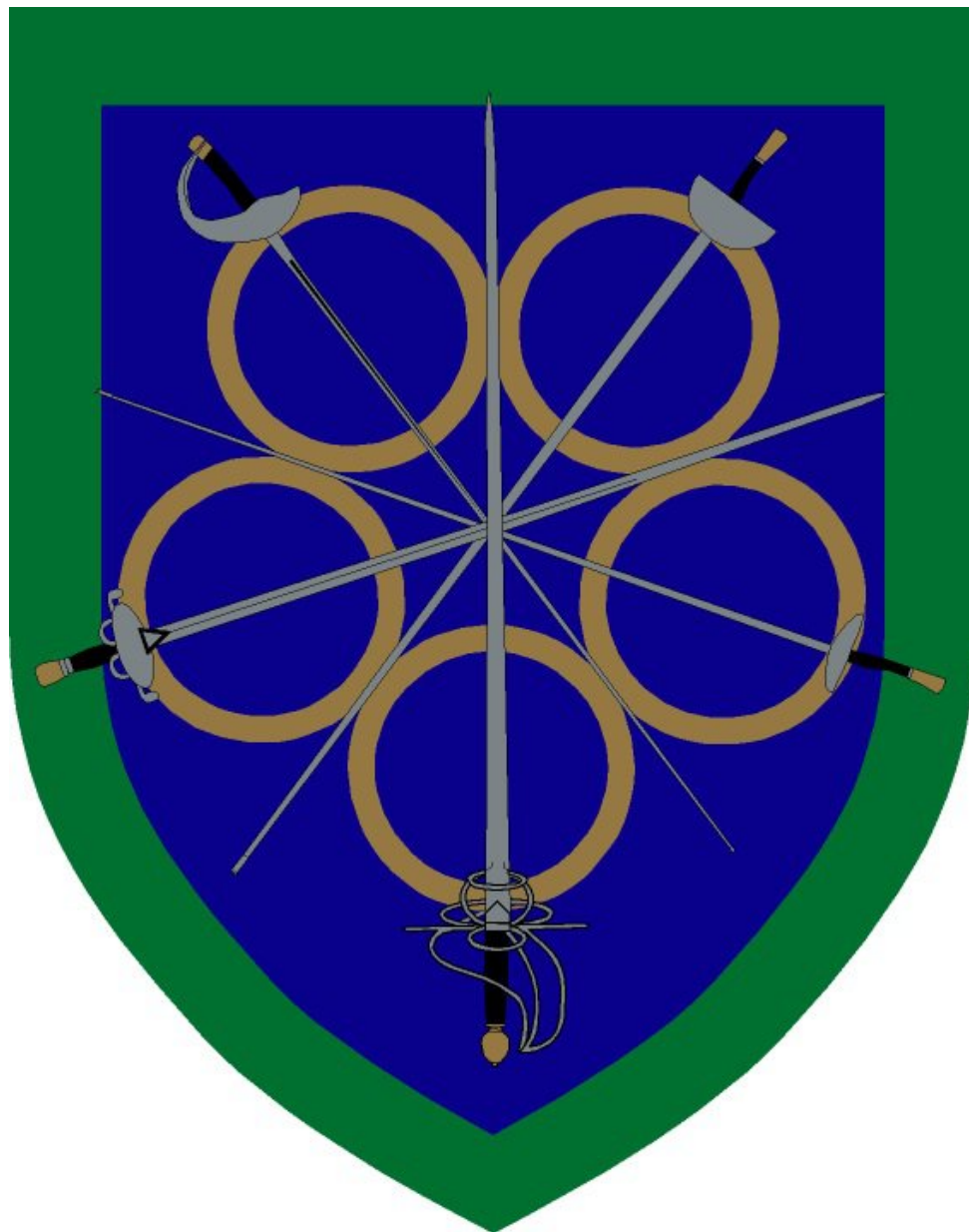


# Five Rings Fencing Historical Fencing Tournament 2021 Rules



The purpose of this tournament is first and foremost fun. The goals and the rules are to promote a style of historical fencing that the club feels is accurate to historical duelling, and fairness. All rules are subject to change.

**Events:**

Military/ duelling saber, small/courtsword, Rapier, and Long sword.

**Date:**

Saber, small sword, and rapier will be held on Saturday September the 23<sup>rd</sup> and longsword will be held on the following day Sunday September the 24<sup>th</sup>. Both days check in at 9:00 am

**Registration:**

Fees are \$30 for a single weapon, \$40 to fence all weapons.

**Location:**

Indian Trail Middle School, 1440 E. 151st, Olathe Ks. The side entrance next to the pool.

**Gear:**

**Protective gear**

Always remember the protective gear is for your safety.

The following items are mandatorily required;

- A fencing or Hema level jacket,
- Fencing Mask
- Back of head cover is mandatory in Longsword. Back cover not required but HIGHLY encouraged in rapier, saber, and smallsword.
- Gloves for both hands. For rapier, saber, and smallsword it is recommended your gloves provide extra protection, either by being padded or having hard armoring. However simple fencing or leaver gloves will be allowed. For longsword, you must have gloves for the level of hits expected in longsword. These will be inspected at the tournament. Red dragon gloves and anything with less protection will not be permitted.
- athletic cup for men.
- Chest protection for women.
- No bare skin may be exposed for combatants while participating.

The following items are not mandatory but HIGHLY encouraged;

- Elbow and knee pads,
- additional padding for thighs and torso,
- shin guards and gorget or some form of trachea protection.

**Clothing**

While not mandatory, you may choose to wear historical garb for fun. Whatever you wear, clothing must still be within the safety limits stated above. No bare skin may be exposed for combatants while participating.

## **Weapons**

All gear is subject to inspection and approval by the director.

### General

All weapons must have been made for the express purpose of being fenced with. All weapons must be in good working order. All weapons must have reasonable flex to the blade. The points cannot be unduly sharp (tips are encouraged). All blades will be inspected the day of the tournaments. Use of the blade will be at the discretion of the tournament director.

Some vendors that are acceptable are;

- Del-Tin,
- Zen Warrior
- Hanwei
- Angus Trim
- Castille Armory
- Darkwood Armory
- Danelli Armories.

This is not an inclusive list but a general guideline.

Tips are highly encouraged. Tips may be rubber, leather, or tape.

### Saber tournament

Dueling or trooper sabers are permitted for this tournament. No sport fencing blades are allowed.

### Small/courtsword tournament

The blade cannot measure longer than 32 inches from the guard to the tip. Number 2 sport epee blades are acceptable.

### Rapier tournament

Rapier is a difficult term to pin down exactly. The weapons must be able to be reasonably considered to be a rapier. All rapiers must be built to be handled as a one-handed weapon. No two-handed weapons (even if wielded by one hand) are allowed. The maximum Length of the rapier from guard to tip cannot be more than 44 inches.

### Off hand

Acceptable off hand items are:

- another sword
- dagger
- mug
- buckler

No rotellas, shields, or cloaks are allowed. Other items (if you can think of any) may be allowed on the day of the tournament; up to the discretion of the tournament director.

Notes on the:

**Buckler;**

bucklers are not battlefield shields. Overly large shields were not historically paired with a rapier. Only a true to size buckler will be allowed. No rotellas or true shields.

**Daggers;**

All dagger blades must be specifically made for the intended purpose of a dagger in fencing. All daggers shall be inspected for safety.

### **Rules of the tournaments**

#### **General: rules that apply to all four weapons**

All participants are expected to act in a friendly and sportsman manner. This is a competitive tournament but it is for fun. Combatants must remain in control of their movements and force of actions at all times. All play stops at the call of HALT. Fencers are expected to stop once halt has been called. Any rules in the weapons specific section to follow take precedent, if they contradict rules in the general section.

**Target:**

Full body is target except for the back of the head. Back of the head is off target and will not result in a penalty.

**Judging:**

The director is responsible for the running and scoring of the bout. The director will call play and award points. Asking for a recap of the play, or politely sharing of your view of what the play was is permitted but outright rudely arguing with the director is not. The director may stop the action at any time with a call of halt. Fencers are responsible for defending themselves regardless of whether a halt has been called, but no touches will be awarded after a halt is called, of even if a halt condition (such as a fall) exists.

**Attacks:**

Attacks with cut and thrust weapons are either thrusts, percussive cuts, draw cuts, or pommel/ quillion indicated to the mask. Incidental or unintentional contact, and slop do not count.

**Percussive cuts:**

Percussive must be made with sufficient force. That is not to say we should be hurting one another but there needs to be enough energy to cut through a reasonable outfit that would be worn to a duel. As this is a historical fencing tournament it is assumed this is a scheduled duel. That being the case it is assume that the combatants would be wearing a dueling fencing jacket and not just a satin shirt or be naked as a baby. Percussive cuts must be with the distal two thirds of the blade. Cuts made with the forte/ strong of the blade are not counted.

**Draw cuts:**

Draw cuts can only be pulled not pushed. They must cut with sufficient force as well. A simple place and pull does not cut it. At least half the blade must be pulled in the draw for it to count.

### Thrusts:

Thrusts require much less force than cuts do. A very slight bend to the blade during a thrust is all that is required to show sufficient force.

### Blades of the weapons:

The rapier and longsword are bladed on both sides, while the saber is bladed on the front and the distal one third of the back of the blade and the smallsword is not bladed at all.

### Parries:

It is the clubs' stance that a cut loses most, if not all kinetic energy when parried. Therefore, if the cut continues after a good parry and is not a new attack, it is insufficient. The cut is insufficient even if contact to the defending fencer is made. This also applies if a cut is parried and then is let go so that a riposte may be made.

However, parries must be strong. If a good cut pushes through and obviously makes sufficient contact with the opponent, then the parry was a mal-parry. For the cut to be successful it must have been a true mal-parry.

To sum up; a cut that lands though through a parry without force is not counted, but one that pushes through a parry and lands with force is counted.

Points require significantly less force to land true, any parries to thrusts must be full true parries where the point does not land on the combatant.

### pommel/ quillion to the mask:

A pommel or quillion attack to the mask should NOT be delivered with full force. Excessive force used with these attacks will be penalized. A presentation of the pommel or quillion to the mask with light contact is all that is needed. The attack is judged valid on the basis that you would have been able to use sufficient force against your opponent. Strikes where your arm is tied up with your opponent or other situations in which the judges deem it unlikely you would have been able to deliver sufficient force with the attack will not be called.

### **Miscellaneous:**

#### Movement:

Fencers may move in any direction they wish. Circling is allowed and encouraged. If a fencer moves out the combat area or in any area deemed unsafe, the referee will call halt and reset the fencers. Due to the environment we are fencing in, no ring out points are possible.

#### Grappling:

Full grappling is not permitted in this tournament. You are permitted to grab your opponent or their guard. You are not permitted to grab your opponents blade. If a grapple does occur you have up to the count of three to come to a resolution. If a resolution does not occur the fencers will be stopped and reset. Kicks and punches are not permitted.

### Scoring:

All bouts are 5 points. All touches to any part of the body, except for the back of the head, count as one point. In rapier, longsword, and smallsword doubles touches count for both fencers. In saber there are no double touches, see specific rules section for further details. There are no after blows. You may decline a point awarded to you or you may call a hit on yourself.

### Seeding and bout progression.

This is a single elimination tournament, with a single round of seeding pools. Otherwise, initial seeding will be assigned by the bout committee. The tournament is a single elimination tournament.

### Penalties

Penalties will be awarded to fencers for;

- Excessive force
- Not staying in control of yourself and your actions and
- exposing the back of your head to your opponent during an attack
- punching, or kicking your opponent
- Aggressively arguing with the judges.
- Acting in an unsportsmanlike manor.

This is not an inclusive list but a general guideline.

For the same infraction; two verbal warnings will be given to the fencer. After that, the next same infraction will result in the fencer's opponent being awarded one point. If the fencer does the same infraction a fourth time he or she will lose the bout they are in. Infractions for unsportsmanlike conduct, or violations of safety or breach of the peace may, at the discretion of the bout committee, result in the expulsion of the fencer (black card.)

This warning system extends throughout a single tournament, not just a single bout. For example, a fencer might be warned three times about excessive force, in three different bouts. On that third warning the fencer he or she is facing will get an extra point.

### **Rapier specific tournament rules:**

In rapier doubles touches count for one point for both fencers. If double touches cause a 5-5 tie in any one bout, fencing continues until a clear winner occurs. You may choose to use any off handed device that is allowed in the tournament in any bout, regardless of what your opponent is using. You are under no obligation to match what your opponent is using. You must continue to use your chosen weapons for the duration of a bout. You may use your off hand to swat away thrusts, or command an opponent's guard or wrist. You cannot use your off hand to block cuts.

### **Smallsword specific tournament rules:**

The smallsword was a civilian personal defense weapon. This is less of a duel and more of a brawl. Grappling with your opponents to command their blade is a normal part of combat. The small sword is a thrust weapon only. Cuts do not count. The blade had only a slight edge to it. Therefore, wrapping your opponents blade in

your arm is permissible. Grabbing your opponents blade with your hand will not be allowed. The assumption being that the weapon was often fought ungloved, in the spur of the moment. The smallsword was bladed enough that you would get cut if you tried to grab the blade with a bare hand.

### **Longsword specific tournament rules:**

The longsword will run very like the rapier tournament. The bouts will be to 5 points each. In the longsword tournament, you are permitted to grab your opponents blade if and only if that blade was not moving. If your opponent can slide his or her blade in your hand that will count as a cut to the hand and count against you.

### **Saber specific tournament rules:**

The saber tournament rules are based off the 1800's Italian military school dueling saber rules. There is the essence of right of way present in this rule set. It is not true right of way as seen in modern sport fencing, but the spirit is here in these rules. For people that do not have right of way experience. The bout committee will give a brief overview before the tournament starts, but please look up the USFA rules to have a better understanding.

In military saber, unlike the rest of the tournaments, there is no situation in which both fencers are awarded points in a single pass. If a true double hit occurs, where no fencer is at fault, then no one is awarded points or priority. If a double hit occurs where one fencer was at fault (didn't have right of way) then the fencer that was not at fault is awarded priority but no points are awarded in that pass. What priority means is, the next time a double hit occurs for any reason at all the fencer with the priority will get the point for that pass (even if he/she was at fault and did not have right of way). After that pass priority is reset.

### Quick and dirty introduction to right of way.

Right of way really is quite simple. The idea behind it is, during training for a real duel, which is what we are doing, fencers don't fence like they would if live blades were being used and injury was really going to happen to them. Right of way rules are there to try to encourage a style of fencing that would work and make sense if actual live blades were being used. Right of way only applies when there is a double hit. If only one fencer makes a touch, then it does not matter if they had right of way or not. That is the theory, here is an over view of rules

- If fencer A start an attack, then fencer A has taken right of way
  - Starting an attack is defined as the blade moving toward fencer B in a threatening motion. Being out of distance means you are not making a threatening motion.
- Fencer B may not attack fencer A until He/ she taken right of way from fencer A or fencer A has lost right of way.
  - In order to take right of way; Fencer B must parry fencer A or fencer A must lose his/her attack.
- Examples

- Example 1: Fencer A attacks fencer B. Fencer B counter attacks Fencer A. Both attacks land. Fencer A was in the right of way. Fencer B did not have right of way and should have parried or retreated.
  - EXTREMELY important point here. So long as both hits occur in the same fencing tempo, which is a bit of a difficult concept, it does not matter who's attack hits first. What matters is who STARTED the attack first. So, in the above example, even if fencer B's attack landed first he/ she still did not have right of way.
- Example 2: Fencer A attacks, fencer B parries and riposte (counter attacks after a parry). Fencer A resumes (continuation of the original attack without right of way). Both fencer's attacks land. Fencer B is in the right of way.
  - Fencer A should have retreated after he/she was parried or counter parried fencer B's riposte
- Example 3: Fencer A starts an attack but then falters or hesitates. Fencer B counter attacks in the lost time. Fencer A renews the original attack. Both fencer's attacks land. Fencer B was in right of way
  - Right of way only last for one fencing tempo. It is not held indefinitely. Once fencer A stopped his/her attack he/she lost right of way. Same would apply if Fencer A missed their first attack and started a second after Fencer B started his/her attack.
- Example 4: Fencer A attacks fencer B. Fencer B parries but hesitates on his/her reposts. Both fencers start new attacks at the same time and both land. Neither fencer had right of way.
  - Fencer B had right of way after his/her parry but hesitated and lost it. Right of way only last for one fencing tempo. It is not held indefinitely

#### **Outside sources for right of way**

Here are a couple of recourses I found If you would like further instruction on sport fencing right of way.

<http://academyoffencingmasters.com/blog/fencing-rules-for-the-novice-parent-objective-and-procedures/>

Please register for the tournament by emailing Mark Wickersham at [mark@fiveringsfencing.org](mailto:mark@fiveringsfencing.org), INCLUDE the subject: 2021 Tournament Registration.

so we know how many people to expect. Please understand that all rules may be subject to change at the actual tournament. We look forward to seeing you!