

# 2024 Amateur Athletic Union Judo Handbook



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# **2024 AAU Judo Rule Book & Regulations**

## **PREAMBLE**

The AAU Judo National Committee has been established to promote the benefits of participation in athletics and hereby adopts these rules & regulations for the advancement of that purpose.

The goal of AAU Judo is to create a venue for judo competition that is fun and enjoyable for all athletes, coaches, officials and spectators. Enhancing the complete athletic experience through organized competitions, rather than politics, will always be the primary objective. - *Written by NORMAN MILLER, National Chair*

## **I. NATIONAL SPORT COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. National Committee Structure and Procedures**

1. **National Chair** – The President of the AAU appoints the Chair from the recommendations of the National Sport Committee after approval of a majority of the National Officers.
2. **Executive Committee Composition**
3. **National Sport Committee Composition** - The Committee will consist of the National Sports Chair, the elected or appointed officers or committee chairs as defined by the sport's operating rules, the elected or appointed Sport Director of each District, or a representative designated by the District Governor and one appointed representative from each affiliated member that registers members in the sport. The President may appoint up to five (5) members-at-large.
4. **Other Committee Positions**
5. **Voting** – Persons eligible to vote shall be the National Sport Chair, elected or appointed officers, chairs of Committees as defined by the sport's operating rules, the elected or appointed District sports director or a representative from each Affiliated member that registers members in the sport, and any members-at-large. Only representatives from Districts which registered a minimum of .5% (a half percent) of the total number of athletes in that sport in the previous year, shall be allowed to vote in the National Sport Committee meeting.

### **B. Sport Committee Meetings**

1. **National Sport Committee Regular Meetings** - Regular Meetings of the National Sport Committee shall be in conjunction with the AAU Convention.
2. **Non – Regular Sport Committee Meetings** - National Sport Committee may hold a Non-Regular National Sport Committee meeting in odd years' subject to the following provisions:
  - a. The meeting is called by the Chair following approval of the National Office.
  - b. The National Office has the right to coordinate the meeting and pick the site for the meeting.
3. **National Sport Committee Special Meetings** - Special meetings of a Committee are scheduled at the request of the Chair or upon written request of at least one half (1/2) of the Committee members. The purpose of the Special meeting must be stated in the Notice for the meeting.
4. **National Sport Executive Committee Meetings** – The National Chair shall determine the date and location of Executive Committee Meetings.
5. **Agenda Additions**
  - a. **Sport Committee Meeting Order (Agendas)** - The Regular National Sport Committee meetings, the Non-Regular National Sport Committee meetings, and National Sport Committee Special meetings shall follow meeting order (agenda format) as established by Code (Bylaw 9.5)

## II. SPORT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### A. The Sport of Judo - *Its scope and objectives.*

1. Judo is a competitive sport that resembles wrestling. Contestants wear a special uniform consisting of a kimono-like jacket, loose fitting drawstring pants, and a cloth belt that wraps around the jacket. Competition takes place on firm shock absorbent foam mats covered with a plasticized material. Matches are won by showing control over an opponent by scoring ippon (full point immediate victory) in one of four ways:
  - a. **Throwing** – Accomplished when the opponent is thrown onto their back with speed and force
  - b. **Hold Downs** – Accomplished when pressing (holding) the opponent's back to the mat for 25 seconds
  - c. **Choke & Arm lock** – Can be accomplished when the athlete:
    - I. Submits by verbal signal of “maitta” (“I surrender”) or any other verbal yell or signal
    - II. Submits by tapping the opponent or the mat at least twice
    - III. The referee sees imminent danger of the athlete passing out from the choke or arm lock and calls “Ippon” to signal the victory and immediately declare “Sore Made” (Match is Over)
2. Referee has the authority to stop the contest and declare an ippon (win) if the athlete is in danger of being choked, unconscious or suffering serious injury from an arm lock.
3. State statutes also require tournament directors to disqualify from further participation any athlete showing signs of head trauma or concussion.

### B. General Competition Rules & Notes

1. Matte called in ground fighting if both contestants are outside the contest area.
2. If osaekomi called, contest continues as long as either contestant has any part of body touching the contest area. Toketa in effect (**hold broken**) and matte called after both contestants are totally outside contest area **except** when there is an adequate safety area to allow the hold down to safely continue up to the hold down time limits i.e. hold down cannot always end by going out of bounds.
3. Osaekomi in progress is not stopped by the end of match time; match continues until "ippon" or "Toketa" result.
4. While standing, contestants are considered in bounds as long as any part of both feet touches inside the contest area and any throwing attempt will be considered for scoring purposes even when either or both contestants go out of bounds as long as the technique started in the contest area.
5. Contestant must be offered minimum of ten (10) minutes rest between matches.
6. Result of any technique started simultaneous with the time signal shall be considered valid.
7. Contestants bow to each other and take one step forward from starting line at beginning of match.
8. After referee awards match to winner, contestants take one step backward to starting line, then bow to each other.
9. "Toketa" is called during osaekomi if contestant being held is able to scissor the holder's legs or body.
10. All actions (**scores, penalties, decisions, etc...**) of the officials (**referee and judges**) are based upon the majority of three.
11. Any situations not covered by the "Official AAU Rules" shall be decided upon by the referee in consultation with the judges.

12. If thrown contestant deliberately "bridges" (**head or heels to mat with back arched**), referee will call Hansoku Make (disqualification) due to the potential danger of serious neck injury from bridging to avoid being thrown on the back.
13. Competitors should not be required to rearrange jacket, belt, etc... at the end of match.

### C. Weight Divisions

1. Although a highly skilled small person has been known to defeat a larger less skilled opponent, the usual result historically has been cracked ribs and other assorted injuries to the smaller contestant.
2. Since judo is a size factor sport, weight divisions should be established to minimize weight becoming the prime determinant of the winner. The days of Open divisions (**all weights together**) should be a thing of the past. Local and regional events may establish their own adult weight divisions, but to maximize safety and fairness, **WEIGHT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL COMPETITORS IN ANY DIVISION SHOULD SELDOM EXCEED 10 PERCENT.**
3. **Youth divisions** (ages 20 and under) should use a combination of age and weight factors along with **AAU 10 PERCENT RULE** to insure the most equitable possible pairing. Since weight is more of a factor than age, there should be no artificial restrictions keeping a 10-year-old from competing against a 12-year-old in some situations. Conversely, however, it would be unacceptable to pair an 11-year-old and a 16-year-old both weighing 140 pounds since age and maturity would be overwhelming and potentially dangerous factors. Discretion and vigilance advised.
  - a. If they pay a separate entry fee, 15- and 16-year-olds can be allowed to compete in a 17–20-year-old category. No one under the age of 16 should be allowed to compete in an adult division.
4. **Masters division (ages 30 & older)** - can also be established using a combination of age/weight factors.
5. **Weight(s) - Further Explained**
  - a. Must enter weight division corresponding to actual body weight.
  - b. Can generally enter only one weight division.
  - c. Only exception to "one weight division rule" is when at the decision and discretion of the tournament director a fighter is placed in an uncontested or under contested division to avoid the situation of uncontested or under-contested winners. In these situations, the following must apply:
    - i. Ten percent (10%) weight rule must be considered.
    - ii. Additional entry fee must not be charged.
    - iii. Affected athlete must be eligible to win or place in both of the divisions.

#### **D. Match Times**

1. **Regulation Match** - Time is three (3) minutes.
2. **Shorter Matches** – Two (2) minutes for ages 10 and under or in special situations. There should be no difference in match time for male or female competitors.
3. **Variance in Match Times** – May be used at the discretion of the tournament director.
4. **Sudden Victory Overtime – (1:00 Minute)** - Matches that are scoreless or tie at the end of regulation time will be decided during the one-minute overtime. The overtime match shall be conducted using the "sudden victory" method (***first score wins***). If the score is still unchanged at the end of overtime, a decision must be rendered by the officials, based solely on what occurred during the overtime period.

#### **E. Bowing Procedure**

1. Contestants bow to each other on the start lines at the beginning and end of each match.
2. There are no bow-ins, bow-outs, bow-ons or bow-offs for either competitors or officials.

#### **F. Belt Designation**

1. To facilitate officiating, one contestant shall be designated to wear a red belt while the other is designated to wear white.
2. Generally, the first contestant listed or called in the pairing will wear the red belt.
3. Contestants can only wear one belt at a time.

#### **G. Competitor Behavior (Applies to coaches, parents and everyone involved.)**

***Respect in Judo is not best shown by bowing but by following these guidelines:***

1. **Know The Rules** - Avoid losing due to ignorance of the rules. Study the rulebook - don't just read it! Strive to know the rules better than the referees. Know entry deadlines and register on time.
2. **Be On Time** - Arrive early for weigh-in and start of tournament. Be ready when your match is called. Have your judo card with you at all tournaments.
3. **Be Clean** - Yes, uniforms should be washed! Clean bodies and clean feet, please. Trim them - long finger and toenails are dangerous for judo. Slippers are part of the judo uniform and should be worn when walking outside of the mat.
4. **Respect Yourself** - Win graciously. Lose graciously.
5. **Attitude Towards Opponents** - "Trash talk" is inappropriate before, during or after the match. Appreciate the work of tournament directors, referees, scorer's timers, etc. Their efforts enable you to compete.
6. **Enjoy yourself!** Judo should be fun!

#### **H. Penalties**

1. Allow the competitors to fight rather than deciding the match through arbitrary and excessive searching for rule violations.
2. Accentuate the positive - encourage action - do not get overly concerned about looking for so-called negative judo.
3. Procedures when penalties are given:
  - a. Referee uses gestures combined with words to give reason for penalty and then points to violator.
  - b. Before assessing "*Hansoku Make*" penalty; referee must consult with judges.
  - c. Penalties are progressive. Subsequent violations after a first infraction must be given at least the next highest penalty regardless of the violation.

- d. Penalties are not cumulative and second or subsequent penalties cancel earlier lower penalty and resultant score.
- e. Officials have some discretion in modifying some of the usual penalty assessments.

**I. Possible Penalties for Rule Violations**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be given directly for serious safety violations. Examples: Lifting opponent off the mat and driving/smashing down on back, bending backward pressure to neck or spine, head first dives in front throw attacks, arm bar smashes, arm bar traps disguised as throws, joint locks other than to elbow, bridging to avoid landing on back when thrown</li> <li>• Can also be given for repeat violations of minor violations. This is the judo “four strikes” and you are out rule.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor violations serve as a recorded warning violation the first time, but are raised each time another minor violation or repeat violation occurs.</li> <li>• Shido violations involve delaying, defensive or gripping violations, Examples: Running out of bounds, overly defensiveness and failure to attempt to grip or throw once a grip has been attained.</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** Referee advisories and competitor cooperation make it possible to have tournaments without penalties. Referees can talk to competitors without interrupting the continuity of the match. They can encourage action and do things to prevent the commission of dangerous acts. A faster more exciting judo is a direct result of the referee’s application of these rules.

**J. “Referee Advisories” – Talk it Up!**

1. Referee should talk to competitors advising them of the need to be more active (**attack, etc...**), less defensive (**take a grip, etc...**) or any other need to increase or maintain the action.
2. Referee should use advisories to prevent the commission of a dangerous act. (**watch the face, do not bend the spine, etc...**)
3. Referee not limited to just one advisory per match, but should assess the penalty when competitor does not respond to the advisory by correcting the violating act.
4. Intent, duration and situational occurrence should all be considered in the assessment of penalties.

## **K. Difference From International Judo Rules**

1. No belt rank promotions.
2. Attempt to have no weight disparities of greater than ten percent (10%) between all contestants in division.
3. Designated red/white belt system to easily differentiate contestants. Any color uniform permitted except that a red uniform may not be worn by the contestant designated as white.
4. Chokes - ages 11 and older.
5. Arm bars - ages 15 and over.
6. One-minute sudden victory -overtime in all scoreless and tie matches.
7. Referee shirts using the red sleeve/white sleeve design.
8. Bowing only once at beginning and end of each match.
9. Referee option of verbal advisories prior to need for assessing penalties.

## **L. Medical Timeouts & Injury Procedure** – Doctor or medical help may be called to mat by referee or injured contestant. Doctor may examine the injury.

1. Tournament doctor or medical attendants may advise the referee not to allow an injured contestant to continue competing.
2. Blood must be cleaned immediately from uniforms and mat surfaces. The medical personnel must then clean surfaces with chloride type germicidal.
3. No contestant shall be allowed to continue with open cuts or bleeding. All such wounds must be totally covered with the appropriate dressing and tape.

## **M.** These rules shall apply to all AAU Licensed events unless modified.

## **III. SPORT OPERATIONS**

### **A. Current Year Rule Changes** – N/A

### **B. Event Operating Rules** – These rules shall apply to all AAU Judo Licensed events unless modified and approved by the AAU Judo Executive Committee.

1. **Facilities/Competition Area**– It is recommended that the mat area be 20' x 20' minimum with a suggested safety area of 8'.
2. **Equipment** – N/A
3. **Judges/Officials/Referees Requirements**
  - a. **Attire** - Black or navy pants. Either long pants or shorts can be worn. Dark socks (**black or navy**), bare feet or white socks when wearing shorts. White Official AAU Referee Shirt with red stripes on right sleeve and white stars on left sleeve
  - b. **The Role of Referees & Judges.** Matches conducted by three referees:
    - ii. The center referee commands and directs the acting while moving about the competition area.
    - iii. The corner referees, generally referred to as judges, stay outside the competition area and assist the referee in rendering scores, penalties, decisions and overall conduct of the match.
    - iv. Center referees and judges rotate positions after either one, two or three matches as is predetermined by tournament director or referee coordinator.

- c. In special circumstances, matches may be conducted with no judges or with one judge action only in an advisory capacity. In a three-official match (**one referee and two judges**) each has an equal vote in rendering an opinion.
- d. **Coaching Requirements** – *Determined by the Event Host*
- e. **Awards** – *Determined by the Event Host*
- f. **Protest Procedures** – *Determined by the Event Host*
- g. **Format/Scheduling** – *Determined by the Event Host*
- h. **Entry Procedures** – *Determined by the Event Host*
- i. **Matching or Elimination Systems** - Varied systems of pairing contestants or teams for the purpose of selecting the winners are used in all sports. A brief description of the more commonly used systems for judo is as follows with descriptive diagrams on next four pages:
  - i. **Single Elimination** - Contestants eliminated after one loss. First (1<sup>st</sup>) place is undefeated and Second (2<sup>nd</sup>) place has lost only to champion.
  - ii. **Round Robin** - All contestants compete against everyone in their division. Usually done with small groups of three (3) to five (5).
  - iii. **True Winner's Repechage with Consolation** - Blend of single and double elimination that assures undefeated champion and a second (2<sup>nd</sup>) place who has lost only to the winner, and third (3<sup>rd</sup>) place who has lost to either (**or both**) champion and runner-up. Add a consolation match when needed to assure everyone a minimum of two matches.
  - iv. **Modified Double Elimination** - Winner undefeated second (2<sup>nd</sup>) place is winner of loser's pool and has only one loss.
  - v. **Strict Double Elimination** - No one eliminated until losing twice. This may necessitate competing against the same contestant as many as three times.
  - vi. **Knockout Pool** - Round robin pools of three but never over four contestants. The top two (2) finishers in each pool then compete in a repechage.
  - vii. **Stand-Up Challenge** - Contestants lined up from lightest to heaviest. Winner of each match stays on mat against next challenger in moving from lightest to heaviest.
  - viii. **Team Competition/Dual Meet** - Point values given for type of win. Point totals to determine winning team.
- j. **Scores and How They Are Earned** - (control is a required component of all throws and counters): **See Page 12-13.**



### C. Competition Rules




1. **Qualification Procedure** - Dependent on the type of event (*see below for more details*):
  - a. **National Championships** – *All athletes are welcome to compete, as long as they meet the guidelines of the AAU Judo program.*
  - b. **Grand National Championships** – *All athletes are welcome to compete, as long as they meet the guidelines of the AAU Judo program.*
2. **Eligibility** – *Any Judo athlete who is a current AAU Member.*
3. **Uniform & Equipment** – The Judo uniform General Requirements:
  - a. **Jacket** - Long enough to cover fists when arms extended at sides and wide enough for eight (8") inches overlap at rib cage.
  - b. **Sleeves** - Must extend to the wrist joint, have at least a four (4") inches space between sleeve and the arm and have armpit space of at least eight (8") inches.
  - c. **Pants** – Must extend to the ankle and at least four (4") inches space between pants and entire length of leg.
  - d. **Belts** – One and a half (1 ½") wide, worn at waist level, wrapped around twice, tied securely with a square knot with ends extending 8-12" beyond knot ends.
  - e. **Patches** - Excessive patches that may interfere with gripping are prohibited and loose patches must be sewn or removed.
  - f. **Foot Covering** - No shoes or socks may be worn on the mat. All competitors must wear foot covering when walking outside of mat area; therefore, slippers should be considered part of uniform.
  - g. Strongly made of ribbed cotton or similar material
  - h. Clean and free of rips or tears
  - i. Female contestants must wear a T-shirt of any color under the jacket
  - j. Uniforms may be of any color or combination of colors except that the designated white contestant may not wear uniform of red color or shades of red.
4. **Competition Types**
  - a. District Championships
  - b. National Championships
  - c. Other events awarded by the AAU Judo Executive Committee

## APPENDIX

1. **District Director Contacts** - AAU Judo District Directors can be found by visiting - <http://www.aaujudo.org/District/DistrictDirectors.aspx>.
2. **Contact Information**  
  
**Norm Miller – National Chair**  
Phone: (414) 354-1898  
[judoinc@att.net](mailto:judoinc@att.net)  
  
**Steve Scott – Vice Chair**  
[stevescottjudo@yahoo.com](mailto:stevescottjudo@yahoo.com)
3. **Event Dates** – Please visit AAU Judo for up-to-date information on our AAU licensed events at [www.aaujudo.org](http://www.aaujudo.org).
4. To purchase your AAU membership, please '[Click Here](#)'
5. **Definitions/Glossary** - How to pronounce necessary Japanese words
  - a. **Scores**
    - Ippon: "ee pawn"
    - wazari: "wah zah ree"
    - yuko: "you ko"
    - wazari awase te ippon: "ah wah seh tuh"
  - b. **Penalties Used**
    - Shido: "she doe"
    - Hansoku Make: "hahn sew koo mah kay"
  - c. **Referee Commands**
    - Hajime (begin): "hah jee may"
    - Matte (stop): "mah tay"
    - Osaekomi (hold down secured): "o sigh ko me"
    - Toketa (hold down broken): "toe keh tuh"
    - Sono Mama (do not move): "so no mama"
    - Yoshi (continue): "yo she"
    - Hantei (call for decision): "hahn tay"
    - Sore Made (end of match): "sore uh mahda"

JUDO SCORES AND HOW THEY ARE EARNED

*III. Sport Operations/Judges, Officials &Referees Requirements/Scores and How They Are Earned*

SCORE & Referee Signal		THROWS or Counter Throws	HOLD DOWNS (seconds)	CHOKE or ARM LOCK	PENALTY By OPPONENT
<b>IPPON</b>		Largely on back with speed, considerable force and control*	<b>2</b>	Tap out, choke out or stop by referee	Hansoku Make
			<b>5</b>		
<b>WAZARI</b>		Partially lacking in either largely on back, speed or force	<b>2</b>	<b>POSSIBLE EXCEPT IPPON</b>	Shido 3
			<b>0</b>		
<b>YUKO</b>		Mostly on side of upper body or lower back and lacking either or both speed or force	<b>1</b>		Shido 2
			<b>5</b>		

- **Shido 1 – first Shido penalty is disregarded for scoring purposes.**
- \*Control means “distinguishable thrower” at time of impact. Does not imply thrower must have grip on opponent’s uniform with either one or both hands at time throw was either started or completed.
- Match ends immediately when ippon is scored.
- Two wazari scores equal ippon. No other scores accumulate to equal a higher score. No amount of yuko scores equal wazari.
- Equivalency scores as result of penalty are posted immediately. If subsequent penalties are assessed, previously posted score is replaced with the higher score.
- Result of any technique started simultaneous with end of match time signal shall be considered valid.
- Hold down in effect (osaekomi) not stopped by end of the match time. Match continues until “ippon” or “toketa” result.
- Attacks that do not score are considered for decisions in tie or scoreless matches. Decisions based on quality rather than quantity of attacks, (i.e., closest attack to a score prevails.)
- Head referees and/or tournaments director may change any major or blatantly incorrect calls or procedural errors if necessary to rectify an egregious mistake

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Any additional questions, please contact the AAU National Headquarters:

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