

Longsword Tournament Rules

Davenriche European Martial Artes School

Match Format

A match will have three officials: two judges and a Marshal. The Marshal oversees the match and is the arbiter on safety and sportsmanship. Fighters are to follow the directions of the Marshal, who has final word on all matters regarding the match.

The Marshal or any judge can pause the match by calling hold. When hold is called fighters are to halt and return to their starting locations. Fighters are not to launch new attacks after hold is called but should continue to defend themselves against strikes launched before hold is called.

If an official sees a valid strike, they will call hold and raise the flag of the appropriate fighter (along with any modifiers). The Marshal will then call for the target hit by the fighter and the judges will indicate with the flags. If two or more judges indicate the same target, the fighter will be awarded points as below. If there is disagreement as to the target, but at least two judges report a hit, then the fighter will be awarded the target worth the least amount of points. If only one judge saw the strike, then no points are awarded.

The Marshal and/or judges can also call hold if they see a penalty. Judges will alert the Marshal of the penalty. The Marshal will determine if the fighter committed a penalty and the appropriate response, such as warning, awarding a point to opponent, disqualification.

A fighter can also call hold for the purposes of self-reporting hits, to seek clarification on the Marshal's instruction, or for any safety reason (such as gear malfunction). Seeking clarification is only to be used so that the fighter better understands the Marshal's instruction, not to dispute a call. If a fighter calls hold, the fighter stays safe and opens distance while getting the attention of the Marshal.

Length

Each match will last for 2 minutes or once the maximum score has been reached. Once 2 minutes has been reached the timekeeper will call hold. If the score is tied, the next point scored wins the match.

Points Limit

The match will be concluded once a fighter has reached a total of 9 points.

Points Scoring

Target	Cut/Thrust/Slice	Pommel	Disarm	Afterblow	Stesso Strike
Head	4	1	5 +Automatic Win	-2	+1
Torso	3	0			
Legs	2	0			
Arms	1	0			

Valid Strikes

Points will be awarded for cuts, thrusts, slices and pommel strikes that hit and are made safely and with intent. Points will not be awarded for touches with the sword.

- Cuts: For a cut to be considered valid it must travel an arc of 65 degrees. Cuts must be delivered with sound body structure to be considered valid. Strikes with the tip of the sword, incidental contact and flailing type attacks are not valid cuts. SCA style 'wrap strikes' are not valid cuts.
- Thrusts: Thrusts must be delivered in a committed manner, rather than pokes which make superficial contact. A sword bend is not required if the fighter is in range to deliver a deeper blow.
- Slices: A valid slice must exert sufficient pressure on the target that judging staff can clearly see the effect on the balance and structure of the affected fighter. Please note that this requires a very high degree of commitment, and is not simply sawing a blade back and forth on the body.
- Pommel Strikes: Pommel strikes are only valid against the mask. Though the pommel does not need to hit hard it must display a structure capable of delivering the whole body's force rather than a lucky strike from an uncontrolled fighter.
- Punches: Punches are valid strikes but do not score and hold will not be called for successful punches.

Disarms

A disarm is defined as a fighter:

- 1) taking sole possession of his/her opponent's sword,
- 2) retaining sole possession of his/her sword, and
- 3) making a valid strike against his/her opponent OR opening distance to back-foot-to-back-foot distance.

A disarm is awarded 5 points and the disarming fighter immediately winning the match.

Afterblows

Afterblows are the result of a fighter striking and then failing to defend him/herself. An afterblow is defined as a fighter making a valid strike and then is hit with a valid strike by the opponent in the next action. If the opponent's strike began before hold was called and it is a valid strike, that will be ruled as an afterblow. An afterblow deducts 2 points from the score of the fighter who hit first, with a minimum score of zero.

Stesso Strike

A stesso strike is a valid slice, cut, or thrust that is 1) made in response to the opponent's attack and 2) controls or displaces the opponent's blade, *in the same action* as the valid strike, so that the fighter is not hit. A stesso strike will be awarded +1 point.

Double Hits

Double hits are the result of fighters who are attacking with no attempt to defend themselves. A double hit is defined as two fighters making valid strikes against each other in the same action. If three double hits have been assigned to both fighters, the match is halted and both fighters are assigned a loss.

Should the Marshal determine that a double hit was without a doubt the direct result of a single individual acting with complete disregard of defense the Marshal can assign the fault of the double strike to the individual in question. The other fighter will be awarded points for a valid strike at the judges' discretion. Should a single fighter earn his third double hit as a result of this, the match is halted and the fighter is assigned a loss.

Hand or Limb Parries

If a fighter moves a hand or limb into the path of a valid strike, it will be scored as a strike to the original target. The fighter may also receive a warning for safety and/or unsportsmanlike conduct.

Zogho Stretto (close play)

Fighters are allowed to engage in zogho stretto for a duration of three beats (approximately 3 seconds). If there is not a valid strike during that time, hold will be called with no points awarded. During zogho stretto is the only time fighters may make one handed strikes with their swords. Fighters can punch but these do not score. Joint locks, takedowns, and kicks are not allowed.

Declining Points

A fighter who feels that he or she awarded points for a strike that was not valid can choose to decline the points. The fighter alerts the Marshal and indicates that the points are being declined.

Self-Declaring Hits

A fighter may declare a valid strike on him/herself by the opponent. To do so the fighter opens distance, calls hold, and alerts the Marshal. The Marshal has the discretion to award the points to the opponent or not.

Dropped Swords & Fallen or Defenseless Fighters

If a fighter drops their sword outside of zogho stretto, trips & falls, or is otherwise defenseless due to non-contact injury or failure of safety equipment, hold will be called immediately. A fighter is expected to withdraw when his/her opponent drops their sword, falls, or is in some way defenseless. If a fighter continually drops their sword, falls, or otherwise is defenseless, the Marshal can intervene and end the match.

Forfeiting & Disqualifications

If a fighter is disqualified or has to forfeit due to non-contact injury or equipment malfunction, the opponent is awarded a win. If the winning fighter has less than 5 pts, then his/her score is increased to 5 pts.

If a fighter has to forfeit due to an injury caused by his/her opponent, then the opponent is not awarded a win or any points.

Off Limits Targets & Techniques

The following are off limits for safety reasons:

- Direct targeting of the back of head and spine. Fighters also cannot expose the back of their head to their opponent.
- Direct targeting of the hands and feet. Should the defender move their hand or foot in the path of a strike targeted at a valid target (such as the forearm or leg) it will be scored as a Hand or Limb Parry (see above).
- Kicks are not permitted.
- One handed blows are not permitted except when the other hand is removed as part of a close play technique executed against an opponent.
- Joint locks and takedowns are not permitted.
- 'Mordschlag' style strikes are not permitted.
- Any strike thrown with a complete lack of control on the part of the attacker. Competitive martial arts fighting involves throwing forceful strikes with full intent to make contact, however each competitor is expected to maintain a respect for their opponent's safety at all times.

Fighters who target off limits areas or perform the above techniques will be progressively warned, penalized and disqualified by the Marshal. Excessive or egregious violations will result in expulsion from the tournament.

Penalties

Fighters who step out of the ring, use excessive force, are unsafe, or otherwise act in an unsportsmanlike manner will be penalized by the Marshal. A fighter who commits a penalty during an otherwise valid strike does not score points that strike, even if the penalty only earns warning.

	Out of Bounds	Excessive Force	Unsafe Conduct	Unsportsmanlike Behavior
1st Offense	Warning	Warning		
2nd Offense	1 Point to opponent*	1 Point to opponent		
3rd Offense		Fighter Loses Match.		

*Penalty for 2nd and each subsequent offense.

Out of Bounds: If a fighter steps out of bounds (through their own action or by the actions of the opponent), hold will be called. The fighter will receive a warning for the first offense and for every offense after that, one point will be awarded to the opponent. A fighter stepping out of bounds can still be hit with a valid strike by his/her opponent.

Excessive Force: Fighters are expected to strike with intent however they are also expected to maintain control. Should a fighter strike with force deemed excessive, the fighter will receive a warning. A second offense will result in the fighter's opponent being awarded a point. A third offense will result in the match ending and the fighter being assigned a loss.

Unsafe Conduct: Fighters are expected to act with their safety and the safety of the opponent, judges, staff, and spectators in mind. Examples of unsafe behavior include attacking off limits targets, engaging in off limits techniques, exposing the back of their own head, or deliberately engaging in limb or hand parries. Should a fighter act in an unsafe manner, the fighter will receive a warning. A second offense will result in the fighter's opponent being awarded a point. A third offense will result in the match ending and the fighter being assigned a loss.

Unsportsmanlike Behavior: Fighters are expected to act respectfully to each other, tournament staff, and spectators. Should a fighter *or spectators for the fighter* demonstrate poor sportsmanship, the fighter will receive a warning. A second offense will result in the fighter's opponent being awarded a point. A third offense will result in the match ending and the fighter being assigned a loss.

Note #1: In the case of especially egregious penalties or multiple penalties of a different kind, the Marshal has the authority to immediately award a penalty point and/or disqualify a fighter from the match or tournament.

Note #2: other than stepping out of bounds, the definitions of penalties are not precise because excessive force, unsafe conduct, and unsportsmanlike behavior are "know it when you see it" actions. As such the Marshal has the discretion to apply these penalties, and their interpretations are final. We know everyone is here to have a good time and do not anticipate any issues, but safety and respect are our top priorities.

Equipment Requirements

Protective Gear

Fighters are responsible for having protective gear that is in good condition. All protective gear will be inspected by the tournament staff prior to competition. If any armor is deemed to be unsafe or inappropriate, the participant will be required to remove it and replace it with a piece of appropriate equipment.

With the exception of gauntlets, heavy armor (breast plates, etc) or Fantasy-styled armors are not permitted. No exposed skin is permitted.

Mask: Masks should have back of head protection. Examples of acceptable types of masks are Absolute Force or That Guy's style masks.

Throat Protection: throat guard must be rigid and protect the throat from a direct thrust.

Jacket: heavy padded gambesons or HEMA jackets (e.g. SPES style) are required. Jackets with armpit holes or jackets that are open in the front are not allowed.

Gloves/Gauntlets: acceptable style of gloves include hard plastic "clamshell" (e.g. SPES heavy style glove), Konig style gloves, or metal gauntlets. Red Dragon style gloves or lacrosse gloves are not allowed.

⇒ If a fighter wears metal gauntlets, the fighter is not allowed to punch. Doing so will result in a Unsafe Conduct penalty.

Other Protective Gear:

- Elbow protection must be hard protection that covers the 3 points of the elbow.
- Knee protection must be hard protection that covers the front & sides of the knee.
- Groin protection is required for male fighters.
- Chest protection is required for female fighters and recommended for male fighters.
- Shin and forearm protection are not required but recommended.

Longswords

Swords should feder style longswords. They must be blunted and flexible, free of rust, or jagged burrs. The sword should be an appropriate length (roughly reaching to the fighter's armpit), neither too long or too short.

Fencer Conduct

All fighters are expected to display skill and control. This is a martial arts tournament and all fighters are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the weapon, their opponent, and the tournament staff. Any fighter that is deemed to pose a danger to themselves or others will be addressed at the discretion of the Marshal and/or the tournament director.

If a fighter has a question regarding the ruling by the Marshal or judges, the fighter is invited to speak with the Marshal after the tournament. However during a match the Marshal's ruling on any subject is final.