



EUROPEAN KENDO FEDERATION

NIHON KENDO KATA

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

COMPETITION REGULATIONS



1. Organisations

This event objective is to promote the practice of Nihon Kendo Kata (NKK) in Europe, fostering inclusivity among Iaido, Jodo and Kendo practitioners, and adapting the competition format to the European context.

Promoter: European Kendo Federation **(E.K.F.)**

Host Organisation: Confederazione Italiana Kendo **(C.I.K)**

2. Place

Sports Hall: **Ravenna (Italy)** TBD after pre-entry.

NB: There is no requirement for a wooden floor for the competition.

Main Hotel: **Ravenna (Italy)** TBD after pre-entry

Supporting Hotels: **Ravenna (Italy)** TBD after pre-entry

Aside from referees, accommodation for delegations should be booked directly with the hotels using the discount code which will be provided by **C.I.K** after pre-entry.

3. Date

Regarding the number of participants, there will be a one-day NKK seminar for Referees and Competitors on Saturday 17/04/2027.

The Sunday 18/04/2027 will be the NKK European Championships (NKKEC)

Please see the EKF website for event information.

4. Events & Schedule

Event info, schedule and costs are shown on the Host Organisation website: (TBD after pre-entry)

Host organisation is best reached via email: (TBD after pre-entry)



5. Content of the Championships

05.1 The content of the NKKEC is as follows:

- **Championships by pairs** with no maximum by country.
- divided into the following 7 categories:
 1. Mudan (kyu)
 2. Shodan (1st dan)
 3. Nidan (2nd dan)
 4. Sandan (3rd dan)
 5. Yondan (4th dan)
 6. Godan (5th dan)
 7. Rokudan (6th dan)
- The category in which a pair competes is determined by the highest grade held by either member, whether in laido, Jodo or Kendo.
- Some groupments of categories could be decided by EKF after the final entry.

05.2 The number and type of kata to be performed in each round depend on the category and the phase of the competition, such as pools, semifinals, or finals.

05.3 The ranges where the kata will be chosen from are as follow: 1st dan=> 1~5, 2nd dan=>1~7, 3rd dan and more => 1~10

05.4 The specific kata that each category must perform are assigned at the time of the manager meeting (the day before the championships).

05.5 The order in which pairs perform is determined by a drawing system, following the same procedure as other European championships.

05.6 For semifinal and final matches, all ten kata should be completed within 6 to 8 minutes, including the standing bows; if fewer kata are required, the time limit is adjusted as follows: Shodan (1~5) = within 4 to 5mn and Nidan (1~7) : within 5 to 6mn. *NB: For the first edition of this event, EKF reserves the right not to apply a time limit to the performances.*

05.7 The top four pairs in each category will be awarded 1st, 2nd and two 3rd places. There will also be special recognitions for fighting spirit performance (FS). For the highest category, there is a possibility that the winning pair will be invited to perform a demonstration at the next European laïdo, Jodo, or Kendo championships.



6. Championships Structure

6.1. Pool system

The competitors will be divided into as many pools of three as possible. **If the inscriptions make it necessary, pools of two (2) or pools of four (4) will be included.**

The ranking of the individuals out of the same pool will be based on the following:

1. The number of matches won.
2. If this is equal, the number of flags is counted.
3. If this is equal as well, a “knock out” match of only one *Kata* will be played. The Court Judge will announce the number of the *Kata* before the start of the match.

6.2. Tournament

The tournament operates under the knockout system. The **first two out of every pool** will be entered on the tournament grid, respecting the principles of separation (refer to 7.2) as much as possible. In principle, the 1st placed of one pool will compete with the 2nd placed of another pool.

7. Rules and Conditions for the Qualification of the Competitors

- 07.1. Every competitor must be a member of an organization adhering to the E.K.F. and be mentioned on the official inscription lists handed in for every category in due time by that organization.
- 07.2. There is no maximum of competitors per country to participate for each category. The competitors must have the exact grade of the category in which they participate at the time of the competition. The grade is verified at the registration in the final entry. The grade or the category cannot be changed after the final entry is closed. In case the competitor is promoted to higher grade after the final entry, he/she will not be able to participate in the competition.
- 07.2. Competitors of one pair can have different nationalities. In registering such pairs, Member Federations will contact the EKF secretariat for assistance.
- 07.3. Every competitor must be at least 16 years old at the time of the Championships. No exceptions on age will be granted.
- 07.4. The category in which a pair competes is determined by the highest grade held by either member, whether in Iaido, Jodo or Kendo. The member with the higher grade, or in the case of equal grades the elder member, must take the role of uchidachi. The grade difference between partners must not exceed two dan. For example, if one member is 6th dan in Iaido and the other is 4th dan in kendo, the pair will compete in the 6th dan category, and the 6th dan will be the uchidachi.



Pairs must be fixed at the time of registration and cannot be changed during the event.

- 07.5. Every competitor must wear a nafuda (name tag) on the left side of the gi (jacket), showing clearly in Roman characters, at least, the name of the competitor. The size shall be 15 cm by 10 cm; the nafuda should be black (with white letters), blue (with white letters) or white (with black letters). Ideally the nafuda should be the same colour as the gi.
- 07.6. Practitioners may wear their usual keikogi and hakama, which can be black, blue, or white, but the top and bottom must match in colour; mixing colours within an individual's outfit is not allowed. It is preferred that Uchidachi and Shidachi wear the same color of keikogi and hakama.
- 07.7. Each pair must use standard bokutō, with the tachi measuring 102 cm and the kodachi measuring 55 cm, and it is preferred to use leather tsuba. It is preferred that both bokuto within a pair match in colour and style.

8. Refereesⁱ¹

- 08.1. A panel of 3 referees, who are seated, like the arrangement used in Jodo competitions, will be responsible for evaluating the performances. There will also be shinpan-shunin by each shiai-jo and a shinpan-cho, or chief judge, overseeing the whole process.
- 08.2. The shinpan-shunin and the shinpan-cho may have a table available for taking notes, and there will be tables and kakari-in assigned for scoring purposes.
- 08.3 The EKF Member Federations are invited to nominate the candidates for Referee selection to the EKF by the Pre-Entry Deadline (see Section 16). The nomination shall be done on the EKF website with the relevant event registration, at the "Flag-Icon – Nominate Shinpan". Please upload a picture of each nominated referee also to the EKF online-system, "Persons" / click – "Image" icon. This picture can be used in the following events.
- 08.4. Appointment of Referees of the NKKEC is entrusted to the E.K.F; they are chosen from among those proposed by the E.K.F. Member Countries. Appointment of referees to semi-finals and finals is done by the E.K.F Technical Director or his representative during the competition.
- 08.5. Referees may not participate as competitors.
- 08.6. The function of Referee is incompatible with that of Coach or Manager. Obviously, a certain reservation and neutrality remain required as a general attitude for Referees.

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- 08.7. The on-site expenses for the referees (lodging in single rooms, meals, local transport & sayonara party) during the event are covered by the Host Organization for three nights, starting from Friday evening until Monday morning.
- 08.8. Each referee shall bring his own set of flags. Official dress code of Referees is keikogi, hakama and Tabi (Blue or black without mixing colors).
- 08.9 The shiai-jo, or competition area, is marked with two crosses (1 red on the shushin side and 1 white on fukushin side) for the starting positions, and there is no requirement for a full square.

9. Judging criteria

9.1. Major Criteria

Major criteria are the fundamental elements that are essential for a high-level performance. They form the core of the evaluation and reflect the most critical expectations for participants:

- Etiquette and appearance, known as chakuso, ensures that participants demonstrate proper reiho, dignity, elegance, and solemnity.
- Performing the correct sequence and precise movements will be recognized as essential for a successful evaluation.
- Movements to show a true understanding of the scenario, with each action having meaning and not being mere choreography.
- The quality of technical execution, including the correct use and trajectory of the sword (hasuji, teno-uchi), as well as mastery of timing through kiai, maai, zanshin, and ki-ken-tai-itchi.
- Fighting spirit: the kata performance should reflect real combat spirit and genuine intensity.

9.2. Intermediate Criteria

Intermediate criteria are important factors that help distinguish between performances of similar quality. They demonstrate a deeper understanding and consistent practice and are used to refine the evaluation when major criteria are met by multiple participants.



- Proper respect for the roles of uchidachi and shidachi, with uchidachi acting as the senior and shidachi as the junior.
- Respect for distance and positioning, especially regarding the center line and the starting and ending positions.

9.3. Subsidiary Criteria

Subsidiary criteria are complementary elements that enhance the overall presentation but are not decisive for the final score. They may be used to differentiate between participants in the case of a tie or to recognize outstanding attention to detail.

- Harmony and coordination between partners, with movements needing to be fluid and adaptive.
- Overall presentation, including cleanliness, uniformity, and the general impression left by the performance.

9.4. Disqualification criteria

One of those criteria from a fighter provokes his disqualification (Cf. The regulations of Kendo shiai and Shinpan):

- Using or possessing prohibited substances or implementing prohibited methods. Prohibited substances and prohibited methods mean those listed in the latest Prohibited Table of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).
- Insulting or acting offensively towards shinpan-in or opponents.
- Use of non-regulation equipment.

10. Managers

The Manager of each team is responsible for the behaviour and attitude of the team members and for the correct way of handling and wearing their equipment.

NB : As this event is an "open" competition, the manager is considered the "Uchidachi" for each pair.

11. Drawing

The drawing will be held under the authority of the E.K.F. prior to the event.



12.Complaints

All complaints to the E.K.F. Technical Director or his representative are to be handed in by the Manager or the Team Leader; all other people will be refused. Any complaint needs to be filed immediately, but in any case, not later than by the end of the possibly affected competition. *No protests to Shinpan decisions, hantei, can be made*



13. Insurance

Every delegation will see to it that all its members are insured against any possible mishaps. Host Organization **must have insurance** against any civil liability. In case of an accident or incident (like theft, traffic accident, accident not covered by travel or sports insurance, incident leading to civil liability...) which might lead to a claim against any third party except the insurance company of the delegation or requires a written attestation by the Host Organization or by the EKF, has to be notified to the Host Organization and the EKF before the departure of the delegation, unless this is impossible due to the circumstances of the accident or incident.

14. Anti-Doping

The prescriptions and prohibitions established by the FIK (International Kendo Federation) will be applicable at these championships. A competitor who is judged by decision of the referees to be under the influence of prohibited drugs or alcohol shall be disqualified, be ordered to retire from the match and shall lose the match. Additionally, the *FIK Anti-Doping Rules* (approved August 27th, 2009, Sao Paulo, as amended April 2020) and the *EKF Anti-Doping Rules* (adopted April 8th, 2010, Debrecen, the later shall prevail in case of conflict – together "The AD-Rules") including the respective updated and most recent WADA Prohibition List shall be applicable. Tests relating to the Championships shall be conducted according to the AD-Rules. In case of disqualification following any anti-doping violation, the shift of ranks method determined by FIK during the past WKC shall be applied.

All TUE exemption requests must be submitted to EKF Vice-President (vice-president@ekf-eu.com) **by the Pre-Entry Deadline (see Section 16).**

15. Additional Points

The event is open and experimental for the first edition; future editions may introduce stricter national quotas or additional categories.

Pre-registration several months in advance is required to estimate participation for the organizer federation.



16. Deadlines

Register at:	http://www.ekf-eu.com
Pre-Entry:	10 th October 2026
Final Entry, Referee nomination, TUE:	To be decided later
Payments must be RECEIVED by:	To be decided later

The final entry registration covers:

- Competitors per category
- Referees
- NKK Seminar participants
- Officials
- Sayonara party participants
- Lunch at Competition
- Additional nights (Thu) for Referees

In case of 'force majeure', names of competitors may be altered until the date of the drawing for the event, after permission has been granted by the E.K.F. President.

Hotel reservations:

Each delegation should make reservations directly, according to instructions given at the event website (To be communicated later)

Portrait photo files of all official participants (Delegation Leader, Manager, Team Manager, Coach, Competitor and Referee) should **be uploaded in the EKF online system (Person / "Picture Icon") by Final Entry Date.** Minimum size: 0.3 MB; Maximum size: 1.0 MB, Ratio: 4,5 - 3,5 [Standard for EU-passport-photos]; Orientation: portrait; Resolution: printable [300 dpi - 600 dpi]; One face per picture [No "group photos"]; The face should cover 2/3 of the picture.

By registering, all participants and officers agree that their names, gender, tournament category, results and pictures as filed or taken during the event may be stored, processed, and published on the internet or in print media and that there may be videos taken during the event, stored, published, and live streamed in connection with the event. All personal data will be handled according to EKF Privacy Statement published on EKF website.

The E.K.F Board of Officers



ANNEX: The procedure of REIHO for matches

Reiho before and after the shiai:

At the start of each match, both pairs line up facing each other outside the *shiai*jo, sit down (Seiza), and do the "*sogo ni rei*" (swords at their right side).

After the end of the shiai, the competitors leave the *shiai*jo and line up with the other pair members to do the "*sogo ni rei*" (idem start of the match in seiza).

Entering and exiting the area

Once the shinpan-in are in their positions (Triangle), the two pairs can enter the shiaijo and they stand up.

The 2 competitors of each pair enter the *shiai*jo in "*sageto*" position (in right hand) already in the disposition Uchidachi/Shidachi.

They stand at the appropriate distance, about 9 steps, facing the cross corresponding to their color, ready for the salute. Note: The red cross is located on the Shushin side.

The two Uchidachi are positioned on the right side of the Shushin.

the commands for the beginning and end

At the command "hajime," all competitors begin performing kata, without waiting for further commands from shushin.

After performing the kata, the pairs will first perform the sogo-ni-rei and then the shomen-ni-rei on their own.

At the command "hantei," the referees raise their flags, and Shushin announces the overall decision (Shobuari). After a short moment, the referees lower their flags.

1st and last match:

For the first and last fight of the day in each category, the Shunin orders the "Shomen ni rei" before saying "Hajime"; afterwards, the "Shomen ni rei" is not repeated, the partners bow directly and begin their performance.



Execution Tachi and kodachi:

Before the shomen ni rei, the two shidachi who entered, lined up facing their Uchidachi, will, by stepping back, place their kodachi in the correct position on the ground.

Between Tachi and Kodachi, the two shidachi go to exchange their Odachi to Kodachi, in the meantime, the Uchidachi is in Sonkyo position.

At the end of the performance, they wait after the hantei, shobuari, then the two shidachi go and take their Tachi by stepping back, exit the shiai-jo and perform outside Reiho.

