Guidelines for Nito Matches and Refereeing (Provisional)

The Regulations of Kendo Shiai and Shinpan & The Subsidiary Rules of Kendo Shiai and Shinpan

The Guidelines for Kendo Shiai and Shinpan

"Other Guidelines" (p.12)

1. When a competitor uses Nito (two swords), the following procedures apply:

1) Both the *daito* and the *shoto* are carried in the left hand in *sageto*.
2) When assuming *kamae*, the *shinai* to be held in the left hand is drawn with the right hand and passed to the left. The other *shinai* to be held in the left hand is then drawn with the right hand.
3) To perform *noto* with two *shinai*, the one in the right hand is first passed to the left hand, and the second one already in the left hand is turned with the right hand back into the left.
4) Other than the three differences listed above, the manners for shiai-sha using Nito are the same as those for Itto.

2. Handbook for Kendo Shiai and Shinpan Management

Explanation of Application

II. Refereeing (pp.17–18)

About Nito

① For a strike executed with the *shoto* (short sword) to be judged valid, the striker must be in control of the opponent's shinai with his or her own *daito* (long sword) and have their arm sufficiently extended as the strike is made with all the necessary requirements for *yuko-datotsu*. Nevertheless, strikes made with a *shoto* from the *tsubazeriai* position will not be considered valid in principle.
② If a Nito competitor's shinai is damaged and there is no replacement, the shiai will be forfeited and the Nito shiai-sha will lose.
③ In *tsubazeriai* with Nito, the two swords should be crossed with the *shoto* on the bottom and the *daito* over the top.

Explanation of Representative Cases

I. *Shiai* (pp.23–24)

(Case 6) Striking with the *shoto* in Nito is restricted. What is the reason for this?

(Explanation)

1) Nito is permitted customarily from kendo's cultural standpoint but striking with the *shoto* is restricted from the perspective of fairness and safety.

(Case 7) In Nito, *sekkiwan* (one-armed), or *katate jodan* (one-handed *jodan*), does gripping the area near the *tsuba* of the long sword in order to conceal the *kote* area constitute a violation?

(Explanation)

1) In principle, the position of the grip on the *tsuka* should be at the *tsukagashira*. However, as it is difficult to make a determination based solely on the position of the grip, when the conduct is markedly unsightly, such as relying exclusively on defensive action, it may, through deliberation among the *shinpan*, be judged a violation in accordance with Article 1 of the Rules.
2) In close-range situations such as *tsubazeriai*, gripping the area near the *tsuba* is not regarded as a particular problem, taking into consideration sword usage and *maai*.

Specifications of Sakigawa and Shinai, Tsuba in competitions

1. Specifications of Sakigawa (Min. diameter or tip)

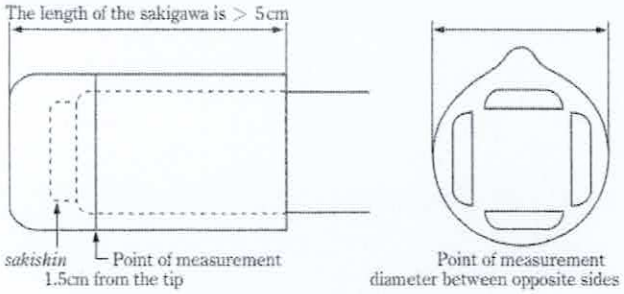
	Diameter (Men)	Diameter (Women)	Length (Both Men Women)
Itto	>26mm	>25mm	> 5cm
Nito Daito	>25mm	>24mm	> 5cm
Shoto	>24mm	>24mm	> 5cm

※ The diameter of the tip of Sakigawa

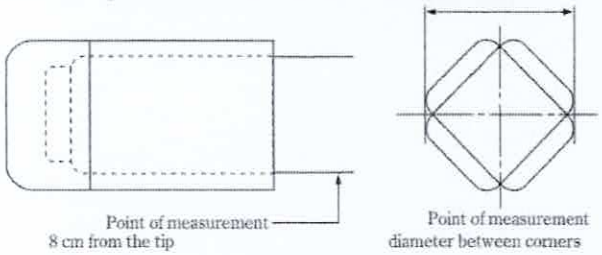
2. Specifications of Chikuto

	Diameter (Men)	Diameter (Women)
Itto	>21mm	>20mm
Nito Daito	>20mm	>19mm
Shoto	>19mm	>19mm

Method for measuring the diameter of the tip of *Sakigawa*



Method for measuring the minimum diameter of the *chikuto*



3. Length and Weight of Shinai

	Length (Both Men Women)	Weight (Men)	Weight (Women)
Itto	<120cm	>510 grams	>440 grams
Nito Daito	<114cm	>440 grams	>400 grams
Shoto	<62cm	280～300 grams	250～280 grams

※Carbon shinai must also comply with the same standards.

4. The tsuba should be round in shape, and made of leather or synthetic material it should be 9 centimeters or smaller in diameter.

Q & A

Q1: Should a Nito competitor who holds the *shoto* under their arm when drawing the swords be corrected?

A1: If the drawing procedure follows the *shiai* management guidelines, it is not deemed to be a problem. However, as it is difficult to regard this as correct sword technique, it is preferable to encourage *shiai-sha* to avoid it. The same applies to holding the blade area of the *shinai* when sheathing.

Q2: In what specific cases can a strike with the *shoto* be considered a valid *datotsu*?

A2: Examples include controlling the opponent's *daito* that is attacking the *kote* on the *daito* side, and then striking the *men* with the *shoto* while fully extending the elbow. Naturally, all elements and requirements for a *yuko-datotsu* must be met.

Q3: What is the basis for interpreting that an Itto *shinai* cannot be used as a replacement *shinai* under the rule "If no replacement *shinai* is available, the competitor loses the match"?

A3: The basis is that this rule is stated in the section specifically addressing Nito.

Q4: If *tsubazeriai* is formed with the *shoto* above and the *daito* below, contrary to the rules, does this constitute a *hansoku*?

A4: Refrain from calling a *hansoku* immediately and provide instruction instead. However, if the behavior is repeated despite instruction, it shall be ruled a *hansoku* by following *gogi*, in accordance with Article 1 of the Regulations.

Q5: During disengagement from *tsubazeriai*, competitors retreat until the tips separate and then re-assume *kamae*. In *hidari-jodan*, the *shiai-sha* should first return to having the right foot forward before resuming *jodan*. In Nito also, should *shiai-sha* return to having the right foot forward first?

A5: In Nito, there are variations with both right-foot-forward and left-foot-forward in both standard *sei-nito* (right) and *gyaku-nito* (left). Therefore, it is not necessary to insist

on always returning to having the right foot forward. Rather, care should be taken to avoid improper actions during the process of disengagement.

Q6: Some Nito competitors assume *kamae* with the *daito* and *shoto* crossed during matches. Is this a problem?

A6: In classical schools, this is called the "*juji-no-kamae*" stance and was frequently used in actual sword combat. As there are also stances such as *hasso* and *wakigamae* in Itto, and from a cultural perspective, it may be regarded as one acceptable stance in Nito.

Q7: There are cases where, although the correct Nito *tsubazeriai* form is taken, the opponent's *daito* is not positioned at the center of the crossed swords. How should this be viewed?

A7: Ideally, the opponent's *daito* should be positioned at the center of the crossed swords. However, this may not occur in the flow of a match, and as it is not assumed to give either side a particular advantage, it is not considered a problem as long as the *tsuba* are locked together.

Q8: In Nito, can a technique with the *daito* executed simultaneously with letting go of the *shoto* be considered valid?

A8: If the strike has already entered the striking motion and meets the elements and requirements for *yuko-datotsu*, it may be considered valid. If not yet in the striking motion, it cannot be considered valid because the *shinai* no longer meets the weight requirements for Itto.

Q9: *Kote* techniques executed from *sei-nito* (right Nito) differ from *kote* techniques executed from *gyaku-nito* (left Nito) in that the trajectory is difficult to perceive. What points should be given attention?

A9: With regard to the requirements for a valid strike, particular attention should be paid to whether the target area is struck with correct *hasuji*, and, as an element, whether the opportunity is properly taken, such as the opponent raising their hands or the initiation of movement.