



WORLD KARATE FEDERATION

Member of:
Global Association of International Sport Federations (GAISF)
International World Games Association (IWGA)

20 May 2020

Karate Qualification System - Tokyo 2020

Update: New Dates for the Olympic Games in 2021 & Revised Qualification System Principles (1st April 2020)

The Tokyo 2020 Qualification Period for the World Karate Federation began on 2nd July 2018, and the first phase of the Qualification System, where 4 athletes per Olympic category would have qualified for the Tokyo Olympics according to their final Olympic Standing positions, was due to conclude on 6th April 2020. Including 5 Continental Championships, 1 World Championships and 20 Karate 1 League events (13 Premier League events & 7 Series A events), this would have been a total of 26 events.

Following the outbreak of COVID-19, the last Premier League event in the first phase of qualification (scheduled in Rabat between 13th-15th March) was cancelled by the Moroccan authorities, a week before it was due to take place. Furthermore, the EKF Continental Championships that should have taken place in Baku (Azerbaijan) during the last week of March were cancelled by local authorities for the same reason. These 2020 EKF Championships should have replaced the 2019 EKF Championships on the Olympic Standing, being the most recent EKF Continental Championships ahead of the Tokyo Olympic Games.

Following the cancellation of the Rabat Premier League, the WKF Executive Committee ("EC") decided to extend the 6th April Olympic Standing deadline so that the next Premier League in Madrid (17th-19th April) could replace the cancelled Rabat event. However, several days later, the Madrid Premier League was also cancelled due to spread of COVID-19 in Spain.

Subsequent to the Rabat and Baku cancellations, the WKF EC agreed that the Olympic Standing as it stood following the Salzburg Premier League would be the definitive Standing for the first qualification phase, with 1 less Premier League event and taking the 2019 EKF Championships into account, instead of the 2020 event in Baku. As the second phase of the Olympic Qualification System, where 3 additional athletes per Olympic category would have qualified for Tokyo, was scheduled to take place very soon in Paris, between 8th-10th May 2020, the decision on the first 4 athletes to qualify via the Olympic Standing for Tokyo was crucial in order to understand which athletes would have been eligible to participate at the Olympic Qualification Tournament in Paris; at this stage, just over a month away.



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Given the spread of COVID-19 in France, the Qualification Tournament in Paris was then postponed until 26th-28th June, and has since been cancelled until further notice, following the announcement that the Tokyo Olympic Games will now take place in 2021.

The necessary announcement of the 4 athletes qualifying per category, via the Olympic Standing, was made by the WKF on the understanding that the Olympic Games was to take place as originally scheduled. Nevertheless, now that the new dates of the Tokyo Olympic Games have been finalised (summer 2021) and the ***new Qualification System Principles (“QS Principles”) have been approved by the IOC as of 1st April 2020; superseding the previous proposals made by WKF***, a review of all decisions taken in light of COVID-19 has been necessary – from the cancellations of both the Rabat Premier League and the EKF Continental Championships in Baku in March, until the announcement of the new dates for the Tokyo Olympic Games and the approval of the QS Principles (beginning of April).

During this review process, the main principle has been to maintain the essence of the original Olympic Qualification System. As such, the following measures are to be implemented:

1. Inclusion of missed opportunities in the initial Olympic Standing due to COVID-19, as defined below:

- a) 2021 Rabat Premier League (substituting the 2020 Rabat Premier League) – at the discretion of the WKF EC, this Rabat event is subject to possible substitution by another Premier League event to be held before the Qualification Tournament in 2021. Following any necessary readjustments to the 2021 calendar, the Premier League to be included on the Olympic Standing will be reconfirmed during the last quarter of 2020.
- b) 2021 Gothenburg EKF Continental Championships (substituting the 2020 Baku EKF Championships) – only applicable to European athletes.

2. Qualification Tournament to be rescheduled soon for 2021, and information will be shared with all.

The two events mentioned in paragraph 1 (Premier League and EKF Continental Championships) will take place before the Qualification Tournament, according to the sequence detailed in the Qualification System.

While the criteria above entail a new Olympic Standing deadline and new Qualification Period, as established by the IOC following the postponement of the Tokyo Olympic Games until 2021, they fully respect the essence of the original Karate Qualification System for the Tokyo Olympic Games, by allocating quota from exactly the same number of events, as originally outlined.