

Tournament Directors' Handbook

ISKF Tournament Best Practices

1st Edition

**Technical Committee
East Coast Shotokan Karate Assn.
January 6, 2018**

Technical Committee

East Coast Shotokan Karate Association

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Introduction

The *Tournament Directors' Handbook* is designed to provide assistance to individuals conducting ISKF tournaments. It is meant to be a guideline and should not be construed as a set of rules. This document will make the reader aware of proven or suggested practices, some of which may produce different results depending on the size and nature of the event.

All tournaments must follow the rules outlined in the *ISKF Tournament Rules and Regulations*. The rulebook is available at our ISKF website.

The *ISKF Instructors Training Booklet* also has information about preparation and execution of a tournament. This document is not meant to replace those instructions.

The Tournament Director must take ownership of the entire process and assign individuals with skill sets relative to the importance of the job.

Initial Planning

(8-12 months before the event)

Many tasks need to be started months in advance since they are essential to the successful running of the event.

Permission

The first task is obtaining permission. Authorization to host a tournament is required from the regional headquarters in the region in which it is to take place. Permission for national tournaments is granted by the ISKF Board of Directors. An ISKF tournament is a public representation of our organization and the running of one carries with it the responsibility of showing the very best of the ISKF to the public.

Hotel

Tournaments often take the majority of a day and can require significant travel arrangements. A dedicated block of hotel rooms is ideal but can work against the tournament budget if rooms remain unsold. Other options are to seek a reduced rate or compile a list of local accommodations that present good options of price and proximity to the tournament venue. A secondary hotel might be useful in case the first hotel manages to sell out. For collegiate tournaments, some students may be willing to host a member of an away-team.

The top-level instructors (*shihan-kai*) rooms should be arranged for and paid for by the hosting group.

Venue

The venue is an extremely important factor in the success of the event. A tournament cannot be run without sufficient floor space. For larger tournaments, the hotel itself might be the most desirable venue since it presents the fewest logistical hurdles for the participants. Fees associated with this venue will be the largest component of the budget. Alternatively, local schools and universities can present viable options that may save considerable expense. Please note that if you are able to utilize a school or university make sure it is readily accessible from the event hotel(s) and convenient for travelers.

The dimensions of the venue floor space (and judges available) will determine how many rings can be run concurrently. The minimum number of rings should be four. The approximate dimension of the venue should be at least 100 ft. (30 meters) by 150 ft. (50 meters) to accommodate rings, judges, spectators, staff, and officials. This size is a basic starting point for an ISKF tournament. The number of anticipated contestants may vary in size and adjustments to the venue requirements should be possible.

Try to arrange a "Staging Area" nearby but out of the flow of the tournament floor. This location is used to stage/gather incoming groups and prepare them to proceed into their assigned ring. The function of a staging area is to assure that all in the group are present and ready (mitts, etc.) to compete.

In addition to these venue requirements there should be enough space to offer concessions with water, other drinks, fruit, packaged snack items. Be sure the venue chosen allows these types of sales.

Tournament items like, mitts, mouth pieces, tee shirts, etc. should also be available. Registration tables should be located nearby. Also reserve space for the judges meetings and luncheon, preferably away from the competition floor.

Save the Date

A flyer or announcement of some kind with the date, location, and any other confirmed information should be given to all clubs so they can begin promoting the event. This should be sent out at the earliest possible time.

Staff

Identify the staff required to make the tournament run properly. Below are listed the officials and their responsibilities. In smaller tournaments, some of these responsibilities can be shared or combined.

Tournament Director: The Tournament Director is the main point of contact and designator of all tasks.

- **Assistant Tournament Director:** This official interacts with the judges, directs table staff, and coordinates with all other floor staff throughout the day.
- **Registration Packet Designer:** Pre-requisites for this position are skills in document design and programs such as MS Word and Adobe Acrobat. The Registration Packet Designer creates the main tournament document.
- **Liaison/Data Processor:** The intake of tournament forms and the fielding of questions is a job that becomes increasingly busy in the weeks before the tournament. This official will send out communications to keep regions, *dojos* and tournament participants informed. The Liaison/Data Processor will need to be in close contact with the Tournament Director to keep abreast of changes.
- **Financial Officer:** The Financial Officer draws up the budget, collects the money, and reimburses individuals for expenses. The FO will also be tasked with submitting the final financial report.
- **Medic:** This official is special in that the medic requires a license. The Medic is only required for the day of the tournament. A medical doctor, PA, nurse, or EMT is necessary.
- **Program Designer:** This role requires skill in graphics design as well as the ability to coordinate with contributors to the program and the vendor selected to make the tournament program.
- **Judges:** An absolute minimum of six judges per ring is required. Seven to eight judges would be ideal in order to provide for an arbitrator and substitutes.
- **Table Staff:** These individuals are responsible for preparing the competitors and assisting the judges. They should be thoroughly trained to ensure a smooth-running event. Specific task details are in the Appendix.
- **Announcer:** A large event will require a PA system, but it is good to have a stationary staff member in charge of announcing ring assignments and all other public announcements. This official also serves as a universal resource for questions from participants. At ring level and also at the main public announcing location, this person must have a clear resonating voice which may be heard over the normal background noise associated with the event. This is extremely important for eliminating confusion and keeping the event moving forward.
- **Other:** Just prior to the tournament many other tasks will need to be completed.
 - Registration: One or two individuals are needed who are available the night before and on event day.
 - Merchandise: A worker is needed to sell t-shirts, food, or other items.
 - An assistant to the Head Table needs to be appointed and briefed.
 - Appointments of runners for the Assistant Tournament Director - one or two as needed
 - Ring Set-up

- Equipment movers need to be organized and briefed.
- Wranglers: Young children often need help putting on their belts and being ushered to the edge of the ring.

Funding

The production of a tournament, local, regional, or national, is expensive. While a tournament with a good number of contestants will usually pay for itself, there are start-up costs that must be borne by the host club or region. It may be necessary to guarantee a certain number of rooms at a hotel, pay for printing and mailing materials and so on. The 2017 national tournament in Los Angeles employed a new method of fund raising by using the GoFundMe website to successfully raise thousands of dollars. Advertisements in the tournament program may bring in additional revenue, but a tournament sales staff will have to exert itself in getting sponsors. Many ISKF clubs will take out ads to support the tournament or their teams. It is important to include requests for tournament ads in the tournament packet. Vendors of martial arts equipment are usually willing to take out full page ads in the program. If they do, they may be invited to the tournament to set up a table and sell equipment.

The tournament committee should also set up a sales table where contestants may purchase mouth pieces, gloves, *gis*, books and other items of general interest.

Clinics for groups of contestants may be held on Friday evening. Registration for these clinics will require a separate fee from contestants. After paying the instructors, there should be significant profit for the tournament.

Covering all the items noted above should add to the prospect for a successful and profitable tournament.

The Second Planning Stage

(2-6 months before the event)

These plans are the heart of a successful event and run concurrently throughout the time period once the initial planning is in place.

Registration Packet

This document is the first and most informative that all participants will see. It is important to distribute it around two to four months prior to the event. If it is distributed too early it may be forgotten or lost. Early notification is needed to allow for *dojo* recruitment and training.

The document itself must have several sections:

- General Information
 - Event Date & Location
 - Deadlines
 - Registration & Payment Submission Instructions
 - Points of Contact
 - Hotel Accommodations
- Fee Structure
- Directions to the Tournament Venue and Hotel
- Tourism Information
- Schedule of Events
- Division (Youth, Adult, Senior) Rules
 - Clearly, and in great detail, identify specific differences between the official ISKF rules and what the Tournament Director indicates. For example, brown belts may only compete using *jiyu ippon kumite*. There should be no confusion on the day of the event.
 - If there are no differences then there is no need to repeat the ISKF published rules and regulations, simply refer to the ISKF website.
- Registration
 - Registration Forms (team and individual)
 - Shirt order details-include a picture of the design if possible.
 - Judges' Registration
 - *Dojo* Registration Form – This is useful for individual *dojos* to pass around to their members to collect information for a single registration packet per *dojo*.
- Competitors' Medical Questionnaire (ISKF boilerplate)
- Waiver/Release Agreement (ISKF boilerplate) Be sure to add your *dojo*, venue, and any others requiring release from liability.
- Parental Consent and Release Form (ISKF boilerplate)
- Tournament Advertising Form

It is highly recommended that the submitted forms be digital, fillable forms to prevent issues with illegible hand-writing. Electronic forms also have the benefit of speeding data entry via export rather

than transcription. This also allows individual participant submissions for a more fluid process. Online submission of forms is an option, but requires a programmer in order to implement it.

Website

A website is a good centralized resource that can be accessed at any time. Often this is an additional page on the existing *dojo* website. If no *dojo* website exists, it might be possible to have one made using a commercial provider or utilize a Facebook or other social media page.

Information such as the tournament registration packet, FAQs, and tournament results can be placed on the website minimizing the need for phone calls and emails.

Placing the registration packet on the website will reduce the costs of printing and mailing materials.

Shirt Design

Shirts are a good way to raise funds and create souvenirs. A designer and vendor should be identified a few months prior to the contest to allow time for production. The turnaround time for this task is shrinking as numerous local businesses exist to do this work.

Program Design

The program will require specialized skills in graphics design and layout. It will be necessary to enlist an outside company to assist with the production of the finished product. Contact the club representatives and advertisers for desired documents early to ensure an attractive program.

The pages suggested for the program are not limited to those shown below.

- Cover Art
- Welcome Letters
 - Tournament Director
 - Venue
 - City
 - State
 - ISKF Regional Headquarters
 - ISKF National Headquarters
 - ISKF *Honbu Dojo*
 - Country
 - Japanese Consulate
- Spectator/Participant Information
 - Tournament Logistics
 - “What is Karate?”
 - Tournament Theme
 - Informational Essays
 - *Kata* and *Kumite* Overview
 - Description of Judging Signals
 - Prior Tournament Winners
 - Tournament Officials
 - Empty Adult Finals Brackets
 - Advertisements

Insurance

It is necessary to obtain an insurance rider for the event, listing the venue as the certificate holder. Typically \$1 million is adequate but this needs to be confirmed with the venue manager. Also listed on the insurance certificate should be the hosting club, region, and ISKF.

Medals/Trophies

Research and find a reputable supplier for medals and trophies. Let the supplier know the desired time frame and ask about time needed for last minute changes. It may be desirable to coordinate the medal design with the program's cover page as well as the t-shirt design.

Note: At a national tournament meritorious awards are presented. These awards are supplied by the ISKF.

Banquet Arrangement

It is the Tournament Director's discretion whether or not to have a banquet for a regional event. In the past they have been held in the evening following the eliminations. Lately they have been held after the event finals. This is at the discretion of the Tournament Director/Committee. National tournaments must always have this event to allow the announcement of team members and other awards.

The venue for the banquet should be convenient and reasonably priced to allow the largest participation.

Financial Considerations

There are several financial considerations to be investigated during this phase. There may be monetary outlays prior to receiving fees for advertisements, registrations, etc.

There is no set plan to assist with finances in the event the hosting group does not have the funds initially to cover these up-front costs. It is suggested that this be discussed with the vendors to make suitable arrangements. It may be necessary to hold off placing orders until funds begin to arrive from the various sources.

If you encounter financial problems, contact your regional headquarters or ISKF headquarters with your concerns and issues. They may be able to suggest possible solutions.

Usually the hosting group is responsible for handling all finances. Please be reminded that the venue will represent the largest outlay of funds. Serious consideration should be given well in advance on options for the event's location.

Some possibilities for funding are found above in the section on funding.

The Third Planning Stage

(3-4 weeks before the event)

At this point in the timeline, many of the individuals in supporting roles will be either concluding their work or just getting started. Communication from participants should commence at this time.

Registrations

Registration packets should be incoming and processed. A deadline and late-fee deadline should be imposed no later than two weeks before the tournament to ensure ample time to process the data and scale the event for the competitors. Incoming and received registrations will need to be handled by the Liaison/Data Processor. If the registrations look sparse in the last week prior to the deadline, it might be helpful to communicate with the *dojos* that have not sent participants to encourage sign-up. Weekly updates to remind people to sign-up via the website or mass emails will help keep the tournament fresh in peoples' minds. Payment should be required with registration to ensure the event has working capital.

Note: It is advisable to store, in a readily available location, medical contact information forms in case of an emergency. It may be necessary to locate the form during the tournament to check for permissions or emergency contacts.

Tournament Advertising

Advertising submissions should be due before registration as it takes time to design and fabricate programs. Ideally the program advertisements should pay for the program itself. Get everything to the vendor producing the program as soon as possible. Make sure the vendor understands the need to proof the final product at least two weeks before the event and that the final product must be delivered to the Tournament Director one week prior to the event. There may be delays from the vendor so do not wait until the last minute.

Tournament Entertainment and Demonstrations

Musicians or recorded music for the tournament anthem/precession should be arranged at this time. If there is to be a demonstration (karate or otherwise) it should also be planned during this period. The hosting club is responsible for arranging demonstrations. Demonstrations by children may be given during the Children's part of the competition. Demonstrations given during the adult part of the tournament should be performed by adults. It is important to organize them several weeks prior to the tournament so that the participants have time to practice.

Program Building

At this time, all of the data needed for the program should be in the Program Designer's hands. It is possible to start work on the program before all materials are obtained, but due to the cohesive nature of the document, missing data can cause a shift in the layout. Before sending the program to the printer, use an additional editor to check for missing components, spelling errors, improper data, and/or revisions.

Medals, Plaques, and Participation Awards

The orders for awards will need to be sent to the vendor to allow processing time. Depending on the number of competitors, some events may be combined or omitted to ensure a reasonable number of matches. Medals are usually printed with the event name, *kata* or *kumite*, and first, second, or third. Be aware that there are two third place awards for *kumite* events.

Medals should have no division, age, or rank specific information. This allows maximum flexibility if medals are missing. The date and event location may be added if room permits

Youth *Shiais* may have participation awards. These can be medals, printed certificates, or ribbons.

Larger events may award plaques in addition to medals. Different trophies or awards may be used for “Best Competitor,” team, or individual events.

“Male” & “Female” best competitor awards are always given in the adult division. Depending on the size of groups and events, “Senior” and/or “Youth” best competitor awards may be issued. This is up to the Tournament Committee or Director.

Make sure the vendor has all of the medals, trophies, and awards to you one week prior to the event. Also find out the turn-around time for last minute emergencies. It is critical that someone go through the entire package to ensure that the amount and engraving is correct on each and every medal or trophy. The number of medals should also be checked to ensure that none are missing.

Tournament Materials

A great deal of equipment is needed to run the rings and the event efficiently.

Permanent Hardware

This equipment can be borrowed from other *dojos*:

- Bells - one per ring.
- Stopwatches - one per ring minimum, a backup is preferred.
- Scorecards for judges - five to seven per ring depending on the event.
- Flags – five sets per ring. A spare is recommended.
- *Kata* cards - One set of *Heian (2-5)* and *Tekki Shodan* and one set of *Sentei kata (Jion, Kanku Dai, Bassai Dai, Empi)* per ring.
- Red belts – three is a minimum number per ring to ensure that there no delays. Five to six per ring is preferred. Be sure to have a variety of sizes for kids and adults.
- Calculator – two to three per ring should be sufficient. Cell phones may also be used.

Consumable Supplies

Additional supplies used during the tournament:

- Tape (red, white, and possibly black for a ring border) Be sure to contact the venue to discuss what is allowed on the floor surface. Gymnasiums will be very specific on the type of tape to be allowed.
 - The venue may require low-adhesive painter’s/masking tape as a base layer to protect the floor. A company called the Tape Works.com makes a tape that meets

the requirement the well. Shurtape 724 is a great choice for temporary gym floor marking and can be found on-line.

- Black and Yellow hazard tape works very well on multi-courts and helps to avoid confusion.
- *Kumite & kata* scoring forms. In general, five times the number of rounds for a ring (*kata* or *kumite*) will be sufficient.
- Note/scratch pads and pencils
- Water for workers and judges

Venue Equipment

The venue should be able to provide additional equipment for setting up the tournament site.

- Officials section – It is best if the venue has a raised platform to seat the senior staff and honored guest(s). It should accommodate four to ten people depending on the tournament.
- Ring table(s), medal/trophy, and registration tables.
- Chairs for each ring - five for judges, three for table staff, one for arbitrator, and a few extra for idle judges.
- Spectator equipment such as bleachers, chairs, sale item tables etc.
- Public announcement system
- It is highly advisable to rent remote hands-free head-sets so the director, announcer, and assistants, are able to communicate quickly with one another as needed.
- Registration tables and chairs which will be set up outside the competition floor.
- Officials plaques are needed for the: Chief Judge, Chief Arbitrator, Tournament Director, Announcer, Medical staff, etc.) and ring designation signage for each ring.
- US & Japanese national flags
- Pictures of Masters Funakoshi, Nakayama, and Okazaki (be sure to provide hanging or mounting items and a highly visible location).
- Competition mats (if required).
- Club or regional banners.

Brackets

Once all submissions, including late ones, are received, it is time to begin the complex tasks of designing the brackets. Ideally this task can be performed by a single individual. Several years ago the ECSKA TC asked two East Coast members to develop software to set up competition ladders. This software has been used in a number of contests, both in the East Coast Regional tournaments and in the nationals. Contact ISKF Headquarters and they will make the software available.

1. Split competitors into divisions (Youth, Adult, Senior).
2. If there are a large number of Seniors competing, it may be advisable to add a Super Senior event (55+).
3. Adult and Senior divisions are then split by gender. Children are conditionally split by gender at higher ages in *kata* or *kumite*, as per the *ISKF Tournament Rulebook*.
4. Events are further split by rank. Children: Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced. Adult: Brown Belt and Black Belt. The Senior division is not split by rank but competitors must be brown belt or higher.

5. Junior competitors are further split by age group: 7-9, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15, and 16-17.
6. When events have two or less competitors, combining brackets may be an option. When combining brackets it is important to use common sense. For example, a twelve year old fighting a seventeen year old is not a fair event. Gender combinations are restricted in the ISKF rules and regulations.
7. Team events need to be confirmed for proper ages. If there are a large number of teams, split them into several rings and have one or two from each ring move into a final ring to conclude the event.
8. Bracket size should be multiple in numbers (2, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc.) so as rounds progress there are an even number of final competitors.
9. Seeded competitors should be separated so they do not meet until later in the bracket. If there is a bye in the first round, it should go to a seeded competitor wherever possible.
10. Competitors from the same *dojo* or region should not meet each other in their first match or, if both have byes, their second match.
11. Avoid double byes (empty brackets) in the first round. This alleviates having any second round byes which are not desirable.
12. Bracket names should have both first (1st) and last name (no abbreviations) and *dojo* if possible.
13. Brackets for collegiate competitors should also have the school alongside the contestant's name.
14. Point rounds with more than five competitors frequently produce ties and re-matches which extend the length of the competition. It is best to run one flag round bracket for six or more competitors.

Judges'/Officials' Gift Order

Since judges and officials are volunteers and usually travel great distances, it is always nice to give them a unique souvenir to show appreciation and remind them of the event. The size of the event is the driving factor in the cost of this gift.

Judges' Lunch

Judges will require a lunch break and a prepared meal. Make sure a vegetarian meal is an available option. *A la carte* options are easiest, preferably one that will not blemish a *gi*. Water, coffee, and even snacks are needed throughout the day to keep the judges sustained for their duties. It is highly advisable to avoid shutting down the entire competition for lunch. Excuse a ring or two (no more than half) for a twenty to thirty minute break for lunch. This typically starts three to four hours after beginning the tournament.

Table Staff Accommodations

The Ring Managers and their assistants are also volunteers who make the event possible. They are not usually a part of the judges' meal, but they should be party to the water, coffee, and snacks.

List of Judges

A list of all attending judges should be forwarded to the Chief Judge of the tournament. To identify them contact the ISKF or the regional headquarters to get their names. The Chief Judge will need to know their names, *dan* rank, judge's rank, and if they are competing at the event. The Chief Judge will then set up the rings with the appropriate judging staff.

Training of the Staff

The importance of a properly trained staff cannot be emphasized enough. They should be very familiar with the process, forms, and duties assigned to them. Run a few short mock events prior to the competition to practice procedures. Please review Appendix I (*Table Staff Manual*) for step by step procedures on running a ring.

It is highly recommend that all staff wear uniform colors to be readily identified as such. If you cannot afford to purchase “STAFF” t-shirts have them all wear the same color. The ISKF marketing committee is working on branding issues and has recommended the standard color used for all staff members at tournament events to be a bright red.

The Two Weeks Prior to the Event

By the final week(s) most things should be set as there is little time for change.

Event Schedule

Once the brackets have been completed, the order of the day's events can be decided. The schedule should be designed around a few criteria that can affect the flow of the tournament. It is highly advisable to follow the prescribed line of events to in order to achieve a smooth and timely execution of the tournament. This ensures minimal down time and maximum utilization of personnel.

- *Kata* events are always before *kumite* events within each division.
- Team *kata* should be the first event in a division (Senior, Youth, Collegiate, Adult).
- Team *kumite* should be the last event in a division.
- **Senior events should be run first.** Many of the senior competitors will also be tournament judges and their services will be needed for the remainder of the day. This event should be followed by youth competition. The next event would be the brown belt divisions, followed by collegiate competition. The last event would be the adult competition.
- It is advisable to have demonstrations only on the finals day of a two-day event. It is best to schedule a break at the beginning of the event or at an appropriate break time. This is typically when suspending the competition is most advantageous so that it may start up again quickly and smoothly.
- By running all events through to the finals, medals can be awarded at the end of the event, which saves time. If it is a two day event, finals will be held the next day and awards will be distributed then.
- Have a packet made that has the ladders and medals for each event. This packet should be handed to the Ring Manager at the beginning of each event if the tournament concludes that day. If finals are held the following day only the ladders need to be in the packet.
- In some events, especially Junior' events, both *kata* and *kumite* should be concluded while the contestants are in the ring. Wait until both events are finished to give out medals. This will prevent them from being lost or worn during the second (*kumite*) event.

Table Packets

Late or missed entries may require redesign of the brackets. No one but the Tournament Director should be allowed to modify the brackets. The packets given to each table should contain all instructions needed to run the event. The packet should include:

- three copies of brackets, six if the potential to split exists;
- medals, plaques, and awards;
- forms or additional paperwork that are not already placed in the binders.

Table Binders

It is advantageous to have all of the instructions, forms, and needed information to run each ring in one binder for easy access throughout the day. Items like tasks and instructions for each worker, all *kata* and *kumite* forms, names and spelling of the *kata* for reference.

Late Recruitment

If the total participation count is small, it will be worth the effort to recruit more participants after the deadline. The work required to redo the bracket is worth the effort to ensure a successful and full event.

The number of judges directly affects the number of operating rings. There may be a need to recruit additional ranked or unranked judges if there are not enough to run the event efficiently. This option should be discussed with the tournament's Chief Judge since the Chief Judge will make the final decision.

The Day Prior to the Event

Registration

When possible have either, or both, the venue and hotel set up to process registrations the night before the tournament. Also, if possible, have the ladders displayed. This might alleviate any issues the day of the event. If it is to be a one day tournament, the registration will have to take place early in the morning prior to the beginning of the contest.

During the registration period it is advisable to distribute programs, t-shirts, and other sale items (mitts, mouth pieces, etc.). Any information such as: a detailed schedule of events before, during, and after the competition and maps to local eateries, attractions, etc. should also be available at registration.

Training/Warm-Up Area

When possible, have a location available for competitors to warm-up or train prior to the tournament. Have that information available to them at registration.

Venue Set-Up

As soon as the facility allows you to come in, set-up the rings, chairs, tables, bleachers, etc., preferably the night before the tournament. Prior to this set-up you should have a good idea of your layout and spacing. Be aware that the tournament does a formal line-up at the beginning of the event so any tables and chairs that interfere with this should be moved to the sides to accommodate that practice.

Provide ample space for the judges, staff, and competitors. Remember a minimum of two meters safety zone between rings is needed. An additional two meters is advisable so that competitors are not crowded.

Spectators should be kept away from staff, judges, officials, and competitors. Keeping them on the perimeter of the venue is advisable. The staff tables should be inside, not along the outer edges, of the competition areas. Also be sure to accommodate optimal viewing of all rings from the officials' table. Check the *ISKF Tournament Rules and Regulations* to see a ring layout.

A designated medical table with adequate equipment should be positioned to allow the medical staff to view and reach all rings quickly.

Hang flags, Master's pictures, banners, etc. in appropriate locations. If space allows, adding a location with the event banner for photo opportunities with contestants and winners is a nice touch.

Printer/Copier

An office or out of the way location with a computer and a printer/copier is useful for making professional signs, copies of documents, or other data processing needs that invariably come up during a tournament.

Meetings, Exams, and Clinics (National Tournament)

For competitors a national tournament begins with their arrival on Friday evening and the elimination rounds that take place on Saturday. Those who are successful during the eliminations compete in the final events on Sunday. However, for officials and prospective dan and judge examinees, the events

begin with their arrival on Thursday evening. Friday is filled with meetings, clinics, and exams. In many cases there are special classes on Friday evenings and rooms have to be allocated for these preliminary events.

Meetings - Friday's meetings usually begin with a National Collegiate Meeting at 9 am, followed by a meeting of the National Board of Directors which begins at 10 am. The Board meeting usually runs until noon, at which time the attendees are served a lunch. It is necessary to reserve a board meeting room for these two meetings as well as a complimentary lunch, which is usually served at the conclusion of the board meeting. Coffee and light pastries should be available for attendees at these meetings.

Following the lunch, usually at 1 pm, there is a judge's clinic during which rules and procedures for the tournament are discussed with the tournament judges, followed by a judges' qualification exam. This room should be set up with at least one ring, but two to three rings will work much better as judges taking qualification exams can be divided into three groups. Many of these groups are quite large and running only one ring will take too much time. It is the responsibility of the tournament committee to see that chairs and judging equipment are available in this room as well as tables, pencils, paper and water are available for the examiners.

The judge's qualification exam is usually followed by a dan exam for higher ranks. Once again, there should be adequate seating, tables, and supplies available for the examiners

Exam Preparation – When registration for the competition is sent in, there will be a number of people applying for dan and judge rank. **It is the tournament committee's responsibility to organize the various lists of examinees for both dan and judge exams.** A number of copies should be supplied for the examiners. Forms for these exams may be obtained by contacting ISKF headquarters.

Clinics - It is a good practice to hold classes for competitors and interested parties on Friday evening. This is one way to generate additional income. Of course, the instructor should be compensated for teaching the class. A recent national tournament in San Francisco successfully ran three classes on Friday evening. The classes may be divided into beginner, advanced (brown and black belt) and an instructor's class. They provided an opportunity for many instructor trainees to work on completing their programs as well as provide additional training for graduate instructors. These classes are usually taught by *Shihankai* members or high ranked ISKF Technical Committee members. It is advisable to inform the instructors of these clinics of their assignment at least a week or so before the tournament so that they may adequately prepare for their teaching assignment.

Tournament Day

Table Supplies

Table supplies should include:

- name tags for arbitrator, ring manger, etc.;
- scrap-paper, pencils, water for staff and judges and;
- extra scoring sheets (in the binder mentioned above).

Publicize Brackets

This will allow competitors to address issues before the event in case there are illegal matchups or misplaced competitors (due to age, gender, name and other typos). This can be done on the day prior to the tournament as well. They can be hung outside the tournament venue or any location accessible to competitors.

Ring Assignments

Assigning groups to pre-determined rings has proven to be problematic, as it may increase the time between events.

The best practice is to assign only the first events to specific rings. **As mentioned above, the first to compete should be the Senior Division, beginning with the team *kata* event, so that those competing finish early and can be reassigned for judging duty.**

Once a group has nearly completed its event for the day, a staff member should make contact with the Tournament Director to stage/ prep the next group/event for that ring.

Competitor Role Call

Once the new group is in the ring an assigned staff member should, with bracket in hand, have all competitors come into the ring so a final head count can be taken. Do this for every group for *kata* and *kumite*. Further details on this process are found in Appendix I, page 17.

Announcing the Winners, Distributing Medals, Documenting the Results

If the group competing in the ring is performing both *kata* and *kumite*, wait until both events are finished before awarding medals.

A member of the table staff should hand the appropriate medals to the referee of the event once all contestants and judges have lined up and before they bow out. The *kata* medals are awarded first and then the *kumite* medals.

Once the group has finished, have a staff member take a copy of the results to the announcer to read the names of the winners over the PA system.

A complete copy of the results should be placed back into the envelope and given immediately to the Tournament Director or Coordinator. To document the results send them to the regional headquarters or ISKF Headquarters.

Awards for each event should be presented as soon as the event finishes, not at the end of the entire tournament. The only awards to be presented at the end of the tournament are those for the Best Competitors.

Two Day Events

When the competition is a two day event, the first day's event records must be carefully stored and given to the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director will create or assign personnel to set up the next day's ladders. The blank ladders for *kata* will be filled in prior to the opening of the second day's event. This will allow the competitors to pull numbers for the competition's order. On the day of the finals, only one ring is used. The first day's *kata* scores be used to seat the competitors for the finals. The contestant with the lowest score performs first and the contestant with the highest score performs last. Contestants between the two are seeded in order of their score, from lowest to highest.

For *kumite*, the ladders can be filled in prior to the start of day two. In the event competitors are coming from multiple rings, make sure that competitors from the same ring do not meet in the first match. (e. g.: competitors 1 & 2 from ring A should pair with competitors 1 & 2 from ring B, not each other).

The same procedure is followed for team events. See Appendix 1 "Team *Kumite* & Team *Kata*" for additional instructions.

The events for the second day finals should be as follows: Senior events, individual *kata* and *kumite*, (four competitors) and the team event (two teams); Collegiate (the same events and number of contestants as the Seniors); Adult (the same as the preceding).

Competitor Name Tags

Name tags are not useful for adults, but can make handling the younger (7-9 and 10-11) groups easier.

Judges' Meeting

Direct judges (or have directional signs) to the location for the judges' meeting. The Tournament Director should seek out the Chief Judge of the tournament to find out the time(s) of these meetings and make the announcement over the PA system. It is customary to have some type of refreshment for this meeting.

Judges' Lunch

As lunch time approaches, (around 3-4 hours into the competition would be preferred, and when some divisions are finished), dismiss the staff and judges for a 20-30 minute break for lunch/down time. Do not have more than half of the rings down at a time so the pace and energy of the competition remains intact. Closing down the entire competition for lunch usually causes a one hour delay from closing to restart.

Opening Ceremonies /Anthems

There are several options for the opening ceremonies. ISKF headquarters has a very nice CD of both national anthems (American and Japanese) if you have no other sources.

On elimination day opening ceremonies are limited to lining up, bowing in, and a brief intro from the head official welcoming all. The Tournament Director will give instructions for the day's events.

Finals day, in a two-day event, will have full opening ceremonies – competitor march in, color guard (if available), anthems, introductions, and demonstrations.

Splitting Brackets

One key element to speeding up an event is splitting a bracket into two parts. This is done by dividing the top and bottom portion of the ladder and sending half of the competitors to a separate ring. The rings will eliminate down to one or two remaining competitors depending on the number of rings that are running that event. Those competitors are to be sent to a ring determined by the Tournament Director for the final matches. If the event is a two day event, the competitors will be told they are moving onto the next day finals and no other competition will be held for them that day.

Spectator Management

As mentioned above, keep spectators away from the competition area. This may be accomplished by careful set-up of the venue. It may also be necessary to tape off areas to indicate the areas for officials and that which is not open to spectators.

Judges' Area

Usually all judges assigned to a ring only need a few extra chairs for sitting while not actively judging. On finals day there should be a specified area designated for all judges.

Post-Tournament Days

Tournament Results

It is highly advisable to keep two sets of tournament results. One should be given to the Tournament Director immediately after the event has concluded. The other can be either collected as a back-up, or given to the tournament Announcer to identify the winners.

The results should be arranged for easy download to the ISKF (national event) or regional website (regional or local event) for permanent record of the tournament. The report should be submitted to ISKF or regional headquarters within a week or two following the event's conclusion.

Audit Results

A detailed financial report needs to be submitted to the regional or ISKF Headquarters for review. This is to determine what needs to be done in terms of reimbursements and or payments to that organization. It also serves as a background for future events and assistance to those running the next tournament. This also should be accomplished in a timely manner, usually one or two weeks after all invoices have been received and all payments been made.

Report

A report should be forwarded to the ISKF Headquarters with copies to the regional headquarters. This report should contain comments on how successfully the event ran. It should also note any problem areas. This will aid future directors, and allow this handbook to be revised where needed. (See the Report form at the end of the manual.)

Appendix I

Table Staff Manual

Composition and Function of the Table Staff for I.S.K.F. Tournaments

Composition

A well-trained table staff is necessary to ensure the efficient processing of competitors through a ring. Whenever possible, the staff should be selected and trained well in advance of the tournament. A complete table staff should consist of: one Ring Manager, one Ring Manager's Assistant, one Score Keeper, one Point Caller, one Time Keeper, and two Wranglers. The position of Wrangler is especially important for children's tournaments. Some of these tasks can be performed utilizing the same person.

Ring Manager

The Ring Manager is the only member of the table staff who should communicate with the referee or arbitrator and will bear primary authority over all matters that relate to processing competitors through the ring. For this reason the Ring Manager should be the most experienced member of the staff. The Ring Manager may delegate responsibilities to the Ring Manager's Assistant when deemed necessary *e. g.* time-keeping in *kumite* matches. A list of the Ring Managers and their Assistants should be given to the Chief Judge and Chief Arbitrator in case they need to contact them.

Ring Manager's Assistant

The role of the Ring Manager's Assistant is to support the Ring Manager. The Ring Manager's Assistant will be responsible for any tasks delegated by the Ring Manager. That may include those of the positions listed below and will be dependent on the size of the event and discretion of the Ring Manager.

Score Keeper

For larger tournaments the Ring Manager may assign a separate Score Keeper. This will be done when deemed necessary so that the Ring Manager can focus on other responsibilities.

Time Keeper

During timed events (*kumite*) the Time Keeper must maintain the proper passage of time.

Point Caller

The Point Caller will announce both individual and total scores for *kata* during point rounds.

Wranglers

The role of Wrangler is only required for children's tournaments. Before the tournament begins the Ring Manager will assign one Wrangler each to both red and white side. The Wranglers will be responsible for maintaining control over their assigned group of children, making certain that they are in position and ready to compete when their names are called.

Ring Function

After the table staff has been appointed to a ring, the Ring Manager's first responsibility is to make certain that all necessary equipment and paperwork is present (see pp. 9-10). Next, the Ring Manager or assigned person will need to use the ladders provided to the ring to check-in the competitors for the first event. As the competitors are checked-in they should be assigned to either the red or white side. If a competitor is not present, notation should be made on the ladder beside that competitor's name. A runner should be sent to the information table where an announcement will be made in attempt to notify the missing competitor. If the competitor is still not present when his or her name is called the match will be forfeited.

If a competitor is present, but not assigned to the ring, the competitor should be directed to the appropriate ring or the information table to find out where he or she belongs. **No changes should be made to the tournament ladders without the approval of the Tournament Director.**

Once these first two tasks are completed the Ring Manager should inform the referee that competitors are ready to be processed through the ring. At the referee's discretion, the judges, referee, arbitrator, and competitors will line up and bow into the competition. At this point the Ring Manager should announce the names of the first two competitors to enter the ring, followed by the names of the two competitors on deck. The names should be announced red (*aka*) side first and white (*shiro*) side second. To gain the attention of the competitor being called to the ring, it is best to say their name first then red or white side. Ex:

Say: "First up (name) red side, (name) white side" pause "on deck (name) red side, (name) white side."

At the conclusion of the match, the referee will announce the decision. At that time, the Ring Manager will circle the name of the winning competitor, announce the winning side, announce the next competitors and those on deck, and finally transfer the name of the winning competitor to the next rung of the ladder. It is important that this order be followed, starting with the circling of the winning competitor's name, in order to avoid transferring the wrong competitor to the next rung on the ladder.

Conclusion of the Individual *Kumite* Event

In *kumite* the sequence of events will continue until only two competitors remain. If the event is to be concluded that day, the Ring Manager will announce that it is the last match. The final two contestants may be sent to another ring. If it is a two-day tournament, they may compete for first place on the second day.

Say: "Final match (name) red side, (name) white side."

When the final match is over, after announcing the winner, the Ring Manager will note the final results on the ladder next to the top competitors' names. There will be one first place, one second place, and two third place awards.

Conclusion of the Individual *Kata* Event

Kata competition will conclude with a slightly different format. Flag round matches will be suspended when there are four competitors left on the ladder. In the event there are a small number of competitors in the event, the flag round will be eliminated. The Ring Manager will announce the individuals who will advance to the point round. At the discretion of the Tournament Director, the Ring

Manager may have the competitors draw lots to determine the order in which they will perform. This is not a tournament rule but, in the interest of fairness, it can be done in lieu of having the competitors perform in the order of the ladder set-up.

Say: "The following competitors advance to the point round: (name) (name) (name) (name). Please report to the Ring Manager's table."

Once the competition order has been determined the Ring Manager will transfer the names in appropriate order to the *kata* scoring sheet, and announce the beginning of the point round.

Say: "First up (name) on deck (name)."

After each competitor performs a *kata* the referee and judges will display scores. At that time the Point Caller will announce each of the individual scores. The Point Caller will start with the referee and continue in a clockwise direction. The Point Caller's deportment is important. The Point Caller will stand in the informal attention stance (*musubi-dachi*) and face the judge whose score is being announced. The Point Caller will extend an arm to indicate which judge's score is being announced. The hand of the extended arm should be held in the form of a knife-hand (*shuto*). The extension of the arm should be similar to that of a referee calling stop (*yame*).

Say: "Scores are" pause "score" pause "score" pause "score" pause "score" pause "score." The pause is important to allow the Score Keepers to record the scores correctly.

Once all of the scores have been announced the highest and lowest score will be discarded. Both the Ring Manager and the Ring Manager's Assistant will then independently add the remaining scores. After the math has been completed the Ring Manager will tell the assistant the total score. If the Ring Manager's Assistant has arrived at the same total score, a response of "I concur" will be given. If the totaled scores are not the same, the individual scores will need to be re-added. After a total score has been agreed upon, it will be announced by the Point Caller.

Say: "Total score" pause "(score)."

After all four competitors have received a total score the Ring Manager will check for ties. If there are tied scores the Ring Manager will inform the referee and then inform the competitors.

Say: "There is a tie for (blank) place. The following competitors will need to perform a second *kata*. First up (name), on deck (name)."

Important Note: The scores that are given during the tying round will only determine the position of the tie. Ex.: If the tie is for second place and the scores exceed those given to the first place competitor it does not change that position. That score becomes second place and the lesser score becomes third place.

When the Ring Manager determines that there are no ties, the Ring Manager will note the positions on the score sheet next to the competitors' names. There will be one first place, one second place, and one third place. The Ring Manager will then inform the referee and the event will be concluded.

Team Kumite

For a team *kumite* event the captain of each of the two teams will report to the Ring Manager and provide their team's fighting order. Team captains have the right to alter this order at the beginning of

every team *kumite* event. The Ring Manager will transfer the competitor's names in appropriate order to a *kumite* scoring sheet. At this point the Ring Manager will inform the referee that the competitors are ready to be processed. When announcing the matches the Ring Manager should always start with red (*aka*) side. The Ring Manager will first announce the team name followed by the name of the individual competitor. The competitor on deck should not be announced for team *kumite*. The first individual match in a team *kumite* event should be announced using the phrase "first up." All additional individual matches should be announced using the phrase "next up."

Say: "First up for (team name) (competitor name). First up for (team name) (competitor name)."

Say: "Next up for (team name) (competitor name). Next up for (team name) (competitor name)."

In the event of a tie score at the conclusion of the final individual match, the arbitrator will inform the Ring Manager as to how to proceed with the match.

Team *Kata*

For a team *kata* event the captain of each team will report to the Ring Manager to check-in and be randomly assigned a competing order. At that point the Ring Manager will inform the referee of the total number of teams in the event and that the competitors are ready to be processed. From that point forward the function of the table staff is identical to the conclusion of individual *kata*, with the exception that announcements are made with team names instead of individual names.

Time Keeping for Free-Sparring Matches

The Ring Manager will use a stop watch to time the duration of free-sparring matches. The duration of these matches will usually be two minutes. From the moment that the referee starts the match time will continue to run, unless the referee signals the Ring Manager or Time Keeper to stop the clock. That signal should be both hands in the shape of a "T" and the command "*jikan*" or "stop" is called. If the signal is given to stop the clock, time will resume as soon as the referee restarts the match. When only thirty seconds remain in the match the Time Keeper will announce "thirty seconds." When time runs out, the Time Keeper will announce "time."

Clerical Errors

When a clerical error is discovered that could have an effect on the outcome of an event, the Ring Manager should notify the arbitrator immediately so the issue can be resolved appropriately according to the ISKF tournament rules.

Post-Event Activity

After a ring has finished processing competitors the Ring Manager will gather all records of the events that occurred in the ring. The records should be checked for proper labeling. Finally, the Ring Manager will follow the directions of the Tournament Director as to the disposition of the records.

Tournament Director's Report Form

To: Chairman – ISKF
From: Tournament Director

Date Event

1. It would have been beneficial to me in the running of my tournament if I had additional information on: (list or describe areas, use other pages if necessary.)

2. I found the following sections to be unclear or confusing:
(specify)._____

3. Sections requiring additional information (specifically what?).

Signature

Title

