

EQUIPMENT SCREENING

*See SMA Weapons Glossary for legal saber types.

All competition weaponry and safety equipment (aka “gear”) is subject to Gear Check-In immediately upon arrival/registration, each day of competition. Approved SMA Officials will tag legal gear at the Check-In station, which will remain active periodically throughout the competition. All gear is also subject to cursory review & approval by the active SMA Head Judge/Referee prior to each match. Any SMA HJ/R may restrict a competitor’s gear from competition at any point for failure to meet criteria, intentional or otherwise, with the approval of at least one other SMA HJ/R. No fighter is permitted to legalize or restrict a competition saber for any reason or anyone. Intentional failure to meet any safety requirements may be grounds for immediate dismissal from competition at the discretion of a SMA HJ/R, with the approval of at least one other SMA HJ/R. We really do want this to be fun and exciting from a martial standpoint, so please pay attention to the gear requirements and your gear will likely meet approval. We welcome all inquiries regarding competition-legal sabers and protection, so if you’re not sure whether your gear meets requirements, please just ask! Bring alternatives (or spares) for anything you are unsure of.

MATCH REGULATION

All point-sparring matches (with the exception of the Semifinals and Finals) will have a score limit of 5 to win, and a time limit of 3 minutes. If a score of 5 has not been achieved by either combatant by the end of 3 minutes, the combatant with the higher score wins. In the event of a tie, there will be a 1-minute Sudden Death Overtime tiebreaker. If a winner is not decided during the first overtime, a 10-second corner break will follow, then a 30-second overtime. If no winner is decided after two overtime tiebreakers, the match will be declared a Draw and both competitors will proceed to the next round but must duel each other again in that round. All Semifinal point-sparring matches will have a score limit of 7, with a 3-minute time limit. Overtime rounds will follow the same format as previous matches. However, no Draws are permitted and tied matches will alternate between 10-second corner breaks and 30-second overtime rounds until a winner is decided.

All Final point-sparring matches will have a score limit of 10, with a time limit of 5 minutes. Overtime rounds will follow the same format as Semifinal matches.

Point-Sparring will be presided over by 1 SMA HJ/R and 2 SJs.

Continuous sparring matches are scored using The 10-Point Must System (detailed in the “In-League Sparring Rules” on Page 5). Elimination matches are 3 Rounds at 1 minute each.

Final matches are 5 rounds at 1 minute each. Breaks between rounds are 30 seconds each.

Continuous sparring will be presided over by 1 SMA HJ/R and 3 SMA SJs. The HJ/R will not score the match, but will mediate all in-ring activity. He/she is responsible for enforcement of all rules and can mandate that SJs deduct points, award points to opponents, or ignore points for foul-play. The SJs are responsible for scoring the match *impartially, and to the best of their ability/knowledge of martial arts*. SJs must obey the commands of the HJ/R whenever applicable to scoring or regulation, but will otherwise score the match according to their own volition.

The clock will run during the entire match, kata, cut/deflection sequence, or self-defense routine, including breaks. Only the Timekeeper or SMA HJ/R can call a stoppage of time, for reasons

including but not limited to: end of a round/match, safety or equipment concerns, injury, unsportsmanlike conduct, point-call review.

Every match, without exception, must also be attended by an official Scorekeeper (SK) and Timekeeper (TK). The roles of SK and TK are compoundable and interchangeable, but not during a match. In the event of shorthanded staffing, no competitor will be permitted to officiate a division in which they are entered, but may be asked in a last resort to act as SJ for other divisions that they are not eligible to compete in. If for any reason the required number of SJs are not available, the match in question *may be presided over by a sole HJ/R*. In these circumstances, the HJ/R will have the right to make final determinations on a call-by-call basis. *This is not a preferred circumstance and will be avoided at all costs.*

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT (Juyo Division & all LED sparring)

Head: 350n fencing mask or higher

Saber: Blades may only be 1" or 7/8" heavy-grades, with blunt/rounded tips only. Hilts must be made of aluminum or carbon fiber and have *no tactile claws, spikes, teeth, or sharpening*. All other saber requirements and restrictions are outlined in the Official SMA Weapons Glossary and competition weaponry must adhere to that glossary.

Hands: Lacrosse, hockey, or weapon-martial-arts grade gloves

Feet: Closed-toe athletic shoes or martial arts shoes (no bare feet, flip-flops, crocs, sandals, etc.) when outdoors. Indoor footwear regulations will depend on the hosting facility's rules and must be clarified by an HJ/R or equipment Official (in writing or verbally) prior to allowing participants onto the competition floor. A safe assumption is that only bare feet or martial arts/wrestling shoes will be approved for use on mats and similar surfaces.

Torso: Hard/dense foam, plastic, or coated-metal chest protection (rated for high-impact sports such as hockey or dedicated martial arts gear) that covers the solar plexus, sternum, front and sides of the ribs, and both clavicles. The addition of back protection and hip protection is highly recommended, but not required.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT (ActionFlex foam sparring)

Head: 350n fencing mask (or higher) OR any martial arts foam sparring helmet with polycarbonate face shield or cage (eyes will be taped with clear tape to prevent thrusts from penetrating)

Saber: SMA-provisioned ActionFlex weaponry only

Torso: any martial arts chest protection that covers the solar plexus, sternum, front and sides of the ribs, and both clavicles, or contact-sports chest protection of similar coverage and function

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT (all sparring)

Head: Rubber mouthguard, back-of-head protection

Neck: Dense/hard foam, plastic, or coated-metal gorget, or goalie-style neck protection (e.g. heavy cloth/leather/polycarbonate chin hangers, or comparable) *Mixed Sabers sparring will REQUIRE dedicated neck protection

Torso: contact-sports protective bra (females), complete-coverage (base of neck to top of hips/pelvis) protection in the materials listed above

Arms: Dense/hard foam, plastic, or coated-metal elbow and shoulder protection

Legs: Dense/hard foam, plastic, or coated-metal knee, thigh, and shin protection

Groin: Athletic support cup, or harness-style integrated groin & hip protection for contact sports (i.e. codpiece)

TARGET AREAS

Front of body, *excluding* throat, groin, and feet

Rear of body, *excluding* back of head/neck, throat, and direct hits to the spine or kidneys

Entire saber hilt (attacks that land on the upper portion of the emitter will be counted, but incidental or “weak” hits to this area may be discounted at the Judges’ discretion, on a call-by-call basis). *When legal in competition, tsuba & other guards, emitter portions between crossguards, extensions, grips, or any alterations to standard hilt configurations *are* legal target areas.

NON-COMBATIVE/INCIDENTAL SCORING

Any fighter who is called by the Judges for contacting their own body with any “illuminated” part of a saber (blade, quillion, etc. *or* any foam portion of an ActionFlex weapon) after the start of a match will cause their opponent to be awarded 1 point. HJ/Rs may issue 1 Official Warning for non-egregious offenses to this rule, but subsequent infractions must incur deductions.

Any fighter who steps out of the ring during active combat (one whole foot out of the ring, provided there is no cage or ropes) will be warned upon the first infraction. Each subsequent infraction will cause their opponent to be awarded a point (or in continuous sparring, cause the infracting fighter to lose one point within the 10-Point Must total for that round).

LED weaponry *must be visibly and clearly illuminated* throughout the duration of each match. Dimly lit or unlit LED sabers are prohibited from competition.

Any fighter who intentionally deactivates an illuminated saber during combat action (not including breaks and corner time) will receive one warning. Subsequent intentional deactivations will cause their opponent to be awarded 1 point, and 3 or more intentional deactivations will disqualify the infringing fighter from a match and their opponent will win the match by default.

Accidental deactivations of an illuminated saber will be tolerated up to 3 times during combat action. If a weapon is deactivating beyond the user’s control (i.e. faulty wiring or other damage), or the saber is malfunctioning beyond its capacity to stay illuminated, Official Time will pause and the user will have 90 seconds to provision a functional *and SMA-approved* substitute weapon. If they fail to produce an approved LED weapon after 90 seconds they will forfeit the match. Any fighter who is disqualified from a single match due to malfunctioning equipment will be given the opportunity to submit a new saber for their next match, but their consequential forfeit loss will stand in the rankings.

Any fighter who targets an opponent’s saber with the perceived intention of damaging their equipment/property beyond the reasonable power limits of martial sport, will receive one

warning. Subsequent infractions will cause their opponent to be awarded 1 point, and 2 or more will disqualify the infringing fighter from a match and their opponent will win the match by default. Additionally, fighters who are unable to replace a saber that has been purposefully damaged by infringing opponents will be permitted to compete with that saber (as long as it is still safe to wield) for the remainder of the sparring divisions with approval by at least two SMA HJ/R's. They will be permitted to use it in other divisions with the same approval *only if* a suitable replacement is unable to be obtained before their next match..

Any behavior that could be construed as intentionally harmful or disrespectful to other participants will be grounds for immediate dismissal from competition, with approval by at least 2 SMA HJ/R's. Examples include, but are not limited to: throwing weapons or equipment, arguing with the Judges or other SMA Officials, striking an opponent after a break has been called or in frustration, trash-talking other participants or saber clubs, damage to property outside of normal martial activity, or uncontrolled striking and similar unsportsmanlike conduct.

RULES (Point-Sparring)

Standard Saber

1. No competitor may argue with an official for any point-call, break, or warning during tournament regulation.
2. Only the foam ActionFlex weaponry provided by SMA will be allowed.
3. Non-saber striking (i.e. kicks, takedowns, joint-locking, elbows, etc.) will not be permitted in sparring divisions, except for minimal offhand-control (hand-to-hilt checking, no grabs). Strikes with the pommel of the saber will not be permitted.
4. The winner will be the combatant who reaches the score limit before time runs out, or the combatant who has the highest score when time runs out. Please read the "Match Regulation" section above for tiebreaker rules and score/time limitations, and conditions for time stoppage.
5. Fighters may allow 1 noncombatant instructor, or teammate, to be their Corner Coach (CC) if desired. CC's will not be permitted to enter the Dueling Rings at any point during regulation combat, unless their fighter is injured and the clock has been stopped. Any CC who infracts this rule will receive 1 warning, and their fighter will be docked 1 point for each subsequent infraction. After 2 deductions, their fighter will forfeit the match for unsportsmanlike conduct.
6. Only controlled strikes, or strikes that are perceived by the majority of spectators to be within reasonable power levels and exhibit quality sportsmanship and technique, to legal target areas will be counted as points.

IN-LEAGUE aka "JUYO" RULES (Ages 16-Senior Continuous Sparring)

Standard Saber

*All rules of personal conduct and gear regulations from Point-Sparring as listed above will apply to Continuous Sparring, with the following exceptions or alterations:

1. The winner will be the combatant who earns the higher score when time on the final round of each match runs out. Rounds are 60 seconds each with a 30-second corner break in between. Elimination matches will be 3 rounds with breaks after rounds 1 and

- 2, while Championship/Trophy matches will be 5 rounds with breaks after rounds 1, 2, 3, and 4.
2. The “10-Point Must” scoring system in the Juyo Division is largely subjective, and will require 3 experienced Side Judges, who will score each fighter by overall performance in each round. The Head Judge/Referee does not score the match but regulates activity within the ring and makes all official determinations or declarations. The superior performer (based on criteria listed in No. 6 below) in each round will earn a score of 10 for that round, while the fighter who the judges believe to have been bested will earn a score of 9 for a strong performance, or 8 for a clearly inferior performance, at the judges’ personal discretion. All 3 Side Judges’ scores will be turned in and announced after the match is over, and whichever duelist wins at least two Judges’ scorecards will be declared the victor. In a three-round fight, the maximum attainable score on a single Judge’s scorecard is 30. In a five-round fight, that maximum attainable score is 50 (a one-sided match should generally score 30-27 or 50-45 for the victor on at least two scorecards).
 3. If the fight has been completed but a Draw results, the Head Judge/Referee will conduct a sudden-death tiebreaking round. The first fighter to score a hit to a legal target will cause *any Side Judge* and subsequently the HJ/R to call a “Break”, and that fighter will be declared the Victor.
 4. Fighters may allow 1 noncombatant instructor, or teammate, to be their Corner Coach (CC) if desired. CC’s must stay on the immediate outside of their fighter’s designated corner, except during breaks between rounds when they may enter the ring immediately within their fighter’s corner to fulfill coaching duties (must not exceed the 30sec time limit before returning to the outside of the ring). CCs will not be permitted to enter the Dueling Rings at any point during regulation combat rounds, unless their fighter is injured and the clock has been stopped. Any CC who infracts this rule will receive 1 warning, and their fighter will be docked 1 point for each subsequent infraction. After 2 deductions, their fighter will forfeit the match for unsportsmanlike conduct by their CC.
 5. Only controlled strikes, or strikes that are perceived by the majority of spectators to be within reasonable power levels and exhibit quality sportsmanship and technique, to legal target areas will be counted as points.
 6. Though clickers or counters may be used to tally hits in realtime, Judges will be expected to take overall “damage” attrition, values of targets hit, ring control aka “generalship”, technique, sportsmanship, competitiveness, warrior spirit (aka “heart”), defensive responsibility, and overall effort, into account while weighing their scores. If a fighter earns any deductions during a round, they are ineligible to win that round; even if they have a superior performance, the highest score they can earn for that round is a tie of 9-9, and this is taken into account as -1 point for the infracting fighter *after each judge has already scored the round* (meant to ensure that the “true victor” of each round, according to the above criteria and regardless of deductions, is taken into account before actually removing points. In some cases, this may be the difference between a round scored 9-9 as a draw, or perhaps 10-8, which could swing the outcome either way).