

Report on 2015 European Judo Union (EJU) Annual Kata Judging Seminar and Examination  
Rome, Italy, March 20 -21, 2015

US Participants:

Eiko Shepherd, Karen Whilden and Diane Tamai Jackson

Travel and Transportation:

Participants arranged their own travel and provided the details to USA Judo as part of registration. EJU provided transportation to and from the venue.

Hotels and Meals:

The training seminar was held in Italian national judo, karate, and wrestling training center. FIJLKAM - Italian Judo Federation, via dei Sandolini 79, 00122 Ostia Lido – Roma. The accommodations were dormitory-style rooms, each with a private bathroom. The meals were cafeteria-style and included in the cost of the lodging. Wifi was available in the front office lobby area and in the rooms at no additional charge.

Registration:

Registration was conducted through USA Judo. Upon arrival, each individual's passport was checked.

Judging Seminar:

On March 20 - 21, 2015, Eiko Shepherd, Karen Whilden and Diane Tamai Jackson attended the EJU kata judging seminar in Ostia, near Rome, Italy. This kata judging seminar is held annually by the EJU. The participants arrived on Thursday, March 19, 2015. The seminar was held on March 20, 2015. Testing for European continental level judges was held on March 21, 2015.

Each year, two to three katas are covered. This year, the katas were Nage No Kata, Ju No Kata and Goshin Jitsu. The participants could test for up to two certifications of the kata offered.

The seminar began with opening remarks and kata history by Mr. Franco Capelletti (Vice President). The other EJU Kata Commissioners, Mr. Shoji Sugiyama(Kata Commissioner), Mr. Cataldo (Aldo) D'Arcangelo (Kata Competition Commissioner), Mr. Michel Kozolski (Kata Competition Commissioner), Mr. Eric Veulemans (Kata Course Commissioner) welcomed the candidates. Aldo also welcomed the United States representatives.

The first morning was classroom training. The Commissioners reviewed general criteria of small, medium, and big errors and forgotten techniques. Of particular note, the 2015 changes to the judging evaluation criteria were discussed. The Commissioners described a new European kata competition category for youth who are Nikyu to Shodan. It is entitled "Randori no kata" and consists of performing first three sets of Nage no kata or first set of Katame no kata.

Kata Judge Positioning and Demeanor:

Kata judge positioning at and exiting from the table was discussed. The Commission explained that the judges should exit from the left side of their chair as the proper process for exiting the judging table.

At each competition, a general briefing should be given and must be attended in order to be able to judge. Judges should not have any contact with the competitors when an individual is in a judging function or in reserve. Contact may not occur until after the awards ceremony.

Judging and Competitor Attire:

The attire for kata judges should be a navy blue or black jacket, grey trousers, white shirt, kata judge tie which indicates the level of the judge, and black socks and shoes. Upon an individual's first EJU kata judge certification, the new judge is given an EJU tie and patch.

For competitor's Judogi is a white gi with either blue or red IJF labels. The same type of label is required for both the jacket and pants, but a different label for the belt is acceptable. The shiai rules for length apply to the kata competitors. Improper gi size or length is considered a medium mistake on the opening and closing score.

### Judge Certification Levels:

The EJU kata judging test consists of participation in the seminar, a written test, and a practical demonstration. The minimum age for testing is 30 years old and minimum rank is 4th dan. There is no longer an upper age limit for testing as an IJF kata judge. The examination is based on:

1. Knowledge of the rules, attitude and organization - written
2. Knowledge of the kata principles - practical on the mat

The written test consisted of twenty questions. The questions were 1-line scenarios, for which the candidate identified the level of error (i.e., Small, Medium, Big, or Forgotten). The practical demonstration consisted of five requests to explain and demonstrate a technique or sequence of either uke or tori's role. For the written test, a demonstration was given for each scenario. For the practical examination, two EJU Commissioners scored the candidates. Up to 20 points was given for the written test and up to 20 points could be achieved for the practical examination. Additionally, the candidate must judge and be evaluated at an EJU-level event.

There are three levels of certification per kata which is based on the percentage of techniques evaluated according to the majority of the five Judges:

- A level: over 70 %
- B level: between 55 % and 70 %
- C level: under 55 %

### General definitions and examples of forgotten techniques and mistakes:

The team's total kata score is calculated summing each technique and opening and closing scores. For the score of each technique, the highest and lowest scores are discarded and the scores for the remaining three judges are summed. General scoring is: Forgotten techniques (-10 points, plus half of the total score), and Big error (-5 points), Medium error (-3 points), and Small error (-1 points).

**Forgotten technique:** omitted, reverse starting position: opening ceremony, change sequence, technique done in wrong place, sequence forgotten.

**Big mistake:** Incorrect principle executed in the technique. Examples include: performing hane-goshi or uchimata on the right leg instead of uchimata on the left leg; performing o-goshi instead of uki-goshi; loss of control when throwing; loss of belt (pants, jacket, etc); loss of weapons during a technique. For every technique without a big mistake, the minimum score has to be 5. A maximum 1 of one Big mistake can be scored per technique.

**Medium mistakes:** One or more elements of the principle are not correct. Walking, position and other process mistakes are often Medium mistakes. Examples include: starting position for bowing and also for each technique; engagement distance between uke and tori to begin a technique; lack of effectiveness and realism are medium mistakes (e.g., jumping); loss a bandage (deducted as part of the closing ceremony score), weapons in kata area. A maximum of 1 medium mistake can be scored per technique.

**Small mistakes:** Being described as an imperfection. Examples include: incorrect Tsugi-ashi. A maximum of 2 small mistakes can be scored per technique.

**Medium/Small mistakes:** there are many elements that could be scored either small or medium. It is the severity of the mistake as viewed by the judge to be either small or medium. Examples include: incorrect tsugi-ashi; tori throws with a bent leg in Harai-goshi

#### General Comments for Judges:

Change for 2015: Fluidity is included in each technique. Previously it was included in only opening and closing ceremony scores.

A judge should decide on the score after watching the complete technique

Scoring for each technique ends at the throw or submission. Mistakes in process while transitioning (e.g., walking, fixing judo gi, loss of bandage) are applied to the next technique.

Scoring for opening ceremony starts from bowing onto the mat until taking shizenhontai after the bows are completed.

#### Nage no kata: (see 2015 IJF Kata Evaluation criteria for complete list)

- Big mistake: Tori threw with the wrong technique
- Medium mistake: Uke pushes on the attack; Uke or tori steps backwards to get grip when starting Uchi-mata or Tomoe-nage; Uke does not defend by raising his upper body in kata garuma.
- Small mistake: grabbing pants in Kata-guruma; position of tori's knee (on the ground) is not slightly inside of shizenhontai in Uki-otoshi.
- Small/Medium mistake: Technique performance incorrect direction and fall; engagement distance incorrect; Tori does not sweeps horizontally and lifts uke's body in Okuri ashi harai; Tori raises his arms for kuzushi in Uki-otoshi.

#### Goshin Jitsu (see 2015 IJF Kata Evaluation criteria for complete list)

- Big mistake: Loss of weapon during technique; Tori loses control of Uke
- Medium mistake: Wrong direction of a technique; Kiai absent when one is expected (e.g., with a punch); incorrect speed and fluidity, effectiveness and realism
- Small mistake: Tori looks down at Uke (instead of to the front) when applying armlock; Kiai when one is not expected (e.g., with a grab or perry).

#### Ju no kata (see 2015 IJF Kata Evaluation criteria for complete list)

- Medium mistake: Lack of decision, effectiveness and realism; engagement distance between uke and tori incorrect; at the conclusion of Muni oshi, Tori steps in left foot, then right foot (instead of right/left);
- Small mistake: change pace during technique
- Small/Medium mistake: Uke's does not gradual lift of the arm to target belt, throat, eyes in Tsuki-dashi; Uke's strike is off-target



USA Participants with the EJU Kata Commissioners at the 2015 European Judo Union (EJU) Annual Kata Judging Seminar and Examination in Rome, Italy

Pictured left to right: Karen Whilden, Michel Kozolski, Eric Veulemans, Shoji Sugiyama, Eiko Saito Sheperd, Cataldo D'Arcangelo, Diane Tamai Jackson