

**Competition Operations Manual of the  
Southwest Intercollegiate Fencing Association**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS:**

Article I: Authority, Waiver & Amendment ... .. Page 1  
Article II: Purposes & Objectives .....Page 1  
Article III: Membership & Eligibility ... ..Page 2  
Article IV: Sanctioned Competitions ... ..Page 2  
Article V: Format of Competitions & Points ... ..Page 3  
Article VI: Minimum Requirements for Hosting Competitions ... ..Page 5  
Article VII: Fencer Equipment & Clothing ... .. Page 6  
Article VIII: Assumption of Risk..... Page 7  
Article IX: “Acts of God” ... .. Page 7  
Article X: Traveling Cup & Trophies. ... .. Page 8

**Article I: Authority, Waiver & Amendment**

This Competition Operations Manual, which establishes the rules for the conduct of competitions held under the authority of the Southwest Intercollegiate Fencing Association (hereinafter referred to as S.W.I.F.A.), is propounded under the authority of Article IX of the By-Laws of Southwest Intercollegiate Fencing Association.

All rules, regulations and matters of policy concerning the conduct of competitions as set forth in the Fencing Rules and Operations Manual of the United States Fencing Association (as amended) are hereby incorporated as part as the Competition Operations Manual, unless they are specifically contradicted by the By-Laws or the Competition Operations Manual of S.W.I.F.A.

The Executive Committee or the member teams, by a majority vote, shall have authority to waive any provision of the Fencing Rules and Operations Manual of the United States Fencing Association (U.S.F.A.) at the Annual or a Special Meeting, to become effective for the next competitive season or, if so designated, at the instant competition.

The By-Laws and the provisions of the Competition Operations Manual of S.W.I.F.A. may be amended at any Annual Meeting or in a Special Meeting of the member teams. An amendment receiving a majority of all votes cast by the member teams voting shall be deemed as adopted, and shall be implemented at the first competition of the next competitive season or, if so designated, at the instant competition.

## **Article II: Purposes & Objectives**

The provisions of the Competition Operations Manual shall be interpreted in a manner to best promote the following purposes and objectives.

The purposes and objectives of S.W.I.F.A. are as follows:

1. To promote, encourage, and develop the sport of collegiate fencing.
2. To provide local competitions for collegiate fencers.
3. To assist individual member fencers and member teams in reaching their full potential in the sport of fencing whether as competitors, coaches, armorers, or referees.

## **Article III: Membership & Eligibility**

**Section 1.** Any individual who is a member of a collegiate fencing club, as defined below in Section 2 of this Article, is eligible for membership in S.W.I.F.A.

**Section 2.** Members must be enrolled in an accredited public or private vocational school, two year or four year college or university, graduate school, or similar institute of higher education.

**Section 3.** Members must not be on academic or disciplinary probation.

**Section 4.** Each team must certify that all members of the team meet the above qualifications.

**Section 5.** Any team member or team found in violation of these qualifications will result in disqualification of the team for that competition and a forfeiture of any points earned by that team.

**Section 6.** Any individual not meeting the above qualifications may make a written petition to the Chair of S.W.I.F.A., which shall be presented to the Executive Committee for a waiver of the requirements. Petitions must be made not less than thirty (30) days prior to the date on which a sanctioned competition is to commence.

## **Article IV: Sanctioned Competitions**

### **Section 1. Number of Competitions:**

S.W.I.F.A. shall hold no less than four (4) nor more than six (6) S.W.I.F.A. sanctioned team competitions in a competitive season. Only a S.W.I.F.A. sanctioned team competition can earn points toward a championship.

### **Section 2. Host Team:**

Any member team of S.W.I.F.A. may elect to host a S.W.I.F.A. sanctioned team competition, but no member team shall be required to do so.

### **Section 3. Rotation of Competitions:**

Each member team shall be allowed to host a S.W.I.F.A. sanctioned competition. To ensure that all member teams are allowed to periodically host a sanctioned competition, the S.W.I.F.A. organization shall follow a rotation schedule set forth in the By-Laws to establish the order of the teams which may accept the option to host a competition or decline in favor of the next member team in the rotation. A member team may also elect to step back one position in the rotation and allow the next team in the rotation the option to host the immediate competition. This option may only be exercised one time by a team in any competitive season. The order of the teams in the

rotation shall continue from season to season, and shall begin with the next team which did not decline or accept to host a competition in the preceding competitive season. No member team shall be required to host a S.W.I.F.A. sanctioned competition in any competitive season in order to compete at other competitions or maintain standing as a member of the S.W.I.F.A. organization. Additional member teams which are allowed to join S.W.I.F.A. shall be added to the end of the rotation list unless a different order is approved by a simple majority of the member teams at the Annual Meeting at which the new team is approved for membership. The competition rotation list shall be published and maintained on the official S.W.I.F.A. website.

#### **Section 4. Format and Rules:**

All sanctioned competitions must follow the format and rules set forth in the S.W.I.F.A. Competition Operations Manual in order to be sanctioned by S.W.I.F.A.

#### **Section 5. Team Competition:**

All S.W.I.F.A. sanctioned competitions shall be team events. Any team hosting a sanctioned competition may hold individual events however, such events must be held on a separate day from the team events and such events will not be sanctioned by S.W.I.F.A. and are the sole responsibility of the host team.

#### **Section 6. Definitions:**

- a. Member Team: A member team is a team which has been voted into membership in S.W.I.F.A. and has paid its dues for the current competitive season.
- b. Team: A team shall consist of one or more squads in one or more weapons.
- c. Squad: A squad shall consist of three fencers and may also have a fourth alternate fencer.
- d. Under-strength Squad: An under-strength squad shall consist of a minimum of two fencers however, every third (the "C" fencer) bout is forfeited by a score of 5-0.
- e. Mixed (Co-ed): A mixed (or co-ed) competition is a competition in which members of both sexes may compete. Teams shall be co-educational, however not every squad on a team must have both male and female fencers
- f. Alternate Fencer: The fourth member of a squad who is not designated as the "A", "B", or "C" fencer. The Alternate Fencer may be substituted at any time for a designated fencer who is injured. The Alternate Fencer may be substituted for a designated fencer by the Squad Captain if is announced to the referee one full bout in advance. The Alternate Fencer must remain in the rotation for the duration of the encounter.
- g. Squad Captain: The fencer who is the representative of the squad and who must designate the fencing order of the fencers, make substitutions, and sign the score sheet at the end of each encounter. The Squad Captain is the only member of a squad allowed to address the referee other than the fencer currently on strip.
- h. Bout Committee: The Bout Committee shall be designated by the host team prior to the beginning of a competition. The names of the members shall be conspicuously posted at the competition. The Bout Committee shall consist of an odd number of at least three people. In the event of a conflict of interest, the remaining members of the Bout Committee shall select one or more alternates to determine any disputes or application of the rules. The Bout Committee, under

the direction of its chair, has the ultimate authority for conducting a competition. It is in charge of all personnel, competitors, officials and other persons present, including spectators.

I. Local Organizing Committee: See Article VI, Section 1.

j. Crisis Management Group: Shall consist of the members of the Bout Committee and one member representing each team at a competition to take appropriate action in the event of an emergency, including, but not limited to, a loss of power, fire, earthquake, flood, or any other natural disaster, including times when a “state of emergency” has been declared, or other “Acts of God”.

## **Article V: Format of Competitions & Points**

### **Section 1.**

Each S.W.I.F.A. sanctioned competition shall consist of the following three required events; Mixed Team Epee, Mixed Team Foil, and Mixed Team Sabre. Each of the three required events shall be fenced electrically.

### **Section 2.**

Each S.W.I.F.A. sanctioned competition shall consist of one initial round of a pool or pools in each event to determine the seeding of the squads in the Direct Elimination round. Upon registration of a squad for the initial pool rounds, each Squad Captain must designate their “A”, “B”, “C”, and (if any) designated alternate fencers. This designation is not required to be followed for squads advancing to the direct elimination rounds.

### **Section 3.**

The Direct Elimination round shall be held in each event following the initial round of pools. The cut-off for advancement to the direct elimination rounds shall be twelve (12) squads in each event. All squads competing in the initial rounds shall be awarded points for their placement and squads advancing to the direct elimination rounds will have points awarded based upon the total number of squads originally registering to compete (as per Section 5 below). Direct Elimination encounters will be fenced to the first five victories out of nine bouts.

### **Section 4.**

There shall be a fence-off in each event to determine the third and fourth place squads. Fence-offs will be to the first five victories out of nine bouts.

### **Section 5.**

Each squad in an event shall be awarded points based upon the number of squads competing in that event to recognize the strength and depth of the field competing in that event.

If ten squads compete in an event, the winning squad is awarded ten (10) points, the second place squad is awarded nine (9) points, the other squads in that event are awarded one fewer point in descending order according to their placement down to the last place squad, which is awarded one (1) point. More than one squad from the same team may place and be awarded points in each event.

Ten squads competing in an event would result in a table with the following points being awarded:

First place - ten (10) points  
Second place - nine (9) points  
Third place - eight (8) points  
Fourth place - seven (7) points  
Fifth place - six (6) points  
Sixth place - five (5) points  
Seventh place - four (4) points  
Eighth place - three (3) points  
Ninth place - two (2) points  
Tenth place - one (1) point.

## **Section 6.**

### **Under-strength Squad Rule**

#### **a. Procedure in Pools:**

1. When two under-strength (two-fencer) squads fence each other in a pool, the bout between the nonexistent "C" fencers will be considered to have a final score of V0-D0. The victor will be the nonexistent "C" fencer of the squad which scores more touches than the other squad in the "A" and "B" bouts combined. In the case that there are equal touches scored in the "A" and "B" bouts combined, the winner will be determined by lot.

#### **b. Procedure in Direct Eliminations:**

When two under-strength (two-fencer) squads fence each other in a DE match, the bout between the nonexistent "C" fencers does not have to be fenced unless the number of victories is tied four to four after eight out of nine possible bouts. If the ninth bout has to be fenced, the bout between the nonexistent "C" fencers will be considered to have a final score of V0-D0. The victor will be the nonexistent "C" fencer of the squad which scores more touches than the other squad in the first eight bouts combined. In the event that there are an equal number of touches scored the first eight bouts, the winner of the ninth bout will be determined by lot.

## **Section 7.**

The team winning the most cumulative points in any competition shall be the winner of that competition. Ties for points won are allowed at all but the final competition of the competitive season. Overall points in each competition carry forward to the conclusion of the final competition of the competitive season to determine the winner of that competitive season. In the event of a tie in points for the top teams at the conclusion of the final completion of the competitive season, the teams who have tied for points will fence off in three bouts of five points each in the three required events to determine the winner.

## **Section 8.**

### **Coaching time out Rule**

Each squad shall be allowed one (1) time out period of one minute duration in the Direct elimination round in each encounter. This time out may only be called by the team coach or

squad captain.

## **ARTICLE VI: Minimum Requirements for Hosting Competitions**

### **Section 1. Organization:**

The organization of a S.W.I.F.A. competition is the responsibility of an organizing committee appointed or approved by the Host Team. The organizing committee provides for the physical facilities, necessary equipment, supplies, personnel, and other things as may be necessary to ensure the smooth running of the tournament. This organizing committee is referred to as the Local Organizing Committee (LOC).

### **Section 2. Venue & Facilities:**

The Host Team shall ensure the availability of a safe and secure venue with adequate lighting, air conditioning and heat, and electrical power to hold a competition. The Host Team shall be responsible for obtaining reservations, permission, security and staff, as may be required to ensure the use of the venue for a sufficient period of time to hold a competition. The venue must, at minimum, provide seating, drinking water, restrooms, and a first aid kit for use by the individuals participating, coaches, trainers, and spectators. Showers and locker rooms, although desirable, are not required.

### **Section 3. Staff/Personnel:**

The Host Team shall ensure there is adequate staff to set up, take down, and run a competition. An armorer to perform equipment checks, although desirable, is not required. However, at a minimum, a member of the Host Team's staff must be available to perform a punch test of all masks and apply a mark or stamp to designate that it has passed the check.

### **Section 4. Referees:**

The Host Team shall ensure that there are a minimum of two qualified referees for each required event. Additional referees are desirable, but are not required. Qualified referees are not required to be rated by the U.S.F.A., but must have the experience and ability to accurately and fairly officiate and apply the rules. Referees must not have a conflict of interest (e.g.: Be a coach, team member, Alumni, or spouse, sibling, or parent of a fencer, etc.) unless that conflict is made known and waived by all fencers who may be affected in that bout or encounter. **The majority of referees must be free of a conflict of interest, which may not be waived.**

### **Section 5. Equipment:**

The Host Team shall ensure that, at minimum, there are six complete working electric strips and sufficient equipment to run the competition. The Host Team shall provide a computer, printer, and necessary software, watches, clipboards, weights and gages, pencils, pens and paper, tape, forms, a mask punch, and a First Aid kit. The Host Team shall provide additional back-up equipment as necessary to properly run a competition. **The new U.S.F.A. saber timing is mandatory in 2016-2017 season and forward.**

## **Section 6. Posting on FRED, Texas Fencing Forum & SWIFA website:**

The Host Team shall post the competition on the Fencing Results and Events Database (FRED), in the S.W.I.F.A., N.C.A.A. & U.S.A.C.F.A. section of the Texas Fencing Forum, and in the SWIFA website preregistration function (once established), within thirty (30) days of electing to host a S.W.I.F.A. competition. At minimum, the posting shall conspicuously designate it as a S.W.I.F.A. competition, include the date, time of the close of registration for each required event, the location of the venue (and/or a map), the availability of parking (and fee to park, if any), and a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Any additional information which may be helpful, such as the availability of refreshments, nearby lodging, and the presence of a vendor or armorer, is desirable. The Host Team shall notify the Chair of S.W.I.F.A. when a posting is made on FRED, the Texas Fencing Forum, and in the SWIFA website preregistration function (once established).

## **ARTICLE VII: Fencer Equipment & Clothing:**

### **Section 1: Uniform:**

Fencers must wear the required clothing: A full regulation fencing jacket (half-jackets are not acceptable), underarm protector (plastron), knee socks completely covering the leg (for those wearing knickers) and a fencing glove that covers half the forearm. Women must wear breast protectors. U.S.F.A. approved kickers or fencing pants are required for the 2016-2017 season and forward. Warm up pants, street pants, yoga pants, and the like are not allowed.

In Epee and Foil, a full jacket is required (i.e., a jacket with croissard/groin strap). S.W.I.F.A. allows uniforms in solid white or of a single pastel color and/or a design or slogan on the back of the jacket or on the rear (unarmed) arm or leg. Such designs or slogans should be in good taste and not be obscene or derogatory.

### **Section 2: Imprint of Name Not Required:**

S.W.I.F.A. recognizes that collegiate fencers may not own their own equipment and may share club or team equipment so S.W.I.F.A. does not require that a fencer's last name be printed on the back of the jacket or on the lame or on the front or side of the thigh of the rear leg. Any name, design, or slogan must not alter the conductivity of a metallic vest or jacket.

### **Section 3: Sabre Gloves:**

In Sabre, the glove, whether a regulation Sabre glove or a glove used with a regulation manchette, must overlap the metallic jacket that, itself, must overlap the cloth jacket. The U.S.F.A. requirement of a 900 newton glove is not required.

### **Section 4: Weapons, Blades, Body & Mask Cords:**

All weapons, blades, body and mask cords must comply with current U.S.F.A. standards.

### **Section 5: Masks:**

All masks must comply with current U.S.F.A. standards. **A conductive bib is not required in foil.**

### **Section 6: Hair:**

Long hair and pony tails are allowed as long as they do not obscure valid target area or may, in the referee's discretion, potentially catch or trap an opponent's blade.

### **Article VIII: Assumption of Risk:**

Every fencer engaging in competition, and every person attending a competition in any capacity whatsoever, does so at his or her own risk and peril and the host team, the S.W.I.F.A. organization, or the organization furnishing the place for the competition, or any officer, official, agent, or employee of any of the aforementioned organizations, shall not be liable in any manner for any damage, injury, or loss suffered by any person, whether as a competitor, official, coach, attendant, or spectator at a competition regardless of whether or not there has been compliance with the rules and regulations prescribed herein and whether or not any official has waived or failed to enforce strict compliance therewith.

### **Article IX: "Acts of God":**

The Bout Committee has no power to amend the rules of fencing. In emergency cases including, but not limited to, a loss of power, fire, earthquake, flood, or any other natural disaster, including times when a "state of emergency" has been declared, it may delay or change the manner in which the competition will be conducted after consultation with the Crisis Management Group. In all such cases, a written report from the Crisis Management Group of the action taken must be submitted to the Executive Committee of S.W.I.F.A. immediately following the competition.

### **Article X: Traveling Cup & Trophies:**

**Section 1:** S.W.I.F.A. shall maintain a Traveling Cup which shall have an engraved plaque attached naming the Team who wins the first place cumulative points for each competitive season. The Traveling Cup is the property of S.W.I.F.A., but shall remain in the possession of the first place team until another team wins the first place cumulative points for the next competitive season.

**Section 2:** S.W.I.F.A. shall purchase three trophies for presentation to the team having the highest cumulative score in each weapon at the end of the competitive season, which shall become the property of the winning team.

Competition Operations Manual of the Southwest Intercollegiate Fencing Association, as amended **September, 2016.**