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FENCING NOTEBOOK



BASIC CONCEPTS MANUAL



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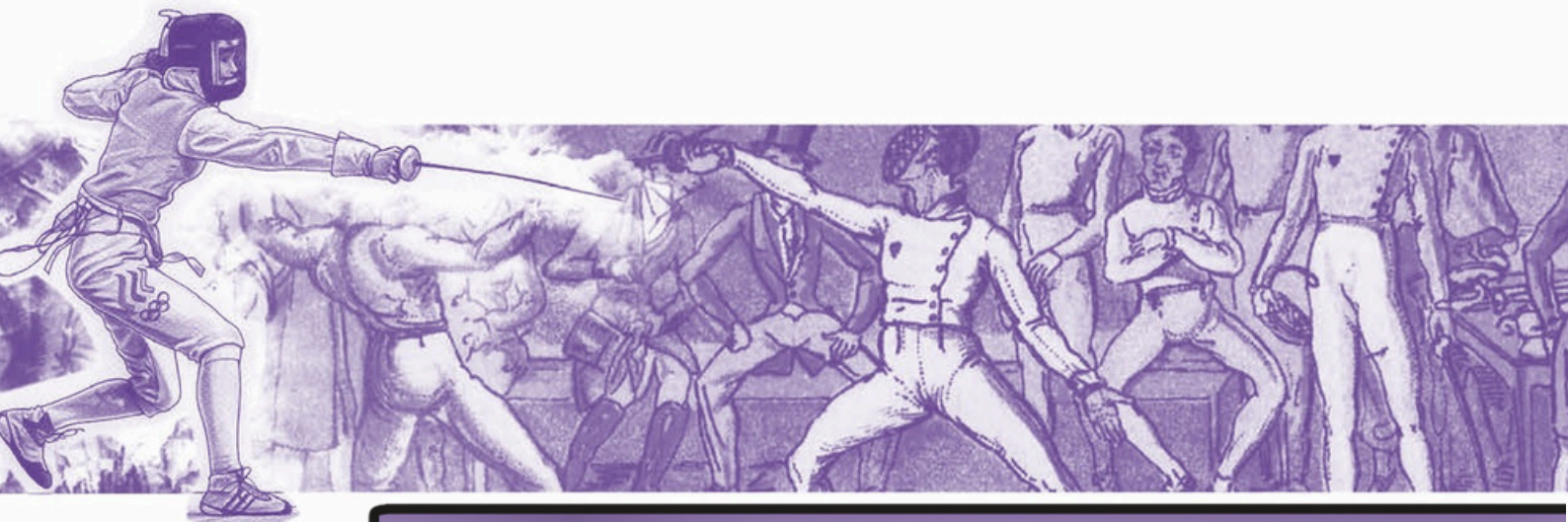
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1. FENCING: FROM ORIGINS TO THE MODERN ERA

1.1 ORIGINS OF FENCING

Fencing is one of the oldest physical activities in existence and has evolved over history based on the weapons used. Its development has been accompanied by numerous treatises that studied both technique and tactics. Therefore, we can almost certainly affirm that fencing has been the most extensively studied physical activity in antiquity, as weapons were used in warfare and have been deeply embedded in human history.

The sword, like war, found a place in all civilizations. It is said that the King of Assyria was a pioneer in using professional fencing masters to improve the performance of his troops. Skilled male and female swordsmen also existed in places like China, Persia, Babylon, and Rome. Numerous warriors from that era became renowned, such as Charlemagne or Boudica, a warrior queen of the Iceni tribe. She led several British tribes, including the neighboring Trinovantes, during the greatest uprising in Britain against Roman occupation. Over time, as warfare evolved, fencing transitioned into a sport. This shift meant that fencing techniques and tactics were already highly developed by the early 20th century. From the beginning, it has been included in the Modern Olympic Games since their inception in Athens in 1896.

Wheelchair fencing (Adapted Fencing) was first introduced during the Stoke Mandeville International Games in 1954 by a paraplegic athlete. He and his teacher, Sir Ludwig Guttmann, quickly demonstrated the potential of this discipline, which was then included in the Rome 1960 Paralympic Games.



1.2 HISTORY OF FENCING

Throughout history, in different parts of the world, men and women have wielded swords: Spanish knights brandished their swords in duels, Japanese samurai elevated their use to a sacred ritual, and French musketeers turned it into an art through the application of sophisticated techniques. Swords were even given names, with Excalibur being one of the most legendary examples.

The use of swords evolved into a sport as firearms began to replace bladed weapons on the battlefield. The earliest treatises in this regard date back to the 15th century. The last vestige of the sword as a deadly weapon was seen in duels to the death over matters of honor, the ultimate expression of Romanticism, which continued until the late 19th century. Italy, and especially France, with their renowned masters and academies, took the lead in establishing fencing as a sporting exercise.

1.2.1 THE SPANISH SCHOOL OF FENCING

During the Renaissance in Spain, the rapier revolutionized combat with bladed weapons. This type of sword, featuring a straight and long blade, was wielded with one hand and was ideal for thrusting. It was called rapier because it was worn as an accessory to clothing, used both as a fashion statement and for personal defense. Its first mention is found in *Coplas de la panadera* by Juan de Mena, written between 1445 and 1450.

The *Verdadera Destreza*, considered the Spanish fencing system, emerged in the 16th century with the publication by Jerónimo Sánchez de Carranza in 1582. This system was not limited to sword combat but encompassed a wide range of weapons, including combinations such as sword and dagger, as well as polearms like the pike.

Jerónimo Sánchez de Carranza, known as the "Father of Destreza," and Luis Pacheco de Narváez were its main exponents. Girard Thibault, a Dutch master, also adopted and promoted this style outside of Spain. The *Verdadera Destreza* stood out for its scientific and philosophical approach to weapon handling, establishing itself as an advanced discipline of the time.

1.2.2 THE ART OF DUELING

For more than three centuries, cloak-and-sword duels became a common way to resolve disputes and protect the honor of both men and women. Although the practice of dueling has ancient roots, its formalization and popularization occurred during the Late Middle Ages. Duels reached their peak in the centuries following the Renaissance and began to decline in the 19th century as Western legislations started to strictly prohibit them.

In the 15th century, Spain stood out as the epicenter of dueling culture. At that time, the cloak was an essential part of daily attire, used not only to protect against the cold but also as a tool in combat.



Made of thick fabric, it could be wrapped around the arm to cushion blows from the opponent or thrown to disorient them, similar to the techniques used by Roman gladiators with their nets. This practice was part of the "Common Destreza," a set of fencing tactics that emphasized improvisation and adaptability in combat.

The duel, recognized worldwide, was practiced in Western societies from the 15th to the 19th centuries. It was a ritualized combat between two individuals, each with the purpose of defending their honor. The weapons used varied, starting with European dueling swords and evolving into the use of pistols from the 18th century onward.



Both combatants were accompanied by witnesses, also known as seconds, who played crucial roles. They not only verified the weapons and ensured that the rules were followed, but they were also responsible for handling their duelist's body in the event of their death.

The concept of honor during this era was fundamental, valued above any material possession. Duels were not merely confrontations to inflict mortal harm but rather ceremonies to restore tarnished honor. The mere willingness to risk one's life to defend personal honor was often sufficient to restore it. However, if resolving the conflict required the death of the adversary, it was accepted as a necessary consequence.

There were various types of duels, each with its own rules and objectives:

- Duel "to first blood": Considered concluded when one of the duelists sustained a wound, regardless of its severity.
- Duel "to severe injury": Continued until one of the duelists was gravely injured and unable to continue fighting.
- Duel "to the death": The only acceptable resolution was the death of the opponent, seen as the only way to fully restore honor.
- Formal duel: These duels were governed by strict rules and were often approved and regulated by the king. They typically involved high-status individuals, such as nobles, politicians, or military figures, and followed a rigorous protocol. Challenges were publicly announced, and only individuals of the same social rank were allowed to participate. In some cases, if the duelist was over sixty years old, a direct relative could take their place.



On the other hand, clandestine duels were more violent and lacked the formal structure of official duels. These encounters were illegal and often resulted in severe punishments. For instance, under the edict of the Catholic Monarchs, the challenger would be executed by beheading, while the challenged party was sent to the Americas to serve.

Over time, and with the evolution of laws, by the late 19th century, duels began to be regarded as acts of first- or second-degree murder in most Western countries. This new legal perspective led to the gradual disappearance of dueling as an accepted means of resolving disputes of honor, reflecting a significant shift in the values and social norms of the era.

1.2.3 WOMEN AND DUELS

In August 1892, the renowned Princess Pauline Metternich engaged in a duel that became a milestone in the history of female dueling. Although dueling at the time was predominantly a male activity, this encounter carried significant social and political implications, coinciding with the rise of the suffrage movement and emerging contemporary feminism. Metternich's rival was Anastasia Kielmansegg, a Russian aristocrat with whom she had several verbal disagreements. The dispute that led them to duel arose from a disagreement over floral decorations for an event.



Before the duel began, the baroness acting as both doctor and witness made an unusual decision: both women would face each other bare-chested. The reason was to prevent infections that could result from wounds caused by cuts to their clothing. Thus, they removed their corsets and blouses, fighting with their torsos exposed—a striking image that soon gained popularity among female duelists of the time.

The combat followed the rules of French dueling, ending when one of the duelists was injured. Although it is uncertain who emerged victorious, the scene of this singular duel was immortalized in postcards and photographs, capturing the attention of society at the time.

In Spain, another notable female duel took place in Madrid's Retiro Park. Paz Villavicencio and Lolita, nicknamed "La de las Canas," faced off due to a dispute at Café Fornos, a popular hub of Madrid's bohemian life. The duel was held at a symbolic location: at the foot of the Fallen Angel statue.

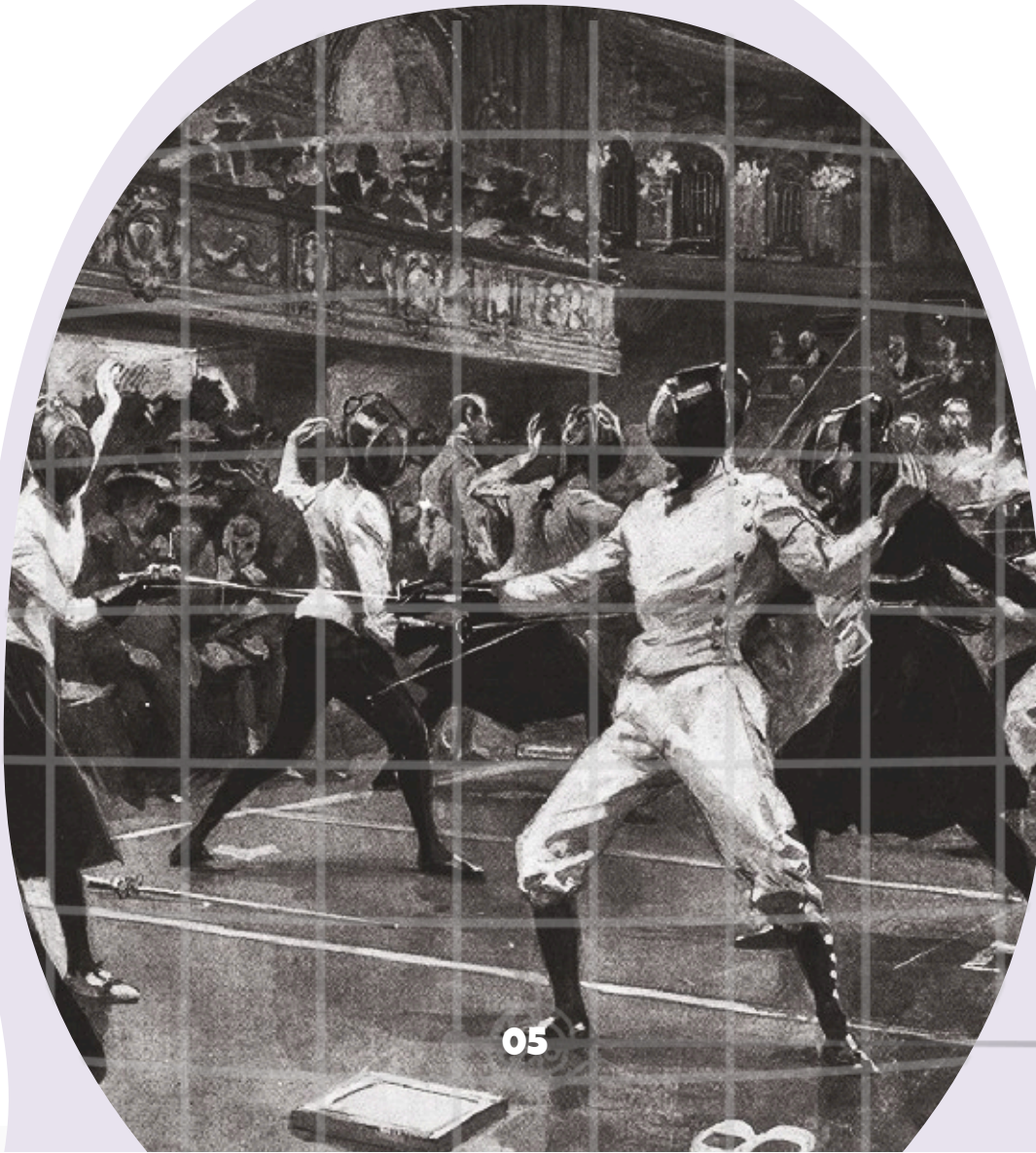


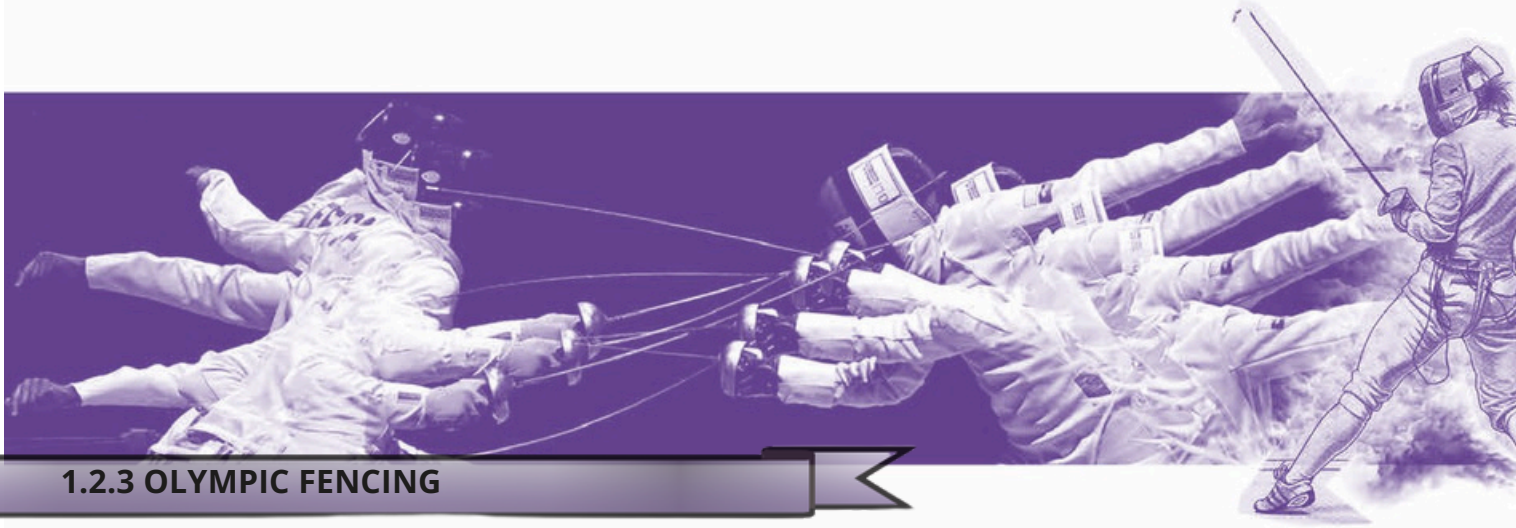
This confrontation reflected how emancipation had also reached the world of dueling, a territory traditionally dominated by men, despite the long-standing tradition of female duelists.

Amid the growing participation of women in dueling, many began learning martial arts, particularly jiu-jitsu, and using improvised weapons such as pins or sharpened canes to defend themselves against aggressors and attackers.

In this climate of revolution and female empowerment in fencing, Teresa Castellanos de Mesa emerged as a prominent figure in Spanish fencing. Teresa grew up in a family of fencing masters; her father Manuel and her brother Cándido, both renowned fencers, shared their knowledge with her and supported her development as a duelist. From a young age, Teresa demonstrated exceptional talent, making her public debut in 1834 at the age of eighteen at the Fontana de Oro, a well-known Madrid tavern. At that time, it was common for taverns to include spaces for various spectacles, including fencing duels, which were highly fashionable.

Beyond being a historical method for resolving conflicts, duels have been immortalized in classical and modern literature by authors such as Cervantes and Lope de Vega. These writers used fencing and duels to explore themes of honor and justice in their works, leaving an indelible mark on cultural memory.





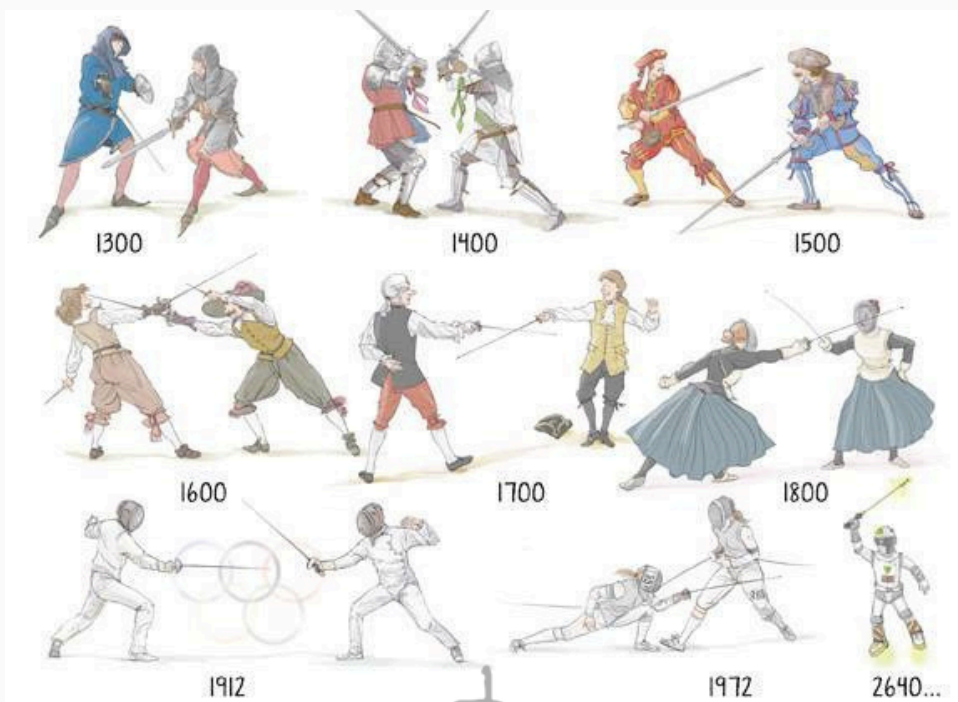
1.2.3 OLYMPIC FENCING

Fencing is one of the few sports that has been present in every edition of the Modern Olympic Games since Athens 1896. In the first edition, only men's foil and sabre events were contested. Epee was introduced in the Paris 1900 Games, and team competitions debuted in London 1908.

In 1913, the Fédération Internationale d'Esgrime (FIE) was established to oversee the global regulation of the sport. Since 1937, the FIE has also organized the World Championships, providing a platform for fencers to compete at the highest level outside of the Olympics.

Women first participated in Olympic fencing at the Paris 1924 Games in the individual foil event. This marked a significant milestone in opening up the sport to female competitors. For over three decades, foil remained the only weapon available to women in the Olympics. Team foil was later added at the Rome 1960 Games.

A major breakthrough came at the Atlanta 1996 Olympics, where women's epee was included in both individual and team events. The inclusion of women's sabre at the Sydney 2000 Games completed women's participation in all three classic fencing weapons: foil, epee, and sabre.





¿DID YOU KNOW..?

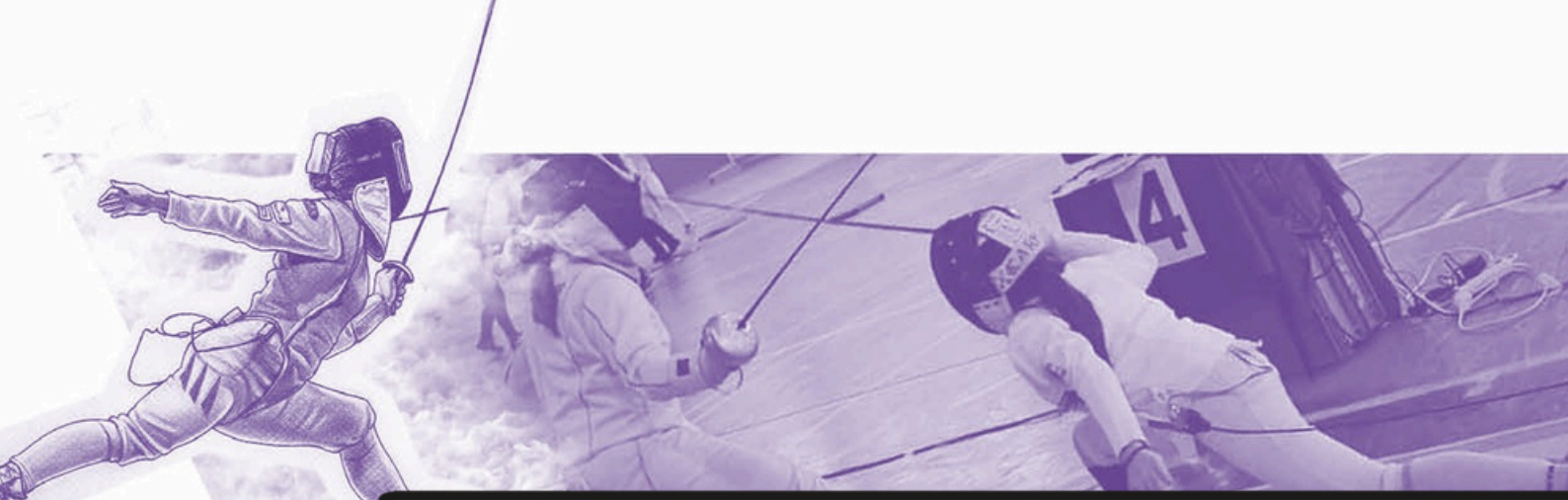
"IN FORMAL DUELS, STRICT RULES WERE FOLLOWED AND WERE OFTEN APPROVED BY ROYALTY. FOR EXAMPLE, CHALLENGES WERE PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED, AND ONLY INDIVIDUALS OF THE SAME SOCIAL RANK WERE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE."

WHAT IS "VERDADERA DESTREZA" AND WHAT ARE ITS FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES IN FENCING?

WHY DO YOU THINK FENCING WAS SO IMPORTANT FOR SOLDIERS IN ANCIENT TIMES?

WHY DO YOU THINK FENCING HAS BEEN PART OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES SINCE THEIR INCEPTION?





2. CHARACTERISTICS OF FENCING

Fencing is one of the most complete sports in terms of physical exercise and one of the most appealing for intellectual development. Its success lies in the balance it provides between mental and physical qualities.

It is an exciting sport that enhances concentration, speed, balance, and coordination. It is a practice of agility that sharpens reflexes and intelligence. Fencing is the only Olympic sport of Spanish origin.

Physically, its practice increases speed, skill, and strength. It is a sport where the entire body plays a role. The legs are used for movement, and the arms execute actions with the weapon. All physical qualities are developed: endurance (sustaining the duration of a bout efficiently), strength (building stronger arms, legs, and torso to handle the weight of the weapon and the required technical positions), speed (the faster the execution of actions, the greater the success in scoring touches), and flexibility (the greater the range of movement of the body segments, the easier it is to achieve touches).

Intellectually, fencing fosters the most important mental qualities: willpower, self-control, initiative, confidence, intelligence, and the formation of habits and skills essential for the multifaceted activities of an individual.





3. MODALITIES AND DISCIPLINES



in modern fencing, there are four main modalities: stage or artistic fencing, historical fencing, sport fencing, and adapted fencing. Sport fencing is the most practiced and well-known, while stage and historical fencing were officially recognized by the Royal Spanish Fencing Federation (Real Federación de Esgrima Española, RFEE) in 2015. These latter modalities, though recently recognized, have historically been practiced in areas such as film, theater, and the art of dueling.

Each fencing modality offers unique characteristics and attracts people with different interests and passions. Practicing all modalities contributes to a fencer's holistic development, as none is considered superior or inferior to the others.

Within sport fencing, there are three disciplines, each named after the weapon used: epee, foil, and sabre. These same three weapons are also used in adapted fencing, providing fencers with a comprehensive and versatile experience.

In summary, the four fencing modalities—stage, historical, sport, and adapted—enrich the practice of this art, offering a diversity of techniques and approaches that foster holistic and balanced development for any fencer.





3.1 STAGE FENCING

Stage fencing is a form of fencing used in theater, film, and other artistic performances to simulate combat in a safe and visually appealing manner. Its primary goal is entertainment, prioritizing choreography and the appearance of realism over technical authenticity and performer safety. Techniques and movements are exaggerated to maximize visual impact and ensure the audience can follow the action. Actors and stunt performers typically undergo specialized training to execute these sequences without risk of injury.

3.2 HISTORICAL FENCING

Historical fencing, also known as HEMA (Historical European Martial Arts), is the practice and study of European martial arts from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance and beyond, based on historical manuals and treatises. This discipline aims to faithfully recreate combat techniques using various weapons, such as longswords, single-handed swords, daggers, spears, and other traditional arms. Practitioners study ancient texts and manuscripts to understand and apply techniques as they were taught in their era, combining academic rigor with practical training to preserve and revive these historical martial arts.





3.3 ADAPTED FENCING (WHEELCHAIR FENCING)

Wheelchair fencing was developed by Sir Ludwig Guttmann in Stoke Mandeville as part of the rehabilitation program for British soldiers injured during World War II. This modality shares the same rules and disciplines as sport fencing, emphasizing values such as kindness, respect, and courtesy, which are foundational in the world of fencing. The inclusive practice of both modalities enriches and complements the experience for fencers.

In wheelchair fencing, athletes compete in chairs that are anchored to the floor using adapted fixtures, allowing for greater mobility of the arms. This sport significantly enhances agility and reflexes. The primary difference from traditional sport fencing is the modification of the valid target areas in epee, where touches are only allowed from the waist up, including the mask, torso, arms, and hands.

To ensure fair competition, wheelchair fencers are classified into different categories based on their level of disability and mobility:

- **Category A:** Fencers in this category have full trunk function and good arm mobility. Their disabilities primarily affect their legs.
- **Category B:** Fencers in this category have limited trunk function and less arm mobility compared to Category A. Their disabilities may affect both their legs and trunk.
- **Category C:** This category includes fencers with severe disabilities that significantly impact both the trunk and limbs. These fencers have considerable limitations in trunk and arm mobility.

Adapted fencing provides an inclusive platform for athletes with disabilities, allowing them to demonstrate skill, strategy, and sportsmanship on equal footing.



3.4 SPORT FENCING

Fencing is an individual combat and opposition sport that presents both physical and mental challenges for competitors. It takes place in the presence of an opponent, with the motor actions of both participants having opposing intentions.

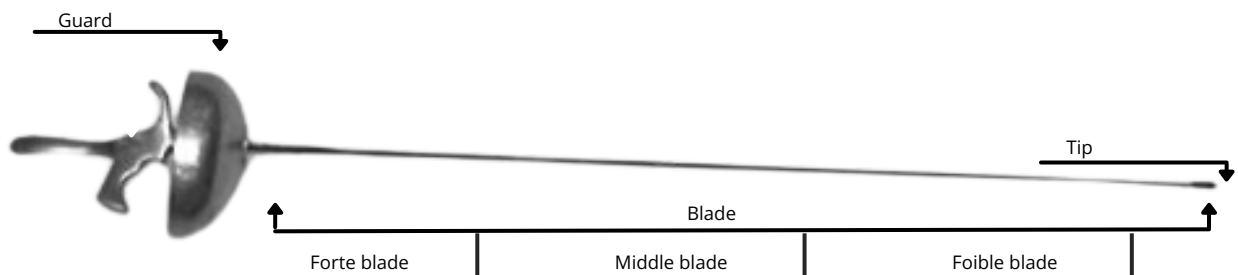
It is a duel that can be contested using foil, epee, or sabre, with the fencers positioned face-to-face and aiming to touch their opponent with their weapon. In fencing, the valid target areas vary depending on the weapon being used. In foil, the target is limited to the torso. In epee, any part of the body is valid, while in sabre, the target area includes everything above the waist, including the head.

An important characteristic of fencing is the limited range of movement available to competitors, known as fencers. They must always face their opponent, moving only forward or backward along the piste. Turning their backs to their adversary is not allowed. Despite these limitations, movements may vary slightly from one bout to another due to differences in the objectives and the morphology of each weapon.

However, the basic movements remain consistent across all bouts. The ultimate goal in fencing is to touch without being touched—that is, to strike the target with the weapon's tip before the opponent can do so. Fencing is governed by a set of rules that regulate the bout, the equipment used, the dimensions of the piste, and other technical elements.

4. THE WEAPONS

In fencing, there are three main types of weapons: foil, epee, and sabre. Each weapon is composed of the following parts: The blade: The long, thin part of the weapon. The guard: The bowl-shaped component that protects the fencer's hand. The grip: The handle where the weapon is held. The pommel: The cap at the end of the weapon that balances its weight. In foil and epee, the tip also includes an electric sensor to register touches during bouts.

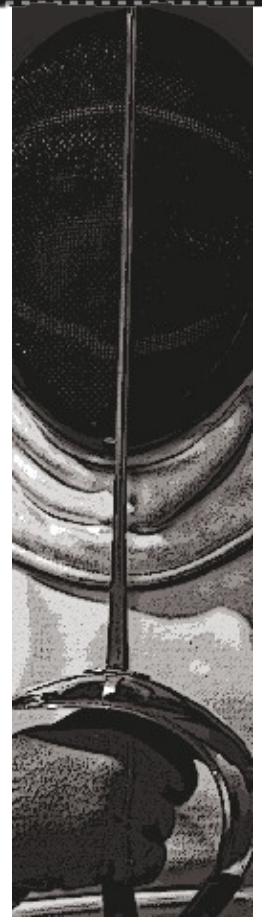


4.1 SABRE

It has a bowl-shaped guard that curves under the hand and a blade with a rectangular cross-section.

LENGTH: 105 cm.
WEIGHT: 500 GR.

There is no rest for the sabreur, who must establish an offensive strategy, controlling and analyzing the opponent's game. A sabreur must not only destabilize their adversary but also impose their own style of play, leveraging both their strengths and weaknesses. Adaptability and quick reaction: These are crucial traits that a sabreur must always keep in mind when stepping onto the piste. Controlling and analyzing the opponent's game helps the sabreur anticipate movements and make strategic decisions. Concentration and cunning are essential qualities for a sabreur on the piste.



EQUIPMENT



MASK



METALLIC JACKET

Covers the torso and the arms. It is worn over the regular fencing jacket and is used in foil and sabre to define the valid target area. The metallic surface ensures that touches made on the valid target are registered by the electronic scoring system.



PANTS



SOCKS



VALID TARGET
AREAS IN
FENCING



JACKET



GLOVES



4.2 EPEE



Classified as a point weapon, like the foil, the epee has a maximum weight of 770 grams and a total length of 110 centimeters. The blade, made of steel, measures 90 centimeters in length.

LENGTH: 110 cm.
WEIGHT: 770 GR.

The epee is the weapon where the preparation and waiting phases are the longest. The time spent observing the opponent can feel like an eternity for novices.

This double-touch weapon allows fencers to score points while countering the opponent's attacks through a defensive or passive strategy. It is, therefore, the weapon of patience, where nerves are put to the ultimate test.

Mastery in the use of the epee is measured not only by physical skills but also by the mental ability to anticipate the opponent's moves and remain calm under pressure. Each bout is a strategic dance, where every small gesture can determine the outcome.

The epee is a thrusting weapon: touches can only be scored with the tip. The valid target area is the entire body.

It is the heaviest and most rigid of the three weapons, with a triangular cross-section blade. The guard, similar to that of the foil but larger, protects the hand.

EQUIPMENT



MASK



PANTALÓN



GLOVE



JACKET



SOCKS


VALID TARGET
AREAS IN
FENCING

4.3 FOIL

The foil is a thrusting weapon, meaning that touches can only be scored with the tip. Additionally, it is a weapon of convention.

LENGTH: 105 CM.
WEIGHT: 500 GR.



The foil is light and flexible, with a blade that ends in a blunt tip. Its maximum weight is 500 grams, and its length cannot exceed 110 cm.



The foil, one of the three classic fencing weapons, stands out for its origins as a tool for study and practice, profoundly influencing the technical and physical evolution of the sport.

Initially conceived to train fencers in precision and technique, the foil requires a combination of agility, strategy, and control. Foil bouts can vary significantly in pace; at times, they may be slower, resembling those of epee, while at other moments, they can reach a speed and liveliness comparable to sabre.

This versatility, combined with the need for a high level of technique, makes foil a fascinating and challenging discipline within the world of fencing.

EQUIPMENT



MASK



GLOVE



METALLIC JACKET

Cubre el tronco a excepción de las extremidades.



PANTS



SOCKS



JACKET



VALID TARGET AREAS IN FENCING





¿DID YOU KNOW...?

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE MODERN SABRE DERIVES FROM THE WEAPON USED BY CAVALRY SOLDIERS?

HOW MANY DISCIPLINES DOES SPORT FENCING HAVE?

HOW MANY DISCIPLINES DOES WHEELCHAIR FENCING HAVE?

WHICH WEAPON WEIGHS MORE, THE SABRE OR THE FOIL?

IN WHICH WEAPON CAN YOU SCORE WITH THE EDGE AND THE BACK EDGE?

WHY IS FENCING CONSIDERED A COMPLETE SPORT FOR BOTH THE BODY AND THE MIND?

?



5. GENERALITIES

5.1 BASIC CONCEPTS



TOUCH

When a fencer strikes the opponent's valid target area with their weapon, the signaling apparatus lights up. Each touch scores one point.



ATTACK

An offensive action aimed at hitting the opponent in a single tempo. It can be executed directly with a straight thrust or indirectly by transitioning from one line to another to achieve the touch.



RIPOSTE

An offensive action executed after parrying an attack. Ripostes are classified in the same way as attacks and are performed by the fencer who successfully parried the opponent's attack.



PARRY

A defensive action that consists of stopping or deflecting the opponent's offensive or counter-offensive action using the weapon.





MATCH

Cuando un tirador alcanza con su arma la superficie válida del contrario y se encienden las luces del aparato señalizador. Cada tocado otorga un punto.



COUNTER-ATTACK

Offensive actions executed in response to the opponent's offensive action. It is an attempt to disrupt the opponent's attack, often by anticipating its conclusion.



FOOTWORK

The movement of the fencer along the piste, including advancing, retreating, and performing specific actions such as the lunge. Footwork is crucial for maintaining distance and strategic positioning during the bout.



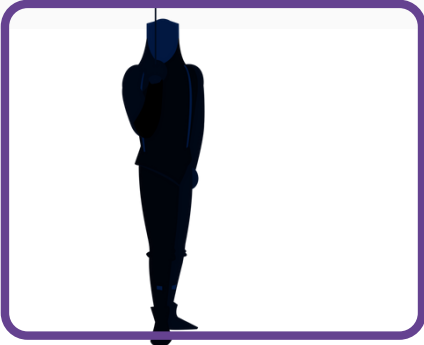
PREPARATION

The movements and techniques used to create an opening for an attack, such as feints and false actions. Preparation aims to exploit the opponent's reactions to execute an effective attack.

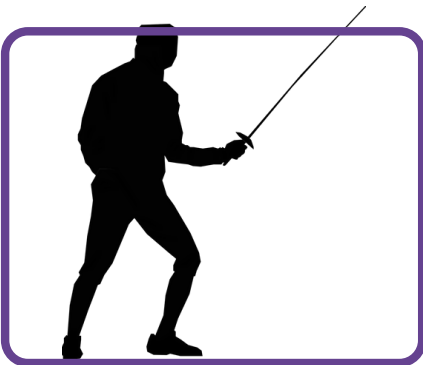




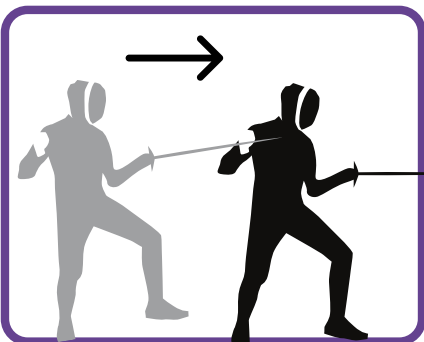
5.2 BASIC MOVEMENTS IN FENCING AND WHEELCHAIR FENCING



The **salute** is a gesture of courtesy in fencing, performed before and after the bout. At the start of the match, a salute is directed to the opponent, the referee, and the officials. It must be carried out with seriousness as a sign of respect towards the opponent and the referees. Failing to perform the salute may result in a penalty card.



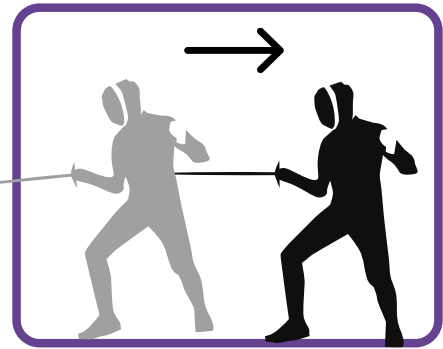
The guard is the fundamental starting position in fencing. It is the stance from which attacks are launched and defenses are executed. The front foot should point forward, while the back foot is slightly turned outward, forming a 90-degree angle. Slightly bend the knees to maintain a low and stable posture. Keep the body weight evenly balanced between both feet. Hold the armed arm at a 45-degree angle.



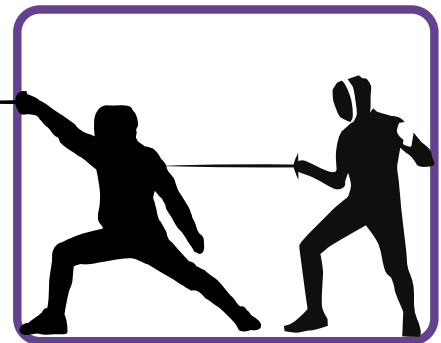
Advancing is a forward movement performed from the basic guard position. Start by moving the front foot forward, initially placing only the heel on the ground. As the sole of the front foot makes contact, the back foot follows, maintaining the same distance between both feet. Throughout the movement, it is essential to maintain posture and balance.



Retreating is a backward movement performed from the basic guard position. From the guard stance: Slide the back foot a few centimeters backward. Immediately follow with the front foot, maintaining the same distance between both feet. Ensure posture and balance are maintained throughout the movement.



The lunge is the most common movement used to score a touch. Begin by fully extending the armed arm. Lift the front foot and deliver an energetic kick forward, fully extending the front leg. Complete the movement by extending the back leg to achieve maximum speed. Finish with a projection of the unarmed arm to create additional forward momentum and balance the body.



The guard in wheelchair fencing is the basic position from which the fencer prepares to attack or defend. In this position: The fencer sits upright, with the body slightly angled toward the opponent. The armed arm is bent, with the elbow positioned 20 cm away from the body. If the disability allows, the unarmed arm is placed backward, holding the side bar or wheel for support. If this is not possible, the unarmed arm should remain positioned to minimize the target area.



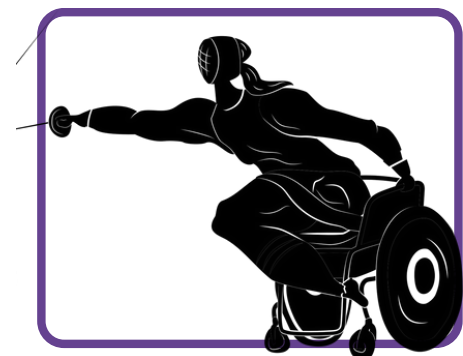
Advancing in wheelchair fencing involves leaning forward from the waist, shifting weight onto the hip of the armed side. During the advance, the back hip can be slightly lifted off the seat without moving the wheelchair, maintaining balance with the unarmed arm semi-flexed and the head upright, focused on the opponent. This movement must be executed quickly and with control to maximize reach without losing stability.



Retreating in wheelchair fencing is a defensive technique where the fencer leans backward from the waist to evade attacks. During this movement, the fencer maintains balance and stability, keeping the armed arm ready. The unarmed arm is used to maintain stability, either semi-flexed or supported on the wheelchair if possible. The head remains upright, with the eyes focused on the opponent, allowing for a quick reaction to any changes in the bout.



The lunge in wheelchair fencing is an offensive movement where the fencer leans forward from the waist to extend their reach and attack the opponent. During the lunge, the armed arm is fully extended forward, while the fencer may slightly lift the back hip off the seat to maximize reach without moving the wheelchair. The unarmed arm remains semi-flexed, and the head stays upright, focused on the opponent. This movement must be executed quickly and with control to avoid losing balance and to be prepared for a rapid recovery.



5.3 THE DISTANCE

In fencing, the distance between fencers is crucial for strategy and the execution of movements. Distance is defined by the maximum reach of a fencer's lunge. There are three main types of distances in fencing:

Short Distance: At this range, a fencer can touch their opponent simply by extending the armed arm without moving their feet. It is a range for quick and efficient responses.

Medium Distance: This is the standard attacking distance. At this range, a fencer can score a touch by performing a lunge, which involves moving forward while extending the armed arm. It is the most commonly used distance for effective attacks.

Long Distance: To reach the opponent from this range, a forward movement is required before executing the attack. This is known as "advance and lunge," where the fencer approaches with one or several steps before launching the attack. This distance allows the fencer to adjust timing and prepare to surprise the opponent.

Proper management of these distances is fundamental in fencing, enabling fencers to maintain control of the bout and capitalize on opportunities to attack or defend effectively.



5.4 THE CONVENTION

In epee, there are no priority rules; the first fencer to land a touch scores the point. If both fencers touch simultaneously, points are awarded to both. In contrast, foil and sabre are convention weapons, where priority rules apply.

Attack with Priority: To gain priority in an attack, the fencer must be the first to initiate the action by extending the armed arm and threatening a valid target. The defending fencer cannot launch a valid attack until they remove the attacker's priority. This can be achieved through a parry or an evasion, or they may choose to change their strategy instead.

Defense and Counterattack: Defensive tactics involve blocking the opponent's attack with a parry or evading it. Once the defender successfully neutralizes the opponent's attack, they can immediately become the attacker, gaining priority to execute a valid touch. If both fencers attempt to attack simultaneously and land touches without one having clear priority, no point is awarded to either fencer.





6. THE COMPETITION

Fencing is a sport practiced in two main formats: individual competition and team competition. It is contested in three disciplines: epee, foil, and sabre. As mentioned earlier, each discipline has its own rules and characteristics, adding great diversity to this sport.

6.1 INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION

In the initial phase, known as the poule, competitors are divided into groups and face each other in a round-robin format within each group. This division can be done randomly or based on ranking classification. Groups typically consist of approximately 6 to 8 participants, depending on the total number of competitors in the event. Bouts are up to a maximum of 5 touches or 3 minutes in duration. The fencer who first scores 5 touches or has the highest number of touches when time expires wins the bout.

Fencers who advance from the poule round move on to a second phase, where a direct elimination bracket is established. Bouts in this phase are up to a maximum of 15 touches or 9 minutes, divided into three 3-minute periods with a 1-minute break between them. The fencer who first scores 15 touches or has the highest number of touches at the end of the allotted time wins the bout.

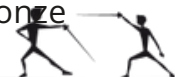
Touches are recorded using an electric scoring apparatus that lights up and sounds when the weapon contacts the opponent's valid target area. Competitors are eliminated through direct elimination bouts until the top 8 remain. These finalists then compete in the quarterfinals, semifinals, and final, all conducted to 15 touches.

6.2 TEAM COMPETITION

Team competitions are conducted through direct elimination rounds, known as matches. Each team consists of three starting fencers and one substitute.

The match is divided into nine bouts, each up to five touches or three minutes, with the members of one team facing those of the opposing team in rotation.

The winning team is the first to reach 45 touches or the one with the most touches at the end of the 9 bouts. Teams are eliminated round by round until the top 4 remain, who then compete in the semifinals and the matches for gold and bronze medals.





QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE ON-GUARD POSITION AND WHY IS IT FUNDAMENTAL IN FENCING?

WHAT DOES THE CONCEPT OF "CONVENTION" MEAN IN FENCING, AND HOW DOES IT AFFECT FOIL AND SABRE BOUTS?

WHAT ARE THE MAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM COMPETITIONS IN FENCING?

WHY DO YOU THINK FENCING WAS ONE OF THE MOST STUDIED PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES IN ANTIQUITY?

HOW HAS FENCING CONTRIBUTED TO THE INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN SPORTS?



7. NORMAS BASICAS DEL REGLAMENTO DE ESGRIMA

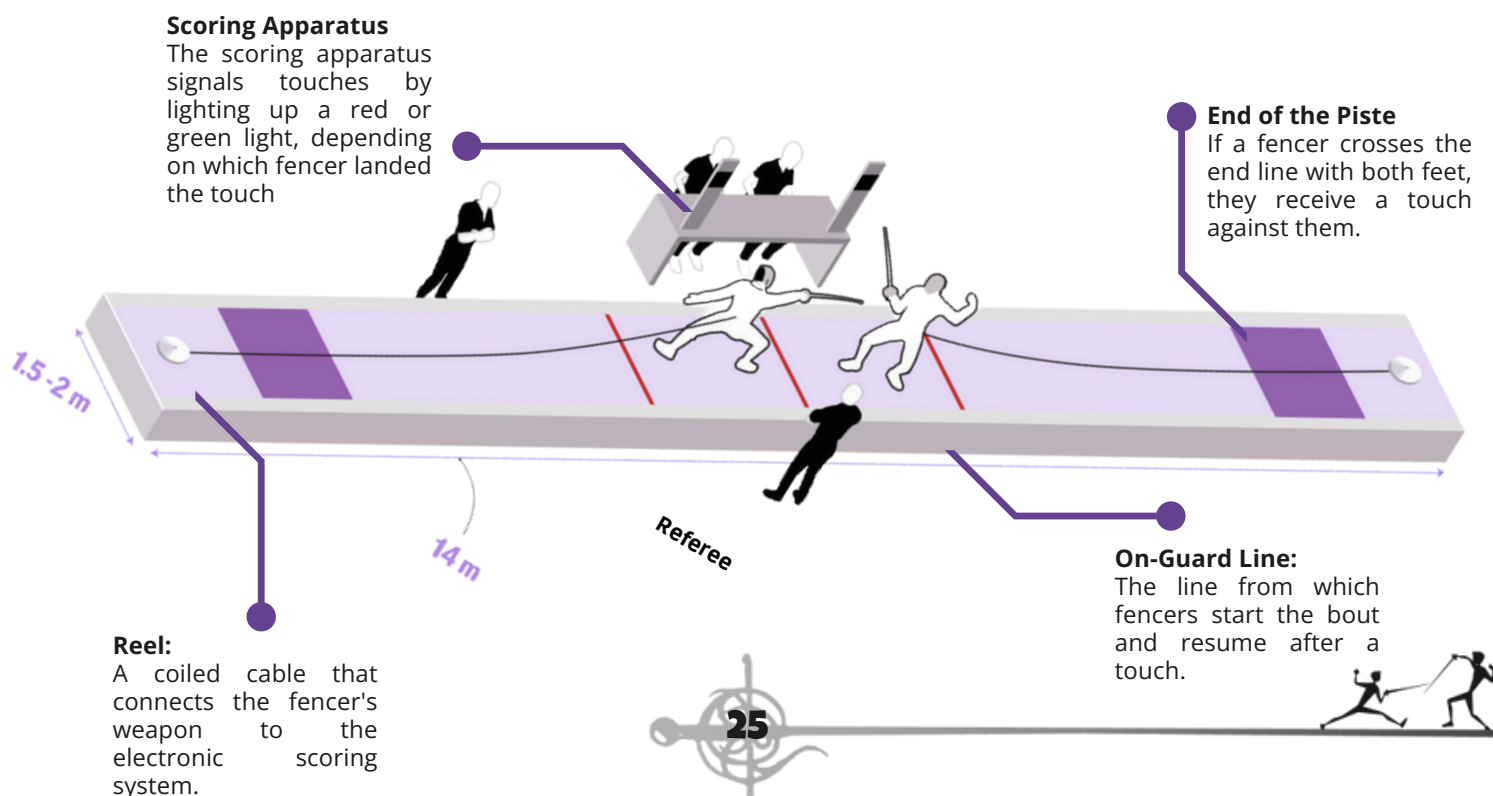
7.1 THE PISTE

It is made of metal or a conductive material that neutralizes ground hits. This means the piste is designed not to register touches when the weapon strikes the ground, thus avoiding false signals on the scoring apparatus.

The electronic scoring system, which records touches, is connected to the spool, also known as the reel, through extension cords. The spool, in turn, connects to the fencer via a device called the body cord. This body cord ensures a secure and stable connection, linking one end to the fencer and the other to the weapon. This system allows precise transmission of touch signals from the weapon to the scoring apparatus, ensuring that only valid touches are recorded.

The piste is a rectangular strip measuring 14 meters in length and 1.5 to 2 meters in width. Fencers begin behind the "on-guard line," which is located 2 meters from the center, at the start of the bout and after each valid touch.

If a fencer crosses the end line of the piste with both feet, they receive a touch against them. If a fencer steps off one of the sides of the piste, the referee stops the bout, and both fencers are repositioned in the center of the piste. However, the fencer who did not step off is advanced by one meter. If a fencer steps off with both feet over the lateral line, they cannot score a point; only the fencer who remains inside the piste may complete their action and score.





7.2 THE FUNCTIONS OF THE REFEREE

The referee plays a crucial role in fencing competitions, ensuring that bouts are conducted fairly, safely, and according to the rules. The following outlines their main functions:

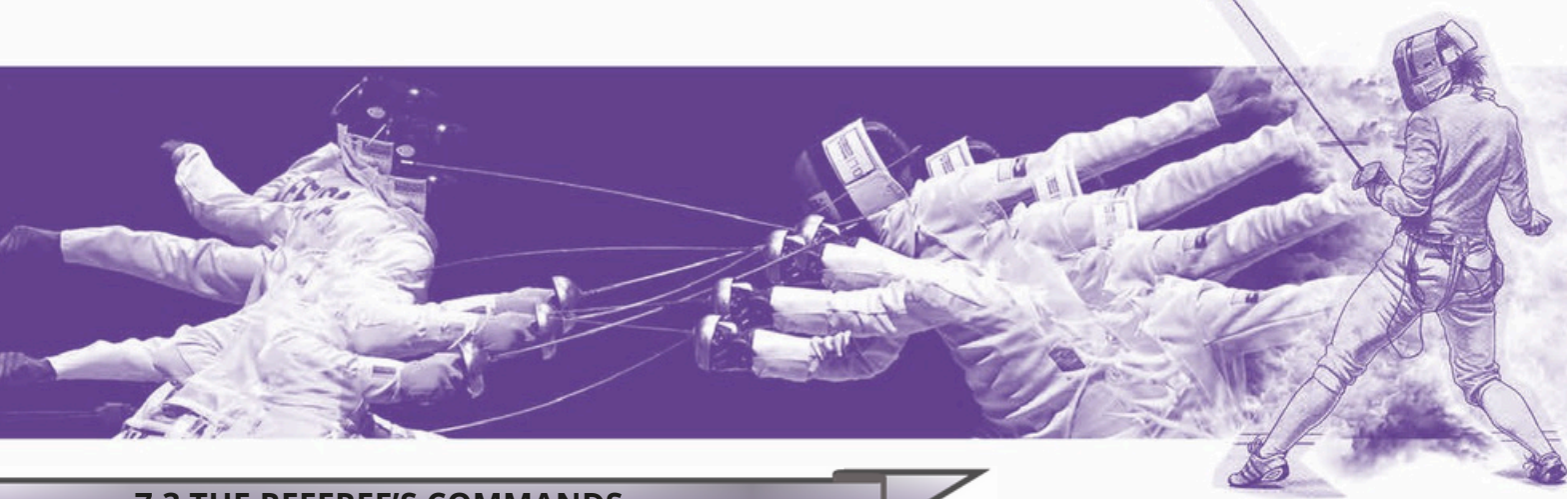
The referee is responsible for supervising the bout, including initiating and ending it with the commands: “En garde” (On guard), “Prêts” (Ready), and “Allez” (Go). They also manage the timing of the bout, including pauses and timeouts, to ensure that the official time limits are respected.

One of the referee’s primary duties is enforcing the rules. They interpret and apply the fencing regulations, ensuring all competitors comply. The referee also determines the validity of touches, based on signals from the electronic scoring system and their own observations. In case of disputes or disagreements during the bout, the referee has the authority to resolve them, consulting with line judges if necessary.

The referee manages penalties as well. They issue warnings and sanctions to fencers for rule violations, using colored cards (yellow, red, and black) to indicate penalties. In cases of serious infractions or unsportsmanlike behavior, the referee can expel a fencer from the bout or the competition.

Ensuring the safety of competitors is a top priority for the referee. Before the bout begins, they verify that all fencing equipment (weapons, masks, jackets, etc.) is in good condition and complies with safety standards. If a competitor is injured, the referee halts the bout and allows the fencer to receive medical attention.





7.3 THE REFEREE'S COMMANDS



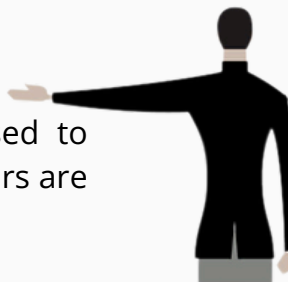
On Guard: Command given to instruct the fencers to assume the on-guard position.



Halt: Command used to stop the bout.



Ready: Command used to confirm that the fencers are prepared.



Touch: The fencer on the referee's left is deemed touched.



Allez (Go): Command used to start or resume the bout.



Point: One point awarded to the fencer on the referee's right.

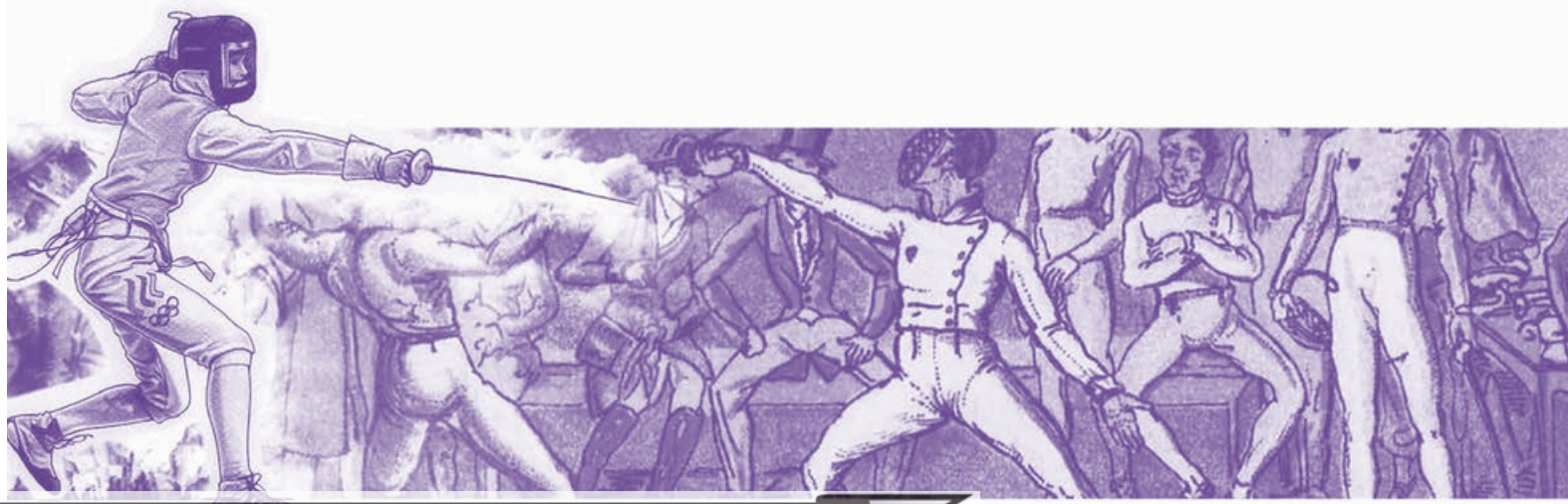


Touches: Both fencers have landed touches.



Yellow Card: Warning.
Red Card: One touch awarded to the opponent.
Black Card: Disqualification.





7.4 SANCTIONS

Yellow Card (Warning):

- Turning your back to the opponent.
- Touching the electrical equipment.
- Dragging the weapon on the piste.

Red Card (Point for the opponent):

- Using the unarmed arm.
- Dangerous or vengeful act
- Disrupting the order on the piste

Black Card (Disqualification):

- Refusing the salute.
- Intentional brutality.
- Violently throwing the equipment to the ground





DID YOU KNOW...?

DID YOU KNOW THAT PENALTY CARDS WERE INTRODUCED IN FENCING LONG BEFORE THEY WERE ADOPTED IN OTHER MORE POPULAR SPORTS?

WHAT ARE THE MAIN COMMANDS USED BY A REFEREE TO DIRECT A BOUT, AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

DO YOU IDENTIFY WHAT THEY ARE?



WHAT TYPES OF SANCTIONS CAN A REFEREE IMPOSE, AND WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF EACH?

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