

# **The analysis of sport training preparation proportionally changes in kata training after a new judging rules introduction.**

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## **Abstract:**

The sport karate evolution is an extremely dynamic process, which goes on all the time. The Olympic games has become one of the most important goals of The World Karate Federation. This shows also a lot of organization changes determined by this WKF attempts. The last biggest change was working out a new judging system in karate competitions and its accepting by WKF at a world championship in Munich in October 2000. It is wise to think that the rules changes may cause also some closely related changes whose definitely affected also sport karate training. The goals of this work is to point out some changes, objective reasons, its importance and following interpretation in practice. This work describes all present sport training kata, which can help both trainee and competitors in more effective professional preparation specialized on kata.

**Key words:** proportional parts of sport training, training karate kata, new rules of kata judging WKF

## **Introduction:**

The matter of special sport kata preparation is although very good results achieved by Slovak sportsmen abroad is not worked on enough and researched. There are not enough theoretical works specialized in this field. There is other important fact comparing to other countries in Slovakia there is many times less number of both trainee and competitors under 18 specialized in kata. Many more of them are specialized in sport fight kumite. New rules introduction in kata judging in Munich 2000 World championship bring along many changes whose affected all parts of sport preparation karateist specialized in kata. It is very important to recognize these changes in order to integrate them in training process by both karateists and trainee.

## **The Kata judging rules changes analysis**

There are many organizations in the world whose cover the individual structures of sport karate. It is important to state that there are many rules modifications, whose are specific and done for each organization separately. The Slovak karate union (SZK) is a member of European karate federation (EFK) as well as a member of WKF, which is the largest karate organization in the world and the only international organization of karate which in 1986 became a proper member of MOV (IOC). SZK is therefore follows only the rules set by the WFK. This content analysis is based on rules document published on 5. 3. 1998 and on new set up rules of kata published on 14.11.2000 ( accepted by WFK in October 2000 World championship in Munich ).

**1. The evaluation and judging changes of sport Kata performance** – New rules change from the scale evaluation ( to give a point to a shown performance ) to comparing evaluation of two following competitors. In the past a referee gave a concrete marking scale consisted of a whole point and a tenth to competitors in raw in each round. ( 1<sup>st</sup> round – more then 16 competitors, 2<sup>nd</sup> round – 16 competitors and the 3rd round final round – 8 competitors ) in present the referee is concerned on a concrete duel of two competitors whose he compared.

Therefore it was quite difficult for the referee to remember a quality of shown performance and given marks of all competitors. This was one of the disadvantages for competitors in consideration to their order and a place in race list ( which mean when each karateist performs, what kind of opponent he follows and who follows him.). The referee did both evaluation, judging and comparing more than two competitors at one time. The advantage of this system was precise specification of individual marks deduction, mistakes done by competitors. The referee could be sure what mistake deduct certain number of points. The marking scale was one whole point and a tenth, for each round of race there was by the referees set so called marking centre. In meant, that for example in final round was mark 8 accepted by all the referees as a middle mark. It defined marking upwards or downwards. The total competitor evaluation consists of a sum of marks which did not contain the lower and higher mark. The new compared evaluation of competitors is from a referees point of view more simple and more objective. The disadvantage of this new kata rules is in our opinion inadequate categorization of individual mistakes taking in consideration its importance in comparing two competitors.

**2. The competition system change-** a transition from past ( if there were not same marks) three rounds race to this eliminating system of mutual two competitors duel with reinstalment so called „spider system“ identical to Kumite competitions. Following to previous rules progressed 16 competitors to semifinal and 8 to final round. The final round marks determines the winners of race. In present a computer after inrolling composes an order and each duel occupation in the first round. The duel winners progress to final round, when the winner is determined. The struggle for two third places goes on in reinstalment, mutually for competitors whose were set off by finalists. In case there are more than 16 competitors each of them performs only kata from official obligatory kata list (SHITEI).

**3. The official list of obligatory (SHITEI) and optional (TOKUI) Kata WKF has changed** – Both number and content of it has changed. The greatest change has been recorded in number of obligatory (SHITEI) kata for individual WKF accepted karate trends (schools) (Goju-ryu, Wado-fyu, Shito-ryu a Shotokan). According to new rules each trend (school) contains the same number of compulsory kata. It has been recorded mutual objectivization between individual trends (schools) of karate, but only in number of kata because the level of difficulty of individual kata in this list is not equal for every listed trends (schools). The GUJU-RYU trend (school) has been mostly affected. Its difficulty and sphere of one compulsory Kata does not fit in sphere and the difficulty level of other listed schools. It is kata Saifa, which can be because of given reasons undervaluated. Next it has been recorded in a new rules the global decrease of number of optional (TOKUI) kata for all trends (schools) of karate. The number comparing of compulsory (SHITEI) and optional (TOKUI) kata for individual trends (schools) timing from before and after setting up the now rules is listed in table 1.

**Table 1.** *The comparison of number of obligatory (SHITEI) and optional (TOKUI) kata before and after the WKF rules innovation.*

	GOJU-RYU	WADO-RYU	SHOTOKAN	SHITO-RYU	
Shitei	7	10	12	18	To year 2000
Tokui	12	17	26	49	
Shitei	2	2	2	2	After year 2000
Tokui	10	11	21	43	

**4. The changes of judging and viewing of obligatory (SHITEI) Kata** - If more than 16 competitors take part in a race, each of them in first two rounds of competition performs two kata listed in obligatory (SHITEI) kata without any change or variation in its content (KIHONE). WKF published documents which describe individual SHITEI kata. These can be understood as an official pattern valid for both referees and competitors. Any official version diversions are considered as mistakes. The mentioned document is processed as a book publication with video along with commentary. Each of the competitors has to acquire an exact choreography and “Kihon” of his own obligatory kata. It means that two competitors obligatory kata choreography performance should not differ.

**5. A draw is not possible-** according to old rules was possible achieving the same marking which was followed by comparing of the lowest and highest uncrossed mark. If even then the points correspond so called supplemented kata had to be performed. An odd number of referees along with the only two possibilities of decision (AO or AKA), can not lead to a draw. Each of referees has an equal vote. They present their decision by rising blue or red flag which is same color as the color of their favorite competitor.

**6. The number and placement of referees has changed-** In past the body of referees consists of five or seven members. In present it consists of only three members. It has not improved judging objectivity of kata performance. To decide winning of one competitor the two of referees are able to decide. In my opinion less members of referee body negatively affects the judging objectivity. The new referee placement around the ring is better and offers for each referee sufficient view.

**7. (BUNKAI) application inserting in Kata teams competitions** – The greatest content change has been recorded in teams category, in final round after optional kata performance is added the practical example of its application (the meaning of each technique in practice) so called BUNKAI. Each team (the final round only) performs own kata following by BUNKAI. It is performed in one consistent form by its members between each other in choreography composed by them, which follows the individual sequences of given kata. The referees in final round do not judge only the kata performance and mutual synchrony of team members, but also the level and quality of real meaning kata acquiring. This change brings along a question of rising the need of quality and practical expertise of kata referees. This change is considered to be very important and good in relation to the meaning and traditions of standard fighting karate. Including BUNKAI to team competition was in our opinion affected

by a very important thought of making sport karate more attractive, mainly the less popular discipline for a wide public. Fans are very important part of each sport without whose it could not have its real meaning.

### **Content of Kata sport preparation**

As the other sports do the sport discipline kata in karate develops as well. Present modern kata training is not oriented only on technique and general physical preparation as it was in the past, but contains some new specific attributes, resulting from demands and competition criteria (Michalov, 2003). They are needs and criteria of judging and evaluating of sport performance. The individual criteria are affected by the subjectivity of each referee. The criteria must be accepted by every competitor. The sport preparation of karateist specializing in kata is in present oriented mainly to these training fields:

- **Form and technique-** total kata structure and its technical performance. Learning of individual techniques, postures, movements and their combinations. Their smooth linking to one harmonic unit – kata, following the karte tradition. There is a great number of repetition of individual techniques and combinations, separated or kata origin. In this field there is so called kata technique drill resulting in the biggest possible techniques precision and exactness. Learning and practicing of a new kata is important as well.
- **Power, speed, dynamic and temper** – these abilities are developed and used in kata performances. The competitor aims his effort to a specific training of power and speed development. This kind of training displays in a total dynamic and temper of movements. It belongs to a field of a general, but most of all specific physical productivity (Zemková, 1999). Kata in its evolution leads especially to this kind of body development. The referees' criteria pay its attention to a general but especially specific physical ability of competitors. Therefore the trainee should master them.
- **Breathing-** the breathing is very important during kata performance or while regenerating. The competitor acquires so called diaphragmatically breathing (IBUKI and NOGARE), which is very typical for karate. By a correct breathing the ideal blood circulating oxidation can be achieved during muscles contraction exchanging so specific for kata. A great importance is paid to a correct synchrony of inhalation and exhalation with a muscle tension or a relief stages. Timing of exhalation during the technique performance and doing the “ KIME “ at the end is stressed too. The breathing acquiring is the most difficult area of sport preparation, especially for children, who have fixed an ordinary kind of pectoral breathing.
- **Stability** – keeping given position after a dynamic, fast movement, turn or jump has been performed. The stability of individual positions is very important and determined for next movements and techniques performance as well as for a right “KIME” performing. So the attention is paid at training to feet strengthening and concrete postures and movements practicing. It consists of many repetitions.
- **Rhythm and timing** – next very important kata training area. A correct kata rhythm is being acquired. A correct timing of individual techniques and their sequence is stressed here. The kata rhythm is not strictly defined for the individual kata. There are many rhythm modifications of identical kata performance. Each karateist in cooperation with his trainee can adapt his kata rhythm according to his own abilities so it can suits him best. Kata rhythm practicing can be done during training with a trainee assistance or at home by picturing individual kata sequences and their rhythm. This form of psychical kata rhythm practicing helps with subconscious intheorization. It is ideomotorical practicing.
- **BUNKAI knowledge and understanding** – practicing and understanding of a hidden kata meaning so called BUNKAI. During training the competitor gradually learns its practical meaning and using in practice. In kata team competition discipline is BUNKAI

of final kata performed. To know BUNKAI helps you in its practical using, but also in correct kata performance at competition. BUNKAI emends irrelevant competitors' modification in order to make their kata more aesthetic. Kata should not contain steps, which do not correlate with its practical fighting meaning. Bunkai has its clear and very important place in a training process. Its practicing can not be rough. An adequate psychological maturity of competitors and technical readiness of trainees is needed for an effective BUNKAI practice. A reasonable BUNKAI modification accepting in one kata is also important.

- **Comprehensiveness** – The best kata performance demands a complex use of knowledge acquired in a training process. A sport kata preparation should consist of individual specific areas of training process. As the individual areas of sport preparation are closely connected. Therefore its comprehensiveness in training process is very important. This area works in general for all sports.

### **Components of kata competitors' sport preparation.**

The sport training is divided according to its orientation to following components:

#### **1. Physical condition**

- **A general physical state development** – a) by rising a number of acquired physical abilities and habits, b) by physical abilities development in various qualities of their demonstration
- **A power, speed, endurance and skills** – based on given physiological functioning systems and related psychological processes.
- **A special physical abilities development** – cooperate with a need of karate techniques as well as its energy mode.

The trainee according to a training plan sets training contains and its difficulty. The competitors lead by a good trainee knows exactly what, when and how he should train.

#### **2. Technical preparation**

- **Coordinating abilities development** – it's a basic of effective technique. In karate it means practicing of individual technique, hits, kicks, blocks, postured and movements. Basic kata steps practice.
- **Sport abilities acquiring and their stabilization** – in this case it is the top of technical kata preparation in training process. Acquiring of individual specific technical abilities (such as kata rhythm, correct breathing, dynamic and smoothness of movements, rigidity and speed of techniques, BUNKAI understanding and so on) in competing kata. The trainee functions as a feedback, who corrects and directs.
- **Sport skills improving** – in competition. One's own skills verified in practice. Each competition offers to both trainee and competitor certain feedback, whose can be used to improve techniques. The competitor's sport performance is also positively affected by the special atmosphere of competition.

#### **3. Tactics preparation**

- **Tactics theories acquiring** – Learning the system and rules of competition. In Karate it means to understand to so called "Spider system" (pyramid eliminating system). The trainee passes information towards to his ward.
- **Acquiring and improving of solution variants in varied competition situations.** – Being able to cope in all different situations at competition, such as unexpected lost, taking part in reinstalment and others.

- The **development of abilities to decide correctly in a given competition situation** – Using correct kata against certain opponent.
- **The creative abilities development** – there is a need to take a creative part in one's own sport performance within the rules.

#### 4. Psychological preparation

- **Performance motivation development** – The motivation to achieve better results is important. All the times stimulation and improvement of sportsman will is important. Motivation strongly affects the whole training process as well as sport performance. The trainee should take an active part in motivating.
- **Emotional processes regulation** – at competition. During the sport preparation we talk about so called stimulated training, which creates atmosphere of competition. The competitor tries to push aside his emotions ( such as anxiety, stress and others ) whose negatively affect his sport performance. On the other hand the competitors keeps those emotions who can help to achieve the best performance.
- **The creating of knowledge base of reasonable acting** – The development of an intellectual part of human personality. For karaterst it means acquiring basic principle of karate ethics and etiquette, but also other knowledge links with karate.
- **The formation of character and a social sportsman's role** – Pointing to a positive sportsman's qualities. Each sportsman by accepting his role takes a special place in social structure. There is a certain expectation of behavior in society of each social role. For sportsman it should be leading the healthy lifestyle and so on.

The closest relations between individual parts in some sports are so interacted that they make one unit. (Choutka, Dovalil, 1987). In karate it mainly affects tactics and psychological areas of sport preparation. Although the fact that heir content, goals and tasks can be specified, very often they merge in one in training process.

#### Method:

The hub method of this work was the questionnaire method of getting information. The official document analysis as well as my own experience methods were used too. The main method was chosen basing on circumstances, whose disables us to use other empirical methods of research, such as physical tests, comparing and evaluation of training plans or diaries. In Slovak sport karate there is not the precise standard structure of a complex measuring, planning, recording and evaluating of training process documented and used in practice.

The researched group is made of a group of crack sportsmen specializing in kata and a group of trainee having the same specialization. There were 17 competitors in a researched group out of whose there were 7 men and 10 women. All of them are active trainee. 15 of them are listed in senior or junior Slovak karate national team. One of them is a member of Czech karate national team. The average age of group was 21. Each of them bears "Dan" level of karate mastery ranging between 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan.

The second monitored group consisted of 7 professional trainees (men only) specialized mostly in kata trainings. These are active in different karate clubs in Slovakia. One of them is an Italian expert with international reputation, having the longest trainee practice. The group average age was 45. Each of the trainees bears "Dan" level of karate mastery ranging between 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>. They also hold a trainee licence of first or second level. Two of the trainees are Slovak national team trainees. The average length of their training activity is 25 years.

**Hypothesis:** In the first hypothesis it was assumed, that most changes ( 5 % at least) will be seen in the tactical and psychological area of sport preparation in training process after

setting new rules. In the second hypothesis at least 50% rise in number of rightly prepared competition kata was assumed for all monitored competitors.

### Results:

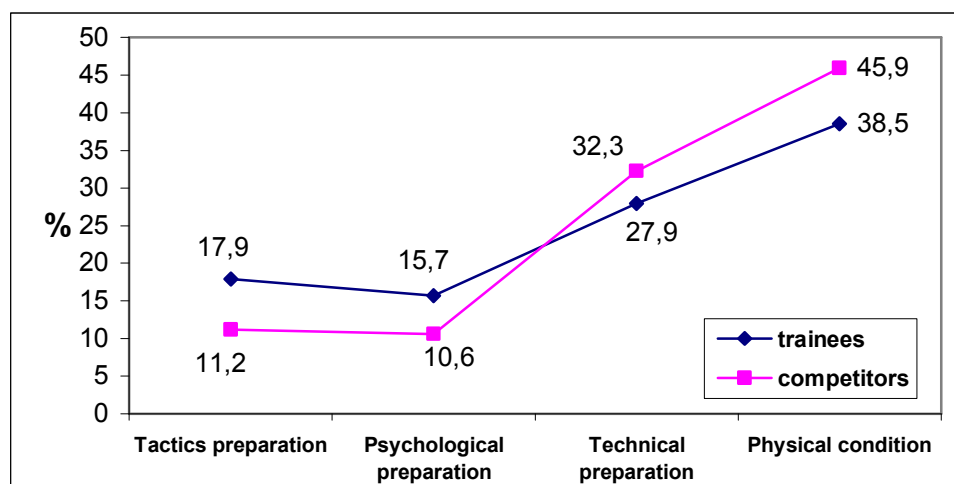
According to obtained information there are following results:

**The first hypothesis**, where the greatest change ( 5% in each of them at least) was assumed in tactical and psychological area of sport preparation in training process after new rules introduction. This hypothesis was confirmed only partly in tactical area. The increase of its presence in training process after new rules introduction can be seen (6,4%)compare to past period before the rules changed. In psychical area the hypothesis did not fulfill. Only 1,3% increase was noted compare to past period. The greatest change in individual areas percentage in training process compare to the past period was noted in technical area in which it decrease in 8,9 %.

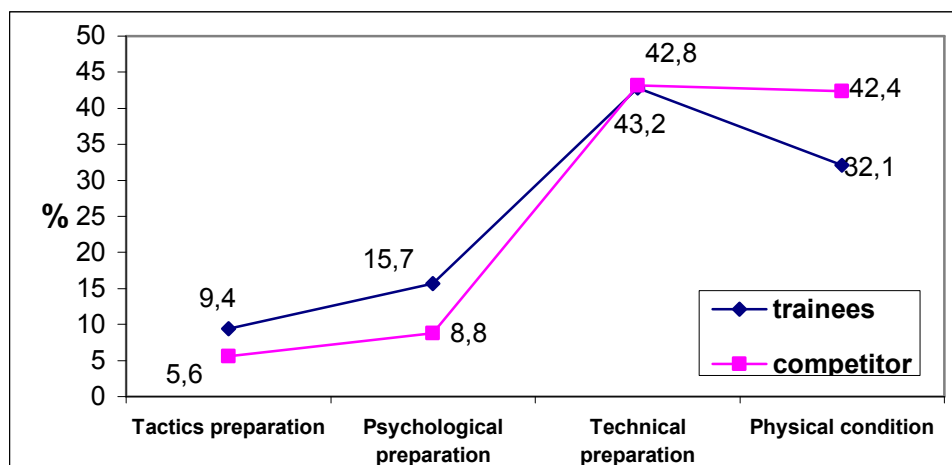
**Second hypothesis** – the rise of professional prepared kata was assumed for all monitored competitors in 50 %. This hypothesis was fulfilled. In the past the competitors had to prepare in average 3 racing kata, after the new rules introducing this number rose more then 50 % to present average 6 racing kata.

In general it can be stated that proportionality of individual areas of sport preparation placement in kata training adapted to a new trends in judging of this discipline. This trend can be seen the most in tactical and technical area, where a rapid rise was noted. The specific outcomes monitored at both competitors and trainee before and after a new kata judging rules introducing are displayed in following charts 1 and 2.

**Chart 1.** *Display of percentage presence of sport preparation areas in kata after a new judging rules introducing in practice.*



**Chart 2.** *Display of percentage presence of sport preparation areas in kata before a new judging rules introducing in practice.*



### Discussion:

According to results above the new kata judging rules brought along many changes in content, methodology and organization whose affected the whole sport preparation. The mentioned result proofed our theories. The analysis of proportional placement of individual areas in sport preparation definitely showed its dependency on realized changes in kata judging systém. It is important to identify, respect and know these changes. The information obtained by this research can help both trainees and competitors in realization but most of all in planning their sport preparation.

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