

The Tournament Handbook

Volume 0: Glossary, Conventions, & Taxonomy

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by

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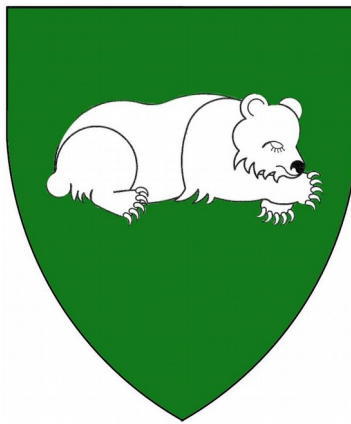


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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my wife Pam (also known as Arcadia) who patiently listened to me rant and rave about the mathematics and simulation of tournaments for months...

Introduction

*“The time has come,” the Walrus said,
“To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings.” – Lewis Carroll*

Glossary

Parts of a Tournament

Fight

A fight is the most atomic element of an SCA tournament. Two fighters engage in combat until one or both of the fighters are dead.

Bout

A bout consists of one or more fights depending on the tournament conventions and is used to track the progress of a fighter in the tournament through wins and losses.[MOL00]

Round

A round consists of one or more bouts with fighters only fighting one bout per round. The use of rounds in a tournament depends on the type of tournament.

List

The list is a...

List Field

The list field is the physical space in which a tournament is fought. The list field is usually cordoned off to prevent non-combatants from accidentally entering the list field during combat. A large list field may be subdivided into multiple smaller fields to allow bouts to be fought concurrently.[SCA00]

Eric

The eric refers to the ropes, markers, and poles used to cordon off a list field. However, the term also refers to the list field as well.[SCA00] A very simple eric consists of one or more segments

of rope and a set of poles. The poles are driven into the ground at the corners of the field and the rope is strung at waist height between the poles. Small pennants are often attached to the rope to improve the visibility of the eric and add some décor to the list field.

List Table

The list table is the location where Minister of the List is located during the tournament. Fighters report the list table prior to the start of the tournament to enter.

Personnel

SCA tournaments require the participation of personnel from several different kingdom offices (Marshallate, Minister of the List, and Herald). The definitions are based the documents, handbooks, and websites for the kingdom offices of the Kingdom of the Outlands. Please refer to your kingdom's office resources for more information.

Sponsor

The Sponsor is the person or group who is responsible of putting on the tournament.[MOL00]

Marshal-in-Charge (MiC)

The Marshal-in-Charge is the person responsible organizing and executing at tournament as well as making sure the tournament meets all the safety requirements for SCA combat.[MAR00][MOL00][MOL01][MOL02] The MiC decides the format and convention of the tournament (usually with input from the tournament sponsor), organizes and tasks the required personnel, and resolves any issues or conflicts that arises during the tournament.

Minister of the List (MoL)

The Minister of the List is the person responsible for making sure the tournament meets all the legal requirements for SCA combat. The MoL checks that all fighters entering the tournament are legal members of the SCA, have signed the combat waiver, and are authorized for the type of combat in the tournament. The MoL is also tracks the progress of the tournament and handles pairing for fighters for bouts and rounds.[MOL00][MOL01][MOL02] In the Kingdom of the Outlands, ministers of the list are trained and employed under the Office of the Kingdom Minister of the List.

Field Marshal

The Field Marshal oversees the execution of each fight and is responsible for ensuring fighter safety.[MOL00] A field marshals must have a valid field marshal authorization in order to marshal an official SCA tournament and every fight must be marshaled by at least one field marshal.[MAR00]

Field Herald

The field herald is announces the names of entrants in tournaments, orders of combat, and winners of matches.[MOL00][MOL01][PLO00] In the Kingdom of the Outlands, field heralds are trained and employed under the Office of the Plover Herald.

Runner

A runner is used to take cards to and from the MoL and the list field.[MOL00] At the start of each round, runners will take the cards from the MoL to the field herald or field marshal. At the end of each bout, the runner will take the cards from the list field to MoL. If a tournament doesn't have a runner, the winning fighter is usually responsible for taking the cards from the list field to the MoL.

Bye Fighter

A bye fighter is used to resolve bye bouts. The bye fighter is a fighter not actively participating in the tournament and is usually selected prior to the start of the tournament. For tournaments used to select champions, the bye fighter is often the current champion.

Metrics

“Measure twice, cut once.” – English Proverb

A metric is used to measure some aspect of a tournament's performance and allow different tournament formats to be compared or contrasted.

Total Time

This metric measures the total time required to complete the tournament. The total time is usually a function of the number fighters in the tournament, the number of fields being used, and the number of fights per bout.

Total Bouts

This metric measures the total number of bouts required to complete a tournament. The total bouts is usually a function of the number of fighters in the tournament and the number of fields being used. This metric can be used to generate an estimate the total time by multiplying the total bouts by an estimated time per bout.

Minimum Bouts

This metric measures the minimum number of bouts a fighter will fight during a tournament.

Maximum Bouts

This metric measures the maximum number of bouts a fighter can fight during a tournament. Thus, the total number of bouts a fighter will fight during a tournament is bounded between the minimum and maximum bouts.

Time Between Bouts

This metric measures the time between bouts.

Visibility

This metric measures how visible a fighter's progress in a tournament is to the tournament spectators.

Forgiveness

This metric measures the how strongly a fighter's performance in each bout affects their overall progress in the tournament. In a forgiving tournament, a fighter may be able to lose several bouts yet still be in contention for the overall winner of the tournament.

Conventions

The tournament conventions are a set of rules that govern how the tournament executes as well as the victory conditions for each bout and the tournament. At the start of a tournament, the conventions are announced by the MiC so the fighters know how the tournament is being run. Also known as the “**Rules of the List**”.

Teams

Under this convention, the bouts are fought by teams of fighters. Team tournaments often require significantly more space, personnel, and time to run and their single fighter counterparts. Teams are usually restricted in terms of size and composition to preserve fairness.

Size Cap

In this variant of the convention, the maximum size of the team is restricted to a predetermined values such as 2, 3 or 5 fighters. For melee team tournaments, the size cap is usually based on size of the field and the number of field marshals.

Precedence Cap

In this variant of the convention, the team composition is restricted using the precedence of the fighters on the team. For example, a 5 man armored combat team tournament might restrict the

number of knights on each team to 2.

Point Cap

In this variant of the convention, the size and composition of the team is restricted by assigning each fighter on the team a point value, summing all the point values, and then limiting the maximum sum. This system is analogous to the salary cap system used in professional sports.

For example, let's examine a possible point cap system for an armored combat team melee tournament with a point cap of 20 points..

Precedence	Points
Duke	8
Count	7
Knight	4
GoA Armored Combat Award	3
AoA Armored Combat Award	2
No Armored Combat Awards	1

Table 1: Armored Combat Point Values

Using the point values in the table above, fighters are allowed to enter any team which doesn't exceed the point cap.

Team	Size	Points
2 x Duke, 1 x Knight	3	20
2 x Count, 1 x Knight, 1 x AoA	3	20
10 x AoA	10	20
1 x Knight, 5 x GoA	6	19

Table 2: Possible Point Capped Teams

Resolution

Fights can be resolved either by melee or by one-on-one fights. In the melee variant of this convention, both teams engage in a melee with the victory condition being last man standing. In the one-on-one variant, team members engage in one or more fights with an opposing team member and victory is awarded to the team which wins the most fights.

Multiple Fields

Under this convention, the list field is divided into smaller fields and the bouts in each round are distributed over them. This allows bouts to be fought concurrently and reduces the time required to fight each round. Usually the early rounds of a tournament are fought on multiple fields but the final rounds are fought on a single field.

Byes

For tournaments that use rounds, a bye occurs when there is an odd number of fighters fighting in that round.[MOL00] In SCA tournaments, byes are handled in three ways.

Skip Bye

Under this convention, the fighter receiving the bye doesn't fight in that round and receives an automatic victory.

Bye Bout

Under this convention, the fighter receiving the bye fights a bout with a bye fighter. If the convention specifies a destructive bye, the outcome of the bout counts against the fighter just like a regular bout. For example, a fighter losing a destructive bye bout in a single elimination tournament would be take a loss and be eliminated from the tournament. In a non-destructive bye bout, the fighter receives an automatic victory regardless of the outcome of the bout.

Performance Bye

Under this convention, the fighter receiving the bye must perform for the sponsor and/or spectators. Some common examples of performance byes include composing and reciting poetry, singing, and dancing. A performance bye can be destructive in which case the performance is judged and an unacceptable performance results in a loss for that round.

Double Kills

Double kills occur when both fighters land killing blows at the same time during a fight.
[MOL00]

Destructive

Under this convention, a double kill ends the fight and is counted as a loss for both opponents.

Non-Destructive

Under this convention, a double kill causes the fighters to redo the fight. The number of redoes is usually limited to prevent a bout from running overly long. A common practice is to restrict the weapon styles of both fighters after the second double kill.

Single Fight

Under this convention, the winner of the bout is determined by a single fight.

Best-of-Three

Under this convention, the winner of the bout is determined by the best-of-three fights.[MOL00]
The behavior of this convention depends on the Double Kill convention. If double kills are non-destructive, then the winner of the bout is the first fighter to win 2 fights. However, if double kills are destructive, the loser is the first fighter to lose 2 fights.

First Blood

Under this convention, only a non-lethal blow (such as a blow to a limb) results in a win.
[MOL00] A lethal blow can result in either a loss for both fighters or a win for the dead fighter depending on how the convention is implemented.

Bleeding Out

Under this convention, a fighter who receives a blow to a limb is considering “bleeding out” and takes a loss after a specified time.[MOL04]

Restricted Entry

Under this convention, fighters who want to enter the tournament must meet some predetermined set of requirements.

By Award

Under this convention, fighters entering the tournament must meet a threshold based on what awards they may or may not have. For example, a “White Scarf” tournament would only be open to those fighters who have been awarded a Defender of the White Scarf (DWS) or equivalent kingdom award. In comparison, a “Non-Don” tournament would only be open to fighters who have not be awarded a grant or patent level award for rapier combat.

By Sponsor

Under this convention, all fighters entering the tournament must have a sponsor. For example, fighters entering the Outlands Ladies of the Rose tournament must be sponsored by a current or former Queen. The use of this convention often implies the tournament is preceded by a procession of the fighters and their sponsors. If a sponsor cannot be physically present at a tournament, he or she may be allowed to provide a letter or missive indicating sponsorship of the fighter. Fighters in the tournament will often wear a token or favor of their sponsor.

Restricted Weapons

Under this convention, the fighters in the tournament are restricted to a specific or limited set of weapons.[MOL00][MOL02] Weapon restrictions can be applied to the entire tournament or to specific rounds or bouts. For example, a two-handed armored combat tournament would require that all fighters use a two-handed weapon.

Drawn Weapons

This convention is the most common variant of the Restricted Weapons convention. Under this convention, the fighters in the tournament randomly draw what weapons they will be allowed to use at the start of each round or bout.[TRN00]

Restricted Targets

Under this convention, the fighters in the tournament are restricted to a specific or limited set of targets.[MOL02] Target restrictions can be applied to the entire tournament or to specific rounds or bouts.

Drawn Targets

This convention is the most common variant of the Restricted Targets convention. Under this convention, the fighters in the tournament randomly draw their targets at the start of each round. [TRN00] Only a blow to the drawn target will result in a win.

Restricted Movement

Under this convention, the fighters in the tournament are restricted in how they can move around the field.[MOL02] This type of convention is often used in themed tournaments or when the list field is very small.

Fences

Under this convention, the fighters are separated by a waist-high fence to simulate mounted combat.[MOL01] Fighters may strike over the top but may not climb, cross, or go around the fence.

Planks

Under this convention, the fighters fight while standing on a narrow blank (or beam). Any fighter who steps off the blank takes a loss.

Lethal Terrain

Under this convention, areas of the field are designated as “lethal” and a fighter who steps into one of those areas takes a loss. Alternatively, areas of the field are designated as “safe” and

fighters who step outside a “safe” area takes a loss. Some example of lethal terrain include lava, crevasses, quicksand, and spiked pits.

Lethal Boundary

Under this convention, the boundaries of the field are designated as “lethal” and a fighter who steps outside the boundary or touches the eric enclosing the field takes a loss.

Tethering

In this variant, the fighters are tethered together by a short rope or cord held in the off-hand. A fighter who lets go of the tether takes a loss.

Fixed Feet

In this variant, fighters are not allowed to move one or both of their feet during the fight. The most common variant of this convention involves placing a cup of water behind the back foot of each fighter and a fighter who knocks over his or her cup takes a loss.

Retained Wounds

Under this convention, a fighter retains any non-lethal wounds obtained in the current bout into the subsequent bouts. [MOL02] Retained wounds are usually reset by being killed. For example, a fighter who wins the bout but lost his or her off-hand would not be able to use his or her off-hand in the subsequent bouts. This convention is usually only applied to pit tournaments. Also known as “**Accumulated Wounds**”.

Counted Blows

Under this convention, the bout ends afters a fixed number of blows has been thrown or received. [TRN01]

Blows Thrown

In this variant, each fighter is allowed a designated number of blows. Once both fighter have used all their blows, the bout ends. A fighter who has used all of their blows may still defend against their opponent's blows. The winner of the fight is the fighter who landed the most killing or wounding blows.

Blows Received

In this variant, the bout ends when one fighter receives a designated number of killing or wounding blows.

Timed Fights

Under this convention, each fight in a bout has predetermined duration. If the fight is not resolved before the time runs out, both fighters take a loss.

Winner Runs The Next Tournament

Under this convention, the fighter who wins the tournament is responsible for running the next occurrence of the tournament. This convention is very common for tournaments used to select champions or in recurring tournaments.

Crown Tournament

A Crown Tournament is governed by a specific set of conventions and requirements dictated by the Society and Kingdom laws. For more information on Crown Tournaments, please contact your Kingdom Seneschal.

Prizes

For most tournaments, the sponsor of the tournament awards the winner with a prize.

Champion or Retinue Positions

SCA tournaments are often used to select people for baronial or kingdom retinue positions. For baronial champions/retinues, the duration is typically a year while for kingdom champion/retinues, the duration is the remainder of the reign.

Temporary Title

A temporary title is given to the winner for his or her personal use for a limited duration. The most common durations are a single day, for the remainder of the event, and until the next occurrence of the tournament.

Traveling Prizes

A traveling prize is given to the winner who holds onto it until the next occurrence of the tournament. The prize is then returned the tournament sponsors to be issued to the next winner. Weapons, shields, and cloaks are the most common form of traveling prizes.

Most Chivalrous

A secondary prize is sometimes awarded to the fighter in the tournament who displayed the most chivalrous conduct during the tournament. Acts of chivalry are reported to the MoL during the tournament by the fighters, spectators, and/or field marshals.

Best Death

A secondary prize is sometimes awarded to the fighter in the tournament who enacted the most entertaining death upon receiving a killing blow.

Tournament Taxonomy

Group Tournaments

In this type of tournament, fighters are paired into bouts for each round. The winner for each bout is awarded a number of points. The tournament continues for a predetermined number of rounds or until each fighter has fought every other fighter a predetermined number of times.

For SCA combat, fighters are usually awarded one point for each bout they win. Since ties are a strong possibility with group tournaments, a tie-breaker bout may be required to determine the overall winner.

Round-Robin

In a Round-Robin tournament, the each fighter fights every other fighter in the tournament once¹. A round-robin tournament can be run formally by the MoL organizing the bouts into rounds or informally where the fighters challenge each other and simply report the results of each bout to the MoL. Also known as an “**All-Play-All**” tournament.

Example: Round-Robin

Number	Name	Group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	F
1	The Honorable Lady Christina	Barony of Iron Hill								
2	Master Olaf	Barony of Iron Hill								
3	Dona Veronica	Barony of Haversport								
4	Lord Galen	Barony of Darkstone								
5	The Honorable Lord Ian	Shire of Redgate								
6	Lady Zoe	Shire of Redgate								
7	Mistress Yasmina	Shire of Redgate								
8	Lady Sabine	Barony of Green Isle								

Table 3: Round-Robin Initial List

¹ This definition refers to a “single round-robin” tournament.

Round	Bouts	Results	Round	Bouts	Results
#1	1-8	W-L	#5	1-5	W-L
	2-7	W-L		6-4	L-W
	3-6	L-W		7-3	L-W
	4-5	L-W		8-2	W-L
#2	1-2	W-L	#6	1-6	W-L
	3-8	L-W		7-5	L-W
	4-7	L-W		8-4	L-W
	5-6	W-L		2-3	L-W
#3	1-3	W-L	#7	1-7	W-L
	4-2	W-L		8-6	W-L
	5-8	W-L		2-5	W-L
	6-7	L-W		3-4	W-L
#4	1-4	W-L			
	5-3	L-W			
	6-2	W-L			
	7-8	W-L			

Table 4: Round-Robin Bouts & Results

Number	Name	Group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	F
1	The Honorable Lady Christina	Barony of Iron Hill	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
2	Master Olaf	Barony of Iron Hill	W						W	2
3	Dona Veronica	Barony of Haversport				W	W	W	W	4
4	Lord Galen	Barony of Darkstone			W		W	W		3
5	The Honorable Lord Ian	Shire of Redgate	W	W	W			W		4
6	Lady Zoe	Shire of Redgate	W			W				2
7	Mistress Yasmina	Shire of Redgate		W	W	W				3
8	Lady Sabine	Barony of Green Isle		W			W		W	3

Table 5: Round-Robin Final List

Line Tournament

In this variant of the round-robin tournament, the fighters are divided into two lines facing each other on the list field. Each fighter then fights the fighter in the other line simultaneously and the wins are recorded by the MoL. At the end of each round, the line shifts so each fighter has a new opponent.[MOL02] This shifting system is similar to the ones used in chess tournaments and is referred to as the Carousel-Berger system.

Line tournaments require a very large field and a substantial number of field marshals to run, but the format does speed up the execution of a round-robin tournament significantly.

Example: Line Tournament – 8 Fighters

At the start of the first round, the 8 fighters divide into 2 lines of 4 fighters. The fighters then fight against the opponent in the opposite line to resolve the bouts in the first round.

Round #1

1	2	3	4
8	7	6	5

Bouts: 1-8, 2-7, 3-6, 4-5

At the end of the first round, the fighters now need to shift. Fighter #1 is designated as the pivot and doesn't move during any of the shifts. The rest of the fighters shift clockwise with the fighters at the end of each line switching to the opposite line. Each fighter now faces a new opponent and the bouts are fought to resolve the second round.

Round #2

1	3	4	5
2	8	7	6

Bouts: 1-2, 3-8, 4-7, 5-6

The same shifting occurs at end the of each subsequent round until the lines return to the original configuration and the tournament ends.

Round #3

1	4	5	6
3	2	8	7

Bouts: 1-3, 2-4, 5-8, 6-7

Round #4

1	5	6	7
4	3	2	8

Bouts: 1-4, 3-5, 2-6, 7-8

Round #5

1	6	7	8
5	4	3	2

Bouts: 1-5, 4-6, 3-7, 2-8

Round #6

1	7	8	2
6	5	4	3

Bouts: 1-6, 5-7, 4-8, 2-3

Round #7

1	8	2	3
7	6	5	4

Bouts: 1-7, 6-8, 2-5, 3-4

At the end of round #7, the tournament ends as each fighter has fought every other fighter.

Example: Line Tournament – 7 Fighters

In the case of an odd number of fighters in the tournament, one slot on the line is kept empty. The fighter who faces the empty slot gets the bye and does not fight in that round.

Round #1

1	2	3	4
Bye	7	6	5

Bouts: 1-Bye, 2-7, 3-6, 4-5

When the line shifts, the empty slot moves as if it was occupied by an actual fighter.

Round #2

1	3	4	5
2	Bye	7	6

Bouts: 1-2, 3-Bye, 4-7, 5-6

Swiss-System

In a Swiss-System tournament, each fighter fights a designated number of rounds without fighting the same opponent more than once. Swiss-system tournaments are normally formally organized into rounds by the MoL. The most common variants of the Swiss-system tournaments are the Swiss-5 and Swiss-8 tournaments.

When the list contains an odd number of fighters, the handling of the byes can be problematic depending on which bye convention is used in the tournament. If the bye is non-destructive, the fighter receiving the bye is essentially awarded a free point for that round. For the top tier fighters in contention for winning the tournament, a bye represents a significant advantage since

the fighter gains 1 point at no risk and with minimal expenditure of energy.

Example: Swiss-5 Tournament

Number	Name	Group	1	2	3	4	5	F
1	The Honorable Lord Ian	Shire of Redgate						
2	Laurent	College of Castle Keype						
3	Mistress Yasmina	Shire of Redgate						
4	Lady Jeanette	Barony of Green Isle						
5	Mistress Patrice	Shire of Redgate						
6	Lady Sabine	Barony of Green Isle						
7	Hrothgar	Shire of Redgate						
8	Don Quinn	Barony of Green Isle						

Table 6: Swiss-5 Tournament Initial List

A truncated round-robin bout table is used to generate the bout pairing for this tournament to ensure fighters don't fight the same opponent more than once. Each fighter receives 1 point for each bout he or she wins.

Round	Bouts	Results	Round	Bouts	Results
#1	1-8	W-L	#4	1-4	W-L
	2-7	W-L		5-3	L-W
	3-6	L-W		6-2	L-W
	4-5	W-L		7-8	W-L
#2	1-2	W-L	#5	1-5	W-L
	3-8	L-W		6-4	L-W
	4-7	L-W		7-3	W-L
	5-6	W-L		8-2	L-W
#3	1-3	W-L			
	4-2	W-L			
	5-8	W-L			
	6-7	L-W			

Table 7: Swiss-5 Rounds & Results

Number	Name	Group	1	2	3	4	5	F
1	The Honorable Lord Ian	Shire of Redgate	W	W	W	W	W	5
2	Laurent	College of Castle Keype	W			W	W	3
3	Mistress Yasmina	Shire of Redgate		W		W		2
4	Lady Jeanette	Barony of Green Isle	W		W		W	3
5	Mistress Patrice	Shire of Redgate		W	W			2
6	Lady Sabine	Barony of Green Isle	W					1
7	Hrothgar	Shire of Redgate		W	W	W	W	4
8	Don Quinn	Barony of Green Isle						0

Table 8: Swiss-5 Tournament Final List

In this tournament, Fighter #1 (THL Ian) was the overall winner with 5 points.

SCA Swiss-5

In the context of SCA combat, a Swiss-5 tournament also involves weapon restrictions for each round.[TRN00] In most common variant, the tournament has a fixed progression of weapons restrictions for each round and fighters must use the proscribed weapons during that round. For example, the tables below illustrates some examples of weapon restrictions for Swiss-5 rapier and armored combat tournaments.

Round	Rapier Weapon Restriction	Round	Armored Weapon Restriction
#1	Single Sword	#1	Sword & Shield
#2	Sword & Dagger	#2	Two-Sword
#3	Sword & Buckler	#3	Great Sword
#4	Sword & Cloak	#4	Pole-arm
#5	Case of Swords	#5	Short Spear

Table 9: SCA Swiss-5 Weapon Restrictions

A less common variant of the SCA Swiss-5 tournament enforces weapon restrictions by not allowing fighters to use the same off-hand weapon more than once during the tournament. Thus, a fighter using *Sword & Dagger* in the first round cannot use *Sword & Dagger* in the subsequent rounds.

Elimination Tournaments

In this type of tournament, fighters are paired into bouts for each round. At the end of each

round, fighters who exceed a predetermined number of losses are eliminated from the tournament. The tournament continues until only one fighter remains. Also known as a “**Knockout**” tournament.

Single Elimination

In this variant, losing fighters are immediately eliminated from the tournament.

Double Elimination

In this variant, fighters who lose two bouts are eliminated from the tournament.

Triple Elimination

In this variant, fighters who lost three bouts are eliminated from the tournament.

Pit Tournaments

In this type of tournament, the fighters are lined up next to the field and the first two fighters take the field for the first bout. The winning fighter stays on the field and the next fighter in line enters the field for the next bout. The losing fighter reports the winner to the MoL and goes to the end of the line. Pit tournaments have a time limit and the winner of the tournament is usually determined from the number of winning bouts. Also known as a “**Bear Pit**” or “**King of the Hill**” tournament.[MOL00][MOL01][MOL02]

Pit tournaments are often run on multiple fields to decrease the wait time between bouts and thus increase the minimum number of bouts each fighter participates in.

Speed Pit

A speed pit is a bear pit except each bout has a time limit. If the bout exceeds the time limit, both fighters are declared dead and exit the field. The use of a time limit helps prevent fighters from “stalling” in order to gain an advantage. Also known as a “**Lightning**” tournament.
[MOL02]

Challenge Tournaments

In this type of tournament, the fighters choose which bouts they fight by challenging the other fighters.[MOL01] There are two main variants of this style of tournament. In the first variant, the tournament has time limit and the fighters pair off to fight bouts. In the second variant, the fighters take the field at the same time and fight simultaneously until only one fighter remains.

Token Tournament

In this variant of the challenge tournament, fighters are given an equal number of tokens at the start of the tournament. When challenged to a bout, the fighters wager one or more tokens on the

outcome with the winner claiming the wagered tokens. At the end of the tournament, the fighters turn in their accumulated tokens to the MoL and the victor is the fighter with the most tokens. Fighters who run out of tokens are eliminated from the tournament but most token tournaments offer some form of buy-in to allow eliminated fighters to reenter the tournament.

Poker Tournament

In this variant of the challenge tournament, fighters are given one or more playing cards at the start of the tournament. When challenged to a bout, the fighters wager one or more cards on the outcome with the winner claiming the wagered cards. Fighters attempt to build as many winning hands of cards as possible over the duration of the tournament. A fighter with a winning hand returns to the MoL to report and exchanges the hand for new cards. Fighters who run out of cards also return to the MoL for new cards.

Ladder Tournament

In this variant of the challenge tournament, each fighters is assigned a rung on the ladder (usually in ascending order by skill so the best fighters occupy the lowest rungs on the ladder). A fighter may challenge any fighter above him or her on the ladder. If the challenger wins or the challenge is declined, the fighters swap positions on the ladder. If the challenger loses, the fighters stay on their respective rungs but the challenger cannot challenge the same fighter until he or she challenges someone else.

Example: Ladder Tournament – 8 Fighters

In this example, 8 fighters enter a one hour ladder tournament. At the end of the hour, the overall winner is the tournament occupying the first run of the ladder. The MoL posts the starting ladder and starts the timer. For the next hours, fighters are free to challenge anyone on the ladder above them.

Rung	Name
1	The Honorable Lord Ian
2	Laurent
3	Mistress Yasmina
4	Lady Jeanette
5	Mistress Patrice
6	Lady Sabine
7	Hrothgar
8	Don Quinn

Table 10: Starting Ladder

Don Quinn (#8) challenges Mistress Yasmina (#3). He is the winner so he swaps rungs with Mistress Yasmina.

Challenge: $8 \rightarrow 3$, W

Hrothgar (#7) challenges Laurent (#2) but is defeated so both fighters stay on their current rungs. Since Hrothgar lost, he may not challenge Laurent again until he has challenged someone else.

Challenge: $7 \rightarrow 2$, L

Lady Sabine (#6) challenges Mistress Patrice (#5). She is the winner so she swaps rungs with Mistress Patrice.

Challenge: $6 \rightarrow 5$, W

Lady Jeanette (#4) challenges The Honorable Lord Ian (#1). She is the winner so she swaps rungs with The Honorable Lord Ian.

Challenge: $4 \rightarrow 1$, W

Rung	Name
1	Lady Jeanette
2	Laurent
3	Don Quinn
4	The Honorable Lord Ian
5	Lady Sabine
6	Mistress Patrice
7	Hrothgar
8	Mistress Yasmina

Table 11: Ladder after 4 Challenges

Lady Sabine (#5) challenges Laurent (#2). She is the winner so she swaps rungs with Laurent.

Challenge: $5 \rightarrow 2$, W

Mistress Patrice (#6) challenges Don Quinn (#3) but is defeated.

Challenge: $6 \rightarrow 3$, L

Hrothgar (#7) challenges Don Quinn (#3) but is defeated. Hrothgar is now free to challenge Laurent again.

Challenge: $7 \rightarrow 3$, L

The Honorable Lord Ian (#4) challenges Lady Sabine (#2). He is the winner so he swaps rungs

with Lady Sabine.

Challenge: $4 \rightarrow 2$, W

Rung	Name
1	Lady Jeanette
2	The Honorable Lord Ian
3	Don Quinn
4	Lady Sabine
5	Laurent
6	Mistress Patrice
7	Hrothgar
8	Mistress Yasmina

Table 12: Ladder after 8 Challenges

Mistress Patrice (#6) challenges Laurent (#5). She is the winner so she swaps rungs with Laurent.

Challenge: $6 \rightarrow 5$, W

Don Quinn (#3) challenges Lady Jeanette (#1). He is the winner so he swaps rungs with Lady Jeanette.

Challenge: $3 \rightarrow 1$, W

The Honorable Lord Ian (#2) challenges Don Quinn (#1) but is defeated.

Challenge: $2 \rightarrow 1$, L

The MoL stops the tournament at this point because one hour has passed. Don Quinn occupies the top rung so he is declared the winner of the tournament.

Rung	Name
1	Don Quinn
2	The Honorable Lord Ian
3	Lady Jeanette
4	Lady Sabine
5	Mistress Patrice
6	Laurent
7	Hrothgar
8	Mistress Yasmina

Table 13: Final Ladder

Restricted Challenges

The most common variant of the ladder tournament restricts how many rungs up the ladder a challenge can occur. This restriction forces a greater number of challenges over the duration of the tournament.

Pas d'Armes (Passage of Arms) Tournament

In this variant of a challenge tournament, the fighters are divided into *tenans* (“holders”) and *venans* (“comers”). Each *tenan* is challenged by a *venan* with the *venan* selecting the type of combat, weapon style, and/or victory conditions for the bout. Once all the challenges are issued, the bouts are fought consecutively on a single field. A pas d'armes tournament is more an exhibition of pageantry, heraldry, chivalric conduct, and courtly grace than a test of skill.

[TRN01][TRN02]

Last Man Standing Tournament

In this variant of the challenge tournament, all fighters take the field at the same time. Once combat begins, fighters challenge each other individually or in groups and fight until only one fighter remains alive and is declared the winner. The field is reset and the tournament continues until one fighters achieves a predetermined number of wins or the tournament exceeds a time limit. Also known as a “**Meanest Mother**” or “**Grand Melee**” tournament.[TRN00]

Snowball Tournament

A snowball tournament is a variant of the last man standing tournament. When a fighter is killed, he or she takes a knee and remains on the field. If the fighter who killed them is killed, they stand and reenter combat. This variant tends to run significantly longer than the standard last

man standing because of regeneration.

Miscellaneous

This section describes those tournament formats which do not fit into the existing taxonomy of tournaments.

Champions Tournament

In this type of tournament, two sponsors field teams consisting of a predetermined number of fighters. The fighters are paired off so each bout consists of one fighter from each team with the sponsor of the winning fighter receiving a point. The bouts are run consecutively on a single field for maximum visibility. The winner of the tournament is the sponsor who reaches a designated number of points first or accumulates the most points at the end of the tournaments. This type of tournament is similar to a “**Pas d'Armes**” tournament.

Example: Champions Tournament Example

In this tournament, the Barony of Iron Hill challenges the Barony of Haversport to an 8-man champions tournament. Both baronies recruit local fighters to fill their teams and submit their rosters for the creation of the bout pairings.

Barony of Iron Hill		Baron of Haversport	
Name	Group	Name	Group
Sir Karl	Barony of Iron Hill	Xavier	Barony of Haversport
Lady Tatiana	Barony of Iron Hill	Ulrick	Barony of Haversport
THL Christina	Barony of Iron Hill	Lady Jeanette	Barony of Green Isle
Lord Magnus	Barony of Iron Hill	Baron Raphael	Barony of Green Isle
Master Olaf	Barony of Iron Hill	Don Quinn	Barony of Green Isle
Lady Zoe	Shire of Redgate	Niccolo	College of Castle Keype
Mistress Patrice	Shire of Redgate	Edward	College of Castle Keype
Dona Fiona	Barony of Darkstone	Laurent	College of Castle Keype

Table 14: Team Rosters

The sponsors flip a coin to decide who chooses first with Iron Hill winning the toss. Iron Hill submits Dona Fiona for the first bout and Haversport submits Don Quinn as her opponent. Right of first submission then goes Haversport who submits Baron Raphael for the second bout and Iron Hill submits Sir Karl as his opponent. The two baronies continue pairing in this manner until both rosters are exhausted.

Round	Barony of Iron Hill	Barony of Haversport	Result	Scores
1	Dona Fiona	Don Quinn		
2	Sir Karl	Baron Raphael		
3	Master Olaf	Xavier		
4	Mistress Patrice	Niccolo		
5	Lord Magnus	Edward		
6	Lady Tatiana	Laurent		
7	THL Christina	Ulrick		
8	Lady Zoe	Lady Jeanette		

Table 15: Champions Tournament Starting List

At the end of the tournament, the MoL adds up the wins for each barony and assigns the points with Barony of Iron Hill beating the Barony of Haversport with a score of 4 to 3.

Round	Barony of Iron Hill	Barony of Haversport	Result	Scores
1	Dona Fiona	Don Quinn	W-L	1-0
2	Sir Karl	Baron Raphael	L-W	1-1
3	Master Olaf	Xavier	W-L	2-1
4	Mistress Patrice	Niccolo	L-W	2-2
5	Lord Magnus	Edward	L-W	2-3
6	Lady Tatiana	Laurent	W-L	3-3
7	THL Christina	Ulrick	L-L	3-3
8	Lady Zoe	Lady Jeanette	W-L	4-3

Table 16: Champions Tournament Final List

Progressive Melee Tournament

In this type of tournament, the fighters in the first round are paired off and fight. The winning fighter becomes a team captain and the losing fighter joins the winning fighter's team. In the subsequent rounds, the teams are paired off and fight with the losing team joining the winning team. The tournament continues until only one team remains. Also known as a “**Snowball**”² or “**Warlord**” tournament.[MOL00][MOL01][MOL02][TRN00]

2 Not to be confused with the “**Snowball**” challenge tournament.

Multistage Tournaments

A multistage tournament consists of two or more simple tournaments run consecutively. In most variants, the earlier stages are used to reduce the number of fighters competing in the later stages. But there are some variants where the earlier stages are used to rank the fighters in order to seed the later stages.

Pooled Round-Robin

A major disadvantage of a round-robin tournament is the length. As the number of fighters entering the tournament increases, the number of bouts fought grows exponentially. One solution to this problem is to split the fighters in the tournament into pools. Each pool fights a round-robin tournament with a fixed number of fighters from each pool advancing to the second stage tournament to determine the overall winner. The most common format for the second stage is a single elimination tournament. Double elimination and round-robin tournaments are also viable formats for the second stage.[TRN00]

Pools are usually fought informally on separate fields with the fighters in the pool challenging each other to bouts. Ties within the pools are usually handled with a tie-breaker bout.

Example: Pooled Round-Round/Single Elimination on Two Fields

Using the fighter data set from Appendix A, the list for tournament has 26 fighters. Running a round-robin with this list would require 25 rounds of 13 bouts (325 bouts total). Running the tournament on two fields reduces the effective bout count to 25 rounds of 7 bouts (175 bouts total).

By splitting the list into two pools of 13 fighters and running each pool as a round-robin on a single field results in 12 rounds of 6 bouts (72 bouts total). The top 4 fighters from each pool are then entered into a single elimination tournament to determine the overall winner. Running the single elimination on a single field adds 7 bouts for a total of 80 bouts for the entire tournament.

Pooled Round-Robin/Round-Robin

A common variant of the pooled round-robin uses a round-robin for the final stage. This variant takes considerably more time to run than the variants which use an elimination tournament for the final stage. To keep the tournament time reasonable, this variant usually has only 1 fighter from each pool advancing to the final stage. Also known as a “**Crucible Tournament**”.

Pit/Elimination Tournaments

A major disadvantage of a pit tournament is the lack of visibility. Pit tournaments are usually run on multiple fields with no heraldry so fighters get minimal visibility and tracking the progress of individual fighters is difficult at best. To overcome this limitation, a pit tournament can be

combined with an elimination tournament. At the end of the pit tournament, the top scoring fighters are entered into the elimination tournament to determine the overall winner.

Bear Pit/Single Elimination

The most common variant of the Pit/Elimination tournament is the Bear Pit/Single Elimination. The bear pit usually runs 45 to 60 minutes and the top 8 fighters from the bear pit are entered in the single elimination. The scores from the bear pit may be used to seed the single elimination tournament.

Rather than wait until the end of the bear pit to determine the top 8 fighters, an alternative scoring method pauses the pit at the quarter time intervals and the top 2 scoring fighters are removed from the pit and entered into the elimination tournament.

Another alternative scoring method is to use a win threshold to determine the fighters to advance into the elimination tournament. Any fighter who exceeds the threshold is removed from the pit and entered into the elimination tournament. Unlike the two previous scoring methods, this method generates a varying number of fighters in the single elimination tournament.

Appendix A – Rapier Fighter Data Set

Name	Title	Group
Alrik	Lord	Barony of Green Isle
Beatrice	Lady	Barony of Darkstone
Christina	The Honorable Lady	Barony of Iron Hill
Dumont		College of Castle Keype
Edward		College of Castle Keype
Fiona	Dona	Barony of Darkstone
Galen	Lord	Barony of Darkstone
Hrothgar		Shire of Redgate
Ian	The Honorable Lord	Shire of Redgate
Jeanette	Lady	Barony of Green Isle
Karl	Sir	Barony of Iron Hill
Laurent		College of Castle Keype
Magnus	Lord	Barony of Iron Hill
Niccolo		College of Castle Keype
Olaf	Master	Barony of Iron Hill
Patrice	Mistress	Shire of Redgate
Quinn	Don	Barony of Green Isle
Raphael	Baron	Barony of Green Isle
Sabine	Lady	Barony of Green Isle
Tatiana	Lady	Barony of Iron Hill
Ulrick		Barony of Haversport
Veronica	Dona	Barony of Haversport
Wilhelm	Sir	Barony of Haversport
Xavier		Barony of Haversport
Yasmina	Mistress	Shire of Redgate
Zoe	Lady	Shire of Redgate

Table 17: Rapier Fighter Data Set Master List

Name	Group
Dona Fiona Lord Galen Lady Beatrice	Barony of Darkstone
Don Quinn Lady Sabine Lord Alrik Lady Jeanette Baron Raphael	Barony of Green Isle
Dona Veronica Sir Wilhelm Ulrick Xavier	Barony of Haversport
Master Olaf The Honorable Lady Christina Sir Karl Lord Magnus Lady Tatiana	Barony of Iron Hill
Dumont Niccolo Laurent Edward	College of Castle Keype
The Honorable Lord Ian Mistress Patrice Lady Zoe Hrothgar Mistress Yasmina	Shire of Redgate

Table 18: Rapier Fighters by Group

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