



2008-2009
Official
Rule Book

THE RULES OUTLINED IN THIS HANDBOOK HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED BY THE NORTH CENTRAL KARATE ASSOCIATION'S (NCKA) BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE 2008-2009 COMPETITION SEASON.

Attention Black Belt Competitors:

The best effort will be made to keep accurate records of placing and points throughout the tournament season. Even with our best effort, however, occasional mistakes are occasionally made.

We ask that you please check the ratings web site (www.nckablackbeltratings.com) regularly to be sure that you have been given the proper points. If you see a mistake, please e-mail us at the link provided on the web page with your name, division and correction to be made. All requests will be researched thoroughly against tournament records before being published.

Please e-mail us in a timely manner so that records are correct for the Finals in April. ***We are unable to make corrections after the Black Belt Awards are presented.***

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GENERAL INFORMATION

THE RING

The size of the adult fighting and form rings shall be no smaller than 15' X 15'. During team form competition, team members may use as much space as the promoter deems appropriate.

The borders of each ring shall be marked and designated with a ring number in a manner visible to competitors, officials and medical personnel from across the floor.

COMPETITOR RESPONSIBILITIES

It is each individual competitor's responsibility to read and know the rules contained in this handbook. All competitors must present themselves at their designated ring suitably attired and physically prepared to compete. Jewelry or any object which the referee feels might endanger the competitor is not allowed to be worn in competition.

It is the competitor's duty to be ready when called to compete. If he/she is not suitably attired or physically prepared to compete as deemed by the referee, the competitor may be penalized for delay of contest.

Three (3) calls will be made for competition - First call, second call and a final call. If a competitor is not at his/her ring when competition begins, he/she may not be allowed to compete.

If a competitor leaves the ring after competition begins and is not present when his/her name is called to compete, the name will be called three (3) times at ringside to compete. If he/she is not present to compete on the third call, he/she may be disqualified if the referee feels it is appropriate.

RANK RULE

A competitor may never compete in a division at a rank that he/she has not earned. Once a competitor competes as a Black Belt, he/she must always compete as a Black Belt.

AGE RULE

Black Belt Competitors may compete for the entire season at the age division that is proper for their particular age as of September 1st each year. For example:

Sam is 13 years old on September 1st, but turns 14 in November. He may compete as a 13 year old for the entire season if he chooses to do so. He may also change age bracket if he so chooses.

Black Belts who choose to change age divisions mid-season will be awarded points in the new age bracket. Points from before the competitor changed divisions *will not* be carried over into the new age bracket, causing the competitor to be ranked in two age brackets. (ex: Sam earns 25 points in the fall and moves to another age bracket after the new year, earning 27 points in the spring. He will finish the season with 25 points in the first age group and 27 in the second, not 52 points)

EARNING POINTS

Points are tabulated throughout the season for all Black Belt competitors and posted at www.nckablackbeltratings.com. When a Black Belt competes and earns 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th place, the appropriate points will be awarded.

Awards will be given at a pre-determined tournament (currently the NCKA Finals) to the top 3 competitors in each category. To earn an award, Black Belt competitors must have placed in the division at least three (3) times during the season.

UNIFORM

All competitors must wear a complete traditional or professional sport karate (Kung Fu, Tae Kwon Do, etc.) uniform in a good state of repair (top and bottom). Uniform tops must have sleeves that reach to at least the middle of the forearm.

Form competitors may remove their uniform top in competition if the removal is considered relevant to the artistic expression or safety of the competitor.

A competitor with offensive artwork and/or words on the uniform may be denied the privilege of participation.

The appropriate color belt or sash must be worn in competition. No t-shirts, sweats, tank tops or shoes are allowed in either sparring or form competitions.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED SAFETY EQUIPMENT

REQUIRED, RECOMMENDED AND ILLEGAL GEAR

NCKA approved hand and foot pads, headgear, face shield/cage, mouthpieces and groin cups (male competitors only) are mandatory for all competitors in all sparring divisions. Each competitor's equipment will be checked to see if it is safe for use. If it is deemed unsafe, he/she will be asked to change the equipment before he/she may compete.

The following is a list of important and required features of NCKA approved safety equipment:

- * **Hand Pads** - A soft padded surface must cover the fingers, wrist and any striking surface of the hand. The striking areas such as the ridge of the hand, side of the hand, back of the fist and knuckles must be covered.
- * **Foot Pads** - A soft padded surface must cover the instep, sides, toes, ankle and back of the heel.
- * **Head Gear** - The forehead, sides and back of the head must be covered by a padded surface.
- * **Face Shield/Cage** - A face shield or cage that covers the front opening of the competitor's head gear must be securely attached to the head gear in order to compete.
- * **Chest Protectors** - All sparring competitors 17 years of age and younger must wear a full chest guard.
- * **Optional Items** - Elbow, shin and rib protection are not required but HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.
- * **Illegal Equipment** - Boxing, other contact sport equipment and gear with too many seams will not be allowed. Insufficiently padded equipment will also not be allowed. All equipment must be in good repair and free from tears, heavy taping or any other repairs that may cause injury.

SPARRING RULES

LENGTH OF MATCH

An elimination match shall last a total of two (2) minutes time unless a competitor earns enough points to be declared the winner before the two (2) minutes have expired. The clock will continue to run during point calls etc., unless the center referee calls for a time-out. During unusually long calls, equipment adjustments, rule clarifications etc., the center referee may stop time.

If at the end of two (2) minutes the match is tied, the match will continue into a two (2) minute sudden victory overtime period. The first competitor to score a point will be declared the winner.

All Grand Champion fighting matches will be one two-minute round. The competitor with the most points at the end of the round will be declared Grand Champion. Ties will be settled as above.

POINT VALUES AND WINNER DETERMINATION

All legal hand techniques that score will be awarded one (1) point. All legal kicking techniques will be awarded two (2) points. Target areas do not change the point value of a technique.

All penalty points will be valued at one (1) point.

The first competitor to score five (5) points will be declared the winner regardless of whether or not the two minutes have expired. If neither competitor has scored five (5) points at the end of the two minutes, the competitor with the most points will be declared the winner.

HEAD CONTACT

Light touch head contact is allowed in all Black Belt sparring and adult (18 and over) red and brown belt divisions. **Any** hard or malicious head contact will result in the offending competitor being penalized or disqualified.

If a division includes even one competitor ranked lower than red belt, the "no head touch" rule will apply.

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AWARDING OF POINTS

Points are awarded by a majority vote of judges. The majority of judges do not have to agree on the specific technique being scored, only that a point was indeed scored.

Judges will indicate whether it was a one (1) or two (2) point technique by holding up two fingers if a kick was seen and one finger if a hand technique was seen. A majority of judges must agree that a kick was scored in order for two (2) points to be awarded. If a majority of judges agree that a technique was scored, but disagree on whether it was a hand technique or kick, one (1) point will be awarded. For example:

If three of five judges see a point for one competitor, two of the three judges must call a scoring kick in order for the competitor to be awarded two points. If there are only three judges being used and two of the three see a competitor's scoring technique, but one sees a hand technique and the other sees a kick, the competitor receives one point.

Please see the *Penalty Points* section for information on receiving penalty points and scoring points at the same time.

All Grand Champion fighting matches will be one two-minute round. The competitor with the most points at the end of the round will be declared Grand Champion. Ties will be settled as above.

POINTS DEFINED

A point is a legal Sport Karate technique scored by a competitor who is in bounds that strikes an opponent with the allowable amount of focused touch or focused control to a legal target area. Criteria to be used by officials when deciding if a point was scored are as follows:

- * Was it a legitimate and legal Sport Karate technique?
- * Was it delivered with the required focused control or allowed focused touch contact to the legal area?
- * Was the competitor who scored the point in bounds?
- * Had the center referee stopped the match before the point was delivered?
- * Was either competitor down at the time the point was scored?

LEGAL, ILLEGAL AND NON-TARGET AREAS

Legal target areas are the entire head and face, side of the neck, ribs, chest, abdomen, collarbone and kidneys.

Illegal target areas are the spine, back of the neck, throat, groin, legs and upper back. Any attacks to these areas could result in a warning and/or penalty points.

Non-target areas are Hips, shoulders, buttocks, arms and feet. Points may not be scored to these areas. If it is deemed that a competitor is actually deliberately attacking these areas a warning and/or penalty point may be awarded.

LEGAL AND ILLEGAL TECHNIQUES

Legal techniques are considered all controlled Sport Karate techniques except for those listed specifically as “illegal.” When determining the legality of a technique, the official considers if the technique is a legitimate controlled Sport Karate technique that obeys all the other rules governing Sport Karate.

Illegal techniques include head butts, hair pulls, bites, scratches, elbows, knees, eye attacks of any kind, ground fighting, attacks to a downed opponent, grabbing*, slapping, uncontrolled blind techniques, any throws or take downs, spinning backfists and any other uncontrolled or dangerous technique that is deemed unsafe by the tournament arbitrator. (**trapping of the opponent’s front arm for one (1) second is allowed*)

SWEEPS

Sweeps not meant to take an opponent down, but merely to disrupt balance are allowed to the back of the front leg at mid-calf and below. These are legal on all types of fighting surfaces. If the sweep is responsible for knocking down an opponent it would be considered an illegal technique and may result in a warning and/or penalty point.

It is important to note that sweeps do not make it legal to kick at an opponent’s legs.

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TOUCH CONTACT DEFINED

Touch Contact: Any contact regardless of how light.

Light Touch Contact: No visible movement of any part of the opponent's body as a result of the technique.

Moderate Touch Contact: Slight penetration or slight target movement on contact with opponent.

Excessive Contact: This occurs when an opponent strikes with force in excess of that necessary to score a point. Though it is largely a judgement call, indications that contact has been excessive may be assessed by the following reactions:

- * Visible snapping back of a competitor's head from the force of a blow.
- * Knocking down of an opponent (not including when the opponent was off balance or has slipped).
- * The appearance of severe swelling or bleeding.
- * The distortion or injury of the body from the force of a blow to the body or head.

METHODS OF PENALIZATION

One and ONLY one warning is given for breaking the rules. A penalty point is awarded to the opponent on each and every infraction of the rules after the first warning is given. If a competitor receives four (4) warnings (giving 3 penalty points to their opponent) in any one match, he/she will be automatically disqualified and their opponent is declared the winner. If the first infraction of the rules is deemed serious enough by the referee, he/she may choose to omit the first warning and issue a penalty point automatically. A penalty point can determine the winner of a match.

An exception to the warning rule applies in the case of head contact in divisions where it is prohibited. In the case of head contact in these divisions, a penalty point is awarded on the first infraction.

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OTHER PENALTY RULES

- * Delay of Contest Penalty - If a competitor does not present him/herself suitably attired to compete, 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 receiving three (3) penalty points, the offending competitor will be disqualified.
- * A competitor cannot be penalized for an infraction and receive a point on the same call. A penalty always overrules a point by the same competitor.
- * A competitor can receive a point because his/her opponent was penalized and at the same time receive a point or points for scoring a technique. *For example: Competitor "A" receives three (3) points because he/she scored a kick to competitor "B" and at the same time competitor "B" hit competitor "A" with excessive contact, receiving a penalty. Competitor "A" receives two (2) points for his/her kick and one (1) point for the penalty, totalling three (3) points.*
- * If, in the opinion of the referee or medical personnel, a competitor is unable to continue because of an injury caused by an illegal attack executed by his/her opponent, the offending competitor shall be automatically disqualified. If a competitor is injured and it is considered that he/she is responsible for his/her own injury, or no fault can be associated with the injury, the opponent will not be penalized (ex: ducking into a knee, butting heads, etc.). In the event a fighter is unable to continue due to a no-fault foul, his/her opponent will be declared the winner even if he/she is not ahead at the time of the foul.
- * If a competitor scores a point and then proceeds to break the rules, even if it was after the point technique, the warning for breaking the rule voids the point (penalties and warnings overrule points.).

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CAUSES OF PENALIZATION

The following is a partial list of possible causes of penalization and may be used as a guideline to follow.

- * 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 (after the break)
- * ANY head, face or headgear touch in divisions it is not allowed in
- * Blind, negligent or reckless attacks
- * Uncontrolled Techniques
- * Grabbing (grabbing an opponent's front arm for one second is allowed. Grabbing the arm for longer, or the legs at all could result in a penalty.
- * Any unsportsmanlike behavior from the competitor or his/her coaches, friends, etc.
- * Any abusive behavior from the competitor or his/her coach, teammates, family, friends, etc., such that the referee feels it affects the outcome of the match or the performance of the officials or other competitors.
- * Excessive contact
- * Not being prepared or ready when it is time to compete (see "delay of contest" penalty and "competitor responsibilities").

DISQUALIFICATION

When a competitor is disqualified, it is proper to notify the tournament rules arbitrator. All awards and rating points for that division are forfeited. An exception to this is if the competitor bows out due to a substantiated injury verified by the tournament medical personnel.

OUT OF BOUNDS

A competitor is out of bounds as soon as he/she does not have at least one (1) foot touching inside or on the boundary line. Stepping out of bounds does not immediately stop the match. An out of bounds competitor may be scored upon by his/her opponent so long as the opponent has at least one foot in bounds and the referee has not signaled to stop.

SPARRING DEFINITIONS

- * Point: A controlled legal Sport Karate Technique scored by a competitor while in-bounds that strikes an opponent with the allowable amount of focused touch contact or focused control to a legal target area.
- * Control: Holding back in reserve the amount of force that, if not restrained or pulled short of full contact, could have incapacitated or inflicted damage to an opponent.
- * Focused Touch: Light, medium and excessive (see section on "Touch Contact Defined.")
- * Focused Control: In areas where no contact is allowed, but the technique must be focused approximately one inch from the "no touch" target area.

COACHING

So that the competitors and officials may conduct sparring matches to the best of their ability and as fairly as possible, the following rules have been established regarding coaching:

- * Never, at any time, can a coach, friend, team member, etc. enter the ring without the center referee's permission. Only officials, competitors and medical personnel are allowed in a ring.
- * No abusive, violent, unsportsmanlike or overzealous coaching is allowed.
- * At no time should parents, friends or coaches demonstrate any type of negative cheering or try to influence or intimidate the judges.
- * A coach cannot ask for a time-out, only competitors may.
- * A coach can never, at any time, interfere with the proper running of the ring or the decisions of the judges.

The center referee issues penalties to the competitor for any of the above infractions.

**PARENTS/COACHES/FRIENDS:
PLEASE, NO COACHING!**

TIMEKEEPERS AND SCOREKEEPERS

Timekeepers are responsible for keeping time during the match. He/she will start and stop time at the command of the center referee and will inform the center referee when the two (2) minutes for sparring matches have expired. The timekeeper does not start or stop the match, his/her only duty is keeping time for the center referee

Scorekeepers are responsible for keeping accurate score. He/she will record the score at the command of the center referee. The scorekeeper should inform the center referee when a fighter has enough points to win the match. The scorekeeper should listen very closely to the center referee and keep an accurate score. The center referee, not the scorekeeper, will make the final score decision.

SPARRING JUDGES

Judges will call points as they see them. The majority vote of the judges and referee (center judge) determines who is awarded the point. To help in determining penalties or warnings, a center referee may consult the judges, though the referee has the power to issue them alone.

When the referee believes that there has been a significant exchange of technique, or when signaled to do so by a corner judge, he/she will call out the word "STOP" in a loud, clear voice. The referee will then return the competitors to their starting positions and address the judges by saying "Ready, CALL." All judges and the center referee cast their votes simultaneously as follows:

- * Point scored: When a judge sees a point scored, he/she will hold up both flags. At that time he/she should yell the word "CALL" in a loud clear voice, indicating that a point was seen. When asked, the judge will hold up the color flag of the competitor who he/she feels scored the point. If the judge is calling for a two-point kick, he/she will raise two fingers of the other hand at the same time. If a one point punch is being called, only the flag is raised. If no flags are being used, the judge will point with his/her hand at the competitor who he/she feels scored the point and point with two fingers if a kick is being called.
- * No point scored: The judge will cross flags if used, or put arms at his/her waist.

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- * Contact: If a judge sees illegal or excessive contact, he/she will raise the flag of the person **who was struck** while simultaneously striking the palm of his/her hand with the fist of the other hand.
- * Disqualification: A disqualification vote is taken separately from any other vote. When a disqualification vote is asked for, the center referee will say "Ready, CALL." A judge will then hold the flag color of the competitor he/she thinks should be disqualified. If he/she does not believe there should be a disqualification, no flag should be raised.
Please note that the center referee has the authority to overrule judges awarding a point and to issue a penalty, warning and/or disqualification.

JUDGING CONSIDERATIONS

- * Was it a legal, legitimate sport karate technique?
- * Was it focused to a legal target area?
- * Did it have the required legal control or focused control in the execution of the technique?
- * Was it a clash (competitors scoring at the same time)?
- * Were there any rules violations immediately following the scoring technique (a competitor may not receive a point and a penalty on the same call)?
- * Was either competitor on the ground when the point was scored?
- * Had time expired?

HOW TO BE A GOOD JUDGE

- * You should know and understand the rules in their entirety
- * Make all of your decisions quickly, decisively and in a confident manner
- * Call only what you **see clearly**, not what you heard or thought you saw
- * Give each match your **full, focused** attention. Do not let outsiders distract you from your duty (coaches, other judges, fans)
- * Stay out of the way of competitors

REFEREE/CENTER JUDGE

The referee or center judge is the highest authority during a sparring match. When setting up a match, the referee must position themselves so that they can see the scorekeeper.

The powers of the referee are outlined below.

- * Is given the power to issue warnings, award penalty points and disqualify a competitor without a majority decision.
- * May overrule a majority point call to issue a warning or penalty point.
- * Is to call "STOP" when a competitor goes out of bounds.
- * Is the only one who can stop the match.

POSITIONING OF COMPETITORS

When determining the competitor to be "red," the referee will, if possible, choose the competitor that is wearing a large amount of red gear. If both competitors are wearing colored gear, the referee will choose the competitor wearing the most red. If neither competitor is wearing red, the referee will choose. Both competitors will be returned to their starting positions before the referee asks for a point call, and also at the end of a match.

PROTESTS

To protest or ask for a rule clarification, the competitor must ask the referee to stop the match and have the arbitrator and/or promoter give a ruling. Any protests must be made immediately - no protest will be allowed after the competition has resumed.

CHANGE OF OFFICIALS

A sparring official can be changed at any time during a division once a match has been stopped.

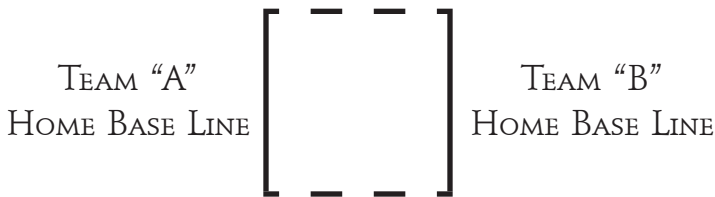
TAG TEAM SPARRING RULES

SCORING

- * A competitor can only score when he/she is in the ring
- * A competitor is "IN" the ring when he/she has one foot in bounds
- * Once a competitor has "tagged out" he/she may NOT score, but they are still an active target and may be scored on by the opposing team's active member
- * If a competitor "tags out" he/she is still an active target until he/she gets both feet out of bounds

COMPETITOR PLACEMENT

- * A non-active competitor must not enter the ring until he/she has been tagged by their teammate
- * A non-active competitor must stay behind their "HOME Baseline" until they are tagged by their teammate



GENERAL INFORMATION

Center referees will observe the following format for the duration of each team event

- * Teams must consist of two (2) members
- * A match will consist of one - three (3) minute round
- * Each team must "tag out" a minimum of four (4) times during the round
- * The NCKA sparring rules will apply to team matches
- * Team members will all line up to bow toward the center referee and each other
- * Start each individual match with opponents bowing to each other (but not the referee)
- * All team members will bow to each other at the end of each match
- * Competitors will shake hands and leave the ring

FORM RULES

COMPETITORS

All competitors must present themselves suitably attired (as described in the “General Information” section of the rule book) and ready to compete. The competitors may be divided into separate divisions based on style, sex, age and/or origin of the form. To enter an adult division, you must be at least 18 years of age or older. Seniors may choose to enter the regular adult division or the senior division, but not both.

The order of performance will be by random draw or selection, shuffling cards, computer selection, etc. Switching the order of performances is not allowed between competitors. If there is a good reason to believe that competitors have switched order they will be disqualified.

It is the responsibility of the competitor to be at their ring prior to the time that their division is scheduled to start. If a competitor comes late, he/she may compete but must compete immediately.

The first three competitors will execute their form before any scores are given. After the third competitor has completed his/her form, the first competitor will return to receive his/her score (followed by the second and third competitors). All remaining competitors will be scored immediately following their performance.

EXTERNAL AIDS

No props, weapons, music, etc. may be used in any division except musical, weapons or team. No aids that would damage or render the competition area unsafe for other competitors spectators or judges may be used in these divisions.

GRAND CHAMPIONSHIPS

Performance order for the Grand Championship divisions will also be determined by random draw. If a competitor is not present to draw numbers, they will automatically go before the ones who are present. If only one is not present, he/she will automatically go first. If more than one is not present a separate drawing will be done for those not present - they will go in that order before the competitors who are present.

(Grand Championships, cont.)

If a competitor has won multiple divisions, he/she will be allowed one draw for each first place won. The competitor may then use the best draw.

FORM PENALTIES

If a competitor starts his/her form over for reasons not due to his/her own negligence, the competitor may start over without penalization.

If, however, 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 still perform again but with penalty points. A competitor may only start a form over one time. If the competitor does not finish the form on the second attempt he/she will be disqualified.

It is important that the referee discuss penalization procedures with the judges and scorekeeper. The referee will instruct the scorekeeper to deduct **0.10** points from the offending competitor's final score.

TRADITIONAL FORMS

A traditional form is one that places emphasis on stances and basic martial arts techniques. In a traditional form, the following techniques are NOT allowed:

- ◆ Flips ◆ Gymnastics ◆ Splits ◆ Multiple Spins ◆ Jump 360° kicks
- ◆ More than 2 kicks on the same leg without setting foot down

TRADITIONAL WEAPONS

Traditional weapon forms are subject to the same requirements as above, and are also not allowed to do:

- ◆ Release Moves
- ◆ Knuckle Rolls
- ◆ Palm Spins
- ◆ Spinning of the weapon
 - ◆ Behind the Back Maneuvers
- ◆ Single figure-8 moves are allowed ONLY when followed immediately by a legal strike
- ◆ Any "baseball" type swing - one or two handed, overhead or not

MUSICAL FORMS

The musical division allows music and the use of martial arts weaponry - there is no separation of empty hand and weapon musical forms. Music must be used in this division and is prohibited from containing lyrics that are profane. A competitor may be subject to disqualification if such music is used. It is the responsibility of the competitor to provide their own battery operated player for their music. If the competitor must start their form over because of sound equipment malfunctions due to no fault of the tournament and its coordinators, the competitor will be downgraded by the judges (see penalties section).

CREATIVE FORMS/CREATIVE WEAPONS

These divisions allow competitors to show off their creative side and “extreme” talents. Restrictions placed on traditional divisions do not apply to the creative divisions. The exception to this is the under black belt creative weapon divisions - please see below for further explanation of this.

WEAPON DIVISIONS

When judging a weapon performance the judges will focus primarily on the effective use and control of the weapon. All other aspects of form competition will also be judged, though the weapon is the primary point of judging. Rules that are specific to weapon divisions are listed below:

- * Referees should check all weapons for safety. Weapons are subject to referee approval. No sharp weapons are allowed in the under black belt divisions.
- * Referees should make sure all spectators and competitors are at a safe distance from competition.
- * Safety is a major concern. Therefore, the competitor’s control of his/her weapon is of utmost importance. If a competitor recklessly or carelessly misuses his/her weapon, he/she may be penalized or disqualified.
- * If a competitor wins their weapons division during eliminations, he/she must perform with a weapon in the weapon grand champion round (if a weapon grand champion division is offered).
- * Striking the floor in a manner that causes any damage to the floor will result in a **0.50** deduction from each judge.
- * In under Black Belt weapons, competitors are ***not*** allowed to swing their bo in a whipping motion with either a one or two handed baseball bat type grip.
- * In under Black Belt *creative* weapons, the competitor must maintain contact with his/her weapon at all times - NO release moves are allowed in these divisions. Moves such as a “palm spin” or “knuckle roll” are allowed, as long as the weapon maintains contact with the competitor’s skin.
- * If a competitor (individual OR team form) *drops* his/her weapon once he/she has entered the ring (including their walk up), he/she will be disqualified (all belt levels).
- * In mega team divisions, a dropped weapon does not disqualify the team. Mega teams will be scored as normal and if a weapon was dropped 0.10 will be deducted from the team’s final score.

TEAM FORMS

Team form competition is a chance for competitors to their talents at choreography and teamwork. Teams must consist of two to nine competitors. Each team member will need to pay for their event registration to enter this division.

MEGA TEAMS

Teams with more than ten competitors are considered “mega teams.” So that ranking points may be given to the correct team, each mega team competing in a season must select a team name and keep the name for the remainder of the season. Team members may be changed throughout the season, but the name of the team will be rated. If a team competes in the advanced division at one tournament and the beginner division at another, points will be awarded in the appropriate category for the team (it is possible for a team to win an award in both beginner and advanced divisions at the NCKA Finals).

Bonus Points will be added to the team’s final score. The amount of bonus points will be determined by how large the team is.

- * Teams with 11-20 members: 0.01 bonus points
- * Teams with 21-30 members: 0.02 bonus points
- * Teams with 31-40 members: 0.03 bonus points
- * Teams with 41-50 members: 0.04 bonus points
- * Teams with 51 or more members: 0.05 bonus points

Beginner mega teams must have a majority of competitors under the rank of Brown Belt. If a team has 50% or more of its members at Brown Belt or above, they will be in the advanced division. If a team competes in the wrong division it will be subject to penalty or disqualification.

Mega teams will be judged on the following criteria:

1. Number of people on the team will have some impact on judging (see bonus points above). Team size is used as a tie breaker. If teams are very similar in ability, the larger team gets a higher score.
2. Synchronization - The “tighter” teams are, the higher their scores will be. Teams who perform **“on count”** will not be scored as highly as teams who do not.
3. Execution - The individual performances of team members should be judged as they would in individual competition.
4. Difficulty - More difficult forms, performed well, will score higher than easier forms that are performed equally well.
5. Presentation - The entry and exit of the competition area, as well as the level of discipline, will be considered in scoring.

Please see pg. 20 regarding dropped weapons in Mega Team divisions.

TIMEKEEPERS AND SCOREKEEPERS *(all form divisions)*

The timekeeper is responsible for calling off each judge's score loudly and clearly so that both the scorekeeper and judges can hear them.

The scorekeeper is responsible for accurately writing and adding the scores of all form competitors in a division. Scores should be written next to the competitor's name as the timekeeper reads them off. A calculator should be used when adding scores together, and the final score should be double checked. If 5 or more judges are being used in a division, the scorekeeper will eliminate the high and low scores when calculating final scores. In the case of a tie, the high and low scores will be added back in to determine the higher score (only in divisions with 5 judges or more).

CHANGE OF OFFICIALS

Judges may not be removed from a form division until the division has completed competition.

JUDGING CRITERIA *(all form divisions)*

When judging form and/or weapons competitors, judges are actually comparing the various competitors in the division against each other to arrive at the top competitors in that division. Each form or weapon routine is judged on execution, presentation and difficulty (in that order).

- * Execution is the act or process of performing the techniques of the form. The execution stage is the **most critical** and should weigh the most in the judge's final score.
 - Elements of execution include balance, technique, stability, coordination, flexibility, stamina, timing, power and speed.
- * Presentation is the image or impression of the competitors as reflected in his/her performance of the form. The presentation stage is the **second most** important and should weigh accordingly in the judges final score.
 - Elements of presentation include confidence, poise, determination, commitment, imagery, respect, sportsmanship, realism, concentration, spirit, showmanship, appearance and imagination.

(continued)

(judging criteria, cont.)

- * Difficulty is the complexity and intricacy of the form or weapon routine. The difficulty category is the **least critical** of the three judging categories, but could become the deciding factor if a judge feels that two competitors are equally as good in the execution and presentation categories. Value should never be awarded for a technique performed poorly. ***Difficulty alone without proper execution should always be downgraded.***

—Elements of difficulty include complexity and versatility of techniques.

SCORING OF FORM COMPETITORS AND TIES (all form divisions)

The center referee will establish a scoring range before each division begins. All judges will award scores within the established range using hundredths. The center official will review the scoring of the other judges in the ring to insure that all judges remain in compliance with the Standard Deviation that is established. The purpose of the Standard Deviation rule prohibits any judge from awarding unusually high or unusually low scores which may unfairly skew the results of the competition. The first three competitors will perform before any scores are given (grand champion and divisions with less than five competitors are exceptions to this rule).

The high and low scores should be eliminated before totalling scores when 5 or more judges are being used for a division.

In the case of a tie, the competitor who received the majority vote (top score of the judges) will break the tie. If there is still a tie all competitors who tied will be awarded the same place.

To break a tie in a grand championship division, the high and low scores will be added back in to determine the winner. If there is a second tie, the competitor who received the majority vote will be the winner. If a tie remains, all tied competitors will be awarded Grand Champion.