



SWASH 2013 Smallsword and Duelling Sabre Tournament Rules

Conditions of Participation

The Smallsword and Duelling Sabre tournament is open to all registered attendees of the hosting event provided they have sufficient experience to compete*.

All entrants:

- Must have completed a PARQ (Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire).
- Are highly recommended to have Personal Injury Insurance.
- Participate at their own risk.
- Agree to abide by The Rules.

***Entrants do not have to be BFHS members, but if you are not a member of a recognised martial arts school, you may be asked to demonstrate your level of competence before participating. If you are not an instructor, you must confirm with your instructor that they are happy for you to compete. Under-18s must provide written confirmation signed by their instructor.**

The Rules

Permissible weapons:

A wide range of late period duelling weapons and styles are permitted in this competition. The basic suggested weapons are smallsword, spadron (or shearing sword), sabre and epee de combat. The judging panel must examine all weapons prior to participation and their word regarding the classification or allow-ability of any individual weapon is final. Other weapon types and styles may be permitted at the discretion of the judging panel.

Technical details for standard weapon types:

Smallsword

- Modern size 2 (max. blade length: 825mm), or smaller, epee style blade with a straight tang.
- Blade must be blunt and buttoned
- Hilt may, or may not, be fitted with a knuckle bow and/or arms
- Maximum guard diameter: 120mm (approximately the size of a modern foil guard)

Spadron or shearing sword

- Blade must be blunt and buttoned
- Blade must be flexible enough to allow safe use of point attacks
- Blade must be of a similar length to a smallsword but broader and heavier than the standard triangular epee style
- Straight tang
- Hilt may, or may not, have a knuckle bow and/or arms
- Maximum guard diameter: 120mm (approximately the size of a modern foil guard)

Sabre

- Blade may be straight or curved
- Blade must be flexible, and buttoned, if point attacks are to be used
- Hilt without arms or ricasso
- Large guard with incorporated knuckle bow



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- Example weapons include, but are not necessarily limited to, Pecoraro or Radaelli type sabres. Hutton type sabres are also permitted but there is currently no commercially available Hutton sabre with a sufficiently flexible blade to allow the use of point attacks with this type of weapon.

Epee de combat

- Modern size 5 (max. blade length 900mm), or smaller, epee style blade
- Tang may be straight or have a "set"
- Hilt without knuckle bow, arms or ricasso
- Maximum guard diameter: 150mm, (modern epee guard size)

Safety and protective equipment:

All competitors are required to wear the following mandatory safety equipment during each bout/assault they are participating in:

- Fencing mask: minimum 1600N bib.
- Fencing jacket: minimum 350N rating. Front fastenings (where present) must be on the non-swordarm side. All jacket openings must be securely fastened during fencing.
- Plastron: Minimum 350N and covering the jacket seam on the swordarm side.
- Gauntleted gloves: To be worn with gauntlet covering the cuffs of the fencing jacket
- Impact resistant chest protectors for female entrants
- Impact resistant groin protection for male entrants
- Impact resistant forearm and elbow guard: To be worn on swordarm during any bout against an opponent armed with a cutting or dual-purpose weapon. Not required to be worn if facing an opponent armed with a smallsword or epee de combat.

All safety equipment must fit correctly and be in good condition. Equipment with any rips, tears, dents, abrasions or other defects, which may affect protective performance, will be disallowed.

In addition the following safety equipment is also highly recommended to all participants and may become mandatory in future:

- Fencing breeches or coaching trousers with a minimum 350N rating
- Impact resistant chest protectors for male entrants

Dangerous actions such as the use of excessive force or fencing without sufficient control to ensure the safety of all participants will not be permitted.

- If such actions occur and are adjudicated by the judging panel to be accidental in nature then a hit will be awarded against the offending fencer and a caution issued. If the offending fencer executes a second dangerous action at anytime during the remainder of the competition they will be withdrawn from the lists.
- If any dangerous action is adjudicated by the judging panel to have been performed deliberately then the offending fencer will be immediately withdrawn from the remainder of the competition.

Hitting

- A hit will be awarded when the target area of the opposing fencer is correctly struck with the blade of the sword.
- Strikes may be made by either cut or thrust depending on weapon type.
- Smallsword and epee de combat may strike only with the point



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- Sabre and spadron may strike with both cut and thrust if the weapon is judged suitable. Note: as mentioned above Hutton style sabres are currently not suitable for thrusting and may only strike with a cut.
- A point strike will be judged correctly executed when the buttoned tip of the weapon connects with the target area of the opposing fencer and sufficient pressure is applied to flex the blade.
- A strike with the cutting edge can be made by either a slicing or percussive blow
- A slice or cut will be judged correctly executed when the cutting edge of the weapon is drawn or pushed against the target area of the opposing fencer with sufficient pressure that a sharp blade would draw blood from bare skin.
- A percussive blow will be judged correctly executed when the cutting edge of the weapon connects with the target area with momentum but without being pushed or drawn. Care must be taken that this type of strike does not violate the rule against excessive use of force.
- Punching, kicking, gouging, head butting, throwing, biting or grappling is not permitted.
- A hit will be awarded for disarming the opponent
- Commanding of the weapon or swordarm will be permitted as long as such action does not result the breach of the rules concerning hitting or dangerous conduct
- A hit will be awarded when a commanding action immediately leads to a scoring strike according to the above rules or immediately results in the unanswerable threat of such a strike. When a commanding action results in either a similar action from the opponent or a closing of distance and the outbreak of grappling then the bout will be halted and no hit awarded
- Strikes may not be made with the pommel or hilt of the weapon; although such strikes may be indicated by a pulled action that does not connect with the opponent. Such actions may be adjudicated, at the judging panel's discretion, as scoring a hit if they fulfil the rules for unanswerable threat of a strike.
- Bouts will be halted once a hit has been awarded, however immediately after being struck a fencer will be permitted one unit of fencing time to return a stroke if they can. If this action is successful then a dual hit shall be called.

Target Area

- The target area for all weapons is the whole of the body, except for the area at the back of the head which is unprotected by a standard fencing mask.
- The target area will consist of the external surface area of any protective equipment currently being worn.

Assaults and bouts

- The order of bouts will be posted at the beginning of each round
- Fencers will be called to the combat area at the beginning of their bout and called to prepare at the beginning of the bout preceding their next appearance.
- Any fencer not appearing when called or appearing without all required equipment will have a hit awarded to their opponent.
- For every further 30 seconds delay awaiting a fencer a further hit will be awarded to their opponent (Note: it is possible to lose a bout in this manner).
- At the beginning of each bout fencers are required to salute each other and the judging panel.



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- At the end of each bout fencers are again required to salute each other and the judging panel and to then shake hands with their non-weapon hand.
- The call of "en garde" will be used to bring fencers to their guard position at the start of each assault. The readiness of fencers will then be assured with a call of "prêt", fencers should acknowledge their readiness. The assault will be commenced with a call of "allez".
- The call of "halt" is used to end an assault when a hit has been scored. It should also be used to stop combat at any time there is a danger to the fencers, judges, spectators, other persons present or a breach of the rules has occurred.
- After each halt the president of the judging panel will describe the actions leading to the call of "halt" and any hit awarded. The bout will then be restarted as described above.

Rounds

Round 1: Qualification by pool fencing.

- Competitors will be assigned to pools by lottery
- All members of each pool will be required to fence all other members of that pool
- Victory in a bout will be awarded to the first fencer to score 5 hits
- The maximum allowable fencing time (measured between the calls of "allez" and "halt") will be 3 minutes. If this time has elapsed and no victory has been gained then the bout will be halted and the current score recorded as final
- The number of hits for a victory and the time allowed can be reduced at the discretion of the judging panel depending on the available time and the number of participating fencers
- During qualification dual hits will be awarded as one hit to each fencer
- At the end of the qualification round fencers will be ranked according to the number of victories gained and the number of hits they have taken. The fencer with the most victories gained and the least hits against them will be ranked first, the one with the least victories and most hits against them last.
- The ranking will then be used to determine which fencers progress to the elimination round and the order of fencing in that round.

Round 2: Elimination

- Round 2 will consist of a series of direct elimination contests between the top ranked fencers after round 1.
- Bouts will be as for round 1 but with the exception that dual hits will no longer be scored for either fencer.
- As for round 1 the number of hits required for a victory and the time allowed can be reduced at the discretion of the judging panel.