

Dutch HEMA Championships

General Ruleset 2022

Summary

- Duration of matches in the poules and elimination phases are 3 minutes. The finals will consist of a best of 3, each match lasting 3 minutes.
- The scoring system differs per system, the details can be found under the relevant section (see index below)
- Throws are only allowed in longsword, and only for division 1 or womens' matches. Throws are **NOT** allowed in any other discipline or division 2 longsword.
- Scoring for afterblows (strikes after the first hit) will only account for hits made within a single tempo after the first hit. There is therefore no separately scored afterblow. The net result of scoring in this tempo will be added to the scoreboard.
- Double hits may result in the subtraction of match points where it is apparent that fighters are forgoing any defensive measures during an exchange.
- During matches you must show respect to your opponent, the referees and judges. Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated.

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1. Participation Requirements

- a. This tournament is open to anyone above the age of 18*, who is also a member of the Dutch HEMA federation (*Nederlandse HEMA bond*).
 - i. **Fighters over the age of 16 may be allowed with the permission of both their legal guardians and their instructor.*

2. Tournament Structure

- a. The tournament starts with a poule phase, after which an elimination phase takes place, followed by the finals.
 - i. Swiss pairings will be used where a low number of fighters is concerned.
- b. Where tournaments are split into divisions (as with open longsword) each division will be run separately. Each division will therefore have its own poules, eliminations, and finals.
- c. During the poule phase, each fighter will fight each other fighter in their poule once. The results of these matches will determine the ranking for the poule phase.
- d. Based on the ranking of the poule phase an elimination tree is created, a cutoff is used and the top fighters will proceed. For the elimination phase each fighter must win to proceed to the next round. A loss will result in elimination from the tournament. This continues until the final 4 fighters are in the semi-finals.
- e. The winners of the semi-final matches in the elimination phase move to the gold finals while the losers will move to the bronze finals. The winner of the gold final will receive the gold medal, the loser silver. The winner of the bronze final will receive the bronze medal, the loser receives nothing.

3. Match duration

- a. Matches in the elimination and poule rounds will last 3 minutes. In the case of a draw refer to point c.
- b. The finals are a best of 3 matches. Matches are 3 minutes each with a break of 30 seconds between rounds. In the case of a draw refer to point c.
- c. In the case of a draw during either the elimination or final rounds:
 - i. The match time will be extended by 1 minute
 - ii. If a winner is still not determined after the extension then 'sudden death' will take effect, which has no time limit.
- d. In general the clock will always run during a fight, with the following exceptions:
 - i. Medical emergency or other safety issues.
 - ii. Gear related safety issues.
- e. Only the referee may call for a time-out, during which the clock will be paused. The referee may do so freely and at their own discretion.
- f. There is no maximum threshold for points or exchanges. The match will continue until time runs out.

- g. During the last 10 seconds of the match 'last exchange' will be called. Once called a final exchange may be performed, after which the match ends regardless of the time on the clock. Such an exchange may therefore last longer than the remaining time if it does so in a natural way. The referee determines what constitutes a 'natural way' and may halt the exchange freely.

4. Scoring

- a. Each match will have 2 jury members in total, incl. the referee who acts as a juror.
- b. The referee acts as an extra jury member. Should the jury be in disagreement, the referee will have the final say, however the referee may not ignore the verdict of the jury. Should it occur that the jury and referee assign different scores to a fighter, the score will be rounded down, however in most cases majority wins.
- c. The jury will clearly call 'hit' or 'point' when they see a point being made. When the call is made, the referee must stop the exchange by calling 'break' or 'halt'. Once the exchange has been halted, the jury must assign points to the fighters based on what they had witnessed. The jury will signal the assigned points through the use of flags.
- d. Points assigned are based on the discipline, refer to the rulesets of the disciplines for details on how points are assigned.
- e. No distinction will be made between a hit or an afterblow. All offensive actions within a single tempo after the first hit will be counted.
- f. Points scored in a tempo are subtracted and the difference is noted in the score.
- i. An exchange scoring 3 points red, 2 points blue, results in 1 point red.
- g. Flags signalling semaphore:
- i. Flag pointed upwards: 3 points
- ii. Flag pointed to the side: 2 points
- iii. Flag pointed down: 0 points
- iv. Flags crossed: unclear exchange / low quality / couldn't see
- h. At the end of the poule round, match points are assigned to fighters based on the results of the matches fought. Fighters are ranked based on these points, which determines which fighters will move to the elimination rounds. The points are assigned as follows:
- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Win:</i> 9 points | <i>Draw:</i> 6 points | <i>Loss:</i> 3 points |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
- i. If 2 or more fighters in the ranking have the same number of points, then the order will be determined first by looking at the number of points received against the fighter and then the number of points made by the fighter during all the matches in the poule phase. Therefore fighters who received fewer hits will be ranked higher than fighters who made more hits when the match points are equal.
- j. Matches are fought until the time runs out, the fighter with the most points at the end of the match, wins the match.

- k. In the event of a draw during either the elimination matches or final match in the final round the match will be extended by 1 minute. If after this extension the draw persists then the match will move to sudden death, during which the first fighter to score 2 points without themselves being struck in the process will win the match.
- l. If during a strike an opponent shows their back, you are not to complete the action. No points will be awarded if you do strike them*.
 - i. If you can demonstrate in a controlled way that you could have struck them, without actually hitting them, full points will be awarded.

5. Double Hits

- a. A double hit is defined as an action where both fighters execute a scoring hit within a single tempo
- b. Assigning double hits is intended to discourage a style of fighting whereby either fighter is demonstrating a lack of self preservation during a fight. If it is clear to the referee that the fighter is clearly, but unsuccessfully, attempting to defend themselves then they may choose to not assign a double hit. Assigning a double hit should be used as a last resort.
- c. No points will be assigned if a double hit occurs.
- d. For each double hit after the first, a match point will be deducted.
- e. In the case where either fighter is simply disregarding this measure then warnings, penalties, or disqualifications may be assigned to the offending fighter. The referee will consult the floor manager on appropriate action.

6. Permitted Actions

- a. Permitted actions with the weapon are as follows:
 - i. Stabbing with the point
 - ii. Striking or cutting* with the edge
 - * *cutting is defined as an action whereby the edge is drawn across the opponent while maintaining contact for a significant distance (about half the length of the blade). For safety reasons, it is recommended that cuts are drawn towards yourself, so that the cross of the weapon moves away from the opponent.*
 - iii. Actions whereby a pommel strike against the mask can be demonstrated from a dominant position, and without actually contacting the mask, are permitted.
- b. Wrestling is permitted, although throws are forbidden.* Wrestling may result in points if clear dominance is established or a scoring action with the weapon is performed during the wrestling. If an action is performed whereby one fighter can no longer use their weapon or is otherwise no longer capable of defending themselves, such action will be considered dominance and points will be awarded accordingly.

* *Throws are permitted in womens- and division 1 longsword if fighting on mats.*

Throws should be controlled and uncontrolled actions may receive penalties

- i. Should a situation arise whereby one fighter is on the ground and the other remains standing the match will automatically be paused and the standing

fighter will be awarded points for domination.

- c. If a fighter lifts both of their opponents feet from the ground, points will be received for domination.
- d. Should a fighter lose their weapon under any circumstances (including dropping it) the opponent will receive points for domination.
- e. If both fighters lose their weapons the exchange is halted and a reset occurs, unless this loss occurs as part of an ongoing wrestling action.
- f. Should a wrestling action take too long to complete or no fighter is convincingly dominant in the exchange, the referee may halt the exchange and reset.
- g. Scoring actions should be made with sufficient intensity. Simply touching is not a scoring action. Poor quality actions such as insufficient contact, bad edge alignment, striking with the flat, or insufficient thrusts will not be awarded any points. Note that the jury may call low quality without halting the exchange.
- h. Fighters may speak with the referee. Intent to speak is indicated by raising the hand between exchanges. The referee may then call for a time-out and approach the fighter. Any decision made by the referee during this consultation is final, further protest from the fighter may result in penalties or disqualification.
Fighters may only speak to the referee for the following reasons:
 - i. To request a recount if the fighter thinks scores were counted incorrectly
 - ii. The fighter feels unsafe due to behaviour of the opponent
 - iii. The fighter has a medical issue
- i. Any fighter may withdraw from the match at any point.
- j. Fighters should continue to defend themselves until the referee halts the exchange.

7. Forbidden Actions

- a. Showing up late for a match is not permitted.
- b. Showing your back, or back of your head, to the opponent is not permitted;
 - i. If the opponent is able to demonstrate that they would be able to hit you during this turn, they will receive full points. (see point 4.i)
 - ii. Should such a turning action be used to devoid the opponent of an opportunity to strike, full points will also be awarded to the opponent.
- c. Making a strike to a forbidden target is not permitted. See point 10 as well the rulesets of individual disciplines for forbidden targets.
- d. Actively aiming to push the opponent out of the ring or 'bullrushing' is not permitted. (see point 8.b)
- e. Throwing during wrestling, where certain exception apply (see point 6.b)
- f. Choke holds or breaking techniques are forbidden (both in- and out of wrestling)
- g. Throwing the weapon is forbidden.
 - i. It is understood that the weapon may be discarded during wrestling actions but this is to be done in a controlled manner, preferably so that it lands with

the flat side on the ground.

- h. Striking the floor with the weapon is forbidden.
- i. Non-scoring or unnecessary violence, this includes punching, headbutts or kicking.
- j. Offensive use of the cross is forbidden.
- k. Excessive violence is not to be used. This means otherwise legitimate techniques applied with excessive force whereby risk of injury is unduly heightened.
 - i. What constitutes excessive force is up to the referee and floor manager, and may differ based on the opponent's comfort with the intensity.
- l. Continuing a fight after a halt is called by the referee is forbidden.
- m. Speaking to table crew or members of the jury is forbidden. Speaking to the referee may be permitted under specific circumstances (see point 6.h)
- n. Cursing, shouting, or obscene gestures of any kind will not be permitted.
- o. Threats towards anyone will not be permitted, verbal or otherwise.
- p. Fighters may not admit points scored on them, or waive points awarded to them. Only the jury and referee may determine the scores. Should a fighter be unhappy with the scoring they may approach the referee (see point 6.h).

8. Ring-Out

- a. If either fighter should step outside of the ring with both feet, the match will be called to a halt and the opponent will be awarded points accordingly (1 point).
- b. It is not permitted to push the opponent out of the ring, nor to rush them across the ring and in so doing causing a ring-out (bull rushing). These actions are not a part of fencing and risk competitors running into equipment, furnishings, or other people while they're being forced out of the ring.
- c. In the event both fighters place both feet outside of the ring at the same time the match will be halted and they will be reset. The clock will not be stopped for such a reset.

9. Infractions

- a. The referee may hand out infractions when fighters are taking part in forbidden actions. When a fighter receives their second infraction, 1 point will be deducted from their score. Upon a third infraction they will automatically forfeit the match. Infractions are tracked by the score keeper.
- b. If a competitor had previously forfeited a match due to having 3 infractions, and they again forfeit a match due to receiving 3 infractions, they will automatically be disqualified.
- c. The floor manager may, in consultation with the referee, escalate any infraction to an immediate disqualification if they feel that the severity of the infraction warrants it or if the fighter is otherwise receiving a large number of infractions but in such a way as not cross the above thresholds.

- d. The referee may also choose to hand out warnings instead of infractions, or behaviour fringing on infraction, based on the severity of the behaviour or the fighters' disposition to infractions.

10. Illegal Targets

- a. Occipital area (back of the head)
- b. Spine
- c. Feet (incl. ankles)
- d. Crotch

11. Coaching

- a. All fighters must have a coach present during all of their matches.
 - i. No more than 1 coach is allowed to present.
 - ii. Fighters may use different coaches for any match or change their coach during a match, as long as they retain a coach for the duration of the match.
- b. The coach should remain in the fighter's corner, whether kneeling, sitting, or standing. But will not leave the fighter's corner except in the case of emergency, be it medical, gear, or technical. In case of such an emergency the coach (or anyone noticing such an emergency) should call 'safety'.
- c. The coach is permitted to ask for a time-out for their fighter in the case of medical concern or emergency, to adjust or repair gear, or to pose questions. In the event gear needs to be adjusted or repaired, a maximum of 2 minutes will be allowed to do so.
- d. The coach is permitted to give the fighter verbal instructions during their match, as long as the volume of such instructions remains within acceptable levels and the coach is not attempting to influence the jury. Should this be ignored, the referee may request the coach to remain silent during exchanges. If the coach does not comply the referee or the floor manager may forbid the coach access to the match area, or even the tournament hall if necessary.
 - i. The coach is permitted to congratulate their fighter, such as clapping or cheering, **after** the jury has given their verdict. Doing so before will be seen as attempting to influence the jury
- e. Safety:
 - i. The coach communicates with the fighter during the match, including whether the intensity of the match is tenable. Both the fighter and the coach may indicate when intensity levels become uncomfortable.
 - ii. The coach should put their hand when a halt is called to draw the attention of the referee and describe the situation (e.g. "intensity is escalating uncomfortably" or "strikes to the head are too hard"). The referee should respond and may call a timeout to convene with the jury and potentially issue warnings or infractions as and if necessary.
 - iii. The coach is also responsible for ensuring that their fighter is not escalating to unnecessary levels. They may recognise frustration or a heightened victory

drive from their fighter should they know their fighter well. Should they be less familiar with their fighter they may recognize uncontrolled behaviour or indicators of pain from the opponent. In either case the coach should request a timeout from the referee, regardless of whether their fighter is in agreement. At this point the coach has 1 minute to discuss with their fighter how to continue the match in a safe way.

12. Gear Requirements

- a. General:
 - i. All gear should be reasonably maintained.
 - ii. No skin should be visible on the fighter
 - iii. The referee, in consultation with the floor manager, retains the right to disqualify any gear, for any reason.
 - iv. These requirements are a minimum standard. Gear exceeding this minimum, including extra protective equipment such as a hard chest protector or extra thigh padding, are permitted and in some cases encouraged.
 - v. Aside from the mask, no protective gear should be made of metal.
 - vi. If it is unclear whether or not a piece of gear is permissible, please contact the tournament organisers prior to the event, or the floor manager on the day of. Please note that gear may be refused and failing to pass gear check will result in a disqualification.
- b. Requirements for protective equipment:
 - i. Fencing mask with an occipital guard. The mesh should contain no serious damage such as cracks or heavy dents.
 - ii. A padded jacket without any openings or tears (where tears mean an object can be passed through the jacket through the tear). Should the jacket open in the front, it should be double breasted. The jacket should have a collar which covers the neck. Ventilation holes or mesh on the back of the jacket are permitted, as long as any such holes are not large enough for the tip of a weapon to pass through unobstructed.
 1. Jackets with lighter padding such as the AP Light should be worn with a throat protector which covers the collar bones.
 - iii. Sufficiently protective gloves. (Lacrosse, hockey, or Red Dragon gloves are not permitted)
 - iv. Should the glove or jacket not have a cuff which sufficiently protects the forearms a separate forearm protector is required.
 - v. A gorget (throat protection) with a hard plate.
 - vi. Elbow protectors consisting of a hard plate.
 - vii. Knee and shin protectors consisting of a hard plate. This may be a single item covering both the knee and shin, or 2 separate pieces

- viii. A toque is required where testicales are concerned and recommended in all other situations.
 - ix. Shoes are required, the shoes should be clean and not leave marks on floors.
- c. Weapon requirements differ based on the discipline, please refer to the rules for the individual discipline for the weapon requirements.
 - d. Note that the requirements for protective equipment may also be different based on the individual discipline, but will generally be less than what is listed above, as such what is listed above should be sufficient in all disciplines.

Examples of Gear

The following are examples of gear from approved makers. These are not direct recommendations nor an exhaustive list. Consult with your club for recommendations.

Mask

- Absolute Force
(https://afinternationalsporting.com/product_info.php/products_id/178?osCsid=e00kl1pt5scma90crc260jn4m0)
- PBT historical fencing (<https://pbthistoricalfencing.com/products/hema-masks/>)

Occipital Guard

- SPES (<https://histfenc.eu/en/179-overlays>)
- PBT
(<https://pbthistoricalfencing.com/products/hema-protectors/#hema-back-of-the-head-protector>)

Jackets

- SPES (<https://histfenc.eu/en/men/200-11501-kurtka-do-hema-ap-plus-350n.html>)
- Arcem
(<https://www.blackarmoury.com/en/jackets/357-7504-arcem-hema-jacket-350n-men-s.html>)

Gloves

- Sparring Gloves (<https://sparringglove.com/portfolio/mittens-fechtschule-gdansk>)
- SPES Heavies
(<https://histfenc.eu/en/men/212-12447-lobster-full-thumb-heavy-gloves.html>)

Gorget

- PBT (<https://pbthistoricalfencing.com/products/details/hema-throat-protector>)
 - Note that this style of throat protection is required where jackets like the AP light with no padding on the collarbone is concerned
- Red Dragon (<https://www.thehemashop.com/red-dragon-throat-protector>)
- DMZ
(<https://www.blackarmoury.com/en/gorget/241-roughneck-gorget-destroyer-modz.html>)

Elbow Guards

- SPES (<https://histfenc.eu/en/men/93-shell-elbow-overlays.html>)
 - Note that if the gloves or jacket do not have a cuff covering the forearms then a separate piece will be required. SPES also sells these.

Knee & Shin Guards

- SPES (<https://histfenc.eu/en/men/88-shell-knee-overlays.html>)
- Hockey Shin Guards
(<https://www.hockeydirect.nl/bescherming-c/scheenbeschermers-c>)
- Red Dragon (<https://www.thehemashop.com/red-dragon-knee-shin-protectors>)

For weapon examples please check the rulesets for individual weapons.

Information for coaches

Summary:

Coaches are required at all matches and each fighter should have exactly 1 coach.

- You (the coach) communicate with the referee when:
 - The intensity of the fight is too high
 - An issue with gear occurs
 - A Dangerous situation occurs

The above is applicable whether experienced by, or caused by your fighter.

- You (the coach) may support your fighter by
 - Ensuring that they remain hydrated during the match
 - Ensuring their gear remains safe and functional
 - Keeping an eye on the safety of the match

You (the coach) may speak to your fighter during the match, however it should be of acceptable volume, advising the fighter is allowed. **Cheering or congratulation of any form when points are made by your fighter must wait until after the jury has given their verdict, doing so before will be considered an attempt to influence the jury.**

Should you (the coach) fail to adhere to this, the referee may ask you to leave the fighting area, and if necessary, the tournament hall. Your fighter must then find a new coach before the match can continue.

Our ideal tournament would be one where the First Aide staff were sitting around doing nothing, therefore we pay extra attention to ensuring that matches are conducted safely. As coach you are expected to not only ensure that your fighter is performing as well as they can but also to keep an eye on the safety of the match. You do so by communicating with your fighter during the match, especially between bouts. If the intensity of the fight is too much, your fighter may speak to the ref, but you may also do so. Between bouts you may raise your hand to draw the attention of the referee, then describe the situation to them (e.g. "The intensity of the fight is ramping up too much" or "Hits to the head are too hard"). The referee can then give a timeout and convene with the jury, possibly handing out infractions if necessary.

It could be that your fighter is the one who is causing an unsafe situation. If you know your fighter well you may recognise signs of frustration or the drive to win outweighing safety concerns. Otherwise you may also recognise signs of pain or fear from the opponent, or you may recognize uncontrolled behaviour from your fighter. You should request a timeout if this occurs, whether your fighter is in agreement or not. You will then receive 1 minute to discuss with your fighter how to best continue the match safely even if that means they need the minute to cool off. Remember that we are doing this for fun and everyone wishes to be able to go home uninjured.

The most important role of the coach is to keep the matches safe for everyone.