

USFA RULES CHANGES – EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2002

1. The regulation time for each bout in both pools and team matches is three minutes.
2. An immediate warning (1st group) will be given against the competitor whose blade is bent more than the rules allow (1 cm for épée, 2 cm for foil, 4 cm for sabre) at the moment the fencer indicates that she or he is ready to fence.
3. Falling is no longer an offense and consequently is no longer penalized. (It is understood that an offensive action that is launched in such a way that the fencer is not in control, and thereby falls, is disorderly fencing and does require a warning and the annulling of any touch scored.) SO, IF A FENCER, BY BEING DISORDERLY, SCORES A VALID TOUCH, THAT TOUCH IS AWARDED?
4. In pools and during the first and second periods of a direct elimination bout, if the fencers show themselves obviously unwilling to fight, the referee will call “Halt!” and warn the fencers; should they continue to be unwilling to fight, the referee will call “Halt!” In a direct elimination bout, the fencers will go straight into the next period of fencing, without the minute break and without the possibility of consulting with their coaches. Should they be unwilling to fight during the third period of fencing in a direct elimination bout or in a pool bout, the referee will call “Halt!” and the fencers will start a final minute of fencing preceded by drawing lots to decide the winner should the score be equal at the end of the minute. WHAT HAPPENS IF FENCERS REFUSE TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT IN A POOL BOUT? THE IMPLICATION HERE IS THAT THE BOUT IS OVER.
5. During team events, if adequate space is available, the organizer shall reserve a zone for the team members. Only the team captain and one additional person (coach, medical, et cetera) have the right to stay with the team fencers inside this zone. The team zone must be well delimited, with a line on the floor or some other system. If possible, it should be sufficiently sized to seat six people and be located at each end of, and separate from, the strip zone. During team matches, the members of the team must remain within the zone reserved for their team.
6. During team events, no member of either team may enter inside the limits of the strip zone without the permission of the referee. Should such an offense occur, the referee will apply the penalty provided for by articles t.114, t.116, and t.120 against the team at fault. The warning will be awarded against the team, and will be valid for all the bouts of the match. Each time any fencer commits another offense of the 1st group, in the same match, the referee is to penalize the fencer at fault with a red card. HAS THE STRIP ZONE BEEN DEFINED IN THE USFA RULES?
7. Direct elimination bouts are for 15 touches, or end when three periods of three minutes, with a one-minute period of rest between each period, have passed. In sabre only, the first period will end either when the three minutes have passed or when the score of one of the fencers has reached eight.
8. Crossing a lateral boundary without having passed ones opponent with one foot or both feet results in the command “Halt!” and the opponent advances one meter from where she or he was at the “Halt!” IF A FENCER STEPS OFF THE SIDE OF THE STRIP WITH ONE FOOT, WITHIN THE FINAL METER, IS THE DISTANCE PENALTY APPLIED, THEREBY CAUSING A TOUCH?
9. A touch scored by the fencer who has crossed the lateral boundary of the strip with one foot remains valid, if the action was launched before the “Halt!”

USFA RULES CHANGES – EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2002

10. If one of the fencers is off the strip with both feet, that fencer may not score. Only a hit made by the fencer who remains on the strip with at least one foot is counted, even in the case of a double touch, if the action by the fencer who is on the strip was started before the “Halt!”
11. The surface area for advertising is increased to 75 cm² per logo (four logos, in total 300 cm²); allowable area is extended to the collar of the fencing suit. A diagram will be provided showing the authorized locations and dimensions.
12. The life cycle of five years for the use of FIE blades is canceled, provided that the manufacturer has conducted periodic controls.