



**Code of Operations,  
Rules and Regulations  
of  
The Competition Rules, Referee Certification  
and Technical Matters Committee  
of  
USA TAEKWONDO**

Enacted: April 26, 2010  
Updated: September 20, 2010



## **Article 1: Name of Referee Team**

- 1.1 The name of this Referee Team is the Committee on Competition Rules, Referee Certification, and Technical Matters of USA Taekwondo. Hereinafter this committee may be called the USAT National Referee Team.

## **Article 2: Administrative Office**

- 2.1 The administrative office of the National Referee Team will be located at the National office of USA Taekwondo (USAT).

## **Article 3: Objectives**

3. This Code of Operations of the National Referee Team is comprised of the following objectives:
  - 3.1. Promote the standardized and consistent application of the USAT Competition Rules for Kyorugi (Sparring) and Poomsae (Forms) by referees at all USAT sanctioned events;
  - 3.2. Define and set standard scoring procedures and measurements to ensure fairness of refereeing and judging Kyorugi (Sparring) and Poomsae (Forms) competitions at all USAT sanctioned events;
  - 3.3 Study, develop, and improve Taekwondo Kyorugi (Sparring) and Poomsae (Forms) competition techniques and rules in the spirit of amateur sports;
  - 3.4 Provide for the selection, assignment, and supervision of officiating Referees and Judges at all USAT sanctioned Regional and National events;
  - 3.5 Develop and enforce a Referee Code of Ethics to ensure the professionalism of all USAT certified Referees;
  - 3.6. Provide for the training and education of USAT Referees by conducting Referee Certification seminars and developmental camps;
  - 3.7. Award the appropriate level of USAT referee certifications based on successful completion of Referee Certification seminars, ring experience and practical assessment of abilities;
  - 3.8. Act as a technical advisory committee of USAT that represents USAT when necessary or upon request;
  - 3.9. Develop criteria for the recommendation of USAT certified referees for participation at International Referee Certification Courses and US International Referees for International competitions conducted or sanctioned by the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF); and
  - 3.10. Develop programs that promote the improvement of Kyorugi (Sparring), Poomsae (Forms) competition, and Referee training.

## **Article 4: Composition of National Referee Team**

### 4.1. Members

#### 4.1.1. The National Referee Team shall consist of the following:

One (1) Chair who will be appointed by the CEO of USAT, plus five (5) Vice-Chairs, appointed by the Referee Chair in consultation with the CEO of USAT.

#### 4.1.2. The Vice-Chairs appointed by the Referee Chair will be responsible for recruitment, education and training of referees within their specified regions, to participate at USAT National Events and such other duties as the Referee Chair may direct. The Vice-Chairs will work under the direction of the Referee Chair.

### 4.2 Eligibility (Referee Members)

#### 4.2.1. Appointed members must be U.S. citizens or residents and currently active as a WTF International Referee or as a USAT National Level Referee.

#### 4.2.2. Appointed members must be currently registered Referee members of USAT.

#### 4.2.3. Appointed members must be actively involved in the support of USAT. An “active” referee is a referee who has worked at a minimum of two national events per year over the past two-year period. National events include the following: Junior Olympics, Senior National Championships, Team Trials and National qualifying events.

## **Article 5: Duties of National Referee Team Members**

### 5.1. General Duties

#### 5.1.1. The National Referee Team members shall be responsible for the training and education of all USAT referees within their specified regions, the supervision of appointed referees during USAT sanctioned National events and such other duties as the Referee Chair may direct.

## **Article 6: USAT Referee Dress Code**

### 6.1. Official National referee uniform

#### 6.1.1. Black suit or black slacks and blazer (no suspenders)

#### 6.1.2. Plain white dress shirt or blouse

#### 6.1.3. Solid red tie

#### 6.1.4. Plain white Taekwondo or tennis/athletic shoes (black athletic shoes are optional)

#### 6.1.5. For all officiating referees:

- No cell phones or pagers in the competition area
- No jewelry while performing the duties of Center Referee

- 6.1.6. Center Referee;
  - Remove jewelry, rings, watches, etc.
  - Remove jacket
- 6.1.7. Corner Judges
  - Jacket may be removed for comfort
- 6.1.8. Official referee polo shirt will replace the white shirt/blouse and red tie listed above at the direction of the Referee Chair, except for any National team trials events.

## Article 7: Classification and Requirements of Referees

### 7.1. Basic Minimum Requirements

- 7.1.1 Current USAT membership
- 7.1.2 Minimum 16 years of age
- 7.1.3 1st Dan black belt certification
  - 7.1.3.1 A red belt member can obtain a provisional referee certificate, which will be upgraded to D-2 when 1st Dan certificate is earned.
- 7.1.4 Current permanent resident of the United States, or U.S. citizen
- 7.1.5 Must be able to competently perform all of the physical demands of a referee

### 7.2. USAT “D-2” Level Referee Certification Requirements

- 7.2.1. Meet all the basic minimum requirements
- 7.2.2. Successful completion of a USAT Referee Certification seminar
- 7.2.3. Successful completion of a USAT Referee Certification seminar written examination
- 7.2.4. Successful completion of a USAT Referee Certification seminar practical examination
- 7.2.5. Satisfactory evaluation of refereeing skills by Seminar Instructor assigned by the Referee Chair

### 7.3. USAT “D-1” Level Referee Certification Requirements

- 7.3.1. Meet all the basic minimum requirements
- 7.3.2. Serve a minimum of six (6) months as a USAT “D-2” Level referee
- 7.3.3. Successful completion of a USAT Referee Certification seminar
- 7.3.4. Successful completion of a USAT Referee Certification seminar written examination
- 7.3.5. Successful completion of a USAT Referee Certification seminar practical examination
- 7.3.6. Satisfactory evaluation of refereeing skills by Seminar Instructor assigned by the Referee Chair
- 7.3.7. Referee at a minimum of one (1) USAT sanctioned tournament\* since promotion to USAT “D-1” Level Referee

#### **7.4. USAT “C-2” Level Referee Certification Requirements**

- 7.4.1. Meet the Basic Minimum Requirements
- 7.4.2. Minimum 18 years of age
- 7.4.3. Serve a minimum of one (1) year as a USAT “D-1” Level referee
- 7.4.4. Successful completion of a USAT Referee Certification seminar which includes a practical and written examination
- 7.4.5. Referee at a minimum of one (1) USAT sanctioned tournament\* since promotion to USAT “D-1” Level Referee
- 7.4.6. Satisfactory evaluation of refereeing skills by Referee Chair or a Vice-Chair

#### **7.5. USAT “C-1” Level Referee Certification Requirements**

- 7.5.1. Meet the Basic Minimum Requirements
- 7.5.2. Minimum 18 years of age
- 7.5.3. Successful completion of two (2) USAT Referee Certification seminars which includes a practical and written examination
- 7.5.4. Referee at a minimum of two (2) USAT sanctioned tournaments\* since promotion to USAT “C-2” Level Referee
- 7.5.5. Satisfactory evaluation of refereeing skills by USAT Referee Chair or a Vice-Chair

#### **7.6. USAT “B-2” Level Referee Certification Requirements**

- 7.6.1. Meet the basic minimum requirements
- 7.6.2. Minimum 20 years of age
- 7.6.3. Serve a minimum of one (1) year as a USAT “C-1” Level referee
- 7.6.4. Successful completion of two (2) USAT Referee Certification seminars which include a written examination and a practical examination while refereeing at a USAT National event
- 7.6.5. Referee a minimum of three (3) USAT sanctioned tournaments\* since promotion to USAT “C-1” Level Referee

#### **7.7. USAT “B-1” Level Referee Certification Requirements**

- 7.7.1. Meet the basic minimum requirements
- 7.7.2. Minimum 20 years of age
- 7.7.3. Successful completion of two (2) USAT Kyorugi Referee Certification seminars including a written examination and a practical examination while refereeing at a USAT National event
- 7.7.4. Referee a minimum of four (4) USAT sanctioned tournaments\* since promotion to USAT “B-2” Level Referee

#### **7.8. USAT “A-2” Level Referee Certification Requirements**

- 7.8.1. Meet the basic minimum requirements
- 7.8.2. Minimum 22 years of age
- 7.8.3. Serve a minimum of two (2) years as a USAT “B-1” Level referee
- 7.8.4. Successful completion of two (2) USAT Referee Certification seminars which include a written examination and a practical examination while refereeing at a USAT National event

- 7.8.5. Referee a minimum of five (5) USAT sanctioned tournaments\* since promotion to USAT “B-1” Level Referee, two (2) of which must include Junior Olympics and National Qualifiers
- 7.8.6. Referee a minimum of one (1) USAT National Event\* per year for two (2) years since promotion to “B-1” Level Referee

**7.9. USAT “A-1” Level Referee Certification Requirements**

- 7.9.1. Meet the basic minimum requirements
- 7.9.2. Minimum 22 years of age
- 7.9.3. Successful completion of two (2) USAT Referee Certification seminars which including a written examination and a practical examination while refereeing at a USAT National event
- 7.9.4. Referee a minimum of five (5) USAT sanctioned tournaments\* since promotion to USAT “A-2” Level Referee, three (3) of which must include Junior Olympics and National Qualifiers
- 7.9.5. Referee a minimum of one (1) USAT National Event\* per year for three (3) years since promotion to “A-2” Level Referee

**7.10. WTF International Referee Certification Course Recommendation**

- 7.10.1. United States citizen
- 7.10.2. Minimum 25 years of age
- 7.10.3. Minimum Kukkiwon 4th Dan Black Belt certification (or 3rd Dan for P Class IR certification)
- 7.10.4. Current USAT “A-1 or “A-2” Level National Referee Certification
- 7.10.5. Serve a minimum of one (1) year as a USAT A level referee.
- 7.10.6. Referee at a minimum of twenty (20) USAT sanctioned events\* within the past five (5) years
- 7.10.7. Attain a superior grade on the last five (5) Referee Evaluations given at USAT National events
- 7.10.8. Approval of the CEO and the Referee Chair

**7.11. Recommendation for Appointment to WTF Events**

- 7.11.1. For WTF-sanctioned events requiring NGB nomination/recommendation, the Referee Chair will prepare a list of qualified United States International Referees. The top 20 (based on evaluation of skills, service to the USAT and participation in USAT National events) shall be part of a rotation to be recommended for international events as determined by the Referee Chair, in consultation with the USAT CEO.

\* *NOTE: For purposes of certification, National Events will consist of the following USATsanctioned events: State Championships, NCTA National Championships, Junior Olympics, Senior National Championships, National Qualifiers and National Team Trials.*

## **Article 8: Sponsorship of Referee Certification Seminar**

- 8.1. International Referee Seminar: The procedure for sponsorship of an International Referee seminar is specified by the World Taekwondo Federation.
- 8.2. USAT Referee Certification Seminars
  - 8.2.1 The Referee Chair will have full authority concerning the operation of USAT Referee seminars.
  - 8.2.2. USAT Referee Certification seminars shall be conducted in conjunction with all USAT National events.
    - 8.2.1 National Referee seminars shall be taught by the Referee Chair or one of the Vice-Chairs unless prior approval from the Referee Chair is obtained.
- 8.3 Local USAT Referee Certification seminars
  - 8.3.1 Any organization wishing to sponsor a local USAT Referee certification seminar must submit an application to the USAT Member Services Manager at the USAT National office. This application will be forwarded to the Referee Chair for approval a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the proposed seminar. The sponsoring organization must either guarantee at least 25 seminar recipients, or must assume seminar instructor's expenses. In the case of 25 or more seminar participants, USAT will bear all reasonable financial obligations of the seminar instructor's travel up to a maximum of \$750.00. Exceptions may be made by prior approval by both USAT CEO and Referee Chair.
    - 8.3.2 Local USAT Referee seminars shall be taught by the Referee Chair, a Vice-Chair or other qualified USAT Referee as directed by the Referee Chair.
    - 8.3.3 When a USAT Referee Certification seminar is held in conjunction with a tournament, those referees requiring evaluations will receive the evaluations by the Seminar Instructor. The Seminar Instructor shall be the Referee Chair, a Vice-Chair or other qualified USAT Referee appointed by the USAT Referee Chair.
- 8.4 Financial Report of Sponsoring Organization
  - 8.4.1 At the completion of the seminar, all finances, applications, tests, and documents pertaining to the seminar must be submitted to the Seminar Instructor. The Instructor will then forward all fees and materials to the USAT National office. Additionally, the Instructor will submit a full report to the Referee Chair and USAT Member Services Manager. The Sponsoring organization must submit a full written financial report to the Instructor, itemizing the following:
    - Total number of seminar participants and seminar fees collected;
    - Total surcharges collected, consisting of the fees that were collected to help the sponsor recoup on costs, if the seminar had less than 25 participants.
  - 8.4.2. Organizers must return all unsold copies of seminar materials, including the Competition Rules, to the USAT Office at the conclusion of the Seminar. Failure to return unused rule books will result in the host organization being charged \$10 for each non-returned Competition Rules book.
- 8.5 Syllabus of Referee Seminar
  - 8.5.1 All seminars must be conducted using the appropriate USAT Referee Instructor's Manual and PowerPoint presentation developed and approved by the USAT National Referee Team.



- 8.5.1 The seminar application and roster forms supplied by USAT must be used for each certification seminar.

## **Article 9: Seminar Fees and Financial Transactions**

### 9.1 Seminar Fees

- 9.1.1 The fee for USAT-sponsored Referee Certification seminars is \$50. This includes seminar fee, Competition Rules book, and participation certificate.
- 9.1.2 Each seminar participant will receive one copy of the Competition Rules. Additional copies of the Competition Rules may be purchased at cost (currently, \$10), if the on-hand supply allows. (Note: These Competition Rules are also available at no charge in PDF form on the USAT website.)
- 9.1.3 All fees noted herein are subject to amendment by USAT.

### 9.2 Financial Transactions

- 9.2.1 The Seminar Instructor must submit all course paperwork, Instructor's Report, sponsoring organization's report, applications, tests, and evaluations, as well as all monies collected from seminar participants and all USAT membership application and fees, to the USAT within 10 working days of the completion of the seminar.

### 9.3 Expenses for Referee Seminar

- 9.3.1 Instructors' expenses: The authorized expenses for appointed seminar instructors will be provided by the sponsoring organization. Reimbursement of these expenses will be made to the seminar sponsor by USAT, providing that the minimum number of participants are registered and in attendance.
- 9.3.2 The authorized expenses include:
- Air and/or ground transportation. Only advance purchase coach airfare tickets will be eligible for reimbursement;
  - Ground transportation. The reimbursement rate will be determined by the current IRS mileage rate when the seminar instructor chooses to drive his/her privately owned vehicle;
  - Hotel accommodations and meals. Where meals are provided there will be no reimbursement for food. Where meals are not provided the reimbursement will be based on a maximum of \$45/day for three meals;
  - Miscellaneous expenses, e.g., parking, tolls, and official telephone calls, not exceeding 20% of the total expenses of the trip;
  - Requests for reimbursement of any item of \$25 or more must be accompanied by an original receipt. It is advisable that all requests for individual expenditures be accompanied by receipts.
- 9.3.3 Additionally, Referee Seminar Instructors will receive a stipend of \$200, to be paid by the host organization upon completion of the seminar. Reimbursement of the instructor fee will be made to the seminar sponsor by USAT, providing that the minimum number of participants are registered and in attendance.

## **Article 10: Issuing Certificates**

- 10.1 Upon completion of each Referee Seminar, the instructor will present a Certificate of Participation to each of the attendees.
- 10.2 The USAT National Office will issue appropriate referee classification certificates to all successful participants within 60 days.

## **Article 11: Duties of the Organizing Committee**

- 11.1 National Championships—The Referee Chair will select the personnel to fill the following staffing requirements:
  - 11.1 Staffing at National events with one (1) to two (2) competition rings  
USAT shall provide full expenses (full expenses is defined as airfare, meals, hotel and honorarium) for the following minimum number of Referee Staff persons:
    - 11.1.1 One (1) Event Referee Chair
    - 11.1.2 The USAT Referee Chair, the USAT CEO and the USAT Events Director will agree on the number of referees to be used at all National Championships and Team Trials. Accommodations, meals, and stipend will be provided by USAT for all referees.
  - 11.2 Staffing at National Events with three (3) to seven (7) Competition Rings  
USAT shall provide full expenses for the following minimum number of Referee Staff persons:
    - 11.2.1 One (1) Event Referee Chair
    - 11.2.2 Two (2) Referee Vice-Chairs where more than 4 rings will be utilized; one (1) for events utilizing four (4) rings or less. These will be appointed by the USAT Referee Chair.
  - 11.3 Staffing at National Events with eight (8) or more competition rings  
USAT shall provide full expenses for the following minimum number of Referee Staff persons:
    - 11.3.1 One (1) Event Referee Chair
    - 11.3.2 One (1) Vice-Chair for every 3 rings
- 11.4 The USAT Referee Chair is responsible for selecting qualified referees to be appointed to officiate at National events based on the criteria for selection and appointment to USAT National events listed in this Code of Operations.
- 11.5 USAT shall provide hotel room (double occupancy), and meals to all referees appointed by the Referee Chair, from the evening before competition begins through the morning after the completion of the competition. (USAT reserves the right to schedule some referees to leave the event during the last day of competition, where practical, and may not provide the final night's hotel room in those cases. These arrangements will be made in advance, with agreement of the referees involved.)

- 11.6 Additionally, it is the responsibility of USAT to provide airfare, lodging and meals for seminar instructors who must arrive at National certification seminars prior to the arrival of the appointed referees for National events.
- 11.7 The organizing committee for each National event has the following responsibilities:
- 11.7.1 USAT, or the local organizing committee (where applicable), will arrange transportation services for all appointed referees from the airport to the hotel headquarters as long as each appointed referee provides his or her airline information by the listed deadline date, and from the hotel to the tournament site from the date of arrival for the competition through the morning after the completion of the competition.
- 11.7.2 USAT or the local organizing committee will register applicants for the on-site referee seminar, and will use reasonable efforts to provide the following
- Venue(s), including a practicum area,
  - Equipment (including electronic scoring systems, video cameras, VCR/DVD systems, projector or monitor, projector screen, etc.)
  - Athletes for simulated sparring sessions (equipped with safety gear) and electronic body protectors, if applicable,
  - One large blackboard (or flip chart)

## **Article 12: Criteria for Selection and Appointment to USAT National Events**

- 12.1 Selection and Appointment to National Team Trials and National events is the responsibility of the Referee Chair and the CEO.
- 12.1.1 The Referee Chair and the CEO will consider the following criteria when making appointments regarding the selection of qualified referees:
- 12.1.2 U.S. Citizen or Resident
- 12.1.3 Current USAT Referee Member
- 12.1.4 Active referee participant at a minimum of two (2) USAT sanctioned events over the past twelve (12) months
- 12.1.5 Physical ability to competently perform all of the duties of a referee through an evaluation system and at the discretion of the Referee Chair:
- Hand/eye coordination
  - Ring agility/mobility
- 12.1.6. Must have successfully completed the most recent written referee evaluation
- 12.1.7 Must have successfully completed a USAT Referee certification seminar or WTF IR refresher within the past eighteen (18) months
- 12.1.8 Demonstrated adherence to the Referee Code of Ethics
- 12.1.9 Current USAT Referee Certification Level B or higher, whenever possible, for National Team Trials; all levels will be considered for other National events

## **Article 13: Powers of the USAT National Referee Team**

### 13.1 Authority

The Referee Chair and Vice Chairs have the authority to exercise jurisdiction in all matters and decisions pertaining to Referee certification seminars, Kyorugi (Sparring) and Poomsae (Forms) competition rules, and officiating at all USAT sanctioned tournaments, including:

- 13.1.1 Sponsoring and conducting referee seminars;
- 13.1.2 Evaluating referees for promotions;
- 13.1.3 Approving referee certificates, citations and commendations;
- 13.1.4 Creating, modifying, and/or amending policies in all matters related to the technical contest rules and referee certification. The foregoing is subject to the supervision and approval of the Committee on Rule Changes created by the Board of Directors.

## **Article 14: Protests**

14. A Competition Supervisory Board will be formed to handle official protests at USAT National events.

14.1 The Competition Supervisory Board shall consist of the following members:

- The Referee Chair or his/her designee
- Athlete Representative currently eligible to serve on the USAT AAC
- Coach Representative chosen by the CEO
- One (1) member of USAT Tournament Committee selected by the CEO
- The CEO or one USAT staff person as designated by the CEO

14.2 The USAT CEO or his designee will chair the Competition Supervisory Board.

14.3 All official protests must be filled out completely and correctly on the Official Protest Form provided by the National Tournament Committee.

14.4 The Competition Supervisory Board may consider only matters that meet the definition of an Official Protest.

## **Article 15: Sanctions**

15. The USAT National Referee Team has full authority to investigate any misconduct, violations of the rules, and/or misjudgments committed by a referee while officiating at a USAT National event, and to request that the CEO authorize the enforcement of the following sanctions in accordance with the result of such investigations. (Note: This does not prohibit the National Referee Team or designees—Technical Assistants, for example—from giving immediate or concurrent directions, instruction, training and verbal warnings without prior approval from the CEO.)

- 15.1 In the case of unintentional misconduct, misjudgment or misapplication of the competition rules by a judge, referee, or TA, the following actions may be taken by the Referee Chair or any of the Vice-Chairs:
- Verbal discussion, immediate instruction or retraining
  - Verbal warning
  - Written evaluation of misapplication of Competition Rules
  - Temporary removal from current ring assignment
- 15.2 In the case of severe or repeated misconduct, misjudgment, misapplication of the competition rules, or misconduct by a judge, referee, or TA, the following actions may be taken by the Referee Chair, with consultation of the Vice-Chairs:
- Verbal warning
  - Written warning and evaluation
  - Temporary or permanent removal from current ring assignment
  - Revocation of official appointment to work at that particular national event
  - Probation
  - Temporary or permanent revocation of referee certification
  - Temporary or permanent suspension of USAT membership
- 15.3 Probationary Period
- Up to three (3) years duration
  - Referee may be appointed to USAT sanctioned National events where actions and conduct will be closely monitored to determine that errors in misjudgment or misapplication of the competition rules have been corrected
  - Referee must attend from one (1) to three (3) National Referee Seminars as determined by the Referee Chair
- 15.3.1 In case of purposeful or intentional misjudgment for any reason, or deliberate misapplication of competition rules by the referee, the following actions may be taken by the Referee Chair, in consultation with the Vice-Chairs, and with the approval of the CEO:
- The Referee found guilty will have all referee certification permanently revoked, and will be prohibited from any referee activities in all USAT sanctioned championships.
  - If the person holds International Referee certification, the Referee Chair and the CEO must report the incident and make an official recommendation to the WTF to revoke International Referee certification.

## **Article 16: Matters Not Covered By This Code of Operations**

- 16.1 Matters and situations not covered by this Code of Operations will be resolved by consideration of similar Taekwondo precedents and interpretations of the WTF Competition Rules.

- 16.2 If the situation is not covered by the WTF rules, the CEO of USAT will deliver the final ruling after meeting with the appropriate parties.

### **Article 17: Code of Ethics**

- 17.1 As a referee I will enforce the current Competition Rules in a fair and impartial manner, showing no favoritism to one competitor over another competitor.
- 17.2 Competitor safety is of the utmost concern as I perform my duties as referee.
- 17.3 I will conduct myself as a professional in all of my actions during a competition event.
- 17.4 I will not accept favors of any kind in return for my actions as a referee.
- 17.5 I will maintain proper physical conditioning in order to be able to perform my duties and responsibilities as a Referee.
- 17.6 I will accept critiques from supervisors in order to improve my abilities as a referee.
- 17.7 I am an ambassador for Taekwondo and, as such, I must perform my duties in a firm and professional manner, using tact and diplomacy as needed.
- 17.8 I will limit my contact with competitors and coaches during the course of any tournament to basic greetings and shall not dine or socialize with participating competitors and coaches during the course of any tournament.

### **Article 18: Amendment**

- 18.1 The Code of Operations of the USAT National Referee Team may be amended after agreement of the Referee Chair and the CEO of USA Taekwondo. Any such amendments shall be in writing.
- 18.2 The Code of Operations shall be in effect from the date of agreement in writing of the Referee Chair and the CEO of USA Taekwondo.

Date of Execution: June 10, 2010

Agreed to by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Seiber, Referee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
David Askinas, CEO

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT:**

*We would like to acknowledge all the past Referees and USAT members who worked on previous versions of the USAT Referee Code of Operations.*