

## CAPITOL CLASH: WASHINGTON DC HEMA OPEN 2017

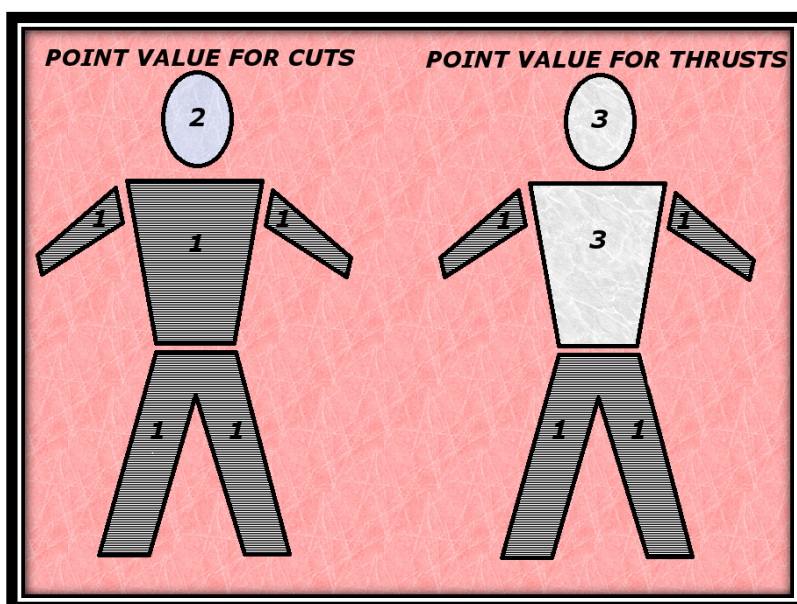
### SWORD & BUCKLER RULES (ADULT CATEGORY)

#### WINNING A BOUT

Pool bouts (first round): The first competitor to score *15 points*, or have the highest score after the time expires (1.5 minutes), wins the bout.

Elimination bouts (second round): The first competitor to score *25 points*, or have the highest score after time expires (3 minutes), wins the bout.

#### SCORING



\*3 points: A thrust to the head or torso

\*2 points: A cut to the head, pommel strike or buckler strike to the head. (Note that pommel strikes and buckler strikes may not score a Technical Bonus; see below)

\*1 point: A cut or a thrust to the limbs (arms, hands, legs and feet). Also, the opponent stepping out of the boundary with both feet.

\*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 referee must see two things: 1) *that a competitor cleanly hits without being hit*, and 2) *the competitor did so with a solid attack while using good structure and biomechanics*. The Technical Bonus is assessed after the halt for every scoring hit.

## **METHODS OF SCORING**

A competitor can score with the edge, point, or pommel of the sword.

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

\*Slices with the edge: A slice must be done with sufficient pressure 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 sliding it along is not enough to score; The competitor must be attempting to displace the opponent with pressure. Example: A thrust that misses the head and happens to slide along the side of the mask is considered incidental contact (non-scoring); however an opponent who misses the thrust and then uses that opportunity to make a drawing/pushing motion that actually pushes the opponent's head to the side can score.

\*Thrusts: A thrust is defined as an attack with the point that has some degree of pressure. If the point merely makes light contact and drags or slips along the target, the attack will be considered incidental contact (non-scoring).

\*Strikes with the pommel: A strike with the pommel can only be scored on the front, top or side of the fencing mask. *Pommel strikes cannot gain the Technical Bonus points.*

\*Strikes with the buckler: A strike with the face of the buckler can only score on the front, top or side of the fencing mask. The buckler may be used to press an opponent's arm aside, but this is non-scoring. *Buckler strikes cannot gain the Technical Bonus points.*

\*Grappling: Grappling is defined as making body contact with the intent to control or throw the opponent. Any time a fighter touches the ground with his/her body or with three points of contact (e.g. both knees and a hand), even if self-inflicted, then the opponent is awarded three (3) points. A fighter who is able to make a clean, controlled throw with solid technique will be awarded a technical bonus. Note that if a fighter initiates a grapple and is struck before or at the exact moment a throw is completed, no points will be awarded for the grapple. JOINT LOCKS, KICKS AND PUNCHES ARE ILLEGAL (see penalties below). The referee may call halt if the grappling goes on too long without either fighter showing clear control of the situation if there is any concern over safety (see Unclear Action below).

\*Disarming: Disarming is defined as a fighter losing his/her weapon. If a fighter is disarmed, the opponent is awarded three (3) points, even if the disarm is self-inflicted (e.g. the fighter simply drops the sword). A fighter who is able to make a clean disarm with solid technique will be awarded a technical bonus. Note that if the fighter doing the disarming is struck or counter-grappled before the disarm is completed, no points will be awarded for the disarm. *Also note that a fighter may drop his/her weapon during a grapple without penalty, but if the armed fighter withdraws then that person scores.*

## **ADDITIONAL NOTES ON SCORING**

\*Incidental Contact: This is non-scoring, but may result in the Referee calling "Halt". This is defined as a light brush with the blade against the opponent, a thrust that barely makes contact, a strike with the flat, or any other type of superficial attack. The Referee will throw these out and reset the match.

\*Multiple Targets or Hits: In the event that an opponent is struck more than once before the halt, only the highest scoring point will be recorded. Similarly, if an opponent is struck in two target areas simultaneously (such as a cut that hits both the mask and the torso), only the higher scoring point is recorded.

\*Back of the Head: The back of the head is off target for safety reason, and intentionally striking it will be penalized (see below). Similarly, intentionally turning the head to avoid being hit will also be penalized.

\*Blocking with the Arm/Hand: If a fighter lifts the arm or hand in the way of a higher scoring target (such as the head), the referee has the right to award the point of the higher scoring target anyway (as a real sword could cut through the arm into the head).

\*Grabbing the sword blade: A fighter may grasp a non-moving sword blade. If the opponent twists and turns the blade, a halt will be called and the blade grab will be treated equal to a cut to the hand (one point awarded to the opponent).

\*Out of Bounds: If a fighter touches the ground outside of the boundary with both feet or with any other part of the body, the opponent scores one (1) point. There are no technical bonuses for an out of bounds score. If both fighters go out of bounds simultaneously, or near-simultaneously, then no point is scored. Note that if a fighter scores on an opponent at the same time that opponent steps out of bounds, the higher scoring point will be awarded, just as with double hits and after blows (see below).

\*Unclear Action: In the event that the referee and judges see that something has happened, but it was too difficult to score (e.g. sloppy fencing mechanics and multiple quick light hits may make it difficult to tell whether a hit was incidental or not, or difficult to tell where the hit landed), then the Referee has the right to call “Unclear Action” and throw out the exchange. Further, any grapple that goes on for an extended time where neither fighter has clear control of the situation may be halted and called “Unclear Action”.

## **DOUBLE HITS**

A double hit is defined as two fighters hitting each other simultaneously or near-simultaneously (within the time it takes for the referee to say “halt”). In the event of a double hit, the higher scoring fighter wins the exchange; The lower scoring point is subtracted from the higher scoring point.

Example: Fighter A thrusts to the mask (3 points), while Fighter B cuts to the leg (1 point). Fighter A wins, but only scores 2 points. (Fighter A’s 3 points minus Fighter B’s 1 point.)

*A fighter cannot gain a Technical Bonus on a double hit.* This means that intentional double hits are a losing game, as this will drastically affect a fighter's indicator score and placement in the elimination round.

## **AFTER BLOWS**

The term "after blow" in modern HEMA tournaments typically refers to a hit that is made one beat of time after the initial hit. For the Washington DC HEMA Open, an after blow and a double hit are treated exactly the same(see Double Hits above). A fighter who hits first must still be ready to defend for another beat of time before the referee says "halt". Please note that the window for making an after blow is very short compared to many other tournament formats. Referees will say "halt" after only a quick beat of time. A fighter who constantly attempts an after blow after the ref has said "halt" can be penalized and potentially ejected from the event after multiple infractions. Therefore, the purpose of the after blow rule is to force a fighter to keep defending even after striking first; It is NOT intended to award a fighter who accepts being hit in order to score on a higher-value target.

## **WHAT CAN'T SCORE A TECHNICAL BONUS?**

-Double hits

-A hit that does not prevent an after blow. Note: In the event that an after blow was in motion before the halt but technically lands after the halt, the referee will not penalize the first hit, but can make the judgment call not to award a technical bonus either, since the fighter must show the clear ability to hit without being hit.

-Any attack where one or both feet are in the air

-Any attack where the attacker is off balance

-Any attack where the weapon strikes very lightly (such as the tip dragging across the torso, which might score, but does not receive bonus points)

-Messy actions (such as both fighters close to grapple, and one fighter is smacking the other fighter on the back with the sword at that range).

## **TIME LIMIT**

The time limit for the Pool Bouts will be one minute and thirty seconds (1:30), with the clock pausing at each halt, and resuming upon the referee's command of "Fight!" The time for the Elimination Bouts will be three minutes (3:00). If the time expires before the score limit is reached (15 points for pool bouts; 25 for elimination bouts), the higher scoring opponent will win the bout. If the score is tied, the victor is the one who has more Technical Bonuses. If that is also tied, the fighters will continue fighting until one scores higher than the other.

## **WINNING THE TOURNAMENT**

The tournament will be divided into three rounds: Pool Bouts, Elimination Bouts and Finals.

1) Pool Bouts: Fighters are divided into groups (a pool of fighters). Each fighter fences against everyone within their pool. Fighters will be ranked based on their victories.

2) Elimination Bouts. All fighters proceed to this round. The format will be single elimination, meaning that when a fighter loses, that fighter is out of the tournament. This will narrow fighters down to the final two. (Note that this format is subject to change, depending on the number of competitors.)

3) Finals. This is the last round of the event. The top two fighters of the previous Elimination Bouts will fence for 1st and 2nd place. The format is identical to the elimination bouts.

## **RANKING FOR ELIMINATION BOUTS**

All fighters will be ranked at the end of the Pool Bouts to determine who they compete against in the Elimination Bouts. The highest ranking fighter will compete against the lowest ranking fighter; the second highest ranking fighter will compete against the second lowest ranking fighter, etc. This is to award those who fight well early on. The ranking will first take into account how many victories a fighter has at the end of the pools. After that, ranking will be based on a fighter's Indicator score.

The formula for determining the Indicator score is: (Hits Scored + Technical Bonuses) – (Hits Received + Double Hits). Please note that the Technical Bonuses in this formula refers to how

many times the bonus was awarded and not to the total amount of points scored with technical bonuses.

## **FORMAT**

-The Pit Boss will call out the two fighters, and will also announce who is “on deck” (i.e. the two who will be fighting next). The fighters will be designated as Red Fighter and Blue Fighter, and each will be given an arm band of the according color. Fighters have two minutes to report to the table or else they forfeit the match.

-The fighters will start at their starting lines (Blue and Red respectively).

-The referee will ask, “Table ready?”, then, “Judges ready?”

-After the confirmation from the staff, the referee will say, “Fighter’s salute.” The two fighters must give a signal of respect with their swords to show they are ready (such as raising the blade up so that the cross guard is in front of the face and then lowering the blade). Afterward the referee will say, “Take your guards. Are you ready? Fight!” and the match begins.

-Anytime a fighter is hit or something out of the ordinary happens, the referee or the judges will call, “Halt!” Fighters must stop fighting and return to their lines. The time keeper will pause the clock. Because either the judges or referee may halt the match, the first “Halt” is the only one that matters for scoring if more than one person has called it.

-The referee, with the judges’ input, will call to the scorekeeper if either fighter has scored, or else will throw out the exchange. The table will confirm the amount of points scored, if any, and the scoreboard will be updated.

-The referee will say, “Ready? Fight!”, and the bout will proceed.

-Should time run out, the scoreboard will buzz (or the timekeeper will call “Time!” if there is any problem with the scoreboard) and the referee will immediately halt the match. Any action that happens after the buzzer goes off will not count.

-At the end of the match, the table will announce who won the bout. The referee will tell the fighters, "Salute. Report to the table."

-The fighters are allowed (and encouraged) to shake hands or show any additional sign of respect beyond the salute, and then they must go to the table to return their armbands.

-After all fighters have finished their pool bouts, they will be required to report to the table and look at the Pool Sheet (the scoring chart that records a pool's wins and losses). Fighters are required to initial that they see no mistakes. If a fighter believes that there is an error, they must tell the table staff so that they can go back and check double check the Scoring Sheets (separate from the Pool Sheet) to see if/where there is an error.

## **PENALTIES**

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

Any competitor who receives two Red Cards throughout a single event is ejected from the tournament. Further, the referee or tournament staff reserve the right to eject a competitor for extreme behavior even without a Red Card.

## **YELLOW CARDS**

-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 goes out of his/her way to strike the back of the head will be penalized.



-Intentionally Turning the Back of the Head: A fighter who turns away or drops the head down to expose the back of the head, particularly as an opponent is attacking. The referee has the right to award the attacker points for the attack 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 the points scored. 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 Referee or staff: A fighter who argues with the ref 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: Making snide comments to either a competitor or the staff is forbidden. Competitors are expected to act with respect.

-Loss of Temper: A fighter who is so angry that he or she cannot calm down, or is throwing down equipment in anger, will be given a penalty card. A fighter who does this at the end of the match will receive a Yellow Card for that fighter's next match.

## RED CARDS

In most cases, a Yellow Card is given before a Red Card. In certain extreme cases, the ref has the right to skip the yellow card.

-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 ref is screaming 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. For example, the

ref calls “Halt”, and one fighter begins returning to the starting line. The other fighter, out of anger, goes up to him and strikes him, and therefore is Red Carded.

### **ADDITIONAL RULES OF NOTE**

-In the event of an equipment failure, a fighter has three minutes (3:00) to fix the issue or find a replacement. If this time expires, the fighter forfeits the match.

-In the event of a medical emergency, the fighter must report to the medical staff on duty. 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 and forfeit all matches.]

-Fighters may not acknowledge being hit. While it is recognized that some fighter merely want to be honest, there are some who attempt to dishonestly acknowledge being hit in a lower scoring area when in fact the hit was to a higher scoring target. The fighter is, however, allowed to acknowledge not scoring on the opponent.