



West Side Taekwondo Tournament Handbook

Welcome to Team West Side! We are excited about your interest in competition, which is a great supplement and arena of application to your Taekwondo journey. Over the years, West Side Taekwondo has been highly involved in Olympic style Taekwondo competitions, ranging from local to national and international levels. We are proud to offer support and guidance to those who choose to pursue the sport aspect of Taekwondo, and in turn hope that you will represent Team West Side proudly.

Whether you are preparing for your first tournament or you are a seasoned veteran, please read over this handbook of guidelines and familiarize yourself with the expectations of the team.

1. What you can realistically expect from typical tournaments in the Tri-State Area.

While it would be ideal if everything always went by the book, there are certain realities that come with competitions generally and, more specifically, competition in a full-contact sport.

- a. Mats - until a few years ago, all local tournaments had tape on the ground to mark the boundaries - nowadays it is common to have matted rings. Matted rings add to the safety of tournaments, and we try to promote those tournaments which we know will have matted rings - but there are some instances that tournament directors cannot provide mats, so please be prepared.
- b. Scoring - in sparring, while there are guidelines to what makes a point and what does not, scoring remains highly subjective. The angle at which a referee sits, how well a fighter 'sells' points, or even factors like how tired a referee is from watching matches all day will affect how they push the buttons. We as coaches will advocate for our competitors when we feel a decision is grossly unfair, but in the end the referees ultimately reserve the right to address or dismiss outside opinions. In forms competition, the scoring is even more subjective, as beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Even so, our students tend to do very well

even under these subjective standards, as we stress precision, power and clean technique in our basics and forms training.

c. Caliber of referees - at the local level, the referees have of a wide range of experience and views on the interpretation of rules. One focus of this year's New York State Federation is to offer training to referees through seminars prior to tournaments.

d. Rules - the rules of Taekwondo competition are constantly changing, even on the national and international level. The rules we have are guidelines, yet in the fine print the tournament organizers reserve the right to change the rules as they see fit. We train our students to the best of our knowledge of the current rules, but one must also to be adaptable to unexpected changes and circumstances

e. All help are volunteers - referees, ring runners, people running the computers, and the WS coaching staff. West Side's coaching staff gives up our time and energy for our team because we enjoy and value the experience for our students.

f. Tournaments WS chooses to attend - tournaments will vary year to year. Some years will have better or worse management than others. We are intentional about the tournaments we choose to attend, and try our best to choose those which will offer the best competitive experience for our students.

g. Tournaments are an industry - we are not in a position to change how things are run, and if anything, it hurts the athletes to get in the organizers' faces. Like many sports, there are no replays, even for a lousy call.

2. West Side's philosophy and resources on competitions.

West Side's focus is on teaching, and tournaments are run on a voluntary basis on the efforts of coaches. It has been a tremendous benefit for many adults and children over the years, and tournaments are a tool to supplement our teaching with real-life application. However, while they encourage and support competitions, Sabomnims have said "it's not for everyone" and no one is obligated to compete.

a. Tradition - all children must compete in forms. We do not want our competitors to become one-sided Taekwondoists without regard for the traditional values of the martial art.

b. Sportsmanship - the focus for the competitors is on *improvement* and *self-discovery*. The tournaments we have attended have been

successful because our children each learned valuable lessons in their matches and showed a lot of heart and drive. From these experiences, they have learned what it means to be a part of a team, how to overcome fears and obstacles, and how to handle unexpected situations with grace and dignity.

3. Roles of Coaches, Students, and Parents.

These are the roles that can/cannot be expected of the coaches, and what is expected of parents.

a. Coaches' Roles

- At minimum, every competitor is provided a coach for sparring and a warm up before they compete
- Coaches advocate and navigate competitors through the tournament process
- Coaches try to make sure someone is aware that children are not overlooked or miss a match
- Aside from the role of coaching (a substantial job as it is), coaches cannot be responsible for the kids - children must come with a guardian and be supervised at competitions
- The Dojang provides a coaching staff of adults who are all experienced and approved by Sabomnims. The staff all have competition experience, are black belts and instructors at the Dojang, and know these tournaments well.

b. Parents' Roles

- Decide whether their child will compete
- Ensure that children show up on tournament day ON TIME with proper gear
- Pay the coach's fee, which goes towards defraying the expenses of coach's passes and transportation
- Register their child for the competition and make transportation arrangements
- Parents are **NOT** allowed on the competition floor unless they have a coach's pass. Videotaping is only allowed from the stands.

4. West Side "Teamsmanship"

EVERYONE (families, competitors, coaches) represents West Side in their conduct at competitions. The Dojang is a community, and we all give and take from it.

- a. Competitors
 - i. support and cheer for one another
 - ii. warm up together
 - iii. give your best effort

- b. Families/Support
 - i. support one another and every competitor to the extent possible
 - ii. put forth a general sense of camaraderie and positive attitude
 - iii. fill in the blanks, taking care of the athletes and coaches as needed (for example, making a run for water bottles, bringing snacks, getting an ice pack, etc.)

- c. Sportsmanship
 - i. The attitude of how you carry yourself reflects yourself, your family, and the Dojang
 - ii. Accept wins and losses graciously, whether they be yours, your teammates', or your childrens'
 - iii. Trust in the experience and judgment of the coaches

5. Tournament Checklist - what to bring

- Clean Dobok
- Belt
- Hogu (Chestpad)
- Headgear
- Mouthpiece (clear or white only)
- Armpads (white only)
- Shin and instep pads (white only)
- Groin cup (male)
- Hairties (if applicable)
- Water bottle/Gatorade
- Kicking paddles
- TKD shoes (optional)
- Nailclippers (nails MUST be cut to a reasonable length)
- Cameras/Camcorders
- Snacks (granola bars, etc.) - tournaments may or may not sell food
- A positive attitude!