

# **RULES OF YOGA SPORT**

## **GAME CHARACTERISTICS**

### **YOGA SPORT**

#### **Introduction**

Yoga Sport originated in India and has been in existence for 2500 years. Yoga is spiritual education. "Spiritual" does not refer to any particular religion; rather it refers to the spirit, which consists of feelings and emotions. The mastery of the physical techniques of yoga is valued only if the human being achieves dominion over his mind and spirit. A sport is a regulated game in which there exists competition between two or more persons. Yoga Sport establishes whether or not a certain human being is competent physically, mentally, spiritually, socially, ethologically, ecologically, and culturally. Yoga Sport is a lesson in life itself which is a competition in every instance. However, the most important thing to remember in Yoga Sport competitions is that they are games, where one must achieve control over his emotions, feelings, and passions in the face of stress. The greatest Spiritual Intelligence obtains more points than any other evaluated category in the competition, such as flexibility, strength resistance, and balance. Judges determine Spiritual Intelligence by evaluating the Affective Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence of the competitor. Affective Intelligence is one's ability to adapt to the feelings of those around him. Emotional Intelligence is the ability to adapt to one's own emotions. Yoga Sport develops these forms of intelligence within the context of competition where the environment could generate imbalance, dissatisfaction, and stress. Competition motivates the competitor to achieve personal transcendation and spiritual training, which ultimately serves him in conquering the obstacles life places before him on a daily basis. Ultimately, Yoga Sport uses competition of physical yoga techniques as a means to a spiritual end.

#### **Divisions of Yoga Sport**

Yoga Sport is divided into four Ramas, Styles, of Lines:

- 1) Athletic Yoga
- 2) Artistic Yoga
- 3) Rhythmic Yoga
- 4) Yoga Asanas

##### **1) Athletic Yoga**

Athletic Yoga evaluates the perfect execution of asana, the perfect alignment, and the range of flexibility, strength, balance, and resistance. It also evaluates the perfect execution of Pranayama (control of energy), and appropriate breathing techniques, or Swara Yoga.

Other factors that are evaluated include achievement of Pratihara (introspection), Dharma (concentration), and if possible the achievement of Dhyana (meditation). Spiritually, the competitor should not be nervous or altered; rather he should feel relaxed, harmonious, content, and happy, which causes him to gain more points in the competition. The spiritual state in which the competitors are in wins them more points than their physical

qualities: flexibility, strength, balance, and resistance.

## **2) Artistic Yoga**

Artistic Yoga is composed of kramajis, or series of yoga postures that create an uninterrupted cascade of asana. Qualities of artistic yoga include use of music, costume, good taste, natural art, rhythm of execution, and rhythm of breath work. The series should be executed to music chosen with good taste. The postures are united with the use of intercalary postures, being the ones that create a passage between the two postures with the least weight displacement and the least time possible. It is fundamental in artistic yoga to express spirituality and the joy of movement. The competitor should achieve a state of empathy and connection toward the judges and the audience.

## **3) Rhythmic Yoga**

Rhythmic Yoga is executed in pairs and is trained with the use of a mirror to ensure the synchronization of the postures. The postures ought to be executed by each individual to the same degree and at the same time. Rhythmic yoga preserves the primary qualities of Artistic Yoga.

## **4) Yoga Asanas**

Yoga Asanas is closely related to Athletic Yoga. It deals with the execution of athletic asanas which are to be performed at the competitor's maximum of flexibility, balance, alignment, and resistance.

### **SECTION 1 -**

## **CHAPTER 1: YOGA SPORT GAME FIELD AND NECESSARY OBJECTS**

### **RULE 1:**

#### **THE ARENA**

**1.1 Dimensions:** The arena is a nine by nine meter square, an open space free from obstacles. (It could be a gym or a stage).

#### **1.2 The Field Surface:**

**1.2.1.** The ground needs to be flat, horizontal, and of uniform consistency. (The ground can be parquet floor, rubber or cement.)

**1.2.2.** The ground should not present any danger of injury for the competitors. Rough or slippery surfaces are prohibited.

**1.2.3.** The competition can take place in covered arenas or out door spaces.

**1.3. Lighting:** The space is lighted to the liking of the judges.

**1.4. Music:** CD player or live musicians can be used in the case of Artistic Yoga or Rhythmic Yoga with a 2 minute maximum for each presentation.

**1.5. The Table:** The judges' table is located at one end of the nine by nine meter square. The referee is located there as well in order that the competitors can best be seen and in order that the points the judges award to them can best be seen.

## **CHAPTER II: THE PARTICIPANTS**

### **RULE 2:**

#### **Composition and Registration**

2.1. Only registered competitors may participate in the athletic gathering.

### **RULE 3:**

#### **Division of the participants in athletic yoga**

3.1. By number of participants:

3.1.1. Individual

3.1.2. Pairs

#### **3.2. By Participant Gender**

3.2.1. Women's

3.2.2. Men's

3.2.3. Co-ed mixed gender

#### **3.3. By Participant Age**

##### **3.3.1. Categories**

According to the International Yoga Federation, athletic yoga is divided into the following categories:

- Baby ages 4-5
- Baby kids ages 6-7
- Kids ages 8-12
- Juniors ages 13-17
- Youngers ages 18-25
- Younger adults ages 26-35
- Adults ages 36-40
- Veterans ages 41-60
- Seniors ages 61 and over.

\*All the categories can be subdivided by the discretion of the organizers of the event, and according to the needs of the sport.

### **RULE 4**

#### **THE JUDGES' DRESS CODE**

##### **4.1. Dress:**

4.1.1. The dress code is free, meaning each competitor may choose.

4.1.2. Clothing must be form fitting in order to best perceive movement, posture, and breathe work.

4.2. Shoes: Each competitor must compete barefoot.

##### **4.3. Prohibited Objects:**

4.3.1. Any object that could potentially cause injury to competitor is prohibited, for example, wings pins, socks, etc.

4.3.2. The competitor may wear glasses at his own risk.

### **RULE 5**

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

### **5.1. The Judges' Responsibilities**

**5.1.1.** That the participants understand rules of the competition and respect them.

**5.1.2.** The participants accept the referee's decisions and respect them in the spirit of sportsmanship.

**5.1.3.** That participants conduct themselves respectfully and in accordance with the spirit of good sportsmanship, not only toward the judges, but toward all people present: trainers, fellow competitors, adversaries, the audience, and even the plants, animals, and insects.

**5.1.4.** That all participants avoid any action which could cause delays in the competition.

### **5.2. The Trainers Responsibilities**

**5.2.1.** The trainers ought to understand the rules of the game and maintain them strictly. They ought to accept any decisions made by the referee in the attitude of sportsmanship, and without discussion.

**5.2.2.** Before the competition, trainers must register their participants' names, categories, and divisions.

**5.2.3.** The trainers must present all documents petitioned for by the organization, such as identification, documents, doctor consent forms, etc.

**5.2.4.** The trainer can give instructions to the competitors, but outside the arena and without distracting other members of the competition.

**5.2.5.** The trainer need be a yoga instructor, he can compete himself, but he cannot judge.

### **5.3. Assigned Location of the Participants**

**5.3.1.** The participants who are not competing are to remain outside the arena, in the section assigned to the organizers of the competition.

**5.3.2.** The competitors who have not yet competed may warm up only in designated zones where they will not distract other participants.

## **CHAPTER III POINTS IN THE COMPETITION**

### **RULE 6**

#### **6.1. POINTS IN YOGA SPORT**

##### **6.1.1. Final Evaluation ten (10) points:**

- Physical Evaluation: (1 point)
- Mental Evaluation: (1 point)
- Spiritual Evaluation: (4 points)
- Social Evaluation: (1 point)
- Ecological Evaluation: (1 point)
- Cultural Evaluation: (1 point)
- Philosophical Evaluation: (1 point)

#### **6.2. THE WINNER**

**6.2.1. THE WINNER IN ATHLETIC YOGA:** the winner is he who obtains the highest overall points

**6.3. IN CASE OF A TIE:** the referee chooses the winner based on highest spiritual points.

#### **6.4. Evaluation of Yoga Sport:**

The judges evaluate a competitor based on a ten-point system. The referee is always a yoga master with lineage and dominion over the spiritual education of a human being. The competitor is evaluated physically, mentally, socially, ecologically, culturally, and philosophically. In all aspects of yoga as a discipline, the primary concern is the spiritual. This is precisely why the control over the spirit demonstrated by each competitor receives a total of four points out of ten possible points in athletic yoga, artistic yoga, and rhythmic yoga.

Once the physical, mental, and spiritual aptitude of the individual has been evaluated, the judges evaluate the cultural and philosophical aptitude of the competitor by way of written exam.

It is important to remember that a flexible competitor with incredible physical postures only wins one point. In order to win, one needs to understand and practice the philosophical and spiritual side of yoga. The competitor's concentration level wins one point, and his spirituality wins four points. The most friendly and pleasant competitor could easily beat a flexible person. The judges are informed about which competitors study yoga and meditate with their masters.

The social points are awarded when a competitor and his trainer are integrated in the Yoga Community in their respective country, and cultural points are awarded based on their competitor's ability to adapt to the home culture of the competition without concern for his own culture. Ecological points are awarded to those who do not litter or pollute the ecology.

Those competitors who smoke in their private lives, or use drugs, alcohol, or pharmaceuticals, are eliminated.

#### **6.4.1. Points for Spirituality (4 points):**

During and after the competition the judge, and most of all, the referee, observe the following four points in evaluating the competitors' spirituality:

**6.4.1.1. AHIMSA:** The competitor may not manifest before, during, nor after, any type of violence aggression, criticism, anger, or disapproval toward fellow competitors, trainers, audience members, judges, animals, or plants--neither physically, mentally, verbally, or spiritually. They also may not destroy objects.

**6.4.1.2. MAITRI:** The second feeling which the judges award points for is Maitri, friendship towards all beings present at the competition. The competitor should not demonstrate mean feelings, nor lack of sympathy, towards rivals or judges. The competitor should exhibit a state of friendship, cooperation, and solidity toward rivals and judges. The competitor must understand that the competition is a game and should not respond too aggressively or maliciously to any living being present. Neither should his friends, family members, and sympathizers present at the competition. The competitor's face should not exhibit expressions of animosity, discontentment, nor of dis-cooperation. Each competitor obtains points for Maitri, feelings of friendship, cooperation, and solidity towards companions, rivals, and judges.

**6.4.1.3. MUDITA:** The judges award points for happiness. It is important to be content, to enjoy the game as a celebration. Neither the competitor nor the trainer should exhibit expressions of sadness, indifference, depression, anxiety, stress, anguish--or any other negative feeling.

**6.4.1.4. EMOTIONAL AND AFFECTIVE INTELLIGENCE:** the capacity to avoid feeling negative emotions in oneself and the capacity to understand what affects the feelings of

others. Affective intelligence deals with capacity to generate feelings, fundamentally those of karuna, or compassion for others. Emotional intelligence deals with the capacity to have fun in the game and with Yoga.

**YAMAS AND NIYAMAS:** The competitors must observe the Yamas and Niyamas before, during, and after the competition. (One hour before and one hour after).

#### **6.4.2. Points for the Physical (1 point)**

The judges award points for the ten levels of flexibility, static balance, and strength resistance in each posture. The judges also award points for alignment in each posture. In the case of Artistic Yoga and Rhythmic yoga, the judges also award points for coordination, rhythm, charisma, artistic ability, creativity, choice of music, and staging.

##### **The ten subdivisions for the evaluated aspects of physicality:**

- 6.4.2. 1) Flexibility (0.10 points)**
- 6.4.2. 2) Resistance in static balance (0.10 points)**
- 6.4.2. 3) Resistance to strength (0.10 points)**
- 6.4.2. 4) Alignment (0.10 points)**
- 6.4.2. 5) Coordination and Rhythm (0.10 points)**
- 6.4.2. 6) Charisma (0.10 points)**
- 6.4.2. 7) Artistic ability (0.10 points)**
- 6.4.2. 8) Creativity (0.10 points)**
- 6.4.2. 9) Choice of music (0.10 points)**
- 6.4.2. 10) Staging (0.10 points)**

#### **6.4.3. Points for Mental State (1 point)**

The judges award points for the competitor's ability to introspect, concentrate, contemplate, and mediate within the competition environment.

#### **6.4.4. Points for Sociability (1 point)**

The judges award points for toleration for and integration with others, companionship, belonging to the group, belonging to the institution, accepting the rules, and understanding them. The competitor should not criticize, protest, or interfere should a judge make a mistake.

#### **6.4.5. Ecological Points (1 point)**

The judges award points for respecting the environment. The competitor is prohibited from smoking, drinking alcohol, using drugs or pharmaceuticals, or littering the competition area or surrounding area. The competitor must leave the environment the way it is without modifying absolutely anything. The competitor must respect the animal kingdom and may not kill or harm insects or plants during the competition. The judges award points to those who help in maintaining everything clean, in order, neat, and who do not destroy living beings or objects.

#### **6.4.6. Cultural Points (1 point)**

The judges award points to those who understand and accept, without criticizing, the cultures, religions, philosophies, races, and customs of the country or city where the competition takes place. The competitor ought to be respectful of the customs of every place and every country.

#### **6.4.7. Philosophical Points (1 point)**

## **Jnana Yoga Competition**

The competitors will have to execute the asanas after they have been called out in Sanskrit. In doing so, the competitors demonstrate a certain understanding of yoga philosophy and study. In addition, the competitors may be asked to fill out a written quiz to demonstrate their understanding of yoga philosophy.

## **CHAPTER IV:**

### **REPARATION FOR THE COMPETITION**

#### **RULE 7**

##### **7.1. Organization:**

**All competition may be organized in the following way:**

**7.1.1. By Federation:** competition exclusively for athletes belonging to the yoga federation with booklets and who follow the norms of the organized federation.

**7.1.2. Open Competition:** where all who wish may compete.

**7.1.3. By Invitation:** where those who wish to compete do so to develop, perfect, and prepare the athletes.

##### **7.2. Official Competitions and Non-official Competitions**

**7.2.1. Official Competitions of the International Federation of Yoga Sports:** The F.I.Y.S., or national federations, pass the official federated title to those who follow the FIXTURE of the institution.

**7.2.2. Non-Official Competition of the F.I.Y.S.:** Those competitions which are organized outside the FIXTURE of the federations. The competition is of friendly nature and are between two or more institutions--federated or non-federated.

##### **7.3. Functions:**

**7.3.1. Competitors:** are people who practice yoga. Their function is to compete representing their school, master, or yoga lineage.

**7.3.2. Trainers:** are yoga teachers or professors. Their function is to direct the competitors.

**7.3.3. Judges:** are yoga masters. Their function is to award points to competitors.

**7.3.4. Referees:** are yoga masters. They are responsible for organizing the discipline and spirituality or Yoga Sport.

**7.3.5. Disk-jockey:** responsible for playing music.

**7.3.6. Security:** responsible for the security of the competition and for expulsion of trespassers.

**7.3.7. Doctor:** responsible for being present during the whole competition, to assist those who require medical services.

##### **7.4. Ceremony and Puja:**

It is important to salute Nataraj the patron of Yoga Sport, or Shiva, before beginning the competition. In order to do this a Swami, Pujari, or Yogacharya must be present to chant mantras during the arati and fire ceremony.

A guru, pujari, or swami is responsible for the pre-competition puja.

## **SECTION II:**

### **JUDGES AND REFEREES**

## **RULE 8**

### **THE JUDGES OF ATHLETIC YOGA**

The panel of judges are composed of two or more judges, maximum ten judges, whose mission is to qualify competitors and award appropriate points to each one.

#### **8.1. THE REFEREE**

**8.1.1.** The competition is directed by the referee. His mission is maintaining discipline, penalizing errors, and awarding final points in order to declare a winner. In order to do this the referee must always keep the spiritual points in mind, as with those he may change the general points awarded by the judges. The referee does this by perceiving the extent to which the competitor follows the game rules, even after having performed. The competitor's failing to abide by the rules is unappealing, unquestionable and unchangeable. This is accepted by all competitors, trainers, techs, judges, institutions and audience members as a priority in determining the winner. There can be no critique or appeal made on the referee's verdict.

**8.1.2.** The referee is the chancellor of discipline and spirituality.

**8.1.3.** The referee must be a Swami or a Yogacharya (yoga master) from a traditional lineage and certified by his guru. Every Yogacharya must have studied for 12 years in an Ashram from the gurukula tradition with his guru.

**8.1.4.** The referee is he who names a winner and determines the rankings.

**8.1.5.** At the end of the competition all officials, participants, and organizers must communicate the results of the game to one another.

#### **8.2. Judges**

**8.2.1.** The judges must be Yogacharyas, Masters or Yoga Formatters in order to qualify competitors on the spiritual level, and in order to understand, respect, and impart athletic justice through the understanding and application of the rules.

**8.2.2.** Their responsibility is to qualify competitors.

#### **8.3. Quantity of Judges in Yoga Sport**

**8.3.1.** One referee

**8.3.2.** One referee and two more judges

### **SECTION III:**

#### **THE WINNER**

#### **RULE 9:**

##### **9.1. The Winner in ARTISTIC YOGA**

**9.1.1. Points: 10 final points**

##### **9.1.2. SUB CATEGORIES in the Artistic Yoga COMPETITION:**

**9.1.2. A- Individual Artistic Yoga** (by gender: women's and men's). One competitor competes at a time. He with the highest final points wins.

**9.1.2. B- Doubles Artistic Yoga** (independent of gender). Competitors compete in twos. The couple which obtains the highest final points wins.

##### **9.1.3. The Judge Panel's Proceedings:**

**9.1.3. 1)** Only one referee awards points, playing the role of judge and referee at the same



time.

**9.1.3. 2)** One referee and two judges: two judges award the points raising signs that show the points 1 through 9, representing the point that coincides with the competitor's jnana yoga point. Each judge raises the sign at the referee's command. The referee adds the points together, deciding a winner.

## **9.2. The Winner in RHYTHMIC YOGA**

**9.2.1. The points: 10 final points.** They are evaluated in the same manner as in Artistic Yoga and Athletic Yoga.

### **9.2.2. Sub-categories of Rhythmic Yoga**

#### **9.2.2. Rhythmic Yoga in Pairs** (independent of gender)

The pairs execute the same posture to the same degree, at the same time. The pair with the highest final points wins.

#### **9.2.3. The judge panel's proceedings:**

**9.2.3. 1)** One referee awards the points, filling the role of judge and referee at the same time.

**9.2.3. 2)** One referee plus two judges: the judges award the points by raising signs showing the points 1 through 9. The raised point corresponds to the competitor's jnana yoga point. Each judge need raise the point at the command of the referee. The referee is the one who sums the points together and designates a winner.

## **9.3. The Winner in ATHLETIC YOGA**

**9.3.1. Final Points: 10 points**

### **9.3.2. System of Elimination: by rounds**

In Athletic Yoga, the competition consists of rounds, divided by category and gender. The referee calls out the competitors. He places them on the game field and calls out six yoga poses at a time. Each pose is worth one out of one point.

**9.3.3. FINAL:** After awarding points to all the competitors of the same gender and category, he designates a winner in each round. The winners of each round compete in the finals.

### **9.3.4. Sub-categories:**

**9.3.4. A- WOMEN'S ATHLETIC YOGA:** compete in age categories. The winner is she who wins the highest point in her category.

**9.3.4. B- MEN'S ATHLETIC YOGA:** compete in age categories. The winner is he who obtains the highest point in his category.

### **9.3.5. The judge panel's proceedings:**

**9.3.5. 1)** One referee awards the points, filling the role of judge and referee at the same time.

**9.3.5. 2)** One referee and more than two judges: the judges award the points by standing by the competitor whom they chose to win the point. The referee determines a final winner.

In the case of a tie, the referee chooses a winner based on spirituality.

#### 9.4. The Winner in Yogasanas

##### **9.4.1. Finals Points: 6 points**

- Back bend flexibility (1 point)
- Forward fold flexibility (1 point)
- Strength pose (1 point)
- Balance (1 point)
- Inversion pose (1 point)
- Pose chosen randomly from the pose-lottery (1 point)

**9.4.2. THE WINNER IN YOGASANAS SPORT** the winner is he who obtains the highest points in the execution and technique of the yoga asanas.

**9.4.3. IN THE CASE OF A TIE** the sum of the points awarded for the execution technique of the poses designates the winner. In this case the spiritual points are not considered to break the tie.

##### **9.4.4. System of Elimination:** by rounds

Yogasanas is competed in rounds, by gender and age category. The referee calls to the competitors. He places them in the gaming arena and names six yoga poses one at a time. Each pose is worth one point.

##### **9.4.5. FINAL**

After awarding points to all the competitors of each gender and age category, the referee designates a winner in each round. The winners of each round compete in the final.

##### 9.4.6. Sub-categories:

**9.4.6. WOMEN'S YOGASANAS SPORT:** the competitors compete by age categories. The winner is she who obtains the highest point in her category.

**9.4.6. MEN'S YOGASANAS SPORT:** the competitors compete by age categories. The winner is he who obtains the highest point in his category.

##### **9.4.7. The judge panel's proceedings:**

**9.4.7. 1)** Only one referee awards points, serving as referee and judge the same time.

**9.4.7. 2)** One referee and two judges: the judges award the points by standing beside the competitor they chose to win the point. The referee sums the points together at the end.

**9.4.7. 3)** The referee must be a spiritual yoga Master with 12 years of formation and lineage, and with a Yogacharya diploma certifying his recognition by the International Yoga Federation. Only a spiritual master can teach the rules of regulations of Yoga Sport as a spiritual sport. This is because only a spiritual yoga master can evaluate spirituality in Yoga Sport.

**9.4.7. 4)** Teaching these rules and regulations to athletic trainers, physical educators,

fitness trainers or any other professionals including yoga instructors, is prohibited. This is because such professionals are incapable of realizing spiritual evaluations because they have no understanding of them.

### **The Asana Series**

#### **10. Asana Series for Athletic Yoga and Yoga Asanas**

##### **10.1. First Asana Series (six poses)**

Ardha Trikonasana  
Raja Bhujangasana  
Padahasthasana  
Dandapada Kakasana  
Thirivikramasana  
Padma Kukutasana

##### **10.2. Second Asana Series (six poses)**

Trikonasana  
Sarvangasana  
Yoganidrasana  
Dhanurasana  
Salabhasana  
Shirsasana

##### **10.3. Third Asana Series (ten poses)**

Paschimottanasa  
Chakrasana  
Ardha Chandrasana  
Visaktna Paschimottanasa  
Eka Pada Kapotasana  
Padma Mayurasana  
Garbasana  
Vrajasana  
Natarajana  
Vrischikasana

##### **10.4 In the case of a tie (Yoga Asanas and Athletic Yoga)**

Padam Kakasana  
Raja Yoganidrasana