

# Judo Bowing Guide

## Introduction

The following guide is adapted from the International Judo Federation Bowing Guide.

A part of the etiquette of Judo, the *rei*, is a tradition which reflects the respect and discipline that permeates the unique activities of our sport. The guide for bowing, therefore, should be followed in a respectful fashion.

All *ritsu rei*, or standing bows, should be at an angle of 30 degrees as measured at the waist.

## 1 Initial *Rei* – Opening ceremony

- 1-1 While the contestants are lined up on the competition area, as the last activity of the opening ceremony, all the referees are to be lined up, side by side, in front of the contestants and team officials, facing the *joseki*.
- 1-2 Upon the order of “*Kiotsuke! Rei!*” team officials, competitors and referees bow towards the *joseki*.
- 1-3 Immediately, the referees make a half turn counter-clockwise facing the contestants and upon the order of “*Rei!*” all bow towards each other.
- 1-4 Then, in order and in accordance with the programmed events, the referees, team officials and contestants leave the competition area so the tournament can begin.

## 2 Final *Rei* – Closing Ceremony

- 2-1 While the contestants are lined up on the competition area as the last activity of the closing ceremony, the referees are to be lined up, side by side, in front of the contestants, facing the *joseki*.
- 2-2 Upon the order of “*Kiotsuke!*” the referees make a half-turn counter-clockwise facing the contestants and on the order of “*Rei!*” all bow towards each other.
- 2-3 Then the referees make a half-turn counter-clockwise facing the *joseki* and upon the order of “*Rei!*” bow towards *joseki*.
- 2-4 After that, in order and in accordance with the programmed events, the referees and contestants leave the competition area, ending the event.

### **3 At the Beginning of the Individual Contest**

- 3-1 Before the first contest of each session of the *shiai*, the first team of designated referees walk along the outside edge of the competition area in single file (judge/referee/judge) to a centralized position before the contest area and facing the *joseki*, then step up to the competition area.
- 3-2 Once in the centralized position on the competition area, standing side by side, the referee and judges bow towards the *joseki*.
- 3-3 From there the referee and judges walk forward onto the danger area, now on contest area, where they bow for a second time toward the *joseki*.
- 3-4 While in the danger area the referee and judges bow towards each other. The referee takes a step backwards, while the judges turn to face each other for the bow.
- 3-5 Immediately the referee and judges take their positions. The judge that reaches the chair first remains standing in front of the chair waiting for the other judge and together they sit down in unison. This same seating procedure should be followed after each conference.
- 3-6 The first team of referees should leave the competition area following the bowing procedure in section 6.
- 3-7 The judge with the shorter distance should walk slower and the other judge should walk faster so that both judges meet the referee at the same time for the bow.

### **4 Following Referee and Judges**

- 4-1 After the first team of officials designated for the first contest, all subsequent groups of referees and judges, before taking their positions, should follow the bowing procedure as established in 3-1, 3-2 and 3-5.
- 4-2 Each subsequent team of referees, with the exception of the last team of each session, are to leave the competition area follow the ceremony outlined in section 6.

### **5 Exchange of Function Between the Referee and Judge**

- 5-1 Following a contest, once the result has been announced and the contestants have left the contest area, if the referee is required to exchange positions with a judge, both referees should approach each other within the red danger area. Once facing each other they should bow before taking their new position. Passing each other, the new referee walks on the inside, taking the shorter route, to the *hajime* position.

## **6 Referee Team Leaving the Competition Area**

- 6-1 Following a contest, once the result has been announced and the contestants have left the contest area, if the referee and judges are to leave the contest area, they should walk towards the outer edge of the competition area. Facing the *joseki*, from a centralized position, with the referee in the center, in unison they should bow towards the *joseki* and then leave the competition area.

## **7 Referee Team at the End of the *Shiai***

- 7-1 Following the last contest of each session and after the result has been announced, the referee and judges should walk towards the red danger area and once inside, facing the *joseki* side by side, with the referee in the center, they should bow towards the *joseki*.
- 7-2 While in the danger area, the referee takes a step backwards and the judges turn to face each other to bow, and finally the three bows towards each other.
- 7-3 The referee and judges then walk towards the border of the competition area to a centralized position, facing the *joseki*, with the referee in the center, they bow towards *joseki* and then leave the competition area

## **8 Contestants Entering and Leaving the Competition Area**

- 8-1 Upon entering and leaving the competition area, the contestants should bow towards the *joseki*.

## **9 *Ritsu Rei* Between Contestants**

As per the USA Judo Referee Commission, the only bow that is required is in the center of the mat. This procedure is in effect as of January 2003 for all competitions under sanction by USA Judo or any member organization. This bow must be strictly enforced. All other bows are at the discretion of the athletes.

- 9-1 The two contestants, standing behind their corresponding marks and without requiring any orders must bow simultaneously towards each other, take a step forward and stand in natural standing position while waiting for the referee to order "*Hajime!*"
- 9-2 Once the contest is over and the referee has ordered "*Soremade!*" the contestants should stand in front of their corresponding marks to await the result. The contestants should at this point have their *judogi* in order.
- 9-3 The referee steps forward one step, awards the result and steps back one step, following this announcement the contestants simultaneously take a step back and must bow to each other.

9-4 The contestants move back to the centralized position at the edge of the contest area and leave the competition area complying with the provisions of article 8.

## 10 Team Competitors

10-1 Each contest by two teams is considered as a session of a *shiai*.

10-2 Before the beginning of each team contest the referee and judges should follow 3-1, 3-2, 3-3 and 3-4 then 10-4, 10-5, 10-6, 10-7 and finally 3-5 of these guidelines.

10-3 At the end of each team contest, the referee and judges should follow 10-9, 10-10, 10-11 and 10-12 of these guidelines. Then they should walk to the danger area to a centralized position facing the *joseki* and bow in unison. After this bow they continue with 7-2 and 7-3 of these guidelines.

10-4 Before each team contest starts, with the referee and judges lined up next to each other, with the referee in the center and the three facing towards the *joseki*, the two teams bow together onto the contest area. They then move forward to their mark, facing each other, the referee orders with both hands straight out and hands facing up, the contestants to face the *joseki*. Upon this gesture, the contestants then turn to face the *joseki* remaining in single file.

10-5 The referee then orders “*Rei!*” and the contestants bow.

10-6 Immediately the referee directs the competitors to face each other.

10-7 Again the referee orders “*Rei!*” the teams bow towards each other and move back to the edge of the contest area and bow. It being understood that the contestants bow once more at the edge of the contest area before leaving completely.

10-8 For each individual contest the contestants should follow the provisions of article 9.

10-9 After all individual contests are finished the two teams line up inside the contest area on their mark facing each other. The referee and judges, with the referee in the center, line up next to each other facing the *joseki* and lined up teams. The referee takes a step forward and announces the result.

10-10 The referee takes a step back, returning to the original position, and orders “*Rei!*” The teams bow towards each other.

10-11 Then the referee with the gesture as in 10-4 directs the contestants to turn toward the *joseki*, remaining in single file.

- 10-12 Immediately the referee orders “*Rei!*” and in unison the contestants bow toward the *joseki*.
- 10-13 After this the contestants should move back to the edge of the contest area and bow. It being understood that before completely leaving the competition area, the contestants should bow again towards the *joseki*, from the edge of the competition area.
- 10-14 At that time, in the danger area, the referee and judges bow towards the *joseki*, bow towards each other and, following the procedure as established in section 7, walk towards the border of the competition area to a centralized position, facing the *joseki* with the referee in the center, they bow towards it and then leave the competition area.

### **Summary**

The bowing etiquette sets judo uniquely apart from other international sports. The gestures are of respect, appreciation and courtesy. The referee and judges have a fundamental role in upholding this uniqueness by ensuring that bowing is done according to these guidelines.