

IFG Spring Fling: Tournament of Roses Ruleset

Fencer Version

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Tournament Objectives:

Ruleset Focus:

- The aim of this ruleset is to encourage fencers to avoid getting hit, be it by doubles, afterblows, or any other action. To this end, the ruleset is intended to punish sloppy fencing and reward fencers who defeat their opponents with techniques that keep them safe.

Inclusion and Participation Requirements:

- The IFG Spring Fling: Tournament of Roses tournament intends to act as a testing ground for fencers to test their skill, technique and fencing ability against noncompliant opponents in the style of the European fencing masters of the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries.
- The tournament staff reserves the right to decide on a case by case basis whether a fencer registered for any given tournament may participate.
- The tournament staff may also disqualify and expel any given fencer from the tournament should the need arise.
- These rules will be used for both the longsword and sword and buckler tournaments at the IFG Spring Fling: Tournament of Roses.
- Our aim is for the tournament to be a space inclusive to all people, regardless of race, gender, ability or sexual orientation. Discrimination has no place here.
- Safety is a primary goal of the tournament, and our focus on safety and injury avoidance comes before our focus on other aspects of the event.

Fencer's Code of Conduct:

- All fencers must conduct themselves in a manner that respects all parties present at the tournament. All fencers must refrain from loud exclamations, swearing, or any other form of potentially distracting behavior while they are associated with the tournament. All fencers must operate with the intent to not injure themselves or their opponents, and respect the limitations of HEMA gear in protection. If they wish to address the director during a match for any reason other than to announce a self call, they must use their second as a route to communication with the director.

Required Gear List:

- **A set of footwear that is non marking, low profile tread. Boots of any kind and shoes with hard edged soles are prohibited. If you have questions, contact tournament staff. This is non-negotiable due to venue requirements.**
- A set of fencing weapons appropriate for the tournament entered. Please contact event staff and refer to the published lists of event specific allowed weapons.
- A mask designed for HEMA fencing that is free of dents, deformations or other structural flaws
- Protection for the back of the head and neck.
- A padded fencing jacket built to withstand 350 Newtons of puncturing force, and of sufficient padding to mitigate any serious injury caused by a strike with an appropriate fencing weapon to the covered area.
- A gorget designed for hema that will intercept any strikes or thrusts that slide between the fencing jacket and mask.
- Hard elbow protection, covering three points of articulation on the elbow.
- Gloves for both hands designed to protect from and withstand strikes made by appropriate fencing weapons, that protect the hands and wrists.
- A hard cup for fencers with testicles.
- A hard breast protector for fencers with breasts.
- Hard knee and shin protection.
- Pants or other fabric that completely covers the upper legs and waist upwards from the knee protection.
- All gear must fit well and be in good working order and will be inspected by tournament staff prior to fencing. Any modification, replacement or removal of gear after the gear check must be approved by tournament staff.

Scoring:

A brief note on the nature of scoring in this tournament:

- Unlike many tournaments, advancement into the elimination rounds of this event will be determined not by total number of wins, but rather by the average number of points scored against a fencer (henceforth known as “wounds”) in each match fought in pools. Therefore, to advance, it is incumbent upon all fencers to avoid receiving wounds. For more information, see the “structure of the tournament” section.

Scoring actions:

- Any martial strike a fencer receives from the shoulder seam to the tip of the fingers shall be scored as one wound.
- Any martial strike a fencer receives from the top of the ankle to the point of the hip shall be scored as one wound.
- Any martial strike a fencer receives from the point of the hip to the top of the clavicle (excluding the arms) shall be scored as two wounds.
- Any martial strike a fencer receives from the top of the clavicle upwards (known as the “upper opening”) shall be scored as two wounds.
- A slicing cut a fencer receives, made with the sword firmly pressed into the target and traveling at least half the length of the blade or in a way that significantly moves the fencer shall be scored as one wound.
- A pommel strike a fencer receives made with at least six inches of motion to the front or top of the mask shall be scored as one wound. Such a strike may be made while holding the sword with both one or two hands.
- A buckler strike a fencer receives, made with at least six inches of motion to the front of the mask, shall be scored as one wound. Such a strike must be made with the buckler’s boss, and may not be struck with the buckler’s edge.
- Any cut or thrust to the upper opening or body in which a fencer’s sword is controlled by any of their opponent’s weapons (sword or potentially buckler) or by grapple in such a way that the weapon’s motion is inhibited for a tempo shall be scored as four wounds.
- Any exchange with a double hit or afterblow may not be awarded control.
- A controlled grapple in which a fencer has a dominant position established on them by their opponent before the end of a period of five seconds (called by the director) shall be scored as four wounds.
 - The determination on dominant position shall be decided at the discretion of the judging team at the **end** of the five second period. Examples include: grapples that result in the opponent being forced into a compromised body position, losing control of their sword in a way that the fencer can take advantage of, wrapping of arms, etc.
- Ring outs are not a scoring action.

What is a martial strike?

- Martial strikes may include cuts or thrusts. **Scoring actions include but are not limited to martial strikes; such actions as pommel strikes, grapples and slices have their own rules about martiality** (see the scoring actions section).
- A martial cut is a cut that has been made with at least 45 degrees of rotation, good edge alignment and with force sufficient to cause a serious wound, should the target be unarmored and should the weapon be sharp.

- A martial thrust is a thrust that has traveled forward at speed at least two feet before making contact with the target, with force sufficient to puncture should the target be unarmored and should the weapon's tip be sharp. A thrust may also be martial if the target and sword make contact after two feet of movement together.
- Decisions on a strike's martiality shall be made at the discretion of the judging team.
- One handed strikes are allowed but are subject to all conditions regarding quality.
- All martial strikes may be assessed to determine excessive force, with an emphasis on one handed strikes due to their inherent lack of control.

Scoring Exchanges:

- Any grapple will be allowed to continue for five seconds, with the director audibly counting the seconds. At the end of the five seconds, the director will call "halt!" If any scoring actions were seen during the five seconds, the judges will call "point!" If not, the director will resume the match.
- When a judge determines a scoring action has been made, they will loudly call "point!" The ring director will wait one second, and then loudly call "halt!" **The fencers must stop fencing at the call of "halt!" not the call of "point!"** The timekeeper will halt the clock at the call of "halt!"
- When a fencer determines a scoring action has been made on them that was not called by the judges, they will loudly call "point!" The ring director will call "halt!" immediately.
- Either fencer may self call a hit in ONLY the following ways:
 - A fencer may only call a hit during active fencing when they were the one hit.
 - A fencer may rule that they were hit when the judges rule no hit had been made.
 - A fencer may rule that a hit they struck was made without quality or that they did not hit at all.
- The ring director will have the final say as to whether to accept the fencer's judgment.
- Should a fencer self call a hit, they must also announce the target of the hit to determine scoring.
- The fencers must return to their side of the ring at the call of "halt!"
- If one of the judges called "point!", the director will then ask all judges to indicate whether they saw contact in the following manner:
 - Each judge will indicate the fencer that struck the hit using the correspondingly colored baton held outwards towards said fencer.
 - If a judge did not see a hit, they will hold their batons downward in an x.

- Double hits occur when both fencers strike each other at nearly the same time. Judges will indicate a double hit by pointing their batons outward at both fencers.
- Afterblows are differentiated from double hits in that they do not occur at nearly the same time, but rather one hit is made distinctly after the other. Afterblows cannot occur after the call of “halt!” has been made by the director. Judges will indicate an afterblow by pointing their baton at the fencer that struck their hit first, and their other baton upwards.
- After the judges determine whether a hit has occurred, the director will instruct the judges to indicate the score:
 - The judges should score the highest scoring target that was struck prior to any afterblows or the director’s call of “halt!”.
 - Judges will keep the baton used to indicate who struck the hit in the same position for scoring, and indicate score using the other baton.
 - A baton held to a judge’s arm indicates one wound (used for arm hits, leg hits, slices and pommel strikes).
 - A baton held to a judge’s upper chest indicates two wounds (used for head and body hits).
 - Both batons held by a judge downward in an x indicates no scoring action, either due to lack of hit or lack of quality.
 - Moving the off hand baton in a circular motion above the head of a judge indicates control wounds should be added, for controlled thrusts, cuts and grapples. Control points may not be awarded in the case of a double hit or afterblow.
 - A judge will remain with both batons held outwards to indicate a double hit. Double hits do not change the wound totals, however, a match will end and both fencers will receive the maximum number of wounds if three double hits occur in one match.
 - A judge will need to use their other baton to indicate score during an afterblow. An afterblow will score the first hit normally and add one wound to the total of the fencer struck with the afterblow.
- The director will settle disagreement between judges based on these criteria:
 - If there is no disagreement on whether a type of hit has occurred or a majority of judges are in agreement, the director will determine contact based on the majority opinion.
 - In the event that the judges disagree evenly, the director will act as a tiebreaker to determine how contact was made. The director may also wash the exchange if the action is unclear.
 - In the event that the judges reach an agreement that wounds should be given to one fencer but differ on the target, the director will act as the tiebreaker to determine wounds. If the director is

unsure about the target, they will use the lowest wound value target to determine value.

- After making a determination of wounds scored, the director will announce the value of wounds received using the following wording: "Red/Blue fencer suffers 1/2/4 wounds!"
- The scorekeeper will then record the wounds privately on the score sheet.
- Once all potential scoring actions have been resolved, the director will resume the match with a call of "fence!" and the timekeeper will resume the clock.

Structure of the Tournament:

Pool Match Composition:

- Competitors shall be divided as evenly as possible into pools of four, five or six fencers.
- Each fencer will fence every other fencer in their pool for one match.
- Prior to the beginning of each pool, the event organizers shall determine the order of matches, and ensure that each fencer fences in as few back to back matches as possible.
- Every match will include one ring director and three judges (each using one red baton and one blue baton), as well as a medic (who may be managing multiple rings), timekeeper, and scorekeeper.

Round Protocol:

- The rules shall be carried out in the pools phase the same way as in all subsequent phases, unless noted differently by the event staff or ruleset.
- Each fencer will begin the match on opposing sides of the ring.
- The match will begin with the ring director ordering the fencers to come to the center of the ring to touch the flats of their weapons together, after which the fencers will return to their sides of the ring.
- The ring director will look to the scorer and timekeeper, and ask if they are ready, not continuing until a verbal affirmation. They will then ask the judges, and lastly both competitors.
- The ring director will then motion for the match to begin, accompanied with the command "fence!" The fencers must begin fencing immediately at this command.
- The ring director will call "halt!" as necessary to stop the motion of the fencers to issue points, warnings, or any other needed commands.

Time and End Criteria:

- Each match will be fought to a limit of 9 wounds, or a lead of 6 wounds. Should one fencer reach this threshold, the match will end. A fencer cannot receive more than 9 wounds in a match.
- Should a fencer lose based on the “lead of 6 wounds” criteria, they will be considered to have received 9 wounds.
- After three double hits in a match, the match will end and both fencers will be considered to have received 9 wounds.
- Each match will be fought to a time limit of 300 seconds (5 minutes), counting cumulatively from when the ring director issues a “fence!” command, until a “halt!” command. The clock stops when fencing is not in progress.
- Should neither fencer reach the wound limit in the 300 second period, both fencers will be considered to have received 9 wounds in the match.
- Should a match end before any of these criteria have been met, the number of wounds each fencer will be considered to have received for the match will be equal to the number of wounds they have received in the match up to that point.

Elimination Brackets:

- **Fencers shall be seeded based on the average number of wounds scored on them while in the pools, with the lowest average being the top seed.**
 - In the event of a tie, the tiebreak criteria are as follows:
 - 1: Matches won.
 - 2: Total number of control points awarded. (higher wins)
 - 3: Total number of warnings received. (lower wins)
 - 4: Random measure. (such as a coin flip)
- The event staff will determine the manner in which fencers advance.
- In elimination brackets, fencers will begin the next match with the total of their doubles (but not afterblows) from the previous elimination bracket matches added to their wounds. In other words, if four doubles occurred in a fencer’s previous matches, the fencer will begin the match with four wounds. If both fencers have received doubles in their previous matches, the fencer with the higher number of doubles will have the sum of their opponent’s doubles subtracted from their total, and the fencer with the lower number of doubles will begin as normal. (In other words, if fencer A had four doubles against them and fencer B had three, fencer A would start with one wound and fencer B would start at 0 wounds).
- When a fencer reaches the wound threshold before their opponent in an elimination bracket match, they are eliminated from the tournament.

Finals and Semifinals:

- As with the elimination brackets, finals fencers will begin the next match with the sum of their doubles from previous elimination bracket matches added to their wound totals.
- The semifinals and finals matches will have a 360 second (6 minute) time limit and will be fought to 12 wounds. A 30 second break will occur 180 seconds (3 minutes) through the match. In the event that time expires and each fencer has the same amount of wounds, sudden death occurs, where the first scoring action wins.
- All rules for sudden death from the eliminations phase apply to the finals and semifinals matches.
- After the two semifinals matches, the two winners will move on to the first place/second place finals match, while the two losers will move on to the third place/fourth place finals match.

Penalties/Disallowed Actions

Penalties System:

- The director may give penalties as they see fit, and are not limited to giving penalties for actions specifically mentioned in the restricted areas/disallowed actions list. However, directors will use the restricted areas/disallowed actions list as a framework to inform their issuance.
- Not all warnings are created equal, and some warnings may result in more severe penalties than others.
- The primary goal of warnings is to keep fencers safe. In an effort to avoid injury, the director may issue warnings more frequently or of more severity if continuous dangerous behavior is noted.
- A fencer's second is considered an extension of the fencer, and the director may award penalties based on the actions of their second.

Restricted Areas/Disallowed Actions:

- The following are restricted areas that are not allowed to be struck:
 - From the top of the ankle downward.
 - The back of the head and neck.
 - Pommel strikes to any target except the front or top of the mask.
 - The spine, all the way down to the tailbone, and 6 inches on each side of the spine.
- Takedowns are not allowed.
- Arm bars, joint locks, chokes or any grapples that may cause harm to fencers are not allowed.
- Buckler strikes made with the edge of the buckler are not allowed.
- Any strikes made with excessive force are not allowed.

- Penalties may also be issued for the following:
 - Strikes after a halt has been called.
 - Repeated small offenses.
 - Arguing with the director.
 - Retaliation after a disallowed action.
 - Breaches of the code of conduct.
 - Any other actions the director deems worthy of a warning.

Tiers of Penalization:

- Tier one (Yellow Card):
 - Verbal warning, no consequence.
 - Actions that may result in a yellow card are those deemed to be breaches of the warnings guidelines that are not dangerous or excessive. Multiple yellow cards for the same offense may result in a red card.
- Tier two (Red Card):
 - Addition of three wounds scored on the offending fencer.
 - Actions that may result in a red card are repeated yellow card actions (throughout a single match) or those that are potentially dangerous or excessive.
- Tier three (Black Card):
 - Forfeiture of match, expulsion from the tournament.
 - Actions that may result in a black card are repeated red card actions (throughout the tournament), any actions that demonstrate a disregard for the code of conduct, or actions that injure an opponent.