

SwordStrong KC 2023 Ruleset



Welcome to the inaugural SwordStrong KC event! Our goal in this event is to provide a very competitive environment with a chance for everyone to fight a lot of bouts, as well as to experience something that they may not get a chance to anywhere else. We're teaming up with a StrongMan competition and you can fight in the Sword event as well as try your hand at the Strong event!

In the Sword event, we are going with 8 events, including an open and a novice for each of the three main weapon types. We'll also have a team event and a combo event with the Strong side. The Strong details and rules will be in a different Ruleset sheet. Links to the StrongMan event are on our website. We hope you enjoy watching or participating in both events!

The purpose of this ruleset is to promote defensive fighting. Only exchanges where you are able to score a hit, but not get hit will count towards your total points. Additionally, rather than having a time or point limit, we limit the number of exchanges. Any points that you can score in the pool exchanges count towards your Elim placement. In the finals, it's single elimination, so stay alive to emerge victorious!

Events

Open events will be open to any competitors. The Novice events are intended for inexperienced fighters as a way to jump into tournament fighting. The requirements to enter a Novice Tournament are:

- Never received a medal in any HEMA tournament (top 3 positions)
- Three or fewer tournaments previously competed in

1. Saturday
 - a. Open Rapier +
 - b. Novice Rapier +
 - c. SwordStrength Combo Event
 - d. Open Saber

- e. Novice Saber
- 2. Sunday
 - a. Open Longsword
 - b. Novice Longsword
 - c. Team Mixed Steel event

Rules

1. A bout consists of five rounds in the pools, and nine rounds in the finals
2. Rounds do not have a time or point limit
3. All valid target locations are worth 1 point
 - a. Valid targets include everywhere except the back of the head and neck
 - b. Striking the back of the head and neck will result in a penalty
 - c. Purposefully exposing the back of the head and neck will also result in a penalty
4. Points may be scored with a Cut, Thrust, Draw Cut, Pommel Strike or Shield Bash
 - a. Cuts must be made with the edge and with sufficient rotation (>45 degrees)
 - b. Thrusts must be deep enough to move the gambeson
 - c. Draw cuts must be over half of the blade, made with both hands (for two-handed weapons), and have significant pressure against the opponent
 - d. Pommel strikes and shield bashes must be made with control, and only to the mesh of the mask
 - i. This can be either gently touching the mask or presenting that you “could have” bashed
 - ii. Glancing, incidental, and blocked blows are not counted as valid
 - iii. Shield bashes can only be made with the boss of the shield. Intentional edge of shield strikes anywhere will incur a penalty
 - e. Stepping both feet out of the ring scores no points, but does stop the action and cause a reset in the center
5. Grappling with the hand is only allowed against the arm, handle, or guard of the weapon.
 - a. Throwing, hitting, kicking or head butting will be penalized
 - b. Grabbing a blade with your hand will count as a strike against you, even if it is stationary.
 - c. You can wrap an arm around a weapon. Pulling the blade out, though, could constitute a draw cut
6. Fighters can “self-call” a hit against themselves during the round, The Director can overrule them if they feel it wasn't a valid hit.

Bouts

1. A round is completed when a scoring action has occurred
 - a. If a point is called and it was determined there was no scoring action, or if a fighter leaves the ring, no points will be scored and the round will restart with fighters in the “Danger Zone” (close enough to cross swords in the center of the ring) and that exchange will continue

2. Fighters will indicate with their swords that they either landed a hit (sword pointing up) or that they were hit by their opponent (sword pointing at the opponent)
 - a. If fighter was both hit and scored a hit, then point up
3. After each round, the Director will
 - a. Note the fighter's opinions
 - b. Look for the Line Judge's hand signs
 - c. Award a point to a fighter that landed a clean strike

At the end of the bout, points will be awarded to each fighter. If a tie occurs in the elimination rounds, sudden death begins and the first clean hit wins the bout.

Team Tournament Specific Rules

1. Setting up the teams
 - a. Before the start of the tournament, fighters attending will form into teams of three, preferably from the same school with varying amounts of experience/skill levels.
 - b. The purpose of this tournament is to give fencers of lower levels a time to shine. Advanced students often get the glory of receiving medals, accolades, etc. We want this to be an opportunity for newer fighters to contribute to the overall outcome of the match.
 - c. Please be honorable in your selections and select a Beginner level fighter, middle-level fighter, and Advanced fighter where available.
 - d. Teams should create a name to represent them, School/Club name can be used as a team name, but if a club has more than one team, please choose some variation.
 - e. Fighters that do not have a team will see the tournament director to join the "Free Agents" who will be grouped into teams.
 - f. Teams will announce who their 1st, 2nd, and Anchor fighters will be before the pools are set.
 - i. Teams of two will vary slightly, the 1st fighter will also be Anchor
 - g. Once teams are set, the order can only be changed after pools finish and before eliminations begin.
2. Team Matches (both pools and eliminations)
 - a. At the start of a match, Each team will put their first fighter forward
 - b. When a team reaches 5 points, the opposing team must switch to their next fighter. The same occurs at 10 points.
 - c. When a team reaches 15 points, they win.
 - d. Fighters may only face a total of two other fighters in any given match. If they force the opposing team to switch fighters twice, they retire from the match and the score is adjusted for the opposing team to the next integer of 5.
 - i. IE: Team One reaches 10 points with their first fighter without being hit, Because Team One's fighter has faced two opponents, he is forced to retire. This gives team two 5 points making the score 10-5.

- ii. Exception: If a team is down to its last member, that member is not required to retire from the match no matter how many opponents they face.
- iii. Exception: If a team only has 2 members, the first fighter must retire after besting two opponents, but may come out of retirement if the other member of the team is forced to swap out or retire.

Equipment

1. Protective gear and clothing:

a. Mandatory items:

- i. A padded or Hema level jacket
- ii. Fencing Mask with back of head cover
- iii. Gorget or some form of trachea protection
- iv. Rigid or heavily padded gloves for both hands (even in one handed events)
- v. Elbow and knee pads
- vi. Shin guards
- vii. Athletic cup
- viii. No exposed skin allowed

b. Highly Recommended but not mandatory items:

- i. Additional padding for thighs and torso
- ii. Forearm protection
- iii. Rigid Chest Protection

2. Weapons:

- a. All weapons must be checked and approved. If any weapon does not pass the check, we will work to provide a safe alternative if you do not have one available.

b. All Blades

- i. Blade must be tipped
- ii. Leather tips are preferred over rubber tips
 - 1. Tips will be available for sale if desired
- iii. Blades must be able to bend easily during a thrust
 - 1. Blades with too stiff a bend will not be allowed
- iv. All major swordsmith brands are acceptable
- v. If you have a custom-made blade, it must be tested and approved by the tournament officials prior to competing with it
- vi. All blade length and width requirements have a small amount of wiggle room that will be at the inspectors discretion.
- vii. In no case will sharp edges anywhere on the weapon be allowed

c. Long Sword or Feder:

- i. Blade length must not exceed 40 inches from the crossguard

d. Rapier

- i. Blade length must not exceed 43 inches from the crossguard
 - 1. Not measured from the ricasso
- ii. Min of 1/2" width on the widest non-schilt part of blade

- e. Saber
 - i. Blade length must not exceed 36 inches from the crossguard
 - ii. Min of 5/8" width on the widest non-schilt part of blade
 - iii. Finger guard of some sort or rigid finger protection must be present
- f. Mixed Steel:
 - i. Blade length must not exceed 36 inches from the guard
 - ii. Min of 5/8" width on the widest non-schilt part of blade
- g. All weapons must reasonably be able to be classified as fitting in that category.
- h. We have a good number of loaner weapons if needed.

SwordStrength Event

1. This will be a joint event between the Sword side and the Strong side. Everyone who is registered in either event is welcome to participate
2. Event consists of standing with your back/lower back/butt to a wall and extending a longsword out straight in front of you
3. It is a timed event and starts when the ref let's go of the sword and ends when the sword moves more than 10 degrees either up or down
4. Sword will be unweighted for the first 15 seconds, then weights will be added every 10 seconds to the end of the blade
5. Whoever holds the blade in place the longest wins first place!

Penalties

1. The purpose of this system is to keep fighters from repeatedly putting themselves or others in potentially dangerous situations.
2. There is no all-encompassing list of penalties. Generally, be kind and respectful, and don't put yourself or other fighters in danger.
3. For minor infractions, two verbal warnings will be given to the fighter. The third time a fencer commits the same infraction will result in the fighter's opponent being awarded one point. If the fighter does the same infraction a fourth time he or she will lose the bout they are in and the opponent will receive the remaining possible points. If a fifth infraction for the same rule happens, the fighter will be asked to leave the tournament.
 - a. This list is subject to change based on the severity of the infraction. If the judges feel that a severe infraction has occurred, immediate severe action can and will be taken.
4. This system extends throughout the tournament, not just a single bout
 - a. For example; a fighter might be warned three times about excessive force, in three different bouts. On that third warning the fighter he or she is facing will get an extra point.
5. Being warned for different offenses does not compound on one another.
 - a. For example, a fighter might be warned about exposing the back of their

head, and for excessive force. These are different warnings and do not count as two warnings for either.

6. Again, these penalties are not in place to try to be overly strict or authoritarian, but to keep everyone safe, happy, and healthy.

Final thoughts:

Thank you everyone for joining us in our first annual SwordStrong KC Event. This promises to be a fun and exciting event and connects HEMA and StrongMan competitions in a way that has been needed for some time.

We've put a lot of sweat and consideration into this ruleset and we think it'll make a fun, fair tournament. We do reserve the right to tweak it as needed, though. Do not hesitate to ask any questions you may have and we hope to see you there!

