

## **2026 Winter Open Karate Championships** **Tournament Rules**

### **I. Kobudo & Team Kata Rules**

- Will be judged by point card system.
- In case of tie, “Beginners to Novice” competitors can repeat kobudo kata.
- “Intermediate to Advanced” competitors must perform a different kobudo kata in case of a tie. You are allowed to use another weapon just as long it is within the classification of “long weapon” or “short weapon”.
- All “Team Kata” competitors can repeat kata in case of tie.

### **II. Kata Rules**

- Judges will use red/blue flag system.
- Will be judged with a minimum of 3 referees/judges.
- Beginner to Intermediate divisions – You can repeat same kata over & over.
- Advanced divisions – Must alternate between 2 katas every round or change kata every single round.
- Exception: Men’s Black Belt (18 – 34 yrs.) and Women’s Black Belt (18 – 34 yrs.) division; competitors must change their kata every single round.

### **III. Kumite Rules: WKF Rules Modified**

**All divisions except Men’s & Women’s Black Belt 18 – 34 yrs. will follow the rules below:**

- **Match duration:** 1½ minute: Stop Time. “Ato Shibaraku” is at 15 seconds.
- **Maximun Points:** 6 point ceiling on all divisions. However, if both contestants score exactly at the same time and score reaches the 6 point ceiling simultaneously, the winner will be determined by “Senshu/Advantage”.
- **Single Elimination Format:** “No Repechage” will be conducted for 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners.
- **Mandatory Equipment:**
  - 1) For Beginner to Intermediate Divisions: White foam headgear, Mizuno headgear, or WKF approved face shield. Red/White/Blue hand pads.
  - 2) Advanced Divisions: White foam headgear, Mizuno headgear, or WKF approved face shield. Red & Blue hand pads & **shin instep protector**. Mouth Piece and Groin Protector.
  - 3) *Competitors must remember to use the correct color if they choose to use red or blue. Absolutely no dipped foam or elastic cloth hand pads will be allowed. Headgear is optional for divisions: (18 to 34 yrs.) & (35 yrs. & above).*
- **Optional Equipment:** Mouthpiece and groin protector are highly recommended but are not mandatory for all beginner to intermediate divisions. Shin and instep guards, chest protectors, certified sport glasses that are shatter proof, and soft contact lenses are also optional. *Absolutely no eyeglasses will be allowed during kumite matches and no dipped foam or elastic cloth shin and instep guards will be allowed.*
- **Contact Rule:** There will be absolutely no face contact allowed in the competition. No matter how effective a score maybe, if it touches the face or facemask, it will be penalized and not scored. The only technique where skin touch is allowed is Jodan Geri/head kicks in “Advanced” divisions only.

- **Category 1 & Category 2 Merger:** There will “NO LONGER” be separate categories for C1 and C2 penalties. All penalties whether “contact” or “non-contact” will be combined together under the title Category 1. The maximum number of penalties you can receive before being disqualified is 4. The 5th penalty will result in disqualification. For example, all face contact, jogai, passivity, pushing, grabbing, mubobi, avoiding combat, etc. are all combined under the same penalty category.
- **Tie Breaker:**
  - 1) In case of a tie at the end of the bout, the winner will be determined by who has the “Senshu/Advantage”.
  - 2) If neither competitor has a score at the end of the bout, the winner will be determined by “Hantei”.
  - 3) If “Senshu/Advantage” is taken away within the last 15 seconds of the match and the bout ends in a tie, the winner will be determined by which athlete scored the higher level of technique. This means if the score was 3 to 3, and the Aka (red) athlete scored 3 points by a head kick/ippon and the Ao (blue) athlete scored 3 points by punches/yuko, the winner goes to the athlete who scored the ippon technique. If there is no difference in the level of technique, the chief referee will walk to the outside of the ring, announce “Hantei”, and only the 4-corner judges will vote initially. If there are two flags for Aka and two flags for Ao, the chief referee will be the deciding vote to break the tie.
- **Throwing Techniques:** Safe throwing techniques will only be allowed in the “Advanced” divisions and not in “Beginner”, “Novice”, or “Intermediate”. Throwing techniques can only be administered with one hand and not two hands at a time. Any two-handed throws or attempts to throw will result in a “grabbing” penalty. The only time a two-handed throw is allowed is when an opponent throws a kick and you use both hands to grab and throw your opponent to the tatami.

**Men's & Women's Black Belt 18 – 34 yrs. will follow the same rules as above with the following exceptions:**

- **Match duration:** Women's and Men's - 3 minutes: Stop Time. “Ato Shibaraku” is at 15 seconds.
- **8 point difference:** Match will end if the difference in score is 8 points or if the time has run out.
- **Head gear:** Optional