



Historical Medieval Battle  
International Association



**BATTLE OF THE NATIONS<sup>®</sup>**



## **HMB Rules**

for TOURNAMENT CATEGORIES

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## GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 1.1. The tournament category is represented by the fights, where the number of stout (clear) blows delivered with the combat part of the weapons in the accepted area of an opponent is taken into account.
- Important!** *The accepted area excludes open face areas, groin, feet, back part of the neck, and back of knees.*
- 1.2. There are no weight categories in the tournament categories.
- 1.3. The panel of marshals includes the knight marshal (chief referee), field marshals (referees), and a secretary.
- Important!** *In case of any disagreement the knight marshal has the final decision.*
- 1.4. The tournament category fights are held on hard lists, from 15 to 40m of length, from 7 to 20m wide. The height of the side boundaries is from 0.9 to 1.2m.
- 1.5. The fight consists of 3 rounds; different weapons are used for each of them:
- **the 1st round** – “Longsword”. It lasts for 1.5min. The winner is the one who has delivered more stout blows to the opponent during the round.
  - **the 2nd round** – “Sword-Buckler”. It consists of 3 bouts and each bout ends when three stout blows have been delivered by one fighter. The winner is the one who wins the majority of the bouts in the round.
  - **the 3rd round** – “Sword-Shield”. It lasts for 1.5 min. The winner of the round is the one who has delivered more stout blows to the opponent during the round.
- 1.6. For each stout blow to the opponent’s accepted area, the fighter who has delivered it is awarded one point.
- 1.7. A blow is counted when it was deliberate, clear and was not blocked by the opponent’s defensive action with a shield or sword.
- 1.8. The blows are counted during the round. The fighter who has got more points or, according to the conditions of a fight in the 2nd round, reaches a certain sum of points first, becomes a winner of the round.

- 1.9. The fighter who wins in 2 or 3 rounds wins the fight. If the score of the rounds is draw, the disputable round continues until one of the fighters gains 3 points.
- 1.10. “Technical victory” with a score 3-0 is awarded to one of the fighters in the following cases:
  - 1.10.1. If an opponent refuses to fight before the beginning of a duel, does not present himself to the lists on call of the knight marshal or fails to prepare his equipment within the time set by the knight marshal.

Not coming to the fight will lead to a warning (one Yellow card). If the fighter is removed from further participation in the fights (due to injury or disqualification), the “technical victory” is also awarded to his opponent.

- 1.10.2. If the opponent cannot continue fighting because of an “accidental injury”.

**Important!** *If the fighter cannot continue the duel due to an injury, resulting from violations of the rules by his opponent, the latter gets a double warning (two Yellow cards) and is removed from participation in the fight. «Technical victory» is awarded to the injured fighter.*

- 1.10.3. If an opponent gets two warnings within the fights (two Yellow cards).
- 1.10.4. Should factors arise, which, according to the knight marshal, impede the fighter from continuing, namely armor or weapons breakage (including the shield or sword). If it cannot be fixed or replaced within the allotted time (not more than 1 minute).

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## AUTHENTIC EQUIPMENT

- 2.1. Only arms and armor which are proven by historical research to be from specific historical period, are allowed in HMB.
- 2.2. Each fighter must rebate his weapons before the participation in an event so that they are compliant with the specifications stated in this regulatory document.

Rebating is rounding of peak and percussion edges of any bladed or pole weapon used in HMB competitions. The radius of rebating is about 10mm (note: it has to match the radius of a coin 20mm in diameter).

- 2.2.1. The edges of all the striking parts of any weapon are to be rounded as a bevel and be not less than 2mm thick (including any possible chips and notches).

- 2.2.2. The edges of shields are to be trimmed with thick (not less than 2-4 mm) leather or three or more layers of fabric attached with glue.

**Important!** *All wooden, wicker or leather shields must be made only on the basis of reliable and approved historical analogues and correspond to the form of the analogue in all three planes. A shield can only be used with a set of armor of the same epoch and region.*

- 2.2.3. Edges of the iron shields have to be carefully forge-rolled and be no less than 4mm thick.

**Important!** *The shape of permitted metal shields must be round, made on the basis of reliable and approved historical analogues corresponding to the form of the analogue in all three planes. A shield can only be used with a set of armor of the same epoch and region. The weight of any metal shield must not exceed 5 kg.*

- 2.3. Fighters must exclusively assume all responsibility for the quality, safety and reliability of the elements of protective arms.

**2.4.** The approved protective arms for HMB competitions must be a reconstruction of medieval armor (must have the exact dimensions and general appearance according to its historical reference) and correspond to such characteristics:

- compliance with historically proven originals of the XIII- XVII centuries;
- authenticity of used materials (metal, leather, fabric, tow, batting, felt);
- availability of configuration that completely covers the vital organs and joints of the fighter;
- good condition;
- thickness of protective material has to meet the requirements (stated below);
- size and proportions of all the protective elements have to meet the requirements;
- aesthetic appearance.

**2.5.** All items of armor have to meet the technical and aesthetic requirements, and represent a complete set of one time period within a span of no greater than 50 years.

### **Important!**

*Only in rare cases, due to the lack of information concerning the material culture of certain periods and regions, stylized armor elements are allowed. In this situation, a fighter can replace these items with the authentic elements relating to the neighboring regions and periods, but only if everything looks aesthetically and proportionally accurate. Concepts that require further interpretation and explanation:*

*1. Authentic means material or object that corresponds to a certain historical original, found during the research. The use of authentic materials and items, coming from the original, is approved by the community of historical reenactors of the Middle Ages.*

*2. A “stylized item” refers to an object that has no specific historical analogues, but is made in*

*compliance with the general style of armor and its proportional, aesthetic and operational characteristics.*

*3. Historically proven originals are confirmed through text and visual material (pictures, sculptures, and other documented archaeological sources or the combination of more than one of these), on the basis of which a belonging of a particular object to the group of authentic ones is determined. A historically proven original is needed in case a reenactor intends to use anything considerably different or about which little is known in the community of HRMA. Only a historically authentic original can help to determine whether an object is valid for a decision to be made about the possibility of its use in the HRMA circles.*

**2.5.1.** The fighter’s head must be protected with a metal helmet, the safety features and specifications of which comply with the same parameters of a helmet made of steel ST3, 2mm thick.

- 2.5.2. The fighter's helmet has to be equipped either with a well-quilted padded cap, or leather suspension, a "parachute" with a quilted padded cap. The thickness of these elements should be not less than 3 mm for quilted and 5 for padded in a condensed form.
- 2.5.3. The fighter's helmet must have a chin strap, which ensures its stability, eliminating any possibility that it may fall off or come loose during combat.
- 2.5.4. The fighter's body, legs and arms are to be covered with at least plate armor. Chainmails can be only used as extra protection in addition to plate armor or as the linking elements of plate armor.
- 2.5.5. In addition to body armor, the fighter's body is to be protected with under-armor padding, which covers the whole torso. The minimum allowed protection is woolen (cloth) and linen material sewn together.
- 2.5.6. The neck and base of the skull are to be protected with steel plate-armor element, supplemented with damping quilted or padded protection, such as a pelerine of the padded cap, a special collar or a filling. A riveted chain-mail element, with the plate protection and a protective damping layer located under it, is allowed.
- 2.5.7. The spine and tailbone should have metal plate protection with quilted or padded protection. The thickness of these elements should be not less than 3mm for quilted and 5mm for padded in reinforced form.
- 2.5.8. The fighter's hands are to be protected with gloves or gauntlets made of steel plates or riveted chainmail. If hand protection is made solely of riveted chainmail, a damping layer no less than 5mm thick in a condensed (reinforced) form must be under it.
- 2.5.9. The hands and forearms of a fighter using a shield with elbow grip can be protected with steel armor elements. Should a fighter lose his shield, he'll be able to continue the fight. They can be protected minimally (only with underarmor padding and cloth gauntlets), but from all sides, which may be under attack. The minimum level of underarmor protection includes layers of wool and linen cloth sewn together.

**Important!** *For the longsword nomination "closed fists" that are authorized by the authenticity committee are allowed. They should copy standard gloves by form.*

- 2.5.10.** The fighter's elbows and knees must have steel plate protection. If the plate protection doesn't fit the fighter's armor, it should be hidden under the authentic element of the set. The minimum level of underarmor protection includes quilted or padded protective layer no less than 10mm thick in a condensed form.
- 2.5.11.** The fighter's shins and thighs are recommended to be protected with metal armor elements at each side. The minimum level of underarmor protection includes layers of woolen and linen cloth sewn together.
- 2.5.12.** The fighter's groin has be protected with armor elements or hidden protection (an athletic support for contact sports will be sufficient).
- 2.5.13.** The protective complex has to provide a complete and reliable protection to the head, neck, spine and joints in any body position.
- 2.5.14.** If a fighter represents a time period, when certain parts of the body weren't covered with protective elements, these areas are to be safely covered with hidden protective elements (Eurasia region of the XIII-XVII centuries), which aren't registered visually.
- 2.5.15.** If the level of safety of the authentic protective arms does not meet requirements of these regulations, a fighter should use extra protection made of other kind of materials (worn only under authentic armor and underarmor).
- 2.5.16.** The fighter must ensure his armor meets protective characteristic standards and check the accuracy and safety of any protective parts before a battle.
- 2.5.17.** The fighter is responsible for the offensive and protective arms he uses in battle, the monitoring of their authenticity, aesthetics, and compliance with the requirements stated in this regulatory document.

**Important!** *Modern protection, having its own fastening system, can be used only as a tertiary level of protection.*

**Important!** *Fighters can only use weapons that are authorized by the Authenticity Committee in battles.*

## **2.6. Characteristics of weapons for the tournament category:**

### **2.6.1. The “Longsword” round:**

- the length of the blade (from the hilt to the tip) - from 80 to 100cm;
- the length of the handle (including a hilt and a pommel) - from 20 to 35cm;
- the weight is from 1,500 to 2,300g.
- the diameter of rounding of the cutting edge is about 10mm (it has to correspond to a coin 20 mm in diameter).

### **2.6.2. The “Sword-Shield” round:**

- the length of the blade (from the hilt to the tip) - from 60 to 80cm;
- the length of the handle (including the hilt and a pommel) - from 12 to 20cm;
- the weight is from 1,300 to 1,600g.
- the diameter of rounding of the cutting edge is about 10mm (it has to correspond to a coin 20mm in diameter).
- the cutting edge of a blade is not less than 2mm thick and rounded.
- the maximum length of a shield is 75cm.

### **2.6.3. The “Sword-Buckler” round:**

- the length of the blade (from the hilt to the tip) - from 60 to 80 cm;
- the length of the handle (including a hilt and a pommel) - from 12 to 20 cm;
- the weight is from 1,300 to 1,600 g.
- the diameter of rounding of the cutting edge is about 10 mm (it has to correspond to a coin 20 mm in diameter).
- the cutting edge of a blade is not less than 2mm thick and rounded;
- the maximum length of a buckler is 35cm.

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## AUTHORIZED FIGHTING TECHNIQUES

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### 3.1. “Sword-Shield” & “Sword-Buckler”:

- cutting blows to the opponent’s accepted area delivered with the cutting edge of the weapons;
- blocking the opponent’s blows with a shield or a blade;
- pushing or pressing the opponent with a shield or shoulder;
- hitting with the plane of a shield;
- repulsion of a blade, a shield, or opponent’s arms and hands with the shield’s plane or the shield’s edge;
- hooking the opponent’s shield with your shield;
- repulsion with the shield edge aimed at an armed hand or body (above the waist and below the neck) of the opponent;
- overlapping of the opponent’s shield with your shield.

### 3.2. “Longsword”:

- cutting blows to the opponent’s accepted area delivered with the cutting edge of the weapons;
- blocking the opponent’s blows with the blade of your weapon;
- pressing and pushing the opponent with your blade or arms;
- repulsion of the opponent’s arms with your arms.

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## PROHIBITED FIGHTING TECHNIQUES

### 4.1. “Sword-Shield” & “Sword-Buckler”:

- thrusting with a blade of the weapon (any thrusts);
- blows aimed at the opponent’s unauthorized area;
- blows aimed at fallen opponents or those rising to a standing position;
- blows aimed at opponents who have been disarmed;
- hitting with the edge of the shield below the belt, in the opponent’s head and neck;
- blows delivered with your head;
- kicking or kneeing your opponent;
- back heels, wrestling throws and clinches;
- punches and elbow strokes;
- blows delivered with the hilt or pommel of a weapon;
- holds of the opponent’s body, head and limbs, using hands or shield, as well as grabbing his equipment (including a sword and a shield) with your hands.

### 4.2. “Longsword”:

- thrusting with a blade of the weapon (any thrusts);
- blows aimed at the opponent’s unauthorized area;
- blows aimed at fallen opponents or those rising to a standing position;
- blows aimed at opponents who have been disarmed;
- hitting with the edge of the shield below the belt, in the opponent’s head and neck;
- blows delivered with your head;
- kicking or kneeing your opponent;
- back heels, wrestling throws and clinches;
- punches and elbow strokes;
- blows delivered with the hilt or pommel of a weapon;
- holds of the opponent’s body, head and limbs, using hands or shield, as well as grabbing his equipment (including the sword’s blade) with your hands.

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## MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF BATTLES

Management and control of battles is done by using the following penalties, depending on the situation in the lists, fighters' actions and referees' decisions.

5.1. Rebuke is a sanction applied to the fighter in the course of one fight if:

5.1.1. He falls down due to active attacking actions of the opponent if they comply with the rules

5.1.2. Any part of protective equipment breaks or faults, which, according to the knight marshal's point of view, doesn't allow the fighter to continue the fight. If the fault can be remedied within the time defined by the knight marshal, the fight can continue.

**Important!** *If the fighter's weapon (sword, shield etc.) is broken, the sanction will not be imposed.*

5.1.3. The fighter loses his weapon during the fight.

5.1.4. The fighter is passive in the fight.

**Important!** *Passiveness is considered to be refusal from active actions against your opponent during a long period of time (not less than 30 sec).*

5.1.5. Going out of or falling out of the lists.

**Important!**

- *Applying a rebuke sanction to one of the fighters is accompanied with awarding his opponent 3 additional points.*
- *Fighters given three rebukes within a fight lose automatically. His opponent is awarded with "a clear victory".*
- *Rebuke sanctions are NOT to be stated on the record of the tournament or in the personal cards of the fighters.*

5.2. Warning (the Yellow Card) is a sanction imposed on the fighter for rule violation, it is to be stated in the record of the competition and it affects the rating of the fighter and his team. The fighter can get a maximum of two yellow cards within the event.

**Warning (the Yellow card) is given in the following cases:**

- 5.2.1. For applying any prohibited techniques stated in Section 4 “Prohibited Fighting Techniques”.
- 5.2.2. For applying actions not listed in Section 3 “Authorized Fighting Techniques”.
- 5.2.3. For unsportsmanlike behavior, boorishness, bad language, shouting at the referees, the opponents and spectators.
- 5.2.4. For starting the fight before the command “To the fight!”
- 5.2.5. For continuing an attack after the command “Stop the fight!”
- 5.2.6. For ignoring the knight marshal’s commands.

**Important!** *For all the aforementioned violations the fighter can get one or two yellow cards at once, depending on the gravity of the violation from the knight marshal’s point of view.*

- 5.3. Disqualification (the Red card) is a sanction imposed on a fighter for gross or systematic (the second Yellow card) violation of the rules. It should be stated in the record of the competition. The sanction implies the fighter’s removal from the further participation in the competition and his substitution with a substitute fighter of the team. ONLY the knight marshal of the tournament has the right to disqualify fighters.

**Grounds for disqualification:**

- 5.3.1. Systematic violation of the rules, when a fighter is shown two yellow cards within the event.
- 5.3.2. Injuring the opponent due to the use of prohibited fighting techniques.
- 5.3.3. Gross and systematic dissents with the referees, groundless appeals against their decisions, insults to the opponents or disrespectful behavior towards them, as well as other parties of the competition.

**Important!** *Each red card which is imposed on the fighter automatically becomes the team’s red card.*

These Regulations have been developed by **HMBIA**® Marshals Committee. This document has been reviewed and proofread by Gavin Stewart, member of **HMBIA**® Development Committee.