

# **GKR**KARATE

## **Referee Manual**

### **Section 10: SUPPORT NOTES**

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# Section 10: SUPPORT NOTES

NOTE: The contents of this section are designed to provide a deeper understanding of the main body of information in this manual. In effect it will summarise the key points and provide more insight in how to interpret and apply the basic rules of tournament refereeing and judging. Note: These support notes are not designed to act as a substitute for the core content of the Judge & Referee Manual. They act instead as a supplement and should only be reviewed after first studying the manual's basic contents.

## 10.1 SUMMARY OF POWERS AND DUTIES

- **At the start of each division**, it will be necessary to conduct a full roll-call for both the kata event and the kumite event. The roll-call may be completed by any of the Officials on the ring.
- During Kata, **two Score-keepers are required**. The second Score-keeper can then move onto the role of Time-keeper once kumite commences. Both Score-keepers should confirm the Score given by the 3 Judges.
- At the end of the division, both Score-keepers should ensure the draw has been clearly marked with 1st, 2nd and 3rd.
- **The Judge** only speaks if summoned ('Shugo') by the Referee, so it is important they have a good grasp of the tournament gestures.
- **The Referee** makes the final judgement in all decisions (unless the ring coordinator has been called).
- **Before over-ruling the Judge**, the Referee must consider if the Judge was better sighted.
- **Before awarding a point**, a Referee must consider if ALL scoring criteria were met. If not 'No score' should eventuate.
- **At the completion of an event**, the Referee should quickly ensure the Score Keepers have clearly marked 1st, 2nd and 3rd placings for Kata and Kumite on the score sheets before handing out the 'Participation Certificates'.

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## 10.2 SUMMARY POINTS FOR KATA

- During a kata bout, Kata Judges must ensure their attention and focus is given to both competitors performing on their ring at all times.
- At the completion of a kata bout, upon hearing the single-tone whistle, each Judge must immediately raise their flag.
- Kata is subjective and different competitors will have different strengths and weaknesses. Therefore each Judge's opinion of a kata bout is equal and should not be questioned.
- **Do NOT** be swayed by the kata being performed, ie: don't automatically assume a higher-grade kata should have an advantage over a lower-grade kata. As an example, a good Saifa should beat an average Bassai-dai.
- The two key elements a judge will make their decision on are the competitor's Technical Performance and Athletic performance.
- **Technical** performance summary points include Technical proficiency, Stances, Transitional movements, Focus, Timing and Correct breathing
- **Athletic** performance summary points include speed/explosiveness, snap, strength, Kime, balance etc.
- Other factors that can influence a decision include forgetting to Kiai, a slight stumble, a mental blank, a belt coming undone, forgetting to bow etc. These minor factors should only be a decisive factor if it was difficult to find a clear winner based on the major criteria of Technical and Athletic Performance.
- A judge can be critical in their assessment of a competitor's kata technique when they are performing Kihon techniques (stances, punches, blocks, kicks). However, when a competitor is performing the more 'abstract' movements in a kata, then technique should NOT be scrutinised as much as differences may occur across various dojos/regions etc. During these techniques, other elements can be judged, such as strength, speed, balance, stability, stance, breathing, posture, focus etc.
- A competitor may start their kata again without prejudice providing the division has Kyu grades involved. Black Belt Only divisions are not permitted to start again.
- Junior teams may start their kata again if need be without prejudice. Senior teams (kata) are not permitted to start again (regardless of the grade).
- All events (except for Open events) will run straight through to the finals. All medal presentations are conducted at the conclusion of the division.

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## 10.3 SUMMARY POINTS FOR KUMITE

- **A mixture of Japanese and English** can be used with all 8th – 7th Kyu and 6th – 4th kyu divisions, irrespective of age.
- Whilst scoring techniques in all divisions must resemble actual karate techniques, **more lenience needs to be shown to the lower graded divisions (particularly children's divisions)**. This includes allowing fractionally more distance from the scoring area, a lesser expectation of full retraction of the punch/kick, and an allowance for a lesser level of coordination and balance.
- Whilst becoming familiar with the various Japanese terms used in tournament protocol is important, by far the most crucial role of a kumite Referee or Judge is that they **see and award techniques fairly and consistently. Being able to see a good technique when it is delivered and awarding the right score for it is THE MOST important part of being a referee – by far!**
- Whilst we generally discourage excessive discussions between Referee and Judge during a bout, be sure to **call for 'time-out' if such discussion is necessary**. This should be adhered to even if discussion is expected to be brief. The two minutes should be spent either fighting or awarding points.
- **Stopping a bout at every exchange should be avoided**. All halts where Torimassen (no score) eventuates should be avoided as much as possible. A bout should be allowed to establish a flow until a clean technique meeting all scoring criteria has eventuated (this can be difficult in lower grade divisions).
- **In Major tournaments**, whilst every effort is made to ensure that competitors from the same Zone (UK only), State or Country do not draw to fight each other in the first round of a kumite division, please make every effort to rectify this problem if it does happen ie: swap them to fight someone else.  
**Note:** This only applies for **first round bouts!**
- **All events, except Open events will run through to the finals**. All medal presentations will be performed directly after the kumite event has been completed.
- **For all divisions**, the Tournament Director (or Senior Tournament Official) will stipulate how many competitors from each ring will move through to the finals. This number may change according to the size of the division and on how many rings it is spread over. Always check for any notations on the paperwork that may already have this information listed.
- **Students who wear glasses** are advised to wear sports glasses/goggles during competition kumite bouts. Students must be made aware of this advice, and the decision will ultimately be theirs to make. In essence, our view is that they wear glasses in kumite at their own risk.
- **Sweeping** – Only competitors 3rd kyu + are allowed to attempt sweeping techniques in GKR tournaments. The only exception to this rule is in team kumite events that are open to all grades. In these instances, the division will follow the same rules as any 3rd kyu+ or 'Open' individual division ie: sweeps will be allowed by any competitors in these teams irrespective of grade.

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- **Sweeping simply defined:** For the purpose of GKR tournaments, a sweep causes an opponent to temporarily lose balance as a result of one leg being disrupted, shifted or dragged. This leg must not be a supporting leg (usually the rear leg). The competitor performing the sweep can assist his/her intentions by grabbing their opponent's arm or body with one hand as the sweep is being attempted. Take-downs or throws of any kind are not permitted!
- **Throws/take-downs defined:** It will be determined that a technique falls into the category of a throw or take-down if one or more of the following factors are present: (a) if the competitor attempting the sweep seizes their opponent's body with 2 hands (b) if the competitor attempting the sweep uses their knee, hip or shoulder as a leverage point for breaking their opponents balance or taking them to the ground (c) if both of the opponent's legs are lifted from the ground simultaneously. All of these techniques are prohibited in GKR tournaments.

## 10.4 SUMMARY FOR EFFECTIVE SCORING

- For a technique to score, it must meet all the scoring criteria. These include Good form, Vigorous Application, Correct Distance, Probable Effectiveness, Zanshin, Correct Attitude and a Kiai.
- Where a competitor is moving backwards or falling away during a pick off (anticipation) technique, it is unlikely the scoring criteria will be met due to probable effectiveness.
- Where a competitor drops either hand below the hip after scoring, or fails to resume an alert stance, they are not meeting the scoring criteria of Zanshin (continued state of awareness and self-preservation), nor are they meeting good form.
- Hand techniques may start and finish from guard. They need not start or finish at the hips.
- Side back-fist strikes need not come all the way back to the ear, but should come back close to the head. The striking back fist should not drop in height as it retracts from the target.
- Kicking techniques need not fully retract (back to Stage 1 of a kick in 4 stages). As long as the foot pulls back from the target cleanly, it is enough to warrant scoring.
- If a kicking technique does not retract due to the opponent catching the foot, but this catch occurred after touching the target area, then the kick may still be scored. An example is catching a round kick whilst the foot or shin is against the ribs.
- For a sweep to receive an Ippon, the sweep must destabilise the opponent and be followed by another technique within 2seconds. If more than 2seconds passes, only a Waza-ari can be scored. A student does NOT have to follow up a sweep with a technique (unless they wish to score).

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- Aiuchi is not the assumed call simply because two competitors throw a punch at the same time. If one of the competitors did not meet all the scoring criteria (eg moving backwards, poor form etc.) then their technique is disregarded, and the other strike is scored.
- If Aiuchi is apparent (both competitors score simultaneously and meet all the scoring criteria), try to avoid calling Yame and instead let the bout continue. Often a successful follow up is halted because the Referee was too quick to call Yame.
- Try to avoid calling Yame if the result is going to be Torimassen (no score). It is best to let the bout continue (a Referee may say nothing or give a verbal assessment on the go, eg: 'blocked, short' etc.) so that competitors are only stopped when a successful technique is landed. This develops their ability to focus for extended periods and allows for more action in the allotted time.
- If two competitors are failing to meet the scoring criteria and both seem oblivious as to why, it is OK to call Yame. Ask the Timekeeper to stop the clock and give them both a quick reminder as to why they are not scoring (eg: neither are using a Kiai, or pulling their hands back etc).
- A Kiai must accompany a technique. Allow more leniency for children here. In the interest of being able to score more techniques in the youngest age divisions, points may be awarded where there was no Kiai present. It is still recommended however to remind them about the Kiai both before and during the bout.
- A technique is only considered 'blocked' if the propulsion towards the target area has been deflected or halted by the opponent. It is NOT sufficient for the blocking arm to have merely touched an oncoming punch or kick for it to be considered blocked. If a technique still touches the target area, despite the opponent's hand touching the incoming strike, then the score may still be awarded.
- In contrast, it may also be deemed a successful block if the incoming attack is taken on the arm, hand or shoulder without touching the assigned scoring area.

## 10.5 SUMMARY POINTS FOR CONTACT

- Whilst all excessive contact is to be addressed within a bout, the rules clearly allow for a more severe treatment of any contact made to the face. All penalties imposed for excessive contact should be proportional to how much the victim's ability to continue fighting has been diminished.
- **Any obvious contact to the face** that does NOT result in bleeding or swelling, should in most cases be given a half-point penalty (Keikoku) without warning.
- **Where the face has only been 'barely touched'**, a warning may come first. If the face is 'lightly slapped, the Referee may use their discretion to issue a warning, or go immediately to a half point penalty (Keikoku).
- **It is NOT automatically considered 'Mubobi'** just because a competitor surges vigorously forward with an attack (as to score, a competitor MUST be coming forward). At the same time, someone 'moving in quickly' should NOT automatically be used as a justification for not penalizing any head contact received by that person as they came in. Contact is contact, whether a stationary target or moving target and competitors are expected to be able to adapt to a moving target and not make contact.

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- **If a person starts to bleed on the face** after being struck, it would be inappropriate to simply warn their opponent. Any blood that is drawn from either the **mouth or nose** should attract a **minimum of one full point penalty** (Hansoku-chui).
- **If blood is drawn from the face in any other area other than mouth or nose** (eg: cheekbone, forehead, chin etc.) then the offender should (in most cases) receive **'Hansoku'** and the victim awarded as the winner. This is based on the general premise that even greater contact is required to **split skin** from a blow, than is needed to draw blood from the mouth or nose. **Before making this** decision however, please speak with your Ring Director for confirmation.
- In general, **warnings without penalty** for contact would apply mostly to excessive **body contact**. The **face is to be treated more seriously**.
- **It is harder to monitor the extent of body contact**. Often a referee may feel a technique was only light contact and immediately resume the bout. However over the next few points it is obvious to onlookers that the victim is slightly winded or upset by the incident. While a Referee should be focused on getting on with a bout, they need to keep an eye on the comfort of both competitors. **If one is fighting at a lesser level because of soreness**, the bout should be halted momentarily for them to get back their composure.
- **If a time-out is called due to injury**, be sure to allow enough time for symptoms of injury to appear before re-starting the bout. Sometimes, symptoms help to determine how serious the offending contact was, or how equipped the injured competitor is to continue.

## 10.6 SUMMARY POINTS FOR REFEREEING CHILDREN

- While children fall under the same rules, leniency with all technical criteria (and even tournament protocol) should be given.
- **For children 12 years and under**, it is better for Referees to speak in English. Japanese language can confuse and intimidate nervous children. This will effect not only their enjoyment from the day, but their performance.
- **Where a children's division is 3rd kyu and above**, Japanese terminology should be used.
- When Judging or Refereeing children's divisions, **always be warm and friendly, and always smile** when talking to them.
- In children's kumite, it is permitted to **allow extra distance** when looking for techniques that score.

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- **Our role is not just to determine the order of medals**, it is to build the confidence and karate passion among our young karate-ka. Because of this, it is permissible to encourage and even slightly coach the children while Refereeing their kumite. This obviously does not include tactical coaching, but occasional generic coaching and encouragement towards both competitors. “That’s the way, a bit closer, don’t forget to kiai kids etc”. And where a technique scores, you may even call, “Yame, nice punch there”.

## 10.7 SUMMARY OF TEAM EVENTS

- For all Team Kata events, the basic timing of the kata cannot be changed for ‘artistic flair’.
- When Judging Team Kata, your judgement should be based on the same system as individual kata, along with the team’s ability to synchronize their timing. 3 individually excellent competitors who don’t move in time should not be seen as having good ‘team kata’. Equally, 3 competitors who stick together perfectly, but have lesser technique, or move slower (taking out the explosiveness) in order to achieve this synchronicity should not be seen as having good team kata.
- Refereeing and Judging team kumite should be just as thorough on ensuring competitors meet the scoring criteria, especially because it is only the first competitor to reach one full point.
- As team kumite is an Open event, all competitors (regardless of grade) are allowed to score with hook kicks, spinning back kicks and sweeps.
- The size of Team Kumite teams may vary from tournament to tournament eg: 3, 5 or 6. It is generally felt that smaller teams are more practical as they make it easier for groups of students to form a full team. As each fight within a team ‘bout’ is only one minute in duration, it is not uncommon for scores to be tied at the end of the allotted time. In most cases, Hikiwake will be called and the time extended with the side who scored the first point (or half-point) declared the winner. If each fight is taken to a clear decision (ie: not left at a tie) then there will always one team winning either 2-1 or 3-0 (assuming we had teams of 3). Where we may run a team kumite event with larger teams (eg: 5 or 6), the Tournament Director may stipulate that a tied score within a fight can be left at a tie, in the hope that the remaining 4 or 5 fights will provide a clear winning team. If each team has an equal number of wins at the end of all fights, then the first 2 competitors who engaged in a tie will fight each other again to determine a winner. Note: This deciding bout will result in Hikiwake if scores are tied again, and will continue until one side scores. It is important to clarify these conditions with the Tournament Director before commencing any Team Kumite division.

Note: If one team has accumulated enough wins to be declared the winner, any remaining bouts WILL STILL TAKE PLACE ie: everyone will still have the opportunity to fight.

- Efforts will usually be made to conduct Team Events at either the start of the day or at the end (ie: after or before all individual events have started - or been completed). Despite this, there may be instances where a team member may be competing in their individual event at the same time their Team Event is running. Understanding should be exercised by the relevant Ring Co-Ordinators in situations such as this to ensure that the affected competitors are not disadvantaged in any way. Whilst priority should be given to their individual event, the officials can make allowances for them to move back and forth between the two rings to compete in both events divisions simultaneously
- As a continuation of the above point, there may be times where only a few teams have all of their team members present at the Team Event start time. It is important that the Ring Coordinator is made aware of this as they may seek to adjust the draw so that the division can commence with those teams that are present in full.

## TOURNAMENT KATA CRITERIA

<b>8<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> Kyu</b>	Up to & including Bassai-dai
<b>6<sup>th</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Kyu</b>	Up to & including Empi
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> Kyu</b>	Up to & including Kanku-dai and Kururunfa
<b>Open Division</b> including 3rd Kyu & above	Up to & including Sochin and Seisan

## KATA SCORING GUIDELINES

8th Kyu – 4th Kyu divisions	6.0 – 8.0
3rd Kyu and above divisions	7.0 – 9.0
Open Divisions	7.0 – 9.0
Team Kata Juniors	6.0 – 8.0
Team Kata Seniors	7.0 – 9.0

## KUMITE TIME-KEEPING SUMMARY

<b>ALL DIVISIONS BELOW OPEN</b>	-	<b>2.00 MIN (continuous)</b>
Blow whistle once at	1.30 minutes	
Blow whistle twice at	2.00 minutes	
<b>OPEN DIVISIONS</b>	-	<b>2.00 MIN (continuous)</b>
Blow whistle once at	1.30 minutes	
Blow whistle twice at	2.00 minutes	
<b>OPEN DIVISION FINALS</b>	-	<b>2.00 MIN (stop time for all calls)</b>
Blow whistle once at	1.30 minutes	
Blow whistle twice at	2.00 minutes	
<b>TEAM KUMITE (SHOBU IPPON)</b>	-	<b>1.00 MIN (continuous)</b>
Blow whistle once at	0.45 seconds	
Blow whistle twice at	1.00 minute	