

Cymbrogi School of Western Martial Arts Open Tournament

Gesellen Fechten 2026

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 tenth Gesellen Fechten! Let us strive together as competitors and comrades to make this year's event the best one yet!

Section I - Longsword

General Longsword Rules – All Tiers

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 whether your gear qualifies for the event, please contact the tournament organizers prior to your arrival.

- Steel feder 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 with at least 350N puncture resistance

- 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)

Event Terminology

- A “Match” typically consists of five “Rounds,” 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.
- Within the ring, each fencer will either be assigned the title of “Black Fencer” or “Gold Fencer,” and will be referred to that way during any scoring actions.
- There will be one “Referee” whose job is to direct and officiate the “match.” He or she will be assisted by one or more “Judges” whose job is to provide a vote on how each round is to be scored and to help watch for unsafe situations.

Match Flow

- Prior to starting a match, the Referee will verify that the other match officials and fencers are ready to begin. He or she will then start the match.
- In phases where the fencers have dedicated judges, each judge will only be looking for strikes delivered by the fencer that they are judging for. The Judge for the black Fencer will look for strikes delivered by the Black Fencer to the Gold Fencer, and the Judge for the gold Fencer will watch for strikes by the Gold Fencer to the Black Fencer. In phases with only one judge, the Judge will be watching for strikes from both fencers. In both cases, the judges will 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,” stopping the round. Fencers should cease fencing immediately, but should maintain guard until it is clear that the halt has been acknowledged by both fencers. Once the match has been halted, any judges should immediately look down to minimize influence by other judges or the Fencers.
- The Referee will first ask for the Fencers’ votes on the scoring by calling out “Fencers?” The Fencers may then indicate that they believe that they hit their opponent (lift sword overhead), that they believe that their opponent hit them (sword pointed at opponent), or to abstain from voting (sword resting at side). Reasons for abstaining may be that the Fencer believes that neither Fencer struck the other, or that the strikes in question were of low-quality.
- The Referee will then ask for the Judges’ votes on the scoring by calling out “Judges?” Each Judge will then indicate whether his or her fencer successfully scored (point at scoring fencer) or did not (arm down at side). In situations with only one Judge, the Judge will use both arms and simultaneously indicate the result for both Fencers. If the Judge is uncertain about the action, he or she should abstain from voting by not indicating a score.
- The Referee will tally up the votes, announce the result, and record it using the tournament software. He or she will then run the next round or conclude the Match.
- In some situations, the Referee may briefly call the Judge or Judges over for clarification. These questions should be specific and to the point. If there is still uncertainty about the outcome of the Round after this discussion, the Round should be reset and run again.

- During phases of the Tournament with multiple Judges, the Referee will ask the Judges to rotate their starting positions clockwise around the ring after the conclusion of a Match.

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

Tournament Progression

- Fencers will initially be seeded into three tier levels (A, B, C) based upon their HEMA Ratings fencing record and past Gesellen Fechten performance. Fencers will be seeded into pools within their tier based upon their relative calculated rankings.
- After the first round of pools concludes, fencers will be seeded into a second round of pools based upon their performance in their first pool. This begins the Elimination phase of the event, as the rankings after the second round of pools will be used to make the first cut to the roster.
- After the second round of pools concludes, fencers will be ranked based upon their cumulative performance in their first two pools, and cuts will be made to each tier's roster. The remaining competitors will be seeded into a third round of pools.
- At the conclusion of the third round of pools, the fencers will be ranked and each tier's roster will be reduced to the top 4 competitors. These fencers will fence in a Finals pool.
- The fencers in the Finals pool will fence and be placed according to their cumulative performance against the other fencers within the Finals pool.
- 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.

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 a weapon or parts of a 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.

Event-Specific Rules – Tier C Longsword

Expectations

Tier C is reserved for newer fencers or those who have less experience with competition. There is a greater emphasis on safety, and certain actions are restricted to encourage a focus on foundational tactics and defense.

Scoring

At the Sword

- Thrusts, hews (cuts), and slices 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 incidental or is clearly struck with the flat, the Judges may overlook the strike or the Referee may throw it out.
- Scoring on thrusts is more generous in Tier C than in Tiers A and B, and may be awarded if reasonable contact is made by the attacking fencer’s point.
- Hews can be made to any part of the body, and should have a minimum arc of forty-five-degrees from start to finish.
- Slices must be made to a vulnerable target area (wrists, underarm, belly, head or neck) with an obviously intentional pushing or pulling pressure.
- “Ring-outs” are not considered a scoring action. If one or both fencers exit the ring, the fencers will be stopped and reset in “Krieg” (close striking distance) in the center of the ring.

Additional Illegal Actions – Tier C

- Pommel strikes
- Wrestling, at the sword or otherwise
- One-handed thrusts, slices or hews

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.

Event-Specific Rules – Tier B Longsword

Expectations

Tier B is the equivalent of an “open” event at most competitions, and has similar expectations.

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 incidental or is clearly struck with the flat, the Judges may overlook the strike or the Referee may throw it out.
- Thrusts must be executed in a way that would deeply penetrate the opponent. While blade flex is not required, the thrust should hit the target squarely and must be more than a light touch.
- 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 or pulling pressure.
- Pommel strikes must be made with control, and only to the mask. Fencers who have sufficiently contained their opponent are encouraged to clearly indicate that they could make the strike, and will be given the full score for the exchange.
- One handed strikes of all types will be highly scrutinized for quality.
 - In the event that a two-handed blow is delivered within the same timeframe as a one-handed blow (two tempi, regardless of the order of attacks), the two-handed blow will be given “priority” and the one-handed blow will be disregarded.
- “Ring-outs” are not considered a scoring action. If one or both combatants exit the ring without being in a grappling exchange, 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 indoors on mats (as opposed to a venue with a concrete or wooden floor), a throw with intent from almost any height can still be damaging. 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.

Event-Specific Rules – Tier A Longsword

Expectations

Tier A is reserved for the most experienced fencers, and the expectations for technical quality are appropriately higher.

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 incidental or is clearly 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.
 - In the event that a two-handed blow is delivered within the same timeframe as a one-handed blow (two tempi, regardless of the order of attacks), the two-handed blow will be given “priority” and the one-handed blow will be disregarded.
- “Ring-outs” are not considered a scoring action unless they occur as part of a grappling exchange (see “*Ringen am Schwert*,” below). If one or both combatants exit the ring without being in a grappling exchange, 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.
- Forcing the opponent out of the ring while maintaining standing control over them
- Valid scoring actions with the weapons during a Ringen am Schwert engagement will end the round.
- While this event is being held indoors on mats (as opposed to a venue with a concrete or wooden floor), a throw with intent from almost any height can still be damaging. 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.

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 whether your gear qualifies for the event, please reach out the tournament organizers prior to your arrival.

- Steel arming sword or sidesword made by a recognized smith, with a minimum overall weight of 950 grams and a maximum blade length of 92 cm, measured from the cross. Blades should be free of burrs and in good condition.
- A steel, wood or synthetic buckler whose longest dimension does not 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, and at least a soft glove for the buckler hand
- Jacket with at least 350N puncture resistance
- 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)

Scoring

At the Sword

- Thrusts, hews (cuts), slices, pommel strikes and strikes with the boss of the buckler 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.
- Buckler strikes must be made with the boss of the buckler, not with the rim.
- In the event that a blow is delivered beneath the waistline within the same timeframe as the other fencer delivers one above the waistline (two tempi, regardless of the order of attacks), the blow above the waistline will be given “priority” and the blow below the waistline will be disregarded.
- “Ring-outs” are not considered a scoring action unless they occur as part of a grappling exchange (see “**Ringen am Schwert**,” below). If one or both combatants exit the ring without being in a grappling exchange, 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.
 - Forcing the opponent out of the ring while maintaining standing control over them
- Valid scoring actions with the weapons during a Ringen am Schwert engagement will end the round.
- While this event is being held indoors on mats (as opposed to a venue with a concrete or wooden floor), a throw with intent from almost any height can still be damaging. 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.

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 a weapon or parts of a 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 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 and with a minimum weight of 850 grams. Blades should have a minimum length of 92 cm, be free of burrs and in good condition, and must be securely tipped with a tip made of leather, plastic or a spent bullet casing.
- Mask with occipital protection
- Lightly-padded leather or lacrosse gloves, at a minimum
- Jacket with at least 350N puncture resistance
- 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)

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.
- In the event that a blow is delivered beneath the waistline within the same timeframe as the other fencer delivers one above the waistline (two tempi, regardless of the order of attacks), the blow above the waistline will be given “priority” and the blow below the waistline will be disregarded.
- “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 in a grappling exchange
- 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 any part of the hilt besides the pommel
- 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 – Smallsword

The Rules and Requirements for the Smallsword 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 “smallsword” with a simple guard, made by a recognized smith. Blades should have a maximum length of 36” from the dish to the tip, and should be free of burrs and in good condition. Blades must be securely tipped with a tip made of leather, plastic or a spent bullet casing.
- Mask with occipital protection
- Lightly-padded leather or lacrosse gloves, at a minimum
- Jacket with at least 350N puncture resistance
- 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)

Scoring

At the Sword

- Thrusts and pommel strikes are 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.
- Pommel strikes must be made with control, and only to the mask.
- In the event that a blow is delivered beneath the waistline within the same timeframe as the other fencer delivers one above the waistline (two tempi, regardless of the order of attacks), the blow above the waistline will be given “priority” and the blow below the waistline will be disregarded.

- “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 the Smallsword 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.
- 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 in a grappling exchange
- 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 any part of the hilt besides the pommel
- 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 V – Saber

The Rules and Requirements for the Saber 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 saber made by a recognized smith and with a maximum total length of 105 cm. Blades should be in good condition and free of burrs, and must measure at least 16mm edge-to-edge at the guard. The total weapon weight must be between 620g and 950g.
- Mask with occipital protection
- Either a hard glove or the combination of a soft glove and a bell hilt with good coverage for the sword hand and a hard glove for the off-hand
- Jacket with at least 350N puncture resistance
- 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)

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 or pulling pressure.
- Pommel strikes must be made with control, and only to the mask.
- In the event that a blow is delivered beneath the waistline within the same timeframe as the other fencer delivers one above the waistline (two tempi, regardless of the order of attacks), the blow above the waistline will be given “priority” and the blow below the waistline will be disregarded.
- “Ring-outs” are not considered a scoring action unless they occur as part of a grappling exchange (see “**Ring am Schwert**,” below). If one or both combatants exit the ring without being in a grappling exchange, 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.
 - Forcing the opponent out of the ring while maintaining standing control over them
- Valid scoring actions with the weapons during a Ringen am Schwert engagement will end the round.
- While this event is being held indoors on mats (as opposed to a venue with a concrete or wooden floor), a throw with intent from almost any height can still be damaging. 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 any part of the hilt besides the pommel
- 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 VI – 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 made by a recognized smith and subject to approval by gear check staff
- Mask with occipital protection
- Hard gloves
- Jacket with at least 350N puncture resistance
- 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)

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 or pulling pressure.
- Pommel strikes must be made with control, and only to the mask.
- In the event that a blow is delivered beneath the waistline within the same timeframe as the other fencer delivers one above the waistline (two tempi, regardless of the order of attacks), the blow above the waistline will be given “priority” and the blow below the waistline will be disregarded.
- “Ring-outs” are not considered a scoring action unless they occur as part of a grappling exchange (see “**Ringen am Schwert**”, below). If one or both combatants exit the ring without being in a grappling exchange, 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.
 - Forcing the opponent out of the ring while maintaining standing control over them
- Valid scoring actions with the weapons during a Ringen am Schwert engagement will end the round.
- While this event is being held indoors on mats (as opposed to a venue with a concrete or wooden floor), a throw with intent from almost any height can still be damaging. 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 any part of the hilt besides the pommel
- 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 VII – Harnischfechten

For more detailed information about Harnischfechten expectations, please refer to www.lynxargent.org/lynx-accords. In brief, 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.