



Light-Contact Rules

Chapter 4

WAKO Rules – Light-Contact

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Art. 1. Definition

Competition in Light Contact kickboxing should be executed as its name implies, with well-controlled techniques. In light contact competitors fight continuously until the central referee commands STOP or BREAK. They use techniques from full contact, but these techniques must be well controlled when they land on legal targets. Equal emphasis must be placed on both punching and kicking techniques. Light contact has been created as an intermediate stage between semi and full contact kickboxing. It is carried out with running time. The central referee doesn't judge the fighters, but only makes sure they respect the rules. Three judges make the complete scoring decisions on normal WAKO scoring sheets or by using the ad hoc created WAKO software.

Art. 2. Weigh-in

During World and International championships, as well as International competitions, the following rules must be respected:

Each fighter will be officially weighed only once, UNLESS THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS DECIDES OTHERWISE, BUT WAKO HQ MUST THEN NOTIFY ALL MEMBERS LONG IN ADVANCE. The weight recorded on that occasion is final. It is allowed, nevertheless, for the representative of a country whose fighter has not reached the right weight during the official weigh-in, to put him into another, suitable weight category, provided that the country in question has got a vacancy in that category and the weigh-in has not yet closed. It is also allowed for all countries to substitute one kickboxer with another, before the end of the first weigh-in and the medical check-up, on condition that, within each competition where substitutes are allowed, the kickboxer in question has been registered as a reserve for that, or in any other weight category.

For a detailed description of the Weigh-in and procedure of weigh-in, see chapter two of WAKO Rules of Tatami Sports / General Rules.

Art. 3. Fighting Rules

Fighters will enter the tatami and touch gloves. They will then step back and assume a fighting stance and wait for the command "FIGHT" from the referee.

The time will only be stopped on the command of the referee, by calling "TIME" to the area control table. Time is not stopped to award penalties unless the referee feels it is necessary. The referee is not allowed to talk to the fighters during the match unless he has stopped the clock.

Fighters may have one coach and one second in their corner during the match. Both must remain in the coach's box throughout the match.

No coach will be allowed to enter the fighting area while a match is in progress and no coach will be allowed to interfere with any referee or judge. No coach will be allowed to make derogatory remarks about a referee or judge.

Only the referee may ask for time to be stopped. A fighter may request the clock to be stopped to adjust safety equipment or check an injury. The referee does not have to stop the clock if he feels it will take away the advantage from the other fighter. Time-stops shall be kept to a minimum.

If the referee feels a fighter is using time-stops to rest or to prevent his opponent from scoring, a warning will be given and the fighter, following a discussion with judges, may be disqualified for delaying the match or refusing to fight.

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Art. 4. Competition Commands

- **TIME**
Forming the letter T with hands, to give the order for the time keeper to stop the clock until the referee says the command FIGHT. When the central referee says TIME he must say the reason why he stopped the clock.
The referee will give the order TIME on these occasions:
 - when he gives a warning to a fighter (his opponent must immediately go to the neutral corner)
 - when a fighter asks for stoppage of time by rising his right hand (the opponent must immediately go to the neutral corner)
 - when the referee sees it's necessary to correct a fighter's equipment or uniform
 - when the referee sees that a fighter is injured (maximum time for doctor's intervention is 2 minutes for seniors and juniors and 1.5 minutes for boys/girls and cadets)
- **STOP**
When the referee orders the kickboxers to stop fighting.
- **STOP TIME** (forming a T with his hands)
When he wants to stop the match for any important reason. The referee must explain the reason for each warning to the fighter question
- **FIGHT**
To begin the contest/fight or after an interruption of the fight.
- **BREAK**
To break up a body-to-body position, after which each boxer must draw back before continuing the fight
- **SHAKE HANDS**
At the beginning of the fight

Art. 5. Legal Target Areas

The following parts of the body may be attacked using authorized fighting techniques:

- **Head**
Face, side and forehead.
- **Torso**
Front and side
- **Leg**
Below mid-calf (Foot Sweeps are allowed)

Art. 6. Illegal Target Areas (Prohibited Techniques and Behaviour)

- Attack the throat, lower abdomen, kidneys, back, legs, joints, groin and to the back of the head or neck.
- Attack with the knee, elbow, knife-hand, head-butts, thumb and shoulder.
- Turn one's back to the opponent, run away, fall down, intentional clinching, blind techniques, wrestling and ducking below opponent's waist.
- Attack an opponent who is falling to the floor or is already on the floor, that is, as soon as one hand or knee touches the floor.
- Leaving the fighting area (exits).
- Continue after the command "stop" or "break" or the end of the round has been sounded.
- Oil the face or the body
- Violations of the rules and regulations may, depending how grave they are, lead to warnings, minus points or even disqualification.
- Bending down below the belt
- Use of spinning backfist is NOT allowed

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Art. 7. Legal Techniques

- **Kicks**
Frontkick, sidekick, roundhouse kick, heel kick (sole of the foot only), crescent kick, axe kick (sole of the foot only), jumpkicks
- **Hands**
Ridge hand, all kinds of boxing punches, backfist
- **Leg, Foot sweep**
Below mid-calf (foot sweeps are allowed)

Hand and foot techniques should be used equally during the entire fighting period. Foot techniques are only recognized when they clearly show the intention to hit the opponent with power.

Art. 8. Scoring criteria

Any legal technique striking a legal target creating contact with “reasonable” power, focus, speed, balance. The authorized striking area of the hand or foot must make “clean / controlled” contact. Any technique that simply touches, brushes or pushes an opponent will not be scored. The referee and judge must actually see the technique strike the target. Awarding points based on the sound of the strike is not allowed. The fighter must be looking at the point of contact when executing the technique.

If a fighter jumps in the air to attack, he must land inside the fighting area to score, and he must keep his balance. It is not allowed to touch the floor with any part of the body except feet. If a fighter loses his balance due to his own instability following a score and touches the ground with any part of his body other than his feet, the score will not count. If a fighter loses his balance following a point score outside his control (pushed or tripped) then the score will stand.

Art. 8.1 Points

- | | |
|---|-------|
| ▪ Punch | 1 pt |
| ▪ Kick to the body | 1 pt |
| ▪ Foot sweep leading the opponent to touch the floor with any other part of the body apart from his feet) | 1 pt |
| ▪ Kick to head | 2 pts |
| ▪ Jumping kick to body | 2 pts |
| ▪ Jumping kick to head | 3 pts |

Art. 8.2 Scoring System

Every round is separately evaluated by each of the three judges according to:

- the number of points scored according to the agreed criteria for points

For all legal techniques (punches, kicks or sweeps) clearly landed on legal targets with speed, focus, balance and sufficient power, the judge will note the mark with the clicker.

At the end of each round, each judge will count the number of points scored and will give to the better fighter his judgment according to the following scale:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| ▪ A difference of: From 1 to 2 marks | = 10 - 10 |
| ▪ A difference of: From 3 to 7 marks | = 10 - 9 |
| ▪ A difference of 8 marks or more | = 10 - 8 |

It is mandatory for all judges to use clickers. The judge must write the number of marks on the back of the scorecard after every round.

At the end of the match, the judges will sum the points given (all 10-10 or 10-9 or 10-8) per round and name the winning fighter who has the larger sum of points. The judge must make a circle around the fighter's name.

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Art. 8.2.1 In case of a draw

If the match ends in a draw (equal points after 3 rounds), to determine a winner a judge has to take into consideration (in the following order):

- Preference of the last round: If a fighter has scored 3 or more marks in the last round, meaning that he actually won the round 10-9, he will be declared the winner. The reason is that this fighter shows better offensive style, condition, endurance and stamina.
- Number of total marks: If one of the fighters only has 1 or 2 more marks in the third round the total number of marks in all three rounds will be considered to determine the winner. The reason is that in the last round the two fighters are considered equal according to our system.
- Using remarks: If the difference between the total marks in all three rounds is only 1 point, the judge uses the remarks on the front of the scorecard to choose the winner.

Art. 8.2.2 Criteria for minus points

Criteria for minus points, given only by the referee, after previous warnings:

- unclean fighting style
- constant clinching
- constant and continuous ducking, turning of the back
- too few foot techniques
- excessive contact
- heavy knock down
- any other violation of the rules

All techniques during in-fighting (at very short distance, during clinching) should not be taken into consideration by judges.

Art. 8.3 Decisions

The following decisions could bring the fight to an end:

- Winner by points
- Winner by disqualification of the opponent
In difficult cases, the referee may also call out a disqualification without having given a warning beforehand, but only after having consulted his judges.
For example:
 - knocking out the opponent by an uncontrolled blow to the head or malicious attack
 - for excessive, continuous hitting after the "stop" command
 - by extreme unsportsman-like conduct of a fighter such as insulting the referee, the opponent or showing overly aggressive behavior.
- Winner by not showing up (Exits)
- Winner by stopping the fight (Referee Stops Contest, TKO)
A fight may be stopped if a fighter is unable to fight or defend himself and also if the other fighter shows total athletic superiority. The referee decides who the winner is. If the fight is stopped because a fighter is injured, then the officials must make a decision according to Art. 15 of the present chapter of Rules.

Art. 8.4 Changing a Decision

All public decisions are definitive and cannot be changed unless:

- Mistakes which occurred in calculating the points are discovered
- One of the judges declares he made a mistake and switched the scores of the fighters
- There are evident violations of WAKO rules

The Chairman of tatami sports, with the help of the WAKO appeals board, will immediately handle all protests. After the discussions, the Chairman of the WAKO appeals board will announce the official result.

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Art. 8.5 Awarding of Points

In awarding points, the following rules must be respected:

- Directive 1 - concerning blows
During each round, a judge will mark respective scores for each kickboxer, according to the number of technically controlled blows that each one has received. To count, a fist or a kick strike must not be blocked, even partially deviated or stopped. The value of recorded blows in a fight will be counted at the end of each round and granted to the better kickboxer according to his degree of superiority. Blows given by a kickboxer will not be taken into account:
 - if they are contrary to the regulations
 - if they land on the arms
 - if they are weak and do not come from legs, body or shoulders.
- Directive 2 - concerning offences
During each round a judge cannot penalize each offence he sees, regardless of whether the referee has noticed it or not. He has to call the referee's attention to that offence. If the referee gives any kind of warnings to one of the fighters, the judges must note it, writing W in the fouls column of the scoring sheet, but that does not mean a direct minus point to the other fighter. When the referee decides to give a minus point to a fighter, the judge will put a "-1" in the appropriate column next to the points of the fighter who has received the warning, thus certifying that he has to take it away from his final score.
- Directive 3 - awarding points
Points will be given per round. No fractions of points will be given. At the end of each round, the more skillful kickboxer (the one who has scored more points) will receive 10 points and his opponent proportionally less (10-9- or 10-8 without considering point deduction in case of penalty).

For all detailed descriptions, see Art. 8.2. Scoring System.

Art. 9. Offences

Warnings given to a fighter's corner count against the kickboxer.

A referee may, without stopping the fight, give a caution to a kickboxer at any moment. If he wants to give a warning to a kickboxer, he will stop the fight and announce the offence. He will show it to the three judges, pointing with his finger to the kickboxer at fault.

The following actions are considered fouls:

- Punching below the belt, hooking, tripping, and hitting with knees or elbows.
- Butting with the head, shoulders, forearms and elbows, strangling the opponent, crushing his face with arm or elbow, pushing back the opponent;
- Hitting with open gloves, with the inside of the gloves, with a wrist.
- Hitting the opponent's back, particularly on the nape of his neck, head and kidneys.
- Lying down, wrestling or not fighting at all
- Attacking an opponent who is on the floor or getting up
- Clinching without any reason
- Hitting while hooking the opponent, or pulling the opponent into the blow.
- Hooking or holding opponent's arm or putting an arm underneath the arm of the opponent.
- Suddenly lowering one's head below opponent's belt in a way that would be dangerous for the latter.
- Using artificial means for a passive defense and falling down intentionally, in order to avoid a blow.
- Using insulting and aggressive language during a round.
- Refusing to withdraw after the order "BREAK".
- Trying to land a blow on the opponent immediately after a "BREAK" order and before withdrawing.
- Assailing or insulting the referee at any time
- When a warning for a particular foul has been administered, for example a clinch.

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The referee will not caution the kickboxer again for the same offence. An official warning will follow a third caution for the same foul. If a referee thinks that an offence has been committed without his knowledge, he will have to consult the judges.

Art. 10. Penalty – Exits (Warning, Disqualifications and Exits)

Warnings should be given in a loud and clear voice so that both the fighters and coaches can hear and understand the warning. The referee should stand facing the offending fighter and give the warning.

To award a penalty point the referee must first request the time to be stopped. He must face the scorekeeper and state that a penalty point is to be awarded by pointing to the fighter who is to be penalized and stating in a loud, clear voice why the fighter is being penalized.

Warnings will be carried over throughout the match to all rounds. When the referee is giving warnings or a penalty (minus) point, he must stop the clock.

1 st violation or exit	Official Warning or 1 st exit Verbally communicated to fighter/coach/table with hand signal
2 nd violation or exit	Official warning or 2 nd exit Verbally communicated to fighter/coach/table with hand signal
3 rd violation or exit	Award penalty point -1 Verbally communicated to fighter/coach/table with hand signal
4 th violation or exit	Disqualification Verbally communicated to fighter/coach/table with hand signal

Art. 10.1 Disqualification

If disqualification is called for, the referee shall confer with the judges and with the Observer of the Area (one of chief referees) to ensure all the proper procedures are being used.

Art. 10.2 Exit

Leaving the fighting area.

If a fighter leaves the area (EXIT) without being pushed, kicked or knocked out by his opponent it will be seen as a "Voluntary Exit" and will receive a warning from the referee. On the third exit the fighter will lose one point. On the fourth occasion the fighter leaving the area shall be disqualified. If the kickboxers fight near the edge of the tatami, the referee must not stop the fight to prevent the fighters from the exit.

Stepping out (EXIT) means

Stepping outside the line, even with only one foot.

Stepping on the line should not be considered as stepping out. The entire foot must be outside the designated area. If the fighter is pushed out by the other fighter, or he went outside the line as a result of a hit or kick, it is not judged to be a voluntary exit.

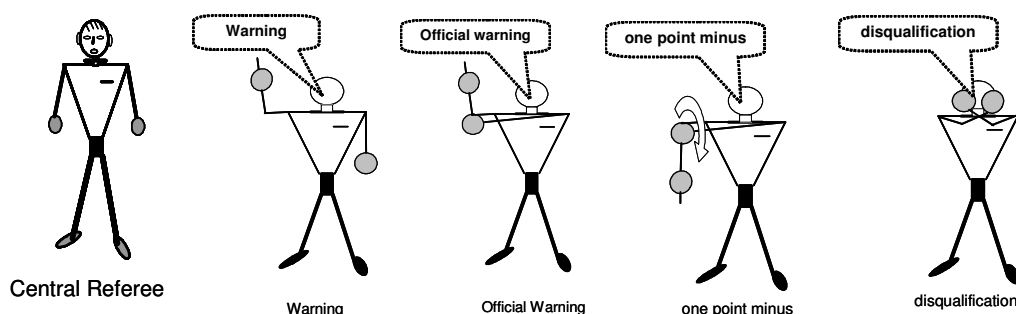
Warnings for leaving the area will be kept as a separate issue from warnings for other offences.

Art. 11. Number of Kicks per Round

In light contact there is no limit regarding the number of kicks because fighters score different points according to the technique they use, like in semi contact. Of course fighters are requested to use both punches and kicks and equal emphasis should be put on both. Warnings (and consequently, official warnings) should be given though, to the fighter who does not use kicks at all.

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Art. 12. Hand signals



Art. 13. Match

A coach and a second, who must obey the following rules, may assist each fighter:

- Only the coach and the second may get onto the tatami during breaks.
- No advice, help or encouragement can be given to the fighter during the round
- A second can give up the fight on behalf of his fighter, and can also, if the fighter is in difficulty, toss the sponge or the towel onto the tatami.
- During the match, neither the coach nor the second may be on the tatami. They must, before each round, remove towels, buckets, etc.
- Any coach, second or official encouraging or prompting the spectators to give signs of advice, as well as encouragement to a boxer during a round, can be suspended from his function for the competition in progress.
- A coach or a second who violates the rules may receive a warning or be disqualified by the referee for bad behavior.

Art. 14. Officials

For general rules and all detailed descriptions of officials, see chapter two.

Art. 14.1 Referees and Judges

Three WAKO judges, seated at tatami-side away from the spectators, must grade each bout. Each of the three judges must be seated in the middle of three respective corners of the fighting area.

In the event the Chief Referees (Observer/Organizer) are not able to apply the above-mentioned directions due to special circumstances, they will find a solution that will ensure the neutrality and impartiality of appointed officials, followed by a prompt report to the Referee Committee.

Art. 14.2 The Central Referee

At the end of a bout, he gathers and checks the score sheets of the three judges. After verification, he must hand them over to the observer of the area (one of chief referees) or, if he is absent, to the announcer.

When the winner is announced, the referee must raise the winning kickboxer's arm. He must indicate to the kickboxers, by appropriate signs or gestures, any violation of the regulations.

He must also:

- Supervise the entire bout
- The referee must not announce the winner by raising a kickboxer's arm or in any other way before the official in charge announces the decision.

In case WAKO software is in use, central referee, knowing immediately who is the winner by looking at the screen, will call the two fighters to the center of the mats and raise the winner's hand.

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Art. 14.2.1 Referee's Powers

- Stop a fight at any moment if he finds it to be too one-sided.
- Stop a fight at any moment if one of the kickboxers has received an unauthorized blow or is wounded, or if he considers a fighter unable to continue.
- Stop a fight at any moment if he finds the fighters behaving in an "unsportsman-like" manner. In such a case, he must disqualify one kickboxer.
- Warn a kickboxer or stop the bout and give a minus point or warning to a kickboxer for an offence.
- Disqualify a coach or a second who has broken the regulations or the kickboxer himself if his coach or the second fails to obey his orders.
- Disqualify, with or without a warning, a fighter who has committed a very dangerous offence.
- Interpret the rules as long as they are applicable or compatible with the fight that is taking place, or, at a special moment, decide on a move which does not appear in the rules.
- If a kickboxer breaks the rules but does not necessarily deserve a disqualification, the referee must stop the fight and give a warning to the kickboxer of a foul. Before the warning, the referee must order the kickboxer to stop fighting. The warning must be given clearly, so that the kickboxer understands the reason and cause of the warning. The referee must hand signal to each judge that a particular warning has been given and clearly show which kickboxer has been punished. After having given the warning, the referee orders the kickboxers to fight again. If a fighter has been given 3 official warnings within the same bout, he is disqualified.
- A referee may give a caution to a kickboxer. A caution means an unofficial warning given by a referee to a kickboxer for breaking a rule. In order to do this he doesn't need to stop the fight, and may reprimand the kickboxer during the fight.

Art. 14.3 Judges

Each judge must independently consider the merits of the two fighters and choose the winner according to the regulations.

During the match, he will not talk to either fighter, other judges, or anybody else, with the exception of the referee. He may, if necessary at the end of a round, notify the referee about any incident that he has missed, for example telling him about the misbehavior of a second, etc.

A judge will mark the number of points granted to each fighter on his score sheet and in professional bouts only his decision will be announced to the public at the end of the match.

During a round the judge will use the back of the scorecard to record the number of hits he sees, either by a number or by numbers of lines. The red corner fighter is on the left side and the blue corner fighter always on the right of both sides of the score sheet. The points/recorded hits must be listed separately for each round.

He will not leave his place until the decision has been announced. While on duty, a judge must use clickers.

Art. 15. Injuries

The match should be interrupted if an injury occurs, if the equipment is not in order or in the event of a long referee's discussion on a rules violation. The fight may only be interrupted by the referee (the side judges or doctor may notify the referee that time must be stopped). In the event of injury, time may only be interrupted until the doctor decides on the seriousness of the injury, that is, whether or not the fight can continue or whether it must be stopped. Treatment of the injury can only be done between rounds or after the match. An interruption made by a doctor should not exceed 2 minutes. If the injury needs to be treated, the match must be stopped. In any case, cuts cannot be taped.

If the match must be stopped because of injury, the referee and the two judges must decide:

Art. 15.1 Who caused the injury

- Whether or not it was an intentional injury
- Whether or not it was the fault of the injured fighter
- Whether or not the injury was caused by an illegal technique
- If there were no rules violations by the uninjured fighter, that fighter shall win by forfeiture
- If there was a rules violation by the uninjured fighter, the injured fighter wins by disqualification
- If the injured fighter is declared fit to continue by the medic/doctor, then the fight shall resume

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If the injury was not intentional and the injured fighter cannot continue fighting immediately, the uninjured fighter is declared the winner by RSC.

If the injury is due to a violation of the rules, the responsible fighter is disqualified. If the injury is due to his own fault, the other fighter is declared the winner by RSC. In case of any injury, the doctor and nobody else has the last word on whether a fighter can or cannot continue to fight. The doctor will communicate his decision to the central referee who will act accordingly. A fighter can at any time give up fighting, raising his arm to indicate surrender. In this case the referee will call the other fighter to his side and proclaim him to be the winner by abandonment.

Art. 16. Procedure after KO, RSC, RSC-H, Injury

If a fighter is injured in a fight the doctor is the only person that can evaluate the circumstances.

If a kickboxer remains unconscious, only the referee and the doctor in charge will be allowed to stay in the ring, unless the doctor needs extra help.

Art. 16.1 Procedure for KO, RSC, RSC-H, Injury

If the injured fighter is declared as the winner (due to disqualification of his opponent), the doctor must decide immediately if the injured fighter is able to continue in the tournament.

A kickboxer who has been knocked out due to a head-blow during a fight, or if the referee has stopped the fight due to severe head trauma which prevents him from continuing, he will be examined by a doctor immediately afterwards and accompanied to hospital by the ambulance on duty or to any other adequate place.

A kickboxer who has been knocked out due to a head-blow during his fight, or if the referee has stopped the fight due to severe head trauma which prevents him from continuing, will not be allowed to take part in any other competition or bout for a period of at least **8 weeks** after the KO.

A kickboxer who has been knocked out due to a head-blow during a fight, or if the referee has stopped the fight due to severe head trauma which prevents him from continuing, two times in a period of 3 months will not be allowed to take part in another competition or bout for a period of at least 3 months after the second KO or RSC-H.

A kickboxer who has been knocked out due to a head-blow during the fight, or if the referee has stopped the fight due to severe head trauma which prevents him from continuing three times in a period of 12 months, will not be allowed to take part in a competition or a bout for a period of one year after the third KO or RSC-H.

To the above mentioned quarantine periods the doctor on site can extend the quarantine period if necessary. Also doctors at hospital, after tests/scan of head, can further extend the quarantine period.

A quarantine period means that a kickboxer cannot take part in any competition in kickboxing no matter what the discipline. The quarantine periods are "minimum periods" and cannot be overruled even if a head scan shows no visible injuries.

The referee will tell the jury and judges to mark KO or RSC-H or RSC on their score sheets when he has stopped the bout due to the kickboxer's inability to resume the fight because of head blows. The same has to be reported by the chief referee on duty in that ring on the fighter's WAKO SPORT PASS. This is also the official result of the fight and it cannot be overruled.

Before resuming kickboxing after a ban, as described in the above paragraphs, a kickboxer will, after a special medical examination, have to be declared fit to take part in competition by a sports doctor.

When suffering a KO or RSC-H result, a kickboxer must get a CT Scan of the head.

Art. 16.2 Procedure for injuries in general

In case of injuries besides KO or RSC-H, the doctor can give a minimum quarantine period and recommend treatment at hospital. A doctor can require immediate treatment at hospital

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Art. 17. Handshake / Touching of Gloves

Before and after a bout, the kickboxers will shake hands as a sign of pure sportsmanship and friendly rivalry, according to kickboxing regulations. The handshake takes place before starting the first round and after the decision. No handshake is allowed between rounds.

Art. 18. Use of Drugs

Any drug or chemical substance ingested by a kickboxer that is not included in the kickboxer's normal diet, is forbidden. Any kickboxer or official violating this code may be disqualified or suspended by WAKO.

Any kickboxer refusing to submit to a medical examination or doping test after a fight, in order to verify that he has not broken this rule may be disqualified or suspended. The same will occur for an official encouraging such a refusal.

The use of local anesthetics is allowed, if agreed to by a doctor from the Medical Committee.

WAKO refers to and adopts WADA Doping Rules.

Note

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