



Official Rules and Regulations

Contestants are expected to behave according to the etiquette of karate-do and demonstrate fighting spirit throughout the entire bout

1. *Definition*

“Karate Combat” is a unique combat sport and a league operated by KOKO Sports Management LLC. “Karate” means unarmed combat involving the use of a combination of the traditional karate techniques subject to any applicable limitations set forth in these rules and regulations, and those prescribed by the presiding Regulatory Body and/or Commission.

2. *Fighting Area*

- a) Bouts are contested in the specially designed Karate Combat Pit. The Fighting Area may be modified according to the requirements and/or specifications established by the presiding regulatory body or commission
- b) Adjacent to the fighting area shall be a platform/space suitable for the licensed seconds and commission inspectors to view the action from above the pit.

3. *Equipment*

For each bout, the promoter shall provide a clean water bucket, a clean plastic water bottle, a stool, and any other supplies as directed by the Commission, in each corner.

4. *Specifications for Hand Wrapping, Ankle/Foot Wrapping and Supportive Braces*

All issues pertaining to Hand Wrapping, Ankle/Foot Wrapping and the use of Supportive Braces shall be determined by the presiding regulatory body or commission.

5. *Mouthpieces*

- a) All contestants are required to bring and wear a mouthpiece during competition and provide an alternate. The mouthpiece shall be subject to examination and approval by presiding commission designees.
- b) The round cannot begin without the mouthpiece in place.
- c) If the mouthpiece is involuntarily dislodged during competition, the referee can call time, clean the mouthpiece, and reinsert the cleaned mouthpiece at the first opportune moment without interfering with the immediate action. Alternatively, the referee may call for the alternate mouthpiece.

6. *Protective Equipment*

- a) Male Karate contestants shall bring and wear a groin protector of their own selection, of a type approved by the Commission.
- b) Female Karate contestants may bring and wear a chest protector during competition. The chest protector shall be subject to approval of the Commission.
- c) Contestants shall wear Karate Combat mitts with a net weight of four ounces.

7. Apparel

- a) Male contestants must wear an official Karate Combat uniform when entering the PIT fighting area. During the fight, contestants will only wear karate trousers.
- b) The karate uniform will be of official design and material sanctioned by Karate Combat.
- c) The appearance of national emblems, flags of the country and labels shall occur according to the policies of the presiding commission.
- d) The contestants must wear Karate Belts approved by the Commission.
- e) The trousers must be long enough to cover at least two-thirds of the shin and must not reach below the anklebone. Trousers legs may not be rolled up.
- f) Female contestants must wear Commission approved and Karate Combat approved attire.
- g) Shoes and any type of footwear are prohibited during competition.
- h) Coaches and other accompanying personnel must wear promoter approved apparel.

8. Appearance

- a) Each unarmed combatant must be clean and present a tidy appearance.
- b) A small amount of petroleum jelly as determined by the commission may be applied to the mask portion of the face. No other products may be used on either the face, head or body.
- c) The Commission shall determine whether the head or facial hair presents any hazard to the safety of the unarmed combatant or his opponent or will interfere with the supervision and conduct of the contest or exhibition. If the head or facial hair of an unarmed combatant presents such a hazard or will interfere with the supervision and conduct of the contest or exhibition, the unarmed combatant may not compete in the contest or exhibition unless the circumstances creating the hazard or potential interference are corrected to the satisfaction of the Commission.
- d) An unarmed combatant may not wear any makeup, face or body-paint, jewelry or other piercing accessories while competing in the contest or exhibition.
- e) Contestants must have short fingernails and must not wear metallic or other objects which might injure their opponent.

9. Karate Combat weight divisions

KARATE COMBAT events feature single-match contests between well-matched, skilled karate fighters in the same weight division.

DIVISION	WEIGHT	ALLOWABLE WEIGHT SPREAD
Women's Flyweight	(121 LB / 55 KG)	Determined by the presiding commission
Women's Bantamweight	(+121 LB / +55 KG)	Determined by the presiding commission
Men's Bantamweight	(135 LB / 61 KG)	Determined by the presiding commission
Men's Lightweight	(150 LB / 68 KG)	Determined by the presiding commission
Men's Welterweight	(165 LB / 75 KG)	Determined by the presiding commission
Men's Middleweight	(185 LB / 84 KG)	Determined by the presiding commission
Men's Light-Heavyweight	(205 LB / 93 KG)	Determined by the presiding commission
Men's Heavyweight	(over 205 LB / over 93 KG)	Determined by the presiding commission

Karate Combat bouts may also be contracted at a Catchweight with the permission of the presiding commission.

10. **General Bout Description**

- a) Each non-title Karate Combat contest shall be 3 rounds. Each round shall be 3 minutes in duration, with a rest period of 1 minute between each round.
- b) Preceding the bell to begin each bout the referee will instruct each fighter to perform a traditional karate bow to their opponent with the following commands: Yoi (ready), Otega-ni Rei (bow to each other).
- c) During the fighting action when one fighter becomes grounded* the referee will begin a visible finger-count from five (5) to one (1) representing the length of time that the standing fighter may continue their legal attack and the downed fighter may fight back from the ground. At the end of the "Five-Count", the referee will separate the fighters, order the downed fighter to immediately stand and quickly restart the action from that same position in the pit. During this restart, both fighters shall maintain their defense. A downed fighter who fails to immediately rise at the command of the referee risks warnings, penalization, disqualification or loss by TKO.

*The definition of a grounded fighter is determined by the regulatory jurisdiction if it differs in any way from the definition provided below: A fighter is considered grounded when any part of the body other than the soles of their feet are touching the fighting area floor

Note that the Pit Wall is NOT considered the ground. In reference to the pit wall, a fighter shall only be considered grounded if he is directly facing the wall and has both hands on it.

- d) When a fighter is attacking his downed opponent, he may do so only with hand strikes and he must maintain an upright and controlled position while attacking. When one of the fighters considered grounded hammerfist and ridge-hand strikes are not allowed. The "top" fighter may place a single knee on his downed opponent, but once a second knee goes (and stays) down, or both fighters are considered grounded, the referee will stop the action, stand the fighters and immediately restart the action from that same position in the pit.
- e) During the rest period between rounds, the fighters licensed second and cutman will enter the pit to address the fighters' needs under the supervision of a commission inspector.
- f) Whenever a fighter is injured by a foul that causes time to be stopped or is finished by KO or TKO, the uninjured opponent shall assume the traditional kneeling position (seiza) on the opposite side of the pit until the opponent has recovered or the referee indicates that the uninjured fighter should rise.
- g) A fighter may submit to his opponent by either tapping their hand continuously on any area of the pit, placing one knee on the ground and one hand above their head or by verbally submitting to the referee. A fighter's chief second may concede the match by a method determined by the presiding commission.

11. **Stopping Contest**

- a) The referee and/or the ringside physician (as determined by the presiding commission) are the only individuals authorized to stop a contest.
- b) The fighter's Chief Second may concede the match by a method determined by the presiding commission.
- c) The fighter is permitted to concede the match to their opponent at any time during the bout by the following methods:
 - i) Tapping their hand continuously on any area of the PIT
 - ii) Placing one knee on the ground and one hand above the head
 - iii) Verbally submitting to the referee

12. **Judging/Scoring**

- a) All bouts will be evaluated and scored by 3 judges who shall evaluate the contest from different locations around the PIT fighting area. The referee may not be one of the 3 judges.

- b) Judges shall evaluate karate techniques, such as effective striking, effective takedowns and control of the PIT fighting area, effective aggressiveness and defense.
- c) Effective striking is evaluated by determining the total number of impactful legal strikes landed by a contestant
- d) Effective takedowns are evaluated by considering the number of successful executions of a legal takedown followed by efforts to finish the fight.
- e) Fighting area control is judged by determining who is dictating the pace, location and position of the bout.
- f) Effective aggressiveness means moving forward and landing a legal strike.
- g) Effective defense means avoiding being struck or taken down while countering with offensive attacks.
- h) A 10-point must system will be used during the bout based on effective fighting according to the criteria listed above. Karate Combat prioritizes productive aggressiveness so the fighter who gets results based on attacking should be favored over a fighter who counters if the results of the fighting action are similar.

13. Legal Techniques

LEGAL TECHNIQUES while standing:

- a) All punching and hand striking techniques executed with the closed fist directed to the front and sides of the head, and the torso above the beltline. Ridge-hand strikes are also legal.
- b) All kicking techniques delivered to the front and side of the head, and torso above the beltline. Roundhouse or hooking kicks (non-linear or thrusting) kicks delivered to legs below the knees only.
- c) Sweeps, reaps and throws (other than those listed as fouls below)

LEGAL TECHNIQUES while one fighter is grounded:

- a) The standing fighter may attack only with legal hand strikes.
- b) The grounded fighter may attack with all legal strikes (including kicks as per stand up rules).

14. FOULS - Including but not limited to:

- a) Striking with an open hand (other than a ridge-hand strike), or striking with the fingers to any target
- b) Striking with hammerfist or ridge-hand strikes when a fighter is grounded
- c) Striking with the knee, elbow, forearm or head
- d) Kicking the portion of the leg below the hip and above the lower part of the knee
- e) Striking or grabbing the throat in any way
- f) Striking to the spine or the back of the head
- g) Kicking, stepping on, stomping, jumping on or throwing oneself on a grounded opponent
- h) Groin attacks of any kind
- i) Grabbing the opponents head with either hand or holding the head with one hand and striking with the other
- j) Single and Double leg takedowns (Catching a kicking leg of the opponent and executing a takedown will not be considered as a single leg takedown.)
- k) Clinching, holding or grabbing for any reason other than to immediately execute a legal technique. Inactive clinching will be split by the referee.
- l) Suplexes or any other throwing techniques over the head

- m) Throwing or spiking an opponent intentionally on their head or neck, or out of the fighting area
- n) Timidity or Passivity, including but not limited to; avoiding contact with an opponent, failing to initiate legal techniques, intentionally or consistently dropping the mouthpiece or faking an injury
- o) Holding the mitts of an opponent
- p) Attacking an opponent on or during the break, while the opponent is under the care of the referee or after the bell has sounded ending the round
- q) Flagrantly disregarding the instructions of the referee or any interference by the corner
- r) Biting, spitting, clawing, pinching, twisting the flesh, hair-pulling, fish-hooking, gouging, putting a finger in an orifice, cut or laceration, small joint manipulation or any other “dirty tactics”
- s) Engaging in any unsportsmanlike conduct, including but not limited to abusive language.
- t) Applying any foreign substance to the hair or body to gain an advantage

15. Cautions, Warnings, Penalties and Injuries Resulting from a Foul

- a) Referees may Caution, Warn, Penalize or Disqualify a fouling fighter.
- b) Cautions may be given without interrupting the fighting action of the bout.
- c) The intentional execution of any forbidden hand strikes and kicks will immediately be penalized with point deduction.
- d) The unintentional execution of any forbidden hand strikes and kicks will be given an immediate verbal warning and on the next occurrence, it will be penalized with point deduction. To issue an official warning the referee will separate the fighters and speak directly to the athlete that is being warned.
- e) To issue an official warning the referee should separate the fighters and speak directly to the athlete that he/she is warning.
- f) If a point or points are to be deducted the referee should stop time and send the non-offending fighter to the opposite side of the pit. The referee should make certain that the judges and the commission supervisor fully understand the nature of the deduction.
- g) If a fighter is to be disqualified, the referee should waive his hands above his head indicating the termination of the bout.
- h) If a fighter is injured resulting from a foul, it will be handled according to the rules, regulations and policies of the presiding commission.

16. Types of Contest Results

- a) Knockout by:
 - i) When the Referee stops the contest (TKO)
 - ii) When a self-inflicted injury or injury as a result of a legal maneuver is severe enough to terminate a bout (TKO)
 - iii) When a fighter fails to demonstrate intelligent defense and places himself at unreasonable risk for imminent damage (TKO)
 - iv) When a fighter is unable to enter the pit without assistance (TKO)
 - v) When a contestant has been rendered unconscious due to strikes or kicks (KO)
- b) Decision via the scorecards, including:
 - i) Unanimous Decision:
 - When all three judges score the contest for the same contestant
 - ii) Split Decision:
 - When two judges score the contest for one contestant and one judge scores for the opponent

iii) Majority Decision:

- When two judges score the contest for the same contestant and one judge scores a draw

iv) Technical Decision:

- If an injury from a foul ends the contest or a double KO occurs the presiding commission's rules regarding technical decisions will be applied.

c) Draws

If the regulation bout is scored a draw, one additional round will occur to determine a winner. If the result of the additional round remains a draw, the bout will be scored a draw.

i) Unanimous Draw

- When all three judges score the contest a draw

ii) Majority Draw

- When two judges score the contest a draw

iii) Split Draw

- When one judge scores a draw and the other two judges score for in favor of different contestants

d) No contest

e) Disqualification

f) Forfeit

g) Technical Draw

h) No Decision

Note that the points above are general descriptions. Actual bout results will be determined according to the rules and regulations of the presiding commission.

17. Extra Round (Sudden Victory)

a) If the judges' final score result in a draw

b) If the fight is balanced out, the judges may indicate on the last round's (third round in case of a non-title fight, fifth round in case of a title/championship fight) scorecard if they wish to have an extra round to determine the winner. To have an extra round at least two judges have to request the extra round.

Note: If the final score after the last round (third round in case of a regular fight, fifth round in case of a title/championship fight) is a Unanimous or Majority decision there will be no possibility for an extra round.

In these two cases, there will be one additional Sudden Victory round, the result of which will determine the winner. If the sudden victory round is scored a draw then the official result will be a draw.

18. Licensed Seconds

The presiding commission will determine the number of seconds that will be licensed.

The chief second and cutman may/will enter the pit during the rest period between each round to address the needs of the fighter.

19. Overruling, Unwritten Rules and Commission Jurisdiction

The above rules for Karate Combat will always be subordinate, and consequently may be revoked or modified depending on the applicable laws and/or ethical standards of the country and/or state where the event is organized, occurring under the supervision of an Athletic Commission, Sanctioning Organization or other approved Regulatory Body. The authority to resolve any circumstances not specifically addressed in this document will be the domain of the presiding commission in consultation with the sanction organization and Karate Combat rules director.

20. The Dangers of Cutting Weight and Dehydrating

(based on the Association of Ringside Physicians)

Unhealthy and dangerous weight loss practices continue to be a serious problem in combat sports. It has been shown that excessive weight loss, rapid weight loss, and repeated cycling of weight gain/loss causes decreased performance, hormonal imbalance, decreased nutrition and increased injury risk. Other life-threatening problems associated with improper weight loss and dehydration include:

- **Decreased Muscle Strength and Endurance:** Decreased blood flow to muscles makes them work less well.
- **Decreased Heart and Cardiovascular Function:** The heart works harder and less efficiently.
- **Reduced Energy Utilization, Nutrient Exchange and Acidosis:** With decreased blood flow to tissues, nutrients don't get delivered, and the body's waste products do not get removed as well. A buildup of acid occurs which changes cells' functions in the body.
- **Heat Illness:** This takes on four forms: heat cramps, heat syncope (loss of consciousness), heat exhaustion, and heat stroke (which may be fatal). Dehydration results in decreased blood flow to the skin and muscles. This is followed by decreased ability to regulate body temperature. The ability to sweat becomes impaired and core body temperature can rise. This increases the threat of all of these to poorly hydrated athletes doing strenuous workouts.
- **Decreased Kidney Function:** Dehydration leads to decreased kidney blood flow and decreased kidney function. This contributes to the problems listed in the points here, in addition to decreased urine output, concentrated urine, and leakage of protein into the urine. (It is not known if these changes can result in permanent kidney damage.)
- **Electrolyte Problems:** Decreased kidney function results in imbalances of electrolytes such as unhealthy increases in potassium and sodium.
- **Mood Swings and Mental Changes:** All of the above contribute to increased mood swings, poor concentration and focus, disorientation and other mental changes.
- **Eye Trouble:** Dehydration can cause blurred vision and dry eyes.
- **Increased Risk of Brain Injury:** There are likely increased risks of brain bleeding and concussion.

Do not:

- Don't use extreme methods for making weight such as excessive heat methods (rubberized suits, steam rooms, saunas), excessive intense bouts of exercise, vomiting, laxatives and diuretics.
- Don't use dehydration as a mainstay of making weight. In addition to the above, it puts you at risk of improper rehydration techniques — when, in reality, proper rehydration takes several hours to days. (Many cases of intravenous fluids being used for rehydration after weigh-ins have been reported — this is a doping violation with several organizations.)

Do:

- Commit to a year-round proper diet and training for proper weight control and body composition.
- By maintaining your weight year-round near an appropriate competition weight and not competing in a weight class outside your appropriate weight class you will help avoid large swings in weight
- Maintain a good state of hydration by drinking fluid throughout the day and staying hydrated during workouts.

Follow nutritional programs that meet your needs for adequate amounts of calories from a balanced diet high in healthy carbohydrates, the minimum requirement of fat, and appropriate amounts of protein.