

KATA CHALLENGE

In our first publication I mentioned that I would put forth a kata challenge to our instructors & coaches.

In staying with the theme that a sequenced process could meet the requirements of a kata, I'm going to ask you to instruct your participants in the proper standing bowing skills required for shiai.

Yes, there is a proper pattern and way of doing this.

The pattern we would like to strive for is as follows:

1. Judoka will take their position on Joseki's side of the mats. Colored sashes or gi's on respective sides.
2. With heels together and hands at the sides of their legs they will bow forward allowing their hands to move to the front of their thighs as they bow. They will return to the upright position with hands at their sides then step forward onto the mats leading with their left foot.
3. They will walk along the outside of the fighting area to the center of the mats. Once at center they will turn and face the fighting area (toes on outside edge of mats) with heels together and hands at the sides of their legs.
4. Once the referee indicates that they can enter the fighting area they should bow as they did in step #2 and proceed, left foot first to their respective tape marks (Toes on tape) heels together hands at side.
5. The contestants then simultaneously bow again to each other (same as #2) and take one step forward over the line (left foot leading) feet apart, and wait for the referee to say hajime.
6. At any time matte or soremade is called the contestants need to return to their respective floor marks and remain inside this mark (heels on line) feet apart.
7. At the end of the match the competitors will wait at their marks (heels on line) feet apart until the winner has been announced. They will then step back with their right foot, placing their toes on the line, heels together, bow to their partner (same as #2) and proceed backwards (right foot leading) until they arrive at the outside edge of the fighting area. Heels come together again at this point hands at side of legs.
8. Here they will bow off the fighting area and proceed back to the edge of the mats on Joseki's side turn and face back towards the mats (heels together) and bow off the mats. (step back with right foot to leave mats)

NOTE: It is not mandatory by IJF regulations that athletes will bow on and off the fighting area at steps 4 & 8, however they must wait until they have been given permission to

enter the fighting area at step 4. In Canada the bow in, and out, at the edge of the fighting area is still encouraged.

This exercise can be taught and practiced within your dojo prior to arriving at a tournament site. Your athletes will look professional, and will have a set of skills that they can transfer for future use once they start to practice formal kata.

You could use this exercise in your club as a skill test for promotion purposes, or have mini challenges with your students to see who might be able to perform the pattern the best. It is a skill that can be taught to any age judoka regardless of their abilities and will allow all students a chance to have a skill that is on par with that of their fellow participants.

As referee's we will look forward to seeing the results of your teachings.

Pat & Blair.