



## Edge Martial Arts Competition Team Frequently Asked Questions

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**What is the competition team?** The EMA Competition Team is an opportunity for all students interested in kata competition at the regional, national, and international level. Although karate is not so much a sport as it is a way of life, and competition with others plays a very small role in your overall training, we encourage our students to consider tournament competition as one way to grow their skills and challenge their limits.

**How do students join the Competition Team?** Spots on the competition team are earned through competing at Team Trials — held this year on Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. Blue, Yellow, and Green Belt students should prepare Taikyoku Kata to compete with. Purple, Brown, and Advanced Brown Belts should prepare any two kata to compete with. Black Belts should prepare any three kata to compete with. Current team members may use any kata that they already compete with. Team Trials are conducted as a “round robin” tournament.

**Is there also sparring on the competition team?** Not at this time, but we hope to create this option in the future.

**How is the team structured?** The team is divided into two programs: the Competition Skills Development (CSD) Team for younger and less experienced students, and the Elite Competition Training (ECT) Team for older and more advanced students. Although placement on both teams is at Sensei Ben’s discretion, typically Blue Belt, Yellow Belt, Green Belt, and Purple Belt students are placed on the CSD Team, and Black Belt students are placed on the ECT Team – with Brown Belt and Advanced Brown Belt students placed depending on age and ability.

**What is the time commitment for competition team?** The Competition Team trains on Sundays, with the CSD Team training from 11:00am-12:00pm, and the ECT Team training from 12:00pm-2:00pm. Almost all tournaments also occur on Sundays, although a couple run on Saturdays, and national events typically span multiple days. Because team training only occurs once a week, the expectation is that students train regularly on their own time.

**Is attendance required at all team trainings?** No. We recognize that illnesses and family obligations will come up, and that most team members will miss one or two practices over the course of the season. Please note that excessive absences will have a negative impact on a student’s readiness for competitions.



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**What is the cost?** The cost of participation on the team is \$399. This covers all team practices from September 2019 through June 2020. The cost of Team Training Camps is not included.

**What are the team training camps?** Team Training Camps are an intensive one-or-two day trainings designed to take a deeper dive into skill building, learning new kata, and doing mock competitions. We hold a Winter Training Camp around the Presidents' Week break, and a Summer Training Camp in late August. All team members are required to attend one of these events (and are welcome to attend both). There is also a Nationals Training Camp held at the end of June, required for those students planning to compete at US Nationals.

**What equipment is required?** At all USANKF events, athletes are required to wear a plain white gi with a "WKF Approved" designation. Additionally, all competitors must own two belts: a red belt and a blue belt, which are used for scoring. EMA can order students Punok brand uniforms and belts at a discounted price, but team members may purchase any brand that is WKF approved. Please feel free to consult us for help with sizing!

**Where are the tournaments held?** Many regional tournaments and USANKF National Qualifiers are held right in the local NYC area, with a majority of events held in either Queens or Long Island. Additionally, the team will compete at the Philadelphia Open in May and the Boston Open in June. At the national level, the team will compete at the Junior International Open and the US Open, qualified students will have the opportunity to represent the team at US Nationals, and there may be opportunities to compete at various American Junior Karate League (AJKL) events.

**How much do tournaments usually cost?** Registration for events is typically between \$65 and \$85 depending on the size of the event.

**Do team members have to compete at every tournament on the schedule?** No. Obviously, every tournament is an opportunity for growth and improvement, and so participation at all events is strongly encouraged. However, we expect and understand that most team members will have conflicts with one or two events over the course of the season.



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**Do team members have to compete at national events?** No. However, the goal of this program is to prepare students for that level of competition if they are so inclined, and we strongly encourage students to set the goal of competing at that level, and encourage parents to support those goals by considering making attendance at those events possible.

**What are the national events?** National events (or “Signature Events”) are hosted by the USANKF each year. There are three Signature Events: the Junior International Open and the US Open are held over spring break in Las Vegas each year. The two competitions are held back-to-back so that athletes can make the most of the trip, and there are often fantastic seminars available to attend that week as well. *(In 2018, kata seminars were offered by World Champion Damian Quintero of Spain; in 2019, kata seminars were offered by Ryuei-ryu Pan-American Chief Instructor Tomohiro Arashiro.)* Team members are strongly encouraged to compete at this event in 2020. The third Signature Event is the US National Championships. In addition to being the culminating event of the competitive season, US Nationals are also the opportunity for athletes wishing to vie for a spot on the Junior National Team. Nationals are hosted in a different city each year (2017: Greenville, SC; 2018: Reno, NV; 2019: Chicago, IL). Team members who finish in the Top 8 of a national qualifier have “qualified” to compete at Nationals. Last year, 90% of our team qualified for Nationals over the course of the season.

**What is the USANKF?** The USA National Karate Federation is the major governing body of sport karate in the United States. The USANKF is a member of the US Olympic committee, and forms the Senior National Team and Junior National Team, which represent the country in international competition, including the 2020 Olympics, the World Championships, and the Pan-American Championships. The USANKF also hosts the US Open, the Junior International Open, and US Nationals, as well as sanctioning National Qualifiers around the country.

**What is the AJKL?** The American Junior Karate League is a nation-wide event series for students ages 6-17 designed to provide equal opportunity for athletes from all regions of the country through six AJKL events. Rankings are maintained based on points earned for participation at each competition, and the series provides Junior athletes with incentives and cash prizes (scholarship fund prizes)



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to help motivate their competitive Karate careers, as well as opportunities to experience top level national competition in a format that mirrors competition on the international stage.

**What is the USA Junior National Team?** The Junior National Team represents the United States in international competition, including the Junior Pan-American Championships, Junior World Championships, and WKF Youth League events. The Junior National Team is comprised of athletes in the following age divisions: 12-13, 14-15, 16-17, and 18-20. (Eligibility for the Senior National Team in kata is 16-34, so athletes from 16-20 have the opportunity to represent the USA on one or both teams). Eligibility for the Junior National Team is determined by the top four athletes in each Elite Division at US Nationals – the gold, silver, and both bronze medal winners. The top two athletes (gold and silver) represent the USA at international events, with the opportunity extending to the bronze medal winners in the event that one or both of the top two are unable to attend the event.