

The SPIFF Saturday series

Season 5, spring of 2024

A weekly event for practicing competing and refereeing.

Aims

The Series has three aims:

The first: To allow members with varying amounts of experience in competitive fencing a chance to practice fencing in a competitive context in a low-pressure and friendly setting, and without having to invest time or money to visit a larger competition event.

The second: To allow members to practice refereeing.

The third: For fun.

Format

The sessions will take place eight Saturday practices at Hagalundsskolan at 11:00. See schedule below:

February 3rd	SPIFF saturday series 1 of 8.
February 10th	SPIFF saturday series 2 of 8.
February 17th	SPIFF saturday series 3 of 8.
February 24th	SPIFF saturday series 4 of 8.
March 2nd	Referee workshop
March 9th	SPIFF saturday series 5 of 8.
March 16th	SPIFF saturday series 6 of 8.
March 23rd	SPIFF saturday series 7 of 8.
March 30th	Easter - no series
April 6th	Referee workshop
April 13th	SPIFF saturday series 8 of 8.
April 20th	Vasaslaget - no series
April 27th	Referee workshop
May 4th	Kungsträdgården - no series
May 11th	Referee workshop
May 18th	Referee workshop
May 25th-26th	HOLMGÅNG!

The Series is open to all members of SPIFF and requires no prior experience competing or refereeing.

There is no mandatory attendance. Each participant should feel free to attend or not attend the series as they please. Participants do not have to register beforehand, and are allowed to join after the series has started.

Disciplines

Each participant may take part in one or several disciplines, without any obligations of attendance or consistency.

Some examples of disciplines:

- Steel Longsword
- Steel single Rapier (cut and thrust)
- Steel Sword and Buckler
- Steel Saber
- Foam Longsword
- Foam Saber

However, any discipline is allowed as long as there are enough participants. Each discipline will have a minimum number of participants of 3, with no maximum.

Every fencer will compete in 2 matches per discipline they choose to participate in, on the day(s) they choose to participate. Each participant will also referee one match in the discipline(s) they chose to compete in, on the day they chose to participate.

Registration

At the start of every Saturday practice a registration sheet will be laid out and all fencers who wish to compete that day may write their name up, as well as which discipline(s) they wish to compete in.

(Writing yourself up does not mean you have to compete regularly. Every fencer should feel free to compete as many or as few times as they wish.)

At 11:00 the registration will be closed and the competition will begin.

Match generation

After the registration is concluded the names of the participants will be randomized into a list (using for example <https://www.random.org/lists/>).

Each participant will fence one match against the participant directly above and below on the list. The top and bottom fencer will also fence each other.

The participant below the fencers of a match will be the referee of that match.

Example:

Anna ←Anna will fence both Bertil and David.
Bertil ←Bertil will fence both Anna and Cecilia.
Cecilia ←When Anna fences Bertil, Cecilia will be the referee.

David

...and so on.

Order of disciplines

The discipline with the highest number of fencers will be conducted first, followed by the discipline with second most fencers, etc.

If there are many disciplines on any given day, disciplines that have not yet started at 12:30 may be stricken.

Gear check

Before the first match all participants will come together and perform a gear check on each other, in order to make sure all participants have proper protective gear.

Here follows the minimal gear requirement.

Steel disciplines:

- Fencing mask. Mustn't have concave dents in the mesh.
- Back of head protector.
- Separate throat protector with a hard plate.
- Fencing jacket.
- Gloves of proper protective level (depending on discipline).
- Fencing pants.
- Athletics cup. (optional for women)
- Hard joint protectors on elbows and knees.
- Shoes.

Foam disciplines:

- Fencing mask.
- Athletics cup. (optional for women)
- Shoes.

Additionally:

- No bare skin is allowed. (Allowed in foam disciplines)
- The equipment must fit well enough to protect as intended, as well as not be displaced too easily.
- The equipment must not be worn or broken to such a degree that its protective quality is questionable.

Series points

After all matches for the day are concluded the participants are awarded series points in accordance to the results.

- 3 points for every win
- 2 points for every draw

- 1 point for every loss

At the end of the 10 Saturdays all points will be tallied. However, since the series is only a practice for competition no winners will be announced.

The Match

Each match two fencers will compete against each other over several exchanges, until a score limit (cap) or time limit (time) is reached, after which the fencer with the most points is declared the winner. If both fencers have the same amount of points the match is a draw.

The match will take place on a marked area of half a piste long and 2 pistes wide (ca 7x3 m).

The match will be refereed by a head referee and an assistant referee. Both referees are equipped with flags, one for each fencer.

Before the match starts the fencers shall take their corners. The head referee shall make sure the fencers are ready to fence by calling "Fencer ready?!" to each fencer. After confirmation from both fencers the head referee shall ask the fencers to "Salute!", after which the first exchange may be started.

Each exchange starts by the head referee calling "Fence!" and ends when a referee calls "Break!". A referee calls "Break!" as soon as they perceive a scoring action, or an action which warrants a warning. Both the head and assistant referee can call "Break!".

After "Break!", both referees signal with their flags which scoring actions they perceived, after which the head referee gives out points and warnings accordingly.

If the referees are not in exact agreement, they must confer. If after conferring, when they raise their flags for the second time, they are still not in agreement, the highest point values (1 or 2) awarded by either referee to each fencer count. The referees shall aim to confer no longer than 5 seconds.

In order to score with a weapon action the hit must be made with the point or edge of the blade (or pommel or boss of the buckler, when applicable). There is no requirement on hardness of hits (and fencers are discouraged from using unnecessary force, dangerous behaviour will result in a warning), but blade-body contact that was clearly only a glancing touch performed with very little to no force or intent, does not count as a scoring action.

All scoring actions from both fencers that were initiated before the initial breaking action was concluded shall score points.

Additionally, all scoring actions that were initiated immediately and without hesitation after the breaking action was concluded, and performed without pause or feint, shall score points.

Any other action initiated after the breaking action was concluded shall not score any points.

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Scoring actions:

- Weapon actions:
 - Longsword
 - 2 Points is scored for:
 - Thrust to the torso, head, or neck.
 - Cuts and slices to the head or neck.
 - 1 point is scored for:
 - Thrusts to the arms, or legs.
 - Cuts and slices to the torso, arms, or legs.
 - Pommel strikes to the face or side of the head.
 - One-handed thrusts, cuts, and slices (regardless of target).
 - Sabre
 - 2 Points is scored for:
 - Thrust to the torso, head, or neck.
 - Cuts and slices to the head or neck.
 - 1 point is scored for:
 - Thrusts to the arms, or legs.
 - Cuts and slices to the torso, arms, or legs.
 - Sword and buckler
 - 2 Points is scored for:
 - Thrust to the torso, head, or neck.
 - Cuts and slices to the head or neck.
 - 1 point is scored for:
 - Thrusts to the arms, or legs
 - Cuts and slices to the torso, arms, or legs.
 - Buckler strikes with the boss of the buckler to the face or side of the head.
 - Rapier
 - 2 Points is scored for:
 - Thrust to the torso, head, or neck.
 - 1 point is scored for:
 - Thrusts to the arms, or legs
 - Cuts and slices to the head, neck, torso, arms, or legs.
 - Thrust with the dagger (regardless of target)(if applicable).
- Other scoring actions
 - Domination (1 points)

Any situation where one fencer controls the opponent's body in such a way that the fencer could clearly strike the opponent without being parried or struck themself.
 - Disarm (2 points)

Any situation where one fencer loses their weapon and is out of grappling distance.
 - Ring-out (1 point)

Any situation where one fencer no longer has both feet inside the fencing area.

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If scoring weapon actions happens before or simultaneously as a dominance, disarm, or ring-out, ONLY the weapon actions shall be counted.

Illegal actions, resulting in a Warning.

- Striking illegal target (cannot score)
 - Back of head.
 - Spine
 - Back of the knee.
 - Feet, including Achilles tendon.
 - Crotch-area.
 - Palm(s) of the weapon-hand(s).
 - Pommel and buckler strikes to the top of the head.
- Fencing before "Fence!"
- Fencing after "Break!"
- (Sword and buckler) Striking with the rim of the buckler.
- Any technique applying force to joints against their range of motion
- Punching or kicking the opponent
- Shoving the opponent off the mat
- Unsporting behaviour
- Dangerous behaviour
- Influencing the referees (e.g. self-calling or tapping the spot you got hit).
- Not being ready to start the match on time.

End of the match

When at least one fencer reaches 10 points or above the match is over.

If the match time reaches 3 minutes before the cap is reached, the referee calls out "Last Exchange!" indicating that the ongoing exchange (or the upcoming exchange if 3 minutes is reached in the short pause between exchanges) will be the last of the match.

The time starts when "Fence!" is called for the first exchange. The time does not stop in between exchanges, unless a referee calls for a time-out, which shall be done if the break between exchanges is expected to last for an unusually long time.

After the match the fencer with the most points is declared the winner. If both fencers finish the match with the same number of points the match is declared a draw.

If the match ends in a draw and is in the direct elimination stage, the match goes on to a sudden death scenario where one additional exchange is fought until one fencer has more points than the other.

Warnings

If a fencer receives a warning, they may be penalized, depending on the number of previous warnings received in the match.

- First warning: No penalty.
- Second warning: 1 Point deduction (score can not go below 0).
- Third warning: 3 points deduction (score can not go below 0).
- Fourth warning: Match loss 0-12.

If the illegal action is grievous, the referees may choose to move directly to a more severe penalty step.

The referee

When acting as referee it is important to communicate clearly with the fencers. To make this communication as efficient as possible the referee should strive to speak in a loud and clear voice, and use a consistent language. Below follows a set of terms to help keep the referee's calls consistent and efficient.

It is encouraged that the referee uses these and only these terms, when applicable.

- Fencer ready?
- Salute!
- Fence!
- Break!
- Warning left/right fencer!
- Hit (on) left/right fencer!
- Point (to) left/right fencer!
- No exchange!
- To your corners!
- Last exchange!
- Match Over!

The referee will also be helped by trying to divide the exchange in its tactical components. One easy way to do this is to consider the following: **Who attacked first, and what did the other fencer do in response?**

Example:

Exchange 1:

Bertil (left) fences Cecilia (right).

Fence!

Cecilia performs a cut to Bertil's hand. Bertil tries to pull his hand back but is still hit.

Break!

Attack (from) right. Hit (on) Left.

Exchange 2:

Fence!

Cecilia performs a cut aimed at Bertil's head. Bertil beats the attack away with his own blade and then immediately afterwards cuts Cecilia in the head. Cecilia is hit.

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Break!

Attack (from) right. Parry-Riposte (from) Left. Hit (on) right.

Exchange 3:

Fence!

Cecilia performs a cut aimed at Bertil's head. Bertil strikes Cecilia's hand as he steps back (avoiding the attack).

Break!

Attack (from) right. No hit. Counter-attack (from) Left. Hit (on) right.

Refereeing is difficult and requires practice. All referees will miss some hits and make a few wrong calls. It is therefore important as a fencer to accept the referees authority, and to know that with practice we all improve.

Final Remarks

The series's aims are to allow competition practice in a friendly and low-pressure setting, so remember to please respect each other, take care of each other, and have fun.

Good luck!