All Japan Kendo Federation
Handbook for Kendo Shiai and Shinpan Management (Revised September 1, 2024)

- Fundamental Points of Consideration for *Shinpan* –
III. Interpretation and Application of the Regulations

● pp. 9-10 About *Tsubazeriai*

Tsubazeriai represents the closest and tensest point between two opponents when they enter a close-quarters tussle with *tsuba* joined together. *Tsubazeriai* arises from attack and defense amid striking action.

When *tsubazeriai* is entered, *shiai-sha* must either proactively execute a waza, or seek to break away from the tussle. Notwithstanding, *shinpan-in* must make a comprehensive judgment based on the following points if *tsubazeriai* continues for a protracted period (one breath - about 3 seconds or more):

(1) Are the *shiai-sha* engaged in correct *tsubazeriai*?
(2) Do they demonstrate intent to strike?
(3) Do they demonstrate the will to separate?

The above rulings and procedure are normally summarized as follows:

- Explanation of Common Cases –
I. *Shiai*

● P.23 (Case 7)

In the context of *nito*, single-handed, or one-handed jodan, would it be considered as *hansoku* if *shiai-sha* grips close to the *tsubamoto* (base of the tsuba) of the daito to hide his/her *kote*?

(Explanation)

① Ideally, the grip on the *tsuka* should be close to the *tsukagashira*. However, determining whether this constitutes a *hansoku* can be challenging and potentially controversial if judged solely based on the grip position.
Therefore, if a *shiai-sha* grips their *shinai* near the *tsubamoto* and adopts an excessively defensive or unsightly posture, it will be considered a *hansoku* under Article 1 of the Regulations, following a *gogi*.

② Gripping the *tsubamoto* during close engagement such as *tsubazeriai* is not considered to be particularly problematic when taking into account sword usage (*toho*) and *maai*.

- Explanation of Common Cases –
I. *Shinpan*

● P.30 (Case 5)

The time taken to cease *tsubazeriai* should be approximately "one breath (about 3 seconds)". At what point should the *shinpan-in* determine that *tsubazeriai* has begun, and how should they determine *tsubazeriai* is resolved?

(Explanation)

① *Tsubazeriai* refers to a situation where both *tsuba* are in a competitive position. However, the *shinpan-in* should recognize the beginning of *tsubazeriai* when both competitors are at close range without engaging in attack or defense, even if their *tsuba* are not physically pressed together.

② The cessation *tsubazeriai* refers to 'Case 8' of 'I Shiai 2. Various Prohibited Acts'. It is essential for *shinpan-in* to closely observe the process of cessation. During the *shiai*, separation must be actively pursued until both *kensen* are completely disengaged. *Shiai-sha* should take *chudan-no-kamae* at a distance from where an immediate strike cannot be made.

● P.31 (Case 8)

What should *shinpan-in* keep in mind when determining the *tsubazeriai* cessation process?

(Explanation)

① The *shinpan-in* should carefully assess whether a competitor is engaging in proper *tsubazeriai* and whether they actively and swiftly disengage from *tsubazeriai* by utilizing the competitive force between the *tsuba*. This judgment should take into account the competitor's age, skill level, and overall proficiency.

- Whether there are any improper actions during the process of resolving *tsubazeriai*.
- Striking action while pretending to retreat.
- If the *shiai-sha* places deliberately their *shinai* on the opponent's shoulder.
- Actions that involve slapping (*harau*), binding (*maku*), holding down, or hooking the *shinai*.
- Actions that involve opening or lowering the *shinai*.
- Actions that include intentionally bending or twisting the body.
- Other actions that are deemed to be inappropriate.
- If there are clearly improper actions during the process of ceasing *tsubazeriai*, *hansoku* will be applied based on *gogi*. In ambiguous cases, *shinpan-in* can call for *gogi* and decide to issue a *hansoku* to the *shiai-sha* if such actions occur more than twice.