

Chief Referee Report - 2025

Good day Everyone,

Overall, the state of affairs of the KNS Official`s program remains about the same as it has the last few years. The number of new officials coming in is minimal at best. At the same time, officials from our neighbouring New Brunswick have, for several reasons, stopped attending KNS tournaments. This has placed more stress on our already thin officiating group.

We did manage to officiate at 3 KNS Grand Prix tournaments as well as the Battle of the Bridge and Yarmouth Cup competitions. Due to our limited number of officials we used the 2-judge format for most divisions and used the standard 4-judge format for National divisions. This seemed to work quite well as we were able to maintain our safety standards and provide for quality competition.

On the top end of the spectrum we are doing fantastic. Theresa Griffin and Doug Chetwynd both achieved National "A" referee certifications and Lorraine Lazier achieved her entry level National license as well. Congratulations to all of them. We would like to wish Mr. David Griffin all the best as he re-certifies his Pan Am license later this year. This gives us 6 officials in NS with National or higher licenses.

We tried several times this year to hold in-person officials' clinics, however, we were unable to generate much interest and the clinics were ultimately cancelled. We are currently working on producing short officiating videos that interested persons can watch on their own time, which help explain applications of various rules (e.g. Jogai, grabbing, pushing, scoring, etc). We are hoping that in this way, people can go on-line, at their leisure, and watch the videos and learn the rules. Unfortunately, due to an injury I suffered in late January, these videos were unable to be completed. They should be out at some point during the summer 2025.

There has been much discussion, as of late, regarding funding for Officials. Karate Canada spent upwards of \$35,000.00, this year, to pay for hotel rooms for officials.

Karate Canada understands that the National Championships cannot be run without adequate officials of multi-provincial representation. It is anticipated there will be mounting pressure from Karate Canada for PSOs to increase funding support at the provincial level to ensure this representation moving forward. The Officials Committee appreciates this will require consideration of the financial situation of KNS and its other funding obligations (such as coaches, volunteers, etc.).

Annual Estimated Officiating expenses:

- \$600.00 – 800.00 for their referee uniforms (150.00/year to upkeep)
- 10+ hours / year doing on-line courses & exams
- \$150.00 – exam fee to test at the national level
- 10+ hours / year studying rules & watching competition videos
- 22 hours travelling to and from tournaments
- 8 – 10 hours/day officiating at Grand Prix Tournaments
- \$500.00/ year in gas travelling to and from Grand Prix tournaments (this does not include out-of-province or international travel to officiate in order to cultivate good interprovincial relationships, hone officiating skills, and pursue PKF/WKF licensing).

The monetary expenses pose the most significant barrier to increasing the number of officials in KNS.

As my good friend and Past President of KNS Mr. Gary Walsh used to say, “We need to take care of the people who take care of our sport”. I believe he is 100% correct. This includes the organizers, the volunteers, the first aid personnel, the coaches, and the Officials as well. The Officials Committee will welcome the opportunity to have an open discussion with the KNS Board Officers regarding funding for KNS Officials moving forward.

Respectfully,
Milton Bourque
KNS Chief Referee