

USA Judo Referee Development/Progression System

Philosophy

Referees provide an essential service to the Judo community by developing, interpreting and administering the Rules of Competition for Sport Judo. The goal of the development/progression system is to provide the opportunity for all referees to advance to the highest referee level they are capable and willing to achieve.

Getting Started

The first step is to learn the written rules and their correct current interpretations. This is best done by reading the rules often, attending rules clinics and referee clinics, and discussing the rules with officials who you have confidence in and who are certified at a higher level than you are. Refereeing within your club during randori sessions is a nice informal way of getting used to moving efficiently on the mat, making calls for each throw to develop your appreciation, becoming aware of when the rules are being violated and developing the basic set of skills needed by all referees. It is important to have someone more knowledgeable watch you while you referee and give constructive feedback. Keep a log of things you learn and questions that arise from these experiences. Discuss them with a certified official at a later time.

Local/Regional Certification

Any National or higher Referee may certify candidates to the Local and/or Regional Levels. Most certification programs offer 1 local level and up to 3 regional levels. You may contact the USA Judo Referee Commission Chair for information about referee certification programs in your area.

Where Can I Referee With Local/Regional Certification

Referees certified at the Local Level may referee at any club, local, or regional event that does not have further restrictions. It is advised that Local Referees gain significant experience at local and smaller regional tournaments, and then test for Regional, prior to trying to referee at large regional tournaments.

Referees at the various levels of Regional Certification (depending on what system they are certified through) should support the level of event that matches their certification level, in addition to all events they can attend below that level.

All levels of referee certification (including Local and Regional levels) are valid throughout the United States so you can officiate at the appropriate levels across state lines without any issues.

Training For National Level Certification

Attend as many clinics as possible. Referee at as many events where the competition is high level and you can receive good critiques from upper level referees you use as role models. It is suggested to “get out of your own back yard” and travel to events in other parts of the country to gain experience refereeing different style players and working with a variety of officials. Study the rules prior to each event.

National Level Certification

Sites for the National Referee Certification Test are determined each year by the USA Judo Referee Commission. Events that have been testing sites in the recent past include:

Sensei Memorial (CA – Jan/Feb)
Pedro Challenge (MA - Feb)
Mayfield Test Event (NC – Feb)
Midwest Championships (IL – Mar)
Liberty Bell (PA – Apr),
Northglenn Championships (CO – Apr)
Speed Harada (CA – Apr)
AM/CAN (NY – May),
Continental Crown (WA – Nov)
Dallas Invitational (TX – Nov).

In addition the following events have been designated re-evaluation sites and although referees are not tested for their initial National Level Referee Certification at these events, national and higher referees are re-evaluated:

Morris Cup (NY – May),

Other sites may be included on an annual basis. Please look on the USA Judo Web Site (Referee Commission page) for the most updated test sites available.

As a general rule, please follow the guidelines of the National Referee Handbook. This handbook could be just as important in your development as the rule book is in your understanding of the rules.

1. Be prepared to referee only. DO NOT referee and compete (or coach) at the event you are taking the test at or are practicing to achieve a higher level of certification.
2. Always have the highest integrity in refereeing. DO NOT talk to coaches, players, spectators or parents while you are refereeing, in particular when you are matside
3. Be prepared to referee players from your own club at local tournaments. Avoid refereeing your own children.
4. Be prepared to take criticism with grace and dignity knowing that those supplying your critiques are there to help you become a better referee. Remember, it is about the players, not you.

Where Can I Referee With National Certification

National Referees are subdivided into 5 categories: N4 are on probation; N3 is the basic starting level of all nationally certified referees; N2 designation is given to those whose performance exceeds that of the N3 referee and the evaluators feel the referee is good enough to referee at N2 level events; N1 designation is given to those whose performance exceed the N2 level and is good enough for N1 events; N0 designation is given to those whose performance exceeds the N1 level; and NOC are those who

perform such that the evaluators think the performance is of such a high caliber that the referee should be considered for the Confederation Level Test.

These categories divide referees according to their previous year's performance average and the referee may move up or down at the end of each year depending on their average performance and the level of competition at which they are evaluated during that year.

N4 referees must be reevaluated and receive a rating of at least N3 at their next event in order to maintain their national referee license. N3 referees can referee at any of the National Referee Test or Evaluation Sites (which for 2010 are listed above), the Group A Junior Nationals, and the Bantam and Intermediate Divisions of the USA Judo National Junior Olympics. They must referee at least one of these events each year to maintain N3 status. N2 Referees can (in addition to the events listed for N3s) referee at the Scholastic Nationals, National Junior Olympics (all divisions), and the President's Cup. In order to maintain their N2 rating, the referee must attend at least 1 evaluation event each year and referee at either the Scholastic Nationals, National Junior Olympics (older divisions), or President's Cup once every 2 years. N1, N0, and NOC level referees may also attend the Senior Nationals and US Junior Open, in addition to all events open to N2 referees. In order to maintain their N1 status (or N0 or NOC), the referee must be evaluated at least once each year at an evaluation event and once every two years at the Senior Nationals or US Junior Open.

Training For Confederation Level Certification

Participation as a referee in clinics and competitions at the highest level the referee is qualified for is the best training for the C-Level Certification Test. It is best to officiate at events where critiques can be obtained by the USA Judo Referee Commission. Additional experience and critique can be obtained at lower level events, however the percentage of time on the mat at low level events should be minimized just prior to taking the "C test".

Confederation Level Certification

C-Level tests are administered by the North & Central American Confederation Referee Commission at designated events within the Confederation. Candidates are selected by the USA Judo Referee Commission, depending on that referee's rating and level of participation in U.S. evaluations events.

Where Can I Referee With Confederation Certification

C-Level Certification is a prerequisite for most events outside the United States. It is recommended that the all of your international experience at this level is gained within the PJC.

Referees from the United States at these events are recommended by the USA Judo Referee Commission. Examples of these events include:

- Benito Juarez, South America Under 17 & 20
- XXI Juegos Deportivos Central American & Caribbean
- North & Central American Seniors
- North & Central American Under 17 & 20
- Pan Am Competition Under 13 & 15

Jita Kioei Juv/Jr/Sr
Panama Open
South American Under 13 & 15
North & Central American Under 13 & 15
Barbados Independence Champs

Other sites may be included. Please check with USA Judo for the most current list.

Training For Continental Level Certification

Participation as a referee in clinics and competitions at the highest level the referee is qualified for is the best training for the B-Level Certification Test. It is best to officiate at events where critiques can be obtained by the PJC Referee Commission. Additional experience and critique can be obtained at lower level events, however the percentage of time on the mat at low-level events should be minimized just prior to taking the "B test".

Continental Level Certification

B-Level tests are administered by the PJC Referee Commission at designated events within the union. Candidates are suggested by the USA Judo Referee Commission and selected by the PJC Referee Commission, depending on that referee's evaluations at various PJC events.

Where Can I Referee With Continental Certification

B-Level Certification is a prerequisite for several top level Continental events within the PJC and many championships in other countries of other Unions around the world.

Referees for some events are selected from the relevant roster. Examples of these events include:

Pan Am Championships and Games, etc.

Referees at other events are recommended by the USA Judo Referee Commission. Examples of these events include:

Sarajevo Open
Brazil Cup
Juan Carlos Vargas & Yanira Vigil Tournament
Jose Rodriguez/Judoguis
London British Open
Pan Am Under 17 & 20
Pan Am Veterans
ParaOlympics

Referees are invited by the Chief Referee at the New York Open.

Training For World Level Certification

Participation as a referee in clinics and competitions at the highest level the referee is qualified for is the best training for the A-Level Certification Test. It is best to officiate at events where critiques can be obtained by the PJC Referee Commission, other continental referee commission members, or members

of the IJF Referee Commission. Additional experience and critique can be obtained at lower level events, however the percentage of time on the mat at low level events should be minimized just prior to taking the “A test”.

World Level Certification

A-Level tests are administered by the IJF Referee Commission at designated events around the world. Candidates are suggested by the USA Judo Referee Commission and the PJC Referee Commission will determine if the candidate will be submitted to the IJF, usually depending on that referee’s evaluations at various PJC events.

Where Can I Referee With World Certification

A-Level Certification is a prerequisite for many top level competitions around the world. In addition, many events are by invitation only. Selection is done by the IJF Referee Commission. Rosters are used to select referees for the Olympic Games, Senior World Championships, Junior World Championships. Events designated Grand Slam and Grand Prix events also use the rosters and many of the referees are selected directly by the IJF Referee Commission from the roster, while others are sometimes selected by the IJF Referee Commission from requests by the PJC, or USA Judo through the PJC.

Referees will be qualified and listed on the roster for the Olympic Games only due to their performance at the World Senior Championships, or other designated events by the IJF. Referees will be qualified and listed on the roster for the World Senior Championships due to their performance at either the Junior World Championships or the World Team of Nations Championships, or other designated events by the IJF.

2010 Grand Slam Events include: Paris, France; Rio De Janeiro, Brazil; Moscow, Russia; and Tokyo, Japan.

2010 Grand Prix Events include: Dusseldorf, Germany; Tunis, Tunisia; Rotterdam, Netherlands; Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates; and Qingdao, China.

2010 World Cup Events include: Sophia, Bulgaria; Tblisi, Georgia; Vienna, Austria; Budapest, Hungary; Prague, Czech Republic; Warsaw, Poland; Cairo, Egypt; Sao Paulo, Brazil; Madrid, Spain; Bucharest, Romania; Lisbon, Portugal; Tallin, Estonia; Colombia; Isla de Margarita, Venezuela; Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia; Miami, USA; Almaty, Kazakhstan; Tashkent, Uzbekistan; Rome, Italy; Birmingham, Great Britain; Minsk, Belarus; Baku, Azerbaijan; Apia, Samoa; and Suwon, Korea.