



POOMSAE COMPETITION RULES & INTERPRETATION

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Article 1. Purpose

1. The purpose of the Poomsae Competition Rules is to smoothly and fairly manage all matters pertaining to Poomsae competitions promoted, organized or sanctioned by USA Taekwondo (USATKD), and to ensure the standardization of Taekwondo Poomsae competition in the United States in accordance with the World Taekwondo (WT)—the international federation governing the sport of Taekwondo.
2. A competition that does not follow the fundamental principles of these rules cannot be recognized as USA Taekwondo Poomsae competition.

Article 2. Application

1. These competition rules shall apply to all Poomsae competitions to be promoted and/or organized or sanctioned by the USATKD. If any USATKD association or event promoter wishes to modify any part of the Competition Rules for a particular organization wanting to make a change to some portion of the existing rules must submit the proposed changes to the USATKD, along with the reasons for the change in writing. Approval for any changes in these rules must be received from the USATKD one month prior to the scheduled competition.
2. Changes such as increase or decrease in the number of USATKD Poomsae Referees and Judges in each ring or their seating arrangement, the number of rounds, the number of Poomsae performed in each round, change in the size of the Competition Area, change in the waiting time between the 1st and 2nd Compulsory Poomsae, change in the position of the inspector, recorder and/or commission doctor, etc., may be made after first gaining the written approval of the USATKD. However, such essential matters as scoring must not be changed under any circumstances.

Article 3. Competition Area

1. The Competition Area

- 1.1. The Contest Area shall measure at least 10m x 10m (12m x 12m for Freestyle Team Competition) and have a flat surface without any obstructing projections. Only USATKD-approved mats shall be used at USATKD-sanctioned Poomsae Championships and must provide safe and secure footing for the competitors.
- 1.2. Demarcation of the Contest Area
- 1.3. The 10m x 10m area (12m x 12m for Freestyle Team Competition) shall be called the Contest Area.
- 1.4. Under exceptional circumstances, ring size may be modified with approval of USATKD.

2. Indication of Positions (see Figure 1)

- 2.1. Referee: The Referee shall be positioned beside Judge No. 1.
- 2.2. Judges: The judges are positioned along Boundary Lines 1 and 3. They are 1m from the boundary line with 1m separation between adjacent judges.
- 2.3. Contestants: Contestants' starting position shall be 2m back from the center of the Contest Area, toward boundary line #3.
- 2.4. Recorder's desk: It shall be positioned at 3m from the Referee on the right side.
- 2.5. Competition coordinator(s): Competition coordinator(s) shall be positioned outside the Contest Area, 1m away from the corner between boundary lines #1 and #2.
- 2.6. Standby contestants and coaches: Standby contestants and coaches shall be positioned outside the Contest Area; if possible, 3m away from the corner between boundary lines #3 and #4.
- 2.7. Inspection desk: An Inspection Desk shall be positioned at the entrance of the Contest Area outside the corner of boundary lines #3 and #4.

3. Judging Formats

- 3.1. Five Judge Format: The five judges (including the Referee) shall sit 1m away from the Competition Area with 1m separation between adjacent judges. Three judges (including the Referee) shall face the front of the contestants and two shall face the back. The boundary line adjacent to the three front judges shall be deemed boundary line #1, followed by, clockwise, boundary lines #2, #3, and #4. Judges are positioned and numbered clockwise from the left facing boundary line #1.
- 3.2. Three Judge Format: In the case of a three-judge format, three judges (including the Referee) shall be positioned facing the contestants in the same order as the five-judge format.

3.3. Judge Format Notes:

- 3.3.1. The position of the Referee and Judges in the Five and Three Judge systems may be modified to all judges facing the contestants or other appropriate arrangement to accommodate scoring systems, venue or other limitations and constraints that may impact the competition.

3.4. Judging System Notes:

- 3.4.1. USATKD Grand Slams, National Championships (for World Class divisions) and qualifying tournaments should use the five-judge format.
- 3.4.2. At USATKD qualifying tournaments and for non-World Class divisions (color belts and black belts under 12 years old) in other USATKD sanctioned events, the three-judge format may be used with the approval of USATKD if the number of USATKD Poomsae-qualified Referees is insufficient to implement the five-judge format.
- 3.4.3. At USATKD sanctioned events that are not qualifying tournaments, the three-judge format may be used for non-World Class divisions (color belts and black belts under 12 years old) with the approval of USATKD, if the number of WT International Poomsae Referees and USATKD Poomsae-qualified Referees is insufficient.

Article 4. Contestants

4. Qualifications of USATKD Poomsae Contestants

- 4.1. Residency and citizenship: Residency and citizenship requirements vary among events. USATKD National Championships and Grand Slams require contestants to be citizens of the United States.
- 4.2. Registered USATKD athlete member
- 4.3. Black Belts: All black belt contestants must submit a copy of their Dan/Poom Certificate, current USATKD identification card, and birth certificate before the athlete can be confirmed. If any documents are missing, they will need to be submitted at the time of registration with the Tournament Organizing Committee unless otherwise directed.
- 4.4. Color belts: Contestant must be a solid color belt, with a USATKD recognized rank (1st & 2nd Geup Red Belt, 3rd & 4th Geup Blue Belt, 5th & 6th Geup Green Belts, 7th & 8th Geup Yellow Belts). Color belt contestants may only wear a yellow, green, blue or red belt, according to the contestant's Geup rank.
- 4.5. All contestants participating in a tournament are required to observe the USATKD Code of Conduct and the rules of the tournament. Violators are subject to sanction by the USATKD.

5. Uniform for Contestants

5.1. Official Uniform for Contestants

- 5.1.1. All contestants must wear a white Taekwondo V-neck USATKD approved uniform (dobok) or WT approved Poomsae competition uniform in good condition, and appropriate to the contestants' division. Black Belts must wear black-collared white uniforms or WT approved Poomsae competition uniform. Color belts may not wear black-collared or poom collared uniforms.
 - 5.1.1.1. Optional: Athletes may wear black pants.
- 5.1.2. Only black belt athletes 14 and under may wear a poom belt. Also, if an athlete wears a poom collar uniform they must wear a poom belt.
- 5.1.3. Patches, embroidery, logos, team names, country names, athlete names, and stripes are permitted on the uniform. Logos or names on the back of the uniform and patches on the chest area of the uniform are also allowed.
- 5.1.4. Shoes may not be worn. No jewelry or ornaments may be worn. No hats or items may be worn on the head except for religious coverings or soft ties to contain the hair.
- 5.1.5. NO TAPE WILL BE ALLOWED ON ANY PART OF THE UNIFORM.

6. Personal Hygiene

- 6.1. All competitors must maintain the highest standard of personal hygiene, keep their nails cut short, and groom their hair neatly.
- 6.2. Any violators of Section 4.1 and 4.2 will be required to correct the violation within one minute or shall be subject to disqualification.

7. Taping

- 7.1. There will be no ankle or wrist wrapping or bandage or any equivalent of protection on the hand and feet. Any taping for an injury requires medical approval.

8. Medical Control

- 8.1. At Taekwondo events promoted or sanctioned by the USATKD, any use or administration of drugs or chemical substances described in the USOC anti-doping by-laws is prohibited.
- 8.2. The USATKD may carry out any medical testing deemed necessary to ascertain if a contestant has committed a breach of this rule. Any winner who refuses to undergo this testing or who proves to have committed such a breach shall be removed from the final standings, and the record shall be transferred to the contestant next in line in the competition standings.
- 8.3. The organizing committee shall be responsible for making arrangements to carry out medical testing.

Article 5. Classification of Competition

1. Contestants may compete in any competition divisions, unless they are limited by gender or age.

1.1. Recognized Poomsae Competition

1.1.1. Men's Individual

1.1.2. Women's Individual

1.1.3. Men's Team (3)

1.1.4. Women's Team (3)

1.1.5. Pair (one male, one female)

1.2. Freestyle Poomsae Competition

1.2.1. Men's Individual

1.2.2. Women's Individual

1.2.3. Pair (one male, one female)

1.2.4. Mixed Team (composed of 5 members including at least 2 males and 2 females). One substitute may accompany the Freestyle Poomsae team.

1.3. Mixed Poomsae Competition (First Poomsae is Recognized, and the Second Poomsae is Freestyle)

1.3.1. Men's Individual

1.3.2. Women's Individual

1.3.3. Men's Team (3)

1.3.4. Women's Team (3)

1.3.5. Pair (one male, one female)

1.3.6. Mixed Team (composed of 5 members including at least 2 males and 2 females). One substitute may accompany the Freestyle Poomsae team.

Article 6. Divisions by Gender and Age

1. Recognized Poomsae Competition

1.1. Male, female and mixed divisions shall be divided according to age as follows:

Division		7 and Under	9 and Under	11 and Under	Cadet	Junior	Under 30	Under 40	Under 50	Under 60	Under 65	Over 65
Age (Years)		6 – 7	8 – 9	10 – 11	12 – 14	15 – 17	18 – 30	31 – 40	41 – 50	51 – 60	61 – 65	66+
Individual	Male	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Female	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Division		9 and Under		11 and Under	Cadet	Junior	Under 30		Over 30			
Age (Years)		6 – 9		10 – 11	12 – 14	15 – 17	18 – 30		31+			
Pair		2		2	2	2	2		2			
Team	Male	3		3	3	3	3		3			
	Female	3		3	3	3	3		3			

*Notes: Shaded cells are official WT divisions competed at USATKD sanctioned events.
Unshaded cells are USATKD divisions competed in USATKD sanctioned events.*

2. Freestyle Poomsae Competition

2.1. Divisions of Freestyle Poomsae Competition shall be classified as follows:

Division		Under 17	Over 17
Age		12–17 years old	18 years old and over
Individual	Male	1	1
	Female	1	1
Pair		2	2
Team (Mixed)		5 (plus 1 substitute, maximum)	5 (plus 1 substitute, maximum)

3. Mixed Poomsae Competition

3.1. Divisions of Mixed Poomsae Competition shall be classified as follows:

Division		Over 17
Age		18 years old and over
Individual	Male	1
	Female	1
Pair		2
Team	Male	3
	Female	3
Team (Mixed)		5 (plus 1 substitute, maximum)

4. The age limit for each division is based on the year—not on the date—when the Championships are held. For example, in the Junior division, contestants shall be between 15 and 17 years old; therefore, if the Junior Poomsae Championships are held on 29 July 2020, contestants born between 1 January 2003 and 31 December, 2005 are eligible to participate.

Article 7. Methods of Competition

1. The methods of competition are:

1.1. Single elimination tournament format

- 1.1.1. In the single elimination tournament, a competitor is eliminated from competition after one loss.
- 1.1.2. Competitors are matched with opponents randomly or by seeding.
- 1.1.3. The order of competition is randomly assigned.
- 1.1.4. Each pair of competitors (Chung and Hong) enters the Competition Area together, but perform individually, with Chung (blue) performing first, followed by Hong (red), each competitor standing on their assigned positions when not performing.
- 1.1.5. The Referee declares the winner based on the score and both competitors leave the Competition Area together.
- 1.1.6. Competitors perform one or two forms in each round randomly* selected from the Compulsory Poomsae by the Tournament Committee and observed by the Referee Chair(s) or designee prior to the competition.

1.2. Cut-off tournament format

- 1.2.1. The cut-off tournament is a competition format that has a maximum of three rounds, a preliminary, semi-final and final round. If the division has 20 or more competitors, the competition shall start from the preliminary round.
- 1.2.2. The division may be split into groups, with each group judged by different judges in the preliminary round.
- 1.2.3. The order of the competitors in the preliminary round and semi-final round is randomly determined. The order of the competitors in the final round will be based on the score in the semi-final round, with the contestant with the lowest score first and the contestant with the highest score performing last.
- 1.2.4. In the preliminary round, each contestant performs one or two assigned forms randomly selected from the Compulsory Poomsae by the Tournament Committee and observed by the Referee Chair(s) or designee, prior to the competition. All competitors perform the same form(s). Scores are totaled for each contestant. Those with scores in the top 50% advance to the semi-final round.

- 1.2.5. When there are more than 20 contestants, the preliminary round may be divided into two flights competing on two different courts with different judges. When there are more than 40 contestants, the preliminary round may be divided into three flights competing on three different with different judges. When there are more than 60 contestants, the preliminary round may be divided into four flights competing on four different courts with different judges. 50% of the contestants from each flight shall advance to the semi-final round.
- 1.2.6. If the number of contestants in the division or groups is odd, then the number of contestants advancing to the next round will be rounded up. For example, if there are 23 contestants in the group, then the 23-contestant number is rounded up to 24, and the 12 contestants with the highest scores shall advance to semi-final round. If there are 9 to 19 contestants, the competition shall start from the semi-final round.
- 1.2.7. In the semi-final round, each contestant will perform two forms (one form may be performed) randomly selected from the Compulsory Poomsae (with the form(s) from the preliminary round excluded), and the 8 contestants with the highest scores advance to the final round.
- 1.2.8. When 8 or fewer contestants are participating, the competition shall start from the final round.
- 1.2.9. In the final round the contestants perform the two randomly selected forms from the Compulsory Poomsae that were not performed in the previous round. In the case where there are 8 or fewer contestants the final round is also the first round, and two Compulsory Poomsae randomly selected forms shall be performed.
- 1.2.10. The top four contestants / pairs / teams shall be awarded prizes based on their points.
- 1.2.11. 3rd and 4th places are awarded bronze medals.
- 1.3. Combination System: Cut off system + Elimination tournament system
 - 1.3.1. The Combination System uses the Cut off system for the preliminary and semi-final rounds and single elimination for the final round. Two poomsae should always be performed in the final round for all World Class divisions.
 - 1.3.2. Method of Competition Notes:
 - 1.3.2.1. The number of Poomsae performed in the preliminary and semi-final rounds may be modified after first gaining the written approval of the USATKD.
- 1.4. Modified Cut-Off Format for Color Belt Divisions
 - 1.4.1. For Grassroots and recreational divisions at USATKD State Championships, Regional Qualifiers, Nationals and Junior Olympic Championships, cut-off format or modified cut-off format at the discretion of tournament organizers.

- 1.4.2. The modified cut-off tournament is a competition format that has a maximum of two rounds, a semi-final and final round.
- 1.4.3. The order of the competitors in the semi-final round is randomly determined. The order of the competitors in the final round will be based on the score in the semi-final round, with the contestant with the lowest score first and the contestant with the highest score performing last.
- 1.4.4. In the semi-final round, each contestant will perform one form randomly selected from the Compulsory Poomsae, and the 8 contestants with the highest scores advance to the final round.
- 1.4.5. When 8 or fewer contestants are participating, the competition shall start from the final round.
- 1.4.6. In the final round the contestants perform one randomly selected form from the Compulsory Poomsae that were not performed in the previous round.
- 1.4.7. The top four contestants / pairs / teams shall be awarded prizes based on their points.
- 1.4.8. 3rd and 4th places are awarded bronze medals.

Article 8. Recognized Poomsae

1. Color Belts

Division	Compulsory Poomsae
Yellow (7th & 8th Geup) All ages	Taegeuk 1, 2 Jang
Green (5th & 6th Geup) All ages	Taegeuk 1, 2, 3, 4 Jang
Blue (3rd & 4th Geup) All ages	Taegeuk 3, 4, 5, 6 Jang
Red (1st & 2nd Geup) All ages	Taegeuk 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Jang

2. Black Belts

Division		Compulsory Poomsae
6 – 7		Taegeuk 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo
8 – 9		
10 – 11		
Cadet (12 – 14)		Taegeuk 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang
Junior (15 – 17)		Taegeuk 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebaek
Under 30		Taegeuk 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebaek, Pyongwon, Shipjin
Under 40		
Under 50		Taegeuk 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebaek, Pyongwon, Shipjin, Jitae, Chonkwon
Under 60		Koryo, Keumgang, Taebaek, Pyongwon, Shipjin, Jitae, Chonkwon, Hansu
Under 65		
Over 65		
Pair	9 and Under	Taegeuk 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo
	10 – 11	
	Cadet (12 – 14)	Taegeuk 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang
	Junior (15 – 17)	Taegeuk 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebaek
	Under 30	Taegeuk 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebaek, Pyongwon, Shipjin
	Over 30	Taegeuk 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebaek, Pyongwon, Shipjin, Jitae, Chonkwon
Team	9 and Under	Taegeuk 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo
	10 – 11	
	Cadet (12 – 14)	Taegeuk 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang
	Junior (15 – 17)	Taegeuk 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebaek
	Under 30	Taegeuk 6, 7, 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebaek, Pyongwon, Shipjin
	Over 30	Taegeuk 8 Jang, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebaek, Pyongwon, Shipjin, Jitae, Chonkwon

Notes: Shaded cells are official WT divisions competed at USATKD-sanctioned events.
 Unshaded cells are USATKD divisions competed in USATKD-sanctioned events.

Article 9. Freestyle Poomsae

1. Freestyle performance is based on Taekwondo techniques, with the addition of music and choreography.
2. Composition of freestyle Poomsae:
 - 2.1. “Yeon-mu” line (i.e., the progress line of the Poomsae) shall be the choice of the contestant.
 - 2.2. Music and choreography shall be the choice of the contestant.
 - 2.3. Music shall not contain lyrics or spoken words in any language.
 - 2.4. The performed techniques must be within the boundaries of Taekwondo. The USATKD Poomsae Referee Team will determine the validity of the performed Taekwondo techniques when the contestant submits a Freestyle Poomsae Performance Plan.

Article 10. Duration of Contest

1. Duration of Contest by Division:
 - 1.1. Recognized Poomsae: Individual, Pair and Team competitions up to 90 seconds.
 - 1.2. Freestyle Poomsae: Individual, Pair and Mixed Team competitions from 90 to 100 seconds.
 - 1.2.1. The waiting time between 1st and 2nd Poomsae is a minimum of 30 seconds.

Article 11. Order of Competition

1. The order of competition shall be random in the preliminary and semi-final rounds and will be accomplished by drawing of lots or by other random process; some electronic scoring systems can randomly order the competitors in the ring. The order of competition in the final round will be based on the score in the semi-final round, with the contestant with the lowest score first and the contestant with the highest score performing last.
2. When seeding competitors into a bracket (1-8), do this according to their standings in the semi-final round in a combination format.

Article 12. Prohibited Acts / Penalties

1. The Referee shall declare penalties for any prohibited acts.
2. Penalties are defined as “Kyeong-go” (deduction of points by penalties).
3. “Kyeong-go” shall be declared on the following prohibited acts:
 - 3.1. Uttering undesirable remarks or any misconduct on the part of a contestant or a coach. This includes any act that intentionally interferes with another competitor, coach or official.
 - 3.2. According to the judgment of the referee, a coach, an amateur contestant or Taekwondo practitioner is not behaving with proper manner and respect the code of conduct.
 - 3.3. Athletes or coaches interrupting and standing in the way of the competition coordinators while they are conducting the competition.
4. Should a contestant be assessed two (2) deductions, the referee shall declare the contestant a loser on penalties. “Kyeong-go,” as defined in this Article, refers to deduction of points due to behavior that disrespects the spirit of sport, rather than due to judges’ scoring in terms of accuracy and presentation.
5. When a coach or contestant commits excessive misconduct and does not follow the referee’s command, the referee may declare a sanction request by raising a yellow card. In this case the Competition Supervisory Board shall investigate the coach’s behavior and determine whether a sanction is appropriate.

Article 13. Procedures of the Contest

1. Call for contestants.
 - 1.1. Thirty minutes prior to the scheduled start of the contest, the names of the contestants shall be announced three times in the contestants' training area. Any contestant who fails to appear in the Competition Area after the "Chool-jeon" command of the competition coordinator shall be regarded as having withdrawn from and forfeited the match.
2. Standby.
 - 2.1. Each contestant, accompanied by only one coach, shall wait at the contestants' waiting area for the physical and uniform inspection.
3. Physical inspection and uniform inspection.
 - 3.1. After being called, the contestants shall undergo a physical inspection and a uniform inspection at the specified inspection desk by an inspector designated by the USATKD. The contestant shall not show any signs of aversion and shall not bear any object that may cause harm to the other contestant.
4. Entering the Competition Area.
 - 4.1. Following the inspection, the contestant(s) shall enter the contestant standby waiting area with one coach. Upon the Competition Coordinator's command of "Chool-jeon" (enter) the contestant(s) shall enter the Contest Area. When issuing the command "Chool-jeon" the Competition Coordinator motions with his/her right hand directing the contestant(s) into the Contest Area to the contestant's designated spot. The coach remains in the designated contestant standby area.
5. Elimination and Round Robin Tournaments
 - 5.1. In individual competitions, the competitors, designated as Chung and Hong enter together.
 - 5.2. Contestants shall make a standing bow at the competition coordinator's command of "Cha-ryeot" (attention) and "Kyeong-rye" (bow).
 - 5.3. After "Kyeong-rye," Chung performs first and then Hong. In pair and team competitions, the Chung team/pair and the Hong team/pair enter together. After "Kyeong-rye," the Hong team/pair exits and the Chung team/pair performs first, then Hong team (pair) performs.
 - 5.4. When issuing the command "Kyeong-rye" the Coordinator motions with his/her hands directing the contestant(s) to bow to the judges along Boundary Line #1.

6. Cut-off Tournament

- 6.1. Individual, pair and team competitors enter the Competition Area alone.
- 6.2. Beginning of the Performance. The performance begins when the Competition Coordinator announces “Chool-jeon,” “Cha-ryeot,” “Kyeong-rye,” “Joon-bi” and “Shi-jak” (start).
- 6.3. When two Poomsae are performed. At the end of the first Poomsae the competition coordinator announces “Bah-roh” then “Shi-ah” then “Tuae-jahng” and “Pyo-chul” at which point the contestant may return to the contestant waiting area to consult with the coach during the waiting time between the 1st and 2nd Poomsae. At the end of the waiting time the contestant returns to the designated spot in the Competition Area or the Competition Coordinator will command “Chool-jeon” and motion with his/her hand directing the contestant(s) into the Competition Area to the designated spot.
- 6.4. Beginning of the performance of the 2nd Poomsae. The performance begins when the Competition Coordinator announces “Cha-ryeot,” “Joon-bi” and “Shi-jak” (start). There is no bow before the 2nd Poomsae.

7. Completion of performance.

- 7.1. The performance ends with the Competition Coordinator commanding “Bah-roh” (back to ready), “Shi-ah”, contestant(s) shall stand in their respective positions wait until the coordinator’s declaration of “Pyo-chul”. Then “Cha-ryeot,” “Kyeong-rye.” When issuing the command “Kyeong-rye” the Competition Coordinator motions with his/her hands directing the contestant(s) to bow to the judges along Boundary Line #1.

8. Retirement of the contestants.

- 8.1. After the standing salute the contestant exits on the Competition Coordinator's command “Tuae-jahng” (exit). When issuing the command “Tuae-jahng” the Coordinator motions with his/her hand directing the contestant(s) from the designated spot out of the Competition Area. The hand motion shall be respectful, performed with formality, not in a dismissive fashion.

9. When using an electronic scoring device.

- 9.1. The judges enter the score into the electronic scoring device, in real time, and after confirm the total scores. The total score entered by the judges appear on the public display board. The referee shall declare the winner according to the results of the judges.

10. When using the scoring ballot.

- 10.1. The judges score accuracy in real time and complete the scoring ballot after confirming the total score. After the judges’ ballots are recorded, the recorder announces the final result. The referee shall declare the winner according to the results of the judges.

Article 14. Competition Coordinator

1. Qualifications

1.1. The Referee Chair shall assign the Competition Coordinator(s).

2. Duties

2.1. One or two Competition Coordinators shall be assigned.

2.2. The Competition Coordinator(s) shall verify the contestants' identities and direct contestants in and out of the venue and shall assist the refereeing officials to ensure the unimpeded progress of the competition and declare the winners/medalists.

Article 15. Scoring Criteria

1. Scoring shall be made in accordance with the USATKD and WT Competition Rules

1.1. Recognized Poomsae (10 Points)

1.1.1. Accuracy (4 points)

1.1.1.1. Accuracy of basic movements

1.1.1.2. Accuracy of details of each Poomsae

1.1.1.3. Balance

1.1.2. Presentation (6 points)

1.1.2.1. Speed and power

1.1.2.2. Rhythm & Tempo

1.1.2.3. Expression of energy

1.1.3. Allotted Scoring Chart for Recognized Poomsae

Scoring Criteria	Details of Scoring Criteria	Points
Accuracy (4.0)	Accuracy of basic movements	4.0
	Accuracy of details of each Poomsae	
	Balance	
Presentation (6.0)	Speed and power	2.0
	Rhythm & tempo	2.0
	Expression of energy	2.0

1.2. Freestyle Poomsae (10 Points)

1.2.1. Technical skills (6 points)

1.2.1.1. Level of difficulty of foot techniques

1.2.1.2. Basic movement & practicability

1.2.2. Presentation (4 points)

1.2.2.1. Creativity

1.2.2.2. Harmony

1.2.2.3. Expression of energy

1.2.2.4. Music and choreography

1.2.3. The USATKD Referee Chair will establish the types of kick and level of difficulty each year.

1.2.4. Allotted Scoring Chart for Freestyle Poomsae

Scoring Criteria	Details of Scoring Criteria	Points	
Technical Skills (6.0)	Level of difficulty of foot techniques (5.0)	Jumping side Kick	5.0
		Multiple kicks in a jump	
		Gradient of spins in a spin kick	
		Kyorugi style consecutive kicks	
	Acrobatic kicking technique		
	Basic Movements & Practicability	1.0	
Presentation (4.0)	Creativeness	4.0	
	Harmony		
	Expression of energy		
	Music and choreography		
Maximum Points		10.0	

Article 16. Methods of Scoring

1. Recognized Poomsae

1.1. Total score is 10 Points

1.2. Accuracy

1.2.1. Basic score is 4.0

1.2.2. Minor mistake, 0.1 point shall be deducted each time a contestant makes small errors; does not perform the basic movements accurately. Deduction of 0.1 point per small mistake in accurate performance point shall be deducted each time a stance (Apgubi, Dwitgubi, Beomseogi and all the other standing movements and positions), hand or foot technique (Makki, Jireugi, Chigi and all the other hand and foot movements) is not performed as explained in the attached Poomsae Competition Guidelines.

1.2.3. Major mistake in accuracy points shall be deducted a 0.3 deduction when incorrect actions or techniques are performed or correct techniques or actions are omitted; i.e., serious deviations from the Poomsae as described in the Taekwondo Textbook.

1.2.4. Examples:

1.2.4.1. Eolgul Makki is performed instead of Arae Makki

1.2.4.2. Dwitgubi is performed instead of Juchum Seogi

1.2.4.3. Kihap (yell) or stomp is not made or made in the wrong place

1.2.4.4. Brief stops during movements (forgetting the next movement for three seconds or longer)

1.2.4.5. Looking in the wrong direction (eyes should be focused in the direction of movement but should not anticipate the next direction of movement)

1.2.4.6. When the raised foot touches the ground when performing Hakdari-Soegi

1.2.4.7. Starting and ending position varies by more than one-foot allowance (Exceptions: Keumgang, Jitae)

1.2.4.8. Jittzikgi (stomping) movement without enough power and sound

1.2.4.9. When the contestant makes loud breathing (e.g., hissing) noises

1.2.4.10. 0.6 point shall be deducted from each judges' score, when the contestant restarts Poomsae regardless of the number of movements performed and deductions received in the previous attempt.

1.3. Presentation

1.3.1. Basic total score (6.0 Points)

1.3.2. Deduction of points in presentation shall be made for the overall performance of the Poomsae, not for every small or serious mistake during the performance:

1.3.2.1. 2.0 points for speed and power

1.3.2.2. 2.0 points for control of rhythm & tempo

1.3.2.3. 2.0 points for expression of energy

1.3.3. Speed and Power (2.0 Points)

1.3.3.1. Ability to perform Poomsae shall be evaluated on whether the movements are performed in accordance with the characteristics of the pertinent movement; for example, attacking techniques such as Jireugi or Chagi, are best performed with a soft start, accelerating with a balance between speed and power, using the body weight to achieve a maximum effect; or, special movements are performed slowly, and intentionally, with power and balance.

1.3.3.2. Example: Deduction shall be made if too much strength is revealed in the beginning of the movements, as this slows down the movement and reduces the power and effectiveness of the movement.

1.3.3.3. Example: Deduction shall be made if the contestant exaggerates a movement beyond the culmination of that movement to show power in the next movement or exaggerates the reaction of the body to express power.

1.3.4. Rhythm & Tempo (2.0 Points)

1.3.4.1. Control of power means the greatest power is shown at the most critical moment of the movement, usually the culmination, through speed and softness.

1.3.4.2. Control of speed means an appropriate connection between actions and changes in speed, such that powerful moves accelerate.

1.3.4.3. Rhythm means repeated actions are performed with timing that results in the technique being most effective to accomplish the intended result, and flow of power with the greatest expression of power occurring at the instant of the strike, block or kick.

1.3.4.4. Example: Too much power makes the movement look stiff and robotic from the start; deductions shall be made if the speed, power and rhythm are presented with no changes from the start to the end of the lines of movements.

- 1.3.4.5. Example: Deductions shall be made in case of stiff or limp actions coming from a stiff body or a too soft presentation without expression of power. A strong start makes it difficult to accelerate, and slows down the action at the critical point of the movements.

1.3.5. Expression of Energy (2.0 Points)

- 1.3.5.1. This category addresses the presentation of confidence and power that come from mastering the expression of energy. The range of movement of techniques, concentration, courage, sharpness, confidence, and posture effect how energy is expressed according to the characteristic actions of the Poomsae. Such characteristics as the direction of sight and focus of the eyes, strength of the kihap (yelling), attitude and uniform all contribute to the overall expression of energy.
- 1.3.5.2. Example: Deductions shall be made if actions are not crisp and powerful, or connecting actions are not big enough for the performer's physique, or the performance is made in the same rhythm throughout without slowing and accelerating to emphasize techniques.

1.4. Deduction of Points

- 1.4.1. Points shall be deducted from the final score in case the performance is finished later than the set contest time.
- 1.4.2. Points shall be deducted from the final score if the contestant crosses the boundary line with two feet during performance.

1.5. Score Calculation

- 1.5.1. Accuracy shall be scored separately from presentation.
- 1.5.2. Final score shall be the average of the judges' scores for accuracy (the highest and lowest judge scores dropped before calculating the average) and the average of the judge's scores for presentation (the highest and lowest judge scores dropped before calculating the average). If using the three-judge format, the highest and lowest score will not be dropped.
- 1.5.3. The publication of the score shall show the score for Accuracy, the score for Presentation and the Total Score.
- 1.5.4. All penalties accumulated during the competition shall be deducted from the final score.

2. Freestyle Poomsae

2.1. Technical Skill

- 2.1.1. Level of difficulty of foot techniques: Points may be awarded from 0.0 up to 5.0 in total in five evaluation areas:

- 2.1.1.1. Jumping side kick: Points shall be awarded based on the performance level of jumping side kick and the height of jump.
- 2.1.1.2. Multiple kicks in a jump: Points shall be awarded based on the performance level of multiple kicks and the number of kicks in a jump.
- 2.1.1.3. Gradient of turn in a spin kick: Points may be awarded based on the number or degrees of turn (i.e., more than 180 degrees, more than 360 degrees, more than 540 degrees and more than 720 degrees) in spin kicks.
- 2.1.1.4. Consecutive kicks: Points shall be awarded based on the mastery and performance level of Kyorugi style consecutive kicks in a row, and the number of consecutive kicks shall be limited from three to five.
- 2.1.1.5. Acrobatic kicking technique: Points shall be awarded based on the mastery and performance level of acrobatic kicking technique.
- 2.1.1.6. Basic movements & practicability of movements: Points may be added from 0 up to 1.0 for accuracy in basic movements of Taekwondo and designated technical movements of Taekwondo. Whether the movements appear to be practicable, whether there is an appropriate connection between attacks and defenses, and whether the movements are in perfect harmony shall be the criteria for evaluating general performances of the free-style Poomsae.

2.2. Presentation

- 2.2.1. Points may be awarded from 0 up to 4.0 based on the general performance of the free-style Poomsae.
- 2.2.2. Creativity: Points may be awarded based on the creativity of the actions and components of the Poomsae.
- 2.2.3. Harmony: Points may be awarded based on the harmony and balance between different components of the Poomsae (music, choreography, and attire for example). Harmony, balance, or synchronicity between or among the performers (unity, for example) shall be also evaluated in the case of team and pairs contests.
- 2.2.4. Expression of energy: Points may be awarded for accurate expression of energy in the Poomsae, as described in Recognized Poomsae, above.
- 2.2.5. Music and choreography: Points may be awarded based on how the music and the choreography contribute to the performance of the Poomsae.

2.3. Deduction of Points

2.3.1. 0.3 points shall be deducted from the final score in case the performance is finished earlier or later than the set contest time.

2.3.2. 0.3 points shall be deducted from the final score if the contestant crosses the boundary line with two feet during performance.

2.4. Score calculation

2.4.1. Technical skills shall be scored separately from presentation.

2.4.2. Final score shall be the average of the judges' scores for technical skills (the highest and lowest judge scores dropped before calculating the average) and the average of the judges' scores for presentation (the highest and lowest judge scores dropped before calculating the average). The publication of the score shall show the score for Technical Skills, the score for Presentation and the Total Score. In the case of the Three Judge Format the highest and lowest score will not be dropped.

2.4.3. All penalties accumulated during the competition shall be deducted from the final score.

Article 17. Publication of Scores

1. The final score shall be announced immediately following the competition.
2. In case of using electronic scoring instruments
 - 2.1. Judges shall input points in the electronic scoring instruments (Accuracy in real time during the performance and Presentation after the performance of the Poomsae), and total points shall be automatically displayed on the monitors.
 - 2.2. The final score and the individual judges' scores shall be displayed on the monitor following the automatic deletion of the highest and lowest scores among the judges.
3. In case of manual (paper score sheet) scoring
 - 3.1. The coordinator shall collect each scoring sheet and convey the results to the recorder immediately after completion of the Poomsae.
 - 3.2. The recorder shall report the final score to the Referee, following the deletion of the highest and lowest scores, and announce the final score or have the final score displayed. In the case of the three-judge format the highest and lowest score will not be dropped.

Article 18. Decision and Declaration of Winner

1. The winner shall be the contestant who is awarded the highest total points.
 - 1.1. In case of a tied score, the winner shall be the contestant with the higher score in presentation (for Recognized Poomsae) or in technical skills (for Freestyle Poomsae) or Free Style Poomsae points (for Mixed Poomsae Competition). In case the scores are still tied, then the contestant with the higher total points (including all judge's scores, the highest and lowest not dropped) shall be the winner. In case the scores are still tied after the highest and lowest scores are added back, a rematch shall be conducted to determine the winner. The Tournament Committee will designate the Poomsae to be performed.
 - 1.2. The rematch will consist of performing one compulsory Poomsae designated by the Referee. The previous scores will not affect the scores of the rematch.
 - 1.3. In case of a tied score after the rematch, the winner shall be the contestant who is awarded more points in total, including the highest and lowest scores that were dropped. In case of a tie, the rematch will be repeated until there is a winner.
 - 1.4. Decisions
 - 1.4.1. Win by score. The winner is the contestant with the highest total points.
 - 1.4.2. Win by Referee Stop the Contest (RSC). In the event that the referee or commission doctor determines that a contestant is unable to continue, even after a minute of recovery period, or if a contestant disregards the referee's command to continue, the referee shall declare the contest stopped and the opposing contestant shall be declared the winner.
 - 1.4.3. Win by withdrawal of opponent. The winner is determined by the withdrawal of the opponent: a. When a contestant withdraws from the match due to injury or other reasons, or b. When a coach throws a towel into the court to signify forfeiture of the match.
 - 1.4.4. Win by disqualification. Should a contestant lose his or her contestant status before the competition begins, the opposing contestant shall be declared the winner.
 - 1.4.5. Win by opponent's penalties. In the event that a contestant accumulates two "Gam-jeom" (deduction of points by penalties), as prescribed in Article 12.3, the opponent shall be declared the winner.

Article 19. Procedures for Suspending the Contest

1. When a contest is to be stopped during the competition, the referee shall:
 - 1.1. At the time of suspending the match, the referee shall order the recorders to suspend timekeeping. At that time, the Competition Coordinator is to determine the reason(s) for the stoppage of the competition.
 - 1.2. In the case in which a contest is stopped due to problems related to a contestant, and should a contestant not demonstrate the will to continue the contest within 90 seconds for Recognized Poomsae or 100 seconds for Freestyle Poomsae, the referee shall declare the opposing contestant as the winner. In the case where the stoppage of a contest is not related to the contestants, the problem shall be resolved quickly and another chance to perform shall be given to pertinent contestants.
 - 1.3. All the other problems that may arise shall be resolved through the meeting of the judges of the pertinent competition, Poomsae Committee Chairperson, and the Competition Supervisory Board members.

Article 20. Refereeing Officials

1. Qualifications
 - 1.1. Judges: Shall be Poomsae-qualified USATKD Referees
 - 1.2. Referee: Shall be Poomsae-qualified USATKD referee
2. Duties
 - 2.1. Referee
 - 2.1.1. The Referee shall document all valid points.
 - 2.1.2. The Referee shall declare the winner and issue “Gam-jeom” (deduction of points by penalties). The Referee shall declare the winner only after the Judges’ decision has been confirmed.
 - 2.1.3. The Referee is permitted to summon the Judges during the competition, if the need arises.
 - 2.2. Judges
 - 2.2.1. The Judges shall document all valid points.
 - 2.2.2. The Judges shall state their opinions forthrightly when requested to do so by the Referee.
3. Classification of refereeing officials
 - 3.1. Refereeing officials shall be Poomsae-qualified USATKD Referees.
4. Uniform of the refereeing officials
 - 4.1. Refereeing officials shall wear uniforms designated by the USATKD.
5. Refereeing officials shall not carry or take any materials to the arena that might interfere with the contest.
6. The Chairman of the Competition Supervisory Board may request the Chair of the refereeing officials that a refereeing official be reassigned in the event that refereeing officials have been improperly assigned, or when it is judged by the Competition Supervisory Board that any of the assigned refereeing officials have unfairly conducted the contest or made unreasonable mistakes.

Article 21. Recorder

1. The recorder shall time the contest, including suspended time during the contest. The recorder shall also calculate, record and announce or display the total score.

Article 22. Formation and Assignment of Refereeing Officials

1. Composition of refereeing officials
 - 1.1. Five Judge Format: 1 Referee, 4 Judges
 - 1.2. Three Judge Format: 1 Referee, 2 Judges
2. Assignment of Refereeing officials
 - 2.1. The assignment of the referees and judges shall be made after the contest schedule is set.
 - 2.2. Referees and judges with the same state or club as that of either contestant or with a conflict of interest shall not be assigned to such a contest. However, an exception shall be made for the judges when the number of refereeing officials is insufficient, as the case may be. Prior to the beginning of the pertinent contest, Referees and Judges must disclose any conflict of interest to the Referee Chairperson.

Article 23. Protest and Arbitration

1. A procedure for protest is provided in case there is a clear erroneous decision from the refereeing officials in identification of the winning contestants, errors in the scoring system, or other administrative errors resulting in the wrong players being named as winners. However, as a first recourse, the coach/team captain should respectfully bring the matter to the attention of the officiating team; if the situation cannot be resolved, then a formal protest may be filed.
 - 1.1. Note that only procedural and administrative errors are subject to protest (including errors in addition or calculation of winners when an electronic system is not in use). Disagreements about scoring are not protestable.
2. Composition of the Competition Supervisory Board
 - 2.1. Qualifications of the members:
 - 2.1.1. Qualified Competition Supervisory Board members shall be persons with sufficient Taekwondo experience recommended by the USATKD Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee.
 - 2.2. Composition:
 - 2.2.1. One Chairman and no more than six members.
 - 2.2.2. If there are officials from the same state or the same training affiliation, as either contestant involved on the Competition Supervisory Board, those members must be excluded from the Board. In all cases, the number of Board members must be an odd number. If the Chair is one who is ineligible, a temporary chair must be elected by the remaining members.
 - 2.2.3. The chair and members of the Competition Supervisory Board will be appointed by the USATKD Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee.
 - 2.3. Responsibility
 - 2.3.1. The Competition Supervisory Board shall adjudicate protests and correct misjudgments if necessary. In their concurrent capacity as the Sanction Committee, the Competition Supervisory Board may also take disciplinary action against the officials committing the infraction. Documented records and results shall be sent to the USATKD Chief Executive Officer.
 - 2.3.2. The Chair of the Competition Supervisory Board may recommend that the USATKD Referee Chairman for that event or USATKD designee replace referees or judges.
3. Protest Procedure After the Match
 - 3.1. In case there is an objection that cannot be resolved with the officiating team, within 10 minutes after the pertinent contest, the certified coach representing the athlete may submit an application for re-evaluation of decision (protest application) together with the prescribed, non-refundable fee of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) to the Event Director.

- 3.2. Deliberation of re-evaluation shall be carried out excluding those members of the same state or training affiliation as that of either contestant concerned, and resolution shall be made by majority vote.
 - 3.3. The members of the Board of Arbitration (Competition Supervisory Board) may summon the refereeing officials for confirmation of events.
 - 3.4. The resolution made by the Competition Supervisory Board will be final and no further means of appeal will be applied.
4. Deliberation procedures are as follows:
- 4.1. A coach or head of team representing the protesting player is permitted to make a brief verbal presentation to the Board of Arbitration in support of their position.
 - 4.2. After reviewing the protest application, the content of the protest must be arranged according to the criterion of "Acceptable" or "Unacceptable."
 - 4.3. If necessary, the Board can hear opinions from the referee or judges.
 - 4.4. If necessary, the Board can review the material evidence of the decision, such as the written records (brackets, competitor lists, score sheets, tally sheets), or electronic records of the match. No videotapes can be used.
 - 4.5. After deliberation, the Board holds a secret ballot to determine a majority decision.
 - 4.6. The Chair will make a report documenting the outcome of the deliberation and shall make this outcome publicly known.
 - 4.7. Subsequent process following the decision:
 - 4.7.1. Errors in determining the match results, mistakes in calculating the match score or misidentifying a contestant shall be corrected.
 - 4.8. Errors in application of the rules:
 - 4.8.1. When it is determined by the Board that the officiating team made a clear error in applying the Competition Rules (for example, advancing the wrong number of players) the outcome of the error shall be corrected.
 - 4.9. The Chair of the Competition Supervisory Board may recommend that the USATKD Referee Chairman for that event or USATKD designee replace referees or judges in the event that refereeing officials have been wrongly assigned, or when it is judged that any of the assigned refereeing officials have unfairly conducted the contest or made unjustifiable mistakes.

5. Procedure of Sanction

- 5.1. The deliberation procedure of Sanction shall correspond to that of Competition Supervisory Board, and the details of sanction will comply with the Regulations on Sanctions.
- 5.2. The USATKD Executive Director (or in case of his/her absence, the USATKD Referee Chairman for that event or USATKD designee) may request that the Sanction Committee meet to deliberate when any of the following behaviors are committed by a coach, contestant, or official:
 - 5.2.1. Interfering with the management of a contest
 - 5.2.2. Stirring up spectators or spreading false rumor
 - 5.2.3. Aggressive or inappropriate behavior toward any technical officials
 - 5.2.4. Not leaving the contest area after the contest
 - 5.2.5. Throwing any materials and/or equipment
- 5.3. When judged reasonable, the Sanction Committee shall deliberate and take disciplinary action immediately. The result shall be announced and reported to the USATKD Chief Executive Officer.
- 5.4. The Sanction Committee may summon involved persons for confirmation of events.

Article 24. Other Matters Not Specified in the Rules

1. Matters not specified in the Rules shall be dealt with as follows:
 - 1.1. Matters related to the competition shall be decided through a consensus of the refereeing officials of the pertinent contest.
 - 1.2. The USATKD Poomsae Referee Team or its proxy shall decide matters not related to the competition.

Official Letter of Protest

Event Name: _____ Date: _____

Division: _____ Gender: _____ Ring #: _____

Competitor Name: _____

I, _____, do hereby officially submit this protest in accordance with the Code of Operations of the _____ (event name) and Article XXX of the Poomsae Competition Rules of USA Taekwondo.

Details of Protest:

Decision Delivered by the Competition Supervisory Board:

Name:	Signature:	Title:
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

NOTE: Protest must be done within ten minutes after the match is complete. A non-refundable \$100 protest-filing fee, in cash, must be submitted along with this protest form. The decision of the Competition Supervisory Board is final, and there is no further recourse. You must sign this form with this understanding.

Coach Name (Print): _____

Coach Signature: _____

Recognized Poomsae Score Sheet



Recognized Poomsae Score Sheet

Competitor:	Ring #:	Round: Preliminary Semi-Final Final															
Division:																	
Judge's Name:					Signature:							Date:					
Poomsae #1:																	
Accuracy in Basic movements	Add deductions, subtract from 4.0. Record Accuracy score in Score box (Use / for 0.1 & () for 0.3).															Score	
Accuracy in Individual Movements of Poomsae																	
Balance																	
Power & Speed	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5	
Coordination of Rhythm & Tempo / Softness & Power	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5	
Expression of Energy	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5	
Total Presentation																	
Total Accuracy + Presentation (10.0)																	

Poomsae #2:																
	Add deductions, subtract from 4.0. Record Accuracy score in Score box (Use / for 0.1 & () for 0.3).															Score

Freestyle Poomsae Score Sheet



USATKD Freestyle Poomsae Score Sheet

Competitor Name:			Ring #:			Round: (circle)								
						Preliminary			Semi-Final			Final		
Division:														
Judge's Name:					Judge's Signature:								Judge #:	
Category		Sub-Category		Score Allocation										Score
Technical Skills (6.0)	Level of Difficulty of Foot Techniques (5.0)	Jumping Side Kick		0.00	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00
		Multiple Kicks in a Jump		0.00	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00
		Gradient of Spins in a Spin Kick		0.00	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00
		Kyorugi Style Consecutive Kicks		0.00	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00
		Acrobatic Kicking Techniques		0.00	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00
Basic Movements & Practibility (1.0)		0.00	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00		
Presentation (4.0)	Creativeness			0.00	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00
	Harmony			0.00	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00
	Expression of Energy			0.00	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00
	Music & Choreography			0.00	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00
Sub-total Score (10.0)														
Deductions and Penalties														
Total Score														