

COVID MODIFIED *TSUBAZERIAI* RULES

Explanatory notes on each of the rules have been inserted below.

These Rules are introduced to minimise the risk of transmission of coronavirus during shiai and they will remain in place while the pandemic continues.

*They are primarily related to *tsubazeriai*, the ways to separate from each other and also associated *hansoku* matters in the process of separation. Whilst these are meant to be tentative rules to mitigate Covid risks, there is also a clear intention to adopt them as permanent rules in consideration of Article 1 of FIK Shiai and Shinpan Rules and Regulations. Both *Shiaisha* and *Shinpanin* are expected to be fully aware of the nature of these rules and the reasons behind their introduction. They should become accustomed to these rules and able to put them into practice.

1. *Shiai-sha* shall avoid *tsubazeriai*.

**Tsubazeriai* is the situation where both *tsubas* are locked against each other at about *chudan* height with both *kensen* tilted to the right. General contacts should not be mixed up with *tsubazeriai*. *Shinpanin* are expected to distinguish general contacts from *tsubazeriai* and take appropriate action depending on the circumstances.

2. When *tsubazeriai* or any other contact occurs, *shiai-sha* must either:

- execute *hikiwaza*, or *waza* after *taiatari*, as soon as they come in contact with each other, or,

**Hikiwaza* may be delivered after *taiatari* as soon as they come into contact with each other or immediately after going into *tsubazeriai*. In this situation, legitimate *kuzushi* techniques – a technique to break the opponent's *kamae* or composure is permitted.

- if no *waza* is executed (from *tsubazeriai* or after any other contact), both *shiai-sha* shall proactively and immediately separate themselves from each other.

*This applies when the players are either in *tsubazeriai* or in any other form of contact and no *waza* is delivered.

3. *Shiai-sha* shall make effort in separating themselves without waiting for the shinpan to call “*wakare*”.

**Wakare* is called only when the players are in *tsubazeriai* and not separating mutually from *tsubazeriai*. It is wrong to call “*wakare*” while the players are not in proper *tsubazeriai* and during the initial process of mutual separation (sometimes shinpan calls *wakare* too early).

4. If this does not happen and *tsubazeriai* continues, shinpan shall call “*Wakare*” immediately.

**Shinpanin* need to identify if it is *tsubazeriai* or other contact. If identified as *tsubazeriai* and it is continuing, then *wakare* should be called. If it is identified as other contact and it is continuing, then *yame* should be called and depending on the situation *hansoku* may be applied after *gogi*.

5. *Shiai-sha* shall be penalised with *hansoku* if refusing to separate, if intentionally wasting time, or if they continue to approach their opponent with defensive posture (i.e., avoiding fighting).

*These are not new rules. These situations need to be assessed against the article 1 of FIK Regulations of Kendo *Shiai* and *Shinpan* and if judged as unfair or illegitimate, *hansoku* should be given to the offending player.

6. When mutually separating, whether of their own accord or as a result of “*wakare*” being called by the *shushin*, *shiai-sha* shall do so together, in equal spirits, and with the *shinogi* in contact. *Shiai-sha* shall not open or lower their *kensen*. *Shiai-sha* shall move to a distance where their *kensen* do not touch.

*This is specifically in case of *tsubazeriai* and not for general contacts. *Tsubazeriai* needs to be established and identified first. Then a process of mutual separation from *tsubazeriai* identified. Otherwise, these *hansoku* cannot be applied. Mutual separation being a process of separation taking place of players’ own accord in mutual agreement.

7. *Shiai-sha* shall not press, strike or *maki* (twist) opponent’s *shinai*, or *gyaku-kousa* (cross *shinai* on the *ura*) whilst separating.

8. No *waza* shall be attempted or executed whilst *shiai-sha* are mutually separating. If a *waza* is executed, that *waza* shall not be considered *yukou-datotsu*.

9. If a *waza* is attempted or executed whilst *shiai-sha* are separating, the offending *shiai-sha* may be penalised a *hansoku*. This includes *oikomi datotsu* (chasing *datotsu*) or feigning to separate then executing a *waza*.

*These rules are specifically about players’ conduct during the process of mutual separation either *tsubazeriai* or any other form of contact. *Shinpanins* are expected to identify as to whether the players are in mutual separation or otherwise.

Tsubazeriai needs to be established and identified first and the process of mutual separation needs to be identified. Just because a player steps back does not mean they are mutually separating or a player wants to separate.

10. In each situation above, *shinpanin* shall confer in *gogi* and make a judgement as to whether apply *hansoku* based on each cause and circumstance.
