



Tournament Readiness & important Resources

Now that you have been fencing for a few months and understand the fundamentals, you can get a taste of your 1st competition. Sign up to fence alongside your comrades and have a fun motivating experience competing against other fencers .

**MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A VALID “ACCESS” MEMBERSHIP
FROM U.S fencing (join here: www.usfencing.org)**

Choose your 1st Tournament: Start small !

USA Fencing has tournaments at the divisional level local, regional, national, and international.

These are further separated into age levels such as youth, cadet, junior, senior and veteran levels and again by “rating.” New competitors should fence at least 2-3 division level tournaments in their age category, either unrated, E or D and under before going to more difficult tournaments.

You can find division tournaments on www.askFRED.net

To help parents, we post flyers on the board at the Academy (Lobby).

Once you have registered with www.askFred.net, please let us know with enough notice (2 weeks) if you would like to have a coach with you (email is good)

Going to your first outside tournament event can seem daunting, especially if you don’t know what to expect. Don’t worry!! You will quickly learn the ropes, and you will soon be looking forward to your next one.

The following are a few notes to help you get the most out of your experience.

- Most often, fencers going to their very first competitive event feel overwhelmed, and due to overthinking they get in their own way. So keep in mind that fencing is very much a mental sport as it is a physical one. Expect that losing may be the case and understand that the most important thing you can accomplish at your first event is to gain experience and HAVE FUN!!! So relax and enjoy the process, this is about learning.

On the US Fencing Association web page (www.usfencing.org) under “New to Fencing?” is a highly recommended link to “Fencing Parents.”

On the competitors page in the SFA website (sebastianifencing.com/competitor) is another great tool for newer competitors to familiarize themselves with Tournaments.

- **Equipment:** ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS IS MAKING SURE ALL YOUR EQUIPMENT AND YOUR UNIFORM IS READY BEFORE YOU GO. Some important specifics:
 - You must have 2 wires, 2 blades, 2 mask cords, a saber glove (no rental) and an electric vest (called a Lamé)
 - You must have the Sebastiani patch attached on the non-fencing side of jacket (get your patch at the Academy)
 - Bring your SFA official black and gold uniform... you will be representing the Academy as your 1st affiliated Club.
 - Once you have arrived at the venue you must bring your mask, glove, and weapon to be submitted at the armorers to be checked and stamped with the armorer’s mark for that event.
- **Cell Phone:** If you have a cell phone, take it, and if we are sending strip coach(s) to the event, make sure the coach has your number and you have his. For larger tournaments with hundreds of people on the floor, we tend to use cell phones like walkie-talkies to keep the coach apprised of which fencer is up on which strip.
- **Description of the Tournament:** The venue for outside Tournaments will vary highly on the size of the tournament and the level. You will be split up in Round Robin pools with usually 6-8 fencers per pool. Once this stage is completed your indicator (touch scored minus touch received) will be factored in and all the fencers will now be entered in D.E (Direct Elimination). Your ranking in pools will affect your standings in D.E. The better you do in your pools, the higher you will be placed where you can most likely earn a BYE or fence lower ranked fencers. At this stage, bouts consist of three 3-minute intervals, with a 1-minute break in between, or 15 touches, whichever comes first. Such bouts seldom last the full 9 minutes.

Only fencers, officials and coaches are allowed into the fencing floor: spectators and family members can get quite close to the strips, but must stay outside the barriers.

At the start of each round of an event, the bout committee will post on a program called Fencing Time Live (www.fencingtimelive.com) what strip you will be fencing on as well as who you will be fencing. The fencers will be given 5 – 10 minutes to report to their strip. If they are not present at the correct strip, they can be scratched from the event, so make sure you stay on top (literally) of this process!

The USADA (US Anti-Doping Agency) works in conjunction with the US Olympic Committee to control the abuse of banned drugs in Olympic sports. This is taken very seriously at all USFA North American Cup (NAC), Junior Olympic and USFA National Championship events. *Be aware that some prescription and over-the-counter medications, including some of the common non-prescription cold medications, are considered to be banned substances.* If you have any questions regarding the status of over the counter or prescription medications, the USADA drug hotline is (800) 233-0393.

Take your SFA warm up hoodie! With over a hundred on the floor, the warm up suits play a very practical role. The distinctive suits help you spot your teammates across a venue's fencing floor. In addition, you may need it for the medal ceremony! You may be exhausted by the time you finish the final round, but don't stand up in front of the crowd in the medal ceremony with your knickers peeled halfway down, your shirt tail hanging out and drooling. Take a moment to spiff up and pretend to look sharp! Those pictures can come back to haunt you! ☺

Generally, the first SFA fencers at the venue choose a good place for the club to "make camp," and everyone else from the club arriving on site looks for the SFA camp. Almost all clubs do this, and it is important. Setting up "camp" enables the coach to find his fencers when they are not on strip, and it enables the fencers and parents from the club to help support each other and encourage team spirit, so when you arrive on site, find the other SFA fencers! They can be of great assistance to you, especially if you're new to the game! A great way to find who is going to which tournament is with:

The Tournament Tracker

With this document other fencers/parents can see which fencers are going where and can contact others to carpool, share the coach's fee...etc.. It is a great tool!

link is on www.Sebastianifencing.com.