



# **General Rules of Ring Sports**

## **Chapter 7**



# WAKO General Rules of Ring Sports

---

## Table of Contents

<b>Art. 1. Officials</b>	<b>3</b>
Art. 1.1 Chairman of Technical Committee	3
Art. 1.2 Referee and Judges	3
Art. 1.3 Referee	4
Art. 1.4 Referee's power	4
Art. 1.5 Health and safety	5
Art. 1.6 Kick-Counter	5
Art. 1.7 Referee's medical check-up	5
<b>Art. 2. Judges</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Art. 3. Timekeeper</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Art. 4. Special Note</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Art. 5. Competition Area (Ring Equipment)</b>	<b>6</b>
Art. 5.1 Ringside	6
<b>Art. 6. Fighter Uniform and Equipment</b>	<b>6</b>
Art. 6.1 Safety equipment	6
Art. 6.1.1 Full Contact / Obligatory safety equipment	6
Art. 6.1.2 Low Kick / Obligatory safety equipment	6
Art. 6.1.3 K-1 / Obligatory safety equipment	6
Art. 6.1.4 Hand wraps (Bandages)	6
Art. 6.1.5 Tooth protection (Mouth-guard)	7
Art. 6.1.6 Breast protection	7
Art. 6.1.7 Groin protection	7
Art. 6.1.8 Shin guard	7
Art. 6.1.9 Foot protection	7
<b>Art. 7. Rounds</b>	<b>7</b>
Art. 7.1 Match	7
<b>Art. 8. Weight categories</b>	<b>8</b>
Art. 8.1 Male weight categories	8
Art. 8.2 Female weight categories	8
Art. 8.3 Age Divisions	8
Art. 8.4 Weigh-in	8
Art. 8.5 International Bouts	9
<b>Art. 9. Special violations of Rules</b>	<b>9</b>

## **WAKO General Rules of Ring Sports**

---

### **WAKO General Rules of Ring Sports / Chapter 7**

Officials, Equipment, Uniforms, Fighting Area, Weight divisions, Weigh-in procedures, Rounds and Special violations of rules.

#### **Art. 1. Officials**

##### **Art. 1.1 Chairman of Technical Committee**

The Chairman of the Technical Committee shall act as a member of the Appeals Board together with the Referee Committee and the Board of Directors members.

##### **Art. 1.2 Referee and Judges**

During World or other international championships, each bout in a ring must be supervised by two WAKO international acknowledged Chief Referees (alternating Observer/Organizer) of the Ring, especially appointed by the International Referee Committee, who can officiate in the ring, but who will not fill out score sheets.

Each bout is graded by three International Judges. The three WAKO judges will be seated away from the spectators and close to the ring. Each of the three judges must be seated in the middle of three respective sides of the ring.

To ensure neutrality, the referee and the three judges for each bout will be chosen by a chief referee of the Ring on duty for that ring, according to the following rules:

- Each official will come from a country and federation different from that of the others and from that of the fighters.
- In no way may two of the officials of the same bout come from the same country, unless it is due to an uncontrollable event.
- An official may not be born or live in a country which is a dominion, colony or in any way dependant of the country of either kickboxer taking part in the bout.
- In the case of an official having changed nationality, he will not officiate in a bout where one of the fighters or other officiating judges come from his native country.
- In the case of the Observer/Organizer of the Ring not being able to apply the above-mentioned directives due to special circumstances, it will find a solution which will ensure neutrality and impartiality of appointed officials, followed by a prompt report to the International Referee Committee.
- In the case of the Chief referee of the Ring not being able, for any reason, to apply the preceding directives, the name or names of the Official or Officials will be chosen by drawing lots, by the Chairman of the International Referee Committee, or any other person on his behalf, for the bout in question.

In the case of international matches between the teams of two or more national associations, a bout could be supervised according to an agreement between the official representatives of the federations in question, provided that the agreement does not go beyond basic refereeing principles set forth in the in WAKO regulations.

Persons in charge of the refereeing or judging of a bout, or a series of bouts, will not at any moment of the bout or bouts be allowed to act as a manager, trainer, coach or second of a kickboxer or team of kickboxers taking part in a bout, or to act as an official in a match in which a fighter from his country participates.

The International Referee Committee or its official representatives, in order to comply with the request of the jury, temporarily or permanently can suspend from his functions any referee who, in their opinion, does not respect WAKO regulations, or any judge whose marks are not considered satisfactory.

Should the referee be inadequate in the course of a bout, the Chief Referee of the Ring will hold him back and stop the match. The next referee on the WAKO international list of neutral referees will receive the necessary instructions to direct and officiate the rest of the bout.

A referee will officiate in the ring. He will wear a WAKO uniform (navy blue jacket with WAKO insignia on it, black gym shoes, gray pants, white WAKO shirt and WAKO bow-tie for qualification and finals).

## WAKO General Rules of Ring Sports

---

### Art. 1.3 Referee

The Referee must:

- Check the safety equipment and clothes of the fighters (unless differently decided by Tournament Committee)
- Make sure that a weakened kickboxer does not suffer unjust and unnecessary blows.
- Make sure that the rules of fair play are strictly observed.
- Supervise the whole of the bout.

At the end of a bout, he gathers and checks the score sheets of the three judges. After verification, he must hand them to the Chief Referee of the Ring on duty. The central referee must not announce the winner by raising the kickboxer's arm or in any other way announce decisions. If a referee (after having so decided by majority decision with the three judges) disqualifies a kickboxer or stops the fight, he must first indicate to the (chief referee) of the Ring the kickboxer who has been disqualified and give the reasons for stopping the fight, so that the Chief Referee of the ring can inform the announcer, who will then, make the public announcement.

He must use three command words:

- STOP when he orders the kickboxers to stop fighting
- BREAK to break a body to body position, after which each boxer must draw back without kicking or punching before continuing the fight
- FIGHT when he orders the fight to continue

In order not to disturb a close fight, the referee should not stand in the way or break in too early. When the winner is announced, the referee must then raise the winning kickboxer's arm. He must indicate to the kickboxer, by appropriate signs or gestures, any violation of the regulations.

### Art. 1.4 Referee's power

The Referee has the power to:

- Stop a fight at any moment if he finds it too one-sided.
- Stop a fight at any moment if one of the kickboxers has received an unauthorized blow or is wounded, or if he considers a fighter unable to continue.
- Stop a fight at any moment if he finds the fighters behaving in an "unsportsman-like" manner. In such a case, he may disqualify one kickboxer.
- Warn a kickboxer or stop the bout and give a minus point or warning to a kickboxer for an offence.
- Disqualify a coach or a second who has broken the regulations, or a kickboxer himself if the coach or the second fails to obey to his orders.
- Disqualify, with or without a warning, a fighter who has committed an offence.
- In the case of a KO, suspend the count if a kickboxer deliberately refuses to withdraw to a neutral corner, or is reluctant to do so.
- Interpret the rules as long as they are applicable or compatible with the fight taking place, or, at a special moment, decide on an action that does not appear in the rules.

If a kickboxer breaks the rules but does not necessarily deserve a disqualification, the referee must stop the fight and give a warning to the kickboxer of a foul. Before the warning, the referee must order the kickboxers to stop fighting. The warning must be given clearly, so that the kickboxer in question understands the reason and cause of the penalty. The referee must hand signal to each judge that a particular warning has been given and clearly show which kickboxer has been punished. After having given the warning, the referee orders the kickboxers to fight. If a fighter has been given 3 official warnings within the same bout, he is disqualified.

A referee may give a caution to a kickboxer. A caution is an unofficial warning given by a referee to a kickboxer for breaking a rule. In order to do this he doesn't need to stop the fight, and may reprimand the kickboxer during the fight.

## **WAKO General Rules of Ring Sports**

---

### **Art. 1.5 Health and safety**

- The referee in ring-sports must use plastic gloves and he must change them after every fight in which blood has occurred.
- At ringside there must be soft paper tissue to be used by the central referee on the fighters
- Soft paper tissue used on one fighter cannot be used on another fighter.

### **Art. 1.6 Kick-Counter**

A kick-counter is a judge who sits in a neutral ring corner. The coaches must be able to see the counter. It is mandatory to use kick-counter in all WAKO World and Regional Championships. It is also recommended to use this in all other WAKO sanctioned tournaments like World Cups or Open Tournaments. The kick-counter reports to the referee after every round regarding any missing kicks. The only responsibility of the kick-counter is to assure that the fighters have delivered enough kicks (6) in each round. In all WAKO World and Regional Championships it is mandatory that the kick-counter use a board with visible red and blue numbers. In other tournaments clickers can be used, though the use of boards is recommended.

### **Art. 1.7 Referee's medical check-up**

Before officiating in an international tournament regulated according to the above-mentioned rules, a referee must submit to a medical check-up in order to prove his physical fitness to fulfil his role in the ring. A referee is not allowed to wear glasses, but he may wear contact lenses. The referee is obliged to attend the meeting organized by the Medical Committee, before each championship.

## **Art. 2. Judges**

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

During the match, he will not talk to the fighters, other Judges or anybody else, with the exception of the referee. He may, if necessary, at the end of a round, notify the referee about any incident that he has missed, for example tell him about the misbehaviour of a second, loose ropes, etc.

A judge will mark the number of points (10-10, 10-9, 10-8 etc) granted to each fighter on his score sheet and in professional bouts and only his decision will be announced to the public at the end of the match.

During the round the judge will use the back of the scorecard to register the number of hits he sees, either by a number or by numbers of lines. Always the red corner is on the left side and the blue corner on the right side of both sides of the scorecard. The points/recorded hits must be tallied separately by rounds.

He will not leave his place until the decision has been announced.

It is mandatory for all judges to use a clicker during fights. It is important to clarify in front of a tournament between WAKO, promoter or Judges themselves to bring this equipment.

## **Art. 3. Timekeeper**

The task of a timekeeper is to keep track of the number and the duration of rounds as well as the break time.

- He will be seated at ringside.
- Ten seconds before the beginning of each round, he will clear the ring, giving the order "seconds out"
- He will ring the gong at the beginning and at the end of each round.
- He will announce the number of the round, before it starts.
- He will stop the clock temporarily, when asked to do so by the referee.
- He will keep track of extra time with a watch or a stopwatch
- If, at the end of a round, a boxer is on the floor, and the referee is counting him out, the gong must ring at the end of two minutes, even if the central referee must still finish his count. Intervals between the rounds will last one minute.

The time must be visible all times for the coaches

## WAKO General Rules of Ring Sports

---

### Art. 4. Special Note

All referees, judges and officials working a tournament, whether on or off duty, are not allowed to take action on behalf of a team/nation as coach or in any other way show favoritism (screaming, cheering like any coach/fan).

### Art. 5. Competition Area (Ring Equipment)

The following ring equipment must be available:

- A standard-size international boxing ring including ordinary canvas (no tatamis on the ring floor),
- 4 ropes (3 ropes in case of "force majeure")
- Pads in all corners (1 red, 1 blue, 2 white)
- straps between the ropes
- at least 2 stairs
- 2 chairs
- 2 foldaway stools for fighters between rounds
- 2 cups and bottles of water
- 2 water buckets
- At the neutral corners of the ring there must be a bag or a bucket tied up in the corner for all garbage.

### Art. 5.1 Ringside

- A table and chairs for the officials
- A sound gong or a bell
- Stopwatches
- Refereeing sheets according to the WAKO model
- A first-aid kit including plastic gloves for the referee to be used at all matches and also soft tissue paper.
- A microphone linked to a sound system. Coaches dressed in sweaters in ring corners will have a towel and a sponge each, to attend to their fighters.

## Art. 6. Fighter Uniform and Equipment

### Art. 6.1 Safety equipment

#### Art. 6.1.1 Full Contact / Obligatory safety equipment

Head protection, mouth-guard, breast protection (mandatory for female fighters), gloves for contact sports (10 Oz), groin protection, shin guards and foot protection.

Uniforms are the same for seniors and juniors, bare torso for men and long pants, sport top and long pants for women.

#### Art. 6.1.2 Low Kick / Obligatory safety equipment

Head protection, mouth-guard, breast protection for female fighters, gloves for contact sports (10 Oz), groin protection, shin guards and foot protection.

Uniforms are the same for seniors and juniors – bare torso and shorts for men, sport top and shorts for women.

#### Art. 6.1.3 K-1 / Obligatory safety equipment

Head protection, mouth-guard, breast protection for females, gloves for contact sports (10 Oz), groin protection, shin guards and **NO** foot protection only ankle protection.

Uniforms are the same for seniors and juniors – bare torso for men and shorts, sport top and shorts for women.

#### Art. 6.1.4 Hand wraps (Bandages)

Hand wraps are used for wrapping the fist to avoid injuries. The use of hand wraps is mandatory. Hand wraps are 250 cm long and 5 cm wide cotton strips without sharp edges. Hand wraps will be fastened on the upper part of fighter's wrists with self-adhesive cotton-base strips; maximum length 15 cm and width 2 cm.

## **WAKO General Rules of Ring Sports**

---

### **Art. 6.1.5 Tooth protection (Mouth-guard)**

Mouth-guards must be made from soft and pliable rubber-plastic material. Protection on only the upper teeth or on both upper and lower teeth is allowed. The mouth-guard must enable free breathing and must be adapted to the competitor's mouth configuration. It is not allowed to use a mouth-guard over tooth correction apparatus (braces, retainers). Using tooth protection is mandatory for all fighting disciplines, in all age categories and in both amateur and professional bouts.

### **Art. 6.1.6 Breast protection**

Breast protection is mandatory for all female competitors in older cadet, junior and senior categories and is mandatory in all fighting disciplines (semi, light, full contact, low-kick and Thai kickboxing). Breast protection is made from hard plastic and can be covered with cotton material. Breast protection can be made in one piece and cover all the chest or in two pieces for insertion into bra to cover each breast individually. It is worn under the T-shirt or under the top (bodice).

### **Art. 6.1.7 Groin protection**

A groin protector is mandatory for all male competitors. A groin protector is made of hard plastic material and fully covers the genital organs to protect this part of competitor's body from any injury. The groin protector can be made as a cup for covering genitals, or for covering the entire abdomen. Competitors must wear the groin protection under their pants. Groin protection for women is recommended.

### **Art. 6.1.8 Shin guard**

Shin guards are made from hard foam-rubber material. A shin guard must cover the shinbone from under the knee to the top of the feet. Shin guards are fastened to the leg by a minimum of two self-adhesive elastic strips. No other kind of plastic tape is allowed for fixing the guard to the shin. Shin guards with metal, wooden or hard plastic elements are not allowed.

### **Art. 6.1.9 Foot protection**

Foot protection is made from special synthetic foam rubber, a compact and soft material which is covered with genuine or artificial leather. Foot protection covers the upper part of the foot (instep), lateral and medial malleolus and heel - all in one piece - with open sole of the foot. They must be long enough (adequate size) to completely cover the competitor's feet and toes. The front part of the foot protection is fastened by elastic strips to the big and second toes. Foot protection is also fastened to the feet with elastic self-adhesive strips on the back of ankle, above the heel.

## **Art. 7. Rounds**

Amateur fights have 3 x 2 minute rounds with a minute break between each round in all WAKO tournaments. Outside a tournament, a single amateur fight can have up to 5 x 2 minute rounds with a minute break between each round. The use of more than 3 rounds must be due to an agreement between the fighters.

### **Art. 7.1 Match**

A coach and a second, who must obey the following rules, may assist each fighter. Only the coach and the second may approach the ring and only one of them at a time may be inside the ropes.

No advice, help or encouragement can be given to the fighter during the round.

A second can give up the fight on behalf of his fighter if he is in great difficulty by tossing a sponge or towel into the ring, except while the referee is counting.

During the match, neither the coach nor the second can be on the ring platform. They must, before each round, remove stools, towels, buckets, etc.

Any coach, second or official, encouraging or prompting the spectators to give signs of advice or encouragement to a boxer during a round, can be suspended from his function in the competition in course.

A coach or a second who violates the rules may receive a warning or be disqualified by the referee for bad behaviour.

## Art. 8. Weight categories

### Art. 8.1 Male weight categories (Seniors and Juniors)

Light bantam	-51 kg
Bantam weight	-54 kg
Feather weight	-57 kg
Light weight	-60 kg
Light welter-weight	-63.5 kg
Welter weight	-67 kg
Light middle-weight	-71 kg
Middle weight	-75 kg
Light heavy weight	-81 kg
Cruiser weight	-86 kg
Heavy weight	-91 kg
Super heavy weight	+91 kg

### Art. 8.2 Female weight categories (Seniors and Juniors)

Bantam weight	- 48 kg
Feather weight	- 52 kg
Light weight	- 56 kg
Middle weight	- 60 kg
Light heavy weight	- 65 kg
Heavy weight	- 70 kg
Super heavy	+ 70 kg

### Art. 8.3 Age Categories

Age divisions will be determined in the following manner at All WAKO Continental and World Championships:

A competitor will be placed in an age division according to his/hers **date of birth**.

#### Age Categories specifications:

- **Juniors Category:** 16, 17 and 18 years old. Meaning from the date he/she turns 16 years and up to the day he/she turns 19.
- **Seniors Category:** 18 to 45 years old. Meaning from the date the he/she turns 18 years and up to the day he/she turns 46
- **Specification during championships/tournaments:** In case of birthday during a tournament that changes the age category, he/she can compete in the lower category until the tournament is over. A tournament period is defined as from the day of the official weigh-in/registration and until the finals is finished.
- **Ring Sports specifications for Juniors:** The date in which he/she turns 18, he/she can decide to be either a junior or senior. However if he/she has competed as a senior at the age of 18 he/she cannot go back to competing as a junior again.



## WAKO General Rules of Ring Sports

---

- **Legitimation:** Positive proof of age will be required at all championships (passport or driving license).
- **Only one weight-class:** In WAKO championships, it is only possible to start and compete in one weight class.
- See General Rules of either Tatami Sports or Ring Sports for other requirements, as health certificate.

### Art. 8.4 Weigh-in

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

Fighters of each weight category will be weighed the day before the competition or in the morning between 8 and 10 on the same day they have been drawn to fight. The International Tournament Committee, or any other WAKO official delegate, will be allowed to modify these conditions in case of an inevitable postponement. The fights will start at least 3 hours after the weigh-in time, or in a shorter lapse of time if the Tournament Committee so decides after consulting with the Medical Committee, provided that the decision is not prejudicial to any kickboxer taking part in the first bouts of the tournament.

The Tournament Committee authorizes delegates to perform at weigh-in. WAKO representatives of any national association may be present, but are not allowed to intervene on any occasion.

Each fighter will be officially weighed only once. The weight registered on that occasion is final. It is permitted, nevertheless, for the fighter who has not reached the right weight during the official weigh-in, to come back within 1 hour maximum. In this case, if he again cannot make the weight, he is disqualified.

Before being weighed, each fighter must be declared fit for fighting by a qualified doctor.

The weight is what the scale reads when the fighter is undressed. The weight must be displayed in metric measures. Electronic scales can be used. A fighter is allowed to fight solely within the category defined at weigh-in.

Each fighter must be in possession of a card with a written consent of a medical doctor as well as the decision of the official in charge of weigh-in.

In tournaments, ring sports have daily weigh-ins, or at least 3 weigh-ins during the tournament. The weigh-ins are done in the morning between 07.00 and 09.00 a.m. All fighters must bring their own national passport as identification.

### Art. 8.5 International Bouts

In the case of tournaments or competitions between two or more nations, the weigh-in shall be carried out by a member appointed by the national association of the organizing country, with representatives of the participating countries present and allowed to verify the weight of each kickboxer.

With each victory, the kickboxer will earn 2 points for his team: with each defeat, he will earn 1 point for his team, except in the case of being disqualified, when no points will be granted. The association of the country which hosts a "visiting" team will provide it with weigh-in scales for the purpose of weight check and a training area when the last visitor has arrived in the town where the match takes place. WAKO referees (in world, international or national matches) will referee each bout: two or three judges may equally officiate if necessary. Each fighter must, before weigh-in, be judged fit for fighting by the doctor appointed by the Tournament Committee. In order to assure a successful weigh-in, the Tournament Committee can decide to start the medical check-up earlier.

### Art. 9. Special violations of Rules

If a fighter, coach or a whole team protests without leaving the ring immediately after the fight, the Chairman of Ring Sports, after consultation with the Board of Directors or the tournament organization, is allowed to disqualify the entire team.

### Note

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