

Isshinryu Hall of Fame

2026 Tournament Rules

I. GENERAL RULES

1. A competitor may compete in 1 Kata, 1 Kumite, and 1 Kobudo division (3 total).
2. Divisions may be split or combined at the discretion of Tournament Officials.
3. All competitors must wear a traditional Karate gi (including obi), clean and in good repair. (Red, blue, black or white)
 - Stitched accents allowed; jacket and pants may differ in color.
 - Patches allowed: Mizu-gami, dojo, association, rank/title, Isshin-ryu symbols.
 - Back printing allowed for dojo/association.
 - Team-style kumite uniforms allowed if unmodified.
4. Any dispute not covered will be decided by the designated Hall of Fame officials.
5. Judge and referee positioning varies by division.
 - Kata and Kobudo: Judges will be seated at the front of the ring, with the Head Judge positioned in the center chair when five judges are used.
 - Kumite: Corner judges will be seated at the corners of the ring. The Center (Head) Referee may move freely about the ring to properly observe action, manage safety, and control the match.

II. KATA RULES

1. Scoring is 7.0–9.0 using one decimal place. Example: “7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.5, 7.4”
2. Judging Criteria:

- Realistic performance with correct attitude
- Timing, rhythm, speed, power (kime)
- Breathing control
- Focus and concentration
- Correct stances, stability, and balance
- Proper hip and abdominal control
- Correct sequence (embusen)
- Strong kihon representing Isshinryu
- Theatrics should NEVER influence scoring.
- When Five judges are used: highest and lowest scores are removed.
- When Three judges are used: all scores are added.
- Tie Procedure:
 - a) Add lowest of remaining scores (if using 5 judges)
 - b) If still tied, add highest of remaining scores (if using 5 judges)
 - c) If still tied, competitors perform a kata of their choice

** High and low scores that were originally removed are NEVER brought back in for a tie breaker. Only the 3 remaining scores are used. **

- Second tie: Judges point to winner on Head referee's command.

3. Permitted kata:

- Seisan
- Seiunchin
- Sanchin
- Naihanchi
- Wansu
- Chinto
- Kusanku

- Sunsu

III. KOBUDO RULES

1. Only Isshin-Ryu weapons allowed: Bo, Sai, Tonfa/Tuifa.
 - Weapons must be traditional, controlled, and in good repair.
 - Bo must be made of wood.
 - Judges may inspect weapons and note discrepancies in weight, length, etc.
 - Non-traditional weapons are not permitted.
 - Judges may not discuss weapon evaluations with each other.
2. Permitted Kobudo forms:
 - Kusanku Sai
 - Chatan Yara no Sai
 - Kyan no Sai
 - Hamahiga no Tuifa
 - Tokuminie no Kun
 - Urashi Bo
 - ShiShi no Kun

IV. GRAND CHAMPIONSHIPS – KATA & KOBUDO

1. Black Belt 13–17: All division 1st place winners are eligible to compete. Male and female, respectively.
2. Adult Black Belts: All division 1st place winners are eligible to compete. Male and female, respectively.
3. All competitors will perform one kata of their choice for the grand championship round.

4. "Returning Grand Champion" (previous year) will be seeded directly into the finals joining all eligible Black Belt competitors.
5. Scoring range will be 8.0-10.0

**Kata and Kobudo divisions will be separated and each will have it's respected Grand Championship.

V. KUMITE RULES

1. Match Length:

- Kyu Ranks & Youth BB (17 & under): 3 confirmed points
- Adult Black Belts: 5 confirmed points
- All Kyu rank and children's matches will be 2 minutes run time. Adult male and female black belt matches will be 3 minutes run time. The head judge will call "stop time" in an instance of an injured competitor or any other extended pause in the match.
- The first competitor to reach maximum points or the highest score at the end of time will be the winner.
- The official match clock will continue to run unless the Center (Head) Referee specifically instructs the timekeeper to stop the clock.

2. Confirmed Point:

- 3 of 5 judges required (or 2 of 3)
- The center judge will call for a stop to the action, and all judges will indicate their point decision on the center referee's call. The center judge does not have to stop the match unless there is a majority decision from the corner judges. The center judge counts as one vote.

3. Required Equipment:

- Mouthpiece (single or double)
- Groin cup (for males)
- Foam hand gear (must cover fist)

- Foam foot gear (must cover toes) No soft rubber kumite shoes allowed.
- Foam head gear (must cover entire head)
- Face shield is optional and will be considered an extension of the face).
- All gear must be in good condition.

4. Scoring Criteria:

- a. Good form
- b. Correct attitude
- c. Vigorous application
- d. Zanshin
- e. Proper timing
- f. Correct distance

5. Target Areas:

- Head
- Face (light touch)
- Side of neck (not throat)
- Ribs
- Chest
- Abdomen
- Collarbone
- Kidneys
- Groin (from in front of opponent only)

6. Contact Rules:

- Light touch is allowed but not required in order to score a point.

- Excessive contact initiated by the protagonist that causes the opponent's head to move excessively will result in a warning, penalty or disqualification at the discretion of the Center Referee.
- Technique stopping 2–3 inches short may score as long as there is still extension left in the scoring technique.
- Only ONE penalty point allowed; second = disqualification
- Contact: Not required to score, but excessive contact **will be** penalized.

7. Sweeps:

- Allowed to lower leg to unbalance as long as immediately followed by a scoring attempt if an opportunity to score is available.

8. Violations:

- Stepping out of bounds of one's own accord (any part of the body being on the tape or outside is considered out of bounds) may result in penalty.
- Continuing to fight after the match has been halted will result in penalty or disqualification
- Excessive contact initiated by the protagonist that causes the opponent's head to move excessively will result in a warning, penalty or disqualification at the discretion of the Center Referee.
- A kick to the legs will result in a warning, penalty or disqualification at the discretion of the Center Referee
- Disrespectful behavior or misconduct by a competitor OR supporters may result in disqualification.
- The Center (Head) Referee may use discretion to issue an official warning for a competitor's first minor rules infraction. A subsequent infraction will result in one penalty point being awarded to the non-offending competitor. A third infraction will result in disqualification.
- All violations fall within the same penalty category. Multiple types of violations (for example, stepping out of bounds, excessive contact, continuing after the halt, or unsportsmanlike conduct) may accumulate toward penalties and disqualification.
- The Center Referee retains the authority to immediately assess a penalty point or disqualify a competitor for serious or flagrant misconduct or excessive contact.

9. The Center (Head) Referee has full authority to move as necessary to observe scoring techniques, control safety, and enforce all tournament rules while corner judges remain stationed in corners for confirmation.

VI. KUMITE GRAND CHAMPIONSHIPS

1. Adult women's Black Belt: All division 1st place winners are eligible to compete. Male and female, respectively.
2. Adult men's Black Belt: All division 1st place winners are eligible to compete. Male and female, respectively.
 - Masters Division winners are eligible.
3. "Returning Grand Champion" (previous year) is seeded directly into the final Grand Championship match.
4. All Grand Championship matches are one 3-minute round.
 - The first competitor to reach 5 points or the highest score at the end of 3 minutes will be the winner.