

# Rules and Regulations for Judging Traditional Forms

Interim Rules for 2005

July 2005

## Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Foreword	2
1 Forms Officials	3
2 Forms Contestants	3
3 Scoring	4
4 Scoring Criteria for Forms Contests	5
5 Scoring Criteria for Weapon(s) Forms Contests	6
6 Next Steps	8

## Foreword

There are arguments both for and against participation in competition. Deng Ming-Dao said “Once Learning is acquired, competition is inevitable. If you want to excel you must compete”. This philosophy is based on the premise that the competition in which the student enters will be judged consistently and without bias. The issue is, of course, that the judging of traditional forms can be subjective, unless there are a set of rules and regulations, including criteria for judging, to which the judge can refer when making their judgments. In order to make an objective judgment, it is essential for the judge to be professional, impartial, fair, consistent and knowledgeable in the application of these rules and regulations; and to be competent to make an assessment based on the criteria for judging traditional forms.

The rationale behind having levels of competition for beginners, intermediate and advanced practitioners is to encourage participation. Those entering tournaments as beginners today will, in time, be the advanced entrants of tomorrow. Whilst the standard of performance will differ the criteria for judgment should not. This is why under the traditional forms rules there is a lower score range for beginners, and higher score range for intermediate, and higher still for advanced. At the beginner level, participation in competition is an important learning tool. The student entering at beginner level needs to demonstrate that they have been practicing enough to make the techniques automatic; and that they are able to perform effectively under pressure – without hesitation or mistakes. Clearly, if the student has to stop and try to remember a form half-way through it, then their score will be low. At the advanced level, participation in competition is more about demonstrating excellence: the performance is expected to be practiced, precise and focused.

Many students believe that the people against whom they compete are their enemies and that if they are not successful then the judges are unfair or biased. These are misconceptions that we, as both judges and instructors, should strive to eliminate. The true opponents are the students' own fears and anxieties. The people against whom they compete, and the judges who provide a fair assessment of their performance, are part of the process to develop the participant and their performance specifically and martial arts generally. The student should be fully prepared for tournament. They should know what to expect, what to do and when to do it. If we are to make traditional forms competition more professional, then the participants would need to know what is expected of them in order to participate successfully.

Judges should be formally trained to ensure that they are fully conversant with the rules and regulations for judging forms and tested to ensure that they are competent to judge. Knowledge of their own style is not enough, especially given the diversity in the Chinese martial arts. A knowledge and understanding of the criteria for judging is essential, and a comprehension of style (including weapons) characteristics is also necessary. Clearly, if a judge is a practitioner of a Southern style it would seem sensible to have them judge Southern forms; but their judgment should be objective and based on the criteria for judging, not their style necessarily. This is also the case for Northern and Internal styles.

This document proposes a format for traditional forms contest and the associated judging criteria for regional and national tournaments, for the British Council for Chinese Martial Arts (BCCMA) to consider.

## **1. Forms Officials**

- 1.1 Officials are as follows: one Head Judge, five Scoring Judges, one Score Keeper, and one Administrator (who will also act a Time Keeper for Internal Forms Contests). One Scoring Judge is positioned in each corner of the Forms area and directly opposite the Head Judge. The Score Keeper and Administrator are positioned either side of the Head Judge. If there is a shortage of Judges, then the format can be reduced to a minimum of three Scoring Judges.
- 1.2 Whilst the Forms Area is in session, the Judges' view of the area must not be obscured.
- 1.3 The Judges will line up in front of the Head Table. The Administrator will call the contestants from the Ready Area to line up in front of the Judges. The Judges and the contestants will salute. The contestants will return to the Ready Area and the Judges will take their positions around the Forms Area.
- 1.4 The Head Judge will manage the Forms Area. The Head Judge will provide the Final Score for the contestants' performance based on an average of the scores to be counted, given by the Scoring Judges; and will arbitrate any issues which may arise. In matters requiring arbitration, the Head Judge's decision is always final.

## **2. Forms Contestants**

- 2.1 The contestants shall arrive at and sit in orderly fashion in the Ready Area at least 15 minutes before the designated time of their performance. If their performance will make use of weapon(s) these should also be taken to the ready area.
- 2.2 The contestant, upon hearing his/her name announced, shall walk briskly to the centre of the contest area (with their weapon, if appropriate), face the Head Judge and salute. The entry to the area is the base line directly opposite the Head Table. The Contest Area should not be crossed whilst in session.
- 2.3 The contestant should perform a traditional form in which they are proficient, and in line with the category in which they are entered. Any performance deemed to be outside the category in which they are entered will not be scored, and the contestant will be disqualified.
- 2.4 The contestant, when at the centre of the Forms Area, should adopt a 'ready' position and announce their name, their form and their style; and then wait in a 'ready' position until they hear or see the command to begin their performance.
- 2.5 The contestant should be aware of the parameters of their form and should move to a sensible position to begin their form.
- 2.6 The contestant should salute the Head Judge and then begin their form.
- 2.7 After completing their form, the contestant should salute the Head Judge and then return to the centre of the Forms Area and wait in the 'ready' position.

- 2.8 The Head Judge will give a command to return to the Ready Area, at which point the contestant can leave the Forms Area and return to the Ready Area. The contestant must not leave the Forms Area arbitrarily.
- 2.9 A contestant whose name has been called three times at ten second intervals by the Head Judge and fails to appear in the Forms Area shall be disqualified.
- 2.10 Any and all actions performed by a contestant during his/her scheduled time shall be deemed the basis for determining his/her scores.

**3. Scoring**

- 3.1 In categories of three or more contestant, the Head Judge should call a Judges' meeting to ensure consistency of scoring. The first three contestants should perform without being awarded a final score until after the Judges' meeting. Following the Judges' meeting the first three contestants will then be awarded their final scores.
- 3.2 The highest and lowest scores are eliminated, and the remaining three scores are averaged together for the contestant's total score. In the event of a tie, the highest and lowest scores are added back in with the other three, and the original five marks are averaged for the contestant's total score. If they are still tied, the Head Judge has the option to call a Judge's meeting to make a decision or have the tied contestants perform their form again.
- 3.3 The Scoring Ranges are as follows:

Category	Low	High	Maximum
Advanced	8.00	9.50	9.99
Intermediate	7.00	8.50	9.00
Beginner	6.00	7.50	8.00

- 3.4 The Score Cards show three figures. The score below is 7.25. This could have been given for a low standard performance in the Intermediate's contest or a high level performance in a Beginner's contest.



#### **4. Scoring Criteria for Forms Contests**

##### **4.1 Quality of Technique (3 points total)**

###### *Quality of hands, legs, stance and movement*

Deduct a minimum of 0.05 points for each mistake. If the contestant makes the same mistake more than once, deduct no more than a total of 0.2 points for that error.

###### *Degree of difficulty*

Form difficulty should be appropriate for the skill level of the contestant (for example, a sufficiently complicated and demanding form for advanced level contestants). Though this is a subjective area, deductions should begin at 0.05 and should not exceed 0.3 for an inappropriately simple form.

###### *Skill*

To evaluate this area, place the contestant in one of three categories: Above Average, Average, or Below Average. If their performance is Above Average, then deduct from 0.05 to 0.2 points from their total score. If they show Average skill ability, deduct from 0.2 to 0.4 points. Finally, if their performance was of a Below Average skill level, deduct from 0.4 to 0.6 points. If the contestant forgets the form, and after a short pause, continues the performance from the same position, then deduct 0.1 to 0.3 points, depending on the severity.

##### **4.2 Strength (3 points total)**

###### *Smoothness of force*

Again, place the contestant's strength level into one of three categories: Above Average, Average, and Below Average. Deduct points accordingly. Above Average: 0.05 to 0.2. Average: 0.2 to 0.4. Below Average: 0.4 to 0.6.

###### *Balance*

Use the same categorisation as in the "smoothness of force."

###### *Coordination among hands, eyes, body and steps.*

Use the same method as in "smoothness of force" and "balance."

##### **4.3 Spirit (3 points)**

###### *Spirit*

The judge can make their own decision here, and deduct from 0.05 points and greater.

*Rhythm*

Use the same method as in “spirit.”

*Features of the form*

Use the same method as in the “spirit” and “rhythm” of the form.

4.4 Martial Ethics (1 point)

Ideally, the contestant should receive the full point in this category. The judges, may, however, deduct points according to mistakes or violations of the following categories.

*Dress*

Worth 0.33 points.

*Personal appearance*

Worth 0.33 points.

*Courtesy*

Worth 0.34 points.

4.5 Other Remarks – For Head Judge Only

If the contestant forgets his/her form and restarts the form again from the beginning, the Head Judge should deduct 0.5 points from the contestant’s final score.

**5. Scoring Criteria for Weapon(s) Forms Contests**

5.1 Quality of Technique (3 points total)

*Quality of eyes, body and steps*

Deduct a minimum of 0.05 points for each mistake. If the contestant makes the same mistake more than once, deduct no more than a total of 0.2 points for the same error.

*Proper characteristics of the weapon*

- Proper characteristic: Deduct a minimum of 0.1 points for each characteristic error; if the contestant makes the same mistake more than one time, deduct no more than 0.3 points.
- Degree of difficulty: This requires the Judge’s discretion. Deductions begin at 0.05 points and no more than 0.5 for an inappropriately simple form.

*Skill*

Again, place the contestant's skill level into one of three categories: Above Average, Average, and Below Average. Deduct points accordingly. Above Average: 0.05 to 0.2. Average: 0.2 to 0.4. Below Average: 0.4 to 0.6. If the contestant inappropriately impacts his/her body with the weapon during the form, deduct 0.05 to 0.3 points, depending on the severity. If the contestant forgets the form, and after a short pause, continues the performance from the same position, then deduct 0.1 to 0.3 points, depending on the severity.

5.2 Strength (3 points total)

*Smoothness of force*

To evaluate this area, place the contestant in one of three categories: Above Average, Average, or Below Average. If they are Above Average, then deduct from 0.05 to 0.2 points from their total score. If they show Average skill ability, deduct from 0.2 to 0.4 points. Finally, if their performance was of a Below Average skill level, deduct from 0.4 to 0.6 points.

*Balance*

Use the same categorisation as in the "smoothness of force."

*Coordination among hands, eyes, body and steps.*

Use the same method as in "smoothness of force" and "balance."

5.3 Spirit (3 points)

*Spirit*

The judge can make their own decision here, and deduct from 0.05 points and greater.

*Rhythm*

Use the same method as in "spirit."

*Development of the weapon's characteristics*

Use the same method as in the "spirit" and "rhythm" of the form.

5.4 *Martial Ethics (1 point)*

Ideally, the contestant should receive the full point in this category. The judges, may, however, deduct points according to mistakes or violations of the following categories.

*Dress*

Worth 0.33 points.

*Personal appearance*

Worth 0.33 points.

*Courtesy*

Worth 0.34 points.

5.5 Other Remarks – For Head Judge Only

If the contestant forgets his/her form and restarts the form again from the beginning, the Head Judge should deduct 0.5 points from the contestant's final score. If the contestant drops his/her weapon during the performance, or the weapon becomes entangled in the contestant's clothing, the Head Judge should deduct 0.3 points from the contestant's final score. If the contestant breaks his/her weapon during the performance, or strikes the floor inappropriately, the Head Judge should deduct 0.2 points from the contestant's final score.

**6. Next Steps**

- 6.1 If the BCCMA Executive Committee accepts the proposal for the format and judging criteria for traditional forms, in principle. A committee will be formed with the approval of the BCCMA to develop a training course for traditional forms practitioners to enable them to become Judges. The training course will be instructed by suitably qualified members of the BCCMA; should take place annually; and would be certified by the BCCMA.
- 6.2 The committee will draft a paper on forms characteristics to support the judging criteria. The committee will also develop the paper work and materials required to support a traditional forms contest. These will be agreed by the committee as the requirements for judging traditional forms.
- 6.3 The traditional forms contest will fall into four broad style/system categories: Internal; Northern External; Southern External; and Wing Chun. Under the Internal category, the committee, as part of their paper, will develop characteristics for the judging of: Taiji Quan; Xing Yi Quan; Ba Gua Zhang; and Liu He Ba Fa. Similarly, under the External category the committee will develop characteristics to enable them to effectively judge the diverse range of External Chinese martial arts. This project will be undertaken by members of the committee and the paper will be presented to the BCCMA as the recommendations of the expert committee.
- 6.4 The committee will then keep under review the criteria for judging and the characteristics to ensure that all styles are treated fairly and that every participant whose performance is deemed to be of the appropriate standard, irrespective of style, will have the opportunity to compete and take first place at major tournaments.
- 6.5 Once qualified, Judges will then be required to participate in an official capacity at the national tournament and invited to participate at regional tournaments. Judges will also be expected to refresh their qualification every two years, to

ensure that they were fully aware of any changes to the rules, regulations, format or judging criteria.

**End**