

Your First Tournament – What do you do?

So, you want to go to your first tournament! Your coaches have said that this would be a good idea, now what do you do? Just remember that you will never know it all or be “ready” for your first tournament. You are there to learn what happens, how tournaments work, and to experience fencing in a different format and location as well as meet new people and have fun.

Step 1 - Registration

To register for a tournament in the province, go to the Sask Fencing web site, <http://www.saskfencing.com>, and then select Competition Info from the left sidebar – <http://www.saskfencing.com/competition-info> - and follow the competition entry instructions.

You can only register on-line for provincial tournaments.

You will need to know your CFF License number (for most clubs your registration includes a Canadian Fencing Federation {CFF} License). This number starts with the letter ‘C’ with 2 numbers followed by a hyphen and 4 more numbers (e.g. C13-1234). This license number is needed to register. You can look up your number on the CFF web site: <http://www.fencing.ca/CFF%20Licences>

Step 2- Equipment

You will need:

- Fencing jacket
- Sous-plastron (half-jacket, or under-jacket)
- Fencing pants (no sweat pants are allowed at tournaments)
- 2 body cords
- 2 weapons
- Glove
- Mask
- Water bottle
- Snacks

If you do not have your own equipment your club coach will bring equipment for you. Please ask before you leave your fencing class on the week of the tournament to find out if you should bring equipment with you!

Step 3 – At the tournament

The times listed on the registration form are for close of registration. You must present yourself to the person at the computer table no later than this time! It is a good idea to be at the venue no later than half an hour before Close of Registration!

Step 4 - What to expect when you arrive at the venue

Fencing tournaments look like organized chaos when you first arrive! On the floor there will be mats to fence on called pistes and a lot of people fencing different weapons.

You will notice the pistes are individually numbered - this is important because you will be called to a piste by its number when your pool is ready to begin fencing.

When you arrive, you must check-in at the computer desk (called the DT or Directoire) or you will be marked absent and not allowed to fence!

There will be referees who direct the bouts and control the order of bouts – who fences who when.

You will need to take your mask to the armourer to be checked. The armourer will be at a table with lots of tools!

Your coaches will be there as well; they can and will answer any questions you may have.

Step 5 – Tournament format

Tournaments in the province are run using a standard format that is used in most parts of the country and the world!

The event begins with one round of pools (a pool is a group of 4-7 fencers who fence each other in a complete round-robin). The tournament director will announce the pools so you will hear names being called - you need to listen for your name so you will know which numbered piste to go to. Remember to salute the referee at the beginning of every match and remember to salute and shake your opponent's hand at the end of every match - this is fencing etiquette!

Once the pool is complete, the referee asks the fencers to sign the pool sheet. This means that the fencers are responsible to make sure all recorded bouts, points, wins/losses have been recorded correctly. If they are not correct, the fencer must tell the referee and the referee will correct the error. It is up to the referee to make this correction on the pool sheet.

The pool sheet is then given to the person at the computer desk (the DT) to tabulate the results of the pool and other pools, if there were more than one pool in that event.

The next part of the tournament is what's called the DE – Direct Elimination - round. Everyone is guaranteed at least one DE bout. Once you lose a DE bout, you are finished in the event.

Pool bouts go to five (5) hits; DE bouts go to fifteen (15) hits (DE bouts in Under-13 events only go to 10 hits!).

Medals are presented at the end of the event. The medals are: 1-gold, 1-silver, 2-bronze. Pictures are encouraged to be taken at the end of the medal presentation, so bring your camera!

Step 6 – Learning!

Fencing is a sport that has been around for many years. Learning is done through experiencing different situations, peers and tournaments. Everyone learns something at a tournament. Whether it's your first or your twenty-first, there is always something to learn!

At your first tournament, your coaches do not expect you to win, they want you to experience fencing in a different way. Fencing a tournament is difficult, but every time you take part in a tournament you get better and get to know what happens next! Go ahead, take a chance, you will have a lot of fun!