

USA Judo
Refereeing (Contest) Rules
Handling of Special Situations
Guidance for National, Elite and Domestic Events
[Approved by the USA Judo Referee Commission – April 30, 2010]

The following are an accumulation of special situations that may occur during Judo Contests. The following information provides a guideline on how to handle these special situations in a standardized manner.

1. Knocked unconscious from blunt force trauma

If a competitor hits his or her head hard enough to cause unconsciousness (grade 3 concussion), the referee shall summon the medical staff to the competition area for an examination. If the medical staff determines that the competitor was rendered unconscious due to blunt force trauma, the athlete will lose that contest. That athlete will not be allowed to compete for the rest of the competition. This includes ALL competition even in other divisions. In the cases of grade 1 or 2 concussion (athlete shows signs of concussion but has not been rendered unconscious) the medical staff will determine whether the condition exists and if it does recommend the athlete not continue in that contest. The medical staff then will assess the situation and determine if the competitor is fit to continue in the competition.

2. Inhaler (Medicine)

At no time during a contest is a competitor allowed to use an inhaler (for asthma, etc.). A contest starts when a competitor steps onto the mat and finishes when the competitor steps off the mat. Use of an inhaler during a contest will result in the opponent winning by *kiken gachi*. The judges must be consulted. Due to its unusual nature the jury should also be consulted.

3. Water (Food or Drink)

Drinking a beverage or eating during a contest or a break in the contest is NOT allowed. At no time during a contest is a competitor allowed to drink liquids or eat food. If this occurs that athlete shall receive *hansoku make*. The judge shall be consulted and a majority-of-three decision shall be reached. The jury should also be consulted because of the unusual nature of this prohibited act.

4. Piercings (Ear, Tongue, Nose, Eyebrow, Lip, Nipple, Navel, Other)

A competitor may compete with a tongue piercing due to the fact that it is inside the mouth. An ear piercing, lip piercing, nose piercing and eyebrow piercing (ring or stud) must be removed. In the case of a nipple, navel or other piercings the object is forbidden and there is a very good chance that the referee will be unaware of such piercings. Because they are under the athlete's clothing, there is little chance of harm to the opponent but may harm the wearer. Athletes should be informed by coaches that no piercing should be allowed in competition. If the athlete chooses (in the case of a minor (junior), the parents would have full knowledge of any piercings) to compete and conceals the piercing, if any injury to their opponent or themselves occurs, it is entirely their fault and not that of the officials, sponsor, host or sanctioning authority. If either competitor is injured because of a piercing which was not in plain sight, the wearer should receive *hansoku make* after consultation with the judges and the jury.

5. Jewelry: (Rings, earrings, watches, bracelets, anklets, etc.)

No hard or metallic objects are allowed (Article 26.32) on the mat and they may not be covered with tape. However, jewelry is exempt from a *hansoku make* penalty but must be removed when discovered. The competitor should remove all jewelry ahead of time. If the referee sees jewelry (rings, earrings, bracelets, name tag with a metal pin, coin change, wrist watch, wallet, etc.) after the contest has started, the contest is to be stopped and the athlete asked to remove the jewelry. NO penalty should be given. Allow the contest to continue once the item is removed.

6. Hair tie with metal clip (Reiteration)

Like jewelry, if the contest has started and the referee or judges notice that the hair tie has a metal clip, the contest is to be stopped. The hair tie must be removed and replaced with a hair tie without any metal parts. No penalty should be given. This is covered under the no-jewelry exemption.

7. Long hair tied back

Any competitor (male or female) whose hair reaches or goes below the back of the collar MUST have it tied up or back so it does not hinder their opponent's ability to grip the collar behind the neck. If the hair tie slips off, the competitor must tie the hair back.

8. Contact lens

If a competitor's contact lens falls out, he or she is allowed a short time (30 seconds to a minute) to find it and either re-insert it or give it to the referee. The referee may take it to the coach or table, whichever is appropriate (Article 27 Appendix-paragraph 1.)

9. Lipstick and Makeup

Competitors are not allowed to wear lipstick or make-up of any kind while competing. If they are found wearing make-up or lipstick during the contest they will be asked to remove it and then allowed to continue in the contest. Obviously, if the referee notices make-up before a contestant steps onto the contest area, it should be corrected before entry onto the contest area.

10. *Kiken Gachi*

When a competitor loses by *kiken gachi* due to injury, that competitor, if otherwise eligible, may continue in the competition if the medical staff subsequently clears them as fit to continue. After the competitor has left the competition area this is not a referee issue. Administratively the medical staff must inform the bracket-keepers of the area where the athlete lost that the athlete is fit to continue. Practically, the competitor should request the medical staff take such action.

11. Rubber strapping around the ankle and under the foot

Any strapping or padding under the foot must not enhance traction. If the referee believes it may, the judges should be consulted. Discussion should consider the likelihood and legality of such advantage and whether *hansoku make* should be given. In every case the jury should be consulted for their judgment in this matter.

12. Tack (Adhesive spray)

The use of a spray-on adhesive on the hands or feet is not allowed. A competitor caught doing this should lose by *hansoku make*. Since this is an unsportmanshiplike act, the jury must be consulted before this penalty is given. The athlete is out of the competition. There should be serious thought of recommending to the State Governing Body and the National Governing Body the suspension of an athlete who engages in such an action.

13. Egregious Act Protocol

When a competitor commits a direct *hansoku make* the referee team may issue such a penalty as the rules prescribe. When a competitor in a medal contest commits a direct *hansoku make*, he or she shall lose the contest, however a medal which has been earned should be awarded. However there are instances when a contestant commits an egregious act, generally unsportmanshiplike conduct, an act which attracts attention and is flagrant - in such cases the referee team upon unanimous consensus shall request the chief referee have the contestant removed not only from that division but from any other divisions in which he or she may be competing. Also, if the act takes place during a medal contest the offending athlete shall not receive a medal and not be allowed to stand on the winner's rostrum and in the official record that place shall be left vacant. In order to invoke this more serious action, the chief referee and the tournament director and whatever other parties deemed appropriate shall review the incident and make their decision. In such cases if the act be deemed severe enough, the tournament officials may recommend further action to the State and/or National Governing Body for suspension for a period of time following the proper avenues of due process.

14. Accident (*Force Majeure*) Protocol

If a contestant is injured by an outside influence, the contest shall be canceled. There is no winner (Article 28 paragraph 6). The manner in which the aftermath of this situation is handled is a sport directorate issue (generally the head bracket-keeper and tournament director.) Outside influence would include a competitor falling onto a chair, something falling from the ceiling, slipping on a wet mat because of the hole in the roof, etc. The referee should call *mate* and call the medical staff. The referee would then confer with the judges. If there is a consensus then they would approach the jury or chief referee for that perspective. At this point the competitors would be asked to leave the competition area. If the injured competitor recovers quickly then they could replay that contest in its entirety. If the injured contestant cannot continue, the uninjured contestant would receive *fusen gachi* and move forward in the bracket.

15. Double *Hansoku Make* (Direct) protocol (Article 19.6)

Normally, the referee would call *mate* after both competitors committed their prohibited acts and have the players return to their marks. The referee would confer with the judges. When there was consensus they would inform the jury. If the jury concurs, the referee team would return to their positions. The referee would then give *hansoku make* to both contestants and declare *sore made*. The referee would then have the competitors bow to each other and leave the contest area. There is no hand gesture. Administratively both have direct *hansoku make* so they are out of the competition in that division, unless they committed the diving, illegal gi and/or leg grab infractions. All competitors they would have faced in future contests would receive "byes".

16. Cadet Choking Rule Protocol

If a competitor (13-16 years of age) is choked unconscious during a contest in a division restricted to that age range, that athlete is out of the competition in that division. (IJF 2009) Medical staff would be called to revive the contestant who, when revived would resume his or her mark (with medical staff assistance, if necessary). If the injured contestant cannot stand, he or she should be directly removed from the contest area. The opponent is awarded the win. When the competitors both leave the contest area, the referee informs the chief referee or jury and then the bracket-keeper that the loser in that contest should be removed from the division. If a senior division competitor is choked unconscious during a contest that athlete may continue in the competition unless the medical staff declare the injured competitor unfit to continue.

17. Reverse *Hadaka jime* (limits)

This technique is allowed if done properly. That is if the choke is done without torque being applied to the neck during its application.

From knees at head (opponent on hands and knees): As long as the neck remains in a neutral/natural position and angle and *tori's* chest is in contact with the back of *uke's* head and upper back, a reverse *hadaka jime* (MMA/BJJ guillotine) is a valid technique. However if the neck is torqued (twisting under force) and angled and it becomes dangerous and illegal then *mate* should be called immediately and the judges consulted for *hansoku make*. The jury should also be consulted because of the unusual nature of this prohibited act.

The most common torquing in this circumstance is hyperflexion, (the chin being forced into the chest.) This illegal action causes severe stress on the cervical vertebrae and spinal cord. This penalty is covered by Article 26.28.

Another common position of use is from the bottom position in 'guard' (on one's back in *ne-waza* with opponent kneeling between one's legs): Severe hyperflexion. From standing used as *hikikomi gaeshi*: Very dangerous.

18. Directed vs. Undirected Frustration (verbal or physical)

If an athlete reacts to being thrown and beats the mat with fists or hurls an expletive (swearing) where the referee can hear it but it is not directed at the referee or judges or opponent, the following action should be taken. If the physical (punching the mat) or verbal act is venting frustration at his/her own action, no punitive action need be taken as this was during the heat of battle. Though unwarranted and discouraged it should not be punished. However, if such action (hurling of an invective) is directed at the referee, judges or opponent, the possibility of unsportsmanshiplike conduct (*hansoku make*) should be discussed (Article 26.28).