





LANCET FENCING

Modern Rapier Rules

Structure

Bout: A bout consists of a number of sets. The fencer winning the most sets wins the bout. The number of sets required to win a bout depends on the formats listed below.

Traditional Bout: 3 of 5 sets

Tournament Bouts: Pool Bout: 1 set -- Direct Elimination bout: 4 of 7 sets

Set: All sets, regardless of format, are comprised of three touches. The first fencer awarded two touches wins the set. The first fencer to be awarded a touch is said to have “Advantage”. If the next touch is scored by the fencer with Advantage then that fencer wins the set but if the next touch comes from the opponent to the fencer with Advantage then the opponent would make the Set Status “neutral”. If the set status is neutral then the fencer who is awarded the next touch wins the set. See Set Status for details.

(Rationale: Scoring with sets insures that neither combatant can score so many points that victory is out of reach. It also allows for some strategic in-game circumstances.)

Terms

Score: The fencers’ score is the number of sets won and within the set, the status of touches.

Set Status: number does not tally the score within a set. Each time a fencer is awarded a touch the set status changes:

No advantage = no touches have been awarded/scored

Advantage = the first fencer to be awarded/score a touch in a set has Advantage

Neutral = when both fencers have awarded a touch.

Set = the first fencer to be awarded/score two touches wins the set.

Hit: A thrust finding target quickly and forcefully. (See: “The Weapon” for details.)

Touch: A hit that can be discerned as being within the definitions of Singular or of greater priority than its Simultaneous or Subsequent counterpart.

Tempo: A beat in time that is an estimation of the period required to perform one action: i.e.: feint, thrust, parry, step, etc.

Refrain: A sequence of hits beginning with the marker and ending when the Director calls halt.

(Rationale: Lancel does not call upon the Director to judge what is or what is not a proper attack nor does it rely on an arbitrary cut off from an electronic box. The Refrain organizes hits within the framework of Tempo.)

Marker: Marking the beginning of the Refrain, the Marker is defined as the first hit or strike occurring in a set.

Singular: A hit that is not simultaneous or subsequently followed by another from the opponent.

Simultaneous: Hits from both combatants in a single Tempo.

Subsequent: A hit occurring in the second beat of the Refrain.

(Rationale: James Amberger book *The Secret History of the sword* outlines several examples where an opponent, having lost all concern for his own safety after having been wounded, delivers a fatal thrust to his enemy.)

Late Hit: A hit after the subsequent window of opportunity. For example the hit occurring on the 3rd beat is disregarded.

Thrust: An attempt to hit using the point of the blade.

Strike: An attempt to hit using the pommel.

Molinello: An attempt to hit using the blade edge against the mask

Target Delineation:

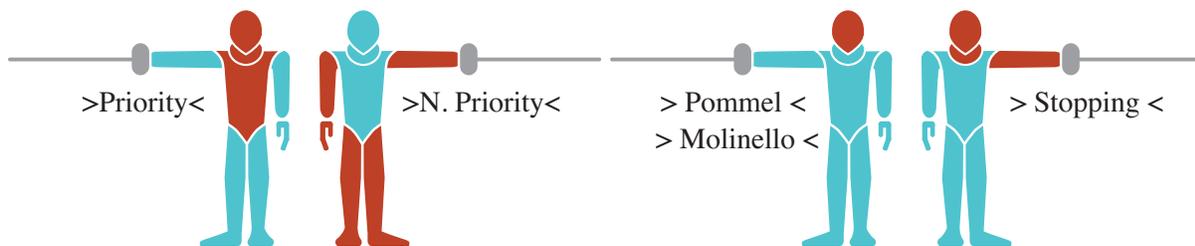
Target is divided into four regions:

Priority= Torso and Mask

Non-priority = Arms and Legs (thrust only)

Stopping hit = Weapon Arm and Mask (thrust only)

Pommel = Mask only, excluding the bib.



(Rationale: The target delineations above are chosen from conventional definitions of target and for simplicity.)

Halt: All Fencing action must stop. The Director may call halt in the following instances:

When the combatants have lost the window of opportunity for a subsequent hit.

Simultaneous hits to Priority target.

A Marker Hit to Stopping target.

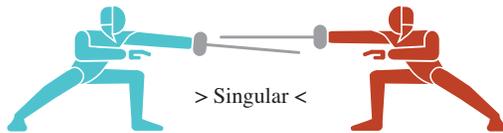
Warnings & Penalties

Any action deemed dangerous by the director.

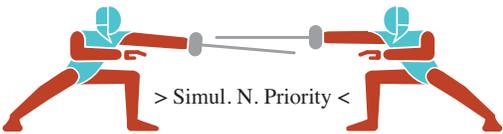
Judging Hits and Awarding Touches

Refrains that end in the following sequences are judged as follows (Red = Hit):

Singular Hit: Touch for the delivering Fencer.

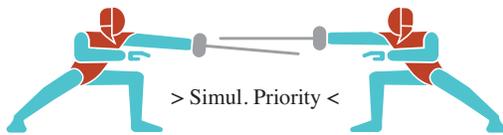


Simultaneous Equal Non-Priority Target: Hits are dismissed. No touch is awarded.



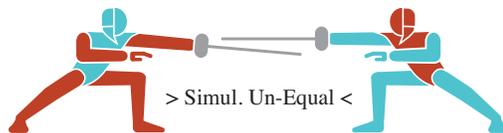
(Rationale: Both combatants are considered negligent of their self-defense so no touch is awarded.)

Simultaneous Hits to Priority target: Priority Warning, (see Priority Warning).



(Rationale: Both combatants are considered extremely negligent of their self defense so no touch and a Warning is issued that affects both combatants.)

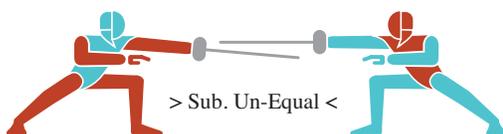
Simultaneous Un-Equal Targets: The fencer who hits priority target is awarded a touch.



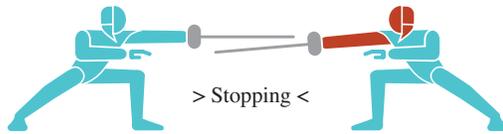
Subsequent Equal Targets: Hits to equal target are disregarded unless the marker hit is stopping. (See Stopping hit)



Subsequent Un-Equal Targets: The Fencer who hits priority target is awarded a touch unless the marker hit is Stopping. (See Stopping hit)



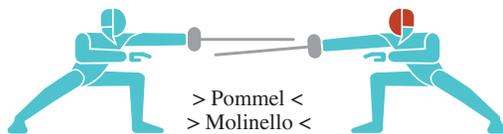
Stopping Hit: Marker hits to Stopping Target are awarded Touches. Subsequent hits are disregarded.



(Rationale: Not to be confused with a stop hit or attack in time from conventional fencing a “Stopping-hit” is a hit that takes into account the stiffness & penetration qualities of a real weapon. A real blade is made to keep your opponent away from you and if delivered to target solidly in the right location will penetrate and prevent further progress of the opposing steel. Our practice weapons have blades that flex for safety reasons. This flex could allow a subsequent hit. Our 4 lbs. spring will simulate the concept of penetration but will not simulate the stiffness of the blade. Practice historical blades are stiffer but, because of the rather large Archery blunts they are fitted with; hits to the sword arm are difficult to judge. It’s for this reason that we have created the stopping hit. The Stopping hit is always the Marker hit. It is never subsequent or simultaneous. We realize that there are many locations on the human body that could be considered a stopping hit but for simplicity’s sake we have chosen to delineate only two regions as stopping. The Sword arm and the Mask. Simultaneous hits to stopping target are judged as Simultaneous Hits. (See Simultaneous equal target and un-equal Target).

Late Hits: A Late hit are those hits that happen outside the Subsequent window of opportunity to hit i.e. the 3rd beat of the Refrain.

Pommel Strikes: Striking the mask with the pommel only of the weapon will score a touch provided that no other hits or strikes have occurred in the refrain. Point hits in all cases take priority to pommel strikes. Simultaneous and Subsequent Pommel Strikes are subject to the same criteria listed above for thrusts. Pommel strikes must be conducted with the utmost care and control. A mere graze of the mask with the pommel is enough to constitute a strike. Excessive Force and or malicious strikes are prohibited.



(Rationale: The Pommel Strike is the last chance a swordsman has at close quarters to use the sword effectively before grappling could begin. It’s for this reason we chose to include the pommel strike so that the fencer may practice utilizing the weapon from point to pommel.)

Molinello (head cut): Striking the mask with an edge of your blade will score a touch and should be judged as Non-priority target.

(Rationale: A cut from a rapier was not very deep but it’s still a sharp metal stick and will hurt like hell and break the skin and often that was enough to stop the encounter so in interests of hybridization we’re including the cut into lancet in the form of the Molinello.

Priority Warnings & Penalties

Priority Warning: The first occurrence of Simultaneous hits to Priority Target results in a Priority Warning and the hits are disregarded. This warning lasts for one set.

Priority Penalty: The second occurrence of Simultaneous hits to Priority Target, in a set, results in the advancement of the set status. In the case of “No Advantage” the set is advanced to Neutral. If one Fencer holds Advantage, that Fencer will win the Set*. In cases where the set status is Neutral and the Priority Penalty is drawn both fencers are subject to the “Hand of Fate”**

(Rationale: Advancing the set from No Advantage to Neutral penalizes both combatants by reducing the number of chances to win the set when once they had 2 chances now it's sudden death.)

*Drawing the Penalty: A fencer with advantage has proven the ability to score a touch so has the option of “Drawing the Penalty” to win the set. Drawing the Penalty may not be employed in the final set of a bout i.e. the 5th set of a bout or the 7th of a Direct Elimination Bout. An example of “Drawing the Penalty” would be if one Fencer has advantage and both are in Priority Warning, the fencer with Advantage may tempt the opponent to, once again, attack Priority Target while simultaneously hitting Priority Target thus causing the Director to halt the bout and award the set to the fencer with Advantage since the Priority Penalty is to advance the set for both Fencers.

**Hand of Fate: Essentially a coin toss, however, a glove may be spun horizontally and the forefinger points to the winner.

(Rationale: The coin toss is representative of the fencer's choice to hand their fate to chance by continually hitting each other simultaneously with no apparent regard for their own safety.)

Card Warnings & Penalties

Cards:

Yellow Card = Warning (commonly striking with the hilt & not the pommel.)

Red Card = Touch against the offender (holding blade, out of bounds, etc.)

Black Card = Expulsion (unsportsmanlike conduct, excessive contact)

Pushing, Grappling and Body Contact: Some pushing Jostling and body contact is allowed provided it occurs in an attempt to defend against a thrust, strike or in the attempt to create an opportunity to thrust or strike. Doing so with deliberate intent to knock down the opponent will be penalized as Kicking & Tripping.

Grasping, Holding and Trapping the Blade: fencers may grasp the blade & redirect it for the length of one beat. Failure to release the blade on the second beat is a Red Card to the offender. Deflecting the blade without trapping the blade is allowed.

Kicking and Tripping: Kicking & tripping are not allowed. Any deliberate action in this vain will result in a Red Card. A second occurrence will result in a Black Card.

Striking with the Hilt: Hits with the hilt may only be scored with the pommel against the mask. Use of any other part of the hilt for striking or striking uncovered portions of the head is a violation & results in a Yellow Card on the first occurrence and a Red Card thereafter.

Out of Bounds: Crossing the bounds of the field with both feet is a Red Card.

Defensive Actions: The Weapon and all parts of one's body are employable to deflect the opposing blade

except the foot. However, the fencer may be hit while attempting to do so. Attempting to deflect the blade by the use of a kick with the foot will be penalized as Kicking & Tripping.

(Rationale: The exclusion of the foot as a defensive element is designed to discourage kicking the blade that could be dangerous to all involved.)

Equipment

Clothing: FIE approved clothing, masks and blades are recommended.

The Weapon:

Electric: The Lancet is used for scoring. It is an epee with French or pistol grip modified with a pommel and a 4 lbs. pressure spring in place of the standard 750gram spring. Instead of a body cord we plug an audio hit registering device (beeper:) into the 3-prong socket*.

-- Customizing is allowed to fit the fencer's technique. Overall length of the weapon has yet to be quantified. Please note: the stiffer your choice of blade the better off you are with a 4 lbs. spring. If your blade is too flexible that will increase the amount of speed and force necessary to set off your beeper.

Dry: All manner of dry fencing weapons including historical replica rapier blades if preferred are usable within the system. Hits are to be judged by significant bending of the blade upon the opponent's target.

* Lack of a proper wireless scoring device forces us to use a Mini 2 long tone epee beeper. It is preferable to locate beepers with 2 different tones so that simultaneous hits are audibly polyphonic. Wireless Epee scoring systems are not recommended because of the epee cut off time.

General Procedure

At the beginning of a bout the fencers start at the Set Start lines. When the Director calls "Fence" or "Play". The fencers may enter the field and begin fencing. The fencers may move freely within the boundaries of the Field. They may stand any way they wish and may use any technique: old, new, and or, just thought up, to try and hit their opponent with the point or pommel of their weapons.

When a Refrain begins, indicated by a Marker Hit, the Director will wait until the subsequent window of opportunity to hit has passed to call halt. At that point the fencers will stop fencing and stay in place. If the Director awards a touch the fencers will go back to either the en garde lines or the Set start lines depending on whether or not the touch awarded wins or advances the set. If the Director does not award a touch the fencers continue the bout from their relative positions at the time of halt at En Garde distance.

THE FIELD

(Fencers are not to scale)

