

Lord Baltimore’s Challenge was created in an attempt to achieve several goals: to promote historical rapier and cut & thrust fencing on the East Coast of the United States; to bring together combatants from different aspects of the historical martial arts world who don’t usually fight together; to bring several of the best historical fencing teachers in the world to one place for a day full of skilled and varied instruction; to host tournaments that are designed around experienced and skilled judging; to hopefully bring together the best of two large historical martial arts communities in a day filled with tournaments.

We hope that you experience challenging and rewarding fights that both encourage your best and take you out of your comfort zone. We expect that you will learn from and be inspired by the classes you choose to attend. But it is our greatest hope that you will first and foremost have fun and meet new friends.

Competition Area

Bouts will take place in an 8m circle with clearly marked edges.

Fencers will start in one of two starting areas, red or blue.

*Equipment*

* Each competition area will have a scoreboard and timer visible to the ring director and competitors.
* Each competitor will wear a red or blue band denoting his or her starting area.

Minimum Equipment Safety Requirements

All equipment will be checked against the below minimums when a fencer registers on the day for their tournaments. No fencer shall be allowed to participate with any gear that has not been inspected and passed.

Rapier and Rapier and Dagger

Mask: The face must be covered by either 12 kilogram mesh (e.g, a standard fencing mask) or perforated metal. Such metal must not have holes larger than 1/8" (3 mm) in diameter, with a minimum offset of 3/16" (5 mm) and shall also meet the SCA definition of rigid material (puncture-resistant material that will not significantly flex, spread apart, or deform under pressure of 12 Kg applied by a standard mask tester, repeatedly to any single point). The mask must be in good condition with no discernible rusting, breaches of the mesh, tongue, or bib. The mask must completely cover the participant’s ears and below the jaw line and be neither too large nor small to snugly fit the competitor. Other headgear (i.e. steel helmets) will be allowed pending inspection for the criteria as above.

Back of the head protection: Rigid protection for the back of the head is required for all participants. Commercially manufactured back of the head protection is preferred, other methods will be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

Neck Protection: Trachea protection that protects the throat from a direct thrust is required.

Torso: The torso (the chest, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits) must be covered with puncture-resistant material (any fabric or combination of fabrics that will predictably withstand puncture). Historical clothing designed to be worn for fencing is acceptable provided it meets these minimum safety standards. A standard fencing jacket, or other jacket designed specifically for HEMA is acceptable, as long as it also meets these minimum safety standards. (A jacket that is otherwise acceptable will not be failed due to ventilation grommets in the back.) Minimum safety standards for SCA are acceptable and found [HERE](https://www.sca.org/officers/marshal/docs/rapier/rapier_handbook.pdf). (https://www.sca.org/officers/marshal/docs/rapier/rapier\_handbook.pdf)

Gloves: Fencers must wear gloves or gauntlets that cover the hand, fingers, and the portion of the wrist nearest the hand. In addition, in rapier tournaments where cuts are allowed, the fingers, back of the hand, and wrist must be protected from cuts by a complex hilt, and/or a padded fencing gauntlets. (for further clarification, if the complex hilt doesn’t protect as far as your wrist, something that is more protective than a normal fencing gauntlet must) It is necessary to point out that padded gauntlets are the minimum when cuts are allowed in rapier tournaments. Fencers should armor up if they feel uncomfortable with the idea of being hit in the wrist or the off hand by a rapier cut.

Groin Protection: Use of rigid groin protection (cup/box) is mandatory for men.

Elbow/Knee Protection: In rapier tournaments allowing cuts, use of rigid elbow and knee protection is mandatory. The protection must completely cover the knee and elbow.

Footwear: Fencers must wear some kind of enclosed toe footwear.

Sidesword and Sword and Buckler

In addition to the above, for sidesword/sword and buckler:

Gauntlets: Fencers must have rigid protection over the hand, fingers, and the portion of the wrist nearest the hand to protect against cuts to the hand and wrist. Rigid demi-gauntlets paired with a basket hilt or other fully protective complex hilt, such as a swept hilt or pappenheimer, may be acceptable, depending on the coverage of the hilt. Gauntlets that are used *without the added coverage of a protective hilt* *or buckler* must have rigid or heavily padded protection on the hands and fingers; unpadded gloves alone are not sufficient. Examples are: SPES Heavy Gloves, Sparring gloves (Fechtschule Gdansk/Ensifers), Neyman Thokks, St. Marks, or modified lacrosse/hockey gloves with significant rigid exoskeleton. Contact us if you have any questions about the acceptability of your gloves. NOTE: The buckler hand need not have rigid protection, but must be at least padded.

Jacket: For cut and thrust tournaments, jackets must also be padded (at least one layer of batting with two layers of fabric, or the equivalent) or made to protect against percussive cuts. Coaches fencing jackets or padded reproduction gambesons are examples (SPES AP or Fechtschule Gdansk Jackets, NEYMAN HEMA Jacket, PBT HEMA Jacket, etc).

Forearms and shins: Rigid or the equivalent of 8 oz hardened leather shin and forearm protection is mandatory. As examples, lacross and hockey protectors that protect ½ way around the arm and leg are acceptable.

Weapon requirements

Rapier and Dagger

Only rapier and dagger blades intended for fencing will be allowed (Del Tin practice blades, Darkwood, Zen Warrior, Alchem, Hanwei, etc…​). All blades will be checked for flex and nicks.

Swords: Rapier blades shall be between 36 and 45 inches in length (give or take 1/8 of an inch) from the cross guard (quillons) to the tip. They shall be in good condition with an acceptable amount of flex and upon inspection shall be free of nicks and burrs that would tear fabric or skin.

Daggers: Dagger blades shall be no longer than 18 inches in length, measured from the cross guard (quillons) to the tip and upon inspection shall be free of nicks and burrs that would tear fabric or skin. Flexi daggers are not allowed. Daggers will also have an acceptable amount of flex.

Tips: Rapier and dagger tips MUST be covered with plastic or rubber blunts (Darkwood and Purpleheart blunts are preferable), or an equivalent cap of leather (minimum equivalent of 6 oz, or “strap leather”), held in place with tape of contrasting color. The last 1/8" of tip must be visible and have no tape on it for visual inspection that the blade has not blown through. No exceptions! Tips that are bare steel or covered merely in tape will not be cleared for fighting.

Sword and Buckler

Sword Blades: Maximum Blade length allowed is 39 inches for all Cut and Thrust swords (give or take 1/8 of an inch) from the cross guard (quillons) to the tip. The blades shall be trainers designed to simulate cutting swords. For that reason, the blades must be a minimum of 1 inch wide at the ricasso. They shall be in good condition with an acceptable amount of flex and upon inspection shall be free of nicks and burrs that would tear fabric or skin. (NOTE: The blades listed below are known to meet the requirements. Even if, in the original manufacturing process, they were ground to just below the acceptable minimums, they will still be allowed. If you have questions or concerns about the blade you plan to use, please contact us.)

Messers and Backswords: Training Messers are not acceptable for 2019. NOTE: All weapons are considered dual-edged for the purposes of judging. I don't expect judges to be able to discern between the 3-6 inches of a false edge that are sharp on many backswords and the rest of the blade.

Side Swords and Guards: Training Side Swords are acceptable. A simple hand guard is allowed. Ports and Side Rings are allowed. Complex hilts such as swept hilts and basket hilts are also allowed.

* Examples of Arming Swords:
  + Albion I:33
  + Arms and Armor Scholar Sword
* Examples of other acceptable blades/swords:
  + Darkwood Sidesword, Spada, or Broadsword blades
  + Arms and Armor Sidesword Trainer, Meyer Rapier Trainer
  + Albion Marozzo
* Buckler requirements:
  + Wooden, Steel, or Nylon Bucklers or Targa are acceptable.
  + Max width is 16 inches across at the widest point.
  + Like blades, upon inspection, bucklers shall be free of nicks and burrs that would tear fabric or skin

Tips: All swords must meet the same tip requirements as rapiers. Namely, all tips MUST be covered with plastic or rubber blunts (Darkwood and Purpleheart blunts are preferable), or an equivalent cap of leather (minimum equivalent of 6 oz, or “strap leather”), held in place with tape of contrasting color. The last 1/8" of tip must be visible and have no tape on it for visual inspection that the blade has not blown through. No exceptions! Tips that are bare steel or covered merely in tape will not be cleared for fighting.

Tournament Rules

**General Rules** that apply to all tournaments can be found after the specifics.

Rapier and Dagger Contest

These Rapier and Dagger rules view the tournament bout as a demonstration of skill rather than a simulation of a serious encounter. Each bout will be fought to 15 points, or 1.5 minutes (90 seconds).

*Scoring*

* Thrust to the body or head: 3 points.
* Thrust to the arms or legs: 1 point. (Combatants do not lose the limb when it is struck.)

*Techniques*

* Double hits and after-blows will be scored as laid out in the **General Rules**, below.
* Technical bonuses will be scored as laid out in the **General Rules**, below.
* There shall be no grappling or in-fighting. Though the gloved hand may be used to parry, it shall not be used to grasp or strike an opponent or a sword. Fleeting contact between opponents is allowed, as long as no grappling, deliberate punching or other in-fighting behavior occurs. If grappling, deliberate punching or other in-fighting occurs, a halt will be called, the fencers will reset, and the director may impose penalties at his or her discretion. (see the **Penalties and** **Injuries** section below)
* Due to the nature of hilts and some methods of holding a rapier, disarms are not allowed. If, for any reason, an opponent drops his or her sword or dagger, the bout will be halted and the ring reset. If it happens to the same combatant two or more times in one bout, the ring director may, at his or her discretion, deduct points from that combatant.

Ring Boundaries: If either fencer steps outside the boundaries of the fencing area, a halt will be called and the fencers will reset. If it happens to the same combatant three or more times in one bout, the ring director may, at his or her discretion, deduct points from that combatant.

Tie: In the case of a tie, whether at the end of the allotted time or if both fencers reach or pass fifteen points in the same action and end with the same score, the combatant with the most technical bonuses for the bout will win the bout (see **Technical Bonus** below). In the exceedingly rare case that they also both have the same number of technical bonuses, the winner will be decided by Rock Paper Scissors. Yes, you read that correctly.

Single Rapier Contest

Unlike the Rapier and Dagger tournament, the Single Rapier tournament is intended to more closely resemble a serious encounter. The goal of the bout will be to score one valid lethal blow.

Each bout will consist of one 1.5 minute (90 second) round. The time will pause when the director stops the fight (See **Halts**, in the **General Rules** section below).

Each bout will be fenced until a fencer scores a single, valid lethal hit, or the time elapses. A valid hit can be delivered with either a cut or a thrust. NOTE: A cut to the head is the only valid lethal cut in this tournament.

We will still be looking for and noting technical bonuses (good technique). This will only play in, however, in the case of a tie for an elims slot at the end of a pool round. In such a case, if player A won her fights with more technical bonuses than player B, player A would be ranked higher than player B.

These fights can go quickly, so we will ask that fighters gear up and be ready to go during the pool rounds.

Blows will be counted as below:

*Target areas*

* Thrust or cut to head: Lethal
* Thrust to body: Lethal
* Pommel strikes to the front of the mask: Lethal
* Cut to arms and legs (true edge and false edge): Non-lethal (Combatants do not lose the limb when it is struck.)
* Thrust to arms and legs: Non-lethal (Combatants do not lose the limb when it is struck.)
* Cut to body (true edge and false edge): Not valid

*Techniques*

* Fighters are allowed to use the off-hand to press an opponent’s arm out of the way or grasp an opponent’s arm provided they are not twisting it or doing any unsafe actions, as judged by the ring director. Grasping the blade is not allowed, though controlling it, blocking it, or pressing it with the hand is acceptable. Fighters may not make any attempt to throw the opponent, nor are they allowed to use actions that manipulate an opponent’s joints. Any attempt to do so will result in penalties at the discretion of the ring directors (see **Penalties and Injuries**, below).
* Pommel strikes (only to the front of the mask) are allowed and are valid lethal hits, but they must be pulled and should not land with full force. Doing otherwise may lead to **Penalties and Injuries** at the discretion of the ring directors.
* In any pools round, a double *lethal* hit or after blow will count as a loss for both fencers, though, as mentioned above, we will rank head shots above all others, and body shots above limbs in the case of a tie in ranking at the end of the pools round. In the subsequent elimination round, the bout will be re-fought once. In the case of a fully single- or double-elim tournament, a *lethal* double hit or after blow will count as a loss for both fencers. Dead is dead. An exception may be made for the final round.

Ring Boundaries: A fencer can also lose by stepping outside of the boundaries of the fencing area with both feet while the fighting continues. If both fencers do so it will be counted the same as a double hit. Fencers will not receive a warning when near the boundaries of the fencing area. Caveat: If one combatant lands a lethal blow and subsequently steps outside the boundaries, the lethal blow will be counted as the fight ender.

*No Lethal Blow*

If there has been no successful lethal blow struck at the end of the period, but non-lethal blows have successfully landed, the combatant who scored the most non-lethal blows will win. (For instance, at the end of 90 seconds, neither opponent has scored a lethal blow, but A has struck her opponent’s limbs while B has not. A will be declared the winner of the bout.) If an equal number of non-lethal blows have landed from both combatants, both take a loss. An exception may be made for the final round. The table will keep track of non-lethal blows just as they do points in the Rapier and Dagger tournament.

Sword and Buckler Contest

Like the Rapier and Dagger tournament, the Sword and Buckler rules view the tournament bout as a demonstration of skill rather than a simulation of a serious encounter.

In addition, this tournament aims to promote Sword and Buckler fencing from several traditions. Due to this it is possible for fencers to end up fencing somewhat ahistorical weapon matches such as late 14th century Arming Sword vs a 17th century Baskethilt. As this is the case we view this event as a way of highlighting the art that you study. We hope to see you fence as cleanly and as true to the sources you study as possible.

Bouts will be fought until a fencer reaches 15 points first or the time expires, in which case the fencer with the highest score at the end of time shall win. Each bout will last 1.5 minutes (90 seconds). The time will pause when the director stops the fight.

*Scoring*

* Cut or Thrust to the body or head: 3 points
* Cut to the arms or legs: 2 points
* Pommel strike (only to the front of the mask): 2 points
* Thrust to the arms or legs: 1 point

*Valid Techniques*

* True edge percussive cuts
* False edge percussive cuts
* Slicing cuts (aka push cuts and draw cuts). The technique known as Slicing (Schneiden) used to block and control your opponent does not score. Only push or pull cuts with enough of the True or False edge. The judges and ring director will determine if the slicing cut was adequate.
* Thrusts
* Pommel strikes

Strikes with the buckler will not score and will result in a loss of points if deemed as deliberate by the director.

If, for any reason, an opponent drops his or her sword or buckler, the bout will be halted and the ring reset. If it happens to the same combatant two or more times in one bout, the ring director may, at his or her discretion, deduct points from that combatant.

Tie: In the case of a tie, whether at the end of the allotted time or if both fencers reach or pass fifteen points in the same action and end with the same score, the combatant with the most technical bonuses for the bout will win the bout (see **Technical Bonus** below). In the exceedingly rare case that they also both have the same number of technical bonuses, the winner will be decided by Rock Paper Scissors.

Side Sword (sword alone) Contest

Like the Single Rapier tournament, the Single Sword tournament is intended to more closely resemble a serious encounter, and has similar rules. The goal of the bout will be to score one valid lethal blow.

Each bout will consist of one 1.5 minute (90 second) round. The time will pause when the director stops the fight (See **Halts**, in the **General Rules** section below).

Each bout will be fenced until a fencer scores a single, valid lethal hit, or the time elapses. A valid hit can be delivered with either a cut or a thrust. NOTE: Cuts to the head, legs, or arms are considered valid lethal (fight ending) cuts in this tournament. Cuts to the hands, and thrusts to the hands, arms, and legs are not!

As in the single rapier contest, we will still be looking for and noting technical bonuses (good technique). This will only play in, however, in the case of a tie for an elims slot at the end of a pool round. In such a case, if player A won her fights with more technical bonuses than player B, player A would be ranked higher than player B.

Similarly, though a cut to the leg is a lethal blow and a cut to the head is a lethal blow, if there's a double kill in the pools where one throws a leg cut and the other hits the head, the head shot will be ranked higher than the leg shot in the case that those two tie at the end of the pools round. We will rank head shots above all others, and body shots above limbs.

These fights can go quickly, so we will ask that fighters gear up and be ready to go during the pool rounds.

*Target Areas*

* Thrust or cut to head: Lethal
* Thrust or cut to body: Lethal
* Cut to arms and legs: Lethal
  + NOTE for the sidesword tournament: Cuts to the hand will count as a non-lethal blow. You'll need to hit the forearm for it to count as a lethal blow.
* Pommel strikes to the front of the mask: Lethal
* Thrust to arms and legs: Non-lethal

*Techniques*

* Fighters are allowed to use the off-hand to press an opponent’s arm out of the way or grasp an opponent’s arm provided they are not twisting it or doing any unsafe actions, as judged by the ring director. Grasping the blade is not allowed, though controlling it, blocking it, or pressing it with the hand is acceptable. Fighters may not make any attempt to throw the opponent, nor are they allowed to use actions that manipulate an opponent’s joints. Any attempt to do so will result in penalties at the discretion of the ring directors (see **Penalties and Injuries**, below).
* Pommel strikes (only to the front of the mask) are allowed and are valid lethal hits, but they must be pulled and should not land with full force. Doing otherwise may lead to **Penalties and Injuries** at the discretion of the ring directors.
* In any pools round, a double *lethal* hit or after blow will count as a loss for both fencers, though, as mentioned above, we will rank head shots above all others, and body shots above limbs in the case of a tie in ranking at the end of the pools round. In the case of a fully single- or double-elim tournament, a double *lethal* hit or after blow will count as a loss for both fencers. Dead is still dead. An exception may be made for the final round.

Ring Boundaries: A fencer can also lose by stepping outside of the boundaries of the fencing area with both feet while the fighting continues. If both fencers do so it will be counted the same as a double hit. Fencers will not receive a warning when near the boundaries of the fencing area. If one combatant lands a lethal blow and subsequently steps outside the boundaries, the lethal blow will be counted as the fight ender.

*No Lethal Blow*

If there has been no successful lethal blow struck at the end of the period, but non-lethal blows have landed, the combatant who scored the most non-lethal blows will win. (For instance, at the end of 2 minutes, neither opponent has scored a lethal blow, but A has struck her opponent’s limbs while B has not. A will be declared the winner of the bout.) If an equal number of non-lethal blows have landed from both combatants, both take a loss. Again, an exception may be made for the final round. The table will keep track of non-lethal blows just as they do points in the Rapier and Dagger tournament.

General Rules for all Tournaments

Thrusts: A valid thrust requires controlled pressure in line with the point and should generally cause the fencer’s blade to bend. Judges should note that some clearly valid thrusts hit at such an angle that the blade does not bend, though. This will be called at the judge’s discretion.

Cuts: A valid cut requires controlled pressure in line with the edge. Incidental contact with the edge will not be considered valid.

A percussive strike with the edge must be done with sufficient force, simulating the cutting mechanics of an actual sword. Note that this does not mean that the strike should hit hard, but it does mean that the fighter must perform a proper cut to be awarded points.

Slicing cuts (push and draw cuts) to the head are valid in those tournaments that allow cuts. An adequate slicing cut must be done with sufficient pressure and blade length with a pushing or pulling of the edge along the target, and will be scored the same as any strike with the edge. Note that merely laying the weapon on the target and moving it along is not enough to score. Also note that at least one third of the length of the blade must slice the head to be judged a sufficiently debilitating cut. The judges and ring director will determine if the slicing cut was adequate.

Excessive Force: Fencers who use excessive force will be warned or penalized by the loss of points or the loss of a match. (See the **Penalties and** **Injuries** section below.)

Stapling: If a fencer covers his or her valid target area with either arm or hand and receives a hit that would have landed on the body or head (thus, “stapling” it to the other target), the hit may be counted by the judges as having hit the deeper target. The application of this rule is at the discretion of the ring directors.

Multiple Targets or Hits: In the event that an opponent is struck more than once before the halt, only the first scoring point will be recorded, unless the ring director deems the first hit as a proper setup for the second - in other words if the first strike was deemed by the ring director as a provocation leading to the second strike. If an opponent is struck in two target areas simultaneously with one weapon (such as a cut that hits both the mask and the arm), only the higher scoring point is recorded.

Invalid Targets: A competitor’s back and back of the head will not be targets. Any attempt to purposely target these areas will be cause for penalties at the discretion of the ring directors. (See the **Penalties and** **Injuries** section below.)

Halts: In all tournaments, the ring director will stop the bout when an action has occurred that requires deliberation or clarification. When the director stops a bout, combatants will return to their starting areas and await a judgement. The director will then ensure both combatants are ready and resume the bout. In all tournaments, the time will pause when the director stops the fight.

NOTE that self-calling blows \*is\* allowed, but that the ring directors can overrule. See *Running of a Bout*, below!

*Doubles and Failed Withdrawals (after-blows)*

A Double is where both Fencers strike each other within the same action or tempo.

* In the case of a balanced double no score shall be given. (Example: The players score three point blows against each other. They cancel each other out and there is no score for the exchange.) If the double is imbalanced, the lower score shall be deducted from the higher score. (Example: The cut to player A’s head lands at the same time a cut to player B’s leg lands. B’s 3 points will be reduced by the 1 point A scored against her.) NOTE: In the case that the tournament risks running long, the imbalanced double will be scored as struck for both opponents. (In the example above, B will get 3 points and A will get the 1 point.)
* If there are 3 balanced doubles in a pool bout then both fencers lose that bout. Learn to parry or void.
* If there are 3 or more balanced doubles in an elimination bout, the winning fencer goes into his or her next bout with a 3 point penalty.

A Bad or Failed Withdrawal (after-blow) is when a fighter lands a successful hit, but fails to defend himself in the tempo afterward (while recovering). Once a blow is struck, the wounded fighter has one tempo or motion to attempt an after-blow, or “revenge strike.” In order to achieve a successful after-blow, it must be done in the time it takes to make one step following the successful hit. An after-blow will be treated as a double (see above). NOTE: Some strikes would almost certainly render an opponent incapable of an after-blow. A thrust to the eye, for instance. The ring directors have the authority to disallow an after blow if, in their judgement, the action would have been amazingly unlikely.

*Special Techniques*

Technical Bonus: A Technical Bonus doubles the amount of points just scored on the opponent. (example: A thrust to the head, which is worth 3 points, now becomes worth 6 points.) To gain the Technical Bonus, the ring director must see two things: *1) that a competitor cleanly hits without being hit*, and *2) the competitor did so with a solid cut or thrust of the sword while using good structure and biomechanics. Slop and accidental points will not get technical bonuses.* The Technical Bonus is assessed by the ring director after the halt for every scoring hit. The technical bonus is the ring director’s way of awarding extra points for good technique properly executed. This can include simply using tempo well and getting out quickly.

Disarms: Disarms are discouraged due to the inclusion of complex hilts in all tournaments. If a disarm occurs, the bout will be halted and the combatants reset. No score will be given.

Running of a Bout

Each bout will be officiated by a total of (two or four) judges and a ring director. (If four judges are present, then they may work in pairs - two judges may be assigned to watch for hits against only one fencer.)

The ring director will be responsible for starting and stopping the bout, determining the validity of hits, and keeping track of who scored for each exchange.

The table will keep track of the score itself.

When a judge observes a hit, he or she will raise the appropriate fencer’s flag, and the ring director will call halt. The director may also halt the bout if he or she observes a hit or has other reasons to do so.

The judges and ring director will watch after the initial hit for the possibility of an after-blow. The defender is allowed no more than one step and one strike to attempt an after-blow.

After the bout has been halted, the Director will call the action, if necessary (Example: “A hit B in the arm, and B hit A with an after-blow to the head.”).

The ring director will then verify the observed action with each judge, if necessary.

The ring director can overrule the judges.

A fencer may choose to acknowledge a hit made against him or her if the ring director does not acknowledge it. A fencer may also decline to accept a hit against their opponent at any time, but this is not required or expected. The fencer should acknowledge a hit or decline one only after the ring director has made a determination of the actions. The ring director may choose to accept these decisions or not at his or her discretion.

A fencer shall never attempt to call a hit against their opponent, or argue that an opponent’s hit against themselves was invalid. Doing so will result in the loss of points. Multiple attempts will result in the loss of the bout.

A ring director may speak with combatants to clarify actions or decisions, at the director’s discretion.

The ring director’s ruling on an action is final.

Penalties and Injuries

Fencers must act in a prudent and reasonable manner at all times in order to avoid injury to themselves, their opponents, tournament staff, and spectators.

Any Fencer who acts in an unsafe or malicious manner may be disqualified from further participation in the tournament at the discretion of the ring directors or tournament administrator. Hard hits will not be penalized if the ring director overseeing the fight feels the excessive hit was the result of the receiving fencer’s own action (i.e. lunging into the opponent’s attack).

*Penalties*

Penalties will be divided into two categories: A warning and a Red Card (Automatic Forfeit of the Match). In most cases a warning must be given before a Red Card is given (see exceptions below). Penalty cards do not carry over into other bouts.

Any competitor, however, who receives two Red Cards throughout the event is ejected from all tournaments. Further, the tournament staff reserves the right to eject a competitor for extreme behavior even without a Red Card.

*Warnings*

Warnings may be accompanied by a loss of points, depending on the severity of the action. A ring director may, for example, give a simple warning for a first offense, followed by a warning with points deducted for a second offense. Three warnings in one bout, however, will result in the loss of that bout. A ring director may also give a warning for a first offense (with or without points deducted), and a Red Card for the second offense, if, in the judgement of the ring director the loss of the match is warranted.

In addition to those incidents mentioned elsewhere in these rules, the following are other possible reasons for warnings:

* Out of Bounds Stalling: This refers to a fighter, who is ahead in points, intentionally and repeatedly stepping out of bounds to run out the clock.
* Striking After the Halt: When the referee halts the match, the match stops. Failure to do so will result in a penalty. It is recognized that sometimes a fighter will be in the middle of an action at the moment of the halt, and referees will not penalize someone for this. Otherwise, fighters must remain in control of themselves at all times and stop as soon as the halt is called.
* Intentionally Striking the Back of the Head: A fighter who intentionally strikes the back of the head will be penalized with a warning.
* Intentionally Turning the Back of the Head as a Tactic: A fighter who turns away or drops the head down to expose the back of the head, particularly as an opponent is attacking, will be penalized. The ring director has the right to award the attacker points for an attack that lands to the head in this scenario despite the back of the head being off-target.
* Disrespectful Vocalization: While fighters are allowed to vocally show excitement or frustration, any disrespectful behavior (taunting, swearing, etc) will receive a penalty card as well as nullify any points scored during that action. Note that this includes attempting to deceive judges by screaming in joy to convince them that you yourself scored when you didn’t.
* Arguing with the ring director or staff: A fighter who argues with the ring director to the point of disruption will be penalized. Please note that this is not the same thing as respectfully asking a question for clarification, which is not penalized.
* Attitude Problems: Competitors are expected to act with respect to one another and the event staff.
* Loss of Temper: A fighter who is so angry that he or she cannot calm down, or is throwing equipment in anger, will be given a warning. A fighter who does this at the end of the match will receive a warning for that fighter’s next match.

*Red Cards*

In most cases, a warning is given before a Red Card. In certain extreme cases, however, the ring director or event administrator has the right to skip the warning.

* Dangerous behavior: This category includes any number of things, including (but not limited to) punching, kicking, stomping on joints, attempting joint breaks during grappling, holding the blade and striking with the cross guard and hilt (a “*mordschlag*”), throwing the weapon, continuing to fight long after the ring director called halt multiple times, etc.
* Intentionally Striking at Unauthorized Times: If a competitor intentionally attempts to hit an opponent when the bout is not in progress, then the fighter forfeits the match, and possibly the tournament. For example, the ring director calls “Halt”, and fighter A begins returning to the starting line. Fighter B, out of anger, then walks up to him and strikes him. Fighter B would be automatically Red Carded and loses the match. In addition, the tournament administrator reserves the right to eject fighter B from the tournament.

*Injuries*

No Fencer, Coach, or Spectator will enter the arena to assist with an injury unless called for by the ring director or the injured combatant.

In the event of a medical emergency, the fighter must report to the medical staff on duty if they wish to continue in the tournament. It will be determined, based on the medical staff’s input, whether to postpone the match or if the fighter will need to drop out of the tournament.

If a fencer is not well enough to continue, the match is forfeited. A warning may be issued to the injured fencer’s opponent if the injury was caused by reckless, but not illegal or malicious, behavior. If the forfeiting injury was caused by illegal or malicious behaviour on the part of the uninjured opponent, then the match is forfeited by both opponents.

In all cases of injury, the judges and tournament administrator will make an assessment as to whether the injury was inflicted maliciously. A fencer who injures his opponent intentionally shall be ejected from the tournament.

Injury inflicted on any other party (director, judges, administrative staff, spectators) will result in disciplinary action up to disqualification, depending on the circumstances and at the discretion of the tournament administrator.

Roles of the Staff

Ring Director

The ring director starts and stops the fight, communicates with the fencers, ensures all participants are ready, controls safety in the ring, interprets the actions, and announces points for the scorekeeper.

During a bout, the ring director’s decisions take precedence. While a fencer or coach can request clarification, or ask to acknowledge a hit or call back one awarded to them, arguing with the ring director can result in a loss of points or the match, at the director’s discretion.

Scorekeeper

The scorekeeper tracks the action of the match as reported by the director, and updates the scoreboard for the match.

Only tournament staff may communicate directly with the scorekeeper during a bout; any fencer or coach who attempts to do so will receive a warning.

Fencers or coaches may communicate with the scorekeeper during a break to ascertain bout order.

Ring Boss

The ring boss controls the general running of the competition area.

The ring boss prepares the next pair of fencers for their bout.

The ring boss shall fill in the fencer brackets.

Fencers or coaches may communicate with the ring boss about general information as long as they do not interfere with the running of a bout.

Roles of the Fencers and Coaches

Fencers

There will be two fencers for every match. No more than two fencers are allowed in the competition ring at a time.

Fencers must report to the ring when called. Any fencer called to the competition ring three times in a three-minute period without reporting will forfeit the match.

Coaches

Each fencer may be attended by one coach. The coach is allowed to give their fencer advice throughout the bout.

If the coach is too loud or belligerent and the director determines that they are interfering with the bout then they shall be given a warning by the director. Two such warnings will result in the coach being disqualified from that tournament. They shall not be allowed to be next to the competition area for the rest of the tournament.

The coach may enter the ring if invited by the director, but must otherwis stay outside of the ring and may not interfere with the referee, other fencers, or any tournament staff.

Rules V.3.1 – 04.27.19

**The staff of Lord Baltimore’s Challenge reserves the right to clarify or change these rules as the event is being planned.**