

Changes to the USFA/FIE Rules for Competitions

Since the 1991 Printing of USFA Rules

{Note: This list was compiled from the FIE documents detailing changes made by the relevant Congresses (through 1994). In some cases, the USFA has adopted a variation of the rules in use at official FIE competitions. Such variations are noted. As always, at international competitions, if there is a difference between the USFA translation and the original FIE version, the latter is considered to be correct. In addition to the changes listed here, the terms "President" and "President of the Jury" should be replaced by "referee" where appropriate.}

Text to be added.

~~Text to be deleted.~~

Part I - General Rules and Rules Applicable to All Three Weapons

Add a bullet to Article 1:

1. Mandatory use of the rules

These rules are mandatory without modification for the "official competitions of the FIE," viz.:

- the World Championships
- the fencing events at the Olympic Games
- the World Under-20 Championships
- the World Cadet Championships.
- **the Category "A" competitions**

These rules must be applied at every international competition of any kind, unless exceptions are made and announced in advance.

Change the second and last paragraphs of Article 15:

The width of the strip is ~~1.50~~ ~~1.80~~ to 2.00 meters; its "useful" length is 14 meters...

... and even surface.

If the strip is mounted on a platform, the latter must not be higher than ~~0.30~~ 0.50 meters.

Change the width of the strip in Figure I-1 (Strip Diagram) to "1.5-2" instead of "1.8-2"

Add to the end of section 2a of Article 17:

For direct elimination bouts and finals of the World Championships and Olympic Games, and for finals of category "A" competitions, the two fencers will present themselves to the referee designated for their bout 5 minutes before reporting to the strip so that the referee may control their equipment.

No control will be carried out on the strip. If an irregularity is discovered, the defective equipment will immediately be replaced, without penalty.

At the beginning of the bout, the referee will place the spare controlled

equipment near the appropriate end of the strip.

Change Article 27, section 3:

~~All clothing must be white.~~ The fencers' clothing may be of different colors, except on the torso, where it must be white or a light color. [USFA variation: At any USFA competition, the fencers' clothing may be of a single pastel color. At local, divisional and sectional competitions from 8/1/94 to 7/31/95, there are no restrictions on colors or decorations on uniforms.]

It must be made of sufficiently robust material and be clean and in good condition.

The material from which the equipment is made must not have a surface which is smooth enough to cause the point, the button or the opponent's touch to glance off (Cf. 313, 408); the judging of touches must be facilitated as much as possible.

Clothing must be made completely from material resistant to 800 Newtons. Special attention must be paid to the execution of the seams, if any, in the underarm area. An undergarment consisting of a plastron covering the vital areas of the upper body (according to the diagram on page 33 [FIE version] of the appendix to the Rules, "Safety Standards for Manufacturers...") and resistant to 800 Newtons is also required (effective January 1, 1995). [USFA variation: Effective October 1, 1995, for all three weapons, in any USFA national competition that is part of a selection process for a USFA team, and in the Olympic Festival, each fencer must wear a uniform (jacket and knickers) bearing an official FIE label indicating homologation AND a regulation (non-FIE is acceptable) protective plastron (underarm protector). Effective March 1, 1995, at all other USFA competitions, in all three weapons, a regulation protective plastron is required with EITHER a jacket bearing an official FIE label indicating homologation OR a standard jacket.]

~~For official FIE competitions, fencers must wear an armband in their national colors with a minimum width of 10 cm between the shoulder and the elbow of their unarmed arm. in foil and épée may wear between the shoulder and the elbow of the non-weapon arm an armband 10 cm wide in their national colors. The edges of the armband must not be white.~~

~~For official FIE competitions, the chief of each delegation must, before the start of the event, provide the bout committee with as many national armbands as he has fencers entered in all the events.~~

~~If this is not done, the federation will be penalized with a fine of US \$100. The fencers are then freed from the obligation to wear an armband during their bouts.~~

~~When the bout committee has confirmed the presence of the armbands, the President will penalize the fencer at fault as specified in Articles 635, 637 and 641 (1st group).~~

Replace the third paragraph of Article 27, section 4:

~~The wearing of a protective plastron is mandatory for all weapons (Cf. 212, 315, 408).~~ [USFA variation: A regulation protective plastron (underarm protector) is required at all USFA competitions, with EITHER a jacket bearing an official FIE label indicating homologation OR a standard jacket (effective March 1, 1995).]

Change Article 28:

The competitors fence in their own ways and at their own risk and peril with the only condition being the observance of the fundamental rules of fencing.

All bouts or matches must, however, preserve the character of a courteous and honest encounter. All abnormal actions (a flèche ending in a collision which jostles the opponent, disorderly fencing, any fall, abnormal movements, brutal hits, touches made while falling) are strictly forbidden.

Before the start of the bout, both fencers must salute the opponent, the referee and the audience. If one of the fencers does not obey this rule, the referee will give a RED CARD. Failure to comply following the RED CARD will result in exclusion from the competition. If both fencers commit this fault, they will be excluded from the competition.

When the last touch has been scored, the bout is not ended until both fencers have saluted each other, the referee and the audience. The fencers must therefore remain still during the decision of the referee and proceed with the salute once the decision has been given.

If the winner does not comply with this rule, the last touch awarded will be annulled. If the loser does the same, the penalty will be suspension for two competitions. If both fencers do not comply with this rule, they will be excluded from the competition and suspended for two competitions.

[USFA variation: Before the start of the bout, the referee will instruct the fencers to salute. The fencers must salute each other, the referee, and the audience. After the last touch is scored, the bout is not ended until both fencers have again saluted in the same fashion. Any fencer failing to salute after the referee's instruction is penalized by a GROUP 3 RED CARD, followed by BLACK CARD upon a second failure to salute. (Immediate application for the 1994-95 season.)]

In foil, it is forbidden to place the shoulder of the non-weapon arm forward of the shoulder of the weapon arm during the course of fencing.

~~A fencer on the strip must keep his mask on until the President has given his decision.~~ The fencer on or off the strip must keep the mask on until the referee calls "Halt." In no case may the fencer address the referee before the referee's decision.

For all these offenses, the President will penalize the fencer at fault as specified in Articles 635, 637 and 641 (1st group).

Add a paragraph to the end of Article 36:

When the order "Halt" is given, ground gained is held until a touch has been awarded. When the competitors are replaced on guard, each fencer

should retreat equally in order to attain fencing distance (Cf. 31).

At the beginning of each period in a direct elimination bout and at the beginning of any additional minute of fencing time, the fencers are replaced on guard at the center of the strip [behind the "on guard" lines].

Change the end of Article 45:

The actual duration of a bout is:

- in epee for *one touch*: 5 minutes;
- in all weapons for *4 touches*: 5 minutes; for *5 touches*: 4 minutes 6 minutes; for *8 touches*: 8 minutes; for *10 touches*: 10 minutes.
- in all weapons for a 15 touch direct elimination bout, three periods of 3 minutes' duration each, with a 1 minute rest between periods.

Change Article 46:

~~One minute before the expiration of regulation time, the timekeeper must stand up and call "One minute" (without stopping the clock). This warns the President, who stops the bout and warns the fencers that they have approximately one minute before the expiration of the time allowed for actual fencing.~~

~~An action initiated at the time of the President's "Halt" remains valid.~~

Regardless of the presence or absence of a chronometer visible to both fencers, no warning or audible signal is given to indicate the start of the final minute of fencing time.

~~At any interruption during the last minute of the bout, the fencers may be told, when they are placed back on guard, how much time they have left to fence. The fencers may ask how much time remains each time that the bout is halted.~~

At the expiration of regulation fencing time, the timekeeper must call "Halt" or operate an audible signal to stop the bout; in this case even an action initiated at the time of the President's referee's "Halt" is not valid. In case of a failure of the clock or an error by the timekeeper, the President himself referee must estimate how much fencing time remains.

Change Article 47:

~~For the finals of official FIE competitions, the warning at one minute before the end of regulation time must be made automatically by the clock, which must set off an audible signal. The President, alerted by the clock, stops the bout and warns the fencers that they have approximately one minute before the expiration of time allowed for actual fencing (Cf. 46). An action initiated at the time of the President's "Halt" at the stopping of the bout is valid (Cf. 702/5, 709/8&9).~~

At the expiration of regulation fencing time the clock must automatically set off a loud audible signal and block the scoring machine, without canceling touches registered before the disconnection. The bout stops with the audible warning.

Part II - Foil

Change the first paragraph of Article 202:

The width of the strip is from ~~1.80~~ 1.50 to 2.00 meters.

Change Article 221, effective 1995-96 season

~~The bib of the mask is not included in the target (Cf. 214 and Figure II-3, Foil Target).~~ The bib of the mask is part of the valid target (specifications on page 23 [FIE text] of the appendix to the *Rules*, "Safety Standards for Manufacturers..." (application postponed until 1995-96 season). [*USFA variation: The bib of the mask is not included in the target (Cf. 214 and Figure II-3, Foil Target).*]

Modify Figure II-3, Foil Target, effective 1995-96 season

(The lower part of the bib is part of the valid target. *USFA variation: the entire bib remains not part of the valid target.*)

Change Article 229:

When using the apparatus it should be noted that:

(a) ~~if the two lights (white and colored) light up together on the same side of the machine, a nonvalid touch has preceded a valid touch; if a nonvalid touch occurs, the machine does not register a possible subsequent valid touch on the same side.~~

(b) the machine does not ~~otherwise~~ indicate whether there is any priority in time between two or more touches that it registers simultaneously.

{Note: scoring machines have not yet been modified to comply with this change.}

Add to the end of Article 233:

8. Continuous forward motion with crossing of the feet is a preparation, and against this preparation any simple attack has priority.

Part III - Epée

Change the first paragraph of Article 302:

The width of the strip is from ~~1.80~~ 1.50 to 2.00 meters and its length is 14 meters (Cf. 15, 38ff, 202 and Figure I-1, Strip Diagram).

Part IV - Sabre

Change the first paragraph of Article 402:

The width of the strip is from ~~1.80~~ 1.50 to 2.00 meters and its length is 14 meters (Cf. 15, 38ff, 202 and Figure I-1, Strip Diagram).

Add to the end of Article 417:

5. The step forward with crossing of the legs and any forward movement with crossing of the legs or feet are not permitted. Every infraction will incur the penalties specified in Articles 635, 637 and 641 (1st group). Any touch scored by the fencer at fault will be annulled. On the other hand, any touch correctly executed by the opponent will be counted.

Replace all of text in Article 423 with the following:
Double touches scored as a result of simultaneous attacks are not counted.

Part V - Organization of Competitions

Change paragraph (a) of Article 505:

The technical organization of competitions is entrusted to a bout committee (mandatory for official FIE competitions) composed of ~~seven~~ **six** members for the Olympics and the World Championships and ~~five~~ **four** for the World Under 20 Championships and the World Cadet Championships. The bout committee includes one member from the organizing country; the others must be of different nationalities (Cf. 581).

Change the last paragraph of Article 547:

A rest period of ~~five~~ **ten** minutes must always be allowed between two bouts of the same fencer.

Change the last paragraph of Article 553:

A rest period of ~~five~~ **ten** minutes must always be allowed between two bouts of the same fencer.

Change the last paragraph of Article 555A:

~~Five minutes rest must always be allowed between two bouts of the same fencer.~~ A rest period of **ten** minutes must always be allowed between two bouts of the same fencer.

Add to the end of Article 555C, section 4:

Furthermore, in an incomplete table, a fencer who has earned a bye based on his or her classification may not be moved to a position in the table wherein he or she will face an opponent.

Change the third paragraph of Article 578:

~~For the World Championships, a delegation must be accompanied by the following minimum number of Presidents of Jury:~~

0—5 fencers:	no President
6—13 fencers:	one President
14—20 fencers:	two Presidents

For the Senior and Junior-Cadet World Championships, each delegation must be accompanied by the following minimum number of referees:

1 to 4 fencers	no referee
5 to 12 fencers	one referee
13 to 20 fencers	two referees
21 to 30 fencers	three referees

~~These Presidents of Jury referees will be at the disposal of the bout committee throughout the events.~~

Replace Article 580 with the following:

The organizers must submit the schedule of events to the Executive Committee for approval.

Replace the fourth paragraph of Article 587 with the following:
For the Junior World Championships, each delegation must be accompanied by the following minimum number of referees:

1 to 4 fencers	no referee
5 to 12 fencers	one referee
13 to 20 fencers	two referees
21 to 30 fencers	three referees

Replace Article 591 with the following:

The organizers must submit the schedule of events to the Executive Committee for approval.

Replace Article 596 with the following:

For the Cadet World Championships, each delegation must be accompanied by the following minimum number of referees:

1 to 4 fencers	no referee
5 to 12 fencers	one referee
13 to 20 fencers	two referees
21 to 30 fencers	three referees

Replace Article 598 with the following:

The organizers must submit the schedule of events to the Executive Committee for approval.

Part VI - Disciplinary Rules for Competitions

Change Article 618, section a:

The Jury of Appeal must be assembled immediately by the bout committee (or when necessary by the organizing committee), either on its own initiative or at the request of a team captain, an official delegate of the federation concerned, a ~~President of the Jury~~ referee or an FIE Central Office delegate immediately after the competition that resulted in the protest. In no case may a Jury of Appeal be convened during the competition. (Cf. 582).

Change Article 641 (Penalty Chart - Group 1):

Non-conforming equipment, no spare regulation weapon, ~~no national armband (official FIE competitions)~~

Change Article 641 (Penalty Chart - Group 1):

Raising the mask before the ~~President's decision~~ referee's "Halt"

Change the text following Article 641; reinsert Article 651:

(Articles 642-650 and 652 are deleted.)

The referee and the bout committee, on their own initiative or at the request of an official delegate of the FIE or the organizing committee, have the obligation to expel from the site of the competition, with or without a warning, any fencer, spectator, medical assistant or trainer, coach, or auxiliary personnel or official who, by gestures, attitudes or statements, disrupts the smooth running of the competition. (Cf. 602, 612, 617, 633, 635, 639, 641/3rd group.)

Change second paragraph of Article 662:

Protests regarding the compositions of the pools ~~may only be made up to 2 pm of the day before the event~~, may only be made up to 7 pm of the day before the competition, the official posting of these pools being mandatory 22 16 hours before the beginning of the competition (Cf. 505).

Part VII - Automatic Scoring Equipment

Change Article 713, section 7:

Conversely, after a certain time "X" (which bears no relationship to "fencing time," which is the basis of judging according to the conventions governing foil fencing) following the first signal given by the machine, the latter must block out all signals for subsequent touches. The central scoring machine must be capable of being regulated for the period of time "X" between ~~1 and 2 seconds. The machine is to be set for a time of 2 seconds.~~ 700 and 800 milliseconds.

Change first paragraph of Article 761, section 12:

After a touch is registered, a subsequent touch in the opposite direction will only be registered within a maximum of ~~2 seconds.~~ 300 to 350 milliseconds.

Change Article 762, section 7:

If contact between the blade and the opponent's target occurs "through the blade," ~~the machine must prevent registration of the touch for between 1 (± 1) ms and 25 (± 5) ms, provided that the contact between the two blades is only interrupted once in that interval of time.~~ the whipover touch

- will register between 1 and 5 ms (± 1 ms)
- will not register between 5 and 10 ms (± 1 ms)
- will always register from 10 ms to 210 ms.

Fencers' Publicity Code

{Note: The exact text changes to the Publicity Code made by the 1994 Congress have not been released by the FIE; the changes listed here are taken from the FIE summary of the Congress. The corrected text will be published once the official text is received.}

Fencers must wear their official country abbreviations on their uniforms, in addition to their last names.

Sponsors' logos on a warmup suit or fencing uniform may be 50 cm².

The mask sticker or leg band (for sabre) advertising the competition is not required to display the fencer's competition number.

FIE Competition Format

{Note: A separate document will be distributed listing the changes made by the 1994 Congress to the provisional text passed by the 1993 Congress.}