

Purpose of Tiers and Modifiers to Events:

It's our belief that Tournament Events should be broken down into skill tier levels so as to allow our competitors to have commensurate challenges. These challenges are the nature of our Sport and should always promote fairness and safety.

- Newer fencers with low to no tournament experience will be seeded into the **C Tier Category**. This will be approximately 25% of the competition.
- Intermediate fencers with some tenure and experience at tournaments will be seeded into the **B Tier Category**. This will be approx 50% of the competition.
- Advanced fencers with a lot of tournament experience and great performance results will be seeded into the **A Tier Category**. This will be approx 25% of the competition.

How are events seeded?

At this time we will be primarily utilizing HEMA Ratings for seeding. There will be a bump and consideration however based on survival rating at previous Gesellen Fechtens.

What are “Modifiers”?:

Each event will have its own set of Modifiers to the normal ruleset standards. These Modifiers are small adjustments to the rules to help promote safety and fairness for the level of the event. These rule modifiers do not supersede any of the standard rules for the event overall.

One of the other benefits of “Modifiers” to an event is how this allows us to answer a lot of the standard concerns people have at events. Questions like, “what are your quality standards?” “Is there any wrestling allowed?” “Pommel strikes allowed?” are answered with “It depends on the Tier you are in.” Which basically is determined by your skill at fencing. If you are newer, holding you at the same standard as an experienced competitor creates major variance and potential frustration at the tournament experience.

This also allows a quick and easy format for other Tournaments/Events to follow.

- *Do we allow xyz at our event?* It depends on Skill Tier.
- *What type of event do we want to hold?* Then that would be the Skill Tier you host the event for.
- *This saber event want to use “priority rules” and “lower quality standards” and “no wrestling”.* This event would fit closest to a C Tier Event but with the added modifier of “Priority Rules Allowed”.
- *This is a “Youth Longsword Event” what would you recommend?* A youth event implies the fencers have less experience and probably not as many total skills to deal with things like wrestling or pommel strikes safely. Since Safety is also a great concern when it comes to an event it would easily be categorized as a C Tier Event.

- *We want to hold an Open Event but want some of the modifiers from C Tier, what do you recommend?* Hold it as a B Tier event but make it clear what modifiers you are using. Adding things like “lower quality standards” and “no pommel strikes” typically would be for a C Tier Event. Advertising it as a B Tier but keeping all the modifiers of an A or C Tier will create more safety concerns and potential dissatisfaction among competitors. More modifiers and nuance can be developed over time. But this is a good starting guideline and a detailed accounting of how Gesellen Fechten will be run at this time.

Tier Modifier Breakdown:

Tier C:

Tier C is reserved for newer fencers or those with less competition experience. As such, more focus is placed on safety and less on an expanded skillset or higher expectations for performance.

- **Quality:**
 - “Quality” of strike is less of a concern for Officials. Clear flat strikes or “incidental” contact will still not be considered a scoring action.
 - “Arc” of motion is less of a factor for officials when considering if a strike is scoring.
 - Any touch with the point could potentially be considered a valid thrust.
 - Slices must be clear and obviously intentional action.
 - Hews/Cuts to any fabric or gear is considered a valid scoring action. (including pants or glancing strikes)
- **Pommel Strikes:**
 - Not allowed in C tier. Intentional pommel strikes will be given a verbal warning and escalate accordingly.
- **Wrestling or grappling of any kind:**
 - Not allowed in C tier. Reset in the middle with no round awarded.
 - “Ring Outs” are a reset in the middle. No round awarded for either party.
 - Intentional wrestling/grappling will be given a verbal warning and escalate accordingly.
- **Priority Rules:**
 - No 1 handed strikes in C Tier are allowed.
- **Warnings and Penalties:**
 - Excessive Force and Safety will be highly scrutinized in C Tier events. Each Referee will review this before the start of a Pool.
 - Fencers are encouraged to have a “Coach” in their Pool. A Coach is allowed to question an exchange and then advise/discuss with their fencer any uncertain exchange. This is allowed any number of times, but if the Referee suspects

intentional manipulation of the Match or stalling for a breather for the fencer then they may warn or penalize the fencers.

- Resets:
 - 2 resets for “sloppy or unclear” fencing are allowed per Match. This is at Referee discretion and does not count halts for safety or ring outs/wrestling.

Tier B:

For the most part, this is the equivalent of an “Open” Tournament as far as expectations.

- Quality:
 - 45 Degree Arc of Motion is expected for any hew/cut.
 - While a thrust does not have to “flex” it’s expected to have made contact with enough distance that it would actually penetrate the person. Someone moving away from the thrust and it barely touching them, for example, would not be considered quality. A thrust that clearly glanced off of gear or was “passe” is not considered quality.
 - A slice must be clear and intentional. Only slices to wrists/underarm/neck are considered scoring action. (the groin/inner leg is not allowed due to safety concerns)
- Pommel Strikes:
 - Allowed in B Tier.
 - Can be just “indicated” that someone could pommel by holding it up to the head.
 - Any contact with the mask from the pommel of the sword is considered a valid pommel strike.
- Wrestling or Grappling:
 - Sword Grabs are legal as long as not done on the “weak” of the blade and not while the sword is in motion.
 - Wrestling/Grappling are legal and allowed, but are only “Implied”. Throws that are incidental (the opponent losing their balance and falling for example) may or may not be scored at Referees discretion.
 - For example, you are grappling with an opponent. They step behind you and put a hip under your hip. Referee stops the action as “Implied Wrestling” and it is scored.
 - Example, you grab your opponent’s leg and lift it off the ground. They (for whatever reason) cannot strike you with the weapon as you are lifting them. You win the Round under “Implied Wrestling”.
 - Example, you rush in to grapple. Your opponent falls as you move in but there was no real contact from you (no shoving or shoulder checking). The referee rules it as no score and resets the Round in the middle of the ring.
 - Any unclear wrestling or disarm attempt will result in a reset in the middle of the ring.
 - Ring Outs are also a reset in the middle of the ring.
- Priority Rules:

- Any 1 handed strike will have less priority than a 2 handed strike. This will also be subject to the quality guidelines for the Tier.
- Warnings and Penalties:
 - Fencers are expected to not argue or attempt to speak to Judges/Refs for any reason.
 - Fencers are encouraged to have a “Coach” in their Pool. A Coach is allowed to question an exchange and then advise/discuss with their fencer any uncertain exchange. This is allowed only 1 time per match in B Tier.
- Resets:
 - 1 reset for “sloppy or unclear” fencing is allowed per Match.
 - This is at Referee discretion and does not count halts for safety or ring outs/wrestling.
 - All other resets are at Referee discretion but may result in being considered a “Double”.

Tier A:

Tier A is for experienced fencers and the “Best of the Best” as far as skills go. Our expectation is that an A Tier Fencer has been to many events and has a higher overall skillset for Historic Fencing.

- Quality:
 - Quality is at the utmost spectrum of grading stringencies for A Tier.
 - Referees and Judges may ignore strikes they see as “no or low quality” and allow the fencing to continue.
 - Flat/passe/not enough arc is weighted on the curve of “convince me” for A Tier Officials.
- Pommel Strikes:
 - Allowed to any part of the mask.
 - Must make contact with the mask (not just indicated) to be considered a valid scoring action.
- Wrestling or Grappling:
 - As with B Tier except:
 - Ring Outs done while in Krieg (grappling) award the round to the fencer still in the ring.
 - Wrestling actions may continue longer at the Referee’s discretion. If nothing has happened within a silent count of 5 tempo then the round will be adjudicated accordingly.
- Priority Rules:
 - No priority given to any scoring action in Tier A, however, all exchanges will be reviewed with the strict quality guidelines of Tier A.
- Warnings and Penalties:
 - Fencers are expected to not argue or attempt to speak to Judges/Refs for any reason.
 - Fencers are encouraged to have a “Coach” in their Pool. A Coach is allowed to question an exchange and then advise/discuss with their fencer any uncertain exchange. This is allowed only 1 time per match in A Tier.

- If an A Tier Fencer is perceived by the Referee to be attempting to influence any outcome of an exchange this will be an immediate Verbal Warning to the Fencer. This applies to the Fencer's Coach as well.
 - Examples of trying to Influence Judging:
 - Excessive celebration before or after an exchange.
 - Verbally disagreeing where an official can hear.
 - Specifically calling out what they thought "just happened" in the exchange. "FANTASTIC Thrust right to his face!"
 - Speaking out against the other fencer actions. "His was flat" or "She stepped out of the ring".
- Resets:
 - 1 reset for "sloppy or unclear" fencing is allowed per Match.
 - This is at Referee discretion and does not count halts for safety or ring outs/wrestling.
 - All other resets are at Referee discretion but may result in being considered a "Double".