



# TOURNAMENT RULEBOOK

## FEBUS



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	
<b>2. TECHNICAL &amp; EQUIPMENT STANDARDS</b> .....	
2.1. Fencing Arena .....	2
2.2. Equipment standards .....	6
3.1. The Process of the Bouts .....	12
3.2. The methods of scoring hits .....	15
3.3. Close quarter combat .....	
<b>4. LONGSWORD COMPETITIONS</b> .....	
4.1. Rules of hit validity and fencing actions .....	18
4.2. Vor/Priority .....	
4.3. Close quarter combat .....	16
4.4. Judging of hits .....	
<b>5. RAPIER AND SIDE WEAPONS COMPETITIONS</b> .....	
5.1. Wrestling .....	20
5.2. Judging of hits .....	19
5.3. Actions involving a dagger as a side weapon .....	21
5.4. Actions involving a cloak as a side weapon .....	
<b>6. ORGANISATIONAL RULES</b> .....	
6.1. The Refereeing system .....	22
6.2. Organisation of the competitions and classification .....	23
6.3. The direct elimination .....	24
6.4. Order of bouts .....	25
6.5. Classification .....	
6.6. Tournament Staff .....	26
<b>7. FENCING ETIQUETTE AND DISCIPLINARY RULES</b> .....	

7.1. Order and Discipline .....	3
7.2. The Competitors .....	27
7.3. Fencing Etiquette .....	28
7.4. The Disciplinary Authorities and their Competence .....	29
7.5. The Organising Team and the Head of the Refereeing Team .....	30
7.6. Penalties .....	31
<b>8. SABRE COMPETITIONS .....</b>	
8.1. Target Area .....	34
8.2. Sabre-specific scoring considerations .....	
8.3. Forbidden actions .....	17
8.4. Priority System .....	
<b>9. RIGHT OF WAY AND PRIORITY RULES .....</b>	
9.1. General Principles .....	35
9.2. Attack Definition and Requirements .....	
9.3. Fencing Actions and Priority .....	36
9.4. Attack Validity Rules .....	
9.5. Parry and Riposte .....	
9.6. Priority Assignment in Double Hits .....	37
9.7. Weapon-Specific Variations .....	38
<b>A1. GLOSSARY .....</b>	
A1.1. General terms .....	39
A1.2. Fencing actions .....	
<b>A2. TABLE OF OFFENCES AND PENALTIES .....</b>	



# 1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of this event is to assess fencing in a safe and friendly manner on the principle of ‘to touch without being touched’. In common with historical rule-sets, competitions are explicitly an abstracted test of skill, and not a simulation of an unregulated combat “to the finish” – in this sense, we shall regard each individual point as a separate “duel” within the framework of the following rules, the loss of which is indicated by having a point called against the losing fencer. Our intention is to determine the relative ranking, and the best fencer among the competitors present on the days of the competitions, in terms of tactical, technical, and athletic skills.

One of the principles which stand above all others is the principle of fair play. Every functional ruleset should be efficient in providing equal opportunities for every tournament contestant.

## **2. TECHNICAL & EQUIPMENT STANDARDS**

### **2.1. Fencing Arena**

1. A fencing arena must provide similar conditions to both contestants. This applies mainly to angles of the light and the ground slipperiness.
2. The fencing arena is a square or rectangular shape, its dimensions must be between a minimum of 5x9 meters and a maximum of 8x12 meters. The borders of a fencing arena must be marked by a full line attached or drawn on the ground. The closest obstacle must be at least 1 meter away from the marking line.
3. The center point of a fencing arena may be marked.
4. The starting position of the fencers must be marked in such a way that start-line is at least 2m away from the center of the arena in opposite directions, setting up at least 4m distance between the fencers at the start of each assault.

### **2.2. Equipment standards**

1. Every contestant is responsible for their equipment, and must use each element of the mandatory equipment, when entering a tournament. If a piece of equipment is declared unsuitable or unfit and the contestant is unable to get a suitable substitute they will be prohibited from entering the tournament.
2. The mandatory equipment is controlled by the designated tournament staff before the competition and an additional check must be done by the referee of each fencing arena. A referee may require a contestant to change or adjust a part of his equipment in a time frame which won't be longer than 5 minutes. If it is not possible for the contestant to comply within the set time frame, the contestant will be awarded a black card and won't be able to continue in the respective tournament.
3. In case of an accident caused by unfit or inadequate equipment approved negligently by the equipment check staff or the referee, the responsibility lies with the staff or referee, who approved the contestant's entry. The staff or the referee will be subjected to disciplinary proceedings and their license may be revoked.
4. A referee has the right to forbid a piece or a set of equipment which does not comply with the prescribed norm.

### ***2.2.1. Protection Gear***

#### ***Head***

1. An undamaged mask that is approved by the FIE (CE level 2, 1600N resistance) is mandatory.
2. Back of head protection and cervical spine protection is mandatory.
3. A neck protector with a thick layer protecting the larynx is mandatory.
4. The bib of the mask must not roll up.
5. If a contestant leans their head in any standard angle, no unprotected part or skin must be visible.

#### ***Hands, arms and torso protection***

1. Only special HEMA fencing gloves or gloves which are meeting all requirements of sporting-historical fencing are allowed. It is forbidden to use pieces of metal on any place of the gloves.
2. Rapier: Fencer with bell guard rapier or sufficiently closed hilt does not need to wear a massive glove with the primary weapon. However, additional hand protection is needed for the protection of the wrist and forearm.
3. Rapier: If a fencer uses a side weapon, this hand needs to be protected with a glove with additional hand protection (e.g. padding...)
4. Gloves used in a tournament don't need to have a thickened layer on the inside of the palm but the palm must be covered at least by a simple glove or textile.
5. The torso of the body must be protected with an undamaged fencing jacket or gambeson which is made of special hardened or thick material which prevents blade penetration and eases the blade impact. The jacket is subjected to control by the tournament staff and the arena referee. A fencing jacket must cover the armpits as well.
6. Every female contestant must wear solid breast/chest protection.
7. Additional protection of the arms or elbows is required if the jacket does not provide sufficient protection itself.
8. Every part of the body must be covered. No open space must be left between the gloves and the jacket.

#### ***Legs***

1. A groin protector is mandatory for every male contestant in all weapon categories.
2. The knees and shins must be protected at the front and the sides as well.

3. The hips must be protected either by a fencing jacket or by padded pants.
4. The thighs and the upper legs must be protected with CE Level 1 certified pants (350N) or other approved thrust-resistant protection.

### **2.2.2. Weapons**

#### ***Longsword***

1. Only straight-bladed, European-type simulators are allowed in the tournament. A longsword must consist of a blade with two edges, a cross-guard, a handle, and a pommel. Longswords must be made of proper steel (no aluminium, plastic or wooden swords will be accepted) and comply with certain qualities, see below.
2. The blade must not bear signs of heavy damage, must not be bent, broken or ruptured. The edges must be round and blunt.
3. A blade may contain a wide blade root, also known as *Schilt*, which must have round and blunt edges.
4. The cross-guard must be straight and must be round at both ends. Additional protection (e.g. in a form of rings) is not allowed.
5. The pommel must be smooth and have no studs.
6. The flexibility of the blade is measured by applying pressure on the blade point against scales, with one hand firmly placed on the pommel. The blade's flexibility is defined as the maximum number (in kg) displayed on the scales before the blade reaches full bend. For longsword blades, the acceptable range is 9-16kg.
7. The minimum point surface area is 70mm<sup>2</sup>.
8. The point of the blade must be either flared or rounded to prevent potential penetration.
9. The point of balance of the sword cannot be more than 9cm away from the cross-guard.
10. The point of the sword must be covered by a red/white/orange tape for better visibility.
11. The overall length of the sword must be within 120-140cm.
12. Sword Weight in the men's category must be between 1400 and 1700g. For the women's category, the sword must weigh between 1250 and 1600g.

#### ***One-handed sword***

1. Only straight-bladed, European-type simulators are allowed in the tournament. In modern times the so-called Fechtschwert/Feder sword (with widened *ricasso*) or *Spada* sword (with a complex handle which protects the hand) are preferred. A sword must consist of a blade with two edges, a cross-guard, a handle, and a pommel.

2. The blade must not bear signs of heavy damage, must not be bent, broken or ruptured. The edges must be round and blunt.
3. A complex cross-guard or rings are allowed.
4. The pommel must be smooth and have no studs.
5. The minimum point surface area is 50mm<sup>2</sup>.
6. The point of the blade must be either flared or rounded to prevent potential penetration.
7. The point of balance of the sword cannot be more than 9cm away from the cross-guard.
8. The point of the sword must be covered by a red/white tape for better visibility.
9. The overall length of the sword must be within 70-100cm.
10. The weight of the sword must be between 900 to 1200g.

### ***Buckler***

1. A buckler is used in tournaments in the category sword and buckler.
2. By the name buckler, it is meant a circular shield that can be gripped in a fist.
3. The core of a buckler is made with a shield boss, which protects the hand.
4. The maximal allowed shield diameter is 40cm.
5. The body of buckler must be wooden or metallic; it cannot have any studs or sharp edges.
6. The weight of the buckler is not limited, but it must have a circular shape; so-called *Targa* shield is not allowed in the tournament.
7. The buckler serves a defensive purpose; covering, engaging and diverting of the opponent's weapon is possible.

### ***Rapier***

1. Historicizing replicas of rapiers with a long blade meant for sporting-historical fencing are allowed (modern epee or foil blades are not allowed).
2. The length of a handle, type of hilt or width of cross-guard is not limited. The overall length of the rapier must not exceed 130cm.
3. The cross-guard must be round at both ends.
4. The maximum length of the blade including *ricasso* is 110cm. The blade must be flexible, especially from the middle of the rapier to the point in order not to pose a risk in thrust attacks. The flexibility of the blade is measured by applying pressure on the blade point against scales, with one hand firmly placed on the pommel. The blade's flexibility is defined as the maximum number (in kg) displayed on the scales before the blade reaches full bend. For rapier blades, the acceptable flexibility is 10kg or less.

5. The weight of the sword must be between 900 to 1300g.
6. The blade must not bear signs of heavy damage, must not be bent, broken or ruptured, which may pose a risk of breaking the weapon.
7. The point of the primary weapon must be blunt and rounded. If the tip is not rounded, it must be additionally secured by protection such as properly fitted plastic or cork end. Adequacy of protection will be judged by the main referee or tournament organizer.
8. The point of the primary and side weapon must be covered by reflexive tape for better visibility.
9. The minimum point surface area is 50mm<sup>2</sup>.

#### *Side weapon - dagger*

1. In the rapier category, it is possible to use a side weapon, which serves defensive purposes. The organizer states the usage of the side weapon.
2. The dagger blade must be straight; daggers with more blades or with a special *ricasso* meant for intercepting a weapon or curved daggers are not allowed in the tournament.
3. The maximum length of the blade is 45cm and the maximum overall length is 60cm.
4. The point of dagger must be blunt and rounded. If the tip is not rounded, it must be additionally secured by protection such as properly fitted plastic or cork end. The point of side weapon must be covered by reflexive tape.

#### *Cloak*

1. In the rapier category, it is possible to use a cloak, which serves defensive purposes. The Organizing Team shall announce in advance, whether they allow the usage of cloaks in their competitions.
2. The term cloak refers to a semi-circular or circular piece of cloth.
3. The cloak must be made of natural materials such as wool, cotton, or a similar fibre; synthetic materials are not allowed.
4. The cloak must not have any attached metal parts such as weights. However, it is allowed to be quilted with fabric or a pattern.

#### *Sabre*

1. A sabre will be defined as a one-handed light cut and thrust blade, either straight or lightly curved.
2. The total weight of a sabre shall fall between the range of 650-800 grams, counting both blade and basket.

3. The maximal blade length is 90cm. The maximal total sabre length is 105cm.
4. The blade must not have any significant bends or signs of damage.
5. The flexibility of the blade is measured by applying pressure on the blade point against scales, with one hand firmly placed on the pommel. The blade's flexibility is defined as the maximum number (in kg) displayed on the scales before the blade reaches full bend. For longsword blades, the acceptable range is 10kg.
6. The minimum point surface area is 50mm<sup>2</sup>. The blade will have a safe tip, this being defined as rolled, thickened or spatulated. The tip will be further built up at the event with contrasting high-visibility tape.
7. The organizers reserve the right to disallow weapons they feel are unsafe or against the spirit of the rules.

## 3. GENERAL RULES

### 3.1. The Process of the Bouts

1. Each bout is performed for a set amount of time or until a set amount of hits. This is achieved through a series of separate, independent assaults.
2. The competitors present themselves in the arena when called by the referee before each pool or direct elimination bout, in appropriate gear conforming to the rules and be ready to fence.
3. An additional equipment check will be performed by the referee directly before each round to confirm completeness of safety gear and weapons. The Referee has the right to repeat this check any time they find it necessary. Fencers who appear in the arena wearing or using unapproved or incomplete equipment will be penalised according to the Rulebook's regulations, and will not be allowed to start or continue competing without having the item(s) approved or replaced with approved ones (see the Equipment Standards).
4. Each fencer is allowed one coach/second who is allowed to be near the arena during bouts. This person may speak to their fencer during breaks but may not disturb the bout with verbal or physical gestures. Generally, it is the fencer who should address the referee for help, clarification or appeals, the seconds should not interfere with the bout in any other way than advising their fencers during breaks.
5. The competitors called first place themselves to the right of the referee behind the on guard line.
6. Pool bouts last 2 minutes of effective fencing time; or until one of the fencers reaches 5 points. Direct Elimination bouts last 2 \* 2 minutes of effective fencing time, with one minute resting period after the first 2 minutes period; or until one of the fencers reaches 7 points. The 'End of Time' is going to be announced by a Timekeeper, but the match can be stopped only by the referee.
7. Before the beginning of each bout, the two fencers called on the arena salute to their opponent, and the referee. Competitors come on guard when the referee gives the order 'On guard!', after which the referee asks, 'Are you ready?'. On the affirmative, or in the absence of a negative reply, the command will be given for fencing to commence with the word 'Fence!'.

8. The assault stops when the Referee commands 'Halt!/Stop!'. The most common reasons for stopping a bout:
  1. a valid hit has been made
  2. an invalid hit has been made, which may complicate the evaluation of any further actions
  3. a fencer has left the arena with both feet
  4. end of time
  5. dangerous or confused fencing
  6. equipment failure
  7. injury
  8. a fencer has requested to break the assault
9. Fencers may ask for a break by signaling with their arm raised. This may be done due to any reason that proves to be valid (e.g. equipment failure, injury). However, the assault stops only when the Referee gives the command to stop.
10. No actions that have started before the command to start or after the command to stop may be counted as valid. Starting any action before the command to start and initiating an action after the command to stop belong to the first group of offences.
11. Invalid hits may be disregarded at the Referee's discretion as if never happened, when the Referee is able to clearly follow the assault.
12. However, if when the Referee stops the bout, a hit that the referee believed invalid and ignored before the conclusion of the last assault proves to have been valid, the Referee shall, if possible, make a decision in relation to the actual first hit, even if this results in the annulment of other valid hits that happened afterwards.
13. When a competitor crosses one of the boundaries of the arena with both feet completely off the arena, the Referee must immediately stop the assault.
14. If the fencer goes off the arena with both feet, the Referee must annul everything that has occurred after the boundary has been crossed.
15. A hit scored by the fencer who leaves the arena with one foot only is valid provided that the action was started before the bout was stopped, even if the fencer leaves the arena afterwards.
16. Should a competitor cross the boundary of the arena completely — i.e. with both feet — without having scored any valid hits before crossing the limit of the arena
  1. upon the first occasion within a bout, the fencer receives a verbal warning

2. upon each subsequent cases within the bout, a hit will be scored against him (as if they had been hit).
17. A competitor who involuntarily crosses one of the boundaries of the arena as the result of any accidental cause (such as jostling/being pushed out by the opponent) incurs no penalty.
18. After each valid hit and in case the bout is stopped for other reasons (confused fencing, malfunction, unsuccessful grappling, etc.) the bout continues from the 'On guard' position, at the starting line.
19. When available, fencers have the right to appeal for video review once during bout. If the video review alters the referee's verdict in their favour, they retain the right to appeal for video review during that bout.
20. In case the points of the fencers are equal at the time limit, an additional minute of time is given, during which the first valid hit wins the bout. Additionally, before overtime starts, the referee flips a coin and randomly assigns one of the two fencers with priority. If the sudden death overtime runs out with neither fencer scoring, the fencer with priority wins the bout. This randomly assigned priority has no effect on the judgment of actions during the overtime.
21. At the end of the bout the referee will announce the winner and the final score. The opponents shall salute to the referees and the opponent and shake hands with the opponent (Refusal to observe this rule by one or both of the opponents belongs to the third group of offences).
22. After the pool round and each direct elimination bout, the fencers shall check and sign the result sheet filled in by the referee during the bout, before leaving the arena.
23. For an equipment failure which occurs in the course of a bout, the referee may allow a break in the fight lasting up to 3 minutes (measured from the point when the failure has been acknowledged by the referee). This time interval can be used to mend or replace, and check the equipment in question. If a fencer is not able to continue fencing before or at the end of the break, the referee has the authority to disqualify the fencer from that bout.
24. For an injury or cramp which occurs in the course of a bout the referee may allow a break in the fight lasting up to 10 minutes (measured from the point when the qualified staff give their opinion). This time interval is reserved for the treatment of the injury or cramp which brought it about. No further interruption can be allowed in the same bout for the same injury. If the professional attendant deems the fencer unsafe/incapable to fence before or at the end of the 10-minute break, they have the authority to withdraw the fencer from the bout, or the competition.

25. In case the fencer forfeits one bout due to an equipment malfunction or injury, during the pool phase, the other contestant is declared as winning, but the score is not annulled (it is possible to win a bout while having less points than the opponent, in this case). In the direct elimination phase, the other contestant is declared as winning, and the fencer does not lose their place in the overall classification of the competition.
26. Only one bout can be forfeited in the pool, should the fencer be unable to fence through a bout a second time, they must withdraw from the competition. (They may still participate in other competitions/weapons in the tournament)
27. In case the fencer is withdrawn from the competition during the pool bouts, their results shall be scratched, and their opponents shall be declared as winning V0-D0 in each of their past or future pool bouts, regardless of the previously achieved results. The withdrawn fencer does not participate in the calculation of ranking for the direct elimination table.
28. If the fencer withdraws from the competition during the last pool bout, the score shall be recorded as if they had forfeited only one pool bout (see previous paragraph), but they will not be included in the calculation if ranking for the direct elimination table.
29. If the fencer withdraws during the direct elimination phase, the opponent is declared as winning, and the fencer does not lose their place in the overall classification of the competition.

### **3.2. The methods of scoring hits**

1. Fencing time is the time required to perform one simple fencing action. In judging hits, referees will count immediate actions that start up to the moment of the first hit, as relevant actions.
2. When only one of the fencers receives a hit within one period of fencing time, the fencer who was hit is called one point against.
3. In case both fencers hit within one period of fencing time, three different tactical situations are defined in the rules.
4. A simultaneous hit is the result of a similar conception and execution of both fencers at the same time. The scoring of simultaneous hits is determined by weapon-specific rules.
5. A double hit occurs when both fencers get hit within a period of fencing time, but are not simultaneous actions, are evaluated according to the rules of each specific weapon.
6. An after-action is a double hit situation, where the fencer at fault starts a counter action (or the finishing move of a compound action) at or after the moment of receiving a hit. After-actions do not score, and do not nullify the hit received.
7. Hits can be made using the weapon in the following ways:

8. Cut - carried out with the edge or the flat of the blade on any valid target. A cut must be performed with a visually distinctive trajectory (preparation more than 45 degrees) and must correspond with an action that would probably cause the target area to be wounded, e.g. hitting head with the flat surface of the sword also counts
9. Thrust - carried out with the point of the weapon on any valid target. A valid thrust must be performed in such a way that it would be visually distinctive, e.g. the blade will be bent at the end of the action and the point will traverse at least 20cm.
10. Slice - carried out with the edge of the weapon on any valid target. A slice must be a movement which is defined by pushing or pulling of the blade against the valid area in a visually distinctive way.
11. Strike - using the pommel of the weapon against any part of the opponent's mask.
12. The referee may call an action as a valid hit, when a weapon action results in a passively constraining position for the opponent, for a considerable time during which the opponent is unable to break free. This may be the result of of grappling, locks involving the weapon, or opposing actions that restrain the opponent's weapon movement for a considerable time, until the referee finds all criteria of dominance met, and calls "Halt!". Hits received while this dominant position is upheld are not considered valid. However, dominance can not be applied to situations, when the opponent can practically break free and initiate valid actions, even if by some active measures, the weapon contact is not completely broken. It is up to the referee's discretion to judge the validity of dominance actions.

### **3.3. Close quarter combat**

Close quarter combat and grappling are allowed with the following regulations:

1. The Referee may call 'Halt!' after an unsuccessful period of grappling.
2. Grappling on the opponent's blade is allowed, if the blade is controlled. Seizing of the blade needs to be momentary, and followed by an immediate 'clean' hit to score a point. If the competitor can not achieve a hit consequently to seizing the blade, the Referee will call 'Halt!' and award no points. Failing to control the blade will be counted as a point against the competitor who attempted to enter grappling.
3. Grappling actions that score a point are:
4. take-downs and throws followed/accompanied by a simple and immediate hit with the weapon (within a period of fencing time)
5. controlling the opponent via grappling with or without the weapon, until the Referee calls 'Halt!'

6. Ground action is not allowed, the Referee shall call “Halt!” when one of the fencers falls to the ground, or whenever the referee is unable to judge the action any more, or when a reasonable time has passed for dominance to apply.
7. Disarming is allowed and scores a point, unless the disarmed fencer immediately (before the referee calls ‘Halt!’) controls the opponent’s weapon and enters grappling.
8. If a fencer accidentally drops the weapon, or falls without the opponent’s interaction, the Referee shall call ‘Halt!’. A hit that started before the fencer obviously lost the weapon should be counted as valid even if it arrives afterwards, but in the spirit of sportsmanship, no intentional new attack should be initiated if the opponent has fallen or lost the weapon.

### ***3.3.1. Forbidden actions***

1. Neck-wrenching, lifting the opponent off the ground, full application of joint locks, small-joint manipulation, or other potentially dangerous wrestling techniques, punching, kicking, violent jostling, and throwing the weapon are strictly forbidden.
2. Excessive force, brutality or unnecessary violence are forbidden.
3. Hitting the back of the head the spine, the back of the knee or the foot is forbidden.
4. Turning the head or covering a valid target with a non-valid one belongs to the first group of offences.
5. Hitting the arena floor with any weapon due to bad measure in an action will be penalised according to the first group of offences (cases resulting from the opponent’s interactions, accidental touches, and touching the floor after having hit the opponent, may be disregarded by the Referee).
6. It is forbidden to hit with the cross-guard, where applicable, or with the basket or bell guard; and in all circumstances, to hit the back of the head, spine and back of the knee, and the foot of the opponent and will be penalised.
7. Hitting the arena floor with any weapon due to bad measure in an action will be penalised according to the first group of offences (cases resulting from the opponent’s interactions, accidental touches, and touching the floor after having hit the opponent, may be disregarded by the Referee).

## 4. LONGSWORD COMPETITIONS

### 4.1. Rules of hit validity and fencing actions

1. All hits made with the true edge, the false edge, and the tip of the blade are valid if they are performed in such a way that it would have caused a wound to an unarmoured opponent, had the weapon been sharp. Hits performed with the flat may be counted, if they bear the characteristics of a coordinated and potent technique. It is up to the referee's discretion to judge the validity of hits.
2. Hits through the blade, that is to say those which bend over the opponent's blade or cross-guard, are not considered to be valid. However, the referee may count a hit as valid, if the opponent's blade has not closed the line of the attack, and it touches at the same time the valid target and the weapon of the opponent, whenever they arrive clearly on the target.
3. The target includes the whole of the fencer's body, including the handle of the weapon, clothing, and safety equipment, except for the back of the head, spine, the feet, and the back of the knees.

### 4.2. Vor/Priority

Longsword uses the standard right-of-way system. See [Right of Way and Priority Rules](#) for detailed priority conventions and examples.

### 4.3. Close quarter combat

1. Priority ceases to exist when the weapons of the opponents come together at *Stercke* on *Stercke* (including the crossguard), and/or in case of grappling actions. In case the weapons touch *Stercke* on *Stercke*, and a double hit follows immediately, no points are awarded. Otherwise, they may disengage and continue fencing (with priority rules), or enter grappling (with grappling rules).

## 4.4. Judging of hits

1. When during a phrase both fencers are hit within a period of fencing time there is either a simultaneous action or a double hit:
  1. The simultaneous action is due to simultaneous conception and execution of an attack by both fencers; in this case no points are awarded.
  2. The double hit on the other hand, is the result of a clearly faulty action on the part of one of the fencers, according to the rules. Therefore, when there is not an interval of fencing time between the hits.
2. When there is a double hit, and if the Referee is unable clearly to judge from which side the fault has come, the referee must not assign any points.
3. In cases when a stop hit is made and there is doubt as to whether it was made sufficiently in time in relation to the final movement of a compound attack, the double hit often occurs through the fault of both fencers concerned. Since this is clearly not a tactically symmetrical case, the referee should assign no points. (The fault of the attacker consists of indecision, slowness of execution or the making of feints which are not sufficiently effective. The fault of the defender lies in delay or slowness in making the stop hit.)
4. Any actions executed while holding the weapon with one hand only, can only score if the fencer does not receive any attack or counterattack with a weapon held with two hands, within one period of fencing time.
5. However if the opponent reacts to the attack with a weapon held in one hand with an attempt to parry, an unsuccessful parry returns the right of initiative to the one-handed hit.
6. In cases when both fencers get hit with a weapon held in one hand within time, the judgment of the action follows the regular priority rules.

## 5. RAPIER AND SIDE WEAPONS COMPETITIONS

### 5.1. Wrestling

1. Wrestling actions (arm locks, throws, chokes) are forbidden in Rapier and Side Weapons competitions.
2. Attempting wrestling actions during bouts of this category belongs to the first group of offences.
3. Body contact (including accidental jostling) in itself is not considered as wrestling and therefore are allowed.

### 5.2. Judging of hits

1. A double hit occurs when two valid hits that land within one period of fencing time.
2. When a double hit consists of a thrust by one fencer and a cut or slice by the other, the thrust scores one point and the cut scores no point.
3. In all other double hits, each fencer scores one point.
4. A hit that begins at or after the moment a fencer receives a valid hit (after-action) is not counted.
5. Rapiers may be used with a parrying dagger or a cloak; the regulations for these side weapons are set out elsewhere in this Rulebook.
6. All hits made with the point, and the edges of the blade, are valid. The action must be performed in such a way that it would have caused a wound to an unarmoured opponent, had the weapon been sharp. Hits performed with the flat may be counted, if they are aimed at the head, and bear the characteristics of a coordinated and potent technique. It is up to the referee's discretion to judge the validity of hits, in accordance with the Rulebook's regulations.
7. The target includes the whole of the fencer's body, clothing, and safety equipment, except for the back of the head, spine, the feet, the back of the knees, and if used, the cloak.
8. It is allowed to parry using the unarmed hand, as long as the weapon is controlled (thrusts or static blade positions, where the parrying hand does not get a direct hit).

9. Switching of the weapon hand is allowed only in case of injury of the original armed hand, disallowing to continue fencing with the same hand. Switching the hands in any other case or holding the rapier with two hands is not permitted.

### **5.3. Actions involving a dagger as a side weapon**

1. It is allowed to parry with the dagger, as long as it is used for defensive actions only.
2. It is allowed to engage the opponent's blade using the dagger
3. It is forbidden to attack with the dagger, and depending on the outcome, it may belong to the first or the second group of offences.
4. It is forbidden to throw the dagger at the opponent, it belongs to the fourth group of offences, and will be penalized with elimination from the tournament.

### **5.4. Actions involving a cloak as a side weapon**

1. It is allowed to parry with the cloak, as long as it is used for defensive actions only.
2. It is allowed to engage the opponent's blade using the cloak.
3. Cuts aimed at the cloak-covered hand or body or the cloak itself are not considered valid.
4. Thrusts aimed at the cloak-covered hand or body are considered valid, as long as the thrust hits a valid target through the cloak and satisfies the general requirements of valid attacks.
5. It is forbidden to throw the cloak at the opponent. It must be wrapped around the unarmed hand. Dropping or letting go of the cloak without the opponent's interaction belongs to the first group of offences.

## 6. ORGANISATIONAL RULES

1. The competition is open to athletes of 18 years and older.
2. It is prohibited to enter a competition under the influence of alcohol or performance-altering drugs (including recreational drugs and those prescribed by physicians).

### 6.1. The Refereeing system

#### 6.1.1. *Main Referee*

1. The Referee works with an Assistant (side Referee) and manages the time and protocol (when necessary, supported by an administrative crew).
2. The Referee gives the signals to start, stop, assigns points and describes what happened during the entire assault or at least the last exchange.
3. After stopping the bout, the Referee consults with the Assistant and proposes a result. If the fencers accept the decision (they say nothing), the fight continues with the proposed score. If they don't agree with the Referee, but they agree with each other, the Referee may make a decision according to their wishes. If any of the fencers protests and the fencers disagree with each other, the Referee will decide whether to assign a point (being completely sure) or repeat the assault.
4. If the Referee is unable to interpret the fencing phrase for some reason, they can repeat the exchange but will explain and apologise.
5. The Referee's decisions can not be contested after the bout.
6. Main referee must be able conduct and manage bouts in English.

#### 6.1.2. *Side Referee (Assistant Referee)*

1. An Assistant Referee helps the main Referee in scoring and hit evaluation. Their task is to observe a match from a different angle than the main Referee.
2. The Assistant may signal hits made by the fencers to the Referee by raising their arm, even if the Referee does not halt the assault immediately.
3. An Assistant Referee is not responsible for point assignment nor for the overall match score.

## 6.2. Organisation of the competitions and classification

### 6.2.1. *The round of pools*

1. In all competitions for which the formula includes a round of pools, these pools will consist of 7 fencers if the number of participants is divisible by 7. Otherwise the pools will be of 7 and 6 fencers.
2. In the pools a bout ends when:
  1. One of the fencers has scored 5 hits. In this case the score registered on the score-sheet is the final score of the bout ( $V5 - Dn$ , where  $n$  = the number of hits scored by the losing fencer).
  2. Two minutes of effective fencing time have passed. (There is no warning for the last minute.)
3. If when the time limit expires there is a difference of at least one point between the scores of the two fencers, the fencer who has scored the greater number of hits is declared winner. The score registered on the score-sheet is the actual score achieved in the bout ( $VN - Dn$ , where  $N$  = the number of hits scored by the winning fencer and  $n$  = the number of hits scored by the losing fencer).
4. If at the end of regulation time the scores are equal, the fencers fence for a deciding hit, with a maximum time limit of one minute. Before the fencing recommences, the Referee draws lots to decide who will be the winner if scores are still equal at the end of the extra minute.
5. In this case the score registered on the score-sheet is always the actual score achieved in the bout:
  1.  $VN-Dn$  if a deciding hit is scored within the time limit for the bout.
  2.  $V4-D4$  or  $V3-D3$  or  $V2-D2$  or  $V1-D1$  or  $V0-D0$  if the winner is designated by drawing lots.
  3.  $Vn-DN$ ,  $VN-Dn$  or  $Vn-Dn$  in case a single bout is forfeited due to injury or equipment malfunction but the rest of the bouts have been completed regularly. It is always the fencer who did not forfeit the bout who is registered as victorious, even though the scores are not annulled.
  4.  $V0-D0$  in case a fencer is withdrawn or removed from the competition, marking the opponent as the winner, but not registering any scores, for all of the fencer's bouts in the pool..

6. Before the competition starts, the Organising Team will decide on and announce the number of fencers who will be eliminated based on the ranking established by the pools (0-40%).
7. After the pools, a single general ranking will be established of all the fencers who have taken part in the pools, taking account, successively, of the indices V/M, HS – HR, HS. (V = victories; M = bouts; HS = hits scored; HR = hits received.)
8. A summary classification table shall then be made in the following way:
  1. The results written up on the summary table will be added up to ascertain the two indices required.
  2. The first index, for the initial classification, shall be obtained by dividing the number of victories by the number of bouts fought, using the formula V/M.
  3. The fencer with the highest index (maximum 1) will be seeded first.
  4. In cases of equality in this first index, and to separate fencers with equal first indices, a second index will be established, using the formula HS – HR, the difference between the total number of hits scored and hits received.
  5. In cases of equality of the two indices V/M and HS – HR, the fencer who has scored most hits will be seeded highest.
  6. In cases of absolute equality between two or more fencers, their seeding order will be decided by drawing lots.
9. Should there be absolute equality among the last to qualify there will not be a barrage, and the fencers with equal indicators will all qualify, even if they are in excess of the number decided on.
10. A fencer who withdraws, or who is excluded, is scratched from the pool, His/her results are recorded as if all of their opponents had won against the fencer, but no score will be registered (V0-D0). The fencer who is withdrawn or excluded during the pool, will not be included in the calculation of the ranking for the direct elimination table.
11. When a fencer withdraws from one pool bout only, they are declared as having lost the bout, but the score established before is not annulled.

### **6.3. The direct elimination**

1. The direct elimination table (bout plan) – complete or incomplete – is established taking account of the classification table and the special rules for each competition (See Figure 2.)

2. The organisers of a competition publish the direct elimination bout plan. The direct elimination bouts are for 7 hits or end when the two periods of two minutes, with a one-minute rest between the two periods, have passed.
3. For the gold-medal bout (1st place) and the bronze-medal bout (3rd place), the Organising Team may raise the hit limit above the standard seven (e.g. 10 or 15). The chosen limit (and any corresponding time structure) must be published in the official schedule before the start of the competition day.
4. During the one-minute rest a second/coach, named before the bout, may have access to the fencer.
5. The bout ends when:
  1. One of the fencers has scored 7 hits; or
  2. 2 \* 2 minutes of effective fencing time have passed.
6. The fencer who has scored the greater number of hits is declared the winner.
7. If at the end of regulation time the scores are equal, the fencers fence for a deciding hit, with a maximum time limit of one minute. Before the fencing recommences the Referee draws lots to decide who will be the winner if scores are still equal at the end of the extra minute. In this case the score recorded on the score-sheet is the real score achieved in the bout.
8. Withdrawal: When, for whatever reason, a fencer cannot fence, or cannot complete their bout, their opponent is declared winner of that bout. A fencer who withdraws does not lose their place in the overall classification of the competition.

## **6.4. Order of bouts**

1. In each round of the direct elimination table (256, 128, 64, 32, 16, 8 or 4), the bouts are always called in the order of the bout plan, starting at the top and ending at the bottom.

## **6.5. Classification**

1. The general classification is obtained as follows:
2. First: the winner of the bout for the first place
3. Second: the loser of the bout for the first place
4. A bout for third and fourth places will be fought between the two losers of the semi-final matches.

5. The remainder are placed, within each round of the direct elimination, in accordance with their classification for the composition of the direct elimination table.

## **6.6. Tournament Staff**

1. Medical/paramedic staff will assess possible injury/illness of the participants during/after bouts and advise on immediate management.
2. The head of the Organising Team is responsible for the overall smooth running of the tournament. The Organising Team is available for questions, complaints, compliments, and suggestions, before during and after the event.
3. The head of the Refereeing Team oversees the allocation and performance of the Referees and Assistants. The Refereeing committee can be approached directly by the participants or their representatives, if questions regarding the performance of any of the Referees are raised.
4. The head of Equipment Inspection performs pre-tournament checks of safety equipment and weapons, stamps passed items and keeps a list of participants whose safety equipment has been deemed satisfactory.
5. The Technical Team manages the technical infrastructure, including the competition management software, ensuring that the events are recorded, stored, displayed correctly.

## **7. FENCING ETIQUETTE AND DISCIPLINARY RULES**

### **7.1. Order and Discipline**

1. Everyone taking part in or attending a fencing competition, including the spectators, must observe strictly and faithfully the particular rules for the competition in which they are engaged, the traditional customs of courtesy and integrity and the instructions of the officials. In particular they will subscribe, in an orderly, disciplined and sporting manner, to the following provisions; all breaches of these rules may entail punishments by the disciplinary authorities after, or even without prior warning, according to the facts and circumstances.
2. Everybody taking part in or present at a fencing competition must remain orderly and must not disturb the smooth running of the competition. During bouts no one is allowed to approach the arenas to give advice to the fencers, to criticise the Referee or the Assistant, to insult them or to attempt to influence them in any way. The second must remain in the space assigned to him/her. The referee must stop immediately any activity which disturbs the smooth running of the bout which he/she is refereeing
3. Any person who, for any reason, threatens or insults an official is eligible for immediate disqualification/expulsion from the premises.
4. The referee, and/or the organising team, on their own authority, can decide to expel from the competition venue, with or without a warning, any person who by his/her gestures, attitude or language disturbs the good order or smooth running of the event.

### **7.2. The Competitors**

1. By the mere fact of entering a fencing competition, the fencers pledge their honour to observe the Rules, and the decisions and instructions of the officials, to be respectful towards the Referees (Referee and Assistant) and to scrupulously obey their orders and injunctions.
2. No fencer may take part in the competition if he/she refuses to fence against any other fencer whatsoever correctly entered in the event. Should this rule be broken, the penalties specified for offences of the 4th group will be applied.

3. The fencers, completely equipped, with all equipment conforming with the regulations and ready to fence, must be present at the time and place appointed for the beginning of the pool, match, or bout of direct elimination, or at the time appointed for the checking of their equipment before their bout, as well as during the competition, whenever the Referee requires it.
4. When presenting themselves to fence a bout, the fencers must arrive on the arena completely ready to fence — regulation clothing, jacket fastened, hands gloved and holding the weapon.
5. During a competition, if a fencer does not present himself on the arena, ready to fence, when ordered to do so by the Referee:
  1. The fencer not present will be penalised with a Yellow Card;
  2. A second call will be made, one minute after the first call, followed by a Red Card for the fencer or team member not present;
  3. A third and last call will be made, one minute after the second call, followed by elimination from the competition for the fencer not present.
6. During or after a bout, even if the fencer has already left the arena, any act against the spirit of sportsmanship such as violently or dangerously throwing one's mask (or any other piece of equipment) will be penalised.
7. The fencer, whether on or off the arena, must keep his mask on until the Referee calls 'Halt!'. He may under no circumstances address the Referee until the Referee has made his decision.
8. Competitors must fence to their utmost ability in a sportsmanlike manner until the end of the competition in order to obtain the best possible classification, without giving away hits or seeking to be favoured by being given hits by anyone.

### **7.3. Fencing Etiquette**

1. All bouts must preserve the character of a courteous and frank encounter. All irregular actions (e.g. violently jostling the opponent; disorderly fencing; irregular movements in the arena; hits achieved with violence; blows struck with the cross-guard; hits made during or after an accidental fall; failing to stop dangerous techniques short of full application, taking out fury on the furniture or equipment of the venue) or anti-sporting behaviour are strictly forbidden. Should such an offence occur, any hit scored by the fencer at fault is annulled.

2. Before the beginning of each bout, the two fencers must perform a fencer's salute to their opponent, the referee, and preferably to the spectators. Equally, when the final hit has been scored, the bout has not ended until the two fencers have saluted each other, the referee (and the spectators). To this end, they must remain still while the referee is making her decision; when she has given her decision, they must return to their on-guard line, perform a fencer's salute and shake hands with their opponent. If either or both of the two fencers refuse to comply with these rules, the Referee will penalise him/them as specified for offences of the 4th group.
3. Punishable actions are acted on by verbal warnings, warnings (yellow card), point awarded to the opponent (red card) or disqualification and expulsion from the venue (black card), according to severity and repetition of offense, as detailed in the rulebook (see the table of offences, also attached to this summary).
4. Spectators are obliged not to interfere with the good order of a competition, to do nothing which may tend to influence the fencers or the Referee, and to respect the decisions of the latter even when they do not agree with them. They must obey any instructions which the Referee may deem it necessary to give them.

## **7.4. The Disciplinary Authorities and their Competence**

### **7.4.1. *The Referee***

1. By accepting a position as referee or assistant, the person so designated pledges his/her honour to respect the rules and to cause them to be respected, and to carry out his/her duties with the strictest impartiality and absolute concentration.
2. The Referee is responsible not only for the direction of the bout, the judging of hits and the checking of equipment, but equally for the maintenance of order in the bouts which he is refereeing.
3. The referee has the right to interrupt a bout if the play becomes confused, dangerous or she/he is unable to clearly judge the action any more. In the absence of an objective scoring device, the fencing phrases are judged according to the referee and assistant's observation of the action. While fencers are welcome to address the referee for clarification or appeals before the final decision is made, the referee's judgment regarding facts is not to be questioned in retrospect.
4. In his capacity as director of the bout and arbiter of hits, he can, in accordance with the rules, penalise the competitors, either by refusing to award a hit which they have in fact made on the opponent, or by awarding against them a hit which they have not in fact received, or by excluding them from the competition which he is refereeing, all, according

to the circumstances, with or without prior warning. In these circumstances, and if he has judged on a matter of fact, his decisions are irrevocable

5. By reason of the right of jurisdiction which he has over all the fencers who participate in, or are present at a competition which he is refereeing, he can also propose to the the expulsion from the venue of the competition of the spectators, trainers, instructors and other persons who accompany the competitors.
6. Finally, he may recommend to the Organising Team all other penalties which he considers appropriate (exclusion from the whole competition, suspension or disqualification). The Head of the Refereeing Team is the authority competent to deal with appeals against the decisions of the Referee.

## **7.5. The Organising Team and the Head of the Refereeing Team**

1. The organising team and the head of the Refereeing Team have jurisdiction over all the fencers who take part in or are present at a competition which they are running. When necessary, they can intervene on their own initiative in all disputes. They are also responsible for maintaining order and discipline during competitions, and may use the penalties specified in the Rules.
2. All the decisions of the Organising team or the Head of the Refereeing Team are immediately enforceable. No appeal against a decision can suspend that decision during the competition.

## **7.6. Penalties**

1. There are distinct categories of penalty applicable to different sorts of offence.
2. Penalties related to fencing, applicable to offences committed while fencing. These are:
  1. refusal to award a hit actually made
  2. awarding a hit which has not in fact been received
  3. exclusion from the competition
3. Disciplinary penalties applicable to offences concerned with maintenance of order, discipline or sportsmanship. These are:
  1. awarding a hit which has not in fact been received
  2. exclusion from the competition

3. exclusion from participation in the whole tournament
  4. expulsion from the venue of the competition
  5. exclusion from events organised by the Federation or the specific Organising Team for a period of time.
4. All these penalties can be applied by the competent authorities at a competition — the Referee, the Head of the Refereeing Committee, and the Organising Team.

### **7.6.1. *Penalties Related to Fencing***

1. Refusal to award a hit actually made. Although a competitor may in fact have hit his opponent on the target, this hit may be disallowed, either because it did not arrive during the period of time during which fencing is allowed, or because the competitor had crossed the boundaries of the arena, or because violence was involved in the making of the hit, or because of other reasons as laid down in the Rules.
2. Award of a hit which has not in fact been received. A competitor may have a hit awarded against him which he has not in fact received, either because he has crossed the limit of the arena, or because he has committed an offence which has prevented his opponent fencing.
3. Exclusion. A competitor who, while fencing, commits certain violent or vindictive actions against his opponent, or who does not fence to his utmost ability, or who profits from a fraudulent agreement with his opponent, may be excluded from the competition. A competitor who is excluded from a competition may not continue to take part in that competition, even if he is already qualified for promotion to the next round. He loses the right to his individual classification and all the fencers ranked after the disqualified fencer move up one place in the results of the competition.

### **7.6.2. *Disciplinary penalties***

1. Exclusion from the Competition. It may also be imposed for a disciplinary offence (failure to appear on the arena as required, weapons not in accordance with the rules, reprehensible attitude towards an official, etc.). The consequences of such exclusion for the competitor are the same as those described in the Article 29. above.
2. Expulsion from the venue of the competition or the tournament.
3. A competitor who is excluded from a tournament will no longer be allowed to participate in any competition during that tournament, either at the same weapon or another.
4. All participants or non-competitors who participate in or are present at a competition (instructors, trainers, technicians, supporters, officials, spectators) may be expelled. Such

expulsion has the effect of forbidding them access to the venue for the duration of the competition or tournament. In no circumstances can the imposition of this penalty give cause for redress to anyone.

### **7.6.3. *The types (groups) of penalty***

1. There are three types of penalty to be applied in the cases indicated in the table in Article. If a referee has to penalise a fencer who has committed several faults at the same time, he should penalise the least serious fault first.
2. Penalties are cumulative and they are valid for the bout with the exception of those indicated by a BLACK CARD, which means exclusion from the competition, suspension for the remainder of the tournament or future events organised by the Federation or the specific Organising Team.
3. Certain offences can result in the annulment of the hit scored by the fencer at fault. During the bout, only hits scored in circumstances connected with the offence may be annulled.
4. The penalties are as follows:
  1. a warning, indicated by a YELLOW CARD with which the Referee identifies the fencer at fault. The fencer then knows that any further offence on his part will result in a penalty hit.
  2. a penalty hit, indicated by a RED CARD with which the Referee identifies the fencer at fault. A hit is added to the score of his opponent and may, if the last hit is at stake, lead to the loss of the bout. Furthermore, a RED CARD can only be followed by another RED CARD or by a BLACK CARD, depending on the nature of the second offence.
  3. Exclusion from the competition, suspension from the remainder of the tournament, indicated by a BLACK CARD with which the Referee identifies the person at fault.
  4. Expulsion from the competition venue (any person disturbing the order of the competition).
5. All warnings (YELLOW CARDS), penalty hits (RED CARDS) and exclusions (BLACK CARDS) must be noted on the score-sheet of the bout, the pool or the match, together with the group to which they belong.
6. The offences and their penalties which appear in different articles of the Rules are summarised in the table that follows in Article 44.); they are divided into four groups. All these penalties are within the competence of the Referee, although the Organising Team still retains the right to intervene on its own initiative.

**7.6.4. *The First Group of offences***

1. The first infringement in this First Group is penalised by a YELLOW CARD (warning). If during the same bout the fencer commits the same or a different offence in this group the Referee penalises him on each occasion, with a RED CARD (penalty hit). If the fencer at fault has already been penalised by a RED CARD because of an offence listed in the Second or Third Group, he receives a further RED CARD for his first infringement relating to the First Group.

**7.6.5. *The Second Group of offences***

1. Every offence in the Second Group, including the first infringement, is penalised by a RED CARD (penalty hit).

**7.6.6. *The Third Group of Offences***

1. The first infringement in the Third Group is penalised by a RED CARD (penalty hit), even if the fencer at fault has already received a RED CARD as a result of offences in the First or Second Groups.
2. If during the same bout the fencer commits the same or a different offence in this group, he is penalised with a BLACK CARD (exclusion from the competition, suspension from the remainder of the tournament. The fencer keeps the position in the ranking s obtained up to the moment of the disqualification (unless the ranking has not yet been established via the pools).
3. Any person not on the arena who disturbs the good order of the competition receives:
4. On the first infringement, a warning, indicated by a YELLOW CARD, valid for the whole of the competition, which must be noted on the bout score-sheet and recorded by the Technical Team;
5. At the second infringement during the same competition a BLACK CARD.
6. In the most serious cases concerning disturbance either on or off the arena, the Referee may exclude or expel the person at fault immediately.

**7.6.7. *The Fourth Group of Offences***

1. The first infringement in the Fourth Group, is penalised by a BLACK CARD (exclusion from the competition).
2. The penalized fencer keeps the position in the ranking s obtained up to the moment of the disqualification (unless the ranking has not yet been established via the pools).

## 8. SABRE COMPETITIONS

### 8.1. Target Area

1. Targets are restricted from the hips up, including arms and head, but with legs being a non-scoring target.
2. Strikes to a non-scoring target will not score.
3. Repeated, deliberate strikes to an off-target will be judged as strikes to an illegal target and dealt with accordingly.

### 8.2. Sabre-specific scoring considerations

1. **Simultaneous hits** - When both fencers hit simultaneously, the score does not change.
2. **Hits through blade contact** - Hits landed with blade contact (through a parry or over the cross/guard) are only valid if the strength of the hit is not meaningfully decreased.
3. **Point-in-line exception** - If the defender holds their point outstretched and the opponent runs into the point, the distance traversed ceases to play a role in judging validity.
4. **Dominance actions** - Note that the general dominance rule (see [General Rules](#)) applies only to weapon locks and constraining actions, not grappling, as grappling is forbidden in sabre.

### 8.3. Forbidden actions

1. Grappling or close quarter combat is forbidden.
2. Engaging in grappling, close quarters combat, or corps-a-corps will immediately be stopped by the referee.

### 8.4. Priority System

Sabre uses the standard right-of-way system. See [Right of Way and Priority Rules](#) for detailed priority conventions.

## 9. RIGHT OF WAY AND PRIORITY RULES

### 9.1. General Principles

1. The Referee alone decides as to the validity or the priority (*Vor*/right of way) of the hit by applying the following basic rules which are the conventions applicable to priority-based weapons (longsword and sabre).
2. Any attack properly executed must be parried, or completely avoided, and the phrase must be continuous.
3. Priority rules are used to resolve double hits when both fencers are hit within one period of fencing time.

### 9.2. Attack Definition and Requirements

1. The attack is correctly carried out when the straightening of the arm, with the point or the edge continuously threatening the valid target, precedes the initiation of the footwork action.
2. An attack with a lunge (or other offensive footwork) is correctly carried out:
  3. in a simple attack when the beginning of the straightening of the arms precedes the launching of the lunge or other offensive footwork, and the hit arrives at the latest when the front foot hits the ground
  4. in a compound attack when the beginning of the straightening of the arms, on the first feint, precedes the launching of the lunge or other offensive footwork, and the hit arrives at the latest when the front foot hits the ground.
5. Attacks with step-forward-lunge or other compound footwork are not defined in this rulebook. Priority is assigned based on the start of the (attack with) lunge other simple offensive footwork, while steps in any case are considered as preparations.
6. Actions, simple or compound, steps or feints, which are executed with bent arms, are not considered as attacks but as preparations, laying themselves open to the initiation of the offensive or defensive/offensive action of the opponent. Hits received from attacks/counterattacks initiated during these actions are counted as valid and score a point against the preparing fencer.

### 9.3. Fencing Actions and Priority

For definitions of fencing actions (attack, feint, compound attack, counterattack, riposte, remise, etc.), see [Glossary](#).

Priority assignment for specific actions: - **Attacks** gain priority when properly executed with blade commitment - **Blade commitment requirement** - Priority will not be given for pure footwork without blade commitment or actions not demonstrating forward commitment of blade - **Ripostes** gain priority when immediate and simple after a parry - **Counterattacks** cannot be assigned priority - **Remise** can only gain priority if the defender's riposte was clearly and significantly delayed

### 9.4. Attack Validity Rules

1. **Point-in-line situations:** If the attack is initiated when the opponent has their point passively in line, the attacker must first deflect the opponent's weapon. Referees must ensure that a mere contact of the blades is not considered as sufficient to deflect the opponent's blade.
2. **Failed blade finding:** If, when attempting to find the opponent's blade to deflect it, the blade is not found, the right of attack passes to the opponent.
3. **Attack completion:** If the attack is commenced when the opponent's blade is not in line, the attack may be completed either direct, or by a disengagement or by a cutover, or else be preceded by feints which oblige the opponent to parry.
4. **Stop hits in compound attacks:** In a compound attack the opponent has the right to stop-hit; but, in order to be valid, the stop hit must precede the last movement of the attack by one period of fencing time, i.e. the stop hit must arrive before the attacker has started the last movement of the attack itself.

### 9.5. Parry and Riposte

1. The parry - properly carried out - gives the right to riposte; a simple riposte may be direct or indirect, but in order to annul any subsequent movement by the attacker, it must be carried out immediately, *without any hesitation or pause*. However, if the riposte is delayed so that a renewed attack clearly starts before the riposte, then the renewed attack gains priority.

2. Against thrusts, and cuts with the edge, the flat, or the back edge of the blade, the object of the parry is to prevent hits made by the opponent arriving on the valid target; therefore:
3. The parry is properly carried out when, before the completion of the attack, it prevents the arrival of that attack by closing the line in which that attack is to finish.
4. When a parry is properly executed, the attack by the opponent must be declared parried, and judged as such by the Referee, even if, as a result of its flexibility, the tip of the opponent's weapon makes contact with the target.

## **9.6. Priority Assignment in Double Hits**

1. Priority rules are only used in assessing double hits. If there is a delay of a fencing time or more between hits, the fencer who landed first is assessed to have scored.
2. Priority rules are only used when one fencer can be clearly assessed to have made a mistake.

### **9.6.1. *The fencer who is attacked is alone counted as hit:***

1. if he makes a counter-attack on his opponent's simple attack
2. if, instead of parrying, he attempts to avoid the hit and does not succeed in doing so
3. if, after making a successful parry, he makes a momentary pause (delayed riposte) which gives his opponent the right to renew the attack (redoublement, or remise, or reprise)
4. if, during a compound attack, he makes a stop hit without being in time
5. if, having his point 'in line' and being subjected to a beat or a taking of the blade which deflects his blade, he attacks or places his point in line again instead of parrying a direct hit made by his opponent

### **9.6.2. *The fencer who attacks is alone counted as hit:***

1. If he initiated his attack when his opponent had his point 'in line', without deflecting the opponent's weapon. Referees must ensure that a mere contact of the blades is not considered as sufficient to deflect the opponent's blade.
2. If he attempts to find the blade, does not succeed (due to the opponent's avoiding reaction) and continues the attack.
3. If, during a compound attack, he allows his opponent to find the blade, and continues the attack while his opponent ripostes immediately.

4. If, during a compound attack, he bends his arm or makes a momentary pause, during which time the opponent makes a stop hit or an attack while the attacker continues his own attack.
5. If, during a compound attack, he is stop-hit one period of fencing time before he makes his final movement.
6. If he makes a hit by a renewed attack following a parry by his opponent which has been followed by a riposte which is immediate, simple and executed in one period of fencing time without withdrawing the arm.

**9.6.3. *Both fencers are at fault (no points awarded)***

1. Similar conception and execution of the same action by both fencers at once, without either of them taking the initiative sooner than the other.
2. Similar failure to initiate or execute the appropriate actions, of both fencers at the same time, resulting in the loss of priority gained by previous actions, and without any of the fencers taking the initiative sooner than the other afterwards.
3. When both fencers are at fault, NO POINTS are awarded to either fencer.

**9.7. Weapon-Specific Variations**

See individual weapon rules for specific applications and variations of these priority principles:

- [Longsword specific applications](#) - [Sabre specific applications](#)

## A1. GLOSSARY

### A1.1. General terms

1. *Assault* – a friendly fight between two fencers which is commenced and ended up by a qualified referee. At the end of an assault the Referee either awards one or both fencers a point, or awards none, and/or imposes penalties when necessary.
2. *Exchange* – an exchange or handwork is the basic unit of a fight. An exchange starts with the first offensive action and ends up with a hit or with both contestants assuming a distance from which it is impossible to continue in the previous offensive action.
3. *Bout* – a Bout is a series of assaults between two contestants where points awarded for the individual exchanges determine the outcome of a Bout. Only one fencer is declared a winner of a Bout.
4. *Competition* - is a series of multiple Bouts performed with a specific weapon, to declare an overall winner from the contestants.
5. *Tournament* – is a series of Competitions in the weapons announced by the Organising Team.
6. *Fencing time* – is the time required to perform one simple fencing action.
7. *In measure* – is a mutual distance between two fencers in which one or both of them can reach the opponent with an attack.

### A1.2. Fencing actions

1. This section of the rules defines basic fencing actions in terms which are easy to understand for every contestant even though they might practice different schools of fencing and thus use various terminologies. It is stressed that this section in no way replaces a treatise on fencing and is only included in order to help the reader understand the rules.

#### A1.2.1. Offensive actions

1. *Attack* – an attack is the initial offensive action made by extending the arm and continuously threatening the opponent's target, preceding the launching of the lunge or other weapon-specific offensive footwork (preparatory actions and movements of the hands

and weapon that do not continuously threaten the target are not considered as parts of the attack).

1. The action is simple when it is executed in one movement and is
    2. either direct (in the same line)
    3. or indirect (in another line).
  4. The action is compound when it is executed in several movements (e.g. using feints, to provoke the opponent to a defensive action, thus creating a tempo that the attacker can take advantage of).
2. *Riposte* – a riposte is an offensive action of a fencer who parried the attack of their opponent. The riposte may be immediate or delayed, depending on what action takes place and the speed at which it is carried out. Ripostes are:
1. Simple, direct
  2. Direct riposte: a riposte which hits the opponent without leaving the line in which the parry was made.
  3. Riposte along the blade: a riposte which hits the opponent by grazing along the blade after the parry.
  4. Simple, indirect
  5. Riposte by disengagement: a riposte which hits the opponent in the opposite line to that in which the parry was formed (by passing under the opponent's blade if the parry was formed in the high line, and over the blade if the parry was formed in the low line).
  6. Riposte with a cut-over: a riposte which hits the opponent in the opposite line to that in which the parry was formed (the blade always passing over the opponent's point).
  7. Compound, when it is executed in several movements.
3. *The counter-riposte* is the offensive action made by the fencer who has parried the riposte.
4. *Counter-attack* – is an offensive or offensive-defensive action made during the offensive action of the opponent.
1. *Stop-hit* – a counter-attack made into an attack.
  2. *Stop-hit with opposition* – a counter-attack made while closing the line in which the opponent's attack will be completed.
5. *Feint* – a false attack to provoke a reacting parry from the opponent.

6. *Renewed attack* – a subsequent, continuing offensive action after the initial attack.

1. The remise - A simple and immediate offensive action which follows the original attack, without withdrawing the arm, after the opponent has parried or retreated, when the latter has either quit contact with the blade without riposting or has made a riposte which is delayed, indirect or compound.
2. The redoublement - A new action, either simple or compound, made against an opponent who has parried without riposting or who has merely avoided the first action by retreating or displacing the target.
3. The reprise of the attack - A new attack executed immediately after a return to the on-guard position.

7. *Counter-time* - Any action made by the attacker against a stop hit made by his opponent.

#### ***A1.2.2. Defensive actions***

1. *Parry* – a defensive action which blocks the opponent’s weapon from reaching its target.
2. simple, direct, when they are made in the same line as the attack.
3. circular when they are made in the opposite line to that of the attack.
4. *Evasion* – it is an action of the body when a potential target avoids being hit by prolonging the distance or by another movement.
5. The Langort position - a specific position in which the fencer’s sword arm is kept straight and the point of his weapon continually threatens his opponent’s valid target.

## A2. TABLE OF OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

This table is intended to be a summary; it is not a substitute for the full text of the articles concerned, which should be consulted in any case of doubt.

OFFENCE	ART.	PENALTY		
<i>A2.0.1. Non-presentation</i>				
0.1	Non presentation when called by the referee ten minutes before the time indicated for start of pool/bouts of direct elimination		Elimination from the tournament	
0.2	Non presentation on the arena ready to fence when ordered by the referee. Three calls, with one minute intervals.	1st call	2nd call	Elim.

<b>A2.0.2. 1ST GROUP</b>		1st of- fence	2nd of- fence	3rd of- fence and subs.
1.1	Leaving the arena without permission			
1.2	Turning back on opponent			
1.3	Covering/substitution of valid target			
1.4	Interruption of the bout without valid reason			
1.5	Attacking forbidden targets (back of the head, spine, foot, back of the knee). Hit with cross-guard. Attack with the dagger in rapier. Wrestling in rapier.			
1.6	Clothing/equipment nonconforming. Absence of regulation weapon			
1.7	Hitting the arena floor with an uncontrolled action			
1.8	Refusal to obey the referee (including actions before "Fence!" or after "Halt!")	YEL- LOW	RED	RED
1.9	Disorderly fencing *; taking off mask before the Referee calls 'Halt!'; dressing or undressing in the arena			
1.10	Irregular moves in the arena *; throwing the opponent by lifting their both of their feet off the ground *			
1.11	Leaving the arena with both feet without the opponent's interaction			
1.12	Unjustified appeal			
1.13	Hitting with the fists and kicking *			
1.14	Removing the opponent's mask or any other protective equipment. *			
1.15	Losing or dropping the cloak during a rapier bout			

<b>A2.0.3. 2ND GROUP</b>		1st of- fence	2nd of- fence	3rd offence and subs.
2.1	Throwing the weapon *			
2.2	Demanding a break for claimed injury/ cramp unjustified by the doctor	RED	RED	RED
2.3	Absence of equipment control marks *			
2.4	Dangerous, violent or vindictive action. * Attack with the dagger in rapier bouts. *			

  

<b>A2.0.4. 3RD GROUP</b>		1st offence	2nd offence
3.1	Fencer disturbing order when in the arena. In the most serious cases the Referee may award a black card immediately.	RED <sup>4</sup> (even if the fencer at fault has already received a Red Card as a result of offenses in the 1st or 2nd groups)	BLACK <sup>1</sup> (only after the fencer has committed another offence in this third group.)
3.2	Dishonest fencing *	RED	
3.3	Any person not in arena disturbing order. In the most serious cases the Referee may award a black card immediately.	YELLOW <sup>4</sup> (valid for the whole of the competition)	BLACK <sup>3</sup>
	Offence against sportsmanship * - In the most serious cases the Referee may award a black card immediately.	YELLOW	BLACK <sup>1 or 2</sup>

<b>A2.0.5. 4TH GROUP</b>		1st of- fence
4.1	Deliberate brutality. Throwing the opponent onto their head *. Neck-wrenching and small-joint manipulation techniques. * Failing to stop dangerous submission holds before full application (both competitors may be penalised, the victim as well if he/she did not submit). * Throwing the dagger at the opponent in rapier bouts *	
4.2	Causing injury or threat of injury with equipment non-conforming to the Rules without or with imitated / transferred weapon control marks.	BLACK
4.3	Offence against sportsmanship	
4.4	Refusal of a fencer to fence another competitor properly entered	
4.5	Profiting from collusion, favouring an opponent	

**A2.0.6. EXPLANATIONS**

*	Annuling of any hit scored by the competitor at fault
YELLOW CARD	Warning valid for the bout. If a competitor commits an offence of the 1st group after having been penalized with a RED CARD, for whatever reason, he/she receives a further RED CARD.
RED CARD	Penalty hit
BLACK CARD	Exclusion from the competition, suspension from the remainder of the tournament. Possible suspension from future events organised by the Federation or the Organiser. A competitor only receives a BLACK CARD in the 3rd group if the offender previously committed an offence in this Third Group (demonstrated by a RED CARD).  1. Exclusion from competition 2. Exclusion from tournament 3. Expulsion from venue 4. In serious cases, the referee may exclude/expel immediately

# CHANGE LOG

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Recent changes to the rulebook:

COMMIT	DATE	DESCRIPTION
c2478b2	2025-08-06	Integrate sabre rules into FEBUS rulebook
4ca6748	2025-04-28	Rapier: Adding priority for thrusts vs. cuts
3663651	2019-10-11	stiffness increased: has to be discussed later. Tyrnhaw 2019
a4618e2	2019-10-10	stiffness increased: has to be discussed later.
13f78ba	2019-10-10	stiffness increased: has to be discussed later.
75313af	2019-10-09	added overall length for dagger in rapier category
5974793	2019-10-07	inconsistent period durations for elims
a5b40c2	2019-10-07	- missing shield diameter added to 40cm - removing some penalties (pulling blade)
39b2b64	2019-10-06	Merge pull request #8 from kohutovic/pre-release-corrections-squashe
47bd02a	2019-10-06	missing point 6.