

Gesellen Fechten 2021

Rules and Guide

Introduction

Gesellen Fechten—from the Middle High German word *geselle*, itself derived from the Old High German *gisellio*, used to describe *gisellio* journeyman associate fellows of the guild. Our choice to reference this historical title in the name of our event was not casual, but was intended to imply the mission of our tournaments.

Anyone can enroll in an open event; to approach one as a *Geselle*, however, is to come in fellowship to learn and teach. Those who come with that mindset show up ready to express their own Art, and have an open mind to gather insights from their encounters with the Arts of others. Our event celebrates this spirit of mutual improvement, and the camaraderie that results from it.

From the beginning, our School's goal has been to provide the most realistic Western Martial Arts combat experience possible in our tournaments, while reasonably safeguarding the health of the participants. This goal is also sought within the wider HEMA community, but can be elusive—in our experience, the best way to handle this situation is to make the rules governing competition as simple as possible. A few particularly dangerous actions are disallowed, but otherwise, all options are equally damaging to you as a competitor. When you are afraid of getting hit in the head, you protect it; when you are afraid of getting hit everywhere, you follow suit. While it may seem paradoxical to some, we have found that raising the stakes for small failures makes overall better and more patient fencers. As an added bonus, it also improves the flow of judging and scorekeeping. The points are simple, so that the focus is right where it should be: on the fight, instead of on how to quantify who hit who slightly better.

So, welcome one and all to our fifth Gesellen Fechten! Let us strive together as competitors and comrades to make this year's event the best one yet!

Section I - Longsword

Gear Requirements

All gear is subject to ringside review and approval. Any missing equipment except clothing and athletic cup can be borrowed at the event if you do not have your own, first come, first served. If you are unsure of whether or not your gear qualifies for the event, please reach out the tournament organizers prior to your arrival.

- Steel fencer made by a recognized smith and with a maximum blade length of 105 cm. Blades should be free of burrs and in good condition.
- Mask with occipital protection
- Hard gloves
- Jacket
- Elbow and knee protection
- Gorget, standalone or built into gambeson/jacket
- Clothing that leaves no skin exposed
- Athletic cup for men
- Chest protector for women (recommended, not mandatory)

Matches and Rounds

- A “Match” consists of a number of Rounds, depending upon the phase of the tournament, and represents each fencer pairing.
- Rounds do not have a time limit, and end with one of three results: 1 point gold fencer, 1 point black fencer, or Double-Kill.
- Non-Elimination matches do not necessarily have a clear winner, and both fencers can theoretically leave one with no points.
- If no victor is determined by the final round of an Elimination match, the fencers will continue to fight “Sudden Death” rounds until one is determined.

Tournament Progression

- Fencers will initially be seeded into pools based upon their HEMA Ratings fencing record and by school affiliation.
- At the completion of this round of pools, fencers will be separated into three skill divisions based upon their performance in their pool. This is the beginning of the Elimination phase of the tournament, and no fencers will be cut from the competition prior to this point.
- Each skill division will fight one round of Elimination pools, at the conclusion of which each division’s roster will be reduced by half or to the top 16 competitors, whichever is greater.
- A second round of Elimination pools will be fought, at the conclusion of which each division’s roster will be reduced to the top 8 competitors.
- A third round of Elimination pools will be fought, and the top four competitors for each division will be placed into a finals bracket for the final two matches of their division.

Tournament Officials and Roles

There will be one Referee, two or four Judges and a scorekeeper for each ring.

Match Flow

- There will be either one or two Judges for each combatant, depending upon the phase of the tournament. The fencer that they're judging for will be distinguished by whether they have a black or a gold baton. Judges with a black baton will look for strikes delivered FROM the combatant with a black armband. Judges with a gold baton will look for strikes delivered FROM the combatant with a gold armband.
- At the start of the match, the Referee will verify that the scorekeeper is ready to begin. He or she will then check with the judges and fencers, in that order. Once everyone is ready, he or she will start the fight.
- Judges are encouraged to move around the ring during the Match to maintain a good view of the action.
- When a Judge witnesses a clean hit for his or her fencer, the Judge will call "Point." The referee will then call "Halt" to the combatants and stop the round. Fencers should stop combat immediately, but should stay on guard until it is clear that the halt has been acknowledged by both sides.
- At Halt of the round, the Judges will immediately lower their heads to prevent being influenced by the other Judges or Fencers.
- The Referee will first ask for the Fencers' opinions by calling out "Fencers?"
- The fencers will then indicate whether they hit their opponent (lift sword overhead), whether the opponent had a clean hit on them (sword pointed at opponent), or will choose not to claim or award a point (sword resting at side).
- The Referee will then ask for the Judges' scoring by calling out "Judges?"
- The Judges will then indicate whether their fencer hit his or her opponent (baton out) or did not (baton at side). If necessary, the judge can raise their hand to call the Referee over for clarification.
- The Referee will tally up the votes and announce the result. The Scorekeeper will record it.
- At the conclusion of the Match, the Referee will ask the Judges to rotate their starting positions clockwise around the ring.

Referee Responsibilities and Prerogatives

- To halt combat, either in acknowledgement of a Judge's call or to stop an unsafe situation
- To warn or disqualify fencers for intentionally or recklessly causing unsafe situations
- To adjudicate between the Fencers and Judges to determine the winner of a Round. If necessary, the Referee can cast a tie-breaker vote.
- To negate the Round and re-do it, If the result of a Round was neither clear victory for one combatant nor a clear double-kill
- To determine the outcome of ringen-am-schwert (see "**Ringen-am-schwert**," below)
- To determine a strike's quality if it is in question

Fencer Prerogatives

- If a Fencer needs to call a "time-out" for any reason, they must verbally get the attention of the Referee by calling "Time-Out Ref" or something equivalent.
- If a Fencer has a question about how a match was decided, they are allowed to ask the Referee for clarification. This is so Fencers can get clarification about a decision, not so they can argue about the outcome.
- If a Fencer feels like a scoring action against them was missed, the Fencer may call "Halt" and point at their opponent to indicate that action.

- If a fencer decides to leave a match for any reason, the match will be considered a forfeit.

Scoring

At the Sword

- Thrusts, hews (cuts), slices and pommel strikes are all considered “Scoring Actions.”
- Any Scoring Action with quality will end the round. There are no differing point values for different targets.
- If a hit is considered to be “light” or struck with the flat, the Judges may overlook the strike or the Referee may throw it out.
- Hews can be made to any part of the body but must have at least a forty five degree arc from start to finish.
- Slices must be made to a vulnerable target area (wrists, underarm, belly, head or neck) with a pushing/pulling pressure.
- Pommel strikes must be made with control, and only to the mask.
- One handed strikes of all types will be highly scrutinized for quality.
- “Ring-outs” are NOT considered a scoring action. If one or both combatants are forced out of the ring, the combatants will be stopped and reset in “Krieg” (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.

Ringen am Schwert

There will be times when fencers get bound up at close range. In these cases, wrestling at the sword is permitted and can result in a Scoring Action.

- Scoring Actions unique to Ringen am Schwert include throws, disarms and opponent containment with clear dominance. Examples of clear dominance are:
 - Lifting (but not slamming) your opponent
 - Establishing a mount position after both opponents end up on the ground (due to a trip or slip). If fencers do end up fighting for dominance on the ground, the Referee will perform a 10 count to determine dominance. If none is established, the fencers will be reset in Krieg (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.
- Valid scoring actions with the weapons during a Ringen am Schwert engagement will end the round.
- While this event is being held outside on grass (as opposed to a venue with a concrete or wooden floor), a throw with intent from almost any height can be damaging, even with mats. When approaching someone in order to throw them in this competition, it is more important that you show control of them rather than throwing them powerfully to the earth. While a basic hip toss or trap is less-likely to seriously injure someone, any throws that involve a lift and drop will be sternly evaluated for “excessive force,” and may result in disqualification. At the end of the day, we want everyone to go home in one piece, whether you win that round or not.

Illegal Actions

- Striking to the back of the head
- Striking to the groin
- Striking with the crossguard

- Striking with a part of the body (punches, kicks, etcetera), with the exception of “push-kicks” used to create distance
- Mortschlag strikes
- Throwing the weapon or parts of the weapon
- Continuing to fight after "Halt" is called
- Intentionally ending a round by stepping out of the ring
- Reckless or unsportsmanlike behavior, including throws that endanger the health of the thrown person
- Arguing with event staff or being disrespectful, in or out of the ring

Performance of an Illegal Action will result in a warning. Cumulative warnings may lead to forfeiture of the match, and in extreme cases, expulsion from the event. All warnings will be documented and recorded on the Scorecard.

Section II – Sword and Buckler

The Rules and Requirements for the Sword and Buckler event are the same as those for the Longsword event, with the following exceptions or additions:

Gear Requirements

All gear is subject to ringside review and approval. Any missing equipment except clothing and athletic cup can be borrowed at the event if you do not have your own, first come, first served. If you are unsure of whether or not your gear qualifies for the event, please reach out to the tournament organizers prior to your arrival.

- Steel “arming sword” or “sidesword” made by a recognized smith and with a maximum blade length of 92 cm. Blades should be free of burrs and in good condition. Hilts should either be simple or semi-complex in the style associated with the Bolognese tradition.
- A steel, wood or synthetic buckler whose longest dimension doesn’t exceed 14”. Any buckler that isn’t round or that is made of wood must be pre-approved. Bucklers cannot have any spikes or protrusions other than a rounded boss, and must have rims that are rounded for competition use.
- Mask with occipital protection
- Either a hard glove or a combination of a soft glove and a complex hilt for the sword hand
- A soft glove for the buckler hand
- Jacket
- Elbow and knee protection
- Gorget, standalone or built into gambeson/jacket
- Clothing that leaves no skin exposed
- Athletic cup for men
- Chest protector for women (recommended, not mandatory)

Tournament Progression

- Fencers will initially be seeded into pools based upon their HEMA Ratings fencing record and by school affiliation.
- Fencers will fight one round of Elimination pools, at the conclusion of which the roster will be reduced to the top 16 competitors.
- The top 16 competitors will be placed into an Elimination bracket for the remaining matches of the event.

Scoring

At the Sword

- Thrusts, hews (cuts), slices, pommel strikes and buckler strikes are all considered “Scoring Actions.” Buckler strikes must be made with the boss of the buckler, not with the rim.
- Any Scoring Action with quality will end the round. There are no differing point values for different targets.
- If a hit is considered to be “light” or struck with the flat, the Judges may overlook the strike or the Referee may throw it out.
- Hews can be made to any part of the body but must have at least a forty five degree arc from start to finish.
- Slices must be made to a vulnerable target area (wrists, underarm, belly, head or neck) with a pushing/pulling pressure.

- Pommel strikes must be made with control, and only to the mask.
- “Ring-outs” are NOT considered a scoring action. If one or both combatants are forced out of the ring, the combatants will be stopped and reset in “Krieg” (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.

Ringen am Schwert

There will be times when fencers get bound up at close range. In these cases, wrestling at the sword is permitted and can result in a Scoring Action.

- Scoring Actions unique to Ringen am Schwert include throws, disarms and opponent containment with clear dominance. Examples of clear dominance are:
 - Lifting (but not slamming) your opponent
 - Establishing a mount position after both opponents end up on the ground (due to a trip or slip). If fencers do end up fighting for dominance on the ground, the Referee will perform a 10 count to determine dominance. If none is established, the fencers will be reset in Krieg (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.
- Valid scoring actions with the weapons during a Ringen am Schwert engagement will end the round.
- While this event is being held outside on grass (as opposed to a venue with a concrete or wooden floor), a throw with intent from almost any height can be damaging, even with mats. When approaching someone in order to throw them in this competition, it is more important that you show control of them rather than throwing them powerfully to the earth. While a basic hip toss or trap is less-likely to seriously injure someone, any throws that involve a lift and drop will be sternly evaluated for “excessive force,” and may result in disqualification. At the end of the day, we want everyone to go home in one piece, whether you win that round or not.

Illegal Actions

- Striking to the back of the head
- Striking to the groin
- Striking with the crossguard
- Striking with the rim of the buckler
- Striking with a part of the body (punches, kicks, etcetera), with the exception of “push-kicks” used to create distance
- Mortschlag strikes
- Throwing the weapon or parts of the weapon
- Continuing to fight after “Halt” is called
- Intentionally ending a round by stepping out of the ring
- Reckless or unsportsmanlike behavior, including throws that endanger the health of the thrown person
- Arguing with event staff or being disrespectful, in or out of the ring

Performance of an Illegal Action will result in a warning. Cumulative warnings may lead to forfeiture of the match, and in extreme cases, expulsion from the event. All warnings will be documented and recorded on the Scorecard.

Section III – Single Rapier

The Rules and Requirements for the Single Rapier event are the same as those for the Longsword event, with the following exceptions or additions:

Gear Requirements

All gear is subject to ringside review and approval. Any missing equipment except clothing and athletic cup can be borrowed at the event if you do not have your own, first come, first served. If you are unsure of whether or not your gear qualifies for the event, please reach out the tournament organizers prior to your arrival.

- Steel “rapier” made by a recognized smith. Blades should be free of burrs and in good condition. Blades must be securely tipped.
- Mask with occipital protection
- Lightly-padded leather or lacrosse gloves, at a minimum
- Jacket
- Elbow and knee protection
- Gorget, standalone or built into gambeson/jacket
- Clothing that leaves no skin exposed
- Athletic cup for men
- Chest protector for women (recommended, not mandatory)

Tournament Progression

- Fencers will initially be seeded into pools based upon their HEMA Ratings fencing record and by school affiliation.
- Fencers will fight one round of Elimination pools, at the conclusion of which the roster will be reduced to the top 16 competitors.
- The top 16 competitors will be placed into an Elimination bracket for the remaining matches of the event.

Scoring

At the Sword

- Thrusts, hews (cuts) and pommel strikes are all considered “Scoring Actions.”
- Any Scoring Action with quality will end the round. There are no differing point values for different targets.
- A solid thrust to any part of the body is considered a scoring action.
- Hews to the head, neck, arms and legs are scoring actions. If a hit is considered to be “light” or struck with the flat, the Judges may overlook the strike or the Referee may throw it out.
- Pommel strikes must be made with control, and only to the mask.
- “Ring-outs” are NOT considered a scoring action. If one or both combatants are forced out of the ring, the combatants will be stopped and reset in “Krieg” (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.

Ring am Schwert

There will be times when fencers get bound up at close range. In the rapier event, throws and takedowns are not permitted, and action will be halted at this point. There are some limited actions that may be taken by the empty off-hand, however:

- The open off-hand may be utilized for parries, but is still considered vulnerable to quality thrusts and cuts.

- The open off-hand may grasp the opponent's blade, but only in a way that holds it momentarily captive. Twisting of the blade or attempts to disarm the opponent are not allowed, and any lengthy exchanges where the opponents are bound up will be halted and reset.
- Limited pushing or grasping actions to the opponent's arms and shoulders as part of a larger attempt to contain their weapon are allowed, but should not proceed to full-on grappling.
 - Example: Pushing the opponent's elbow or shoulder to change the orientation of their blade or body somewhat is acceptable, but taking control of the opponent's arm with a joint lock is not.

Illegal Actions

- Standing joint locks, throws and takedowns
- Attempting to disarm the opponent
- Twisting or greatly bending an opponent's blade during a grasping containment
- Striking to the back of the head
- Striking to the groin
- Striking with the crossguard
- Striking with a part of the body (punches, kicks, etcetera)
- Mortschlag strikes
- Throwing the weapon or parts of the weapon
- Continuing to fight after "Halt" is called
- Intentionally ending a round by stepping out of the ring
- Reckless or unsportsmanlike behavior that endangers the health of the opponent
- Arguing with event staff or being disrespectful, in or out of the ring

Performance of an Illegal Action will result in a warning. Cumulative warnings may lead to forfeiture of the match, and in extreme cases, expulsion from the event. All warnings will be documented and recorded on the Scorecard.

Section IV – Messer

The Rules and Requirements for the Messer event are the same as those for the Longsword event, with the following exceptions or additions:

Gear Requirements

All gear is subject to ringside review and approval. Any missing equipment except clothing and athletic cup can be borrowed at the event if you do not have your own, first come, first served. If you are unsure

of whether or not your gear qualifies for the event, please reach out the tournament organizers prior to your arrival.

- Steel messer or dussack made by a recognized smith and with a maximum blade length of 73cm. Blades should be free of burrs and in good condition.
- Mask with occipital protection
- Lacrosse gloves, at a minimum
- Jacket
- Elbow and knee protection
- Gorget, standalone or built into gambeson/jacket
- Clothing that leaves no skin exposed
- Athletic cup for men
- Chest protector for women (recommended, not mandatory)

Tournament Progression

- Fencers will initially be seeded into pools based upon their HEMA Ratings fencing record and by school affiliation.
- Fencers will fight one round of Elimination pools, at the conclusion of which the roster will be reduced to the top 16 competitors.
- The top 16 competitors will be placed into an Elimination bracket for the remaining matches of the event.

Scoring

At the Sword

- Thrusts, hews (cuts), slices and pommel strikes are all considered “Scoring Actions.”
- Any Scoring Action with quality will end the round. There are no differing point values for different targets.
- If a hit is considered to be “light” or struck with the flat, the Judges may overlook the strike or the Referee may throw it out.
- Hews can be made to any part of the body but must have at least a forty-five-degree arc from start to finish.
- Slices must be made to a vulnerable target area (wrists, underarm, belly, head or neck) with a pushing/pulling pressure.
- Pommel strikes must be made with control, and only to the mask.
- “Ring-outs” are NOT considered a scoring action. If one or both combatants are forced out of the ring, the combatants will be stopped and reset in “Krieg” (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.

Ring am Schwert

There will be times when fencers get bound up at close range. In these cases, wrestling at the sword is permitted and can result in a Scoring Action.

- Scoring Actions unique to Ringen am Schwert include throws, disarms and opponent containment with clear dominance. Examples of clear dominance are:
 - Lifting (but not slamming) your opponent

- Establishing a mount position after both opponents end up on the ground (due to a trip or slip). If fencers do end up fighting for dominance on the ground, the Referee will perform a 10 count to determine dominance. If none is established, the fencers will be reset in Krieg (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.
- Valid scoring actions with the weapons during a Ringen am Schwert engagement will end the round.
- While this event is being held outside on grass (as opposed to a venue with a concrete or wooden floor), a throw with intent from almost any height can be damaging, even with mats. When approaching someone in order to throw them in this competition, it is more important that you show control of them rather than throwing them powerfully to the earth. While a basic hip toss or trap is less-likely to seriously injure someone, any throws that involve a lift and drop will be sternly evaluated for “excessive force,” and may result in disqualification. At the end of the day, we want everyone to go home in one piece, whether you win that round or not.

Illegal Actions

- Striking to the back of the head
- Striking to the groin
- Striking with the crossguard
- Striking with a part of the body (punches, kicks, etcetera), with the exception of “push-kicks” used to create distance
- Mortschlag strikes
- Throwing the weapon or parts of the weapon
- Continuing to fight after "Halt" is called
- Intentionally ending a round by stepping out of the ring
- Reckless or unsportsmanlike behavior, including throws that endanger the health of the thrown person
- Arguing with event staff or being disrespectful, in or out of the ring

Performance of an Illegal Action will result in a warning. Cumulative warnings may lead to forfeiture of the match, and in extreme cases, expulsion from the event. All warnings will be documented and recorded on the Scorecard.

Section V – Dagger

The Rules and Requirements for the Dagger event are the same as those for the Longsword event, with the following exceptions or additions:

Gear Requirements

All gear is subject to ringside review and approval. Any missing equipment except clothing and athletic cup can be borrowed at the event if you do not have your own, first come, first served. If you are unsure

of whether or not your gear qualifies for the event, please reach out the tournament organizers prior to your arrival.

- Wooden dagger (provided)
- Belt for sheathed carry (provided)
- Mask with occipital protection
- Lightly-padded leather or lacrosse gloves
- Jacket
- Gorget, standalone or built into gambeson/jacket
- Clothing that leaves no skin exposed
- Athletic cup for men
- Chest protector for women (recommended, not mandatory)

Tournament Progression

- Fencers will initially be seeded into pools based upon their HEMA Ratings fencing record and by school affiliation.
- Fencers will fight one round of Elimination pools, at the conclusion of which the roster will be reduced to the top 16 competitors.
- The top 16 competitors will be placed into an Elimination bracket for the remaining matches of the event.

Scoring

With the Dagger

- Thrusts to the head, neck, torso and arms. Hits that glance off of their intended target may be overlooked by the Judges or thrown out by the Referee.
- Unobstructed pommel strikes to the head. These blows should be used with control, and will be sternly evaluated for excessive force.
- Any Scoring Action with quality will end the round. There are no differing point values for different targets.
- “Ring-outs” are NOT considered a scoring action. If one or both combatants are forced out of the ring, the combatants will be stopped and reset in “Krieg” (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.

With Ringen

- Scoring Actions unique to Ringen include throws, standing submissions and opponent containment with clear dominance. Examples of clear dominance are:
 - Lifting (but not slamming) your opponent
 - Establishing a mount position after both opponents end up on the ground (due to a trip or slip). If fencers do end up fighting for dominance on the ground, the Referee will perform a 10 count to determine dominance. If none is established, the fencers will be reset in Krieg (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.
- Throws that are considered Scoring Actions are “flying throws,” in which both of the thrown fencer’s feet come off of the ground. The throwing fencer must not put a hard point on the ground while performing the throw, or it will not be considered a Scoring Action and action will continue.
- While this event is being held on a wrestling mat, a throw with intent from almost any height can be damaging, even with mats. When approaching someone in order to throw them in this competition, it is more important that you show control of them rather than throwing them

powerfully to the earth. While a basic hip toss or trap is less-likely to seriously injure someone, any throws that involve a lift and drop will be sternly evaluated for “excessive force,” and may result in disqualification. At the end of the day, we want everyone to go home in one piece, whether you win that round or not.

- If a fencer’s mask comes off incidentally as the consequence of a standing chokehold, its removal will be considered a Scoring Action. Please note that the removal of the mask should not be a goal, and that doing so in any other context is considered an Illegal Action.
- The success of a standing or ground submission will be determined by the Judges and Referee. If at any point a fencer wishes to submit to avoid injury, they can do so by loudly saying “HALT.” The fencer should continue to defend themselves to the best of their ability until action has been halted by the Referee.
- Valid scoring actions with the weapons during a Ringen engagement will end the round. Any attacks with the dagger while the opponent is in a compromised position will be sternly evaluated for excessive force.
- Disarms are not a Scoring Action, and action will continue until a Scoring Action occurs.

Illegal Actions

- Suplexes, scissor sweeps, fireman carries, sacrifice throws or any other throw that would land the opponent in a dangerous or uncontrolled way upon their head
- Removal of the opponent’s protective equipment, with the single chokehold exception provided above
- Striking to the back of the head
- Striking to the groin
- Striking with a part of the body (punches, kicks, etcetera)
- Mortschlag strikes
- Throwing the weapon or parts of the weapon
- Continuing to fight after "Halt" is called
- Intentionally ending a round by stepping out of the ring
- Reckless or unsportsmanlike behavior that endangers the health of the opponent
- Arguing with event staff or being disrespectful, in or out of the ring

Performance of an Illegal Action will result in a warning. Cumulative warnings may lead to forfeiture of the match, and in extreme cases, expulsion from the event. All warnings will be documented and recorded on the Scorecard.

Section VI – Harnischfechten

The Rules and Requirements for the Harnischfechten event are the same as those for the Longsword event, with the following exceptions or additions:

Gear Requirements

All gear is subject to ringside review and approval. Some missing equipment can be borrowed at the event if you do not have your own. Please contact the tournament organizers prior to your arrival if this is the case, or if you are unsure of whether or not your gear qualifies for the event.

Armor - Should be representative of a style worn in Europe from 1350 to 1550:

- Fully-enclosed steel helmet that meets the following requirements:
 - Constructed of steel that is at least 16 gauge thick
 - Neck protection of either mail or rigid plate
 - No gaps on the helmet or underneath where a ½ inch by ½ inch object may pass through to the head or neck. Any openings larger than this must be filled with perforated steel plate, and will be considered exposed areas for scoring purposes.
 - Visors must be able to be locked down so that they cannot accidentally open during a bout
- Rigid gorget (leather, steel, reinforced mail standard, or modern)
- Rigid torso protection of a period style (breastplate, cuirass, brigandine, coat of plates, or corazzina)
- Mail shirt, voiders, or sleeves & skirt that covers the torso and everywhere from elbows to thighs not already covered by rigid protection. Armpits **MUST** be protected by mail and a sturdy arming garment, or a puncture-resistant Newton-rated fencing jacket. Mail armor is to be of riveted steel or iron links.
- Sturdy arming garment or gambeson
- Steel gauntlets of the five-finger or mitten type. For pollaxe, mitten gauntlets or “finger rondels” must be used.
- Rigid steel elbow protection at minimum (floating or articulated arm harness, bazubands, vambraces & couters, etc.)
- Rigid steel knees and shins minimum (greaves, cuisses & poleyns, floating knees, etc.)
- Shoulder protection (spaulders/pauldrons/besagews) is optional, but is recommended
- Clothing that leaves no skin exposed
- Athletic cup for men

Weapons

- Blunt steel longsword (not federschwert) made by a recognized smith. Blades should be free of burrs and in good condition. The sword must be tipped with a rubber tip with a minimum diameter of ¾”, which must also contain a metal washer to minimize tip splitting. Leather tips are not allowed.
- Blunt steel or wooden rondel dagger. Steel daggers must be tipped with a rubber tip with a minimum diameter of ¾”, which must also contain a metal washer to minimize tip splitting. Leather tips are not allowed.
- A pollaxe or spear that is 6’-7’ long and tipped with an approved synthetic tip. Please contact the tournament organizers if you wish to bring your own.

Tournament Progression

- Fencers will initially be seeded into pools based upon their known harnishfechten experience and by school affiliation. Each pool match will have three rounds, and will be fought with longsword, though fencers may also wear and use a dagger if they choose to.
- At the completion of pools, all fencers will proceed to the Elimination phase of the tournament. A single elimination bracket will be populated based upon the fencers’ performance in the Pools.

- Elimination matches will still have three rounds, but the weapons will change with each round:
 - The first round will be fought with pollaxes or spears;
 - The second round will be fought with longswords;
 - The third round will be fought with daggers. Daggers may also be carried and used during the first two rounds, as a sidearm.
- Unlike in the Pool matches, each Elimination match must have a victor. If there is not a clear victor by the end of the match's third round, the fencers will continue to fight rounds with the same weapon progression until a victor is decided.

Scoring

With Weapons

- Pommel strikes to the helm, and thrusts and hews (cuts) to unarmored areas are all considered "Scoring Actions."
- "Unarmored areas" are the gaps in an individual fencer's armor, either for mobility or because they are lacking in that fencer's kit. Any areas covered by cloth, modern protective gear or perforated steel plate fall into this category. Other examples include: behind the knee, inside of the elbow, underneath the skirt, beneath the aventail, the face of an "open face" helm, the palm of the hands, inside the cuff of a gauntlet, the eye slits, and the top of the foot.
- Any Scoring Action with quality will end the round. There are no differing point values for different targets.
- If a hit is considered to be "light", struck with the flat or insufficient for the armor present, the Judges may overlook the strike or the Referee may throw it out.
- Hews can be made to any part of the body but must have at least a forty-five-degree arc from start to finish.
- Pommel strikes must be made with control, and only to the helm.
- One handed strikes of all types will be highly scrutinized for quality.
- "Ring-outs" are NOT considered a scoring action. If one or both combatants are forced out of the ring, the combatants will be stopped and reset in "Krieg" (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.

Equipment-specific Considerations

- All weapons used in this event can pierce mail and hardened leather armor with a thrust. Thrusts through armor must be done with good structure, such as couching the weapon, pressing enough to flex the blade or make your opponent step back, stabbing with a dagger held in an ice-pick grip, etc.
- Pollaxes can bypass all types of armor with a blow from the axe, hammer, or beak.
- Plate armor is proof against anything except pollaxe blows. Plates riveted to a leather or textile foundation (such as brigadine or splinted armor) will be counted as plate armor.

Ringen am Schwert

There will be times when fencers get bound up at close range. In these cases, wrestling at the sword is permitted and can result in a Scoring Action.

- Scoring Actions unique to Ringen am Schwert include throws and opponent containment with clear dominance. Examples of clear dominance are:
 - Lifting (but not slamming) your opponent

- Establishing a mount position after both opponents end up on the ground (due to a trip or slip). If fencers do end up fighting for dominance on the ground, the Referee will perform a 10 count to determine dominance. If none is established, the fencers will be reset in Krieg (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.
- Valid scoring actions with the weapons during a Ringen am Schwert engagement will end the round.
- While this event is being held outside on grass (as opposed to a venue with a concrete or wooden floor), a throw with intent from almost any height can be damaging, even with mats. When approaching someone in order to throw them in this competition, it is more important that you show control of them rather than throwing them powerfully to the earth. While a basic hip toss or trap is less-likely to seriously injure someone, any throws that involve a lift and drop will be sternly evaluated for “excessive force,” and may result in disqualification. At the end of the day, we want everyone to go home in one piece, whether you win that round or not.

Illegal Actions

- Reckless attacks to the groin
- Striking with the crossguard
- Striking with a part of the body (punches, kicks, etcetera), with the exception of “push-kicks” used to create distance
- Mortschlag strikes
- Throwing the weapon or parts of the weapon
- Continuing to fight after "Halt" is called
- Intentionally ending a round by stepping out of the ring
- Reckless or unsportsmanlike behavior, including throws that endanger the health of the thrown person
- Arguing with event staff or being disrespectful, in or out of the ring

Performance of an Illegal Action will result in a warning. Cumulative warnings may lead to forfeiture of the match, and in extreme cases, expulsion from the event. All warnings will be documented and recorded on the Scorecard.