



NASKA FORMS AND WEAPONS CRITERIA

NASKA separates forms and weapons competition into following four categories: (1) Traditional; (2) Creative; (3) Extreme; and (4) Musical.

- **Traditional Forms and Weapons** – These forms must capture the essence of classic martial arts movements, displaying the traditional techniques, stances, footwork, and weapons. Emphasis is placed on execution of technique, application of technique, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and focus. Forms may be unmodified or modified from what a system or school considers to be the original version of the form; however, performance of the following movements will result in a downgrade of the form, or upon unanimous vote of the judges, a “no score” as a form inappropriate for the division: **Movements that involve more than a 360 degree spin, require the body to be inverted more than parallel to the floor,** more than two kicks with the same leg without putting the foot down in between; front or back flips; cartwheels; front or side leg splits; releases of the weapon other than simple hand switches; or any other gymnastic movements or extreme exhibitions of flexibility or **agility** with the body **or weapon** that are deemed in the opinion of the judges to be inappropriate for the division pursuant to the general guidelines set forth here. (**Forward Roll is a legal Traditional Technique.)

Commentary: There has been a great deal of debate among reputable martial artists regarding whether a form or series of moves are outside of the bounds of the Traditional Division. Because NASKA is a tournament circuit open to all styles and schools (across the nation and around the world) and from which judges are utilized, each competitor must make his or her own decision regarding whether to include movements, which might be to be objectionable for the Traditional Division. Just like the extreme and creative competitors, the traditional competitors will try to extend the base of the rules that govern the traditional divisions to gain an advantage over their competition. If there is something performed in a traditional form or weapon division that is not covered by the above rules, the NASKA Rules Official/s will make the decisions if a technique is a legal or illegal move.

- **Creative Forms and Weapons** – The Creative Division allows forms to include contemporary martial arts techniques that have evolved over the last 30 years. These may be added to a traditional form, or the form may be devised in its entirety by the competitor. The Creative Division was formerly known as the Open and before that the *American Division*. A form in the Creative Division must **ONLY** include techniques which originate from martial arts and like the Traditional Division, emphasis will be placed on execution of the techniques, application of the techniques, balance, speed, power, solid stances, and focus. Spinning kicks, jump spinning kicks, flying kicks, multiple kicks, splits, weapon twirls, weapon releases, and other *creative martial arts techniques* are permitted. Movements that involve more than a 360 degree spin, require the body to be inverted more than parallel to the floor, or are similar to movements found in gymnastics and/or non martial arts disciplines, or forms that meet the above definition of strictly traditional forms, will result in a downgrade by the judges or, upon a unanimous vote of the judges, a “no score” as a form inappropriate for the division. **Although one creative move qualifies a competitor for the creative divisions, it should be expected that a creative form or weapon routine with multiple creative moves of good quality would prevail as the winner, assuming all other criteria is met.**
- **New:** The following techniques are legal in the Creative form/weapon divisions: **Butterfly Kick, Illusion Kick, Forward Roll and Kip Up. They will be scored as any other techniques: power, speed, balance and proper execution.**

Commentary: The Creative Division is intended for those competitors who do not wish to compete with a strictly traditional form, and/or do not wish to compete against other participants who execute extreme gymnastic-type movements. Over the past several years, it was often observed that judging these “creative” forms in the same division with forms including extreme martial arts “tricks” was essentially comparing apples and oranges, and to be more fair to the participants these divisions should be separated. NASKA has therefore created a separate “Extreme Division”, as detailed below, separate and distinct from the Creative Division, thus allowing the Creative Division to include only those forms with movements that originate more inherently from the classic martial arts systems.

Regarding the Creative Weapons Divisions, it is important to note that any particular weapons movement shall NOT be a factor in determining whether the weapons form constitutes a Creative or Extreme Form. The determining factor shall be the particular body movements as defined below in the Extreme Divisions. Consequently, a Creative Weapons competitor is permitted to perform any weapons move (i.e., twirls, releases, spins, etc.), but is not permitted to perform “Extreme” body movements (i.e., flips, 540 and above spins or any inverted body moves, etc.).

- **Extreme Forms and Weapons** – The Extreme Divisions allow the competitor to perform any movements whether they originate from traditional or contemporary martial arts systems or otherwise.

However, (1) at least half of the form must originate from martial arts techniques, and (2) the competitor must execute at least one technique that involves an inverted move or greater than 360 degree spin. Emphasis is placed on the quality of execution of techniques and movements, martial arts skills, balance, speed, power, degree of difficulty, and showmanship. In addition, only those movements that portray a definite offensive or defensive martial arts purpose, or are included to illustrate extreme flexibility or agility, are allowed. Inclusion of other movements, or the performance of a form or weapons form meeting the criteria above for a Traditional or Creative form, will result in a down grade by the judges, or upon a unanimous vote of the judges, a “no score” as a form inappropriate for the division. **Although one extreme move qualifies a competitor for the extreme divisions, it should be expected that an extreme form or weapon routine with multiple extreme moves of good quality would prevail as the winner, assuming all other criteria is met.**

Commentary: As martial arts evolves from the Traditional to Creative to Extreme, this category allows for the integration of techniques and movements from all martial art styles, gymnastics, acrobatics, dance, and athletic disciplines. If a competitor wishes to participate in a division with moves not permitted in the Traditional and Creative Divisions but meeting the guidelines described here, the competitor should compete in the Extreme Division.

- **Musical Forms and Weapons:** The Musical Divisions requires a empty hand form or weapons form to meet all the above criteria for a Traditional, Creative, and Extreme form, and additionally meet the requirements of the “Divisional Music Rule” below.
- New “Divisional Music Rule”: Music Choreography should be judged as follows:

- 1) The movements of the form must be accented by and performed in conjunction with specific beats, notes, or words in the music. Simply performing your form to the same rhythm or cadence of a song is not satisfactory.
- 2) If sound effects are added to the music, the form should not solely be choreographed to the added sound effects.
- 3) Music and sound effects should appropriately match each other, and set the overall mood for each performance.
- 4) Overall, all music, and sound effects used, must compliment the form, and both the form and music should be judged together and viewed as an overall performance, not simply as a form performed with music playing.

Each competitor must provide a music player of reasonable and non-intrusive size at ringside to play his or her music, and an attendant at the player who must be present at all times during the performance (unless it is advertised that music players will be supplied). As each form begins, a music volume check must be made, during which time the player attendant will look to the center judge for a nod of approval or a signal to lower the volume. Once this volume is set, it may not be increased during the performance of the form.

Commentary: If a competitor chooses to use music in a grand championship division to a form that does not require music, the “Divisional Music Rule” does not apply.

Commentary: If a competitor receives a “no score” decision by the judges because they feel the competitor’s form is not appropriate for the division, the competitor is not allowed to redo his/her form or weapon form in that division. It is the responsibility of the competitor to read and understand the rules of the division he/she is competing in before competition starts.

- **Grand Championships and Over-All Grand Championships:** All competitors must compete in any Grand Championship and/or Over-All Grand Championship with the style of form or weapons (not exact form or weapon) they won with in their division (example: a winner of a creative form cannot compete with an extreme form in the grand championships) If a competitor wins more than one division, they have the option to select the style of form or weapon of the divisions they won. All competitors may still use music in all “Overall Weapons and Forms Grand Championships and Runoffs” but in Divisional Weapons and Form Grand Championships, music may only be used by competitors in the CMX Divisional Grand Championships (this includes creative and extreme winners).
- **Age Divisions:** To Compete in an 18+ Divisional Grand Championships, Overall Grand Championships and/or Runoff in Form, Weapons and/or Sparring, a competitor must have won an 18+ Division. An adult black belt competitor who is 30 and older can compete in an 18+ Form and Weapon Division and Fight in an older division. A 30 and older competitor cannot split Form and Weapons age groups. The only exception to this rule is the ****New Traditional Challenge** Division. A 30 and older competitors can compete in the 18+ Traditional Challenge and still compete in their regular 30+ Form and Weapons Divisions.