

Rules - Dutch Lions Cup 2024

General

The fencers must be at least 18 years old. They participate at their own risk and discretion as long as they follow the spirit of the tournament rules. Each bout should maintain a polite quality and instructions from tournament officials are to be respected.

Bout start

The fencers will receive red and blue armbands before the bout, and will be known by their colours during it.

The fencers will start the bout in their corners. The bout begins when the referee calls "fence" or "fight".

Exchange end

When a hit occurs, judges will call "point". After giving time for an after-blow, the referee will call "break" or "halt". When "break" or "halt" is called, the fencers must cease attacking, separate, and return to their corners. We expect fencers to pay attention to hearing the referee.

The referee can call "break" even if no "point" has been called, e.g. in the case that they are acting as a judge (see Scoring), when judging non-sword actions (grappling, ringouts, etc), or for safety reasons.

Even if there are no hits registered, the fencers must return to their corners if "break" is called by the referee.

Bout

A bout is fought for 3 minutes or until one fencer has reached the score cap of 10 points.

Timekeeping is not paused during the scoring; in case there is a longer break in the bout for any reason, the referee will call a timeout.

Ten seconds before the time limit is reached the Secretariat will call "last exchange". The current exchange will be allowed to run to its end, as long as the fencers are actively trying to fence. If the exchange becomes too passive, the referee will break it up, ending the bout.

If "last exchange" is called after an exchange has ended or while scorable actions are being performed, there will be one more exchange, which will be the last.

Between exchanges

After this, the referee will call "judges". Each judge will indicate the highest scoring blow for each fencer.

The referee will consult the judges and announce the points for both fencers to the scorekeeper. The scorekeeper then will subtract the lower score from the higher score, and announce the final score.

The referee has a vote himself as well and can act as a tie breaker but can not overrule both judges.

Bout end

If the point limit is reached before the time limit is reached, the table will call "match", and the referee will end the match and the fencer who reached the cap will be declared the winner.

If the bout time runs out, the fencer in the lead will be declared the winner; if the score is equal when the bout ends, the bout is a draw.

In case of a bout ending in a draw during the elimination round, the bout will continue in sudden death. Sudden death is fought until one fencer scores at least one point more than the other fencer.

Winner of the bout

After this the table will announce the score to the referee, who will officially announce the winner of the match and the final score.

Illegal targets

The following targets are illegal, and are worth no points:

- Back of the head
- Spine
- Groin
- Back of the knee
- Achilles tendon
- Foot incl. toes

Indicating attacks to illegal targets will still score (for example indicating a strike to the back of the head during a grappling situation).

Scoring

Scoring with the sword

3 point targets: Cuts, thrusts and slices to the head and neck, down to the end of the clavicle, and thrusts to the torso, down to the top of the bicep and down to the hipbone

2 point targets: everything else that is not an illegal target

Afterblows

An exchange can continue with an immediate attack after the first hit has landed, and said immediate attack will also score the appropriate amount of points. Both fencers are allowed to perform this attack.

Double hits (fencers landing their hits simultaneously) will be treated as blow-afterblow and be awarded the appropriate amount of points.

Fencers who consistently throw multiple “afterblows” after receiving a hit might be penalized for unsafe behaviour.

Ring outs

We don't allow pushing people out of the field for safety reasons. When a fencer leaves the field with both feet they will receive a warning. Each time after they will lose 2 points.

Scoring in grappling

In a grappling situation, a fencer can score by striking with the weapon or by specific grappling actions. The referee will halt the action in case of a judge calling “point”, if there is a scoring grappling technique, if the referee thinks there is a safety issue or if the grappling is at stalemate (~ 5 seconds without either fencer advancing into a better position). The 5 seconds will be counted out loudly by the referee.

Grabbing and maintaining a hold on a stationary sword is allowed.

The following techniques score in grappling:

If a fencer loses their weapon for any reason, and grappling distance is broken, their opponent will score 3 points.

Takedowns that place any other part of a fencer but their feet on the ground, award the fencer that remains standing 3 points. If both fencers go to the ground and neither is in a clearly dominant position, no score is awarded. If one of the fencers is in a dominant position, for example sitting on top of the other fencer, the dominant fencer is awarded 3 points. Likewise, if a fencer falls outside of grappling distance, their opponent will score 3 points.

Kicking or punching is disallowed and will be penalised, with the exception of controlled push-kicks to the front of the torso.

Uncontrolled and dangerous throws or takedowns are disallowed and will be penalised. Joint locks are also disallowed.

Quality requirement

Incidental strikes, cuts with questionable edge alignment, cuts with the tip of the blade and cuts made with a very small arc do not score. It is up to the fencers to demonstrate quality hits. This doesn't mean hit harder, but rather hit better.

Judging

- If the two judges agree on the score, the fencer scores that amount.
- If the two judges agree on a hit, but disagree on the score, the lower score is awarded.
- The referee may act as a third judge if they disagree with the judges. However, the referee does not have the right to overrule both the judges scoring.
- If the judges are both showing three points, three points are awarded and the referee cannot overrule.

Errors and penalties

Each bout should be conducted in a safe and respectful manner. The penalties for errors against these guidelines are:

- Warning
- Penalty hit (maximum possible points for an exchange awarded to the opponent)
- Loss of match
- Disqualification

The referee will rule according to the tables below but are free to escalate when deemed necessary.

Sportsmanship	First offence	Second offence	Third offence
Influencing the judges or referee	Warning	3 points awarded to the opponent	Loss of match
Refusal to obey the referee	Warning	3 points awarded to the opponent	Loss of match
Refusal to salute the opponent	Warning	3 points awarded to the opponent	Loss of match
Refusal to face contestant who is duly registered	Warning	3 points awarded to the opponent	Loss of match
Interference with the order on the mat	Warning	3 points awarded to the opponent	Loss of match
Favouring the opponent or benefit from unauthorised agreements	Disqualification		

Violation against sportsmanlike spirit	Disqualification		
Safety	First offence	Second offence	Third offence
Turning the back to the opponent before “break” has been called	Warning	3 points awarded to the opponent	Loss of match
Taking the mask off before “break” has been called	Warning	3 points awarded to the opponent	Loss of match
Striking after “break” has been called	Warning	3 points awarded to the opponent	Loss of match
Uncontrolled fencing	Warning	3 points awarded to the opponent	Loss of match
Violent, dangerous, or vindictive action	Warning	3 points awarded to the opponent	Loss of match
Severe violent, dangerous, or vindictive action, or intentional brutality	Disqualification		

Self-calling hits, correcting the referee or disputing the scoring is considered a violation (influencing the judges).

The second’s, as well as the audience members’ behaviour (for instance influencing the judges), also constitute violations and can lead to warnings, penalty hits and disqualification of the fencer.

Fencers or seconds are able to appeal decisions to the referee after the conclusion of the bout. If the issue does not get resolved, the fencer, second, or referee can ask for the tournament manager to settle the dispute.

A warning is valid for the bout at hand. If a fencer commits an error that should result in a warning after already having received a warning, the opponent receives 3 points regardless of which the second error is.

Warnings can carry over to next bouts depending on the severity of the behaviour. Repeat behaviour can cause loss of bout or disqualification.

If a fencer, second or member of the audience is disqualified, they must leave the premises immediately.

Violations against the sportsmanlike spirit include, but are not limited to, using foul language, throwing equipment and threatening tournament officials.

In cases where an offence cannot be properly addressed by the referee during the bout, it is possible for the referee or any of the fencers to make an appeal to the tournament manager. The manager has the opportunity to remove match points from a fencer for a violation that hasn't been fully addressed during the bout.

Each warning is recorded in the bout protocol.

Even though the amount of warnings resets after a bout has ended, if a fencer or second repeats violations throughout the tournament the tournament manager will address it and has the ability to remove match points or disqualify them, depending on the severity of the violations.

Injuries

If a fencer is injured during the bout, the referee will call a time-out and the medical staff will examine the fencer. If the medical staff clears the fencer to continue, and the fencer wishes to do so, the bout can proceed. If the bout cannot continue within 3 minutes, the injured fencer will have forfeited the bout.

If an injury occurs, all mats will halt ongoing bouts until the situation is cleared for the benefit of medical staff and the injured fencer. Please do not disturb staff while they work.

Equipment failure

The referee will call a time-out when equipment being broken or displaced is noticed. If a fencer, judge or second notices an equipment failure, they should point it out to the referee. If a piece of personal protective gear is broken, the fencer has 3 minutes to find a replacement. If this is not possible the fencer will have forfeited the bout.