

Actual for BOMEHA: First Harvest. 07.09.2024.

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SUMMARY: BOHEMOTH rules.

Event and fighting are conducted in English.

2 points for deep target (head, neck, torso), dominance, and one-handed strike with control.

1 point for shallow target (legs, arms), one-handed actions, pommel strikes, and ring outs.

Prohibited actions: Strikes with the sword to feet, groin, and back of the neck and head, spine are not allowed. Any actions against natural bend of joints. Kicks and hand strikes.

Only strikes with good quality (weak part of the blade, but not the very tip, edge alignment, structure, power, speed, and intent) are scored.

Any **afterblow** subtracts one point from the first strike. You can't score points with an afterblow.

Doubles are zero points for equal value targets. If a double occurs with unequal value targets, the hit to the deep target is awarded one point.

Fighting is 2 minutes of pure time or up to 10 points. The last 15 seconds is the Last Exchange.

Fencers are allowed to call for stoppage due to any issue. Or to accept the hit on themselves that is **worse** than what the judges are giving **after the score is given**.

Any attempts to influence judges via speaking, screaming, celebrating, discussing etc will be penalised.

Any misbehavior (just don't be a dick) will be punished by the referee with:

a warning -> point to the opponent -> disqualification.

You are not allowed to speak to the referee if not asked a question. For any issues outside the fight reach out to the Tournament Manager.

You can only step back and raise your hand in case of an issue that needs to be fixed. Your coach can do the same.

All participants will be divided into pools of 7 fighters and then everyone will go to eliminations.

The final 4 fencers will fight in the final pool.

Equipment: All equipment should be well maintained, clean, and without holes.

Mandatory gear:

- Mask (FIE 1 or 2 level)
- Mask overlay with the semi or rigid back of the head protection
- Gorget
- Groin protector (recommended for women)
- Plastron (mandatory for women/recommended for men)
- Plastic mittens or gloves (better not)
- Forearm, elbow, knee, and shin plastic protectors
- 350N or above resistant jacket (or T-shirt underneath)
- All skin of the fencer must be covered

Recommended gear:

- Leaves on knee protectors
- Rigid gorget
- Puncture-resistant pants

Swords will be provided by Kvetun Armoury, the same for everybody. It will be FFG or Easton model.

Explanation and Details

I. Goal of the Rules:

To create and test a model on fencers that rewards fencing actions, allowing them to score points with martial arts values and source material recommendations.

Mainly:

- Protect yourself at all times.
- No rewards for suicidal actions.
- Control space and the opponent.
- Attack in a way that is safe for you.
- Hit with the quality that would do damage with a sharp sword.

II. Scoring Sectors and System:

To win a match, you need to score 10 points before your opponent does.

- 2 points is the maximum possible result of an exchange.
- 2 points are awarded for a clean strike, thrust, or slice to a deep target: head, neck, and torso.
- 2 points are awarded for control, dominance, and disarmament.
- 1 point is awarded for a clean strike, thrust, or slice to a shallow target: legs, arms.
- 1 point is awarded for ringing out the opponent, any one-handed actions without control to any target, and a pommel strike to the face of the mask.

What is control?

When you take the opponent's sword or arms, and they can't protect themselves, being at your mercy.

Mercy strikes:

When you are in a position of control and can clearly land a quality strike, you are expected to show it to get points without making the quality action. Landing the strike with quality is allowed, as long as it is to a legal target

Allowed actions:

- Strike, slice, thrust, pommel strike.
- Grappling, pushing, wrestling for the sword on your feet.

In grappling situations, the referee will count up to 5 seconds, during which one fencer needs to achieve domination (e.g., control, lifting but not throwing, disarming, grabbing the opponent's sword, or pushing for ring out) as well as scoring with the sword.

III. Afterblow Rules:

Any afterblow of quality and tempo results in MINUS 1 point from the first hit.

- You attacked the head (deep target) and received any afterblow: $2-1=1$ point for you.
- You attacked the leg (shallow target) and received any afterblow: $1-1=0$ points for you.

After you successfully hit the opponent, it is not guaranteed that they are dead and can't retaliate. Therefore, you need to attack or protect yourself expecting an afterblow.

The definition of the Afterblow:

Retaliation action of the opponent after receiving the first hit. In our model, we believe that you cannot win with the afterblow because some damage is done with the first hit, and therefore there is no reward for the afterblow.

However, the first attack never guarantees that there will be no afterblow; therefore, a fencer who succeeded with the first hit must protect themselves. The opponent has one fencing tempo, which is equal to one simple (or joined) fencing action, like a step, strike, or strike with a step. If it is a step followed by a strike, it will be declared a late afterblow by the referee.

IV. Double Hits:

- Equal targets - no points.
- Deep vs shallow - plus one point for deep.

Double hits are bad. You'll burn in hell for doubles. Yet, they happen, and in our model, the thinking is as follows: If both fencers make a mistake, there are two sad corpses and no rewards. More often, one of the fencers ignores the other fencer's prepared attack and goes for a reckless counteraction, resulting in uneven targets getting hit simultaneously. That is also bad but should be worse for the one who is ready to sacrifice his deep target for the opponent's shallow target.

Why are there deep and shallow targets, and why are deep targets worth more?

In our model, the thinking is as follows: When you attack a deep target, you have a line and the possibility to bind in order to cover yourself at the same time. It is not possible to achieve this while attacking shallow targets. Moreover, in source materials on the longsword, there is an overwhelming amount of advice to go for deep targets, with very few actions for legs and hands. Additionally, based on cutting data and historical records, humans are sometimes very hard to stop or kill, especially with limb attacks. Limbs are a luxury, not a necessity. Therefore, fencing masters advise going for the body, neck, and head.

That, of course, must be done with the quality of the strike.

V. Quality of the Strike:

The scored action must be executed in a way that is technically possible to inflict damage on the target. Damage is considered to be at least ~3 cm cut/thrust deep.

How do we calibrate for that?

We take a sword that has the same specs as swords commonly used in the time and region of the early Lichtenauer tradition (e.g., 15th century, Holy Roman Empire Territory—modern Italy, Germany, Poland, Czechia, Slovakia).

We sharpen this sword in the same way that it is presented on sharp surviving artifacts. According to Peter Johnsson and others' research, it is from a 35 to 45-degree sharpness angle of bevels, mainly sharpening the $\frac{1}{3}$ (weak) part of the blade. The reason is very simple. It was enough to cut well. Razor sharp (6 degrees) will cut better but will break easily on contact with something it can't cut. Therefore, 35-45 degrees is a healthy compromise between cutting prowess and blade survivability.

With such swords in hand, we cut targets. The ultimate target is a pig corpse, "dressed" with a linen shirt, to simulate a medieval citizen on minimum settings. An alternative to that would be a double tatami roll that needs to be fully cut, covered in linen.

Cutting those targets helps us understand what is possible and what is not possible with the longsword. Spoiler: flat strikes are not possible. Also, for the slap to the head, the force is 100 times less than with the edge (see Sean Franklin's sword dynamic research).

A question may appear: What does it mean if I have no experience in cutting?!

But you do. If you train with a sword, sometimes it makes a "woosh" sound. That thing is called sword wind, and it is a huge clue about the quality and structure of your actions.

To put things more into the tournament context:

1. Your strikes must be done with an edge.
2. Slices must be made with a pushing or pulling motion
3. Closer to the point of percussion is better.
4. The sword blade needs to travel ~45-degree arc at least.
5. The sword needs to be accelerated with intent.
6. You should have proper structure of the body.

So, what will not be counted:

1. Very tip of the sword
2. Strong part of the blade
3. Flats
4. Short slaps
5. Putting the sword on the opponent

And that would be it. We want fencers to fight like in the sources, therefore we award it.

VI. Judging and general Culture

We aim to run events smoothly and according to schedule. Therefore, no protests or discussions are possible with the working judging crew. They are on the clock, so should you.

You can approach the Tournament Manager (who will be publicly announced at the beginning of the event) with any questions, concerns, or grievances.

If you need match information, time, who is next, what are the score, etc - you can do it at HEMAGON.com

There are only three situations where a fencer can reach/interrupt the referee in the ring:

1. Equipment failure, injury or any kind of gear/table issue.
2. If you wish to accept a strike to yourself that is worse than the score announced by the referee. Note, that referee might disagree with you.
3. Referee may ask question about the exchange and it is up to you to honest or "efficient".

Any kind of influence on the referee and judges or table from a fencer or their team, such as screaming, celebrating, or protesting, will not be tolerated. You'll receive a warning; if repeated, your opponent will receive 2 points or you will be disqualified based on the referee's ruling.

As referees and judges, we are interested in awarding clean and solid exchanges. Mentally prepare for many exchanges to be called uncleared. This might not be because you fenced in that way, but because the referee and judge couldn't make a certain decision.

If we are uncertain, we will give no score. If we are certain that there was a strike of quality but unsure about the sector, we will assign a lower sector.

Thus, you'll have more exchanges in the fight, more fighting time, and more opportunities to score good, clean actions.

Good articles to read:

<https://swordstem.com/2019/03/20/how-did-the-sources-say-we-should-weight-targets/>
https://swordstem.com/2018/06/27/what-is-force-dispersion-and-how-it-keeps-you-safe-from-swords/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAAR00jTWMEYA6RkeakMX4sCPZDjzYDuk6cAAuJCUzJilxerSnCJ1eJN5922A_aem_ARHkb_ssBEI2hhZj0D_o2Bqe65yOELUileWems_rTzA8eWICD9-Qnz2uobDnVJ0MOXrjL6wjOBee1ZSZV3Z6ceS1