



Guidelines for Open Style Tournament

In order to avoid confusion and ensure a common ground for competitors the following Guidelines will be followed:

2010 - RULES

COMPETITOR: Each competitor must present him/herself to the referee suitably attired with proper uniform and equipment and physically prepared to compete. If he/she is not prepared to compete as deemed by the center referee, the competitor may be penalized for delay of time.

DELAY OF TIME PENALTY: Sparring: An automatic warning will be issued to the competitor. A penalty point will be issued for each minute the competitor is not properly ready to compete. Upon 3 penalty points the offending competitor will be disqualified. **Form:** .01 points will be deducted from the offending competitor's final score. Each minute the competitor is not ready to compete, .01 points will be deducted for his/her final score. If a competitor is still not ready to compete after 3 minutes, he/she will be disqualified.

RANK RULE: A competitor must compete at the highest belt level they have earned in the martial arts. A competitor can never compete in a division of which he/she had not earned that rank. Once a competitor competes as a black belt legally, he/she must always compete as a black belt. A competitor can never compete in a lower belt division than the level of belt he/she has earned in the Martial Arts.

PROOF OF AGE RULE: All competitors must have a proof of age document. If there is a legitimate reason to question a competitor's age, he/she must present a proof of age (birth certificate, driver's license, or other acceptable documents) to prove his/her age.

LEGAL AGE RULE: All competitors have the option of competing in the same division all year long for rating purposes, by establishing a legal competition age for the year. The age a competitor is on June 30th of the current competition year is their legal competition age for that year. They can compete all year at that age so he/she can earn rating points in one age division all year. A competitor can always compete in his/her chronological age.

UNIFORM: All competitors must wear a complete (top and bottom) traditional or professional sport karate (Kung Fu, Tae Kwon Do, etc.) uniform in a good state of repair. The appropriate color belt or sash must be worn in competition. **Sparring:** All sparring uniforms must have sleeves that reach at least to the middle of the forearm. No T-shirts, sweats, tank tops or shoes are allowed in the sparring divisions. **Form & Weapons:** T-shirts, tank tops and sweatshirts are allowed in form if they are part of the competitor's official school uniform. Uniforms in the form and weapons divisions are allowed more liberties because form is not one-on-one competition where the uniform could cause a decisive disadvantage or advantage to a competitor. Removal of the uniform top is allowed if the removal is considered relevant to the artistic expression or safety of the competitor. Shoes may be worn in form competition if they do not damage or mark the competition floor.

COMPETITOR RESPONSIBILITIES: It is the responsibility of the competitor to know the rules and be ready for competition when called to do so. He/she must be suitably attired, weighed-in and at the appropriate ring when competition begins. Three calls will be made for competition at ringside. If the



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competitor is not at his/her ring ready to compete when competition begins, he/she will not be able to compete (see delay of time rule). If a competitor leaves the ring after the competition begins and is not present when his/her name is called to compete, his/her name will be called three times at ringside. If he/she is still not present to compete, he/she will be disqualified (see delay of time rule).

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED SAFETY EQUIPMENT: NASKA approved headgear; hand and footpads, mouthpieces, groin cups (for male competitors only). The competitor's equipment will be checked and if it is deemed unsafe, he/she will be asked to change the equipment before he/she can compete.

Hand Pads: A soft padded surface must cover the fingers, wrist and any striking surface of the hand.

Foot Pads: A soft padded surface must cover the instep, sides, toes, ankle and back of the heel of the foot. The bottom of the foot does not have to be padded. (NASKA has approved the use of "Ringstar sparring shoes in all sparring divisions, with the same stipulations placed on other approved sparring gear.)

Head Gear: The front, sides and back of the head must be covered by a soft padded surface. Insufficiently padded gloves, foot, chest and head gear will not be allowed.

Mouth Guard :A properly fitted mouthpiece is required

Shin pads and Rib/Chest guards are highly recommended for additional safety to all sparring competitors.

Equipment must be in a good state of repair and must be free of heavy taping, tears or any other repairs that may cause injury. The tournament's official rules arbitrator ultimately determines the approval or denial of the equipment. .

REFEREES: The referee is the most experienced official in the ring and is thoroughly versed on the rules and order of competition. He/she promotes the safety of the competitors, enforces the rules and ensures fair play. To this end, he/she starts and stops the match, awards points, makes penalty decisions, administrates the voting of the other judges, communicates clearly with the scorekeeper and timekeeper, and announces the winner of each match. **Added Powers of the Referee:** 1) Match starts and ends only with his/her command (not the command of the timekeeper); 2) Has final decision on any disputes on score; 3) Has the power to issue warnings and award penalty points without a majority decision: 4) Can overrule a majority call only to issue a warning or a penalty point: 5) Automatically has power to disqualify a competitor who receives (3) penalty points; 6) Has power to issue time-outs. A competitor can ask for a time-out, but it is the determination of the referee to issue one. The disqualification of a competitor, where disqualification is not automatic, is determined only by a majority vote of the judges.

OFFICIALS: Each ring should have a REFEREE, two to four JUDGES, a TIMEKEEPER/SCOREKEEPER. The judges call points and rule infractions as they see them. They also vote on disqualifications. The referee also calls points and rules infractions but is also in compete control of the ring and



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ring personnel. Referees make all final decisions on penalty points and warnings (except for disqualifications) but can consult judges before making their decisions. The majority vote of the judges and referee determines a scoring point and/or a competitor's disqualification.

CALLS AN OFFICIAL MAY MAKE: When the referee believes there has been a significant exchange of techniques, or when signaled to do so by a corner a judge/s, he/she shall call out the word, "STOP!" in a loud voice. The referee shall then returns the competitors to their starting marks and addresses the judges by saying **"JUDGES CALL!"** All judges and the center referee cast their votes simultaneously and assertively in the following manner.

- 1. Judge Sees a Point - He/she should hold up both colors or hold up one arm if colors are not being used. At the same time, he/she yells out the word **"CALL!"** in a loud, clear voice to let the referee know he/she has a call.
- 2. Point Calling - When signaled by the referee (referee says "Judges Call" in a loud clear voice) a judge raises the appropriate color (red or white usually) if colors are being used or points to the competitor who scores the point. If a competitor scores a two point kick, the officials should hold up or point with two fingers (index and middle fingers). If only one point is being called, the judge should point with only one finger (Index finger).
- 3. No Point Scored - An official crosses his/her wrist at waist level or holds both colors down to indicate that he/she believes that a point was not scored.
- 4. Did Not See If A Point Was Scored - The officials holds his/her hand over his/her eyes indicating that he/she could not see whether a point was scored or not. Indicates the official was not in position to see if a point scored. (When using this signal, it has the same effect as saying "no point", but it indicates to the referee, competitors and fans the reason why you are not calling the point).
- 5. Clash - Officials make a motion as though they are hitting both fists together, indicating that both competitors scored at the same time.
- 6. Penalty - The judge waves the color of the offending competitor in a circular motion. If no colors are used the judge waves the hand and arm in a circular motion while pointing at the offending competitor.
- 7. Disqualification - A disqualification vote is taken separately from any other vote. When a disqualification vote is asked for, the referee will say, **"JUDGES CALL"**. **The judges will then hold the color or point to the competitor who is to be disqualified. If the judge does not feel the competitor should be disqualified, he/she crosses his/her wrist or holds both colors down at waist level.**

LATE CALLS: All officials should make their calls at the same time. If, in the opinion of the referee, the corner judges are making a late call intentionally, the referee can disqualify the call and/or judge (noise not allowing the judges to hear the referee and the honest mistake of raising the wrong color or pointing at the wrong competitor should be taken into consideration not to disqualify the call or judge).

PROTEST: A competitor has the right to protest an infraction of the rules or if a possible mistake was



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made (not a judgment call). If a competitor wishes to protest, he/she should first let the referee know he/she believes there has been an infraction of the rules or a mistake has been made. The referee will summon the arbitrator to the ring (if the referee cannot properly settle the protest to the players satisfaction) to render a decision. All protests must be made in an orderly, proper and sportsmanlike manner. All protests must be made immediately. Protests are not allowed once competition has resumed (after the fact protest). A competitor may be penalized or even disqualified if he/she is protesting improperly or without proper cause.

LATE ENTRIES: Once a division has started (the first competitor has started his/her form/weapon routine or the first divisional fight has started) no competitor/s can be added to that division. **BE ON TIME!**

THE RING: The size of the fighting and form adult black belt rings shall be approximately 20' x 20'. Starting lines should be marked approximately six feet apart in the middle of the ring. Additionally, each ring should be posted with a ring number visible to competitors, officials, and medical personnel from across the floor. All youth and under black belt adult rings shall be a minimum of 16' x 16' approximately.

SPARRING RULES

LENGTH OF MATCH: Two minute running time unless a difference as listed below are scored before time has expired. If a match is tied at the end of two minutes, sudden victory (first person to score a point) overtime period will determine the match.

POINT VALUES AND WINNER DETERMINATION: All legal hand techniques that score will be awarded one (1) point. All legal kicking techniques that score will be awarded two (2) points. All penalty points awarded will be awarded one (1) point.

Under Black belt competitors who earns a **Five (5) point spread** in scoring or whoever is ahead at the end of the two minutes is declared the winner.

All Black belt matches will use a **Seven (7)-point spread** to determining the winner or whoever is ahead at the end of two minutes.

All grand championship matches are **Two (2) -minute** running time.

MARJORITY VOTE: Points are awarded by a majority vote of all judges. The majority of judges do not have to agree on the same technique being scored, only that a point was scored. **A majority of the judges calling the point must call a two (2)-point kick before two points can be awarded.** Otherwise only one point is awarded.

WHAT IS A POINT: A point is a controlled legal sport karate technique scored by a competitor in-bounds and up-right (not considered down) without time being called that strikes a competitor with the allowable



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amount of focused touch contact to a legal target area.

LEGAL TARGET AREAS: Entire head and face, ribs, chest, abdomen, collarbone and kidneys.

ILLEGAL TARGET AREAS: Spine, back of neck, throat, sides of the neck, groin, legs, knees and back.

NON-TARGET AREAS: Hips, shoulders, buttocks, arms, and feet.

LEGAL TECHNIQUES: Legal techniques are all controlled sport karate techniques, except those listed as illegal.

ILLEGAL TECHNIQUES: Head butts, hair pulls, bites, scratches, elbows, knees, eye attacks of any kind, take downs on a hard surface floor, ground fighting on a hard surface, any stomps or kicks to the head of a downed competitor, slapping, grabbing for more than one second, uncontrolled blind techniques, any uncontrolled throws, takedowns or sweeps and any other uncontrolled dangerous techniques that are deemed unsafe in sport karate.

GRABBING: A competitor may grab the uniform top of his/her opponent in an attempt to score with a sport karate technique for only one second (immediately), after which time he/she must release the uniform. Likewise, the uniform pants may be grabbed for one second to an upright opponent in an attempt to score.

SWEEPS, TAKEDOWNS, GRABS AND GROUND FIGHTING: Sweeps not to take down an opponent, but only to obstruct the balance so as to follow up with a sport karate technique can only be executed to the back of the front leg at mid-calf or below. A sweep must be deemed a proper sweep and not a kick, to be legal.

LIGHT TOUCH CONTACT: Means there is no penetration or visible movement of the competitor as a result of the contact. Light touch is required to all legal target areas in all black belt sparring divisions. The face shield of a head gear is a legal target area.

MODERATE TOUCH CONTACT: Means slight penetration or slight target movement. Moderate touch contact may be made to all legal target areas except the headgear, face shield and face.

Head Contact in under Black Belt divisions must be light and no face contact is allowed. This will include head gear with face shields attached . Also a well focus non contact strike to the head will be award the same points.

Non Head Contact Divisions : The Tournament organizer can select certain under black belt divisions to be non head contact divisions . Any head contact in these divisions are subject to the rules on warnings and penalties listed below .

WARNINGS AND PENALTIES: One and only one warning is allowed for breaking the rules before a penalty point is awarded. After the first warning is given, a penalty point is awarded for each and every rules violation. If a



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competitor receives **Three (3)** warnings (**Two (2)** penalty points) in any one match, he/she will be disqualified. If the severity of the first rules violation is deemed by the referee to be too severe, a penalty point can be issued immediately.

Other Penalty Rules: A competitor cannot be penalized and still receive a point on the same call. A competitor can receive a point for a proper technique and another point from a penalty

call against his/her competitor (two points awarded). If, in the opinion of the referee and/or the medical personnel, a competitor cannot continue because of an injury caused by an illegal penalized attack executed by his/her competitor, the offending competitor shall be automatically disqualified.

Other Cause for Penalization: Attacking illegal and non-target areas, using illegal techniques, running out of the ring to avoid fighting, falling to the floor to avoid fighting, continuing after being ordered to stop, excessive stalling, blind, negligent or reckless attacks, uncontrolled techniques, showing unsportsmanlike behavior by the competitor, his/her coaches, friends, etc., excessive contact, and delay of time are examples of possible penalization.

DISQUALIFICATION: Requires a majority vote by all officials, unless it is an automatic disqualification.
Non-Competing Penalty: If, in the majority opinion of the officials, it is considered that the competitors are not making an obvious attempt to fight in the true spirit of competition, both competitors will be warned and if it continues, will be disqualified. **Wrong Division: If any competitor competes in a division he/she does not qualify to compete in due to age, weight, rank, gender, style, etc., he/she will be disqualified.**

COACHING: The luxury of having a coach is something that most competitors do not have access to. Therefore, it sometimes can become an unfair advantage over a competitor who does not have a coach. The rules are made and enforced so no one competitor has an advantage or disadvantage over another competitor. Therefore, coaching is allowed but only under the following guidelines:

1. Never, at any time, can a coach enter the ring without the referee's permission, 2. No abusive, violent, unsportsmanlike or overzealous coaching; 3. Coaches cannot ask for a time out (only the competitor may ask for a time out), 4. Coaches can never, at any time, interfere with the proper running of the ring or the decisions of the judges. **A Coach is defined as anyone who is trying to help one competitor in anyway. A coach could be but is not limited to a friend, parent, team mate or official coach. The center referee can issue a warning to a competitor for each time his/her coach is interfering with a match or disrupting fair play between contestants. A referee can ask for a disqualification of a contest, but requires a majority vote of all judges.**

OUT-OF-BOUNDS: A competitor is out-of-bounds as soon as he/she does not have at least one foot touching inside or on the boundary line. **An out of bounds competitor cannot score a point while out of bounds. In bounds competitor can score on an out of bounds competitor if the center referee has not called stop.**

FORM RULES



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TIME LIMIT: Each form or weapons routine must be three (3) minutes or less. The time starts once the competitor enters the competition ring.

SCORING RANGES OF FORM AND WEAPONS:

Ranges will be set follows

Beginner (white , yellow & orange)	7.50 – 8.00
Intermediate (green, blue & purple)	8.00 – 8.50
Advanced (brown & red)	8.50 – 9.00
Black Belt	9.50 – 10.00
Grand Champion	9.90 – 10.00

Scores will be presented after **all** competitors have completed their forms for the division . 2 points should be used for each competitor when judging , i.e 10 competitors = 20 point spread 9.80 – 10.00 . For divisions using 5 judges the high and low scores will be dropped .

TIES: If there is a tie for 1st Thru 3rd place, with the majority of the judge's scores* determine the winner by dropping the low score . If after with the scores there is still not a majority of judges for one competitor , then drop the high score , If with this the scores are still not a majority of judges for one competitor, the tie competitors must redo their form and the center referee commands the judges to points to the competitor who they fill should win.

*Note this applies when the competition has only 3 judges.

TRADITIONAL, CREATIVE, MUSICAL AND EXTREME DIVISIONS: Competitors in these divisions must exhibit a form or weapon routine that reflects the essence and values of the division name in which they are competing. Otherwise, the competitor risks disqualification or down grading.

Traditional forms and weapons must capture the essence of classic martial arts movements, showcasing the traditional techniques and stances.

Traditional Forms and Weapons – These forms must capture the essence of classic martial arts movements, showcasing the traditional techniques, stances, footwork, and weapons. Emphasis is placed on execution of technique, application of technique, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and focus. Forms may be unmodified or modified from what a system or school considers to be the original version of the form; however, performance of the following movements will result in a downgrade of the form, or upon unanimous vote of the judges, a "no score" as a form inappropriate for the division: more than two kicks with the same leg without putting the foot down in



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between; front or back flips; cartwheels; front or side leg splits; releases of the weapon other than simple hand switches; or any other gymnastic movements or extreme exhibitions of flexibility or agility with the body or weapon that are deemed in the opinion of the judges to be inappropriate for the division pursuant to the general guidelines set forth here.

Creative form and weapons allows contemporary martial arts techniques that have evolved over the last 30 years. No extreme gymnastic-type movements are allowed in the creative form and weapons divisions.

Creative Forms and Weapons – The Creative Division allows forms to include contemporary martial arts techniques that have evolved over the last 30 years. These may be added to a traditional form, or the form may be devised in its entirety by the competitor. The Creative Division was formerly known as the Open and before that the American Division. A form in the Creative Division must **ONLY** include techniques which originate from martial arts and like the Traditional Division, emphasis will be placed on execution of the techniques, application of the techniques, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and focus Spinning kicks, jump spinning kicks, flying kicks, multiple kicks, splits, weapon twirls, weapon releases, and other *creative martial arts techniques* are permitted. Movements that involve more than a 360 degree spin, require the body to be inverted more than parallel to the floor, or are similar to movements found in gymnastics and/or non martial arts disciplines, or forms that meet the above definition of strictly traditional forms, will result in a downgrade by the judges or, upon a unanimous vote of the judges, a "no score" as a form inappropriate for the division.

Musical forms and weapons require choreography of moves to the music.

Musical Forms and Weapons: The Musical Divisions requires a form or weapons form meeting the above criteria for a Traditional, Creative, and Extreme form, choreographed in a general sense to the beats or rhythm of music chosen and provided by the competitor. Primary emphasis shall be placed on innovative choreography of moves to the music, however, the basic criteria listed above for all forms must also be observed. Simply performing a Traditional, Creative, or Extreme form with background music, or a form not meeting the basic criteria for all forms above, will result in a downgrade by the judges, or upon unanimous vote of the judges, a "no score" as a form inappropriate for the division.

Extreme forms and weapons allow movements whether they originated form traditional or contemporary martial arts systems or otherwise. However at least half of the form must originate form martial arts techniques and the competitor must execute at least one technique that involves an inverted move or greater than 360 degree spin.

Full definition of forms and weapons is listed on the Form and Weapons Criteria sheet.

WEAPON DIVISIONS: Safety Rule: A competitor who unintentionally drops his/her weapon will be automatically disqualified. If a competitor recklessly or carelessly misuses his/her weapon, he/she may be penalized or disqualified. If a competitor's weapon breaks or comes apart during his/her routine, he/she will



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be disqualified.

STARTING A FORM OVER: If a competitor starts his/her form over because of a memory lapse or any other reason due to his/her own negligence, he/she may perform the form again. The officials will score as though there was not a mistake, but the center referee will instruct the scorekeeper to subtract .50 points from the competitor's final score. The three-minute time limit will start over. A competitor can only start over one time for scoring. If a competitor has to start over not due to his/her negligence, he/she will not be penalized on the start over.

The MAC Open Style competitions rules as stated above are derived from the 2008 NASKA rule summary and is referred to as a tournament competition guide line , but may be changed or altered .

Check with the Tournament Organizer for any updates or changes.

Thank You.