

Dynamic Judo Edge Rules 2006 (Trial Application)

Borderline Testing Rule

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For Coaches and Competitors

This is only a trial (test) rule application. It is NOT an official IJF rule change. However, with good feedback from its use in all the Unions, I suspect it will become official in 2007.

Currently the rule is to be applied in all Senior and IJF junior elite point categories and divisions. It may be utilized at the Local and Regional Level if the Regional Referee authority and Tournament Directors wish to do so. A full safety area is required.

Some of you may have seen a previous article by me with regard to this Dynamic Edge Rule. One adjustment has been made. Dynamic Judo or Action requires that there is a tori and uke, therefore the tori must be executing a throw for it to be considered action. This is different from the first article.

Now onto the rule.

THE COMPETITION AREA (Article 1)

The competition area shall be divided into two (2) zones, the Contest Area and the Safety Area. The Contest Area will remain a minimum of 8m x 8m or a maximum of 10m x 10m. The Safety Area (of a different color) shall be 3m wide.¹

1. This explanation seems to be very clear.

Those with green tatami will have to get yellow or blue tatami to use as safety area. Actually any combination has been used. The Paris Open had yellow tatami for the contest area and green tatami for the safety area. Another had green tatami for the contest area and blue tatami for the safety area.

THE DANGER ZONE (Article 1 - 2nd paragraph)

The present function of the Danger (red) Zone becomes cancelled. However, the red mats (for the time being) may still be used.²

2. For those with vinyl or canvas mat covers, removal of the danger area or purchase of new mat covers would be prohibitively expensive. Therefore, the danger area can continue to be included, but will serve no function as indicated in the rule above. Except the outer edge will demarcate the contest area from the safety area. Even those with tatami will have a significant cost as most have only green tatami and some red tatami.

If you start using this rule you should NOT use the words "danger area (zone)" anymore. After 34 years it has been changed out of existence.

THE PENALTY IN THE DANGER ZONE (Article 27 - 4th paragraph) (27(a)4)

Consequently the Shido penalty for remaining (generally more than 5 seconds) within the Danger Zone shall be eliminated (as well as its gestures from Article 8 - 20th paragraph.)³

3. Without the danger area, this prohibited act no longer can be enforced. This will end the practice of one competitor forcing the other to stay in the danger area.

SITUATIONS ON THE EDGE (Article 9 - Location (Valid Areas).)

This article becomes completely modified with the exception of the paragraphs ruling *Newaza*. The criterion to apply in the standing position (*Tachi-waza*) during actions on the edge will be the following: **“The “action”⁴ is valid as long as either contestant has some part of his (or her) body touching the contest area.”** (In fact, the same criterion will be applied that currently rules *Newaza*.)⁵

As this new rule evolves more language may be added.

The word “Action” and its meaning is very important to the application of this new rule.

*4. “Action” **IS** when there is a tori and uke. So the tori must be engaged in the execution of a throw or counter.*

CONCERN: Competition areas without a full 3 meter safety area may pose a safety issue with competitors being thrown near or off the edge.

GOING OUTSIDE THE CONTEST AREA - PROHIBITED ACTS

Nothing is changed, present rules must be applied. Going outside the Contest Area without action (by the contestant, or forced by the opponent) will be applied as described in Article 27, Prohibited Acts and Penalties: **SHIDO (Slight Infringement Group)**

²⁰⁾ To go outside the contest area or intentionally force the opponent to go outside the contest area either in standing position or in *Newaza*.⁶

6. There is a change, but not in wording. In the 2003 rule it was possible for tori to get a shido for doing a throw outside. This is no longer the case with the new edge rule. Any throw attempt at the edge would be considered dynamic action and should be considered for scoring purposes.

Additional Comments from Richard Celotto

The “Sutemi Waza” Edge Matter

During dynamic action on the edge if a competitor executes a sutemi waza and goes more than half out, this throw should be considered valid for scoring purposes. This is contrary to the 2003 written rule, but the change follows the new edge rule.

Currently this seems to include both **passing through the danger area** (Matte was called, throw invalid, but no penalty) and **dwelling in the danger area** (earned tori a shido) in the danger area. Both of which now should be considered **IN** and if successful should score.

Clarifications

If there is no dynamic action on the edge and one competitor causes the other to step out or one competitor just steps outside, this action will continue to receive the penalty of shido.

If there was action on the edge and one competitor stepped out and then quickly stepped back in, that action should be allowed to continue and Matte should be called. The competitor who stepped out should get shido. This “action” was not the result of a throw or counter.

This new rule is a paradigm shift of thinking for those of us in Judo a long time. Do not make it complicated. Just remember this one sentence! **“The “action” is valid as long as either contestant has some part of his (or her) body touching the contest area.”**

Final Notes

As it seems is always the case, when new or changed rules are introduced even when they are official, there is a period where all the variables have not been worked out. With time as certain undefined and unexpected results show themselves the IJF will provide a clearer picture of how these unique situations are to be handled.

When the U.S. Referee Commission members are made aware of any variations or the proper handling of any specific situation with regard to this rule, that information will be forwarded to the Continental (IJF-B), Regional (PJU-C) and National Referees for their dissemination to the Regional and Local areas.