



# IGX 2018 “5-Points” Tournament Rules

For Longsword and Mixed Weapons Tournaments

## [Acknowledgement](#)

## [Expectations & Safety](#)

[Gear](#)

[Forbidden Actions](#)

[3-Tier Penalty System](#)

[Excessive Force/Unsafe Fighting](#)

[Quality Hits](#)

## [Tournament Logistics](#)

[Field](#)

[Tournament Format](#)

[Conduct of Pools](#)

[Scoring Metric](#)

[Sword Strike Scoring Actions](#)

[Other Scoring Actions](#)

[After blows/Doubles](#)

[Clean Fighting Bonus](#)

[Point Refusal/Acknowledgement](#)

## [Staff Roles](#)

[Referee](#)

[Judge](#)

[Scorekeeper](#)

[Ring Boss](#)

## [Quick Reference Guide](#)

# Acknowledgement

Special thanks to the members of Boston Armizare for creating these rules, and allowing Iron Gate Exhibition to modify them slightly for this year's event. Thanks to the rest of the New England HEMA Community for their patience during rules tests to bring these final rules to fruition.

## Expectations & Safety

### Gear

- Longsword Tournament Weapons
  - Open/Women's/Wisdom: Blunt, steel longswords
  - Beginner: Synthetic longswords may be used if desired, but preference will be for steel
  - Youth: Synthetic and steel longswords may be used as appropriate for the fighters. If there is a discrepancy between weapons, the default shall be synthetic.
  - Steel longsword tips must be either rolled or tipped. All longsword tips must have brightly colored tape to better see thrusts.
- Mixed Weapons Tournament Weapons
  - Blunt, steel weapons
  - Off-hand weapons can be steel or cold-steel equivalent
  - Shields must not exceed 21" at its largest point.
- Longsword Tournament Protective Equipment
  - Head/back of head
  - Throat
  - Hand (heavy)
  - Rigid elbows/knees/shins
  - Groin and chest protection required where anatomically appropriate. Encouraged for all participants.
- Mixed Weapons Tournaments Protective Equipment
  - Head/back of head
  - Throat
  - Hand (light)
  - Rigid knees/shins
  - Groin and chest protection required where anatomically appropriate. Encouraged for all participants.
- No skin is allowed to show.
- No open-toed shoes or bare feet allowed. 5-toe shoes are ok.

## Forbidden Actions

- The following actions are ILLEGAL and will be subject to the 3-tier penalty system:
  - Actions in which effectiveness comes from joint injury, such as small joint manipulation, full arm bars, and kicks to the knee.
  - Punching. The use of the open hand to push during wrestling is permitted.
  - In any Mixed Weapons tournament, buckler punches are not permitted. While a valid action, it is too likely to cause a concussion.
  - Pommel strikes to the top or back of the head.
  - Strikes to the groin or to the back of the head.
  - Anything you would describe with the word flying – flying kick, flying tackle, flying Double Swedish Forbidden Grip – is something you already know is not a good idea.
- Push kicks above the belt are allowed; all other kicks are not.
- Anyone who sees other safety issues, such as loss of equipment, should immediately call halt. Bouts will resume once the issue has been remedied.

## 3-Tier Penalty System

### Overview

All events at IGX will use a 3-tier penalty system, enforced by the Referee. The Referee will call a penalty if he/she sees an illegal technique or other unsafe or unsportsmanlike behavior. We expect all competitors to show good sportsmanship at all times. Likewise, we expect visitors/coaches to show good sportsmanship and yield to the final decision of the Judge/Referee. The ultimate responsibility for maintaining a safe, competitive environment falls on the shoulders of the IGX Tournament Staff.

### The 3 Tiers are as Follows:

- 1st tier: Verbal warning - typically for accidental/incidental offenses
- 2nd tier: 1 point subtracted from the fighter who executed the unsportsmanlike behavior - typically for repeated/intentional offenses
- 3rd tier: Expulsion from the bout, tournament, or event as appropriate - typically for egregious offenses including injuring the opponent maliciously. If you injure an opponent to the point of withdrawal in the course of a bout, that is a potential 3rd tier offense and you can expect the Referee to respond accordingly.

Two 1st tier penalties (verbal warnings) will automatically result in a 2nd tier penalty (point deduction). Every 1st tier penalty afterward will result in a 2nd tier penalty.

## Penalty Guidelines

The Judge/Referee should make note of the following actions to determine if a penalty should be awarded. The Judge/Referee should immediately call the medical staff to assist in the following situations:

- If a fighter is knocked down and either gets up slowly/with difficulty/with assistance, or does not get up at all
- Damage to safety equipment (i.e. dented mask)
- Any other sign of potential injury (i.e. limping, bleeding)

If a fighter executes any version of a leaping attack and receives a strong hit, no penalty shall be awarded. Likewise, if a fighter receives a strong hit but states he/she is ok (“absolves guilt”) then only a verbal warning shall be issued.

## Excessive Force/Unsafe Fighting

Striking an opponent with force IS allowed; however, it is up to the Judge, and, ultimately, the Referee, to monitor power levels and assess when force is excessive. Timely communication between IGX Tournament Staff and fighters is KEY – it is much more difficult to resolve a problem after the fact than addressing it immediately, or preferably preventing it during escalation. To help ensure communication channels remain open, the following are recommended Best Practices:

Referee and Judge Safety Protocols: If at ANY time the Judge or Referee suspect there might be excessive force or unsafe fighting, they are expected to halt the action IMMEDIATELY. Once halted, the following protocol should be observed by the Referee:

- Referee approaches fighter who is potential subject of excessive force/unsafe fighting.
- Question 1: “Are you OK”? Assess if there is injury.
- Question 2: “Do you feel this is excessive or you are in danger of being injured?” Assess if there is risk of future injury.
- Referee approaches fighter who is potential party responsible for excessive force/unsafe fighting. Assess legitimacy of excessive force or unsafe fighting.
- From assessments, give feedback to fighters and coaches, apply penalties as appropriate.

## Quality Hits

A hit will be considered “good” or be of good “quality” if it follows the below criteria. This criteria is similar to the one employed at Longpoint.

The blow must be delivered with sufficient authority, force, stability, balance, and poise. This does not mean that the blow needs to be “hard.” The fighter must be in full control of his/her movement—balanced or grounded, not stumbling, falling, or wildly lunging.

Strikes must have sufficient force. Sufficient force is defined as follows:

- Cuts: The blade must travel approximately 60 degrees or more, and strike the target with obvious intent. The blow must hit with the weak (schwech) of the weapon. Light snips that travel little distance, lazy blows, and strikes with the strong or flat will not count as quality hits.
- Thrust: Any hit with the point with forward motion of the blade (motion towards the opponent with the point) that obviously makes contact. Bending the blade is not necessary. A good rule of thumb is a divot should appear on a fighter's jacket to show where the thrust landed.
- Slice/Press: Drawing cuts must be clearly demonstrated, drawing or pushing at least half the length of the blade. The fighter receiving the slice should be moved by the slice. Gently caressing your opponent with your sword will not count as a quality hit.

The following actions will not count as quality hits:

- Blows that are sloppy, wild, twist in the strike, or otherwise fail to show authoritative control, angle, and blade presence. Judges should especially look for these indicators when single-handed/off-handed strikes such as daz gayszlen are performed with a longsword.
- Blows made with the strong (starck) of the sword, especially during a grapple.
- Weak blows made blindly against an opponent in a grapple, such as "wrap shots" around the opponent's back or over one's own shoulder with the back edge.
- Strikes that ever-so-barely scrape an opponent's clothing or mask, but made no significant contact.
- Blows made wildly from high-risk leaps, rolls, stumbles, etc. If it doesn't look like it would have hit with presence and placement, it should not be considered a quality hit.
- Blows delivered as a fighter falls or fumbles their weapon will not count as a quality hit.

Finally, the Judge/Referee will NOT assess good hits differently for different fighters. The standard will be universally applied to all fighters, regardless of the perceived skill level, age, or gender of the fighter.

# Tournament Logistics

## Field

Bouts will take place in a rectangular “lane,” 12’ wide by 20’ long, on indoor turf.

## Tournament Format

The Longsword and Mixed Weapons Tournaments will be held in 3 stages: a qualifying stage with pools, an eliminations stage with pools, and a single-elimination finals stage with the top 4 contenders. This format may change if timing at the event is delayed or otherwise impacted by outside forces that prevent the tournament staff from following this prescribed format.

At the start of the bout, each fighter starts with 5 points. For every scoring action a fighter receives, his/her total points are reduced by the number of points the target is worth (e.g. if a fighter receives a blow to the head, which is worth 2 points, the fighter’s score is reduced to 3).

Each bout in the pool runs until one of the following conditions occurs:

- 4 passes
  - A pass ends when one or more fighters executes a scoring action.
  - Any scoring action counts as a pass, whether it is a strike, throw, or disarm.
- One fighter’s score is reduced to 0 points
  - A fighter’s total score cannot go below 0 points.

The following does not count as a pass:

- If after the conclusion of an exchange, it is determined that no scoring action occurred (judges’ error, messy fighting).
- If a halt is called for safety or similar reason.
- If either fighter exits the ring for any reason.

Fighters who intentionally delay the bout with overzealous retreating or backing out of the ring will be warned. Judges/Referees have the authority to declare that a pass cannot be refought and/or assess penalty points to fighters who have multiple, successive unclean exchanges/ring-outs.

When a scoring action occurs, the Judge/Referee will pause long enough to allow for an after blow, and then call “Halt!” The FIRST scoring action by EACH fighter that occurs before “Halt” is called will be scored. (e.g. If a fighter scores twice before “Halt” is called, once to the arm and then to the head, only the first strike to the arm scores). If both fighters score points before “Halt” is called, the fighters’ points will be reduced equal to the number of points the target is worth.

*For instance:*

Fighter A scores 2 points and Fighter B scores 1 point. Fighter A's total score will be reduced by 1, while Fighter B's total score will be reduced by 2. Current bout score: 4-3.

At the end of the bout, the number of doubles/after blows that occur in the bout is recorded by the scorekeeper. The winner of the bout is awarded victory points equal to the difference between the fighters' remaining bout points. Each fighter (including the loser) is awarded an additional 1 victory point if there were no doubles/after blows in the bout.

*For instance:*

Fighter A wins a bout 3-0. There were no doubles or after blows. Fighter A is awarded 3 victory points. Both fighters are awarded 1 victory point for a clean fight, so the final score for this bout is 4-1.

Fighter B wins a bout 2-1. This bout had a couple doubles. Fighter B is awarded 1 victory point. Neither fighter is awarded a "clean fighting" victory point, so the final score for this bout is 1-0.

After the qualifying stage, overall standing in the tournament is determined by victory points. Ties are broken based on least number of total doubles. Further ties are broken based on bout points. **It pays to fight clean!!**

## Conduct of Pools

1. The Scorekeeper announces who is currently fighting and who is on deck.
2. The Ring Boss distributes the appropriate arm bands to the fighters called.
3. The fighters go to their assigned side of the lane, accompanied by their coaches.
4. The Judge and Referee take up positions across from one another on the long edge of the lane.
5. The Referee asks if the Table is ready. After confirmation, the Referee asks if the Judge are ready. After confirmation, the Referee asks if the fighters are ready. After confirmation, the Referee says, "Fight!"
6. When an exchange occurs, the Judge and/or Referee will call "Halt!" This command will be issued after a scoring action occurs, with time allowed for any after blows.
7. The Referee and Judge will quickly confer to determine what action(s) they saw complete and what target was struck, if any.
8. The Referee describes the scoring action to the fighters, and announces the number of points awarded to each fighter, including whether the pass was "clean" (no doubles/after blows) or "unclean" (doubles/after blows).
9. At the end of the bout the Referee announces the winner.

# Scoring Metric

## Sword Strike Scoring Actions

- A strike must be with the sword edge, point or pommel. Pommel strikes are allowed only to the grill of the mask.
- To score, a strike must demonstrate sufficient intention and ability to injure.
  - A strike with the edge must travel approximately 60+ degrees of arc
  - A thrust must travel at least six inches
  - A slice must travel across the target and push against the body or limb such that it is moved.
  - A pommel strike must travel at least two inches and have the arm behind it – we are looking for a pommel “thrust,” not a sideways backhand pommel.
- Points are awarded for strikes as follows:
  - 2 points for cuts to the head. The head includes the top of the shoulders, to the seam of the jacket sleeve.
  - 2 points for thrusts to the head and torso. The torso includes the shoulder and extends to the bottom of a standard jacket.
  - 1 point for cuts to the torso.<sup>1</sup>
  - 1 point for cuts/thrusts to any other area of the body (except groin or back of head/neck - do not deliberately target these areas!).
  - 1 point for pommel strikes to the front of the mask.
  - 1 point for slices (not to be confused with a hand press).

## Other Scoring Actions

- Throws with dominance: 2 points.  
*Dominance requires either remaining standing while your opponent is down, or ending the throw on top and in control. Throws that do not clearly demonstrate control will not earn a point or count as a pass unless there was another scoring action.*
  - “Down” shall be considered shoulders and hips. If a fighter’s knee touches the ground, it shall be up to the Judge/Referee to assess the safety of the situation and call “Halt” appropriately.
  - Special note: If you trip or otherwise throw yourself while your opponent remains standing, 1 point will be deducted from your bout score. Stay on your feet.
- Disarms: 2 points. A fighter shall not be counted as disarmed until fighters are separated from each other. Therefore, loss of weapon during wrestling does not score until the fighters separate.

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<sup>1</sup> Mittelhau, Zwerch-to-pflug, Mezzani, or other cuts that hit the opponent on the torso below the arms only score 1 point. We want to disincentivize these actions since they often cause doubles. This way, a double where one fighter makes this type of strike, and the other makes a strike to the head will only award 1 point to the fighter who struck their opponent on the head.



- Any scoring action performed while wrestling in such a manner as to control the opponent's weapon is worth 2 points. This is intended to disincentivize fighters from using their forearm to block a strike to their head.
  - At the beginning of a wrestling exchange, the Referee will count out-loud to 5. If no scoring action occurs during that time, the Referee will call "Halt!" and the fighters must disengage. No ground fighting is allowed.

## After blows/Doubles

**Doubles:** A double is when attacks from both fighters arrive simultaneously. Doubles show one or both fighters' inability to recognize danger and prioritize defensive fighting over scoring a hit.

**After blows:** A valid after blow must begin immediately after the opponent's attack arrives, and be completed with a single motion of the sword (no feints or other preparations). It must arrive before halt is called. An after blow shows a fighter's inability to properly defend him or herself after delivering an attack.

There is no distinction between doubles and after blows as far as scoring is concerned.

## Clean Fighting Bonus

At the end of the bout, both fighters will be awarded 1 victory point if there were no doubles or after blows in their match. This is to award clean fighting for both fighters. Even if you lose a bout, you still get points!

## Point Refusal/Acknowledgement

If a fighter is assessed points but does not believe that he/she earned them, the fighter is allowed to refuse the points. Likewise if a fighter receives a good hit and it is not called by the Judge, the fighter is allowed to acknowledge the hit and the Judge/Referee shall take the fighter's acknowledgement under consideration for scoring. A fighter cannot otherwise modify the Judge's/Referee's decision in any way and must yield to the final decision of the Judge/Referee.

# Staff Roles

For each ring, there will be:

- 1 Referee
- 1 Judge
- 1 Scorekeeper
- 1 Ring Boss

## Referee

The Referee is in charge of the safety of all staff and participants of the pool and the smooth execution of the pool. The Referee calls all participants to the pool, conducts equipment checks before the start of the pool, and maintains order throughout the pool. The Referee settles all disputes and delivers any penalties. During a bout, the Referee watches both fighters. The Referee confers with the Judge before awarding points, and is the final authority with regards to point awards to fighters.

## Judge

The Judge supports the Referee in maintaining safety and order in the pool. During a bout, the Judge watches both fighters, and assists the Referee in awarding points after a scoring action.

## Scorekeeper

The Scorekeeper monitors the score for each pass in each bout in the pool, and announces the current pass number. In addition, he/she announces which fighters are currently fighting and which fighters are on deck, along with the fighters' designated color according to the scoring machine.

## Ring Boss

The Ring Boss is in charge of attaching armbands to fighters currently fighting and on deck, as announced by the Scorekeeper.

# Quick Reference Guide

## Bout Format

- Fighters start with 5 points
- A bout runs for 4 Passes, or until a fighter's points are reduced to 0

## Scoring

- 1 point
  - Strike on the opponent's arms/legs
  - Cut to the torso
  - Pommel strike to the grill of the mask
  - "Good" one-handed strike
- 2 points
  - Strike/thrust to the opponent's head
  - Thrust to the opponent's torso
  - Disarm with control
  - Throw with dominance
- Victory Points
  - At the end of the bout, victory points are awarded to the winner at the difference of bout points.
  - An additional victory point is awarded to BOTH fighters if the bout did not have any doubles or after blows.
- After blows/Doubles
  - There is no distinction between doubles/after blows, scoring-wise.
  - The FIRST scoring action by EACH fighter that occurs before "Halt" is called will be scored.
  - Both fighters' total points are reduced equal to the number of points the target is worth (e.g. If Fighter A scores 2 points and Fighter B scores 1 point, Fighter A's total score will be reduced by 1, while Fighter B's total score will be reduced by 2).
- Fighters may acknowledge hits against them and decline points awarded to them.