

# 2014 AAU Karate Handbook –Kumite Rules

## SECTION 2. AAU/USA KARATE RULES FOR KUMITE COMPETITION

### ARTICLE 1. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- See General Rules SECTION 1 ARTICLE 1.

### ARTICLE 2. COMPETITION AREA

- See General Rules SECTION 1 ARTICLE 2.
- Two parallel lines, each one meter long must be drawn at a distance of one and one half meters from the center of the competition area for positioning the competitors.
- A one-meter wide border inside the prescribed fighting area shall be the warning area. The line should be of a different color than the rest of the surface (floor or mat).

### POSITION OF OFFICIALS/COACHES IN COMPETITION AREA

- **Referee**-The Referee may move around the entire tatami (when 4 corner judges are used), including the safety area where judges are seated.
- **Judges**- Each judge will be seated at the corners on the mat in the safety area. Each judge will be equipped with appropriate equipment for the conduct of that match.
- **Arbitrator**- the Arbitrator and or the Match Supervisor shall be seated just outside the safety area, behind and to the left or the right of the Referee.
- **Coaches**- Coaches will be seated outside the safety area, on their respective sides at the side of the tatami towards the official table. The Coach may be assigned a specific place by the Referee Committee in conjunction with the Tournament Organizing Officials. This area shall be close to the competition area and the Coach allowed a free and uninterrupted access to contestants between bouts.

### ARTICLE 3. REFEREE/OFFICIAL PANEL

- The Referee Panel shall consist of one Referee (Shushin), two, three or four Judges (Fukushin), and one Match Supervisor (Kansa).
- In addition, for the purpose of facilitating the operation of matches, several timekeepers, caller-announcers, and record keepers shall be appointed.

### ARTICLE 4. OFFICIAL ATTIRE

- See General Rules SECTION 1 ARTICLE 3.

### ARTICLE 5. EQUIPMENT

- See General Rules SECTION 1 ARTICLE 4.

### ARTICLE 6. SCORING AREA

The scoring areas shall be limited to the following:

- Head
- Face
- Neck (including throat, but not touching the throat)
- Abdomen
- Chest
- Side
- Back

## ARTICLE 7. CRITERIA FOR SCORING

A score is awarded when a technique is performed to a scoring area and according to the following criteria:

- **Good form** - a technique with good form is said to have characteristics conferring probable effectiveness within the framework of traditional karate concepts.
- **Correct attitude** - a non-malicious attitude of great concentration obvious during delivery of the scoring technique within the framework of traditional Karate concepts.
- **Vigorous application** - defines the power, speed and controlled delivery of the technique, with the purpose of succeeding.
- **Zanshin** - a continued state of awareness and commitment which endures after the technique has landed. The contestant with Zanshin maintains total concentration and awareness of the opponent's potential to counter attack and the ability to continue with proper form other continuing techniques.
- **Proper timing** - delivering a technique when it will have the greatest potential effect. Proper timing is carrying out a technique at the optimum moment in time to achieve the greatest result.
- **Correct distance** - delivering a technique at the precise distance where it will have the greatest potential effect.

## ARTICLE 8. PENALTIES

- There are no points awarded to the opponent for penalties.
- A Hansoku or Kiken (disqualification or loss of match due to penalties) will count as the full score (Ippon, Sanbon, Happon) for the opponent.

### Penalty Categories

- Hansoku – Prohibited actions and behaviors. Contact and non-contact penalties.
- Jogai - Out of bounds
- Mubobi – defenseless behavior.
- Shikkaku (disqualification or expulsion from the event/competition)

## Penalty Levels

- Levels of penalty – for each of the penalty categories (Hansoku, Jogai, Mubobi) there are 3 levels:
  - Chukoku (warning)
  - Hansoku Chui (penalty)
  - Hansoku (disqualification)
- Penalty categories DO NOT cross accumulate

## Prohibited behavior

- Face Contact –
  - All divisions (hand technique): Contact is not allowed, and may be penalized.
  - All Divisions (kick): “skin touch” is allowed, but excessive transfer of energy to the target area is prohibited and will be penalized.
  - All Black Belts Divisions (kick/hand technique): “skin touch” is allowed, but excessive transfer of energy to the target area is prohibited and will be penalized.
- Any excessive contact regarding the target area.
- Attacks and contact to the joints, throat, below the pubic bone or groin, and legs are not considered points and may result in a penalty.
- A sweep of the ankle or foot must be followed up with an attempt to score to one of the scoring targets otherwise may result in a penalty.
- Exiting the ring during the match (Jogai).
- Avoiding the opponent, running around the ring and generally disengaging from the match is a non-contact violation and may result in a penalty.
- When SHIKKAKU is imposed, the severity of the penalty is decided by the Referee Council and Executive Committee (disqualification from the actual tournament, competition, or match).

## ARTICLE 9: INJURIES

- An injured contestant who has been declared unfit to fight by the tournament doctor cannot fight again in that competition.
- A competitor who is injured during a bout in progress and requires medical treatment will be allowed three minutes in which to receive it. If treatment is not completed within the time allowed, the Referee will decide if the competitor shall be declared unfit to fight, or whether an extension of treatment time shall be given.
- An injured contestant who wins a bout through disqualification due to injury is not allowed to fight again in the competition without permission from the doctor. If they are injured, they may win a second bout by disqualification but are then immediately withdrawn from further Kumite competition in that tournament.
- A contestant who wins two matches in a single division thru disqualification will not be allowed to continue.

## **FEIGNING INJURY**

- In order that the credibility of the sport is maintained, competitors who feign injury will be subject to the strongest penalties up to and including suspension for life for repeated offenses.
- Competitors who receive SHIKKAKU for feigning injury will be taken from the competition area and put directly into the hands of the tournament Medical Commission who will carry out an immediate examination of the competitor. The Medical Commission will submit its report before the end of the Championship, for the consideration of the Referee Council.

## **ARTICLE 10: 10 SECOND RULE**

- Any adult (of any rank) or youth black belt competitor who falls, is thrown or knocked down and does not fully regain his/her feet within ten seconds is considered unfit to continue fighting and shall be automatically withdrawn from all Kumite events in that tournament.

## **ARTICLE 11: SHOBU IPPON KUMITE**

Shobu Ippon Kumite is a sparring match where the goal is to score a full point (IPPON) or two half points (WAZARI) to equal a full point to win the match.

### **Scoring**

- A full point is awarded to two techniques only: controlled kick to the head or face, break of balance / safe takedown immediately followed by a scoring technique.
- All other techniques including multiple scoring techniques (RENSOKU WAZA) to scoring areas will be awarded a half point.

### **Winning a Match**

To win the match the following criteria is considered in this order:

- Earning a score of ippon during the allotted time.
- If an ippon is not reached during the allotted time of the match, the referee calls for HANTEI (judges decision). The judges vote plus the referee's silent vote/judgment will determine the winner or if there is a tie (HIKIWAKE).
- If HANTEI determines there is a tie (HIKIWAKE), the athletes will conduct a new match (SAI SHIAI), where no points, penalties, or memory of previous penalties will be considered in the new match.

- The winner of SAI SHIAI is the athlete who earns an ippon, or if no ippon is reached during the allotted time of the match, the referee calls for HANTEI. At this point, the judges must pick a winner (NO HIKIWAKE).

### **Duration of bout**

- An ippon match will be 2 minutes for all divisions.
- Atoshibaraku announcement shall be when there are 30 seconds left in the allotted time.
- Duration of SAI SHIAI match will be 2 minutes for all divisions.

### **Penalties**

Penalties and prohibited behavior is described in ARTICLE 8.

### **Equipment**

Mandatory and elective equipment are described in ARTICLE 5.

### **ARTICLE 11. SHOBU SANBON**

Shobu Sanbon Kumite is a sparring match where the goal is to score 3 full points to win the match.

### **Scoring**

- A full point is awarded to two techniques only: controlled kick to the head or face, break of balance / safe takedown immediately followed by a scoring technique.
- All other techniques including multiple scoring techniques (RENSOKU WAZA) to scoring areas will be awarded a half point.

### **Winning a Match**

To win the match the following criteria is considered in this order:

- Earning a score of sanbon (3) during the allotted time.
- Having the leading score at the end of the allotted time.
- If the score at the end of the allotted time is tied the referee calls for HANTEI (judges decision). The judges vote plus the referee's silent vote/judgment will determine the winner or if there is a tie (HIKIWAKE).
- If HANTEI determines there is a tie (HIKIWAKE), the athletes will conduct a match extension (ENCHOSEN), where no points are carried over. However, penalties will carry over and be considered in the match extension.

- The ENCHOSEN match is where the first competitor to score wins (“sudden death”).
- If there is no score at the end of the allotted time of the match extension, the referee calls for HANTEI. At this point, the judges must pick a winner (NO HIKIWAKE).

### **Duration of bout**

- A sanbon match will be 2 minutes for all divisions except for male black belt 18-34 years old.
- Male Black belt 18-34 year old match will be 3 minutes.
- Atoshibaraku announcement shall be when there are 30 seconds left in the allotted time.
- Enchosen match is 1 minute for all divisions.

### **Penalties**

Penalties and prohibited behavior is described in ARTICLE 8.

### **Equipment**

Mandatory and elective equipment are described in ARTICLE 5.

### **Team competition:**

- Kumite teams shall consist of 3 contestants on each team of the appropriate age and rank for the division. A fourth contestant as an alternate is permissible but not required.
- At the beginning of each team match, each team must submit in writing the order of contestants for that match and not vary from that order.
- Individual matches will use the same time/length and rules for Sanbon individual matches.
- The order of situations in determining the winning team shall be:
  - Number of Sanbon matches won. Kiken and Hansoku will be considered a loss of a match (the match score will be elevated to 3 ippons to the opposite team).
  - Total score accumulated (taking both winning and losing matches into account).
  - A tie breaker match ending with a winner or by HANTEI (NO HIKIWAKE). Name must be submitted to the table.
- In team matches, should a team member receive KIKEN, or be disqualified (HANSOKU or SHIKKAKU) their score will be reduced to zero and the opponent’s score will be set to the maximum allowable score.

### **ARTICLE 12. AAU OPEN SCORING**

AAU Open Scoring Kumite is a sparring match where the goal is to score an 8 point lead (or 8 point ceiling) over your opponent.

## **Scoring**

- 3 point (SANBON) is awarded to two techniques only: controlled kick to the head or face, takedown followed by a scoring technique within 2 seconds.
- 2 points (NIHON) is awarded to: a scoring kick to the body.
- 1 point (IPPON) is awarded to all other techniques including multiple scoring techniques to scoring areas.

## **Winning a Match**

To win the match the following criteria is considered in this order:

- For Adult Black belts, earning an eight (8) point lead during the allotted time. In all other divisions, a contestant who earns eight (8) points total will win the match.
- Having the leading score at the end of the allotted time.
- If the score at the end of the allotted time is tied the referee calls for HANTEI (judges decision). The judges vote plus the referee's silent vote/judgment will determine the winner or if there is a tie (HIKIWAKE).
- If HANTEI determines there is a tie (HIKIWAKE), the athletes will conduct a match extension (ENCHOSEN), where no points are carried over. However, penalties will carry over and be considered in the match extension.
- The ENCHOSEN match is where the first competitor to score wins ("sudden death").
- If there is no score at the end of the allotted time of the match extension, the referee calls for HANTEI. At this point, the judges must pick a winner (NO HIKIWAKE).

## **Duration of bout**

- An AAU Open Scoring match will be 2 minutes for all divisions except for male black belt 18-34 years.
- Male Black belt 18-34 year old match will be 3 minutes.
- Atoshibaraku announcement shall be when there are 10 seconds left in the allotted time.
- Enchosen match is 1 minute for all divisions.

## **Penalties**

Penalties and prohibited behavior is described in ARTICLE 8.

## **Equipment**

Mandatory and elective equipment are described in ARTICLE 5.

## **APPENDIX A. REFEREE PROCEDURES:**

### **Suspending Matches**

- The Referee shall suspend the match by using the appropriate gesture and calling “Yame.” When resuming the match, the Referee will announce “Tsuzukete Hajime”.

### **Ending Matches**

- The timekeeper shall give signals by a gong or buzzer indicating Atoshibaraku (a little time to go), using one sharp blast.
- Time-Up signal shall have two long blasts of the signaling equipment. At “time-up” the Referee will halt the match and announce “Soremade”. He will then check the score, announce the decision and award the contest to the winner, or call Hantei.
- The Referee shall end the match with the formal exchange of bows by the contestants and Referee Panel (Otagai ni Rei - Shomen ni Rei) and at that stage the match is deemed to be over.

### **Match Procedure**

- At the start of a Kumite match the Referee stands on the outside edge of the match area facing toward the center of the mat. Judges shall stand to the left and right of the referee.
- After the formal exchange of bows by the contestants and the Referee Panel, the Referee takes a step back and the Judges turn inward and all bow together.
- The Referee and Judges shall take up their prescribed positions and following an exchange of bows between the contestants, the Referee will announce “SHOBU HAJIME” and the bout will commence.
- The Referee will stop the bout by announcing “YAME”. If necessary, the Referee will order the contestants to take up their original positions (MOTO NO ICHI).
- The Referee returns to the starting position and the Judges will indicate their opinions by means of a signal. In the case of a score to be awarded the Referee identifies the contestant (AKA or SHIRO/AO), the area attacked, and then awards the relevant score using the prescribed gesture. The Referee then restarts the bout by calling “TSUZUKETE HAJIME”.
- When a contestant has scored the maximum points as allowed during a bout, the Referee shall call "YAME!" and order the contestants back to their standing lines as he returns to his. The winner is then declared and indicated by the Referee raising a hand on the side of the winner and declaring "SHIRO/Ao (AKA) NO KACHI". The bout is ended at this point.
- When time is up and the scoring situation tied, the Referee shall call "YAME!" and return to his position. The Referee will call "HANTE!" and following his signal (by whistle) the



judges will indicate their opinions. The majority decision will be taken. The judges and Referee have one vote each at HANTE.

- The Referee will award the decision and announce the winner, or give a draw ("HIKIWAKE") as allowed by appropriate rules.
- When changing the entire referee panel the departing officials take one step forward, turn around and face the incoming panel. They bow to each other and on the command of the incoming Referee and in one line (facing the same direction) leave the competition area.
- When individual Judges change, the incoming judge goes to the outgoing judge, they bow together and change positions.
- Officials should not referee, when possible, a competitor who is from the official's dojo or karate organization.
- At the start of a Team Kumite match, the Referee stands on the outside edge of the fighting area. On his left and right sides stand the Judges. The Referee will call both teams (only the actual fighters, not the substitutes or coach), to line up in order, properly composed and proceed to initiate the formal exchange of bows by both contestants and officials (Shomen Ni Rei - Otagai Ni Rei). The Referee will then take one step back, the Judges will turn inwards towards the Referee and all bow together. The match shall start with the announcement by the Referee of "Shobu Hajime" and the bout will then commence.

### **SHIKKAKU Procedure**

- Referee shall call up all of the judges (SHUGO).
- The judging panel discusses the offense. If the entire judging panel agrees to the SHIKKAKU, they write up a description of the offense and the agreed upon SHIKKAKU.
- Every judge on the panel signs the SHIKKAKU document.
- The referee then SHIKKAKU's the athlete and takes possession of their credential.
- The referee then continues with the division.
- The referee council and executive committee are notified and review the SHIKKAKU document.
- The referee council and executive committee determine the extent of the SHIKKAKU penalty (Shikkaku from the match, the division, the day, the tournament, the season, for life, etc.). They record the ruling on the credential and return it.
- A public announcement of the extent of the SHIKKAKU is made at the tournament.

### **10 Second Rule Procedure:**

- In the event that a competitor falls, is thrown or knocked down and does not return to his feet immediately, the Referee shall signal to the timekeeper to start the ten second count-down by a blast on the whistle, raising his/her hand and then calling out for the doctor.
- The timekeeper will stop the clock when the competitor stands fully upright and the Referee raises his/her arm. In all cases where the 10 second clock has been started the doctor will be asked to examine the contestant. For incidents falling under this 10 second rule, the contestant may be examined on the mat.
- If the contestant does not regain their feet and stand at the line within the 10-seconds, the Referee Panel will decide on KIKEN, HANSOKU or SHIKKAKU as the case maybe.

#### **Calling Doctor Procedure:**

- The Referee should call the doctor when a contestant is injured and needs medical treatment by raising his/her hand and verbally calling out “doctor”.
- If physically able to do so, the injured contestant should be directed off the mat for examination and treatment by the doctor.
- The doctor is obliged to make safety recommendations only as they relate to the proper medical management of that particular injured contestant.

#### **Other Procedures for Suspending the Match:**

When faced with the following situations, the referee shall call “YAME” and halt the bout temporarily:

- When both or either of the contestants are out of the match area (or when a Judge signals a JOGAI).
- When a Referee orders a contestant to adjust the karate-gi or protective equipment.
- When the Referee notices that a contestant appears about to contravene the rules.
- When the Referee notices that a contestant has contravened the rules.
- When the Referee considers that one or both of the contestants cannot continue with the bout due to injuries, illness or other causes. Heeding the tournament doctor’s opinion, the Referee shall decide whether the bout should be continued.
- When a contestant seizes the opponent and does not perform an immediate technique or throw within two seconds.
- When one or both contestants fall or are thrown and no effective techniques are immediately forthcoming.
- When one or both contestants are off their feet following a fall or attempted throw and begin to wrestle.
- When both competitors seize or clinch each other without attempting a throw or score within two seconds.

- When both competitors stand chest to chest without attempting a throw or score within two seconds.
- When a score or foul is indicated by two or more judges for the same competitor.
- When in the opinion of the Referee, there has been a point scored or foul committed.
- When the situation calls for halting the match for safety reasons.
- When requested to do so by the Area Controller or Referee Council Member.

**Table Procedure:**

- The timing of the bout starts when the Referee gives the signal to start and stops each time the match is stopped (HAJIME/ YAME).
- The timekeeper shall give signals by a bell, gong or buzzer. A short signal indicates "thirty seconds remaining" ("atoshibaraku"), and a long signal indicating "time-up". When using a bell, one ding indicates "atoshibaraku", and several dings indicate "time-up".
- The timekeeper will also have available an additional stopwatch for the "10 second" rule.

**APPENDIX B. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCORING**

- No point shall be awarded if the competitor injures his opponent, even if the injury is only very minor. A warning or penalty may be imposed against the offender.
- Techniques which land below the belt may score, as long as they are above the pubic bone.
- The neck is a target area and so is the throat. No contact whatsoever to the throat is permitted but a score may be awarded for a properly controlled technique.
- A technique that lands on the shoulder blades may score. The non-scoring part of the shoulder is the junction of the upper bone of the arm with the shoulder blades and collarbones.
- The time-up bell signals the end of scoring possibilities in that bout, even though the Referee may inadvertently not halt the bout immediately. The time-up bell does not however mean that warnings or penalties cannot be imposed. Penalties can be imposed by the Refereeing Panel up to the point where the contestants leave that area after their bout's conclusion. Penalties can be imposed after that, but then only by the Referee Committee.
- Simultaneous effective scoring techniques (Aiuchi) delivered by both contestants shall not score. True AIUCHI's are rare. Not only must two techniques land simultaneously but both must be valid scoring techniques each with good form etc. Two techniques may well land simultaneously, but seldom are both effective scores. The

Referee must not dismiss as Aiuchi, a situation where only one of the simultaneous pair is actually a score. This is not Aiuchi.

- No technique will be scored if it is delivered after a penalty. If contestant one makes contact to contestant two's face just before contestant two scores, and the referee calls "Yame!" and penalizes contestant one, no score will be awarded to contestant two. However, if contestant two scores at the same time of contestant one's violation, both the score and penalty should be given.
- All penalties shall supersede scoring possibilities for that same contestant. Example: Contestant one scores with a Chudan Geri, the referee calls, "Yame!", and then that competitor accidentally makes contact to the opponent's face. Contestant one will be penalized with no score for the Chudan Geri.
- Techniques in principle have the potential to score if they are delivered perpendicular to the scoring area and directed to the axis of the body.
- A victory over an opponent who has been given a Hansoku or Shikkaku shall be worth Kachi. If a contestant is absent or is withdrawn, the opponent shall be credited with a win by Kiken.
- If a contestant, whilst inside the fighting area delivers a scoring technique and then steps outside of the area, the technique shall score. For example:
  - If a contestant (Aka), whilst inside the fighting area delivers a technique that does not score and who then steps outside of the area, Jogai will be recorded against Aka.
  - If a contestant (Aka), whilst inside the fighting area delivers a scoring technique and Shiro steps outside of the area after it has scored, the technique shall score and Jogai shall not be recorded against Shiro.
  - If a contestant (Aka), whilst inside the fighting area delivers a scoring technique and Shiro has stepped out or steps outside the fighting area as Aka's technique is delivered, the technique shall score and Jogai shall be recorded against Shiro.
  - No technique, even if technically correct, shall be scored if it is delivered when the two contestants are outside the competition area. However, if one of the contestants delivers an effective technique while still inside the competition area and before the Referee calls "Yame", the technique shall be scored.
- The point at which "YAME" should have been called is helpful in determining if Jogai has occurred. For Jogai to occur a contestant's foot or any other part of the body must touch the floor outside the fighting area, an exception to this is when the contestant is physically pushed or thrown from the area by the opponent.
- An effective technique delivered at the same time that the end of the bout is signaled is considered valid. A technique even if effective, delivered after an order to suspend or stop the bout shall not be scored and may result in a warning or a penalty being imposed on the offender.

- For reasons of safety, throws where the opponent is being grabbed below the waist, thrown without being held onto, or thrown dangerously, or where the pivot point is above the thrower's belt level, are prohibited and shall incur a warning or penalty. Exceptions are conventional karate leg sweeping techniques that do not require the opponent to be held while executing the sweep, such as ashi-barai, kouchi-gari, kani waza, etc.
- A worthless technique is a worthless technique – regardless of where and how it is delivered. A technique that is badly deficient in good form, or lacking in power, shall not score.

### **APPENDIX C. INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS IN COMPETITION**

- KIKEN or forfeiture is the decision given when a contestant or contestants are unable to continue, abandon the bout, or are withdrawn on the order of the Referee. The grounds for abandonment may include injury not ascribable to the opponent's actions.
- If two contestants injure each other or are suffering from the effects of previously incurred injury, and are declared by the Tournament Doctor to be unable to continue, the bout is awarded to the contestant who has amassed the most points. In Individual Matches if the points score is equal, then a vote (HANTEI) will decide the outcome of the bout.
- Self-inflicted injury and those injuries caused by the athlete are easy to deal with but when assessing an injury caused by the opponent's technique, the Panel must consider whether the technique was valid. Was it properly applied to the proper area at the correct time and with the correct degree of control. Consideration of this will assist the Referee Panel in deciding whether the injured contestant should be declared the loser by Kiken, or whether the opponent should be penalized for a foul.
- When a contestant is injured, the Referee shall at once halt the bout and call the doctor. The doctor is authorized to diagnose and treat the injury only.
- If the doctor declares the contestant unfit, the appropriate entry must be made on the monitoring record sheet. The extent of unfitness must be made clear to other Refereeing Panel.