

American Jujitsu Institute

Since 1939



Official Karate Rules

March 13, 1993

Preface

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Official Karate Kata Rules

Purpose

The purpose of Karate Kata competition is to promote a competitive spirit amongst the different organizations within and outside of the AJI. With a specific set of rules and guidelines the AJI furthers an atmosphere of sportsmanship and wholesome competitiveness, and develops a safe environment in which students of all abilities can compete on an equal basis.

General Guidelines

In Kata or "Form" competition, each student competes against students of equal skill and age. The tournament director may, at his discretion further break the level further down by sex. There is also team competition in which two-person teams compete against similar competition. The kata is performed before a panel of five judges. Points are awarded based upon execution, form, general presentation, timing, and other considerations which may be specific to the kata being performed. The highest point total wins. There shall also be an official scorer and a runner who's duties are outlined later.

Contest Area

The contest area shall be no less than twenty (20) feet square. There shall be a stripe marking near the center-front of the contest area marking the spot where the contestant is to begin his/her kata. There will be five chairs for the judges. The Head Judge will sit at the front, directly center of the contest area. The other four judges shall be placed at the four comers of the contest area. There shall be no tables or any obstructions between any of the judges and the competitor, except for the Head Judge.

Attire

All competitors shall wear a complete martial arts uniform which shall consists of a jacket, pants and obi (belt).

All female competitors shall wear a t-shirt under the uniform jacket.

The wearing of socks and/or "kung-fu" type slippers, are optional.

Uniforms must be clean.

No jewelry shall be worn during the performance or contest. Excluded are permanently attached jewelry or medic-alert bracelets.

Competitor Safety

Any injury shall immediately be brought to the attention of the head judge by the contestant or a representative of his/her school. The head judge shall, confer with the other judges in an attempt to determine the extent of the injury. The decision to allow the competitor to continue shall be the sole responsibility of the head judge. His decision is final and there is no appeal.

Injuries which were sustained prior to actual competition shall be brought to the attention of the tournament director prior to the beginning of the contest. If the competitor is unable to compete, the entrance fee shall be refunded immediately in full. The tournament director's decision is final.

Approved Katas

This section applies to “Closed Tournaments” in which only AJI Schools are allowed to participate in.)

For closed competitions amongst AJI schools, only katas from the following list are permitted.

This list is current as of January 1st, 2000.

Beginner Forms: Kentsuki Kata
 Shoto-Geri Kata,
 Sanchin Kata,
 Goju Kata

Advanced Forms: Shodan
 Nidan
 Sandan
 Yondan
 Godan
 Rokudan
 Shichidan
 Hachidan
 Empi Kata
 Basai Dai

These forms may be any of the several variations practiced at the different AJI schools.

Any AJI School not practicing the above forms, may submit a list of their forms for approval by the Vice-President of the Karate Division. The list shall be submitted prior to the event.

This section applies to all “Open and National Tournaments”.

In open format and National Open competitions, the competitor may elect to perform any form. There are no restrictions.

Groups and Divisions

There shall be four category groups; **Juniors, Youth, Adults and Black Belts.**

Age Requirements

Juniors

- 5 thru 7 years
- 8 thru 9 years
- 10 thru 11 years

Youth

- 12 thru 13 years
- 14 thru 15 years
- 16 thru 17 years

Adults

- 18 and older

Divisions - Juniors and Youth

Novice	White/Yellow/Orange Belts	8 th Kyu and higher
Intermediate	Purple/Blue/Green Belts	7 th , 6 th , 5 th , 4 th Kyu
Advanced	Brown Belts	3 rd , 2 nd , 1 st Kyu

The AJI does not recognize black belt ranks for anyone under the age of 16. Junior Black belts shall compete with the Advanced Division.

Adults and Black Belts

Beginner	White/Yellow Belts	9 th Kyu and higher
Novice	Orange/Purple Belts	8 th and 7 th Kyu
Intermediate	Blue/Green Belts	6 th and 5 th Kyu
Advanced	Brown Belts	3 rd , 2 nd and 1 st Kyu
Black Belts	By Grade	

The contestant's age shall be determined at the date of the contest. That is, the competitor shall compete at the age group level which reflects his age at the time of the contest.

The AJI does not recognize anyone holding a rank of Shodan or higher who is under the age of sixteen (16) years. Thus, no one will be allowed to compete in the black belt division who is under sixteen (16) years of age.

Team Competition

Team Competition shall consist of two-person teams within their respective age groups. At the present time, no distinction is made with regards to division (skill level).

Re: a green belt may team up with a white belt etc,...

Duties

Scorer

The official scorer shall tabulate all scores from judge's score sheets. The scorer shall be appointed by the tournament director. The final score of any competitor or team shall be the total score of the five judges divided by five, minus any penalty points. The scorer shall then compile placings for every age group and division.

Runner

The runner shall be appointed by the tournament director. The runner is responsible for handing out score sheets to the judges and returning them to the scorer's table upon completion of every kata. The Runner shall insure that the head judge's score sheet shall be the top most sheet delivered to the scorer.

Head Judge

The head judge shall insure that proper etiquette is adhered to by all judges and competitors. For each division called, the head judge shall line up the competitors towards the rear of the competition area. All judges shall assemble fronting the head judges table. The head judge shall welcome the competitors and have them bow-in. Any last minute instructions can be made at this point. He shall have the competitors sit, then begin the contest. The Runner will present him with the contestant list and score sheets.

The head judge will call out the competitors. After each competitor presents himself the head judge shall give him the signal to begin.

Upon completion of the kata, the head judge shall score the competitor then signal him to return to his seated position. This process will continue until all competitors for that division have performed.

When the division is completed he shall stand the competitors up, reassemble the judges at the front, then have them bow again before dismissing the competitors.

Competitors

Competitors are expected to follow etiquette as outlined herein. After the bow-in, each competitor shall remain seated at the rear of the competition area until his/her name is called by the head judge. The competitor shall stand, straighten his/her uniform if necessary, then bow before entering onto the competition area. The competitor shall approach the head judge and bow once again before introducing him/herself. The competitor should provide at least his/her name to the head judge. The competitor may also introduce his/her style, school, name of the kata to be performed and may also request permission to begin.

Once given the signal to begin, the competitor shall position himself wherever his/her starting point should be. The kata will then be performed. Upon completion of the kata, the competitor shall await the signal to return to his/her seat from the head judge. Once the signal is received, the competitor shall once again bow to the head judge then return to his seating area. The competitor shall bow once again towards the mat before sitting.

Scoring

Scoring shall be based on a ten (10) point system, that is, 10 points is the highest a competitor or a team can score. Scoring below 10 points shall be by the decimal system to the tenth of a point. Example: 7.5 9.7 8.2 etc...

The average score shall be seven (7). This number shall be considered the **starting point of all scoring**. If a performance is better than average, the score may be higher. If the performance is below par, then the score may be lower. If a competitor or team completes his/their performance the score given shall **not** be lower than six (6). A score lower than six (6) is permitted only if the person or team fails to complete the kata.

The performer shall be judged on etiquette, total presentation, technique, style and difficulty. Scoring begins when the competitor's name is called and the competitor presents him/herself to the head judge. (*See Competitor's Requirements.*) Attire is part of the total presentation.

A competitor may request to perform the kata over again provided the kata was not completed. The request **shall** be approved by the head judge. The performance shall be scored as **normal, without penalty**. A notation will be made on the score sheet by the **head judge** that the performance was re-done and a one-half (.5) point penalty shall be applied to the final score, **not by the judges, but by the scorer**.

When the scoring is completed, the appointed "runner" shall pick up the score sheets from all five judges and return them to the scorer's table. The scorer shall add the five scores then divide by five to obtain the averaged score. This shall be considered the final score. If there is a penalty assessed, it shall be deducted from the averaged score to obtain the final score.

In a situation where there is a tie for first place, the contestant's who are tied, shall, compete again and re-scored. They may or may not perform the same kata. The decision on which kata to perform shall be left up to the contestants.

Awards

Awards shall be presented for First, Second and Third Place. There shall be no ties for first place. There may, however, be ties for second and third places. Further, contest directors shall make every effort to present participation certificates, or medals to all competitors.

Team/ School Awards

Team or Dojo awards shall be presented from first through fourth place. Scoring for team awards shall based on cumulative points earned by each school as assigned by the following schedule:

1 st Place	5 points
2 nd Place	4 Points
3 rd Place	3 Points

4 th Place	2 Points
5 th Place	1 point

Variations

Any variance to any rule or regulation herein, may be given by the tournament director at his sole discretion. *The exception to this is the rule covering Competitor Safety. Any injury sustained after the start of the competition, is guided by the Competitor Safety Rule. Once the head judge determines that a competitor shall not continue, there shall be no recourse.*

The request must be made prior to the beginning of the contest. Tournament Director shall notify the head judge as soon as practical.

The purpose of this rule is to allow the Tournament Director to handle unforeseen problems which may arise and not to show favoritism or bias.

Grievances

Grievances for which there is an appeal, must be made by the head of the grieved school to the Tournament Director, in writing within fifteen (15) days after the event. All pertinent information must be contained within. The Tournament Director shall conduct an immediate investigation and present the findings to the AJI Board of Directors within 30 days of receipt of the grievance. The decisions of Board of Directors is final and shall be made in writing. The board shall respond within 10 days after a decision is made.

Formalities

The Tournament Director shall open and close all contest following established protocol. He shall line students up at the back of the contest area, facing the head judge(s), senior ranking official and other dignitaries.

Proper protocol calls for a welcome address, recognition of officials and dignitaries, and a brief thank-you to all for competing and/or being present.

After the contest, there shall be closing remarks and thank-you's to all.

Presentation of Awards

Awards are to be presented at the end of the contest. If there is a large turnout, the Tournament Director may elect to present awards after each age group is completed. The method of presentation is left to the discretion of the Tournament Director.

Certification of Judges

The certification of judges is of paramount importance in order to facilitate a fair and honest competition. The AJI strives to perfect it's ideals in equality and fairness in it's judges. What follows is a guideline for certification of AJI Karate judges.

Prerequisites

- Persons must have the desire to perform as a judge and devote the necessary time.
- Persons must have the desire to shun personal biases in order to facilitate fairness and impartiality in competition.
- Persons must have the desire and ability to uphold the integrity and responsibility of the position of judge.

Requirements

- At least 18 years of age.
- At least a Brown Belt for local and regional judging.
- At least a Black Belt rank for national level judging.
- Pass a written examination.
- Attend a clinic presented by an AJI official.

Specifics

Candidates must accrue points in the following manner.

- ½ point for each year candidate has been a brown belt.
- 1 point for each black belt rank attained.
- 1 point for each year candidate has taught, or assisted in teaching.
- 1 point for each contest previously judged in.
- 1 point for every year that candidate has been a black belt.

Based on the above point system, candidates may judge in the following capacity:

Level 1	5-10 points	All divisions below Black Belt
Level 2	11-20	Shodan & Below
Level 3	21-30	Sandan & Below
Level 4	31-40	Rokudan
Level 5	41 and Over	All Levels

AJI Certification Board

Professor Charles Lee
 Professor Kenneth Eddy
 Sensei Daniel Saragosa
 Zane Graham

Certificates

Judges shall be issued a certificates indicating their qualifications and judging level as soon as practical after satisfactory completion of the listed requirements.

It shall be the responsibility of each candidate, or judge, to submit in writing, a yearly update of their accomplishments in order to increase their judging level. A new certificate will be issued with every increase in level.

Karate Kata Judges Certification Test

1. In any kata competition, there will one head judge. How many other judges must there be?

- a. 3
- b. 4
- c. 5
- d. At least 2 more

2. The purpose of the kata contest is to

- a. see who the best student is.
- b. promote a competitive spirit among different organizations.
- c. promote an atmosphere of sportsmanship and wholesome competitiveness.
- d. Both a. and b.
- e. Both b. and c.

3. A competitor is scored for etiquette prior to the actual performance of the kata, as well as for the actual performance. Etiquette may include the condition of the competitor's uniform.

True

False

4. A competitor may wear his/her religious necklace while performing.

True

False

5. The highest score a competitor can receive is

- a. 7
- b. 10
- c. 9.9
- d. higher than 10 if the performance is exceptional.

6. You are the head judge. A competitor completes 39 of the forty moves in a kata. He then stops and request to start over. You should:

- a. not permit him to continue as the kata was 99% completed.
- b. let the competitor start over.
- c. tell the competitor to finish the last move.
- d. let the competitor start over and note it on your score sheet.

7. A competitor is injured midway through the performance and you as the head judge, make a determination that he is unable to continue. You advise the competitor that you will not let him continue. The competitor, his instructor, and the competitor's parents all request that you allow the competitor to continue. You refuse. What recourse do they have?

- a. File a grievance with the tournament director.
- b. File a grievance with the AJI Board.
- c. None.

8. As a judge, you are informed before the contest that a competitor is injured and cannot compete. You should:

- a. refund the competitor's money.
- b. check the competitor out and make the determination.
- c. inform the tournament director as it is his responsibility to take appropriate action.

9. Team competition shall be limited to:

- a. two-man teams.

- b. three-man teams if there are a lot of competitors.
- c. any number of competitors provided enough awards are available.

10, Appeals or grievances must be written and filed within

- a. 15 days after the tournament.
- b. brought to the attention of the tournament director immediately.
- c. taken care of immediately,

11, A contestant performs a kata almost perfectly, however, you notice that he missed just one move. You should score the performance:

- a. 10 since the error was very minor.
- b. 9.5 since the error was very minor,
- c. 7 since the performance is considered average
- d. below 10

12, In the performance of a kata, a contestant kicks higher than other students and this looks impressive. However, there does not appear to be as much power behind the kick. Should you score the person higher than the others?

- a. Yes
- b. No

13. There are _____ beginners katas in closed competitions.

- a. 4
- b. 8
- c. 12

14. For the purpose of competition, a person is considered to be in the adult division if:

- a. his/her age is 18 or older.

- b. his/her age is 19 or older.
- c. his her age is 17 or older.
- d. he or she is a black belt.

15. The scorer can override the judges score.

- a. True
- b. False

16. An average (starting) score is considered a:

- a. 6
- b. 6.5
- c. 7
- d. 7.5
- e. all of the above
- f. none of the above

17. There may be a tie for 2nd or 3rd place, but not for first place.

- a. True
- b. False

18. Individual awards are given from first thru 4th place.

- a. True
- b. False

19. You are the tournament director. A person shows up a the contest and request to be entered. He has missed the deadline for applications by one week and your rules specifically states that entries should have been received one week prior. He proves to you that he was unaware of the deadline and that his parents just drove him 100 miles to get to

the event. Are you allowed to let him enter the tournament against the rules?

- a. Yes
- b. No

20. Who shall open and close contest events?

- a. The head judge.
- b. The President of AJI
- c. The tournament director.
- d. The emcee

21. Judges should strive for

- a. fairness.
- b. impartiality.
- c. a&b

22. You are a certified judge and have received you certificate. You are promoted within the next year and have judged 3 tournaments. Should you request a change in your judges level?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not necessary.

23. There are _____ levels of judges.

- a. 3
- b. 4
- c. 5

24. To become a national level judge, you must:

- a. be at least 18 years of age.
- b. be a black belt.

- c. must have a desire to be a judge,
- d. all of the above.

25. The 1/2 (.5) penalty for restarting a kata is assessed by

- a. the head judge.
- b. all the judges.
- c. the scorer.
- d. the tournament director.

Karate Rules Test Answers

1. b.

Reference page # 5. Katas are performed before a panel of 5 judges. One of the judges is the head judge.

2. e.

Reference page # 5. Although we would like to determine who the best student is, answer (e.) "Both b. and c." is the most correct.

3. True.

Reference page # 9. Etiquette is part of the score.

4. False.

Reference page # 5. No jewelry unless it's permanently attached or is a medic-alert bracelet.

5. b.

Reference page # 9, SCORING.

6. d.

Reference page # 9. A competitor can request to start over if the kata was not completed. The head judge will mark it on his score sheet and the penalty of .5 points will be assessed by the scorer after the scores are tabulated.

7. c.

Reference page # 6, Competitor Safety, paragraph # 1. In this instance, there is no appeal. The head judge is given the power to determine the extent of the injury despite the feelings of others including the competitor. The head judge must be satisfied that no further injury may occur and that there shall be no opportunity for potential liability.

8. c.

Reference page 6, paragraph 2. The tournament director is responsible for injuries prior to the start of the tournament.

9. a.

Reference page # 7, under Team Competition.

10. a.

Reference page # 10, under Grievances.

11. d.

Reference page # 9, Scoring. 10 points is the highest score which should be given for perfection. In this instance, there was a mistake and therefore, the kata was not perfect. You may rate the performer anywhere below 10.

12. Answer is either.

This is subjective and a personal matter for your thoughts. Just how well someone performs is

relative to how you perceive the forms to be. Remember to be consistent in how you judge. If you give higher scores for higher kicks, then be sure to reflect this same sentiment for all competitors who likewise kick high.

13. a.

Reference page # 6, Beginner's Forms..

14. a.

Reference page # 7, Adults.

15. False!

Reference page # 8, Scorer. The scorer tabulates scores and assesses penalty points only as indicated. Scorer can never make or enter his own scores.

16. c.

Reference page # 9, under Scoring.

17. True.

Reference page # 9, under Awards.

18. False.

Reference page # 9, under Awards. Awards are for 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

19. Yes.

Reference page # 10 Variance. The tournament director is given the power to waive rules under unusual circumstances which have merit.

20. c.

Reference page # 10, under Formalities.

21. c.

Reference page # 11, under Prerequisites.

22. a.

Reference page # 12, under Certificates.

23. c.

Reference page # 11, five levels of judges.

24. d.

Reference page # 11, under Requirements.

25. c.

Reference page # 8 and 9. Scorer assesses the penalty after the final score is tabulated.

A passing score shall be a minimum of 17.