



General Rules

Chapter 1

WAKO General Rules

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WAKO General Rules / Chapter 1

Art. 1. Rule changes

Only WAKO's Board of Directors has the power to officially decide rule changes, either proposed by themselves or by committees. A change of rule must be communicated to the committee related to the subject. When changes of rules in chapter 2 to chapter 8 (sport rules for each discipline), the changes become operative at a minimum of 2 months after decisions are taken. The date for an operative new rule must be communicated well to all committees and member countries.

Changes can be operative with immediate action if obvious mistakes are found in the text or if determined by the Board of Directors to be critical for health and safety or in case of "force majeure". If a change is valid immediately it must be well communicated to all member countries by mail and published on the Internet. The exception for such practice is that there cannot be rule changes just before or during a World or Regional Championship.

The Board of Directors can change rules in chapter 1 - General Rules – at any time. However changes must be communicated well to all member countries by mail and on the Internet. The date for an operative change must be well communicated.

Art. 2. Health and Safety

Art. 2.1 Health of Fighters

WAKO is an official member of WADA, having fully adopted the World Anti-Doping Code. Every fighter is obliged to respect the Code both in and out of competition.

WAKO allows a maximum of 2 matches per day during Continental or World Championships in all ring sports, while there is no limit on the number of matches in the tatami sports.

WAKO refers to its Medical Procedures and Health Security Guidelines regarding:

- Introduction
- Anti-Doping
- Weight-Reduction and Nutrition Methods
- Medical Fitness Certificate - Examinations
- Medical Check-Up before competitions
- Medical Suspensions
- Medical Personnel
- Health Security at competitions

Art. 3. General, Equipment, Fighting Areas

Art. 3.1 Basic

The basis of all kickboxing competitions is honor, fair play and honest competition.

Results of matches will determine the placing and final achievement of a fighter, club or national team at the competition.

Results and rank achieved by dishonorable acts will not be recognized by judges, referees and competition committees and officials will initiate penalty procedures.

All competitions - WAKO official competitions and official National competitions, professional and amateur matches, prestige or title matches, must be under these rules.

All competitions and matches are on a voluntary basis. Also, the basis of all our activity in kickboxing must be according to "fair play", respect of all participants and officials and respect of WAKO rules.

All sportsmen, coaches, officials, representatives, promoters and members of WAKO organizations must respect WAKO rules and the honor, dignity and moral values of all members, clubs, national federations and WAKO.

All competitions on world, continental, national and all other levels must promote the development, popularization and rising quality of kickboxing as a sport and WAKO as an organization.

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Art. 3.2 Competitions

Official WAKO competitions directly under WAKO headquarters' authority are (in repetition):

- World championships for all age categories (cadets, juniors and seniors) and in all kickboxing disciplines (semi, light, full contact, low-kick, K1 Rules, musical forms and aero kickboxing) as follows:
- Semi contact: younger cadets, older cadets, juniors, seniors - male and female divisions
- Light contact: juniors, seniors - male and female divisions
- Full contact: juniors, seniors - male and female divisions
- Low kick: juniors, seniors - male and female divisions
- K1-Rules – juniors, seniors - male and female divisions
- Musical forms (styles - with weapon and without weapon) - cadets (younger and older combined), junior, senior - male and female divisions
- Aero kickboxing (styles - with step and without step) - cadets (younger and older combined), junior, senior - male and female divisions - single and team competition
- Continental championships for all age categories and in all kickboxing disciplines - same as for World championships
- Regional Championships for all age categories and in all kickboxing disciplines - same as for World championships
- World cups for all age categories and in all kickboxing disciplines
- Continental cups for all age categories and in all kickboxing disciplines.

Also:

- In World, Continental and regional championships only national teams can participate.
- Continental championships cannot be open championships for national teams from other continents.
- In World and Continental cups, clubs and members of national federations which are WAKO members can participate
- In senior championships only one member per national team can participate in each weight category in a fighting discipline
- In cadet and junior championships two members of national teams in each weight category in a fighting discipline can participate
- For cups and other tournaments there is no restriction on the number of competitors in a weight or competition category from same nation or club
- World and Continental championships will take place every other year – one year will have World senior championships, the next year will have Continental senior and World junior and cadet championships
- World and Continental championships will be held in two parts in different disciplines and in two countries, according WAKO Board decision.
- Continental championships can be held at just one venue - for all disciplines
- World and Continental cadet and junior championships will be held at the same time and place for all kickboxing disciplines
- World and Continental cadet championships can be held separately from junior championships.

Also:

- A fighter in one of the ring sports can only compete in one discipline during a given World or Regional championship. However a fighter can compete in Musical Forms or in Aero Kickboxing since these are not contact disciplines.
- A fighter can compete in both semicontact and lightcontact during the same World or Regional championship but cannot enter the ring sports. If a fighter is called for a fight in both semicontact and lightcontact at the same time, the fighter must choose a discipline with immediate response. In practice the fighter will be deleted in the category he/she do not choose.
- Any competitor in Musical Form will be allowed to enter a maximum of two categories only. But a competitor in Hard Style cannot enter in any Soft style division.

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Art. 3.3 Equipment for competitions

Promoters of a competition (championships or cups) must provide the necessary equipment for a normal development of a tournament:

- Electronic digital or mechanical scales (minimum two)
- Amplifier with sufficient number of microphones
- Flags and CD with national anthems of each competing national team
- Equipment for cleaning and drying the floor
- Copying machine
- Timers for all official tables. Timers must be visible at all times for the coaches
- Small bags for each tatami (to signal that the time of a round has expired) or gongs for each ring
- Every fighting area must be marked by a number
- For each tatami an electronic scoreboard or flip cards with two big black numbers (from 0 to 30) to display point results and 4 small red numbers from 0 to 3 (2 at each side of big numbers) to display warnings or exits.
- An adequate display of current fight number
- An adequate time display
- The rules also refer to a Tournament Checklist which is produced.

Art. 3.4 Drawing

Order of criteria:

- Competitors from the same club or national team in the same weight category must be split into separate divisions (one in upper, the other in lower part of drawing list – the competitors can thus only meet in the final)
- Champions from the last two championships (World and Continental) will be placed in separate parts of the drawing list (one in upper, the other in lower part of drawing list - competitors can thus only meet in the final)
 - If, in a category, there is an odd number of fighters, the defending champion (or favorite) will draw a bye (walkover) in the first match.
 - Every drawing list must have data as follows: name of tournament, place and date, name of discipline, sex, age, weight division, competitor's name and surname, club or nation and number of fight.
 - All drawing lists must be printed in 3 official copies - for the chief referee, for official's table and for the notice or bulletin board. All three lists must be the same and any changes must be repeated on all three with the signature of the chief referee. Also, unofficial copies of drawing lists will be distributed to national team chiefs.
 - Completed official copies of results, with stamp and chief referee's signature, are official WAKO documents and will be kept in archives for a minimum of 2 years.

Art. 3.5 WAKO Competition calendar

At all times the WAKO calendar will be on the official web site.

The WAKO calendar will include:

- World and Continental championships – a minimum of two years before the date of championships
- Regional championships and World and Continental cups – a minimum of one year before date of tournaments
- International Open Tournaments of WAKO National federations, a minimum of one year before date of event (National federations are responsible for informing WAKO headquarters of dates and other details about Open tournaments)

On the calendar there will also be other official activities such as seminars, meetings, etc.

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Art. 4. Official Championships and Tournaments

Art. 4.1 Promoters

The promoters of all International WAKO events must be the President of the host country or any other designated person under the responsibility of the President. The President of the host country may, if he wishes, have a partner, but this in no way relieves him of the overall responsibility for the Tournament. The Promoter shall communicate directly with the WAKO World President on all matters concerning the event. The Promoter shall send a written report to the Wako World President every sixty (60) days concerning the promotion of the event. Promoters of International Events shall be responsible for the following:

Art. 4.2 Championships

The championships, like World Championships and Continental Championships, or Regional Championships (Asian, Arabian, Oceania, Pan Americans, African Championships) are promoted alternatively every second year. The championships can be organized as one championship including all disciplines or be divided into a maximum of two championships for the different disciplines and in agreement with the promoter.

The venue for a championship:

- shall be a suitable auditorium seating a minimum of 2000 spectators
- must have adequate space for all fighting areas and between all fighting areas
- must have a warming up area to take care of the number of participants attending
- must have areas for referees, organizers and WAKO officers
- must have relaxing rooms and dressing rooms for the number of participants attending
- headquarter and administration rooms, faxes and copy machines

WAKO sanctioning fees of Championships and Cups differ and they are determined directly by the WAKO President in accordance with the Board of Directors.

Art. 4.3 World Cups / Open Tournaments

A WAKO World Cup is such when it is promoted with normal Championship procedures such as:

- The Tournament lasts for at least 3 days
- Arrival and Weigh-in day before the start of fights
- Semi contact and light contact: 2x2 minute rounds
- Ring sports 3x2 minute rounds
- Only WAKO rules shall be used
- Official WAKO referees and judges only
- World Cups are only open to WAKO members and their clubs/teams.

WAKO will develop a ranking system based on points from results either for competitors or for clubs/teams.

A **WAKO Open tournament** are open only open to WAKO members and their clubs/teams. If inviting other organizations, it must be in coordination with WAKO Board. The Open shall be promoted only under WAKO rules.

Art. 4.4 Championship Trophies

A suitable and dignified reward must be furnished for the following categories:

- Medals: 1st, 2nd and two (2) 3rd places for all Competition Divisions.
- Trophies for all gold winners.
- Trophies for Team competition in Semi Contact.

The team standings shall be decided in the following manner;

1st place = 3pts. 2nd place = 2pts. 3rd place = 1 pt.

Art. 4.5 Championship Headquarters

The promoter shall select a Hotel that will serve as the Tournament Headquarters.

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Art. 4.6 Scales

There shall be a minimum of two sets of medical balance scales made available to the fighters a minimum of two days before the official weigh-in.

Art. 4.7 Refreshments

A refreshment area shall be provided for the use of the Referees, Judges and the Official's Table. It should have a minimum of tea, coffee and soft drinks. The promoter will be responsible for sending the national WAKO Presidents all relevant information concerning the locations, dates, lists of hotels and prices, airport transportation arrangements and a complete schedule of events. The promoter shall have transportation coordinators assigned at the airport of the tournament city to assist the competitors upon their arrival. The national Presidents are responsible for providing their flight times to the promoter. The promoter shall be responsible for providing all personnel and equipment necessary to conduct and administer the tournament.

Art. 4.8 Tournament Check-List

WAKO has made a tournament checklist to be distributed to the promoters of World and Regional Championships. If the promoter has to deviate from this checklist, it is the promoters' responsibility to establish contact with WAKO and its Organizing Committee to find the best possible solution.

A tournament checklist can be changed by the Organizing Committee or by the Board of Directors.

Art. 5. Protests

Art. 5.1 Regular protests

If a team wants to protest a result, the Chief Referee must receive it in written form within 15 minutes after the fight. The written protest must describe clearly the problem. The Chief Referee must deliver the protest to the Appeals Board/Referee Committee which will also consider the problem. The protest will be handled immediately.

Note: in Full Contact, Low-Kick, K1 and Light Contact there will be no changing of decisions as described in Chapter 7 Ring Sports and Chapter 4 Light-Contact.

A protest cost of 100 Euros and must be paid up-front. If the protest is successful the money will be refunded.

Art. 5.2 Irregular protests

Irregular protests resulting from disapproval of decisions, where fighters protest by delaying the regular continuation of the program in the ring/tatami, such as sitting down in the ring/tatami, whether decided by himself or provoked by his coach/team, will be reacted upon by the Referee Committee or by the Board of Directors directly. As a consequence, the entire team of the discipline can be excluded. If security staff have to intervene, and/or in case of physical conflict due to this action, the entire national team in question can be immediately disqualified.

A protest will only be handled in response to a written letter and a protest will not be handled if the above-mentioned actions take place.

Art. 5.3 Video evidence

Video footage is not applicable to WAKO events. Video footage may not be used to resolve any queries, complaints or points of clarification.

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Art. 6. Duties

Art. 6.1 Officials in General

All officials at championships and cups are WAKO officials. During the event they are not officials of their own countries or federations. They must be completely neutral. At all times during championships they represent WAKO. They show an unbiased, positive and honest attitude and fair play to everyone.

The Officials at WAKO World, Continental and Regional Championships and WAKO World Cups are:

- Representatives of the WAKO Board of Directors
- The Chief Referee Committees (ring sports and tatami sports)
- The Chairmen of the various Committees
- An administrator / computer man
- The Chief referee for tatamis or rings
- Referees
- Judges
- Kick counters
- Time keepers
- Score keepers
- Announcers
- Doctors with medical teams

Art. 6.2 WAKO Representative

A WAKO representative must be present at all WAKO World and Continental championships and/or World, Continental and Regional cups. The representative at a tournament can be the WAKO President or a member of the WAKO Executive Board. He is responsible for seeing that all championships or cups are under WAKO rules and that all results are official WAKO results. For each championship or cup the WAKO Board or WAKO President will choose a WAKO Representative.

Art. 6.3 Referee Committees of Tatami sports / Ring sports

In WAKO we have created two Referee Committees: one for Tatami sports and one for ring sports.

The Chairman of each Committee is responsible for naming the Chief Referee for tatamis or rings with the Chief Referee then deploying the various referees and judges for tatamis and rings. With each Chief Referee he checks the tatamis, rings, official table equipment, referee and judge uniforms and he will sanction the start of competition. He will distribute draw papers to the official's table and collect them after finished matches. He is the supervisor of the weigh-in. He is responsible for making draw lists (along with the administrator) and only he can make changes to official draw lists. He will be the supreme referee in protests. His decision about protests will be binding.

Referee Committees are named by the WAKO Board of Directors and stay in place for 4 years unless otherwise decided by the WAKO Executive Board itself.

Art. 6.4 Tournament Committee / Computer Man

The Administrator is responsible for collecting all registration material and loading data into a computer to prepare draw lists. With the Tournament Committee he makes draw lists and distributes them to the official's tables. He collects completed draw lists after matches are finished and transfers the results to the computer. He will make an official report of the Championship or Cup and distribute the official report to all representatives of national teams. If the promoter of a championship cannot appoint a responsible person for administration, the WAKO board or WAKO President will appoint an adequate person.

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Art. 6.5 Chief Referees (Organizer / Observer)

The Chief Referees (named by the Chairman of Tatami sports / ring sports) **alternate in the roles of organizer and observer** and are responsible for normal procedures for matches held on tatamis or rings. They will deploy referees and judges for each match according to their nationalities and experience and with respect for neutrality rules. They are responsible for the correct compilation of the draw list with results, and at the end will sign the draw list and give it to the computer man. In the event of protests, they must follow procedures and make a first-level decision. If the protester is not satisfied with their decision, the Chief Referees will explain all details of the protest to the Technical Director. The Chief Referees supervise the referees and judges and can change a referee's decision only in case of a "material mistake".

In Musical Forms and Aero Kickboxing the Chief Referee will give the signal for competitors to start performing and he coordinates the work of other judges.

The Chairman of the Referee Committee of championships or cups will appoint Chief Referees from among well-experienced referees who come with their national teams.

Art. 6.6 Referee / Judges / Kick counter / Time and Score Keeper

The duties of referees, judges, kick counters, timekeepers and scorekeepers are described in the chapters on General Rules of Tatami Sports or General Rules of Ring sports.

Art. 6.7 Announcer

For a match he calls the fighters to the combat area. First he calls the fighter in the red corner, and then the fighter in the blue corner. At championships and cups, the announcer also always calls the fighters for the following match so they can start to prepare. After being called three times, when a fighter does not come, the announcer will order the timekeeper to start the timer. If the fighter doesn't appear within 2 minutes the announcer will signal the referee and announce the other fighter winner of the match by opponent's WO.

In musical forms and aero kickboxing competitions he will read loudly the points awarded by each judge.

The timekeeper will be appointed by the Chief Referee or by the promoter.

Art. 6.8 Doctor with Medical team

The doctor must be ready for immediate intervention when called by the referee. Before being called by the referee he cannot enter the tatami or ring. The medical team must have sufficient equipment and a sufficient number of medical staff and technicians for rapid and qualified intervention at all fighting areas. Doctors must have experience in treating kickboxing specific injuries.

The promoter is responsible for providing an adequate medical team, with ambulance.

WAKO medical procedures and safety guidelines must be followed.

Art. 6.9 Organizing Committee

THE COMMITTEE:

The WAKO Board of Directors shall select the Organizing Committee. The Committee shall consist of at least three (3) members. The leader of the Committee shall be known as the Tournament Director. It is important that all members of the group speak English.

The Committee meets prior to World Cups and/or Continental/World Championships. If necessary, they can hold other meetings, but are required to meet during events/tournaments. At other times they communicate by mail and by telephone.

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RESPONSIBILITIES:

- They are responsible for the disciplines during the tournament
- They will be responsible for all the Chief Referees and their staffs in the arena throughout the event
- They will have the responsibility of being in complete charge of all paperwork, administration and announcing regarding results and complaints.
- They will cooperate closely with the Referee Committee and Technical Committee will facilitate all referee training seminars.
- They will, together with the promoter, take care of the event/promotion/tournament and make sure everything is arranged according to WAKO rules. Any deviation from the rules has to be cleared by the Committee or through the Board of Directors.
- They will take care of all official weigh-ins or appoint referees/officials who take care of it.
- They will report to the Board of Directors and the president of WAKO.
- They will handle protests or forward them to the Board of Directors. Their decision, or that of the Board of Directors, will be final.

Art. 6.10 International Referee/Judge seminars and registration

In preparation for World /Continental Championships and Cups the Committee organizes seminars to make sure that the judging and behavior of referees are the best possible.

When sending out letters of invitation to championships, WAKO will write an extra note concerning referees and judges including all requirements for their preparation.

The organization of seminars will be as follows:

- All referees and judges must have a copy of the updated rules which will be used during the seminar.
- Testing will verify that all judges and referees speak a minimum of English. The referees and judges will be rated and placed in categories according to both their language skills and experience.
- The seminars will deal with each kickboxing style and the rules to be used during tournaments.
- The Committee makes sure that all referees and judges wear the same uniforms, which is important for WAKO's image.
- The sequence in a seminar contains :
 - Verbal introduction and explanations
 - Verbal explanation of the main issues that frequently cause problems in order to create uniformity among the judges
 - Any video presentation to explain situations
 - Practice teaching, using fighters in action.
 - The use of scorecards and/or explaining digital system
 - Written tests/exams

Registration

- All referees and judges are registered and are given points during a championship and WAKO sanctioned international events.
- The best referees and judges will be invited as official referees to participate in the championships.
- Referees and judges will get their license based on their performance in the championships.

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Art. 6.11 Medical, Health and Anti-Doping Committee

THE COMMITTEE:

The Committee has at least three (3) members. The leader takes the initiative to organize the work within the committee. It is important that the members of the group speak English.

The committee meets prior to World Cups and/or Continental/World Championships. If necessary, they hold other meetings, but are required to meet during events/tournaments.

RESPONSIBILITY:

- Their responsibility is to make sure that all safety rules are followed in the tournaments/championships regarding both doctors and medical staff.
- They will make sure that the anti-doping rules are known and, together with the Board of Directors and/or promoter in a championship, verify that doping control tests are carried out
- They make sure that WAKO works effectively regarding weight reduction problems
- The Committee works together with, and reports to, the Board of Directors
- The Committee has the power to postpone the start of fights if weigh-in procedures are too close to the normal start of competition or if the weigh-in is delayed or in any other way, fighters were not properly informed.

Art. 6.12 Technical Committee

THE COMMITTEE:

The Committee has at least three (3) members. The leader takes the initiative to organize the work within the committee. It is important that the members of the group speak English.

The committee meets prior to World Cups and/or Continental/World Championships. If necessary, they can hold other meetings, but they are required to meet during events/tournaments.

RESPONSIBILITY:

- Improve the existing WAKO Syllabus
- Improve the present WAKO grading system
- Advise the Board of possible improvements of rules/regulations in both ring and tatami sports
- Give technical assistance to WAKO regions in need of improving their skills.
- Be responsible for approving all fighting safety equipment supplied by Promoters. The Committee will also be responsible for inspecting all fighting areas during a Championship to insure top quality.

Art. 6.13 Important for all WAKO officials

All referees, judges and officials present at the tournament (both on or off-duty) are not allowed to take action for their team/nation as coach or in any other way act or behave in a partial manner (screaming and moving as a coach or fan). They are NOT allowed to change roles from official to coach during the same championship.

Again, WAKO stresses the importance for referees and judges to speak a minimum of English to communicate during the championships.

Note

For better readability the text sometimes uses masculine pronouns only. However, all references to persons apply to both genders.