



MA Tour

Tournament Rule Book
2025 Season

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1.0 Basic MA Tour Rules

1.1 COMPETITOR

Each competitor must present him/herself to the referee suitably attired with proper uniform and equipment and physically prepared to compete. If he/she is not prepared to compete as deemed by the center official, the competitor may be penalized. **Refer to Section V.17, Sparring Penalties– Delay of Time or Section VII.2, Forms and Weapons- Delay of Time Penalties.**

1.2 COMPETITOR RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the competitor to know the rules and be ready for competition when called to do so. He/she must be suitably attired, weighed-in (sparring) and at the appropriate ring when competition begins. If the competitor is not at his/her ring ready to compete when competition begins, he/she will not be able to compete (see delay of time rule). If a competitor leaves the ring after the competition begins and is not present when they are up next to compete, he/she will be disqualified (see delay of time rule in penalty section of Sparring or Forms and Weapons).

1.3 LEGAL AGE RULE

All competitors have the option of competing in the same division all year long for rating purposes, by establishing a legal competition age for the year. The age a competitor is on June 30th of the current competition year is their legal competition age for that year. They can compete all year at that age, so he/she can earn rating points in one age division all year. A competitor can always compete in his/her chronological age if they chose.

A competitor who will turn 18 on or before June 30th of the competition season, may compete the entire season as an adult in the 18+ division. The competitor still has the option to compete in the 16–17-year-old divisions until his or her birthday. However, once the competitor turns 18, he or she must compete as an adult in the 18+ division.

New for 2025: 17 year old competitors may choose to compete in the 18+ forms and weapons divisions for the entire year, even if their birthday is after the June 30th cut- off date. Once a competitor moves up to the 18+ forms and weapons divisions they can't switch back to the 16- 17 divisions and their ratings points can't be transferred or moved once they compete in the 18+ division. A 17 year competitor could compete in the 18+ forms and weapons divisions and the 16-17 sparring divisions at the same tournament since sparring is excluded from this new rule update. (A competitor whose 18th birthday occurs in the calendar competition year may choose to compete in the 18+ Forms and Weapons divisions for the entire year. If a competitor does not move up early, he/she must move up as soon as he / she turns 18.) *If a competitor chooses to move up to the 18+ Forms and Weapons divisions while they are 17, it is the competitors responsibility to be present at all of their divisions. Divisions as well as divisional and overall grands will not be held for competitors competing in another age group.

All adult Black Belt sparring competitors 30+ have the option to compete down in age. (Example: Any 30+, 40+, 50+ and 60+ year old competitor can compete in any younger adult Black Belt Division.) A competitor cannot compete up in an age division.

An adult competitor can choose to compete down in age. If the competitor elects to compete in more than 1 age group / separate ages for Sparring, Forms or Weapons, they must be aware that divisions cannot be held for them to move from one age group to another. They will be subject to disqualification if they cannot make their divisions on time. They should always check the tournament scheduling before committing to compete in more than one age group.

1.4 PROOF OF AGE RULE

All competitors must have a proof of age document. If there is a legitimate reason to question a competitor's age, he/she must present a proof of age (birth certificate, driver's license, passport, or other acceptable documents) to prove his/her age.

1.5 RANK RULE

A competitor must compete at the highest belt level they have earned in the martial arts. A competitor can never compete in a division of which he/she had not rightfully earned that rank. Once a competitor competes as a black belt legally, he/she must always compete as a black belt. A competitor can never compete in a lower belt division than the level of belt he/she has earned in the Martial Arts.

1.6 LATE ENTRIES

If a competitor arrives late (the division is ready to start, but the 1st competitor has not started), the late entry must compete first, including seeds.

Once a division has started (the first competitor has started his/her form/weapon routine, or the first divisional sparring match has started) no competitor/s can be added to that division. BE ON TIME!

The only exception to this rule is the "Fairness Rule" at the end of this rules summary.

Late Entry Definition: a competitor arrives at the ring after the last call for the division has been made, the seeds selected, the shuffle has been made, the order of competition has been determined and the 1st competitor has not started

1.7 WEIGHING-IN

It is mandatory for all adult sparring competitors– who are in weighed divisions– to weigh in before competition. Only one official weigh-in is required. All competitors must compete in his/her weight division. A competitor cannot compete up or down in another weight division for which he/she has not made the proper weight. It is the responsibility of the tournament personnel to weigh and properly record the competitor's weight. If a competitor is caught falsifying their weight, they will be disqualified.

If a competitor fails to weigh-in, prior to their division competition starting, he/she is subject to the Delay of Time Penalty. It is the responsibility of the competitor to be officially weighed-in prior to their division.

1.8 RING REQUIREMENTS

The size of the fighting and forms black belt rings shall be approximately 20' x 20'.

- a) Starting lines should be marked approximately six feet apart in the middle of the ring.
- b) Additionally, each ring should be posted with a ring number visible to competitors, officials, and medical personnel from across the floor.
- c) Under black belt rings can be a minimum of 16' to a maximum of 20'.

1.9 FAIRNESS RULE

If a question arises that is not completely covered by this rule book, the official rules arbitrator may at his/her discretion, overrule, modify, or change a delineated rule if he/she believes that enforcing such a rule would result in an inherent unfair outcome to a competitor. However, the rules arbitrator should overrule, modify, or change a delineated rule only in extreme cases.

1.10 DIVISIONAL, TOURNAMENT, AND ORGANIZATIONAL DISQUALIFICATION

These disqualifications go from least severe to the most severe. The severity of the infraction is the basis of which disqualification is warranted. What is warranted is voted upon by the MA Tour Board of Directors. Play by the rules and always show good sportsmanship.

1.11 SPLITTING A DIVISION

Any forms/weapons division with 24 or more competitors will be split into 2 divisions. An elimination division and a final division. The top 10 rated competitors present will be split into a group and will not compete in the elimination round. If less than 10 rated competitors are present, use only the rated competitors that are present. The remaining competitors will compete in an elimination round. The order of competition for the elimination round will be done by random draw. The top 4 finishers in the elimination round advance to compete against the rated competitors in the final round. MA Tour seeding will apply to the final round per MA Tour seeding rules. MA Tour points are only awarded in the final round.

1.12 CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

NEW and effective immediately- For any competitor that suffers or is diagnosed with a concussion at a MA Tour tournament, there will be a mandatory 30 day minimum time for that athlete to return to competition and or register, enter and compete at any MA Tour tournament

2.0 Equipment And Uniforms

2.1 UNIFORM

All competitors must wear a complete (top and bottom) traditional or professional sport karate (Kung Fu, Tae Kwon Do, etc.) uniform in a good state of repair. The appropriate color belt or sash must be worn in competition.

- a) **Sparring:** All sparring uniforms must have sleeves that reach at least to the middle of the biceps. No T-shirts, sweats, tank tops or unapproved shoes are allowed in the sparring divisions (see sparring foot pads).
- b) **Forms & Weapons:** T-shirts, tank tops and sweatshirts are allowed in forms if they are part of the competitor's official school uniform. Uniforms in the forms and weapons divisions are allowed more liberties because a form routine is not one-on-one competition where the uniform could cause a decisive disadvantage or advantage to a competitor. Removal of the uniform top is allowed if the removal is considered relevant to the artistic expression or safety of the competitor. Shoes may be worn in forms competition if they do not damage or mark the competition floor.

2.2. REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Under Belt : MA Tour approved headgear; hand and foot pads, mouthpieces, groin cups (for male competitors only) are mandatory for all competitors in sparring divisions.

Black Belt: MA Tour approved headgear; hand and foot pads, elbow pads, shin guards, mouthpieces, groin cups (for male competitors only) are mandatory for all competitors in sparring divisions.

The competitor's equipment will be checked and if it is deemed unsafe or does not fit properly, he/she will be asked to change the equipment before he/she can compete. Insufficiently padded gloves, foot, chest and head gear will not be allowed. Equipment must be in a good state of repair and must be free of heavy taping, tears or any other repairs that may cause injury.

If a competitor is missing required equipment or the equipment does not meet MA Tour requirements, as it is deemed unsafe, prior to their division being called for competition, he/she is subject to the Delay of Time Penalty and may be disqualified, it is the responsibility of the competitors to have the proper equipment.

The tournament's official rules arbitrator ultimately determines the approval or denial of the equipment.

- a) **HandPads:** A soft padded surface must cover the fingers, wrist and any striking surface of the hand.
- b) **Foot Pads:** A soft padded surface must cover the instep, sides, toes, ankle and back of the heel of the foot. The bottom of the foot does not have to be padded. If sparring

shoes are used in all sparring divisions, a soft padded bottom is required. Hard bottoms are NOT Allowed.

- c) **Headgear:** The front, sides, and back of the head must be covered by a soft padded surface.
 - d) **Chest Guard:** Rib/chest guards are highly recommended for additional safety to all sparring competitors
 - e) **Mouthpiece:** A properly fitted mouthpiece is required.
 - f) **Soft Shin Guards and Soft Elbow Pads are required for black belt competitors.**
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3.0 OFFICIALS

3.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each ring should have a Center Official, two to four Judges, and a Timekeeper/Scorekeeper.

- a) The Judges call points and rule infractions as they see them. They also vote on disqualifications. The Center Official also calls points and rules infractions but is also in complete control of the ring and ring personnel. It is also the judge's responsibility to assist the Center Official when:
 - 1.) A competitor is requesting a time out.
 - 2.) A coach or competitor rep is requesting a Protect / Arbitration
 - 3.) Competitor is injured
 - 4.) A coach leaves their Coaching Chair.
 - 5.) Check competitors for proper equipment (approved gloves, approved foot gear, mouthpiece, chest protector, cup, shin guards, elbow pads, etc...)
- b) The Center Official makes all final decisions on penalty points and warnings (except for disqualifications) but can consult judges before making their decisions.
- c) The majority vote of the judges and referee determines a scoring point and/or a competitor's disqualification.

3.2 CENTER REFEREE (CENTER OFFICIAL)

The Center Official is selected on his/ her experience and knowledge of the rules and is thoroughly versed in the rules and order of competition. He/she promotes the safety of the competitors, enforces the rules and ensures fair play. To this end, the Center Official:

- a) Starts and stops the match.
- b) Awardpoints.
- c) Makes penalty decisions.
- d) Administrates the voting of the other judges.

- e) Communicates clearly with the scorekeeper and timekeeper; and
- f) Announces the winner of each match.

3.3 ADDED RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE CENTER OFFICIAL

The Center Official also maintains responsibility for the following:

- a) Match starts and ends only with his/her command (not the command of the timekeeper);
- b) Has final decision on any disputes on score.
- c) Has the power to issue warnings and award penalty points without a majority decision:
- d) Canoverrule a majority call only to issue a warning or a penalty point:
- e) Automatically has the power to disqualify a competitor who receives (3) penalty points; and
- f) Has the power to issue time-outs. A competitor can ask for a time-out, but it is the determination of the center official to issue one.

NOTE– The disqualification of a competitor, where disqualification is not automatic, is determined only by a majority vote of the judges.

3.4 NUMBER OF OFFICIALS

2 or 4 MA Tour judges and one MA Tour center official are recommended in all weapons, forms, and sparring divisions (4 or 6 judges and 1 center official are allowed in weapons and forms grand championships). If only two judges and one center official are used in the weapon and form divisions, the Maximum Deviation Rule (See Article VII) will be used in all form and weapon divisions

3.5 CALLS AN OFFICIAL MAY MAKE

When the referee believes there has been a significant exchange of techniques, or when signaled to do so by a corner a judge, he/she shall call out the word, “STOP!” in a loud voice. Calls should be made immediately by the judges, but no competitors shall receive a point until he/she returns to the starting marks and the center official says “JUDGES CALL!” All judges and the center referee should cast their votes simultaneously and assertively in the following manner.

- a) **Judge Sees a Point**– He/she should hold up both colors or hold up one arm, if colors are not being used. At the same time, he/she yells out the word “CALL!” in a loud, clear voice to let the referee know he/she has a call.
- b) **Point Calling**– When signaled by the referee (referee says the competitor who scores the point. If a competitor scores a two-point kick, the officials should hold up or point with two fingers (index and middle fingers). If only one point is being called, the “Judges Call” in a loud clear voice) a judge raises the appropriate color (red or white usually) if colors are being used or points to judge should point with only one finger (Index finger).

- c) **No Point Scored**– An official crosses his/her wrist at waist level or holds both colors down to indicate that he/she believes that a point was not scored.
- d) **Did Not See If a Point Was Scored**– The officials hold his/her hand over his/her eyes indicating that he/she could not see whether a point was scored or not. Indicates the official was not in the position to see if a point was scored. (When using this signal, it has the same effect as saying "no point", but it indicates to the referee, competitors, and fans the reason why you are not calling the point).
- e) **Clash**– Officials make a motion as though they are hitting both fists together, indicating that both competitors scored at the same time.
- f) **Penalty**– The judge waves the color of the offending competitor in a circular motion. If no colors are used the judge waves the hand and arm in a circular motion while pointing at the offending competitor.
- g) **Disqualification**– A disqualification vote is taken separately from any other vote. When a disqualification vote is asked for, the center official will say, "JUDGES CALL". The judges will then hold the color or point to the competitor who is to be disqualified. If the judge does not feel the competitor should be disqualified, he/she crosses his/her wrist or holds both colors down at waist level.

3.6 LATE CALLS

All officials should make their calls at the same time. If, in the opinion of the center official, the corner judges are making a late call intentionally, the center official can disqualify the call and/or judge (noise not allowing the judges to hear the referee and the honest mistake of raising the wrong color or pointing at the wrong competitor should be taken into consideration not to disqualify the call or judge).

if the center official has ruled a judge's call was late and therefore not considered, arbitration cannot be requested.

4.0 PROTESTS

4.1 WHO MAY LODGE A PROTEST

Prior to each sparring match or forms/weapons division, each player may assign a Coach, as his/her Player Rep. A Player Rep is defined as someone who can lodge a protest for participants before, during, or after the competition. For 18+ competitors only, if a player does not designate a Player Rep, that player will act as his own representative. Only the Player Rep or the players themselves may lodge protests. A Player Rep or Coach may not change during a sparring match in order to participate in or address a protest.

4.2 MATTERS THAT MAY BE PROTESTED

a) If the protest is lodged immediately before the match begins:

- The composition of the judges, based only upon a fact-based conflict of interest. For example, coaches or team members of a competitor.
- An improper matching of competitors according to the scorekeeper's bracket sheet. If the protest is lodged during the match.

Protests above that are not made before the match or forms division begins are deemed void.

b) If the protest is lodged during the match:

- An improper application of the rules by an official or Player Representative. II. III.
- An injury to a player not noticed by the Center Official.
- A fact-based concern that the score, as posted, by the scorekeeper is incorrect.

Protests above that are not made before the next action segment of a match or before the next form is run, are deemed void.

c) If the protest is lodged after the match ends, before the next match/form's competitor begins, or prior to the awards.

- An improper application of the rules by an official or Player Representative during the last activity segment of the match.
- II. A fact-based concern that the final score as posted by the scorekeeper is incorrect. Protests above that are not made immediately after a match or form ends and before the next match or form begins are deemed void.

"Fact-based" as used above means that the protest will be ruled invalid unless there are facts, as opposed to opinions or beliefs, presented to support the protesting party's position. (E.g- Judge #2 never scores my player very high or rarely calls his/her points is an invalid protest and will be penalized for delay of the contest.)

Commentary- Video and/or audio recordings CANNOT be used in the presentation or evaluation of a protest

4.3 LODGING A PROTEST

a) A Player Rep may lodge a protest immediately before or immediately after a form is over, directed only toward the Center Official of the ring.

b) Rep may lodge a protest immediately before, during, or immediately after a sparring match is over, directed only toward the Center Official of the ring.

c) Protests may only be lodged during a sparring match when the Center Official has brought both players to their starting positions for point calls or any other reason.

4.4 REMOVAL OF OFFICIALS

If a competitor feels that an official should be removed from a form or weapon division for good reason, He/she must file a protest before the division begins. If a competitor feels that an official

should be removed from a sparring division, he/she may file a protest prior to the start of the division only. It is totally up to the center official and the rules arbitrator to determine if an official should be removed. **The Head Rules Arbitrator will make the final determination if there is "Fact-Based Reason" to remove the judge.**

4.5 PROTEST PENALTIES

If the protest does not clearly fit into one of the above categories, the protest will be ruled "invalid" and will not be heard or decided upon, all parties will return to their positions,

The player on whose behalf the protest conference was requested, will be penalized a penalty point for Delay of Contest with a 1-point deduction for sparring. (See Penalties)

5.0 SPARRING

5.1 ORDER OF COMPETITION

Once the final call for the sparring division is made at ringside and the seeds have been taken out (See Seeding Rules) the division is ready to be set up. If byes are needed, they will be picked randomly (seeds may have first priority for byes– See Seeding Rules).

- a) Competitors / Teams cannot pick whom they want or do not want to fight.
- b) Matches are always selected by random draw.
- c) Allowances may be given to competitors from the same physical school or team that are matched up in the **first round of competition**. They should be separated from each other in the first round ONLY and moved to the upper and lower bracket.
- d) In the 10 and above Black Belt youth divisions, the competitors- boys and girls, should be lined up by height (smallest to the tallest) and split into tall and short divisions.
- e) Promoters may elect to split or not split UBB Boys and/or Girls into short and tall divisions.
- f) Determining tall and short divisions is for safety reasons, not to split the division equally.
- g) A true break in size should be found to determine the taller competitors from the shorter competitors.
- h) Oncethetall and short divisions are determined by height, determine who fights whom by random draw.
- i) The winner of the small and tall divisions will compete in a single round 2-minute match to determine the overall champion for that age group and gender.

5.2 LENGTH OF MATCH-DIVISION / INDIVIDUAL

The length of a match will be two minutes running-time unless a competitor is ten points ahead (Ten Point Spread Rule) before time has expired.

- a) If a match is tied at the end of two minutes, a sudden victory (first person to score a point) overtime period will determine the winner.
- b) At the 1 minute 45 second mark of a sparring match, the timekeeper will shout out "FIFTEEN SECONDS".
- c) All divisional Grand Championship matches are 1 two-minute round and win by 1.
- d) **Overall Grand Championship matches are 2 two-minute rounds and win by 1.**

5.3 WHAT IS A SPARRING POINT?

A point is a sport karate technique that is scored by a competitor in-bounds and up-right (not considered down) without time being called that strikes a competitor with the allowable amount of **focused touch contact** and **focused control** to a legal target area.

- a) **Focused Touch Contact:** the legal amount of contact allowed to certain scoring areas.
- b) **Focused Control:** an amount of controlled force that would have incapacitated the opponent, at least momentarily, if the technique had not been controlled.

Therefore, only sport karate techniques that would have incapacitated the opponent, at least momentarily, if the technique had not been controlled, are considered points.

NOTE: A front punch to the body that does not have "focused control" and a back fist to the body are NOT considered a proper sport karate scoring technique are not a point in MA Tour.

NOTE: A defensive side kick that is not extended with "focused control" is NOT considered a proper sport karate scoring technique and thus not a point.

Any contact that incapacitates the opponent (Example: knockout, causes a concussion, or the opponent cannot continue), will be deemed as Hard Contact and will be a disqualification, unless it is deemed a **No-Fault** contact by the officials.

5.4 NO-FAULT CONTACT

Unintentional contact can occur that injures a competitor, which can be classified as no-fault on any competitor part. It will be a majority of judges vote to ascertain if the penalty was a penalty or if one or both unintentionally competitors caused the injuries. The injury can be declared No-Fault, by the majority vote of judges.

5.5 GENERAL RULES

- a) All regular MA Tour **Light** touch point calling rules will apply.

- b) Out of bounds, falling, or excessive running (as determined by the head official) around the ring will be considered an attempt to avoid competition and the other competitor will be awarded a point. **No warning will be given.**
- c) A competitor is considered out of bound when they have one foot off the sparring area (mat). If the competitor is out of bounds to avoid contact without being kicked out or physically pushed out of bounds, their opponent will receive 1 point.
- d) If the out-of-bound competitor is scored on, with a legal technique, before the center official calls STOP, then the in-bounds competitor can receive a score for the technique and the penalty point from the other competitor going out of bounds to avoid fighting.
- e) If a fighter touches the ground/mat with any part of their body, except their feet or 1 hand, they are considered down.
- f) A point cannot be scored on a down competitor and a downed competitor cannot score a point. If an upright competitor strikes a down competitor or they can be penalized.
- g) A competitor who leaves their feet while in-bounds, must land with both feet in-bounds to score a point.

5.6 CONSECUTIVE MATCHES

Any competitor who must engage in consecutive (back-to-back) matches have the option to receive a two (2) minute rest between each match. The exception is in overall Grands where there is a one (1) minute rest period.

5.7 DOWNED COMPETITOR

A competitor is considered down when they have any part of their body touching the sparring surface or outside the sparring surface except the bottom of their feet or 1 hand.

- a) If an upright competitor strikes a downed competitor, the upright competitor can be penalized.
- b) A downed competitor can be penalized, if they strike an upright competitor.

5.8 POINT VALUES AND WINNER DETERMINATION

- a) All legal hand techniques that score will be awarded one (1) point.
- b) All legal kicking techniques that score will be awarded two (2) points.
- c) All jump spinning kicks to the head will be awarded (3) points.
- d) All penalty points will be awarded one (1) point or more points.
- e) The competitor who is ahead by 10 points (10-point spread rule) before the end of the two-minute time period is automatically declared the winner or whoever is ahead at the end of the two minutes is declared the winner.

5.9 MAJORITY OF VOTES

Points are awarded by a majority vote of all judges. The majority of judges do not have to agree on the same technique being scored, only that a point was scored. A majority of the judges

calling the point must call a two (2)-point kick before two points can be awarded. Otherwise, only one point is awarded.

5.10 LEGAL, ILLEGAL, AND NON-TARGET AREAS

- a) **Legal Target Areas:** Entire head and face, ribs, chest, abdomen, collarbone, and kidneys.
- b) **Illegal Target Areas:** Spine, back of neck, throat, sides of the neck, groin, legs, knees, and back.
- c) **Non-Target Areas:** Hips, shoulders, buttocks, arms, and feet.

5.11 LEGAL & ILLEGAL TECHNIQUES

- a) **LEGAL TECHNIQUES** are all controlled sport karate techniques, except those listed as illegal.
- b) **ILLEGAL TECHNIQUES:** Head butts, hair pulls, bites, scratches, elbows, knees, eye attacks of any kind, take downs on a hard surface floor, ground fighting, any stomps or kicks to the head of a downed competitor, slapping, grabbing for more than one second, uncontrolled blind techniques, any uncontrolled throws, takedowns or sweeps and any other uncontrolled dangerous techniques that are deemed unsafe in sport karate.

5.12 GRABBING

A competitor may grab the uniform top of his/her opponent to score with a sport karate technique for only one second (immediately), after which time he/she must release the uniform. Likewise, the uniform pants may be grabbed for one second to an upright opponent to score.

5.13 SWEEPS

Sweeps are not meant to take down an opponent, but only to obstruct the balance to follow up with a sport karate technique and can only be executed to the back of the **front leg at mid-calf or below**.

- a) A sweep must be deemed a proper sweep and not a kick, to be legal.
- b) Controlled Takedowns and sweeps that are meant to take down an opponent are **NOT** allowed.

5.14 LIGHT TOUCH CONTACT

Light Touch Contact means there is no penetration or visible movement of the competitor because of the contact. A light touch is required to all legal target areas in all black belt sparring divisions. The face shield of a headgear along with the headgear is a legal target area.

5.15 MODERATE TOUCH CONTACT

Moderate Touch Contact is defined as slight penetration or slight target movement. Moderate touch contact may be made to all legal target areas except the headgear, face shield, and face.

5.16 OUT-OF-BOUNDS

Out of bounds is defined as an area outside the designated competition area.

A competitor is out-of-bounds as soon as he/she has one foot completely out of bounds. An out of bounds competitor cannot score a point while out of bounds. In bounds competitors can score on an out of bounds competitor if the center referee has not called stop. Once a competitor is determined to be out of bounds, a point will be awarded to his/her opponent. No warnings will be given.

5.17 DELAY OF COMPETITION

A competitor will be determined to be delaying the competition for any of the following:

- a) A competitor arrives at the ring without the proper equipment.
- b) A sparring match is ready to start, and the competitor is delaying his/her entry into the ring.
- c) A competitor is not present when the match is called to the ring.

The center official will declare a one-minute warning for the competitor to comply with the competition rules. The center official may keep the time him/herself or request that the time be kept by the scorekeeper.

If the competitor fails to comply within the one-minute time a one-point penalty will be assessed. Additional penalty points will be assessed for each additional minute until a total of three penalty points is attained at which time the competitor will be disqualified from the competition.

5.18 SPARRING PENALTIES

- a) **NO WARNINGS are issued in MA Tour Black Belt Sparring.** Penalty points are issued immediately for breaking the rules.
- b) In **Under Black Belts** one (1) warning may be issued (verify with promoter if Black Belts and UBB have the same rules.)
- c) A competitor cannot be penalized and still receive a point on the same call.

A competitor can receive a point for a proper technique and another point from a penalty call against his/her competitor.

- d) If, in the opinion of the medical personnel, a competitor cannot continue because of an injury caused by an illegal penalized attack, executed by the opponent, the offending competitor shall be automatically disqualified.
- e) The injured competitor cannot continue to compete.
- f) A penalty point(s) will be issued if a competitor does any of the following - Note: 3 penalty points is a disqualification:
 - Missing or improper equipment
 - Goes out of bounds three times (unless forced out or kicked out).
 - Falling down to avoid competition.

- Runs around the ring to avoid competition.
- Stalling and/or not attempting to engage the other competitor. VI. Excessive contact, as deemed by the center official.
- Pushing a competitor out of bound, as deemed by the center official.
- Attacking illegal and non-target areas.
- Using illegal techniques.
- Blind, negligent or reckless attacks.
- Uncontrolled techniques.
- Unsportsmanlike behavior by the competitor, his/her coaches, friends, etc.
- A coach stands up or leaves the coach's chair during the match.
- If a coach(s) and/or team member(s) enters the ring, during a match.
- Competitor refuses to leave the immediate sparring area an additional penalty point may be issued.
- Late strikes after call to stop.
- Retaliation strike from a competitor.
- Competitor's equipment that is incorrectly fitted or improperly secured and continues to fall off or requires adjustment. This penalty will be awarded on the 2nd occurrence of the equipment failure. In other words, there is only one warning for equipment failure.
- At the discretion of the center official, a penalty point may be issued immediately, if the center official believes the competitor is delaying without a valid reason.
- Delay of Time - Sparring
- A competitor purposely removes their equipment.
- A competitor, coach, or team member uses profanity.
- More than 1 coach or maximum team members are represented at the start of a match.
- Punching a downed competitor in the head or face.
- Kicking a downed competitor, to the body, will result in a 1-point penalty or a disqualification for kicking the downed competitor in the head or face. Disqualification requires a majority vote.
- A downed competitor kicks an upright competitor to the body.
- A downed competitor kicks an upright competitor will result in a 1-point penalty or a disqualification for kicking the upright competitor. Disqualification requires a majority vote.
- A one (1) point, per minute, penalty if a competitor fails to weigh-in prior to the division being called.
- Protest penalty – losing the protest.
- Continuing to protest, after decision has been made; and
- No competitor, team member or coach may make physical contact with officials.

Once a competitor receives 3 penalty points, they are disqualified.

If a penalty is called on one or both competitors, the penalty point(s) **must be issued** to the competitor(s). This ensures the penalties are counted to determine an automatic

disqualification. For example, both competitors continue to spar after STOP is called. The Center Official calls a penalty on both competitors, a one-point penalty should be issued to both competitors.

5.19 OTHER CAUSES OF PENALIZATION

Any grabbing or pushing an official will cause the competitor to be disqualified. Striking an official will cause the competitor, coaches(s) or team member(s) to be disqualified and suspended from future MA Tour events. Disrespecting an official in any way by a competitor, coach or spectator will result in a penalty, disqualification, and possible suspension from future MA Tour events.

5.20 DISQUALIFICATION

Requires a majority vote by all officials unless it is an automatic disqualification.

- a) **Non-Competing Penalty:** If in the majority opinion of the officials, it is considered that one or both competitors are not making an obvious attempt to compete in the sparring match in the true spirit of competition, one or both competitors will be penalized and if it continues, will be disqualified.
- b) **Wrong Division:** If any competitor competes in a division he/she does not qualify to compete in due to age, weight, rank, gender, style, etc., he/she will be disqualified.

5.21 COACHING

The luxury of having a coach is something that most competitors do not have access to. Therefore, it sometimes can become an unfair advantage over a competitor who does not have a coach. The rules are made and enforced so no one competitor has an advantage or disadvantage over another competitor. Therefore, coaching is allowed but only under the following guidelines:

- a) A **Coach** is defined as anyone who is trying to help one competitor in any way. A coach could be but is not limited to a friend, parent, teammate, or an official coach. Competitors or teams may have a coach or coaches but only one **designated** coach at a time.
- b) Only the designated coach at the time of a protest and arbitration can speak on behalf of the player.
- c) Coaches may be changed from one fight to another but if a change is made the Center Official must be notified of the change for it to be **official**.
- d) The **designated** coach must stay seated in the designated coaching chair anytime a match is in progress. It is the responsibility of the promoter to provide two chairs at each ring during sparring.
- e) A coach may stand before a match is started, between rounds, during timeouts and once the sparring match is over.
- f) **Coaching Penalty:** If a coach leaves his/her chair, during a sparring match, a penalty point will be awarded to the opposing competitor/team for the first, second and third

time it occurs. A flag or other tool will be provided, at the coach's chair, to throw into the ring to call for a judgment or protest. However, if the center official has ruled a judge's call was late and therefore not considered, arbitration cannot be requested. On the 3rd occurrence in any one round the coach and coach's competitor will be disqualified.

- g) Penalty points on coaches are issued on the coach's player. In team events, the penalty point does not continue to the next team member.
- h) Since the coach and player are considered the same as far as penalties go, if a player already has a penalty point and the coach receives 2 penalty points for standing, etc. the player is automatically disqualified because 3 penalty points were received in one round.
- i) Just like a player, coaches can be penalized or disqualified for unsportsmanlike behavior. If a coach is disqualified, they can be replaced.
- j) Never, at any time, can a coach enter the ring without the referee's permission.
- k) No abusive, violent, unsportsmanlike, or overzealous coaching.
- l) Coaches can never, at any time, interfere with the proper running of the ring or the decisions of the judges. The center official can issue a penalty to a competitor for each time his/her coach is interfering with a match or disrupting fair play between contestants. A referee can ask for a disqualification of a competitor but requires a majority vote of all judges.
- m) A coach's chair must be provided. The coach must stay in the chair during the match. A coach's player can be penalized during a match if they leave the chair without permission of the head judge. (1 point penalty each infraction)The head judge determines the severity of the penalty based on the coach's conduct.
- n) There are no coaches allowed in the ring for forms or weapons.

5.22 INJURED COMPETITOR

- a) The promoter or his/her designee has the final determination if a competitor may NOT continue, with NO exceptions.
- b) Everyone except the medic, competitor, the center official and one coach will be removed from the immediate area to allow the medic to determine the extent of the injury.
- c) No one may discuss the injury with the medic, except the competitor and parent/legal guardian. It is the responsibility of the center official to control the other/outside conversation and may issue a penalty if:
 - Team member(s) or coach(s) will not leave the immediate area.
 - Attempts to discuss the competitors' injury or ability to continue, with the medic, unless the input is requested by the medic.

- d) If a medic determines a competition cannot continue; either immediately or in a post-injury review, the following steps are mandatory:
- Competitor and Coach is informed the competitor cannot continue;
 - Tournament Promoter and staff are notified competitor cannot continue and why; and
 - If an online system capability is available, competitor entry into other events at the tournament is pulled or flagged / indicator in the system set. Once the indicator is set, the competitor cannot continue at the event or register for future events until the competitor has submitted documentation that has been cleared by a medical individual.
 - If a manual system is being used, all rings, where the competitor can compete, must be notified the competitor is eligible to compete.
 - If it is deemed by the medic, promoter, or his/her designee that a competitor cannot continue in competition for any reason, the competitor is not permitted to compete in any other divisions or events for the duration of the tournament.
 - If a competitor is knocked out or there is suspicion of a concussion, the promoter or his/her designee has the right to disqualify the competitor from competition for the duration of the tournament.
- e) A competitor is injured, not due to a penalty, they are allowed 4 minutes to determine if they can continue, the time starts immediately. The time may be extended two additional minutes, once the medic reaches the competitor. It is the center official's responsibility to communicate with the medic and determine if additional time will be allowed. The center official must then inform the scorekeeper who is keeping up with the time of the delay. A medic can always request an extension time to properly determine if the competitor can continue.
- The maximum time that can be allocated to determine if a competitor can continue is 8 minutes. If the medic requests an extended length of time, due to an injury and is officially allowed, it is recommended, if possible, to move to the next match while the injured competitor is recuperating.
- After the next match is complete, if the competitor is not able to continue as deemed by the medical personnel he or she is finished for that division.
- The timekeeper must record the score and time remaining to properly restart the match.
- f) If it is determined the injured competitor cannot continue, due to a penalty, as determined by center referee and judges, the following applies
- The uninjured competitor is **disqualified**.
 - The injured competitor cannot continue to compete; and
 - If the match was for 1st and 2nd place (or any Grand level), the uninjured competitor will be declared the winner.
- g) If a competitor cannot continue because of an injury, where there is **no penalty** call, the uninjured competitor will be declared the winner.

If something happens in any MA Tour sparring competition that cannot be answered by the rules stated, the “MA Tour Fairness Rule” will come into play. As an example – the failure of a tournament medic to arrive prior to the expiration of the 4-minute rule.

5.23 EXCESSIVE INJURIES

On the third request for an injury timeout, the competitor will NOT be allowed to continue. The Referee and Judges will follow normal protocol to see if the injury was the result of an illegal technique.

5.24 TIME-OUTS

A request to stop the time can only be requested by the competitor in the ring. A coach may NOT request the timeout and can be penalized.

The center official, at their discretion, may allow a timeout or elect to disregard the request.

If the center official has ruled a judge's call was late and therefore not considered, arbitration cannot be requested.

5.25 YOUTH OPEN WEIGHT DIVISIONS

- a) Only offered for Black Belts youth competitors.
- b) Boys and Girls will be separated.
- c) Division will not be separated into small and tall.
- d) Divisions offered are 11 and under, 12 to 14, and 15 to 17; and
- e) Requires standard Youth equipment, contact levels, and seeding.

Order of competitors will be randomly selected; however, consideration will be given to competitors from the same team or same physical school. Teammates should be separated into the upper and lower brackets when possible.

6.0 TEAM SPARRING

6.1 TEAM DIVISIONS

- a) 3-Man 18+ Team Sparring (Max 4 Team Members)
- b) 2-Women 18+ Team Sparring (Max 3 Team Members)
- c) 3-Boy Youth Sparring Teams (one 13 & younger, one 14-15, one 16-17)
- d) 2-Girl Youth Sparring Teams (one 13 & younger, one 14-17)
- e) 3-Man 30+ Team Sparring (one 30+, one 40+, one 50+)
- f) 2-Women 30+ Team Sparring (one 30+, one 40+)

6.2 ADULT TEAMS

When teams are called to the sparring surface (mat), only the 3 or 4 male competitors and 1 coach or 2 or 3 women competitors and 1 coach can appear on the mat. All other team members and coaches must remain off the mat and/or sparring area. It is a penalty point to bring extra competitors or coaches.

A team may only declare 3 or 4 male team competitors per event/tournament or 2 or 3 female team competitors. A team may declare a team member who has not arrived. A team **may not** declare a 5th competitor for men or a 4th for women at any event/tournament.

If Team Sparring is an event at the night-time final or moved to a new ring during eliminations, it is the Promoter's responsibility to ensure each team card, of the teams competing, is moved to the new ring and/or with the documentation for the night-time finals.

Competitors must be 18 years old or older (MA Tour Age Rule). No youth competitor can participate in adult sparring competition.

- a) Teams must submit a roster for their team to MA Tour at the time a new team is formed to earn points and use their seed. The roster can be any number of competitors.
- b) Teams are allowed to add a new member to their team. They must submit the new member to MA Tour to earn points and use their seed.
- c) A team may pick up and use competitor/competitors that are not listed on their roster at any event/tournament. However, they will not earn any points or be allowed to use their seed.
- d) Prior to the start of the division, all eligible team members must be declared by listing those team members in the electronic registration system.
- e) Once the division has started, no team members may be added to the team roster for that tournament.
- f) A team may have multiple coaches but only one coach can be designated to coach at one time. The coach will be required to sit in a chair and follow the rules for coaching.
- g) All team competitors, 3 or 4 for men, 2 or 3 for women, must be listed on the card or in the electronic scoring system and submitted at the ring prior to the start of the division. It is the responsibility of the promoter to provide the team cards, if electronic registration is not used, for competition.
- h) When teams are called to the sparring surface (mat), only the 3 or 4 male competitors and 1 coach or 2 or 3 women competitors and 1 coach can appear on the mat. All other team members and coaches must remain off the mat and/or sparring area.

6.3 TEAM MEMBERS

Since there are only 3 individual team rounds for men and 2 individual team rounds for women, a men's team that has 4 members and a women's team that has 3 members have an additional member. The additional member can be used at any time.

Any player on a 4-man team or a 3-woman team can be used equally but can only fight once in a team round (**Exception:** see ties and overtime period).

The additional member can be used as a strategy in any round during a match, but the 4 men team members and 3 women team members must be declared when the teams are called to the mat, prior to the start of the first team round. The competitors/members must match the names presented on the team card, at the start of the competition.

After the start of the team's first round, only the team members that are declared can be used in any additional rounds at a single tournament. A specific member does not have to be named as the substitute since any 4 members on men's teams and any 3 members on women's teams can be used equally in the 3 men fights and 2 women fights.

6.4 SENIOR AND JUNIOR SPARRING TEAMS

A coin flip will determine which team will send an initial competitor and the other team must send a matching age competitor.

Where ages are different, the appropriate ages must be matched together (Exceptions below.)

- a) Junior 3-Boy Sparring Teams and Junior 2-Girl Sparring Teams
- b) A younger age category competitor can compete up 1 age category older (EXAMPLE – A 13 & younger age category competitor can compete up into the 14-15 age category and/or a 14-15 age category competitor can compete up into the 16-17 team age category). Same for Girl's age categories.
- b) Senior Sparring Teams
- c) An older age category competitor can compete down in a younger age category, but a younger age category competitor cannot compete up into an older age category.

6.5 TEAM MATCH RULES

- a) A flip of a coin will determine who sends out the first competitor. The winner of the coin flip can decide to send the first competitor or have the other team send out first. After the first competitors, the teams then alternate who must send out a fighter first to be matched by the other team.
- b) All matches are 2 minutes.
- c) The competitors who earn a 10 point spread or is ahead at the end of 2 minutes are declared the winner of the first 2 matches (first match only in 2 –women teams). If either or both first 2 matches end in a tie, they remain tied. No run-off, of ties, in the first 2 matches (or match 1 for 2-women)
- d) The final match is a total points match using the full 2 minutes.
- e) The team with the most accumulated points wins.
- f) If at the end of the final match the accumulated score is a tie, overtime is required to determine the winner.
- g) In overtime, a coin toss will determine who will send out a fighter to finish the match. The winner of the coin flip can decide to send out first or have the other team send out first.

6.6 TEAM COACHES

Refer to the Coaches section.

6.7 INJURY TO TEAM MEMBER(S)

Standard injury protocol as defined in **Sections Injured Competitor and Excessive Injuries apply.**

Any declared Team Member, who has not completed during the match, can replace an injured competitor that cannot continue during a match. If this happens, the injured competitor cannot be used again in the team event at that tournament. (If it is considered by the officials, with great certainty, that a fighter is faking an injury for any reason the fighter can be disqualified). See Section - Disqualified Competitors).

- a) If the competitor cannot continue **due to a penalty**, the injured competitor will receive 10 points because of the disqualification. The competitor who committed the violation will get 0 points for that round.
- b) If a competitor cannot continue, because of an injury where there is no penalty call, and they do not have an alternate to continue the match, the uninjured competitor will receive a ten-point spread unless it is the **last match**. If the injury happens, in the last match, the other team will be declared the winner even if they have fewer points at that time.
- c) If a competitor is disqualified in the last match the other team automatically will be declared the winner of that team match.
- d) If two or more competitors are injured, the team could win the match, but will NOT be allowed to continue in future matches at the tournament.
- e) Once a competitor is injured and replaced by the alternate, the injured competitor cannot compete for the remainder of the team sparring competition.

6.8 TEAM DISQUALIFICATION

- a) Loses all points they have earned in the match.
- b) If during the final match, his/her team cannot win, the opposing team will be declared the winner.
- c) Any competitor who injures a competitor with an illegal technique.
- d) Any competitor, team member, or coach who enters the sparring area, in the event an altercation happens, and accelerates the altercation / does not attempt to control their competitor, will be disqualified. (EXAMPLE – A fight between 2 competitors, if any of the above enters the sparring area and throws a punch or kick, they will immediately be disqualified.)
- e) If anyone refuses to leave, security will be called and a suspension and/or tournament disqualification (Tournament Disqualification is where the disqualified person(s) must leave the tournament site) would be given to that individual or individuals.

- f) If 2 or more members of any team are disqualified in one match, the team is automatically disqualified and cannot continue.
 - g) A disqualified competitor cannot be used in any remaining matches in a tournament team event.
 - h) If a team sparring competitor continues to fight after the match is called to stop, it is the responsibility of the Center Official and Corner Judges to control the competitors. If a coach(s) and/or team member(s) come into the ring during this time and restrict the officials from following through on their responsibility of controlling the competitors, the team or teams can be disqualified.
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7.0 FORMS AND WEAPONS

7.1 MAXIMUM DEVIATION RULE

Since the high and low scores are not dropped when three officials are used in forms and weapons, the Maximum Deviation Rule (See Article VII) limits the impact of a single judge's score to control with his/her high or low score the outcome of placement. The judge's score that is between the other two judges' scores (middle score) is considered the middle score. Once that score has been determined, the other two judges cannot be higher or lower than .02 points of that middle score. If their score is higher or lower than .02, they must adjust their score up or down accordingly to that .02 maximum deviation. See complete Maximum Deviation Rule (See Article VII) for more details.

7.2 DELAY OF TIME PENALTY

A .01 point, per judge, will be deducted from the offending competitor's final score each minute the competitor is not ready to compete. If a competitor is still not ready to compete after 3 minutes, he/she will be disqualified.

7.3 TIME LIMIT

Time starts with the competitor's first step, in the ring. Competitors have used two initial launch points; 1) the corner of the ring; or 2) just outside of the corner. In either case, once a competitor takes their first step, time will start. Should a competitor delay their start, the following will occur:

- a) The Center Referee shall issue a First Verbal Warning to the Competitor by stating: "PLEASE BEGIN YOUR PERFORMANCE."
- b) If Competitor fails to comply with the Center Official's First Verbal Warning, a Second Verbal Warning shall be given by the Center Official stating: "SECOND WARNING, PLEASE BEGIN YOUR PERFORMANCE." A Second Verbal Warning may result in a .05 deduction, per judge.

- c) All Referees must reach a unanimous decision that the Competitor's failure to enter the Competition Ring unreasonably delayed his/her performance prior to any penalty being assessed.

Each divisional form or weapon routine must be four (4) minutes or less. Four (4) minutes is allowed for each form or weapon routine in the runoff grands and or the daytime overall grands and or the Night-Time Finals. Four (4) minutes is allowed for the Traditional Challenge, team form and/or demo routine as a four (4) minutes time limit. Competitors who exceed the 4 minutes will be disqualified, regardless of warnings given by any officials, judges or scorekeepers.

7.4 ORDER OF COMPETITION

Once the final call for the form and weapon divisions has been made at ring side and the divisional seeds have been taken out (see seeding rules) the competition cards will be collected and shuffled thoroughly or, if electronic scoring is used, checked in. The competitor cards will then be drawn sorted randomly (in the case electronic scoring is used, the competitors are checked and sorted) for the order of competition. As per the Relative Ranking Rule, the judges will look at all the competitors before they give their final scores. This rule allows judges to adjust their scores if they feel other competitors that come later are better or worse than the competitors who came first (See Relative Ranking Rule Sheet).

If a competitor arrives late (the division is ready to start, but the 1st competitor has not started), the late entry must compete first, including seeds.

7.5 SCORING RANGES OF FORMS AND WEAPONS

The Scoring range should always be discussed by the center referee and judges before the division starts.

- a) **TIES:** If there is a tie for 1st thru 4th place, the majority of the judge's scores determine the winner. If there is not a majority of judges for one competitor and one judge or more given the same score for the tied competitor, the judge that gave the same scores must be asked to make a decision and break the tie.
- b) All judges must make scoring decisions by giving different scores to the competitors.
- c) Ties for 5th through 8th place are never broken. They will remain tied and all will receive points and awards. If there is a tie and there is not a majority judge's decision and no judge gave the same score to any one competitor, the tied competitors will compete again and be scored again.
- d) **Commentary** - Re-running only applies to ties for first place. All unbreakable [after applying tie-breaker rules (a), (b), and (c) above] ties for 2nd place and beyond will result in the tied competitors all receiving the same placement. The placement positions will be adjusted in the same manner as the MA Tour ratings. For example, if there is a 2-way tie for 2nd place then the positions awarded would be 1st place, two 2nd place awards, and a 4th place award. There would not be a 3rd place award as we have two tied for second, thus allowing a total of 4 places to be awarded.

7.6 PROPS

Props are only allowed in demo division.

7.7 EQUIPMENT ABUSE

It is the competitor's responsibility to not abuse the tournament supplied equipment. Abuse can happen during the normal flow of a match or form routine and is acceptable, i.e. being pushed into a score table. Intentional actions may be penalized. Intentional action may include, but are not limited to the following examples:

- a) Driving/striking downwards with a sword that penetrates the mat.
- b) Throwing any weapon on the mat (placing is acceptable); and
- c) Forcibly pushing a bow into a mat.

7.8 DROPPING A WEAPON

If a competitor drops his/her weapon **during the eliminations**, they will not be scored and will be disqualified. They are encouraged to complete their form but are not required to continue.

If a competitor drops their weapons during the finals, they are not disqualified unless they drop twice or do not finish their weapons form.

If a competitor drops their weapon and it goes out of bounds or hits anyone, they will be disqualified and will not receive any score.

Throwing a Weapon down will be scored, as if the Weapon was dropped.

Competitors who use multiple Weapons may place/toss one of the weapons, or part of the weapon, to the mat, to separate it from the competitor. An example includes a Swords' Sheath. Likewise, a competitor can place their Weapon(s) on the mat at the end of their routine.

Should the tossed weapon leave the competition area (Mat), the competitor can be penalized or disqualified, if the weapon(s) hits another competitor, spectator or the judges.

7.9 ALTERING A WEAPON

It is the intent, of this rule, to enforce the use of any weapon in its original design, functionally, and capabilities, Alternating the weapon(s) in any matter (excluding tape), including but not limiting to the use of magnetic weapons, will be deemed as altering the weapon and the competitor scores may be lower. The competitors must notify the judges, prior to starting their routine, they are using magnetics'.

7.10 WEAPONS / FORMS BOUNDARY PENALTY

A weapon(s) or any portion of a weapon should not exceed the boundary of the ring, including an imaginary line that goes vertically from the boundary floor line upward. Further, a competitor (weapons and forms competitors) should not exceed the imaginary line.

The intent of this rule is the safety of competitors, spectators, and the judges; also, known as the group. It is not intended to be applied unilaterally; rather in situations where the exceeding of

the imaginary boundary could provide a risk to any of the group. For example, the weapon's / competitor exceeds the boundary:

- a) The weapon's competitor goes between or over the group's body or head; or
- b) The weapon's competitor hits anyone, in the group, who is outside of the ring.

7.11 STARTING A FORM OVER

If a competitor starts his/her form over because of a memory lapse or any other reason due to his/her own negligence, he/she may perform the form again.

- a) The officials will score as though there was not a mistake, but a penalty applies – See Penalty section.
- b) The three-minute time limit will start over.
- c) A competitor can only start over one time for scoring.
- d) If a competitor must start over, not due to his/her negligence, he/she will not be penalized on the start over.

7.12 FORMS AND WEAPONS PENALTIES

In the Form and Weapon Divisions, all penalties, non-disqualification, are per judge and will be deducted from the offending competitor's final score

The group is defined as – Another Competitor, Spectator, or Judge that is outside the ring area.

Penalties:

- a) Delay of Time - .05 deduction from each judge.
- b) Exceeds time limit - Disqualification
- c) Props in divisions - Disqualification.
- d) Equipment abuse - .05 deduction from each judge.
- e) Protest penalty – losing the protest.
- f) Continuing to protest, after decision has been made; and
- g) Dropping or throwing a Weapon down:
 - In division – Disqualification
 - Runoff, Grand, or Finals - .05 per judge, per occurrence. On the 2nd drop the competitor is Disqualification. Competitor is only scored if they finished their routine
- h) Weapons strikes the Group – Disqualification.
 - A portion of a Weapon leaves the ring area (Sword's Sheath or second Weapon);
 - Leave the ring area – .05 from each judge.
 - Strikes anyone in Group – Disqualification
- j) Altering a Weapon – Competitor scores can be lowered.

- k) Boundary Rule – without the request to exceed ring boundary:
 - The weapon goes between or over the group's body or head – .05 from each judge
 - The weapon hits anyone, in the group, who is outside of the ring – Disqualification.
- l) Starting a Form or Weapon routine over – .05.
- m) Moves that are illegal for the type of routine (Traditional, Creative, Musical, Extreme) - a downgrade of the form or weapon routine, or upon unanimous vote of the judges, a "no score" as a form inappropriate for the division.
- n) Routine is incorrect for the division – Extreme moves in Creative or traditional forms or traditional weapons routines in the musical forms and musical weapons divisions – a downgrade of the form or weapon routine, or upon majority vote of the judges, a "no score" as a form inappropriate for the division.
- o) Weapon Breaks – separates into 2 or more sections – Disqualification
- p) Weapons Cracks – Does Not separate into 2 or more pieces – NOT a penalty. The competitor may have their score lowered, if, in the opinion of the judges, the Crack impacted the execution of the form or the effectiveness of the weapon.
- q) Traditional Challenge only: - All are Disqualifications
 - Doing a non-traditional form (altered or made up);
 - Kia rule not followed (too many or not enough);
 - Out of bounds.
 - Sportsmanship not adhered to.
 - Excessive stance violation.
- r) Music must NOT contain any cursing, explicit content, and/or racially or culturally insensitive lyrics -Disqualification

7.13 TIE-BREAKER PROCESS

The process for breaking ties follows the same order regardless of the number of judges used for the division or the type of division (eliminations, runoffs, grands). The methodology always follows this order:

- a) **Majority of judges** – this is the majority of the total number of judges in the division; not based on score but rather on who the judge placed higher (most ties can be broken using this rule)
- b) **The Judge Determines the Winner.** This occurs when a judge gives the same score to the tied competitors. The judge who gave the same score must select a winner. If the judge had to manually adjust his or her score due to the Maximum Deviation Rule, then the judge must select the winner based on the unadjusted score. If the judge gave the same score to the two tied competitors, not as a result of the Maximum Deviation Rule, then the judge(s) must select the winner.

- c) **Total Score** – is applied when judges scores are added back in (5 or 7 judges). This methodology is used after the majority of judges' method or the requirement on 1 judge who may have given the same score did not break the tie.
- d) **Re-run the tied competitors** – the re-run would only include the tied competitors who remain tied after applying rules one and two

Commentary - Re-running only applies to ties for first place. All unbreakable [after applying tie-breaker rules (a), (b), and (c) above] ties for 2nd place and beyond will result in the tied competitors all receiving the same placement. The placement positions will be adjusted in the same manner as the MA Tour ratings. For example, if there is a 2-way tie for 2nd place then the positions awarded would be 1st place, two 2nd place awards, and a 4th place award. There would not be a 3rd place award as we have two tied for second, thus allowing a total of 4 places to be awarded.

The following summarizes the methodology that will be used, with the initial total score is a tied score and is based on the number of judges.

If a re-run is required, the order of competitors will be by random draw/sort.

Three Judges:

- a) Majority of the judge's
- b) Judges determine the winner
- c) Re-run the tied competitors Five or Seven judges:

Breaking a tie(s) with 5 or 7 judges will require the dropped judges score (low and high score) to be included to break the tie(s).

- a) Majority of all judge's
- b) Judge(s) determine the winner (breaks ties – if the same score is given to 1 or more competitors)
- c) Total score of all the judges
- d) Re-run the tide competitors

8.0 RELATIVE RANKING

8.1 RELATIVE RANKING RULE

The Relative Ranking Rule has replaced the old "score-as-you-go" system in all divisions at all MA Tour tournaments. Since all competitors run their forms before anyone is scored, this system eliminates the possible disadvantage early-running competitors were subject to, and the scoring advantage last-running seeds may have enjoyed. In addition, it prevents judges from getting "boxed-in" by giving scores too high early on, and eliminates "scoring creep" where judges who start with very low scores gradually increase his/her scores as the divisions progress.

8.2 HOW IT WORKS

For the Relative Ranking Rule to operate properly, all judges must use the scoring worksheets provided in the ring boxes. As each competitor runs their form, they are given a place number relative to the competitor who has already run. (For example, each judge gives the first competitor up a "1" next to his/her name on the worksheet.)

The next competitor gets a "2" if their form is not as good; or if their form is better, they get a "1" and the first competitor gets his "1" changed to a "2". The third competitor then gets a number that grades his form relative to the first two, and so on down the division. When all competitors have run, each judge's Worksheet will have all the competitor's names listed in the order they ran, but with numbers next to their names that reflect their place relative to one another.

EXAMPLE IF FOUR COMPETITORS ARE IN DIVISION

JOHN DOE	II	9.98	2nd
BOB SMIT	IIII	9.96	3rd
KEN BLACK	I	9.99	1st
LARRY JAY	IIII	9.95	4th

The Center Judge will then allow up to two minutes for the judges to assign decimal scores to each competitor based on their relative ranking. Each judge decides how high to score his number "1" competitor – usually a 9.99 or 9.98 in the black belt divisions – and assigns that score to the top competitor. The number "2" competitor will be scored one-hundredth lower at 9.98 or 9.97 (or even lower if the judge feels there was a great gap between the number "1" and number "2" competitors). Number "3" will get a score at least one-hundredth lower than the number "2, and number "4" will get a score at least one-hundredth lower than the number "3".

This is done until all the competitors are ranked relative to each other. None of the top four competitors ever receives the same score, and the top four scores a judge gives are only given once. A judge may give the same score to competitors he/she has ranked as "5" or lower, though it is discouraged unless there are many competitors in the division and giving incrementally lower scores would take the lower-ranked competitors to scores that were undeservedly low. (Judges may prefer to use slash marks rather than numbers to rank each competitor: I, II, III, IIII and so on. By using this method, you do not have to mark out or erase as often, you only add slashes.)

Once all judges are ready, the Center Judge will have each competitor step forward as his or her scores are announced, using the Maximum Deviation Rule.

9.0 MAXIMUM DEVIATION RULE

Divisions with three officials will use the Maximum Deviation Rule. Since high and low scores are not dropped when three officials are used, the Maximum Deviation Rule has a similar effect of limiting the impact of a judge's score that is significantly higher or lower than the other judge's scores. This prevents a single score from being so high or so low that it controls the placing order.

When a form or other performance is ready to be scored, the center official will say "Ready", then, "Check", at which point the three judges show their score to each other only (not to the competitors or spectators).

The center official will then look at the 3 scores to determine which one is the middle score (for example, a 9.92, 9.96 and a 9.95 – the 9.95 is the middle score. The other 2 scores must be .02 from the middle score. So, in the example, the 9.92 must be upgraded to 9.93.

Other than this mandatory adjustment, a judge may not change his score. If no score is more than .02 higher or lower than the middle score, then there is no adjustment.

After assuring that any necessary adjustment has been made, the Center Official then says, "Score", and the scores to the audience, the competitors, and the scorekeeper as usual.

10.0 FORMS AND WEAPONS DIVISIONS

10.1 TRADITIONAL

These forms must capture the essence of classic martial arts movements, displaying the traditional techniques, stances, footwork, and weapons. Emphasis is placed on execution of technique, application of technique, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and focus.

Forms may be unmodified or modified from what a system or school considers to be the original version of the form; however, the performance of the following movements will result in a downgrade of the form, or upon unanimous vote of the judges, a "no score" as a form inappropriate for the division:

- a) Movements that involve more than a 360-degree spin.
- b) Require the body to be inverted more than parallel to the floor.
- c) More than two kicks with the same leg without putting the foot down in between. d) Front or back flips.
- e) Cartwheels.
- f) Front or side leg splits.
- g) Releases of the weapon other than simple hand switches.
- h) or any other gymnastic movements or extreme exhibitions of flexibility or agility with the body or weapon that are deemed in the opinion of the judges to be inappropriate for the division pursuant to the general guidelines set forth here. (EXCEPTION – A Forward Roll is a legal Traditional Technique.)

There has been a great deal of debate among reputable martial artists regarding whether a form or series of moves are outside of the bounds of the Traditional Division. Because MA Tour is a tournament circuit open to all styles and schools (across the nation and around the world) and from which judges are utilized, each competitor must make his or her own decision regarding

whether to include movements, which might be objectionable for the Traditional Division. Just like the extreme and creative competitors, the traditional competitors will try to extend the base of the rules that govern the traditional divisions to gain an advantage over their competition. If there is something performed in a traditional form or weapon division that is not covered by the above rules, the MA Tour Rules Officials will make the decisions if a technique is a legal or illegal move.

10.2 CREATIVE

The purpose and intent of this division and all Creative, Musical and Extreme divisions is to showcase contemporary martial arts that have evolved over the last 30 years. The intent of this division is not for traditional/classical forms/kata athletes to enter in this category. Traditional athletes should enter into the Traditional divisions provided by MA Tour. Entering a traditional form/kata into this category by simply adding a small amount of contemporary movements will result in a significant reduction in score and or disqualification.

A form in the Creative Division must include techniques which originate from martial arts and emphasis will be placed on execution of the techniques, application of the techniques, difficulty, balance, speed, power, solid stances, performance and focus. Quick and continual succession of hand strikes, combinations and spins, spinning kicks, jump spinning kicks, flying kicks, multiple kicks, splits, weapon twirls, weapon releases, and other creative martial arts techniques are required and must be included in the majority of the performance. Athletes will receive scores based on elements that demonstrate and highlight speed, power, and stances that provide solid foundations for which movements can be executed. Scores will also be awarded based on the elements as defined and how the athlete utilizes performance techniques to highlight the elements defined.

In the Creative WEAPONS divisions, emphasis will be placed on the execution of the martial arts techniques specific to the weapon used and to include all elements defined in CREATIVE FORMS as well as weapon twirls, weapon manipulations, weapon releases and the overall use of the weapon. This division distinguishes itself from the Traditional Weapons divisions by rewarding athletes who uniquely incorporate the use of manipulations, releases, spins and body/finger rolls with the weapon into a created routine.

Performance of the following movements will result in a downgrade by the judges, or upon a majority vote of the judges, a “no score” if a form is inappropriate for the division:

- a) Movements that involve more than a 360-degree spin without touching the leg down before continuing the rotational moves and spins.
- b) Movements that require the body to be inverted more than parallel to the floor ie; back flips, front flips etc.
- c) Techniques that are similar to movements found in gymnastics and/or non-martial arts disciplines
- d) forms that meet the definition of a strictly traditional form.

The following techniques are legal in the Creative Divisions and will be scored as any other techniques (difficulty, power, speed, balance, and proper execution):

- a) Butterfly kick;
- b) Illusion kick;
- c) Forward Roll;
- d) Kip Up.

The Creative Division is intended for those competitors who do not wish to compete with a strictly traditional form, and/or do not wish to compete against other participants who execute extreme gymnastic-type movements. Therefore the essence of a competitor's creative form/routine should be more in the manner of modern sport karate including those techniques, movements, and combinations and not simply a traditional form with one or two creative or extreme techniques added.

Over the past several years, it was often observed that judging these "creative" forms in the same division with forms including extreme martial arts "tricks" was essentially comparing apples and oranges, and to be fairer to the participants, these divisions were to be separated. MA Tour has therefore created a separate "Extreme Division", as detailed below, separate and distinct from the Creative Division, thus allowing the Creative Division to include only those forms with movements that originate more inherently from the martial arts systems.

Regarding the Creative Weapons Divisions, it is important to note that any weapons movement shall NOT be a factor in determining whether the weapons form constitutes a Creative or Extreme Form. The determining factor shall be the particular body movements as defined below in the Extreme Divisions.

Consequently, a Creative Weapons competitor is permitted to perform any weapons move (i.e., twirls, releases, spins, etc.), but is not permitted to perform "Extreme" body movements (i.e. flips, any kick spinning greater than a 360, or any inverted body moves, etc.).

10.3 EXTREME

The Extreme Divisions allow the competitor to perform any movements whether they originate from traditional or contemporary martial arts systems or otherwise. However, (1) at least half of the form must originate from martial arts techniques, and (2) the competitor must execute at least one technique that involves an inverted move or greater than 360-degree spin.

Emphasis is placed on:

- a) the quality of execution of techniques and movements;
- b) martial arts skills,
- c) balance, speed, and power;
- d) the degree of difficulty;
- e) and showmanship.

In addition, only those movements that portray a definite offensive or defensive martial arts purpose, or are included to illustrate extreme flexibility or agility, are allowed. The inclusion of other movements, or the performance of a form or weapon from meeting the criteria above for a Traditional or Creative form, will result in a down-grade by the judges, or upon a unanimous vote of the judges, a "no score" as a form inappropriate for the division.

NOTE - Although one extreme move qualifies a competitor for the extreme divisions, it should be expected that an extreme form or weapon routine with multiple extreme moves of good quality would prevail as the winner, assuming all other criteria is met.

As martial arts evolve from the Traditional to Creative to Extreme, this category allows for the integration of techniques and movements from all martial art styles, gymnastics, acrobatics, dance, and athletic disciplines. If a competitor wishes to participate in a division with moves not permitted in the Traditional and Creative Divisions but meeting the guidelines described here, the competitor should compete in the Extreme Division.

10.4 MUSICAL

The musical division is intended to be part of a set of divisions dedicated to contemporary martial arts, an integral part of the CMX trio. The division's purpose is to host a unique space for the evolution of art and the combination of artistry to be evaluated simultaneously with the emphasis on choreography and synchrony to music, musical elements such as tempo, rhythm, and beats, and overall presentation. Therefore, a form in the musical division should be greater than 50% high-speed, contemporary techniques including but not limited to hand technique combinations, weapons manipulations, and aerial kicking techniques. This is not to reduce opportunity for traditional competitors, but to preserve the spirit of the CMX divisions. The Musical Divisions requires a form or weapons form to meet all the above criteria for a Creative or Extreme form, and additionally meet the requirements of the "Divisional Music Rule" below. This rule does NOT exclude traditional forms choreographed to music from our sport as a whole. Using music in the traditional divisional grands and traditional overall grand championships is allowed as a way to showcase this part of sport martial arts.

10.5 DIVISIONAL MUSIC RULE

Music Choreography is defined as the following:

- a) The movements of the form must be accentuated by and performed in conjunction with specific beats, notes, or words in the music. Simply performing your form with the same rhythm or cadence of a song (background music) is not satisfactory.
- b) If sound effects are added to the music, the form should not solely be choreographed to the added sound effects.
- c) Music and sound effects should appropriately match each other, and set the overall mood for each performance.
- d) Overall, all music and sound effects used must compliment the form, and both the form and music should be judged together and viewed as an overall performance, not simply as a form performed with music playing.

- e) Inappropriate words, cursing, language or adult oriented lyrics are not allowed and will result in a disqualification.

Judging criteria.

- a) Synchronization of the competitors form in relationship to the beats, notes, words and tempo of the music.
- b) Degree of difficulty demonstrated by the required Creative and or Extreme moves, techniques, combinations, hand strikes and kicks.
- c) The execution of basics including hand strikes, blocks, kicks, stances and combinations.
- d) For Musical weapons - the manipulation of the weapon in relation to strikes, blocks, twirls, spins, releases and catches.

75% of the competitor's form/routine must have music playing during it. If this is not met, then there will be a downgrade of scores from the judges. If a competitor's music stops playing during their performance, or starts and stops multiple times, resulting in less than the 75% of music playing during the form, then the judges must adjust their scores accordingly with downgrades in scoring.

Each competitor must provide a music player of reasonable and non-intrusive size at ringside to play his or her music, and an attendant at the player who must be present at all times during the performance (unless it is advertised that music players will be supplied). As each form begins, a music volume check must be made, during which time the player attendant will look to the center judge for a nod of approval or a signal to lower the volume. Once this volume is set, it may not be increased during the performance of the form.

If a competitor chooses to use music in a grand championship division to a form that does not require music, the "Divisional Music Rule" does not apply.

If the event promoter is requiring competitors to utilize non-licensed or royalty-free music and a competitor does not have the required rights-free music, the competitor has the option of running his/her form WITHOUT music WITHOUT penalty.

If a competitor receives a "no score" decision by the judges because they feel the competitor's form is not appropriate for the division, the competitor is not allowed to redo his/her form or weapon form in that division. It is the responsibility of the competitor to read and understand the rules of the division he/she is competing in before the competition starts.

10.6 CHINESE

A Form or Weapon routine in the Chinese Division can include techniques which originate from the style of martial arts the competitor represents and emphasis will be placed on execution of the techniques, application of the techniques, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and focus.

The movement of the competitor will determine what MA Tour runoff or Grand the Chinese competitor will compete in. Movement of the following will place the Chinese Competitor in the MA Tour CMX (Creative, Musical, or Extreme) runoff / Grand:

- a) Movements that involve more than a 360-degree spin;

- b) require the body to be inverted more than parallel to the floor;
- c) are similar to movements found in gymnastics and/or non-martial arts disciplines;
- d) Butterfly kick;
- e) Illusion kick; and
- f) Kip Up.

Should a Chinese competitor enter a MA Tour division that is not declared Chinese Division (Musical, Creative or Extreme, the competitor must follow the standard rules for that Division.

Music is not allowed in the Chinese Divisions, as MA Tour offers a Musical Division for both Forms and Weapons.

10.7 AMERICAN KENPO

- a) **Uniform.** Uniforms are black. Association patches are allowed on the uniform with no minimum or a maximum number of patches.
- b) **Stances.** Stances are generally high and they are transitional. There are no super low and held stances. The bow stances look similar to front stances, but the front foot toes are angled inward to the body. Also common are “soft bow/close kneel” stances where the back knee is bent down towards the ground and the back heel is up.
- c) **Kicks.** Kicks are generally low (chest level and below) and snapped. They are not locked and extended. Low kicks and stomps to a downed opponent are common. Additional kicks include Tornado kicks, jumping front kick and jump round kicks, crescent kicks. There are no flying kicks, cartwheels, handsprings, flips or inverted moves, split kicks or more than 360-degree kicks allowed.
- d) **Hand Techniques.** The blocking techniques are a combination of linear (hard style) and circular (soft style). Hand strikes are also a combination of hard and soft techniques with a variety of claws, palms, spear hands, eye pokes, finger strikes, hammer fists, chops, middle knuckle and front knuckle etc.
- e) **Tempo and flow.** There is a fluidity in American Kenpo forms. You will note many strikes and blocks include cover hands that are not traditionally chambered at the ribs/hips like other traditional styles.
The “slapping” is common and demonstrates the extra parry and checking moves in the techniques. There are no locked out or held moves, stances, blocks or strikes.
- f) **Kias and breathing.** There are no set Kia requirements in traditional Kenpo Forms. There is no dynamic breathing or tension breathing as in Japanese and Okinawan Forms.
- g) **Form Content.** American Kenpo Forms are generally made of actual self-defense techniques that are taught as part of the Kenpo belt curriculum.

These forms must capture the essence of classic martial arts movements, displaying the American Kenpo Techniques, stances, footwork, and weapons. Emphasis is placed on execution of technique, application of technique, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and focus.

Forms may be unmodified or modified from what a system or school considers to be the original version of the form; however, the performance of the following movements will result in a downgrade of the form, or upon unanimous vote of the judges, a "no score" as a form inappropriate for the division:

10.8 GRAND CHAMPIONSHIPS AND OVERALL GRAND CHAMPIONSHIPS

All competitors must compete in any RunOff Grand Championship and/or Overall Grand Championship with the style of forms or weapons (not exact form or weapon) they won with in their division (EXAMPLE – A winner of a creative form cannot compete with an extreme form in the grand championships)

If a competitor wins more than one division, they have the option to select the style of form or weapon of the divisions they won.

All competitors may use music in all Overall Weapons and Forms Grand Championships and Overall Grand Championships runoffs.

In ALL Traditional and CMX Weapons and Forms Runoff Grand Championships, music may be used by competitors for their respective division that they won. This includes ALL Traditional and ALL CMX forms and weapons divisions. Competitors must compete with the form or weapon routine representing the division that they won ie: creative forms and weapons and or extreme forms and weapons.

To Compete in an 18+ Divisional Grand Championships, Overall Grand Championships, and/or Runoff in Forms, Weapons and/or Sparring, a competitor must have won an 18+ Division.

NOTE - Traditional Challenge Division. A 30 and older competitor can compete in the 18+ Traditional Challenge and still compete in their regular 30+ Form Weapon's Division.

10.9 WEAPON BREAKS OR AND WEAPON CRACKS

- a) A competitor will be disqualified if he/she breaks their weapon, separates into 2 or more pieces.
- b) If the Weapon cracks, does not separate, the competitor may continue the routine and will not be disqualified. The competitor may have their score lowered, if, in the opinion of the judges, the Crack impacted the execution of the form or the effectiveness of the weapon.

10.10 LOSS OF WEAPON CONTROL IN FINALS AND OVERALL RUN-OFFS

- a) Loss of Control is divided into three categories and penalties:
 - Category 1 = bobble but no interruption of form = .01 to .03 deduction (Discretion of the judges)
 - Category 2 = form interrupted (usually a drop) = .05 deduction
 - Category 3 = if the weapons goes out of bounds and/or off platform, or the competitor strikes a spectator, judge, or another person with the weapon regardless of intent = disqualification

- b) Deductions are mandatory, and each judge deducts from his or her score before figuring their Relative Ranking order.
 - c) If a competitor drops their weapons twice they will be disqualified.
 - d) Score after deductions is subject to adjustment by Maximum Deviation Rule (See Article VII) just like any other score.
 - e) If Category 1 or 2 occurs, a competitor may continue and be scored, or may bow out and not be scored or placed.
 - f) Disqualification for Category 3 is the decision of the Center Official or a majority of other judges. A judges only conference is held as soon as the weapon goes out of bounds.
 - g) A cracked or broken weapon is treated as a loss of control. If the break or crack prevents the weapon from being used as intended, it is a Category 3.
 - h) The rule is used during finals and overall runoffs in all black belt divisions.
 - i) In all regular eliminations, Weapon Divisions, a competitor will be disqualified if they drop a weapon and no points or placement is awarded.
-

11.0 TEAM SYNCHRONIZED FORMS AND TEAM DEMONSTRATION

11.1 TEAM SYNCHRONIZED FORMS DIVISION

Team Synchronized Forms is defined as a group organized to function cooperatively in a joint effort. Synchronized: Working at same time or rate/ Go together or happen at the same time/ Working in unison/ Use of Techniques in a Domino effect

11.2 TEAM SYNCHRONIZED FORMS JUDGING

Synchronize Team Forms will be graded on how well a team is working in a cooperative joint effort with the majority of techniques being executed together, at the same time, in unison and/or in a domino sequence effect.

11.3 TEAM SYNCHRONIZED FORMS GENERAL RULES

- a) Teams are composed of 2 – 5 members; however, 60% of the originally declared team must be present for the team to earn points.
- b) 4 Minute Maximum Time Limit – Time starts when the first team member steps into the competition ring and ends when the team is obviously finished in the opinion of the Center Official.
- c) Empty Hand Forms, Weapons Forms or combinations of both are legal.
- d) All the technical Martial Arts skills are graded for execution, presentation, and difficulty.

- e) Team Synchronized Traditional Forms and Team Synchronized Traditional Weapons will be added divisions. Only traditional based forms and weapons routines are allowed in these divisions. Music is allowed in ALL team synchronized forms and weapons divisions. It is the tournament and promoters option to offer any prize money and or other special awards and championships.

11.4 TEAM DEMONSTRATION DEFINITION

Team Demonstration is given more liberties and freedoms to exhibit one or a combination of Martial Arts Skills. Synchronization may or may not be a part of team demonstration.

11.5 TEAM DEMONSTRATION GENERAL RULES

- a) Teams are composed of 5 – 25 members; however, 60% of the original declared team must be present for the team to earn points. A team may compete and have their score counted, if they are competing with the original declared members.
- b) Additional “extra” member(s) cannot compete unless they are replacing an original member;
- c) Substitutes are allowed, but only to replaced missing declared members and will not be considered as original team members; and/or
- d) Additional competitor(s) cannot compete with a team, except to substitute a missing member. Examples:
 - A team registers its team with 3 members – 2 original members must compete in the team event to be considered a legal team. ii. A team registered its’ team with 10 members, 6 original members must compete in the team event to be considered a legal team
- g) A team may change their team by replacing a member(s) or by adding new members. All changes must be made prior to the next event and cannot exceed 60% or the original team.
- h) 4 Minute Maximum Time Limit – Time starts when the first team member steps into the competition ring and ends when the team is obviously finished in the opinion of the Center Official.
- i) All the technical Martial Arts skills are graded for execution, presentation, and difficulty.

11.6 TEAM PROPS

Props that are considered dangerous or harmful to people and/or to any part of the competition area or that will cause major clean up time will not be allowed. All teams are responsible for their own cleanup. If a team has any question about their Team Synchronize Form or Team Demonstration, they should ask the Center Official before the competition starts.

MA Tour Rules at a Glance

Forms & Weapons Summary

- **Maximum Deviation** rules is no more than a .02 difference between the judges scores.
- **Relative Ranking** rule allows judges to rank the competitors in order 1st place to last place based on their performance.
- **Time Limit** is 3 minutes from the time the competitor enters the ring.
- **Scoring Range** is 9.90 -9.99.
 - Judges must only give one 9.99, one 9.98, one 9.97 and one 9.96 to prevent ties. (The only exception would be if a judge had to change their score due to the deviation rule). Multiple 9.95, 9.94, 9.93, 9.92, 9.91 and 9.90 can be given.
- **Ties** the majority of the judge's scores determine the winner 1st-4th. 5th-8th ties are not broken.
- **Black Belt Weapon Drop** in elimination rounds is a disqualification and .05 deduction in runoffs and grands.
- **Restarts** are not allowed in Black Belts divisions, Under Belts get one restart with NO deduction.
- **Division Criteria** must be read by the Center Judge before the start of the division. The Center must ask the players if there are any questions on allowable moves.
- **Illegal Moves** in the form/kata is a downgrade by the judge or disqualification if unanimously voted by all the judges.

Judging Tips

- **Take Notes** during competitors routines but keep your notes simple to not waste time writing your notes instead of watching. Example: X = a mistake. B a balance issue etc.
- **Pick a Winner.** Even if two competitors are nearly identical in their performance and you want to give them both the same score, **DO NOT**. Find something that elevates one above the other: speed, power, difficulty, performance, choreography etc. You are allowed to use one 9.99, one 9.98, one 9.97, and one 9.96
- **Do Not Watch** other rings or other competitors while you are actively judging. Parents, coaches and competitors are watching you judge and probably videoing you also.
- **Limit** talking, cheering and socializing with competitors and parents while you are judging divisions. This can be viewed as a conflict of interest and or favoritism.

Judges are neutral!

Sparring Summary

- **Time Limit:** All matches are 2 minutes long, including team fights
- **Win:** All matches are win by 1 point and are a 10 point spread.
- **Scoring:** All legal hand strikes are 1 point. All legal kick techniques are 2 points. All jump spin kicks to the head are 3 points.
- **Equipment:** All players must wear Hand, Foot, Headgear, mouthpiece and groin protector (males). Black Belts must also wear Elbow and Shins pads. Face guard and chest guards are optional for all ranks.
- **Out of Bounds:** One foot out is considered out of bounds if it's completely out not partially on the line. Out of bounds fighters cannot score but inbounds fighters can. It's a penalty point as soon as they step out, unless they are forced out (ex: being kicked out).
- **Coaching:** A fighter may have one coach and they must be sitting at all times and have coaches pass -(coaches pass is optional for some tournaments) Before the start of any match corner judges must verify the coach's credentials. Without the proper coaches credentials, the person is not allowed to coach (optional for some tournaments)
- **Warnings:** There are NO warnings with one exception. A point is awarded to the other player when an infraction occurs. The only warning will happen when a competitor stops the fight to fix their gear. The 2nd time a point is awarded to the opponent. They may fix gear quickly while the judges are calling points.
- **Around the Ring:** Do not allow a large crowd to be around any of the rings at any time. All judges must control the perimeter of the ring 3 feet beyond the mat for safety including equipment, chairs, tables and spectators.
- **Center Judge** may call the following Penalty points on their own:
 - Out of bounds, falling to avoid the fight, running to avoid the fight, stalling, pushing a competitor out of bounds, delaying etc.
 - Striking illegal target areas
 - Using illegal techniques, blind or reckless techniques
 - Unsportsmanlike behavior by the athlete, coach or team member
 - The coach stands up out of their chair
 - Late strikes and or retaliatory strikes
 - Profanity by the athlete, coach or team member
 - Striking a downed opponent to the body or the face is a 1 point penalty or DQ with a majority vote.
 - The downed opponent strikes the standing opponent to the body or the face is a 1 point penalty or DQ with a majority vote.
 - Losing a protest and or continuing to protest after losing
 - Physical contact by an athlete, coach or teammate
- **DQ for Penalties:** 3 penalty points equal a disqualification of the athlete. There is a difference between a penalty point versus a regular point awarded for running out of the ring.

Fighting Grands - They are all one round, include the 10 point spread and win by 1 Only the grands on stage at the finals are 2 rounds (the overall 18+ Men and Women's Grands)

Traditional Forms & Weapons

Forms that capture the essence of classic martial arts movements, displaying the traditional techniques, stances, footwork, and weapons. Emphasis is placed on execution of technique, application of technique, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and focus.

- **Techniques Not Allowed** - Creative or Extreme
 - **Techniques Allowed** - all
 - **Judging Emphasis** is placed on:
 - Execution of technique
 - Performance and energy
 - Strong basics including stances, kicks, strikes and blocks.
 - Degree of difficulty
-

Creative Forms & Weapons

Open forms division with focus on the execution of fundamental martial arts techniques. Competitors may use high level kicking/tricking techniques, but may not invert or break a 360 degree rotation when performing them. No gymnastics moves allowed. Traditional techniques and moves are allowed.

- **Techniques not allowed:**
 - Extreme moves and kicks including: 540, butterfly twist, cartwheel, moonkick
 - More than a 360 degree rotation kicks and jumps
 - No inverted and upside down flips and kicks
 - Variations of: butterfly twists, corks, 540, fulls, kicks that rotate 540 degrees or more.
 - **Techniques allowed**, but not limited to:
 - rolls, kip ups, butterfly kicks, illusion kicks, tornado kicks, pop 360 round, jump outside, Fei Long, butter-knife.
 - **Weapons:** all techniques, throws, spins and releases are allowed.
 - **Judging Emphasis** is placed on:
 - Execution of technique
 - Performance and energy
 - Strong basics including stances, kicks, strikes and blocks.
 - Use of the weapon in creative weapons
 - Degree of difficulty
-

Musical Forms & Weapons

Open forms division that must be choreographed to music. All styles are allowed to be performed in this division, and all levels of difficulty need to be taken into account with the requirement of musical choreography being met.

- **Techniques Not Allowed** - None
 - **Techniques Allowed** - all
 - The form must be 75% choreographed to the music
 - **Judging Emphasis** is placed on:
 - Choreography to Music
 - i. The competitor is not expected to hit every beat with a technique
 - ii. Points of emphasis are on
 - 1. Pauses
 - 2. Intro beats
 - 3. Ending positions
 - Execution of technique
 - Performance and energy
 - Strong basics including stances, kicks, strikes and blocks.
 - Use of the weapon in creative weapons
 - Degree of difficulty
-

Extreme Forms & Weapons

Open forms divisions focused on execution of high level inversion & rotation techniques. Judges will focus on fundamental martial arts techniques, but will put additional weight on the "extreme movements" in their scoring. Extreme movements being anything where the athlete is completely inverted, and/or spins more than 360 degrees. Half of the form must originate from martial arts.

- **Techniques Not Allowed** - None
 - **Techniques Allowed** - all
 - **Judging Emphasis** is placed on:
 - Execution of technique
 - Performance and energy
 - Strong basics including stances, kicks, strikes and blocks.
 - Use of the weapon in creative weapons
 - Degree of difficulty
-