Uniform Requirements see page 3.

For Specific Criteria Advanced & Black Belt page 22.

Belt Rank:

For General Criteria Rank Requirements see page 2.

Availability:

The Player must be ready and equipped to compete when called.

Weigh In:

All Players participating in divisions with a weight requirement, must be officially weighed in prior to competing and may only participate in their proper weight division(s).

Time Limit:

Two (2) minute running time.

30 Seconds Alert:

Players will be alerted when there is 30 seconds left in the match.

Scoring Areas:

Front, sides, and back of helmet (with the exclusion of the top of the helmet), face, ribs, chest, abdomen, and kidneys.

Techniques:

Allowable techniques include all controlled and proper;

- Kicks
- Strikes
- Front Leg Boot to Boot Sweeps. If sweeping, it should be done independently and should be boot to boot to the back of the front leg only.
- Grabs are allowed for takedowns and up to three (3) seconds-start to finish. Grabs must be followed by a technique with proper contact.
- Blind Techniques are not allowed. Players must "spot" their target for a technique to be valid.

Non-Scoring Areas:

All other areas such as the neck, eyes, throat, back, etc. are not allowed. Contact to non-scoring areas may result in penalties or disqualification whether incidental or not.

Amount of Points to Win:

Total number of accumulated points in two (2) minutes or a ten (10) point spread.

Coaching:

Allowed from the Coach's Box or designated area Only.

Time Out:

A Player or Coach can call one (1), ten (10) second time out per match. Time outs can only be called when play is already stopped.

Single Elimination Bye Method: (See Addendum for Single Elimination Bye Chart) When there is an odd number of Players, a "Bye" allows one or more to play in a later round. The "Bye" system shall be used for all sparring matches. "Byes" are applicable in the first round only.

Option:

At the discretion of the Tournament Promoter, the Round-Robin option may be used for divisions in which there are only three (3) Players.

Round Robin Option: (See Addendum for Round Robin Elimination Chart)

When there are only three (3) Players, the Round Robin Elimination Method may be used.

Each Player will compete once with the other two (2) Players in turn.

- Two (2) wins: 1st Place
- One (1) win: 2nd Place
- No wins; 3rd Place.

If each Player wins one (1) match apiece, the Round Robin matches are run again until the above results are achieved.

Team Sparring

Number of Players:

Teams are comprised of three (3) Players and all must be within the Age Category specified. Pick up teams are allowed and must be registered prior to the beginning of the event.

Team Sparring Rules:

Point Sparring Rules shall apply.

Time Limit:

Two (2) minute running time. Only the Center Referee can stop & start time and issue time outs.

30 Seconds Alert:

Players will be alerted when there is 30 seconds left in the match.

Order of Play:

Coin flip shall determine the order of play.

Amount of Points to Win:

Total Accumulated Points at the end of all three (3) matches shall determine the winning team.

Tie Score:

If both teams are tied at the end of team match play, each team shall select any one (1) team member to represent their team in a "Sudden Victory" Tie Breaker.

Continuous Sparring

Number of Judges:

Each ring must have five (5) Officials. Four (4) Side Judges and one (1) Center Referee.

Location of Judges:

Judges shall sit just outside each corner of the ring.

Time Limit:

Two (2), one (1) minute rounds, running time. At the end of the first round, each Judge will announce their scores for their designated Player. 2nd Round play will resume with the Judges scoring the opposite Player for the remaining one (1) minute. Only the Center Referee can start & stop time and issue time outs.

30 Seconds Alert:

Players will be alerted when there is 30 seconds left in the match.

Rules of Play:

Same as Point Sparring except where noted.

Legal Scoring Areas:

Same as Point Sparring except Head Contact is not Allowed

Awarding of Points:

- Round 1 - Judges in opposite corners tally the points scored only for their assigned Player.
- Round 2 - Judges switch to tally the points scored by the opposing Player.
- Judges will announce their scores at the end of each round.

Awarding Penalty Points:

The Center Referee awards penalty points ONLY.

Safety Equipment

Mouth Guard:

A mouth guard is required for all Players in all Sparring Divisions.

Groin Cup:

A groin cup is required for males and must be worn under the uniform.

Hand Gear (Gloves):

Sport Karate open palm hand gear is required. Gloves must cover the fingers as well as be free of any damage or repairs that could cause injury.

Foot Gear (Boots):

Sport Karate foot gear is required. Boots must cover the toes and heel as well as be free of any damage or repairs that could cause injury.

Head Gear (Helmet):

Sport Karate head gear is required. Helmets must be free of damage, repairs, or of construction which could cause injury. It is the Player's responsibility to wear helmets suitable to facilitate proper hearing of the judges' calls. Face Protection (face shield) is allowed and recommended. Face Shields may be made of any material that is constructed and secured in such a way as to not cause injury.

Note: *Tape of any type is not allowed on any part of the safety gear.

Boxing or MMA Equipment is not allowed

Optional Equipment

For additional safety, shin, elbow, rib, knee, and chest protectors are recommended but optional.

Penalty:

A Player entering the ring without proper safety equipment will be given **five (5) minutes** to obtain proper safety equipment or will be disqualified by the Center Referee. Insufficiently padded equipment will not be allowed. Equipment must be free of heavy tears, or any state of repair that may be deemed unsafe by the Center Referee. The final authority of allowable equipment will be the Tournament Arbitrator.

Contact Definitions

No Contact:

Techniques within four (4) inches of the target. A technique within the four (4) inch zone must have the potential to be a valid strike to the intended target.

Novice Divisions:

Light Contact:

Light or Touch contact is allowed to the side or forehead of the helmet, excluding the top of the helmet, regardless of protection. Light or "Touch" Contact is defined as, NO penetration or movement of the struck target. Light body contact is allowed. Face contact (even if the opponent has a shield) is not allowed in any division. Face Shields are considered the same as the face.

Intermediate, Advanced, and Black Belt Divisions:

Moderate Contact:

Light to moderate contact is allowed. Moderate Contact is slight penetration or movement of the struck target. No injury, bruising, or bleeding caused. Head contact is limited to the "Light Contact" definition.

Excessive Contact:

Intentional or accidental contact which penetrates the target area and causes injury, bruising, or bleeding.

Stopping forward movement may also be an indication of Excessive Contact. All Players are responsible for the "control" of their techniques regardless of the actions of their opponent.

Disqualification Due to Injury, Bruising, or Bleeding:

A majority of the judges must see a technique "thrown" to the injured area which may have caused the injury in order to justify disqualification. A majority of the judges must agree on the call of Excessive Contact. Automatic Disqualification may be warranted if the technique draws blood.

Disqualified Players are only considered the loser of that match and if qualified may continue to compete in subsequent matches.

Arbitrator is the ONLY one who can disqualify a player. Arbitrator will discuss with the judges and make the final ruling.

Contact Due to Player Negligence:

Heavy or excessive contact may or may not be considered a contact infraction if the Officials deem that the offended Player's action was a negligent or risky action which was a contributing factor for the contact.

The Officials shall take under consideration whether the offending Player's contact was intentional or if there was an attempt to control or "pull" their technique in order to "control" the technique from striking their opponent. The Arbitrator should be present during the Official's discussion. The Medical personnel shall be the final authority as to whether the injured Player shall or can continue. The Player's Instructor, Coach, Parent(s) / Guardian, or the Player themselves may also remove the Player / themselves from completing the match or division.

Penalty:

No penalty is assessed to either Player regardless of injury, bruising, or blood. In this case, blood is not grounds for automatic disqualification. The Center Referee may give an unofficial Warning to both Players concerning both the contact and negligent action.

Possible Negligent / Risky Actions:

Cartwheel Kicks; "Superman" Punch; "Blitzing"; Running or Falling to Avoid the Fight; Intentionally turning the back; and other actions which the Officials rule as Negligent or Risky.

Head Contact:

Players may only use light or touch contact to side or forehead of helmet.

Out of Bounds:

Out of Bounds is when neither foot is inside nor touching the boundary line. Forced out as opposed to fighting out: No penalty for fighting out of bounds or being forced out of bounds, Players who step out of bounds without being engaged in attacking or defending will be considered "Out of Bounds".

An Out of Bounds Player cannot score on an In-Bounds Player. It's the Player's responsibility to know where they are at all times. If a Player is in-bounds while his opponent has even one foot out of bounds and scores before the Center Referee calls "Break", the out of bounds Player should be issued a warning or a penalty. The In-Bounds Player should be awarded the score for a valid technique. A Player with one foot in-bounds will be considered "out" as soon as the in-bound foot is lifted to either step or kick. Players executing a jumping technique which causes neither foot to be "on the ground" must land in-bounds for the technique to be considered valid and scorable. An out of bounds Player must reestablish one foot in-bounds before they can execute a valid, scorable technique.

Penalty:

Warning for 1st infraction; one (1) penalty point for 2nd and subsequent infractions. A Player who intentionally forces their opponent "out of bounds" by pushing, shall incur one (1) penalty point.

Down Player:

Except while executing a valid technique, a Player is considered "Down" when any part of their body other than their feet touches the "ground". The Three (3) Second rule will go into effect. Down Players have three (3) seconds to either "stand" or defend themselves before play is stopped. Both Players have three (3) seconds to score to any legal target when either Player is down. The four (4)-inch rule is also applicable.

Scoring on or by a Down Player:

During the Three (3) Second rule, a "Down" Player may score to any legal target on the "Standing" Player using any legal, controlled technique. A "Standing" Player can score on a "Down" Player using any legal, controlled technique, with the exception of "No Kicking Motions" to the head of a "Down" Player and "No Contact" to the head of a "Down" Player. When either Player is down, the three (3) second rule is in effect.

Whenever a Player is considered down (any part of the body except the feet touches the ground), scoring on or by a "Down" Player, with the "Down Player" rule in effect, all scores are one (1) point.

Sweeps:

Controlled Techniques Only. If a Player has swept their opponent, a following technique must be immediate before or while the Three (3) Second rule is in effect.

Penalty:

Kicking Motions to the head of a "Down" Player and any contact to the head of a "Down" Player is illegal and the offending Player's penalty can be solely determined by the Center Referee.

Scoring:

Points are awarded by majority vote of the Judges. Judges must "see" a legal technique score to a valid target area in order to make a point call.

Scoring Points:

- One (1) point awarded for all hand and kicking techniques to the body scoring areas.
- Two (2) points awarded for any type of kicks to the head scoring areas.
- Kicks are only one (1) point when either Player is down.

Penalty:

One (1) point is awarded to the offended Player except for Head Kick Contact where two (2) points are awarded to the offended Player.

Points and Penalties:

A point and penalty point can be awarded to the same Player.

Ties:

Players tied at the end of regulation play will result in a sudden VICTORY overtime. The Player scoring the first point will be declared the Winner.

Injury:

The Medical Personnel shall make the final ruling for whether an injured Player may continue or not. The Medical Personnel's opinion takes precedence over the opinion of the Arbitrator, Center Referee, Coach / Instructor, Parent, or any other concerned persons.

An injured Player who "bows out" of a match due to an unintentional injury, is only considered the loser of that match and if qualified and able, may continue to compete in subsequent matches if the Medical Personnel consents to their continued participation.

Re-injuries will be considered under the "Contact Due to Player Negligence" rule.

Penalty:

Three (3) contact infractions will constitute a disqualification.

Minor Infractions:

Out of Bounds; Falling to Avoid the Fight; Striking a Non-Target Area; Running to Avoid the Fight; Infraction by the Coach, Instructor, Friends, or Parents. Minor infraction penalties may be solely awarded by the Center Referee.

Secondary Infractions:

Striking with a Blind Technique: Moderate Contact; Illegal Technique; Striking to an Illegal Target (e.g. Knees, throat, eyes, groin, sweeps against the joint; Un-sportsmanlike Behavior, Intimidation of Players, Officials, Staff, etc. Secondary infraction penalties may be solely awarded by the Center Referee except for Moderate Contact.

Disqualification:

Malicious or intentional secondary or excessive infractions which cause injury, bruising, or bleeding. Disqualification requires a majority vote of the Judges.

Blatant Excessive Contact:

Whether causing injury or not may result in disqualification solely at the discretion of the Center Referee.

Improper Attire:

For General Criteria page 2.

For Specific Criteria - Advanced & Black Belt page 22.

Poor Sportsmanship and Bad Behavior:

May result in immediate expulsion from the tournament. This is determined by the Arbitrator. Poor Sportsmanship and Bad Behavior can be but not limited to; foul language, taunting, throwing equipment, and disrespect to an official.

Coaching:

The Coach must be present and within the Coach's Box at the beginning of the match. The Coach's Player may be penalized if the Coach enters the Coach's Box after the match has begun. Late arrival is allowed only with the approval of the Center Referee. Only one Coach is allowed in the Coach's Box at a time and only one (1) person at a time may coach.

Center Referees should inform coaches of their responsibilities and restrictions prior to the start of the match. Coaching is allowed in Sparring Divisions ONLY.

Penalty:

Players whose Coach arrives after the start of the match shall have one (1) point awarded to the opposing Player at the time of the infraction. Unless the Coach has prior permission from the Center Referee.

Invalid Coach's Pass:

Coaching without proper identification will result in a penalty of two (2) points awarded to the opposing Player. Coach's Identification cannot be transferred from one person to another. This may result in a Player's disqualification, fines, suspension, and or expulsion of the Coach from the tournament. Coaches or Spectators are not allowed to enter the ring without the Center Referee's permission. All Persons must conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner. No taunting is allowed. Coach's Identification must be purchased at registration.

Player Leaving the Ring:

Players intentionally leaving their ring shall constitute Poor Sportsmanship and may be disqualified. A Player who intentionally leaves the ring without proper permission or dismissal will lose all rating points.

Illegal Strike / Attacking Non-Target Areas:

A Player attacking a non-target area, may result in a penalty point awarded to the opposing Player. If the Center Referee determines that the strike was excessive and intentional, the offending Player may be disqualified.

- Unintentional - 1st and 2nd offense, one (1) penalty point; 3rd offense, disqualification
- Intentional - 1st offense, one (1) penalty point; 2nd offense disqualification
- Malicious - Automatic Disqualification

Illegal Contact / Excessive Contact:

One (1) Penalty point is awarded to the offended Player if the Center Referee determines that the contact was excessive or intentional, the offending Player may be disqualified.

- Unintentional - 1st offense, one (1) penalty point; 2nd offense, disqualification
- Intentional - Automatic Disqualification
- Malicious - Automatic Disqualification

Continuing After Stop Action Call:

Both Players must stop all action the moment "Break" is called, or the moment they hear the whistle representing stop action. Any offensive movements, striking, kicking, or punching in the direction of an opponent may result in a penalty point. The Center Referee is responsible for stopping the action on the break.

- Unintentional - 1st offense - Warning
- Intentional - One (1) penalty point
- Malicious - Disqualification and possible expulsion

The Center Referee has the power to issue a two (2)-point penalty if they deem it necessary due to the nature of the violation and the attitude of the Player involved. It is also possible for both Players to be penalized and or be disqualified. If a Player strikes the Center Referee or Judge intentionally, that Player will be immediately disqualified.

Protests

Who Can Protest:

A protest can be brought forth by a Player or a Player's Coach. All Coaches must purchase a Coach's Pass in order to coach and / or protest. Parent can act as a coach if the parent has purchased a Coach's Identification. Protests should be made immediately to the Center Referee in a respectful manner by the Player or the Player's Coach. Center Referees are qualified and educated on the rules and they can make the call ring side. The Center Referee should consult the Arbitrator. Protests concerning a match must be made before the conclusion of the match and before the start of the next match. Protests must first be brought to the Center Referee's attention and if warranted the Arbitrator may be requested.

Filing a Protest:

All protests regarding rule violations must be brought to the attention of the Center Referee, who will consult with the Arbitrator without question. **In order to file protest to the Arbitrator there is a \$25 CASH NON-REFUNDABLE FEE paid directly to the Arbitrator at the time of Protest.** The Player cannot be penalized if the Arbitrator is not readily available. Requesting the Arbitrator may be done by the Player or Player's Coach only after scores, points, or penalties pertaining to the arbitration have been awarded, but before the start of the next match. After the division winners are declared the Player has no right to arbitration, except for scoring errors where the scores were not disclosed previously. All protests regarding proper rank for the division, must be made before the order of performance is chosen.

Supporting Violation with Rule Book and Video:

It is the Player's responsibility to know the rules and penalties. The contesting Player will be given two (2) minutes by the Arbitrator to find evidence in the Rule Book to support their protest. If the protesting Player or Coach cannot find evidence in the rules in the allotted time, their protest shall become null and void unless the Arbitrator further processes the protest on their own. Along with evidence of a rule violation submitted from the rule book, the Player may submit video evidence of a rule's violation. A judgment call can be protested.

Rules Procedural Error:

Protest of a rules procedural error which is agreed upon as a procedural error by the Arbitrator requires that the division stop using the error. Once the error is caught, it must be corrected with the proper procedure immediately. The division should not be restarted, however the Arbitrator has the authority and option to readjust the present situation, match, or performance, to make it as fair as possible before continuing. The Arbitrator has the option of restarting the match or performance, if deemed necessary. A procedural error that was allowed at a tournament and not discovered or corrected by that Tournament Arbitrator does not set a precedent for the same procedural error to be allowed in other divisions or tournaments.

Judging or the Removal of Judges:

A Player or Coach may ask the Arbitrator to scrutinize any Judge for possible removal. A Player or Coach may request to have one or more Judges (including the Center Referee) removed from the division from the onset. This protest should be made prior to choosing the order of the competition. Removal of Judges is at the discretion of the Arbitrator based on facts presented by the Player or Coach, Judge, or any Center Referee. Officials from the same school should not be used. This could result in an unfair advantage or disadvantage. The Center Referee can replace judges as needed.

Pre-selected Officials:

Pre-selected Center Referees and Judges cannot be removed.

Scoring Protest:

Flip cards and/or scoreboards take precedence over tabulation of the Scorekeeper. The Center Referee has the final decision on the score. Center Referees may consult the Side Judges to render a decision.

Code of Conduct:

All attendees must agree to and are expected to conduct themselves honorably by acting in a courteous and respectful manner to all others in attendance, including the property and the community. Breaching this Code of Conduct may result in Player penalties, including disqualification and possible expulsion from both the tournament and property.

“ HONESTY, COURAGE, HONOR, DUTY, COMPASSION, COURTESY, AND JUSTICE”

Tournament Officials

Official's Certification:

Must learn, know, and understand the rules clearly prior to officiating at any tournament.

Qualifications:

Officials should be knowledgeable of the style criteria in any division where style criteria is a factor. Officials should excuse themselves or request a replacement in any division in which they have students, affiliates, relatives, etc. when possible. Officials chosen for any given ring should represent as many different areas, states, or countries as possible. An Official may be changed upon a protest before play is started, if an equally qualified Official from a variety of localities are available. Officials from the same school should not officiate in the same ring.

Age:

All Officials must be eighteen (18) years or older. If necessary, sixteen (16) and older Officials may be used as side judges in Under Black Belt divisions only.

Rank:

Officials must hold the rank of 1st Dan (degree) Black Belt or higher. The Center Referee should be either the highest ranking official or the most experienced.

Amount of Officials

Black Belt Divisions:

Shall have five (5) Officials: One (1) Center Referee and four (4) Side Judges or three (3) Officials: One (1) Center Referee and two (2) Side Judges, when five (5) Officials are not available.

Under Black Belt Divisions:

Shall have three (3) Officials: One (1) Center Referee and two (2) Side Judges.

Center Referee Duties:

- The Center Referee is the ring general and is in charge of all things pertaining to that ring.
- May choose to assist the Scorekeeper / Timekeeper as necessary.
- The only official who can issue a timeout of any type.
- Duties are based on safety first, along with fairness and integrity.
- Has the power to unilaterally disqualify a Player when applicable.

Identification:

Center Referee:

- Center Referees shall wear a school uniform and belt.
- Recommended: Soft soled shoes which will not mark the tournament floor.

Judge Duties:

- Assists the Center Referee in scoring Players.
- Assists in determining penalties or warnings when consulted.
- Judge an entire division without leaving the ring.
- Duties are based on safety first, along with fairness and integrity.
- Make responsible judgments based on the criteria given.

Identification:**Side Judges:**

- Officials shall wear their school uniforms.
- Recommended: Soft soled shoes which will not mark the tournament floor.

Official Leaves Ring / Official Replacement:**Forms Divisions:**

An Official cannot be replaced for any reason or leave their post once a Forms division has started (unless removed by the Arbitrator). If an Official leaves and does not return, then the Forms division must be rerun using the same order of performance.

Sparring Divisions:

An Official can be replaced or leave their post once a Sparring division has started between matches only. If an Official leaves and does not return, then a suitable replacement shall be found.

Calls an Official May Make (Sparring):

When the Center Referee believes there has been a significant exchange of technique, or when signaled to do so by one or more of the Judges, the Center Referee shall in a loud voice issue a command to stop or break the action. The Center Referee then calls for a simultaneous vote for point and or penalty. Scores are rendered by a majority vote of the Judges including the Center Referee. All methods of communications should be in English. In Black Belt divisions only, a whistle may also be used by the Center Referee only to start or stop the action.

Scoring Points:

Under the direction of the Center Referee a simultaneous call is made. Each Official will clearly point to the Player's side of the ring that in their judgment scored a point, using fingers to represent the point value of their call.

Simultaneous Point:

An Official will hold up one (1) finger for each Player when they believe both Players scored valid techniques simultaneously.

No Point Call:

A downward motion of both hands indicates that an Official did not see a valid technique.

Did Not See Call:

Crossing both hands in front of their eyes indicates that the Official could not clearly see a valid technique score whether they "know" it or not.

Penalty Call:

Pointing down and to the side of the ring of the Player committing the infraction.

Note: A Player committing an infraction cannot receive a point on the same call. Therefore, an Official may penalize one Player and award a point to the other Player on the same call.

Contact Call:

Raising a clenched fist towards the offending Player's side of the ring indicates excessive contact.

Disqualification Call:

This is separate and simultaneous majority vote. Raising and circling one (1) finger toward the side of the ring of the offending Player.

Late Calls (Popcorning):

Calls not made simultaneously can be considered "Late". If the Judge is deemed intentionally making Late Calls, their call can be nullified and/or the Judge may be replaced.

Changing a Call:**Forms:**

An Official may change their vote or score if they find they have scored outside of the scoring range, from a rule clarification, or voted for the incorrect Player.

Sparring:

An Official may change their call if they awarded a point to the incorrect Player or from a rule clarification.

Starting and Stopping a Match:

Only the Center Referee can start and stop a match. The following command shall be used.

Starting a Match:

The Center Referee shall position themselves with one (1) hand extended between the Players and facing the Scorekeeper. The match starts when the Center Referee issues the command, "**FIGHT**" and drops their hand to start the clock.

Stopping Action:

To stop the action for any reason, the Center Referee shall issue the command, "**BREAK**". Time does not stop unless requested by the Center Referee. Be sure to use caution when stepping between Players to stop action.

Time Outs:

To pause time for any reason, the Center Referee shall issue the command, "**HOLD TIME**" and form the letter "T" with their hands. Time will be paused until the Center Referee restarts the match.

Expiration of Time:

When the Timekeeper announces that the allotted time period has expired, the Center Referee shall issue the command, "**TIME**" to end the match.

NOTE: When starting or stopping play, the Center Referee must always use caution so as to not place themselves in a precarious position which may cause them to be injured by the Players.

Scorekeepers / Timekeepers

Amount:

Each ring shall have one (1) Scorekeeper and one (1) Timekeeper when applicable. The Scorekeeper and Timekeeper must be eighteen (18) years or older, or one (1) adult (18+) in combination with a minor, who can account for the minor's actions. Arbitrator may make age exceptions.

Scorekeeper Duties:**Forms:**

Announces Players "Up" and "On Deck"; announces, records & tallies each Player's scores; double checks all scores; and indicates places taken.

Sparring:

Announces Players "Up" and "On Deck"; "echo's" points awarded; records points & warnings; if available, uses flip card to display points; announces winning point when applicable.

Advantage Points (handicapping system):

Implements the Ad Pts system for both Forms and Sparring where applicable.

See Addendum for Advantage Points Charts, pg 31.

Timekeeper Duties:**Forms:**

Times the Player's performance from when they enter the ring until they end their form; communicates to the Center Referee when a Player exceeds the time limit and by how much.

Sparring:

Times the match using "running" time and pauses or stops the time only upon the Center Referee's command. At the end of match time, the Timekeeper will in a loud, clear voice announce "Time" and if available will toss a "Time" indicator into the ring between both Players.

30 Second Alert:

The Timekeeper shall sound an alert, either verbally, mechanically, or both when there is 30 seconds remaining in the match.

Identification:

Scorekeepers and Timekeepers shall wear appropriate identification indicating their official status.

Location:

The Scorekeeper and Timekeeper shall sit at a table or in chairs just outside the ring.

II. Specific Criteria Advanced/Black Belt Divisions

Advanced / Black Belt Specific Criteria

This section applies to both Advanced and Black Belt Players only. Please note that Advanced and Black Belt are separate divisions and are not combined for competition. In the case where Advanced Players are combined with Novice and or Intermediate Players, the General Criteria Rules shall take precedence.

Uniform Standards

Uniforms can be themed but cannot be “regular” clothing. Cotton t-shirts are not allowed as a uniform top. T-Shirts should be white or black and match the uniform jacket. Color t-shirts under the uniform are not allowed.

Belts / Sashes must be worn when competing

Uniforms Must Be Clean and Have NO Offensive Language or Graphics

Japanese / Okinawan:

- Cross Tied Uniforms Only.
- Uniforms can be solid White or Black, or a White / Black jacket and pants combination.
- Color uniforms are not allowed.
- A total of four (4) Patches or Emblems allowed on the Uniform

Korean:

- White Cross Tied or V-Neck with or without trim.
- White or Black pants.
- Color uniforms are not allowed.
- A total of four (4) Patches or Emblems allowed on the Uniform.

Chinese:

- All Uniform options allowed which are within the Chinese Martial Arts System.
- **Optional:** Shoes which do not mark the competition floor.

Creative / Sparring:

- Full School and Team Uniforms are allowed.
- Uniforms must have sleeves

The Tournament Arbitrator is the final authority on uniform acceptability...

Forms Division Information

Time Limit:

Player has three (3) minutes from start to finish of form. Time starts when player enters the ring to the time the form is completed.

Forms: Bracket and Point

Bracket Forms:

Bracket Forms is single elimination where two (2) Player compete either side-by-side or individually but scored simultaneously.

Advanced & Black Belt Players:

Must “know” a minimum of two (2) forms and cannot perform the same form back-to-back.

Bracket Scoring:

The winner is determined by a majority vote of three (3) or five (5) Judges by a show of hands or flags.

Point Forms:

Point Forms is a single elimination Forms Competition where each Player performs individually and receives point score from each judge.

Points Scoring:

Scoring will be based on Number of Players in the division. Where applicable the first three (3) Players (first three rule) will perform and be scored after to determine an “average” performance.

Each Judge will present their score after a Player’s performance. With three (3) judges, all three (3) scores are totaled to determine a final total score. With five (5) judges, one (1) of the highest and one (1) of the lowest scores are eliminated and three (3) remaining scores are totaled to determine a final total score. (Three Rule) will perform and be scored after to determine a “average” performance.

Advanced / Black Belt Divisions

<u>Number of Competitors</u>	<u>Point Range</u>
2 - 6	9.90 - 10.00
7 - 12	9.85 - 10.00
13+	9.80 - 10.00

Restarts:

Restarts in Black Belts divisions are not allowed; however, the Player may continue to demonstrate their form and will receive no score.

Split Divisions: Divisions can be split if the division has more than 12 competitors.

WEAPONS

Weapon Standards

(Advanced and Black Belts)

For Weapon examples, see page 27

Traditional Divisions

(Bracket Scoring)

Bo / Staff:

- Head Height or Taller
- A slight taper is allowed, but no more than a ¼ inch diameter difference from the center of the Bo to the end of the Bo.

Kama:

- Wood Handles
- Metal Blade
- Non-Sharp
- No Holes or designs on the Blade

Tonfa:

- Wood Only

Sai:

- Metal Only

Katana / Sword / Bladed Weapons:

- Metal Blade
- Non-Sharp

Oar / Eku / Kai:

- No specific requirement

Nunchaku:

- Wood Only, No Foam

NOTE: For all other weapons, please email shinzokaizendojo@yahoo.com if you have a question about the weapon.

Creative Divisions: (point scoring)

- All weapons must be unsharpened and safe for use.
- No Throwing Weapons.

Dropping of the Weapon:

If the Player drops their weapon, the Player will be automatically disqualified. No scores are given.

No Restarts are allowed in Advanced or Black Belt Divisions.

Weapon Breaks:

If the Player's weapon breaks and is able to continue without a break in performance, they will be scored based on their performance. The Center Referee will determine the safety of continuing the performance and render a decision whether to allow the performance to continue. If the Player's weapon breaks and they are unable to continue, they shall receive no score.

Replacing a Weapon:

A Player whose weapon is disallowed for competition or breaks during performance shall have five (5) minutes to correct or replace the weapon with the same or similar weapon and return or risk being disqualified.

Point Sparring Rules and Information

Scoring Areas:

Front, sides, and back of helmet (with the exclusion of the top of the helmet), face, ribs, chest, abdomen, and kidneys. Face contact is legal with VERY light contact in 16 yrs old and under divisions.

Non-Scoring Areas:

All other areas such as the neck, eyes, throat, back etc. are not allowed. Contact to non-scoring areas may result in penalties or disqualification whether incidental or not.

Amount of Points to Win:

Total number of accumulated points in two (2) minutes with no point spread.

Time Limit:

Two (2) minutes running time.

30 Seconds Alert

Players will be alerted when there is 30 seconds left in the match.

Black Belt Sparring Grand Championships

Amount of Points to Win:

Total number of points in two (2) rounds. No point spread

Time Limit:

Two (2) minute rounds with a one (1) minute break between rounds.

30 Seconds Alert:

Players will be alerted when there is 30 seconds left in the match.

Officials:

Grand Championship matches must have five (5) officials, one (1) Center Referee and four (4) Side Judges.

Black Belt Forms Grand Championships

Performance:

Must perform the same form used to win their division.

Scoring:

Mixed Forms - Point Scoring will be used.

Traditional Only Forms - Bracket Scoring will be used.

Officials:

Grand Championship matches must have five (5) officials, one (1) Center Referee and four (4) Side Judges.

III. Weapon Examples

			
BO / STAFF Straight or Tapered. Taper is no more than 1/4" dia difference from center to end.		OAR / EKU Straight or Angled Blade	
			
NUNCHAKU Wood or Graphite (black), corded.		TONFA Wood, Round or Square (tapered)	
			
KAMA Wood handle, metal or aluminum blade		SAI Round or Octagonal blade	
		For all other weapons not listed here, shinzokaizendojo@yahoo.com Kaizentournaments@yahoo.com For questions about or for possible allowance of your weapon.	
KATANA Unsharp, Metal or Aluminum blade			

IV. Addendum

Sparring Single Elimination Bye Chart:

"Byes" are applicable for the first round only.

SINGLE ELIMINATION BYE CHART					
Players	Matches	Byes	Players	Matches	Byes
3	1	1	10	2	6
4	2	0	11	3	5
5	1	3	12	4	4
6	2	2	13	5	3
7	3	1	14	6	2
8	4	0	15	7	1
9	1	7	16	8	0

Sparring Round Robin Elimination Chart:

Round Robin Elimination Chart



2 match wins = 1st Place

1 match win = 2nd Place

0 match wins = 3rd Place

Advantage Points (Ad Pts)

Handicapping System

Advantage Points (Ad Pts)			
FORMS			
	Nov	Int	Adv/BB
Nov		+0.01	+0.02
Int			+0.01
Adv/BB			

Ad Pts are added to the Player's Total Score

Nov - Int Division

Novice Player starts with 0.01 Ad Pts

Int - Adv/BB Division

Intermediate Player starts with 0.01 Ad Pts

NIA/BB Division

Novice starts with 0.02 Ad Pts

Intermediate starts with 0.01 Ad Pts

Advantage Points (Ad Pts)			
SPARRING			
	Nov	Int	Adv/BB
Nov		+2	+3
Int			+2
Adv/BB			

Ad Pts are added to the Player's Score at the start of the match.

Nov Vs Int

Novice Players start with two (2) Ad Pts

Int Vs Adv / BB:

Intermediate Players start with two (2) Ad Pts

NIA/BB:

Novice starts with 3 Ad Pts

Intermediate starts with 2 Ad Pts

Byes:

Lower rank Players in mixed rank division shall receive priority when Byes are drawn.

Advantage Points (Ad Pts) are added by the Scorekeeper to the applicable Players score prior to the start of the division or match.

NOTE: Use of the Advantage Point (Ad Pts) Handicapping System is solely at the discretion of the Event promoter.

Point & Bracket Forms Divisions

Bracket Forms Divisions

- Traditional Forms (empty hand)
- Traditional Weapons

Point Forms Divisions

- Creative Forms (empty hand)
- Creative Weapons
- Team Forms
- Self Defense