

PATTERNS

4

TOURNAMENTS

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1 INTRODUCTION

Patterns are sets of fundamental movements which consist of defensive and offensive techniques. They were designed to allow the student to practise their skills against several imaginary opponents using various attacking and blocking tools for different directions. Practising these series of movements enables the student to develop sparring techniques, improve flexibility of movements, master body shifting, build muscles and breath control, develop fluid smooth motions and gain rhythmical movements.

Key points while performing patterns:

1. Pattern should begin and end at exactly the same spot. This will indicate the performer's accuracy.
2. Correct posture and facing must be maintained at all times.
3. Muscles of the body should be either tensed or relaxed at the proper critical moments in the exercise.
4. The exercise should be performed in a rhythmic movement with an absence of stiffness.
5. Movement should be accelerated or decelerated according to instructions of the encyclopaedia.
6. Each pattern should be perfected before moving to the next.
7. Students should know the purpose of each movement.
8. Students should perform each movement with realism.
9. Attack and defence techniques should be equally distributed among right and left hands and feet.

Taekwon-Do Condensed Encyclopaedia, General Choi Hong Hi, ITF

Performing patterns require consideration of the above key points. Furthermore, performing them in tournaments allows students to develop and to achieve their own personal goals. The purpose of this thesis is to introduce fellow students to the tournament side of patterns, in terms of tournament protocols and providing insight into local and overseas tournaments. Furthermore, I would like to share my experiences in training for this type of competition, in the hope that it can be beneficial to those that are keen in this area.

2 TOURNAMENT PROTOCOLS

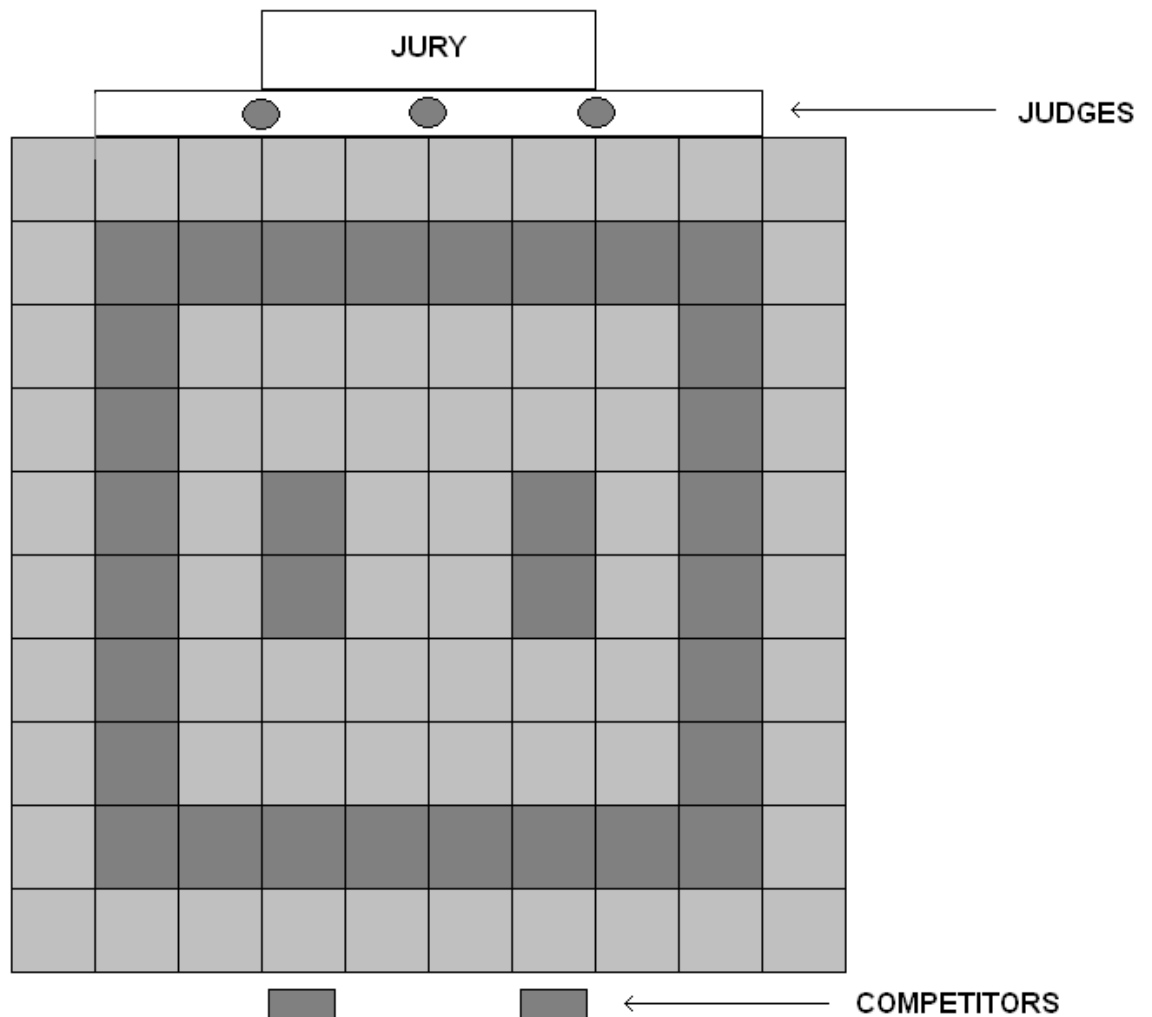
“The purpose of tournaments and these rules is to provide a friendly, safe, and fair environment for contestants to gain experience, improvement of TKD skills, comradeship & fun. With this in mind, it is through friendly rivalry, competitors will be self motivated to strive for the goal of personal improvement and not winning at all costs.”

ITFNZ Taekwon-Do TOURNAMENT RULES, June 2002.

The following tournament protocols are based on the ITFNZ Taekwon-Do

Tournaments Rules, June 2002. The next chapter will explain some differences that exists in other tournaments that occur internationally.

2.1 FLOOR SET-UP



This diagram is an example of how a pattern competition ring may be set-up using interlocking safety mats. The normal ring dimensions are 10m by 10m as shown above, the two dark rectangles within the ring depicts the starting positions of the competing individuals. Note however, that the competitors may alter their starting positions along the vertical axis according to the pattern to be performed, for example, Juche Tul, a 2nd. Dan pattern would require the competitors to start at the top edge of the large dark square. There are usually 3 judges seated in their respective positions in front of the competitors, a jury table (maximum of 3 jury members) placed behind the judges and there may/may not be a centre referee. The competitors are positioned at the bottom edge of the ring prior to entering the ring.

2.2 GENERAL PROCEDURE

Generally, most tournaments use the pyramid system of elimination i.e. ‘knock-out’, where the competitors compete on a 1 to 1 basis and the winner moves forward to the next round. Each competitor performs at least two patterns, the first pattern is considered as the ‘optional’ pattern chosen by the competitor and the second pattern is the ‘designated’ pattern chosen by the judges/jury. This ‘designated’ pattern is usually selected by a random process prior to each round. At the completion of these patterns, the competitor with the highest combined score advances forward to the next round. If the result is a draw another pattern is designated until a winner is decided.

Competitors will be only allowed one attempt at each pattern. In some circumstances such as time restrictions or a very large number of competitors, the judges/jury may choose to only judge the ‘optional’ pattern in the early rounds. However, when there are four remaining competitors, two patterns must be judged in each round.

2.3 DESIGNATED PATTERNS

The designated pattern can be any pattern from Chon-Ji to the highest pattern for that grade; this rule also applies when competitors choose their optional pattern. For example, a black stripe would be expected to perform Choong-Moo if that was the designated pattern. This rule can be adjusted in a situation where two competitors are of unequal rank. Therefore, the highest pattern that can be designated is only up to the level of the lower ranked competitor.

2.4 SCORING SYSTEM

The following scoring system is commonly used in ITFNZ Taekwon-Do Tournaments. The patterns are judged according to a 17-point scale where points are allocated in the following areas:

<i>1. Technical content</i>	<i>5 points</i>
<i>2. Power</i>	<i>3 points</i>
<i>3. Balance</i>	<i>3 points</i>
<i>4. Breath control</i>	<i>3 points</i>
<i>5. Rhythm</i>	<i>3 points</i>

NB If a pattern is not completed no points will be scored. Therefore, if you have forgotten your pattern, maintain that position until you can continue so you can complete your pattern.

2.5 PROCEDURE FOR COMPETITORS

Throughout the pattern competition, the jury/head judge will organise the competitors and guide them through the rounds. Therefore, it is essential that competitors obey the instructions issued by the jury/head judge. The following points illustrate the usual procedure for competitors.

PROCEDURE:

1. The jury/head judge will call up the two competitors for that round
2. Form up at the respective positions at the bottom of the ring, either 'at ease' or in attention stance
3. The competitors are asked to enter the ring
4. Bow before entering the ring
5. Walk or march to your respective positions in the ring according to your instructor/coaches' wishes
6. Stand 'at ease' or in an 'attention' stance whilst waiting for further instructions
7. Bow to the jury/head judge and your opponent when instructed
8. The jury/head judge will ask you what you will perform as your 'optional' pattern
9. Follow commands such as 'junbi' and 'sijak'
10. At the completion of your pattern, return to the 'junbi' position of the pattern performed
11. Follow the command 'swiyo', you may turn left and tidy up and then return to 'at ease' position
12. The jury/head judge will appoint a 'designated' pattern
13. Follow points 9 - 11
14. The results will be tallied up by the jury and they will announce the winner
15. Bow to your opponent and the jury/head judge when instructed
16. Bow when leaving the ring

Remember that your etiquette and mannerism is noted by those watching your performance, so show your professionalism from when you enter the ring until you leave the ring. In some tournaments, they have a centre referee to assist the jury/head judge and they can be present to raise the hand of the winner.

3 TOURNAMENTS

This aim of this section is to describe the various tournaments available and the main differences between them in terms of tournament protocols, expectations and the type of competition.

3.1 REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS

This type of competition is one of the best ways to introduce beginners including white belts to tournaments, as the students they will compete against are from their own club and/or region. Furthermore, the judges are familiar to them as they are usually their instructors and/or seniors. The divisions are similar to those for the National Tournaments but they can be more flexible in certain circumstances such as insufficient competitors therefore the senior and junior divisions may be combined to form one division. This type of environment is usually more relaxed and enjoyable.

3.2 NATIONALS TOURNAMENTS

This tournament only allows a maximum of two competitors per division from each region. The criteria for gaining a place in the Regional Team (e.g. Wellington) is usually by either being placed as 1st or 2nd in the Regionals or if there are places available in that division. This type of tournament is a great way to compete against other students from all over the country and it is a valuable learning experience. Furthermore, the divisions are fairer as it takes into consideration of age and rank, separating the coloured belts into senior and junior divisions and the divisions are yellow, green, blue, red, 1st Dan, 2nd Dan, 3rd Dan and 4th Dan and above.

3.3 INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS – ITAO, BRISBANE 2003

The tournament protocols at the International Taekwon-Do Australian Open (ITAO) 2003 are quite similar to the above tournaments. The main difference was the scoring system, there were 5 judges instead of 3 and they used a ‘flag system’ rather than a ‘point scale’. Each judge would hold a red and blue flag, one for each competitor. At the completion of the ‘optional’ and ‘designated’ patterns, the judges were signaled to raise the flag of the competitor they preferred and the competitor with the most flags advances through to the next round. This tournament had three main countries competing, New Zealand, Australia and USA, therefore, there were some differences in ITF style patterns. Hence, the judges needed to be representative of all three countries so to reduce bias and allow fair judging.

3.4 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS – POLAND 2003

The World Champs is a very competitive and exciting tournament for black belt holders. The main criterion for competing in this type of tournament is to be selected on the New Zealand Team at the trials held usually in February of that year. The divisions allow only one representative from each country in each of the Dan divisions up to 4th Dan and the males are separated from the females. Since there are many differences in ITF style patterns internationally, there are 5 judges to score the patterns using a point-scale system and to reduce bias the judges are a representation of most of the countries. Furthermore, the judges cannot be from the same country as the competitor. In general, patterns evolve quite quickly overseas and New Zealand usually adopts some of those techniques, such as head turns, hip twist, sine wave

variations and breath control. However, it is very important that when adopting these techniques that we still maintain the technical correctness from General Choi Hong Hi's teachings. There can be some bias in judging as judging can be quite a subjective area due to different preferences. Therefore, my advice in these circumstances is to take the advice from the New Zealand Coach and the ITFNZ Technical Sub-committee, as they have most likely sought advice from those on the overseas tournament circuit.

4 TRAINING HINTS AND TIPS

Since the scoring system indicates the areas where points are allocated, this part will use these areas as headlines followed by key points to improve in these areas, although there is some overlap of these points. Furthermore, I have provided a brief outline of training exercises that can be utilised and provided a few key references to articles for further information. Remember that **PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**, therefore continuous repetition is the key to improvement as well as correct advice from more senior members and experienced competitors. To settle the nerves in performing at tournaments, regular practice in front of audiences can help greatly. There are some digital movies to aid visualisation of some of the points such as the different motions. Please keep in mind that this section only highlights some of the key points in performing patterns and is not intended as a complete reference, therefore refer to the Taekwon-Do Condensed Encyclopaedia or even better the full version of the Encyclopaedia.

4.1 TECHNICAL CONTENT

General pattern knowledge such as correct heights of each technique, proper stances, correct intermediate positions and the purpose of each movement. This knowledge can be obtained from your Instructors and the Taekwon-Do Encyclopaedia.

Furthermore, each pattern should end and begin at exactly the same spot, so learn the tricks of the trades from other senior students and the position of the hands when the kick is executed improves the overall look of that movement.



Fig 4 Toi-Gye – Walking stance X-fist pressing block to a middle front snap kick



Fig 1 Do-San – Walking stance high outer forearm block

Walking stance – Ensure the stance is nice and long

→ Keep the front knee bent, rear leg straight and rear foot facing forwards at 45 degrees



Fig 2 Yul-Gok – Sitting stance middle forefist front punch

Sitting stance – Keep knees bent and move them outwards and face the feet forwards



Fig 3 Dan-Gun – L-stance knifehand outward strike

L-stance – Maintain the correct weight distribution i.e. 70/30 for rear/front leg



Fig 5 Forefist punch at the same time as executing a side piercing kick



Fig 6 Variation of executing a punch over the side piercing kick

This variation is not exactly a punch, but the punching hand moves in an outward motion similar to performing a knifehand outward strike but without the knifehand. This makes the movement look sharper and remember to hold the kick for a split second!!



Fig 7 Hands in a guarding block position for a turning kick



Fig 8 Do-San – Maintain the hand positions while executing a front snap kick



Fig 9 Intermediate position for the guarding block

Using bigger arm movements in intermediate positions helps to generate power

Head turns play an important role in demonstrating technique and power. There are variations to head turns, the first is to turn the head sharply towards the direction of the movement to be executed when in the intermediate position. The other is to place the head at a 45° angle in the intermediate position and then turn the head sharply towards the direction of that movement. The general rule of thumb for this variation is that only do head turns when changing directions, therefore, there are no head turns when moving in a straight line.



Fig 10 45° angle head turn variation when moving into a walking stance low outer forearm block

[Movie: 45° angle head turn for a walking stance low outer forearm block from a parallel stance](#)

4.2 POWER

- Speed helps to generate power, so the speed is usually slower at the intermediate position and it speeds up towards the end of each movement
- Slight hip twist to generate more power by using the abdominal muscles to provide additional momentum, therefore, rotate the hip in the same direction as that of the attacking tool (similar to turning the head from a 45° angle)

[Movie: Slight hip twist for a walking stance](#)

[Movie: Slight hip twist for a walking stance low outer forearm block](#)

- Breathing helps to show power and control in the pattern, this is described under ‘breath control’
- Beware not to over generate power as it looks quite shaky and uncontrolled
- Sinewave utilises body weight and speed to generate power, this is described in the ‘balance’ section, as correct utilisation of sinewave prevents poor balance and maintains stability of the movement

4.3 BALANCE

Sine wave helps to generate power and maintain balance; there are a few variations but in this section the normal and common variation are demonstrated.

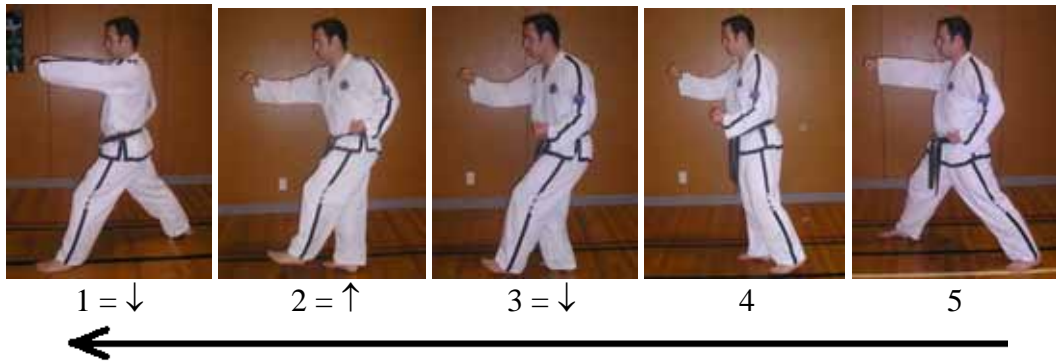


Fig 11 Sinewave for a walking stance front punch

This series illustrate full sinewave (down/up/down) in walking stances. Note that the 1st down movement is when the feet are close together in the third photo.

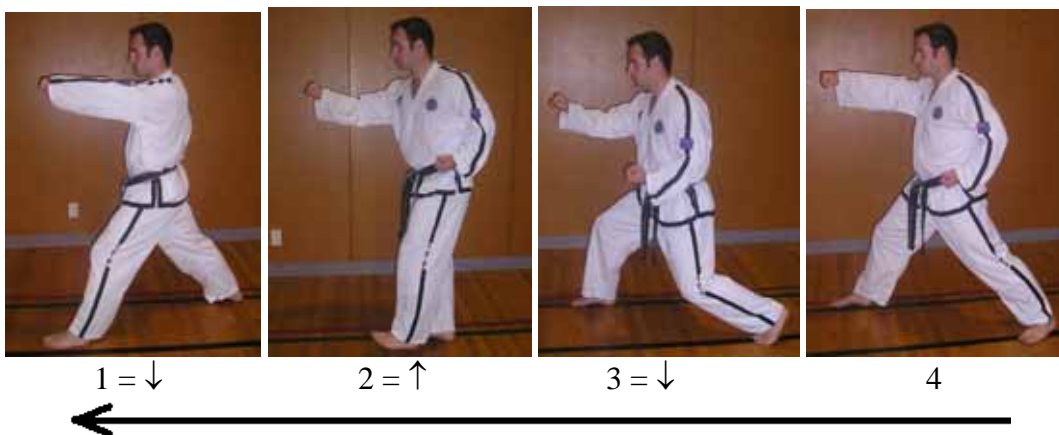


Fig 12 A variation of the sine wave for a walking stance front punch

This is a variation in the sinewave that have been adopted from international tournaments. Here the 1st down movement starts from the stance of the last movement, up movement when the feet are closer together and a fast downward motion towards the end. This is quite difficult to perform and takes quite a lot of lateral thinking to make it work for each movement.

- Pivoting on the ball of the foot instead of the heel helps maintain balance
[Movie: Pivoting on the ball of the foot in Chon-Ji](#)
- Correct stances helps maintain balance if they are stable and flexible

4.4 BREATH CONTROL

- Breathing technique: 1. Sharp exhaling at the moment of impact
2. Slow inhaling helps prepare for the next movement
3. Loud breathing assists in showing power
- Motions: Fast: *1 breath for each movement*
Continuous: *1 breath for each movement*
Slow: *Slow breathing which speeds up towards the end*
Connecting: *1 breath for both movements*

4.5 RHYTHM

- Know the different speeds and motions for each movement
- Stop each movement for a split second before executing the next movement to show a ‘picture-perfect’ movement
- Motions:
Fast: *Sinewave is cut-short so move straight into next movement*
‘Urgent and aggressive’
Continuous: *No pause between each movement*
‘Grace and beauty’
Slow: *Slow movement which accelerates towards the end*
Connecting: *1 sinewave for both movements*

[Movie: Normal motion for a sitting stance double middle front punch](#)

[Movie: Normal motion for a walking stance low forearm block followed by a rising block](#)

[Movie: Fast motion for a sitting stance double middle front punch](#)

[Movie: Continuous motion for a walking stance low outer forearm block followed by a rising block](#)

[Movie: Connecting motion for a walking stance palm hooking block followed a middle front punch](#)

[Movie: Slow motion for a walking stance palm pressing block](#)

4.6 TRAINING EXERCISES

Leg exercises can be helpful to generate strength, balance and flexibility. Exercises can be structured to suit each pattern for example slow side piercing kicks from the bending ready stance without placing the foot on the ground for 10 repetitions. There are many variations to help with this aspect of training such as holding a turning kick for ten seconds or fast repetitions of leg raising for a distance of 10 cm, as well as using weights to further develop leg strength. Regular stretching as well as partner stretching helps with joint laxity.



Fig 13 Side leg raising to strengthen abductor muscles



Fig 14 Side piercing kick without support for balance issues



Fig 15 Front split stretch to improve flexibility



Fig 16 Extreme flexibility!!

4.7 KEY REFERENCES

Key references include the TKD Condensed Encyclopaedia and key articles that are located in the reference section on the ITFNZ website, www.itfnz.org.nz, I found them to be extremely helpful and they provide further information of some of the key points explained above, as well as specific points for each pattern.

- Taekwon-Do Condensed Encyclopaedia, General Choi Hong Hi, ITF
- Pattern Speeds and Sinewave Study - Mr Paul McPhail VI Dan
- Instances of Fast, Continuous and Connecting motion in Patterns
- General Choi Seminar notes – Jan 1998
- ITFNZ Techniques Seminar notes – 1998
- Techniques Seminar notes – March 1996

5 CONCLUSION

Tournament patterns are one of the most exciting events to watch. They are aesthetically pleasing and they demonstrate the beautiful techniques of Taekwon-Do. In the process of choosing your 'optional' pattern, choose one that you know quite well technically and that you can perform to your optimum level in tournaments. Furthermore, choose a second 'optional' pattern as a back-up and continuous constructive criticism from more senior students is extremely helpful.

Patterns can be seen to be individualised to each competitor as they may like to emphasise their strengths such as a beautiful jumping side piercing kick and outdoing their opponent by identifying their weaknesses and improving on them. Since, the judging of patterns can be quite subjective, tournaments aim to have a good representation of the competitors to help minimise bias. Adapting your patterns to the current situation would be helpful to keep up with the International Tournament circuit, but keep in mind to take the advice from the ITF NZ Technical Sub-committee and to keep in line with the teachings from General Choi Hong Hi.

The Reason for 24 Patterns:

"The 24 patterns represent 24 hours, one day, or all my life"

General Choi Hong Hi