

Nordic Rules

## Conduct of bouts

### 1. General

The fencers participate at their own risk and discretion as long as they follow the spirit of the tournament rules. Each bout should maintain a polite quality and instructions from tournament officials respected.

The fencers will receive red and blue armbands before the bout and will be known by their colours during it.

The fencers will start the bout in their corners. The bout begins when the referee calls “fence”. When the referee calls “break”, the fencers must separate and return to their corners, until the referee calls “fence” again.

Bouts are fought to 8 points. If the bout time runs out the fencer in the lead will be declared the winner.

If the score is equal when the bout ends, the bout is a draw. In case of a bout ending in a draw during the elimination round the bout will continue in a sudden death.

A sudden death is fought one exchange at a time until one fencer scores at least one point more than the other fencer in an exchange.

### 2. Bout time

A bout is fought for 3 minutes or until one fencer has reached the score cap.

Timekeeping is not paused during the scoring; in case there is a longer break in the bout for any reason, the referee will call a time-out.

Ten seconds before the time limit is reached the table will call “Last exchange!”. That exchange will be allowed to be run to its end, as long as the fencers are actively trying to fence. If the exchange becomes too passive, the referee will break it up, ending the bout.

After this the table will announce the score to the referee, who will officially announce the winner of the match and the final score.

### 3. Scoring

The following targets are illegal, and are worth no points:

- Back of the head
- Spine
- Groin
- Back of the knee

- Achilles tendon
- Toes

If the point limit is reached, the table will call “match”, and the referee will end the match. After this the table will announce the score to the referee, who will officially announce the winner of the match and the final score.

The maximum score for a hit is 2 points.

### **3.1 Scoring**

Only attacks with the edge, point, pommel, and sabre guard score points. Strikes with the crossguard are not allowed. All strikes must be executed in a controlled fashion.

- A strike to the head above the level of the chin is worth 2 points in sabre and longsword, and 1 point in rapier and dagger
- A thrust to the torso or the head is worth 2 points
- All other legal targets and pommel strikes, including head cuts and dagger in rapier & dagger, are worth 1 point
- Any strike made outside grappling with only one hand holding the sword is worth 1 point, no matter what target is hit (only applicable for longsword)

At the first hit, a judge will call “point”. After giving time for an after-blow, the referee will call “break”. When “break” is called, the fencers must cease attacking, separate, and return to their corners. After this, the referee will call “judges”. Each judge will indicate the highest scoring blow for each fencer that happened within one tempo of the initial hit. This means that if the fencer who struck first can hit a higher-scoring target within the after-blow window, this hit is valid.

The semaphore is as follows:

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Hit on 2-point target: | Judge holds the flag vertically up                     |
| Hit on 1-point target: | Judge holds the flag horizontally sideways             |
| No hit:                | Judge holds the flag low, crossed in front of the body |

Each fencer will score as follows:

- If two judges agree on the score, the fencer scores that amount.
- If two judges agree on hit, but disagree on the score, the lower score is awarded.
- If two judges are showing two points, two points are awarded, no matter what the other judges are showing. (2-2-1-1 is 2)
- The referee announces the points for both fencers to the scorekeeper. The scorekeeper then subtracts the lower score from the higher score and announces the final score.

To clarify; after-blows and simultaneous hits are treated the same and both can score regardless of who struck first. The hits from both fencers are scored

independently by the judges; the scorekeeper is responsible for calculating the final score of the exchange.

**Incidental strikes, cuts with questionable edge alignment, very light cuts with the point and cuts made with a very small arc does not score. It is up to the fencers to demonstrate “good” hits.**

Only indicating attacks with sword or body due to safety reasons will still score, for example indicating a strike to the back of the head during a grappling situation.

### 3.3 Scoring in grappling

In a grappling situation, a fencer can score by striking with the weapon(s) or by specific grappling actions. These special situations are scored by the referee alone; the judges only score strikes with the sword. The referee will halt the action in case of a judge calling “point”, if there is a scoring grappling technique, if the referee thinks there is a safety issue or if the grappling is at stalemate (ca 5 seconds without anything happening)

Grabbing and maintaining a hold on a stationary sword is allowed.

The following techniques score in grappling:

- If a fencer pushes both feet of their opponent outside the mat and remains inside with at least one foot. Likewise, if a fencer accidentally leaves the mat with both feet, their opponent is awarded **1 point**. Strikes with the sword by a fencer outside the arena do not score, while strikes with the sword against a fencer outside the arena do score as normal
- If a fencer loses their weapon for any reason, and grappling distance is broken, their opponent will score **2 points**.
- Controlled takedowns that place any other part of a fencer but their feet on the ground, the fencer that remains standing scores **2 points**. If both fencers go to the ground, but one fencer is in a clearly dominant position, the dominant fencer is awarded **1 point**. Likewise, if a fencer falls outside grappling distance, their opponent will score two points.
- Kicking or punching legal target areas is allowed but will not score.
- **Uncontrolled and dangerous throws or takedowns are disallowed and will be penalized. This includes but is not limited to takedowns or throws that place one fencer in the ground head first, takedowns where one fencer lands outside the mat, and slams where a fencer is lifted up before being thrown to the ground.**

## 5. Errors and penalties

Each bout should be conducted in a safe and respectful manor. The penalties for errors against these guidelines are:

- Warning
- Penalty hit
- Disqualification
- Loss of match points

The referee will rule according to the tables below.

<b>Format of the bout</b>	<b>First time</b>	<b>Second and following times</b>
Not present during bout call	Warning	Penalty hit
Non regulatory equipment	Warning	Penalty hit
Leave the mat without permission	Warning	Penalty hit
Addressing the referee before the final score for the exchange is announced	Warning	Penalty hit
Unwarranted suspension of the bout	Warning	Penalty hit
Request of suspension of the bout due to injury that is not accepted	Penalty hit	Penalty hit

<b>Safety</b>	<b>First time</b>	<b>Second and following times</b>
Turn the back to the opponent before the referee called “break”	Warning	Penalty hit
Take the mask off before the referee called “break”	Warning	Penalty hit
Striking after the referee called “break”	Warning	Penalty hit
Uncontrolled fencing	Warning	Penalty hit
Violent, dangerous or vindictive action	Penalty hit	Penalty hit
Intentional brutality	Disqualification	

<b>Sportsmanship</b>	<b>First time</b>	<b>Second and following times</b>
Refusal to obey the referee	Warning	Penalty hit
Refusal to salute the opponent before the bout	Warning	Disqualification
Refusal to salute the opponent after the bout	Warning	Disqualification
Refusal to face contestant that is duly registered	Warning	Disqualification
Person that interferes with the order on the mat	Warning	Disqualification
To favour the opponent or benefit from unauthorized agreements	Disqualification	
Violation against sportsman spirit	Disqualification	

A warning is valid for the bout at hand. If a fencer commits an error that should result in a warning after already have received a warning the opponent receives 1 point regardless of which the second error is.

Each warning is recorded in the bout protocol.

If a fencer, second or member of the audience is disqualified he or she must leave the premises immediately.

Violation against the sportsman spirit includes, but is not limited to, using foul language, throwing equipment and threatening tournament officials.

In cases where an offense cannot be properly addressed by the referee during the bout it is possible for the referee or any of the fencers to make an appeal to the tournament manager. The manager has the authority to remove match points from a fencer for a violation that hasn't been fully addressed during the bout.

## **7. Injuries**

If a fencer is injured during the bout, the referee will call a time-out and the medical staff will examine the fencer. If the medical staff clears the fencer to continue, and the fencer wishes to do so, the bout can proceed.

If the bout cannot continue within 3 minutes the injured fencer will have forfeited the bout.a

## **8. Equipment failure**

The referee will call a time-out when equipment being broken or displaced is noticed. If a fencer or judge notices an equipment failure, they should point it out to the referee.

If a piece of personal protective gear is broken, the fencer has 3 minutes to find a replacement. If this is not possible the fencer will have forfeited the bout.

# Structure of tournament

## 1. Organizational hierarchy

The organizational hierarchy of the tournament consists of multiple elements that all play a vital part in getting such a large undertaking to run smoothly:

- Tournament manager. The person in charge of the tournament and for making all final decisions during the execution of the tournament. Will be available during the tournament.
- Referee. The person responsible for running all bouts on one mat. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, starting/stopping a bout, announcing score, clearing up misunderstandings, giving out warnings and disqualifications.
- Judges. A group of judges judge all exchanges in a bout and award points based on their impression of what happened during each exchange.
- Secretariat. Announce bouts, keeping time as well as score and making sure fencers are presented with red and blue armbands.

In addition to the people filling these roles there are three vital components to all tournaments: fencers, seconds (coaches) and audience. For the purposes of this text, “fencers” and “seconds” refers only to the two fencers and up to two seconds who are involved in a bout. All others are considered members of the audience.

In order for a tournament to run as efficiently and correctly as possible, it is important to establish proper communications channels between all the elements involved.

If the fencers or the seconds have any concerns during a bout, they can address the *referee* by calling a time-out.

Members of the audience can direct their questions and comments to the *tournament manager*. The tournament manager can address the referee between exchanges should the issue warrant attention during the bout. Under no circumstances are members of the audience to address anyone involved in the ongoing bout.

Anyone who has a question, complaint or comment between bouts is to direct their issue to the *tournament manager*.

## 2. Pool round

The fencers will be seeded and split into pools.

The size of the pools depends on the number of participants. The pools will only be final after registration on the day of the tournament.

Each fencer will have one bout with all the other fencers in their pool. The result from the bout will be scored as followed:

- Win - 9 match points
- Draw - 6 match points
- Loss - 3 match points

After the pool rounds, all the fencers are ranked, based on the following criteria:

1. Highest match point index; number of match points divided with number of bouts fought
2. Highest victory index; number of bouts won divided with number of bouts fought
3. Highest point index; gained points minus the opponents' points, divided with number of bouts fought
4. Lowest received index; number of opponents' points divided with number of bouts fought

The actual number of points will be used.

If two fencers are still ranked the same their internal bout result decides who will rank higher. If such a result does not exist their internal order in the ranking is decided by drawing of lots.

During the pool round the fencers in the current pool must remain in the designated area with their equipment on.

If a fencer forfeits a bout, the result for that bout will be recorded as a victory for the opponent with the relevant maximum points (8) to 0 points. This applies regardless of the current score at the time of the forfeit. The winner gains 9 match points and the loser 0.

If a fencer withdraws from the tournament or is disqualified during the pool round, that pool will be handled as if the fencer never participated in the tournament. This applies regardless of number of fought bouts in the pool.

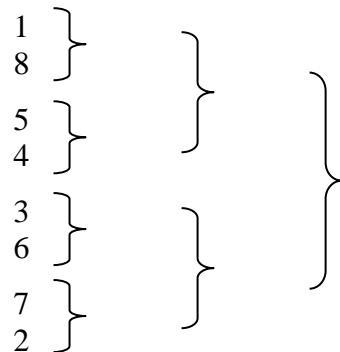
**Note that depending on the amount of registrations to any single tournament, Swiss pairs may be used before the elimination rounds instead of pools.**

### 3. Elimination rounds

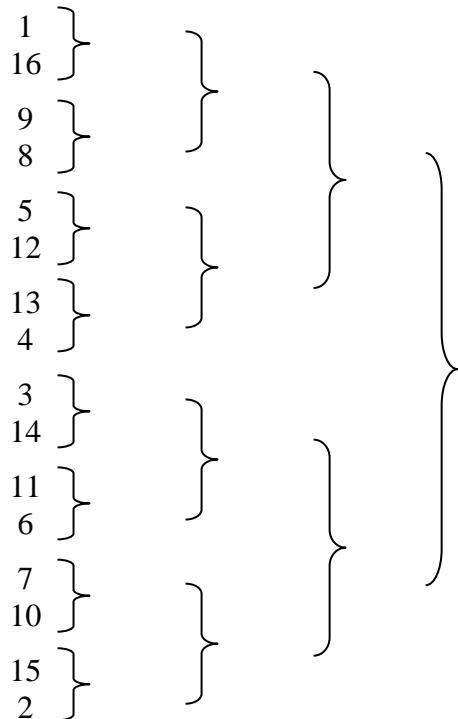
After the pool round the tournament moves on to the elimination rounds where each fencer will continue to fight bouts until they suffer a defeat.

The elimination rounds start with the highest ranking fencer meeting the lowest ranking fencer that made it to the first elimination round according to the examples below:

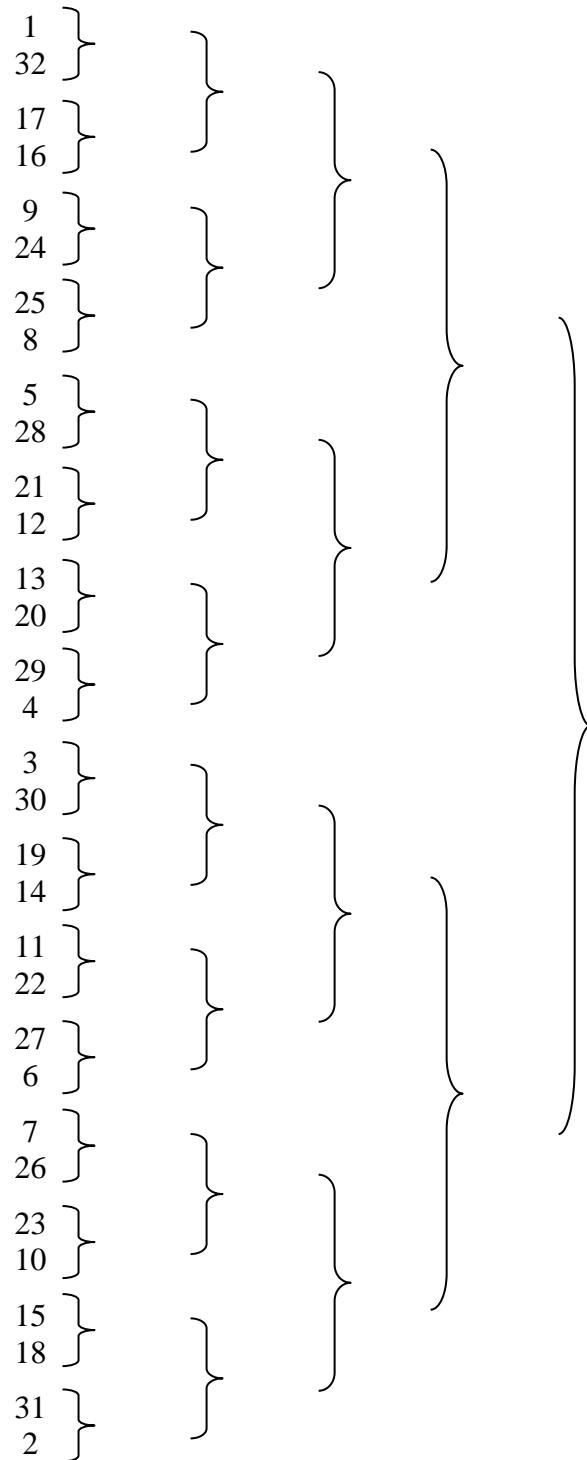
Ranking after pool round, 8 fencers



Ranking after pool round, 16 fencers



Ranking after pool round, 32 fencers



The number of fencers advancing to the elimination rounds will be decided based on the number of the participants. It is also possible that the highest-ranking fencers will fight one elimination round less than the rest. This depends on the number of participants and will be announced at the same time as the pools.

If a fencer who has advanced to the eliminations withdraws from the tournament or is disqualified, the fencer will be considered to lose the forthcoming bout, resulting in a walk-over for the opponent.

#### **4. Fight for third and first places**

The fights for third and first places in the tournament will be decided by the best of three bouts with a 1-minute break in between. Every single bout will be conducted as a bout in the pool rounds.

Once a fencer wins two bouts, or wins one bout and has two draws, the fight is won. In case the bout is a draw after 3 rounds, the bout goes to sudden death, with the first fencer scoring at least one point winning the bout.

## Equipment requirements

### 1. Protection

Fencers are themselves responsible that the equipment they use on the mat is functional and meets tournament requirements. This does not apply to the swords since these are provided by the tournament.

The equipment checks that take place during the tournament are only to help the organizer to monitor the compliance to the regulations and aid fencers to comply with the same. Equipment checks may not be invoked to eliminate fencers' responsibility in the case of a violation of requirements.

All equipment must be whole, clean and adequate for the tournament. **Fencers are to dress professionally and in a manner appropriate to a serious tournament.** Loose sweat pants, tatty trousers or similar are inappropriate. Clothes must overlap: so, skin must not be exposed at any time. Breeches are therefore highly recommended. No loose equipment, like suspenders, scarves or other clothing that might tangle or fall off will be allowed.

Seconds are to be dressed in a professional way, preferably in club clothing or jacket and dress shirt. However, it is permitted for fencers in gear to coach other fencers.

The following equipment is mandatory for all fencers:

- Mask
- Throat guard
- Protective jacket
- Gloves
- Elbow and knee guards
- Shin guards
- Shoes
- Athletic cup (men only)
- Chest protector (Rapier & dagger only)

Use of additional protective gear is allowed.

Metal protection, aside from the mask mesh, is not permitted.

No bare skin may be exposed, except for the palms of the hands, when the fencer stands in any guard.

**Throat guards, athletic cup and chest protectors are to be worn under the outermost layer of clothing.**

## 1.1. Mask

The mask must be in good condition, with no tears or large dents. The mask must fit the fencer; a mask that comes off too easily will be disallowed.

The mask must include a protection for the back of the head.

## 1.2 Throat guard

The throat guard must be reasonably rigid and constructed so that it will stop a thrust from a broken blade.

## 1.3 Protective jacket and pants

The protective jacket must be reasonably padded and constructed so that it will stop a thrust from a broken blade. Jackets with armpit holes or jackets that are open in the front are not allowed.

The SPES AP fencing jacket or ARCEM HEMA jacket from Black Armoury is recommended for longsword or sabre.

For rapier a light jacket is enough.

The jacket must be tested for at least 350 N penetration protection. The penetration protection is not required for the back of the jacket and regions covered by gloves. It is allowed to wear an unclassified jacket if wearing a long-sleeved 350 N (or more) plastron underneath. The jacket must not rise above the trousers so that the jacket does not protect the torso.

The fencer must also wear pants (below the knee) tested for at least 350 N penetration protection and with a high waist.

## 1.4 Gloves

Gloves must protect all fingers, the back of the hand and the wrist.

For longsword and sabre, Sparring Gloves, SPES Lobster or Koning gloves are recommended.

For rapier we recommend the PBT coach epee or sabre, or SPES light gloves.

## 1.5 Elbow and knee guards

Elbow and knee guards must also protect the side of the joint and should not displace too easily.

## 1.6 Shin guards

Shin guards must protect the shinbone from the knee guard down, more or less, all the way to the foot.

## 1.7 Shoes

Shoes must enclose all toes. Hardened (such as steel) soles or caps are not allowed.

## 1.8 Athletic cup

The athletic cup must be reasonably rigid and may be metal.

## 1.9 Chest protector

The chest protector must be rigid enough to protect in case of a blade break.

## Weapons

Weapons for longsword and sabre are supplied by the tournament. For rapier the fencers are to bring their own.

Rapiers must be a maximum of 45" / 114.5 cm blade length from cross-piece to tip, and must be diamond section or similar. Epée blades or similar are prohibited. Darkwood square 'rapier foils' are prohibited. All blades must be flexible, blunt, rounded and tipped or nail-tipped. 'Rapiers' or sideswords used for Meyer or Bolognese styles are inappropriate.

Daggers must be a maximum of 18" / 46 cm in blade length from cross-piece to tip. Blades must be flexible, blunt, rounded and tipped or nail-tipped. Hanwei dagger blades are prohibited.

All equipment must be free from rust and be serviceable.

Regardless of whatever safety certification the weapons may have received, tournament staff reserves the right to refuse any equipment which is deemed unsafe or unsuitable for tournament use.