

FALL CLASSIC EMPTY HAND/WEAPON FORMS RULES

Rules and Responsibilities - Forms, known as Tao Lu (套路) in Chinese, are an essential aspect of training in traditional martial arts. A form is composed of different stances, footwork patterns, blocking movements, evasive actions, striking and kicking techniques, or weapons work. They represent the real fighting experience of the masters who developed the forms.

A style's unique characteristics can be clearly distinguished in the execution of the forms that represent it. Thus, northern styles are usually distinguished from their southern counterparts, as are internal and external styles. Though, understand that some styles do mix southern, northern, external, and internal concepts.

In an attempt to keep the traditions of martial arts alive, categories have been created and separated to allow competitors the opportunity to be judged according to style and expertise. Before signing up for a category, please ensure that what you are performing fits into that category.

The judges are trained to look at the qualities of that style for the division category. The judges may advise a competitor to move into another division based on the form or style the competitor is performing. For example, if someone performs Hung Gar, they should not participate in a Northern division. Or, if the competitor is performing Tai Chi, they should not sign up for the Southern division. Be aware if a competitor decides to sign up for a division, they will be judged by the qualities and characteristics of that division.

It is recommended that forms presented for competition should commensurate the skill level of the practitioner or higher. For example if a competitor is signed up for Advanced Northern but performs Tan Tui, which is a beginner form for many systems of Chinese martial arts, the judges may allow more room for mistake for someone performing a higher difficulty form than someone performing a more basic set. The competitor who performs the higher difficulty form with more mistakes may score higher than someone performing something less difficult with less mistakes.

As a competitor, it is your responsibility to make sure that you perform what is announced during your presentation to the judges before performing. The judges are well trained and may know the form you are presenting. If you begin performing something not resembling that form, the judges reserve the right to stop the performance. This is to assist competitors to be in the appropriate divisions to ensure they are judged fairly based on their skillset. As an example, a competitor says they are a Wing Chun student and will be performing Sim Nim Tao but then starts to perform Tan Tui, this performance will be stopped and addressed as not scorable. The judges will then guide that competitor to the appropriate division.

If a competitor decides to participate in a division that is inappropriate for their skill set, the head judge reserves the right to deduct .50 from the final score. The competitor will also not be allowed to medal in that division.

There is also the gray area for styles that are more modern or eccentric that don't fit into a subcategory of northern, southern, etc. An example is Kenpo. Kenpo has many variations. Some Kenpo have more of an Okinawan flair as opposed to other styles of Kenpo that are more Chinese in execution. The Forms Other category allows these and other systems the freedom to be judged based on martial concepts and not be restricted to the characteristics of northern and southern styles.

If a competitor must restart their form for whatever reason, they will be allowed to start over. A restart will only be allowed once and will result in a mandatory .10 point reduction from the overall score by the head judge.

**If a restart is necessary due to a spectator, or other outside interference, entering the ring, that competitor will not be penalized.*

Competitors should try to limit their forms to 3 minutes max. If you need more time, please inform the head judge in your ring prior to competition.

If competitors need more ring space, please inform the head judge before the form performance. The head judge will do their best to ensure the competitor has adequate space to safely perform their form. Without notification, points could be deducted from the competitors score for stepping out of the ring.

Weapon Divisions - For advanced teen/adult competitors the following weapons shall be split into their own divisions in order to ensure fair competition. The weapons are as follows: Staff (Gun/Gwun), Saber (Dao), Spear (Qiang/Cheung), and Straight Sword (Jian/Gim). Any other weapons such as halberds (kwan dao, pudaos, etc.), double weapons (sabers, swords, daggers, etc.), flexible weapons (three section staff, rope dart, chain whip, etc.), and unconventional weapons (bench, fan, etc.) will fall into the Other Weapon category.

In certain divisions, you will see the classification of "Long Weapon" or "Short Weapon". Long Weapons are categorized as spears and staffs while Short Weapons classify as straight sword and broadsword. Other Weapons continue to classify as anything other than spear, staff, straight sword, and broadsword. Examples of Other Weapons include double broadsword, chain whip, guan dao, rope dart, hook swords, etc.

If a competitor drops their weapon, but continues to move in a martial way toward their weapon, retrieves it, and then continues the form without interruption, then there will be no mandatory point deduction. However, if the competitor does not do so in this manner, he/she will receive a

mandatory .10 point reduction from their overall score by the head judge. Restarts as a result of a drop will follow the restart rules mentioned above.

All weapons will be inspected by Fall Classic officials before their division. All weapons must be of good quality with no broken or loose parts. Judges may refuse to allow use of a weapon deemed to be unsafe or fragile, or even non-appropriate for the form of division. If a weapon breaks during a form, the competitor may begin again with no point deduction, with a different weapon of the same genre, as per the head judge's discretion. No Wushu weapons will be allowed in the traditional weapons division. For a weapon to be deemed appropriate for traditional divisions, it must "support its own weight" and be allowed for use by the judges.

Scoring - Scores are based on the 6.00 – 9.99 point system:

- Beginner: 6.00-7.50
- Intermediate: 7.00 – 8.50
- Advanced: 8.50-9.99

Competitors order of competition will be randomly listed on the division listing. The first three competitors will compete before any scores are awarded. After the third competitor has finished, the judges will confer with each other about the performances. The first competitor will be called back for scoring followed by the second and then the third. Each judge's scores are reported to the scorekeeper. The scorekeeper then tabulates each judge's score which is then averaged into the final score. The competitor's final score will determine placement in the division. After the first three competitors are scored, all remaining competitors in the division will then be judged and scored immediately upon completion of their form.

**Ties between two competitors will be broken by having each competitor performing again. Competitors may choose to perform the same form or another.*

Each competitor will be expected to demonstrate a form based on the martial art style/styles in which he/she has been trained in. Judges will score empty hand/ two person and weapon forms based on the following criteria:

- Stances – strong and correct
- Eyes – follows the form or movements (i.e. doesn't stare at the floor)
- Qi – displayed based on the level of the competitor
- Spirit – is the form alive and believable
- Choreography – did competitor(s) forget, leave out moves or stop the form prior to its ending
- Strength or Power – are the movements martial in nature
- Command of the weapon – if performing a weapon form
- Teamwork - if performing a 2 man set

Arbitration and Disputes: Any instructor or competitor disputing the results of a match and wishing to have arbitration of a match for any reason must notify the Tournament Director within 15 minutes of the end of the division. They must then provide a written request and \$300 arbitration fee to the Tournament Arbitrator within 30 minutes of the end of the match to have resolution that same day. If the arbitration is settled in favor of the arbitrating parties, a full refund of the arbitration fee will be given. If the arbitrating parties are not settled in their favor, no refund for the arbitration fee will be given.