

Match and tournament procedure

The tournament consists of pool rounds, followed by elimination matches leading up to the finals. During the pool rounds, any two fencers from the same pool who have not yet fought each other will pair up on their own. They may fence on any of the available rings assigned to that pool. From the eliminations onwards, the order of matches is fixed and fencers will be called accordingly.

A match consists of 5 exchanges in the pool rounds, 7 exchanges in the eliminations, and 9 exchanges in the final rounds. An exchange ends as soon as one fencer is hit and the hit fencer has executed a direct afterblow with a maximum of one tempo.

To determine the winner of a bout, first the number of exchanges completed without receiving a hit is counted, and second the points scored are counted. After a pool round the top-ranked fencers from the combined pool ranking fence in direct comparison leading to the finals.

Indirect comparison (pools): During a pool round, a match ends after five exchanges, so it can be won, lost, or tied. The results of every exchange are included in an overall ranking. The position in an overall ranking across all pools is determined by the total number* of exchanges fought without receiving a hit (= unharmed) (higher is better). In the event of a tie, the number of points scored decides (higher is better). If there is still a tie, the total number of 3-point-hits decides (higher is better). If a tie remains, the decision is made by lottery. *For unequal sized pools, all ranking values are normalized by size.

Direct comparison (eliminations/finals): During the eliminations or finals, a match must end with one fencer winning and the other losing. It can be won by the greater number of exchanges completed without receiving a hit (first criterion) or by points (second criterion, if the number of unharmed exchanges is tied). However, the winner must have at least two exchanges completed without receiving a hit. Therefore, additional exchanges may be added beyond the fixed number.

Video challenge

From the eliminations onwards, each fencer has one opportunity per match to request a video challenge of a decision. If the challenge is accepted, the fencer retains their opportunity for a video challenge. If the challenge is denied, the video challenge is lost for the remainder of the match.

For video challenge, one device is available at each table. If the fencers provide someone to film, this device may be used. Fencers are also free to provide an additional person using their own device to film. The videos are available to both fencers.

Hit guidelines

The target area is defined as the fencer's entire surface and their protective equipment, with the exception of the back, the back of the head, shoes, and the genital area.

In all weapon categories, cuts, thrusts, and slices count if they are delivered with sufficient quality (e.g., using only the cutting edge, the blade having traveled a sufficient distance before the cut, applying pressure for a slice).

In longsword, grappling is allowed, including takedowns, pins, and arm wrestling.

In sabre, only pins and arm wrestling are allowed.

In rapier, grappling is prohibited.

A step out occurs when one of the fencer's feet completely crosses the outside boundary line.

Conventions, Hits and Points

Scoring is structured so that exchanges survived without receiving a hit (unharmed) are counted primarily, while points scored by hits are considered secondarily.

Ranking	Name	Unharmed	Points Scored
1	Walburga	4	4
2	Giovanni	3	9
3	Lichtenauer	1	6
4	Joachim	1	3
5	Achille	0	6

Point values:

3 points for cuts, slices, or thrusts to the head and torso as well as successful grappling actions according to the DDHF framework rules (grappling is allowed for longsword, in saber it is only allowed to gap with the offhand and no throwing). Stepping outside the boundary line results in 3 points awarded to the opponent.

1 point all other valid hits.

Red card: Exchange lost and 3 points awarded to the opponent,

“Small” black card: Match lost and retroactive maximum scoring for the opponent (e.g. in 3 exchanges: 3 unharmed exchanges worth 3 points each),

“Big” black card: Disqualification and all matches voided.

Doubles:

Double hits are scored for both fencers according to the hit value. (The exchange does not count as having been completed uninjured.)

Afterblow:

An afterblow following a received hit is permitted if it is initiated immediately after the received hit (i.e. in the receivers directly following tempo triggered by the hit, without preparatory action) and executed with a maximum of one step. The counterattack is scored as a double hit.

Prohibited actions

1. Kicks with the foot, lower leg, or knee.
2. Strikes with the hand, forearm, or elbow.
3. Pommel strikes or strikes with the guard (hilt).
4. Strikes with the crossguard (mordschlag).
5. Pushing, shoving, ramming with excessive force, or taking someone down without providing assistance.
6. Strikes to the back of the head, neck, back, foot, or genital area.
7. In the case of grappling, the fencer who is being thrown must not attempt to strike the opponent, but must focus on falling safely.
8. Excessively hard strikes.
9. Joint locks (except locks used for disarming).
10. Throws onto the head.
11. Throwing the weapon or any equipment.
12. Thrusts with weapons for which no flex characteristics are specified.
13. Deliberately striking the floor (e.g., strikes intended to provoke the opponent, or uncontrolled strikes).

<i>PDF- Page</i>	Topic	Original version	changed version
6	Equipment & weapons (reference)	— (not present)	The specifications for weapons and protective equipment listed on the Berlin HEMA Cup website apply.
13	General bout procedure	1. The pairing for the next bout is called by the assistant / Lüsner. 2. The fencers line up ready to fight within 2 minutes.	1. Two fencers from the same pool who have not yet fenced each other report to the ring on their own. In eliminations or finals, fencers will be called. 2. The fencers state their ID/code to the assistants at the ring.
14	Video review (organisation)	It is the responsibility of the tournament management to ensure the technical equipment and comparable equipment for all fighting areas.	It is the responsibility of the participants to provide a technical device with the required functionality and immediate access (e.g., a tablet or smartphone) as well as a person to film. The tournament management may provide technical devices and personnel if needed. All videos of a bout are available to both fencers, regardless of who filmed them. If there is no video, the bout will be conducted without the option of video review.
14	Video review (access to videos)	The judges cannot request video evidence unless a challenge is made. If a challenge is made, the judges may be able to access both videos to get a neutral picture	The judges cannot request video evidence unless a challenge is made. If a challenge is made, the judges may be able to access all videos to get a neutral picture
15	Hit guidelines – target area	The hit zone is defined as the entire surface of the fencer and their protective equipment.	The hit zone is defined as the entire surface of the fencer and their protective equipment, with the exception of the back, the back of the head, shoes, and the genital area.
15	Hit guidelines – thrust	The blade must visibly deflect, slide off the mask or must visibly make sufficient contact.	The blade must visibly deflect, slide off the equipment or must visibly make sufficient contact.
16	Hit guidelines – grappling (procedure)	— (not present)	If grappling occurs in the Rapier & Dagger discipline, the bout is stopped immediately and the exchange is repeated.
16	Hit guidelines – bringing to the ground	Bringing to the ground: If a fencer succeeds in bringing their opponent to the ground while remaining standing himself with the weapon in their hand or stably standing in front of their opponent, this counts as a hit - unless	Bringing to the ground (longsword only): If a fencer succeeds in bringing their opponent to the ground while remaining standing himself with the weapon in their hand or stably standing in front of their opponent, this counts as

	the opponent can roll off and immediately stand up again ready to fight or defend himself.	a hit - unless the opponent can roll off and immediately stand up again ready to fight or defend himself.
16	Hit guidelines – fixation / blocking Fixation / blocking: If a fencer succeeds in rendering the opponent incapable of action by a hold, whereby the opponent cannot free himself from this hold, this counts as a hit. The hold must be dominant and recognizable as an intended action. A fencer can give up at any time by tapping	Fixation / blocking (longsword and sabre only): If a fencer succeeds in rendering the opponent incapable of action by a hold, whereby the opponent cannot free himself from this hold, this counts as a hit. The hold must be dominant and recognizable as an intended action. A fencer can give up at any time by tapping
17	Prohibited actions (kicks) Kicks with the foot, lower leg, or knee against joints and soft tissues, or leg sweeps.	Kicks with the foot, lower leg, or knee.
17	Prohibited actions (body contact / takedowns) As a physically superior person: pushing, shoving, bringing down, or the like with no apparent technique.	Pushing, shoving, ramming with excessive force, or taking someone down without providing assistance.
17	Prohibited actions (excessive force) Hard blows on hands and back.	Excessively hard strikes.
17	Prohibited actions (striking the floor) — (not present)	13. Deliberately striking the floor (e.g., strikes intended to provoke the opponent, or uncontrolled strikes).
17	Violations & penalties (penalty-hit logic) Hits of the opponent remain valid in case of own misconduct and possible penalty hits are added.	Hits of the opponent remain valid in case of own misconduct and possible increased by the higher penalty-hit total.