



## USSF POLICY LETTER 02

DATE: August 2011

### USSF EVENT SANCTIONS

#### PURPOSE

To provide guidelines and requirements by which USSF sumo events such as tournaments, exhibitions, demonstrations, clinics, seminars, etc... are sanctioned by the organization to further the development of sumo in the United States.

#### BACKGROUND

The USSF, as a member of the International Sumo Federation (ISF), is obligated to ensure the amateur sport of sumo is portrayed accurately, respectfully, and in accordance with the guidelines set by the ISF. To accomplish this, the ISF and the USSF require that public sumo events held within the United States are sanctioned by the USSF.

The ISF requires the USSF to report all sumo related events held within the United States each year. This is done for the purpose of revealing to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) how the sport is growing throughout the world with the hope of the IOC adding sumo as an Olympic sport.

#### AUTHORITY

USSF By-Laws, Article IV, Section 4.C., dated June 2011

This Policy Letter supersedes all previously dated information on the same subject.

#### POLICY

##### **Section 1. General**

- A. All public sumo events such as tournaments, exhibitions, demonstrations, clinics, seminars, etc... are to be sanctioned under the USSF. Sanctioned events shall have the official support of the USSF.
- B. USSF sanctioned tournaments should be open to all International Sumo Federation Affiliated (ISFA) members. If the tournament is a promotional tournament or club tournament, it may be open or closed as an individual tournament to specified USSF members and/or clubs. The U.S. National Sumo Championships is an example of a closed tournament, only open to USSF members.
- C. The Board of Trustees, under counsel from the Executive Committee, will and can at any time, deny an athlete, coach, official, etc... from competing / attending sanctioned events based on character. Any representative of the USSF should be of high moral character and promote the USSF, ISF, and the sport of sumo with professionalism and in accordance with USSF By-Laws and Policy Letters.

## **Section 2. Membership Participation**

- A. All athletes, coaches, and officials must be members of the USSF (or ISFA organizations) to participate in USSF / ISFA sanctioned events.
- B. All USSF members are cautioned to only participate in USSF or ISFA sanctioned events. Participating in events not sanctioned by the USSF or through the authority of the ISF will result in disciplinary actions taken by the USSF and/or the ISF, and an in-eligibility to participate in larger forums such as the World Championships, World Games, Combat Games, or other ISFA events. (An example of this is the Big Boy Productions tournaments in 2006. Sumo athletes from several countries were suspended by the ISF for one year for participating in the unsanctioned events.)

## **Section 3. Categories of Events**

- A. Tournament / Competition
  - 1. Sanction required.
  - 2. Definition: Two (2) or more USSF (or ISFA) members competing for an official title, trophy, medal, or award.
  - 3. General:
    - a. Means by which USSF and ISFA members are ranked and qualify for a title, trophy, medal, award, etc... The USSF uses these events to select individuals to represent the United States at various local, national, and international competition levels.
    - b. Participation and finish at tournaments are also used as part of individual Dan ranking qualifications.
    - c. If ten (10) or more USSF (or ISFA) members are initially projected to participate as athletes at an event, it will be designated as a competition / tournament and should be sanctioned as such.
- B. Exhibition / Demonstration
  - 1. Sanction required.
  - 2. Definition: Nine (9) or less USSF (or ISFA) members that may compete as a means to promote the sport of sumo. No official title, trophy, medals, or awards are presented.
  - 3. General:
    - a. Means by which USSF (and ISFA) members can present the sport of sumo to the public in an authentic manner.
    - b. Any exhibition or demonstration where ten (10) or more USSF (or ISFA) members are initially projected to participate as athletes will be designated as a tournament / competition and should be sanctioned as such.
    - c. Trophies, medals, awards, etc... may be given during a children's exhibition / demonstration.

C. Clinic

1. Sanction required.
2. Definition: Group session(s) offering coaching with hands-on instruction and training on the “How To” of sumo.
3. General: Means by which USSF (and ISFA) members provide and receive instruction and training on basic sumo movements, advanced styles, and proper techniques to enhance individual knowledge and skills in the sport of sumo.

D. Seminar

1. Sanction required.
2. Definition: Dispersing knowledge through a lecture or academic instruction / message which familiarizes the recipients with the history and/or methodology of sumo. May possibly have limited demonstrated movements.
3. General: Means by which USSF (and ISFA) members communicate the historical and cultural roles that sumo played in the early days of Japan, development of standardized rules, how sumo has grown to its present form, and roles that American’s have played in the professional and amateur sport of sumo.

**Section 5. Sanction Application Processes**

- A. Applications for sanction may be obtained from the National Office, the official USSF web-site, or from members of the Executive Committee or Board of Trustees.
- B. Completed sanction applications, with all required signatures and data, must be forwarded to the National Office, with the appropriate fee (if applicable), by the deadline established on the sanction application (currently at least two weeks before the planned event). This may be accomplished by mail, e-mail, fax, or in person.

Note: Sanction applications are not considered complete until the required fees are received by the USSF.

- C. Once a sanction application, (and applicable fees), are received, the application is sent to the Board of Trustees for approval. When approved, the event is assigned a sanction number. Once the application and applicable fees have been received, the approval process should not take longer than one (1) week.
- D. Advertising, to include notification to athletes and officials, for the event should not begin before a sanction number has been assigned.

Note 1: Sanction applications should be coordinated well in advance of the event in order to properly advertise and notify perspective participants of the event. Early coordination also ensures that major events are de-conflicted.

Note 2: Include the sanction number in your advertising and notifications. This lets perspective participants know that the event has been properly endorsed and sanctioned by the USSF.

Note 3: If unsure that an event has been sanctioned, please contact a member of the Executive Committee or Board of Trustees for confirmation.

## **Section 6. Fees**

- A. The fee for sanctioning a tournament is fifteen dollars (\$15).
- B. There is no fee for an exhibition, demonstration, clinic, seminar, etc...

Note: Please consult the current Sanction Application Form for the most up-to-date fee rates.

## **Section 7. Reasons to Sanction Events**

- A. ISF required in order to monitor the integrity of the sport.
- B. ISF required in order to report sumo related events to the IOC.
- C. Full official support from the USSF
  - 1. Assistance in planning a successful event.
  - 2. Offer proper equipment such as portable dohyo, mawashi, etc... (if cost effective and available)
  - 3. Publicity / Advertising via USSF media
  - 4. Provide participants: athletes and officials
  - 5. Supplementary liability insurance for participants
  - 6. An award will be given to the U.S. Sumo Club that hosted the most sanctioned sumo events for the year.

## **Section 8. Non-USSF Club Sanction**

See USSF By-Laws, Article IX, Section 2.G. for information on Non-USSF Club Sanctions.

This Policy Letter was originally drafted by Thomas Zabel and adopted by the Board of Trustees: Brian Condon, Andrew Freund, and Kelly Gneiting in August 2011.