

F. SPARRING RULES

1. **Ring Procedure for Competitors:** Each competitor should answer "Yes Sir!" loudly with enthusiasm when his name is called. The competitor should first bow into the ring, then run to the mark indicated by the Center Judge in the center of the ring. The Center Judge will inspect each competitor's sparring equipment before the beginning of each match. The competitors will then follow any instructions from the Center Judge. The competitor should not talk unless directly addressed by the Center Judge or one of the corner judges.

2. **White Belts and Yellow Belts** will compete with Drill Work and One-step Sparring Combinations as outlined below:
 - a. Due to the differences in terminology among CTF schools, the Center Judge (or his designee) will demonstrate the techniques called for in the Drill Work.
 - b. Matches may be run either as single elimination according to the same Bye System used in Free-Sparring or graded similarly to forms.
 - c. The competitors may do the one-steps either with or without partners.
 - d. If the Bye System is used, winners will be determined by a judge's decision. Rounds will be two (2) minutes in length. The Center Judge will call for a decision and all three Judges will hold up the colored flag indicating the winner.
 - e. If the Center Judge chooses to score each competitor as in forms, then he will conduct the competition in a similar manner to forms. The competitor with the highest total points wins. If there is a tie, the tie will be run off in the same manner as forms competition.
 - f. Judging criteria are stances, geometry, execution, focus, power and difficulty of techniques.

3. **Sparring "Bye" System:** The proper Bye System should be set up before any sparring begins. If the Center Judge has difficulty, he should ask one of the Master Level Referees, the Tournament Directors or the Chairman for help. Entries should be closed, and byes picked five minutes after last call.

4. **Single Elimination Matches** – With the exception of Spar Wars, matches will be single elimination unless there are only two or three competitors in the division.

5. Double Elimination Matches –

- a. If there are only three competitors, the match will be run as a double elimination with the first competitor to lose twice receiving third place.
- b. If there are only two competitors in a division, then they will fight for the best two out of three matches.
- c. SPAR WARS - All matches will be run as Double Elimination with the exception of Beginner Divisions.
- d. NATIONAL BLACK BELT DIVISIONS – These divisions are pre-seeded based on qualifying points and tournament competition. Double elimination does NOT apply to these divisions.

6. Double Elimination Brackets - ONLY the Tournament Chairman, or a Master Referee may set the brackets used for double elimination.

7. Judging Procedures

- a) The three judges will stand, forming a triangle. The Center Judge should stand at the peak, facing the scorer and timekeeper so he can monitor them.
- b) In order to judge well and fairly, every judge must focus totally on the match and move appropriately to maintain clear lines of sight.
- c) The judges will remain in the same rough triangle but move together with the Center Judge initiating the movement.
- d) No judge should just stand in one place nor should any judge move so much faster than the others that he crosses in front of another judge.
- e) If a judge sees a point or penalty occur, he should kiyap loudly and all judges should return to their starting position.
- f) The Center Judge will then say “Judges”, and each judge, once he has made his decision how he will call, will raise his flag to chest level, parallel to the ground.
- g) Once all three judges have raised their flags, the Center Judge will call for points and the judges should all **immediately** hold up the appropriate number of fingers for points and the appropriate colored flag or indicate any other appropriate call. Under no circumstances should a judge indicate his intention to call points, warnings, no see or block prior to the Center Judge’s call for points nor should he delay once the call is made.

8. **Green Belt through Black Belt** will Free Spar as outlined below:

a. **Length of Match:**

i. The most points scored at the end of each two (2) minute round will determine the winner **or**

ii. **COLORED BELT DIVISIONS** - The match will end when the first competitor accumulates a total of five (5) points.

iii. **BLACK BELT DIVISIONS –**

➤ **REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS –** Black belt matches will continue until the 2-minute time has elapsed or until one competitor accumulates a 5 point lead. When this occurs, the Center Referee will stop time and call the match.

➤ **NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISIONS –**

➤ **PRELIMINARY DIVISION MATCHES -** Black belt matches will continue until the completion of 1 round of 2 minutes or until one competitor accumulates a 10-point lead. When this occurs, the Center Referee will stop time and call the match.

➤ **QUALIFYING DIVISION MATCHES -** Black belt matches will continue until the completion of 2 rounds of 2 minutes each or until one competitor accumulates a 10-point lead. When this occurs, the Center Referee will stop time and call the match.

➤ **FINAL CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND –** The match will continue for the full time (two rounds of two minutes each) regardless of the differential in the score.

➤ Time will run continuously unless the Center Judge should indicate otherwise; such as, time out for a verification on a call, an injury, or a warning.

b. Judges' calls:

- i. Point Scored - The judge should indicate he saw the score by holding up the appropriately colored flag in one hand and fingers to indicate the point value of the technique with the other hand.
- ii. No See - The judge should cover his eyes indicating he did not see the score.
- iii. No point - The judge should cross his arms in an "X" indicating there was no point. This could mean the technique was blocked, was overextended, jammed or too weak, did not strike a legal target, the striking competitor was out of bounds, the technique did not exist, etc.
- iv. Warning or penalty – Once he has indicated his position on points (i., ii., or iii. Above), the judge shall point the colored flag (representing the offending competitor) at the ground and wave it in a circle.

The majority decision of the judges will determine if the point is awarded.

- A "no see" is not counted as a vote.
- A "no point" is counted as a "no" vote.

For example, a "no see", a "no point" and a "point" call will equal no (0) points. Two "no sees" and a "point" call will equal a point.

c. Match ending in a tie:

- i. Ties will be determined by a "sudden victory;" that is, the first competitor to lead by a point wins.
- ii. There must be confirmation of any point scored in overtime. If two judges call for a point, the competitor will win regardless of whether the third judge votes "no see" or "no point". If only one judge calls for a point and the other two judges call "no see", no point is scored in overtime.
- iii. Penalty points as well as proper point scores may decide overtime matches.

d. Competitor out of bounds:

Out of bounds is defined as having both feet outside of the protected ring area. The Center Judge should IMMEDIATELY call "Break" and reposition both players at the center of the ring, calling for any warnings, penalties or scores. No points may be awarded to a player that is Out of Bounds.

e. Scoring of points:

i. Points are scored by placing valid hand and foot techniques on or in proximity of a legal target area - with varying criteria on technique depending on rank and division and competitors.

ii. There are three-point classifications: one-point, two-point and three-point techniques:

- One (1) Point is awarded for a legal hand technique to a legal body or head (in advanced or black belt divisions only) or a legal foot technique to a legal body target area.
- Two (2) points will be awarded for any kicking technique scoring to the head, face, or back of the head above the neck (side of neck and throat are illegal targets).
- Two (2) points will be awarded for jumping kicks to legal body target areas.
- Two (2) points will be awarded for a **jump rear hand punch** to any part of the head (allowed only in black belt divisions).
 - A jump punch will qualify for two points ONLY if the **striking hand begins the technique in the rear hand position**. The judges will not consider the landing position of the feet, but only if the competitor jumped while executing the strike.
- Three (3) points will be awarded for a jumping kick to the "head" target area.

NOTE: There shall be no minimum distance from the ground to qualify jumping kicks. The only criterion is that the non-kicking leg be off the ground.

If the judges score different point levels, e.g. one judge scores one point for a body kick and another judge scores two points for a head kick, the Center Judge should call "time out" and discuss with the Corner Judges the sequence of events for clarification. The Center Judge will then award the proper number of points. If two judges have scored two points and one judge only one point, the majority rule will apply.

g. Legal hand techniques:

Punches, back fist or hammer fist, ridge hand or knife hand strikes.

h. Legal kicks:

Any kick executed while standing with good balance or while jumping and landing with good balance. You may score a kick by contacting the legal target area with any portion of the foot below the ankle.

i. Target Areas: The front and sides of the body above the "belt" are legal for hand and foot techniques in all divisions. The head, face and back of the head above the neck are legal for kicks in all divisions. Hand techniques to the head and face are legal in Red and Black Belt divisions. All other parts of the body except arm and leg blocking areas are illegal target areas.

Points are scored only for techniques to legal target areas. Warnings, penalty (minus) points or disqualification may result for blows to non-target or non-blocking areas.

j. **Contact rules are relative to division.** In colored belt competition, students are allowed to score face kicks without contact. If a competitor makes accidental light contact, a point may still be awarded since light contact will be required in higher divisions. However, if the Center thinks the contact is too hard, he may warn, award penalty points or disqualify the attacker immediately. Other body contact may be light to medium.

Contact Infractions - Normally, first infractions will draw a warning for negligence. Malicious attacks on illegal or dangerous target areas (groin, standing knee, throat, etc.) shall draw minus points or disqualification depending on the situation as determined by the Center Judge and other proper officials. If a competitor is injured, the opponent should turn his back and kneel down in a show of courtesy and respect for the injured partner.

Light or incidental hand contact to the face in Green and Blue Belt divisions can result in a warning. However, the Center Judge has the option of awarding penalty points or disqualifying the attacker if he feels the contact is too hard, deliberate, malicious or dangerous in nature.

NOTE: Pretending Pain or Injury: Competitors should not pretend pain as a device to improve competition standing or to gain judges' sympathy. Competitors should always demonstrate integrity and indomitable spirit. Competitors' complaints of contact, blood, or tears, have no bearing on whether too much contact was made. The decision is simply whether the attacker used too much power or penetration.

k. Penalty or disqualification may result from:

- i. Excessive contact explained above
- ii. Running out of bounds or falling to avoid attack
- iii. Grabbing an opponent or his uniform
- iv. Tripping, throwing, or foot sweeping an opponent
- v. Fingertip or similar "spearing" techniques
- vi. Attacking other than legal targets
- vii. Causing injury from unclipped fingernails or toenails
- viii. Exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct at any time before, during, or after the match while under direction of the referee (such conduct elsewhere may draw other Federation action as deemed appropriate by officials).

The Center will decide whether an infraction warrants only a warning, or a penalty or disqualification based on the circumstances. Once a competitor has been warned twice (regardless of the infraction) in any match, subsequent infractions will result in a penalty (negative point) or disqualification.

- i. Out of bounds rulings depend on whether the competitors have "fought" out or "run" out of the ring. A competitor who runs out of bounds to escape the attacker may be issued a warning. The third and subsequent such infraction results in penalty points. Persons "fighting" out or ejected from the ring by their opponent will not be warned or penalized. If that happens, or if a competitor inadvertently steps out of bounds, the referee will call both competitors back to the center of the ring. Falling down to avoid an attacker will be judged similarly to running out of bounds.
- m. **Sparring Bracket Guidelines** – Competitors are assigned to their brackets randomly with the following exceptions:
 - Byes should be distributed evenly and fairly within the brackets.
 - In the first round, competitors from the same school should not be paired together if at all possible. The intent is to allow them to spar with people from a different school in the first round; and
 - In the final regional qualifier of the year, the 1st place and 2nd place qualifiers in the Black Belt Divisions will be seeded at different ends of the brackets.

n. CONCUSSION POLICY

- In the event that a competitor receives a blow to the head, the Center Referee must stop time and examine the competitor for any symptoms of dizziness or disorientation. If the Center feels ANY cause for concern, they should stop the match and immediately call for the Chief Medic AND the Tournament Chairman for evaluation.
- If the Chief Medic determines there was a concussion, the competitor will be required to withdraw.
- The Tournament Director will speak with the judges to determine if the contact was due to an infraction or excessive force in order to determine the winner of the match.