

Helsinki Bolognese open 2017

Cutting Rules

These rules are subject to change on any notice.

Equipment

Participants will be provided a historically accurate sharp sidesword.

Safety

Observe the following safety guidelines at all times. A violation of these guidelines may result in a warning or immediate dismissal from the tournament at the sole discretion of the tournament staff (* denotes an offense that warrants dismissal):

1. Always follow the instructions of the tournament staff without hesitation or argument.
2. *Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
3. Do not swing your sword if there are people near you and especially behind you.
4. *Do not cut over your leading leg (if your left leg is forward, do not cut down from right to left. This does not apply to cuts from below or horizontal cuts).
5. Make sure your hands and hilt are dry before cutting.
6. Do not handle tatami mats during the tournament. Competition staff will set up your mats and remove your debris.
7. The tournament staff will indicate when you are ready to cut. Do not cut before then.
8. *Always approach the target from the specified direction.
9. *Always remember that you are holding a deadly weapon that can easily maim or kill with the slightest misstep.
10. When cutting, keep your offhand at your back or on your hip.

Tournament Staff

The following is a list of the tournament staff and their roles:

Tournament Manager: The Tournament Manager is responsible for the running of the tournament and is the primary/head judge. The Tournament Manager's decision in all matters related to the tournament is final.

Technical Judges: The Technical Judges (one of which is the Tournament Manager) are responsible for observing the cutting actions of the participant and assigning penalties as necessary.

Auxiliary Judges: These judges will be responsible for time keeping, observing form, and/or functions that support the technical judges.

Tournament format

The tournament will be multiple rounds, with people being eliminated each round until 3 or 4 finalists are left.

Starting Position

Each round will have a marked standing position. When your name is called, go to the designated starting position with your sword. The judges will ask you if you are ready. If you answer in the affirmative, the judges will instruct you to begin. When you've finished your pattern, say, "Done" and leave the tournament floor. Whenever you are walking to or from the starting position with your sword, carry it in a safe manner with the sword pointing in a safe direction (straight up or straight down).

Scoring

Scoring will be percentile based, except in the final round. A perfect score will be 100% (higher is possible with bonus cuts), and deviation from perfection will result in penalties. Scoring will be based on three categories, weighted unevenly.

The three categories are Technical, Speed and Form. The Technical category scoring is based on a perfect score of 100% with points deducted for mistakes or failures. Both the Speed and Form categories may result in additional deductions. The Technical category represents the most important aspect of scoring, while the Speed and Form categories are intended as tie breakers.

Scoring will be cumulative (your score will be an average of all of your scores from every round you have completed) until the final round, at which point the scores will be reset and every participant will start on equal footing.

Technical

Cutting standards are presented later in this rule set. Deviation from these standards will result in subtraction of percentage points. The reduction will be based on the total number of penalties, as well as the seriousness of the penalties. Some penalties (e.g. striking the cutting stand) may result in immediate elimination. The cutting penalties listed are not the only penalties you can receive, though all penalties will be matched/fit to one of those listed and scored accordingly.

A perfect cut is a cut with straight trajectory that severs the target cleanly at the specified angle and causes the severed piece to fall gently away from the remaining target (not go flying). Any and all deviations from this will be penalized, though certain cuts (e.g. tondo) will not incur penalties for sending the severed piece flying. Additionally, not all scoring criteria apply to all cuts. If you make multiple mistakes during a single cut (e.g. scalloped and big mountain) you will be penalized only for the mistake that incurs the highest penalty loss (in the preceding example, you would be penalized for a big mountain only).

The following mistakes will incur a 2% penalty:

- Piece goes flying

- Angle off a little
- Rough/Frayed Cut

The following mistakes will incur a 4% penalty:

- Sprayed tatami debris
- Angle off a lot
- Small mountain

The following mistakes will incur an 8% penalty:

- Hit floor lightly
- Mat falls off of stand
- Piece hanging
- Big mountain
- Shallow cut
- Scalloped/Scooped

The following mistakes will incur a 12% penalty:

- Miss mat
- Hit floor hard*
- Cut peg
- Sword stuck/no cut
- Wrong cut (e.g. pattern calls for Mandritto Tondo but participant executes Mandritto sgualembrato)
- Hit stand*
- Stand falls

* Depending on the severity of these mistakes, you may be eliminated from the tournament.

Speed

Scoring in this category depends on the actual performance of the participants during each round. Each participant will be timed and, at the conclusion of the round, the times will be scored in tiers. The fastest participants will be ranked Tier 1 and will not be penalized. The next fastest participants will be ranked Tier 2 and will receive a 1% penalty. The third ranked participants, Tier 3, will receive a 2% penalty. The slowest participants, Tier 4, will receive a 3% penalty. The speed category is intended to be a tie breaker, as the focus of the tournament is to display technical ability. That said, among participants with closely matched skills, a 2% difference can be significant.

Form

Your form is how closely your cutting adheres to martial principles. This category is both subjective and objective, in that the determination is based entirely on the opinion of the judges, but there are concrete standards that the judges use.

Behaviors that will result in penalties are:

Over-swinging: making big swings with the sword point behind you and unnecessarily

exposing yourself to danger (if the mat were a real opponent)

Cocking back/winding up: any preparatory action such as dipping the point back from a high guard (cocking back).

Bad footwork: not stepping with cuts when stepping is called for, poor balance, slipping, etc.

Each observed form violation will cost the participant a 1% penalty.

NOTE: there will be no remounting or straightening of mats under any circumstances. Participants may check their mats prior to commencing their rounds and request a mat be re-spiked or replaced (tournament staff may or may not honor this request at their discretion).

Miscellaneous Penalties

Participants are not permitted to measure their distance. For example, you may not approach the target, place your sword on or near the target to make sure your distance is correct, then cut. Doing so may result in a significant penalty, a score of 0 for that round, or immediate dismissal from the tournament, at the Tournament Manager's discretion.

Standards

Any cuts that deviate from these standards will incur penalties.

1. All diagonal cuts from above and below should be 45 degrees.
2. Horizontal cuts should be 90 degrees.
3. Cuts must not hit the area of a previous cut. This is called a "mountain." A mountain is bad because hitting your old cut means you have to cut through a lot less mat, which makes the cut significantly easier. Since this is not desirable (and against the rules), hitting your old cut means you missed your intended target. This includes striking the area of a previously failed cut.
4. Cuts should be straight and not scooped or scalloped.
5. Cuts should not spray tatami debris.
6. Leading leg: DO NOT cut diagonal descending cuts over your leading leg (e.g. if your right leg is forward, do not cut a descending diagonal cut from above from left to right). If the judges notice that you cut over your leading leg, you be warned. This is a safety issue, and repeated offences will lead to disqualification.
7. Extreme Penalties: the following will either incur massive penalties or disqualify the participant, at the discretion of the judges.
 - Striking the floor HARD
 - Striking the stand HARD
 - Tripping and falling over a mat fragment or other debris is an instant disqualification.
 - Any injury to yourself or others will result in immediate disqualification.