

New Jersey Division Tournament Operations Manual

(December 14, 2011 Edition)

Purpose

The New Jersey Tournament Operations Manual was prepared by New Jersey Division of the USFA (the “Division”) to provide guidance and assistance in the running of Covered Events known as sanctioned events, (that is events for which classifications may be sought through the Division), whether they are run by the Division itself or are club-run events that have been approved by the Division. It is also intended to apply to all other Covered Events as that term is used in the Division’s MOU. While the USFA permits great freedom in running events, this Operations Manual represents the standards and principles that the Division expects will be observed at all events. Any questions regarding this document or the standards that the Division has set should be directed to the Division’s Tournament Committee. This Operations Manual is incorporated by reference into the Division’s MOU. If there is any conflict between the MOU and the standards and principles set forth in this manual, then the standards and principles of this manual will prevail.

Amendment and Updates

This Operations Manual may be amended or updated from time to time by the Tournament Committee. All such amendments and updates will be deemed to become a part of this Manual at the time of their adoption as if set forth fully and at length herein.

Required Documents

During any Covered Event, the Tournament Manager is required to keep a copy of the following documents (most current edition available) present at all times:

USA Fencing Rules

USA Fencing Athlete’s Handbook

USA Fencing Operations Manual

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USA Fencing Penalty Chart

USA Fencing Classification Chart

Event and Entry sheets or computer generated copies of same

Adequate supplies of pool sheets, DE sheets, DE tables and USFA membership applications.

It is preferable that hard copies of all these documents be available at all times, in case there are any questions regarding the event and its operation. Soft (or computerized) copies of the USA Fencing Rules, USA Fencing Athlete Handbook, USA Fencing Operations Manual, USA Fencing Penalty Chart, USA Fencing Classification Chart and this document may be kept instead of hard copies. Note: these documents are available for downloading from the Division's website at <http://njfencing.org> or the USA Fencing's website at <http://www.usfencing.org>.

It is required that Fencing Time V.3.0 (or higher) tournament management software be used to manage a sanctioned event. It speeds the running of the event and it allows for faster and more detailed reporting of results. See that sufficient paper and printer cartridges are on hand, but remember, computers and printers breakdown so it is recommended that you have available index cards and preprinted pool sheets, DE sheets, DE tables and a calculator in case the event has to be run by hand.

All hard copies of pool and DE score sheets should be retained for at least 90 days. All computerized records of an event, or if computers were not used to run the event, then the hard copies of the records should be retained by the Division or the club that hosted the event for 90 days or until July 31 of the current fencing season, whichever is longer.

Approval of an Event

The Tournament Committee is responsible for seeing that sanctioned events are run properly and it has the sole and absolute authority to approve or not approve the running of a sanctioned event. The Executive Committee controls the Division's schedule and has sole and absolute authority and discretion to approve or not approve the addition of any Covered Event to the schedule. Sanctioned events must first be approved by the Tournament Committee before the organizer can seek approval from the Executive Committee to add the event to the schedule. All Covered Events, including sanctioned events approved by the Tournament Committee, must be approved by the Executive Committee in order to add the event to the Division's schedule. Once an event receives the required approvals, it will be listed on the Division's schedule which is posted on the Division web site. No Covered Event may be held in this Division unless it is listed on the Division's schedule. If the event is a sanctioned event, then the event organizer must also establish an AskFRED account to allow fencers to sign up in advance and information must be given to the Division's webmaster to allow a link to be established to the AskFRED listing.

Before a club can request approval for a Covered Event, it must first provide the Division Tournament Chair with a signed copy of the current season's MOU and a Certificate of Liability Insurance showing that the club has liability coverage issued through the USFA for USFA related events for the current season. The signed MOU must be provided at or before the time of request for a Covered Event. The certificate must be provided at or before the time of request for a Covered Event, unless the requested competition date is between August 1 and September 1 of the current season, and then the certificate must be provided the Thursday before the competition date. If the certificate is not provided to the Tournament Chair by that Thursday, the approval of the event will be removed.

USFA Membership of Fencers

In order for an event to receive sanctioning, all individuals participating in the event must be members of the USFA. This allows the event to receive insurance coverage from the USFA, as well as allows for the possibility of awarding classifications to participants. The Tournament Manager is responsible for verifying that all individuals who wish to participate in a sanctioned event either have current memberships with the USFA, or that these individuals apply for membership with the USFA. Members of the USFA are required to show proof

of membership to the Tournament Manager. This can either be a USFA card or key card, a letter from the National Office that shows the membership number or it can be shown in the USFA's current publications of membership lists. Additionally, if the fencer recently joined the USFA at an event, that fencer can show a receipt from the Tournament Manager of that event. If a participant cannot show proof of membership, then they are required to complete a USFA membership application and submit payment to the USFA for their membership. Note: allowing individuals to fence without verifying their USFA membership may result in the National Office not accepting any rating changes from the event and invalidating the results of the competition.

Event Officials

At all Covered Events in the Division for which the Division gives it sanction for classifications, the following will be the event officials:

Tournament Manager—This shall be the Division Tournament Committee Chair if he or she is present at the competition in that capacity, or a person named by the Division Tournament Committee Chair to perform the duties of the Tournament Manager at the event. The Tournament Manager shall be solely responsible to see that the event is run in accordance with the rules of the USFA, the Division By-Laws and the procedures established by this Manual.

Tournament Staff – The Tournament Staff shall be chosen by the Tournament Manager to assist him or her in the operation of the event. This shall include strip and equipment set-up, fencer check-in, posting pool and DE assignments and results, running the computer, seeding and assigning pools, DE's, strips and referees.

Bout Committee—The bout committee shall consist of the Tournament Manager and four additional members appointed by the Tournament Manager. The Tournament Manager shall appoint the bout committee members from among the Division members present at the competition and not otherwise competing in the event and in making such appointments, an attempt shall be made to have representation from among a variety of the Division clubs or salles d'armes. The bout committee's responsibility shall be to hear all appeals and resolve same by majority vote and to perform those functions provided for in t.97 of the USFA Fencing Rules.

Referees—All Division events will be run using qualified referees hired for the event. At National Qualifiers there must be at least one referee with a USFOC rating of 5 or better. If the Tournament Manager determines that there are not enough hired referees available on site to run an event properly, and in any club-run event which has been sanctioned by the Division, the pool of referees can be supplemented by, or in the case of club-run events, may be entirely made up of, fencers or coaches serving as referees, provided they are not or are no longer competing in the event they are asked to referee. The Tournament Manager should determine the knowledge and skill of any fencer or coach before permitting them to referee any bout. This includes, but is not limited to, the testing of equipment, the penalty system, time of bouts and right-of-way. Once a fencer or coach is deemed to be knowledgeable enough to referee, the Tournament Manager should keep a list of which fencers or coaches were refereeing in case there is any question concerning the refereeing of bouts. It is recommended that fencers and coaches are not allowed to referee bouts involving members of their club, unless both fencers in the bout are members of that club. Note: this recommendation should not be followed if the most knowledgeable referee is also a member of the same club as one of the fencers and/or both fencers agree to the assignment of the referee to their bout.

Event Venue and Operation

All Division run events will be equitably distributed throughout the geographic area of the Division as required by the Division By-Laws and as a general rule it is preferred that they be located at neutral sites such as a school

gym. Safety and compliance with insurance regulations which enhance safety are the primary guidelines for the selection and operation of any event site, whether run by the Division or a Covered Event run by a club. It is also important that the operation of the event be fair and be seen and understood by the participants to be fair. The Division will not approve any Covered Event which does not meet these guidelines and any club which does not comply with these guidelines will be subject to possible discipline, which may include being suspended or barred from holding further Covered Events.

The event venue must be adequately sized to safely accommodate the number of fencers, officials and spectators in attendance as well as the number of strips required to efficiently run the event. This shall include adequate separation between strips, alleys to permit referees a safe, proper and completely unobstructed view of both the strip and the fencers on the strip, and the means to allow fencers to move safely to their assigned strips.

The event venue must be legally occupied and the use of the venue must not be a violation of any statute, law, rule, regulation or ordinance. The event venue and the operation of the event within that venue must comply with all USFA requirements so that the USFA insurance coverage for that event will not be put at risk.

Where membership in the USFA is a requirement of the event, each fencer's USFA membership must be checked at check-in. The USFA card is always the ultimate proof of membership and if an entrant is not on the USFA lists as a current member and cannot show their USFA card, then they must not be allowed to fence unless they fill out a USFA membership form and pay the membership fee. Please understand that allowing a fencer who is not a USFA member to participate in a sanctioned event could invalidate the results of that tournament, classification changes may not be recognized, it could jeopardize the insurance coverage for the event, and the USFA could impose penalties on the Division.

The proper way to set up Fencing Time for USAF membership validation prior to starting an event is to import the fencers from the latest membership list downloaded from the US Fencing website and allow that list to overwrite the existing fencer information in Fencing Time. This should be done before loading the AskFred tournament file. When you subsequently load the AskFred tournament registration file be sure to select the option in Fencing Time to NOT allow the AskFred information to overwrite the membership information. Following this procedure will insure that fencer birth year, rating and division membership in Fencing Time are what is official in the USFA, not what the fencer has chosen to enter into AskFred.

For sanctioned events, only fencers who meet all USFA requirements for the event are allowed to compete. This specifically includes all of the USFA limits on age. Please note that for open, Div I, Div II, Div III and "U" competitions, the fencer must be no less than 13 years of age as of January 1 of the current fencing season or, if less than 13, the fencer must be on the current Junior Point Standings.

For Junior Olympics and Summer National qualifiers one or more qualified armorers must be present and available to all participants. The armorer's responsibilities in order of priority will be safety checks of equipment, then strip/equipment repair and then repair of fencer's equipment.

A first aid kit must be present at all Covered Events. At all Covered Events there must be a person available trained in CPR and first-aid At Junior Olympics and Summer National qualifiers a trainer or EMT will be available.

When called for the competition, all fencers will wear the required safety equipment or be excluded from the event. Without limitation, this means the Tournament Manager or the referees must check that:

All fencers must wear plastrons.

All fencers must wear socks which cover the entire calf up to the bottom of their pants.

All women must wear breast protectors.

All jackets, pants, socks, shoes, lames, gloves and masks must be in good condition, without rips, holes or tears, and with properly functioning fasteners, (for other than National qualifiers, a 12 kg mask test will be at the option of the Tournament Manager).

Jackets must overlap the pants by at least 10 cm when the fencer is in the on-guard position. Suspenders must not be hanging out below the jacket and undershirts must be tucked in.

While it is understood that it can be difficult and costly to provide strips that are completely in compliance with USFA rules, all strips at all sanctioned events will nonetheless meet the minimum standards set forth in the current USFA Operations Manual. In addition to the foregoing:

At Division events, strips will be separated by at least 4 feet (3 feet if overhead scoring equipment is used) and referee alleys will be at least 9 feet wide when shared by 2 referees, 6 feet wide when used by 1 referee.

Proper weight and/or shim tests by the referee are mandatory at all sanctioned events.

Y10 events must be fenced with blades that are 30" or 32" in length. A fencer eligible to compete in Y10 events may use a full size weapon when eligible for and competing in non-Y10 events.

At all sanctioned events, the following must be posted for all fencers to see:

Prior to start, a list of seeded entries

At the conclusion of each round, seeding results

Prior to the start of DE's, the DE tableau

Final results

Allow time for corrections after each posting during the event.

Format of Events

Except for round-robin youth events and events which are specifically advertised and sanctioned by the Division as events utilizing that round robin format, all sanctioned events are to be conducted with an initial round of qualifying pools that places fencers into a direct elimination table. If announced in advance, sanctioned events may run two rounds of qualifying pools and/or repechage. Note: Except for round robin, events cannot be run with only one round of pools to determine the final standing of fencers. DE bouts will be conducted in accordance with the USFA Fencing Rules, (see, o.21-o.27), except that at Y10 and Y12 events DE's will be best of 3, 5 point bouts.

At sanctioned events, pools should be initially established with 7 fencers or 6 fencers or some combination of 7 and 6 fencers (in this order). If this is not reasonably possible, then pools of 5 or 8 fencers may be used as well (again, preference should be given towards larger pools). Tournament Managers are allowed to qualify a certain number (or percentage) of fencers into the direct elimination table. The Tournament Manager may advance as

many as 100% of the fencers from the qualifying pools, and it is recommended that the minimum number to advance should be at least 80% of the fencers from the qualifying pools. This must be announced prior to the start of fencing, and may not be changed at any time, for any reason.

Prior to the start of the event, the Tournament Manager should call all the fencers together and announce the format of the event. This should include the number and size of pools, number of fencers qualifying to the direct elimination table, as well as any other special awards or circumstances of the event (for example, recognizing the top unrated fencer at an event). If ratings may be awarded at the event, but the actual rating is dependent upon the placement of certain fencers (for example, in C1 events where 2 Cs and 2 Ds need to finish in the top 8), this should be announced as well. The Tournament Manager should be careful when announcing the potential ratings that may be awarded (so as to not provide inaccurate or misleading information about the classification of the event), and should make the final announcement as soon as the actual classification of the event is known.

Post Tournament Procedure

At the conclusion of any sanctioned event, the Tournament Manager must complete a listing of the final results for the event using Fencing Time software. If any classification changes were earned at the event, then the Tournament Manager must also complete the USFA Classification Change form. Note: a copy of the USFA Classification Change form should be retained by the Tournament Manager as part of his or her records. The event must be reported to the Division as required by the MOU. Any Membership applications and fees should be submitted directly to the USFA. All original documentation and a copy of any USFA Classification Change forms should be filed and kept by the Tournament Manager.

Goals - The following are the goals the Division wishes to encourage through its competitions and the club competitions sanctioned by the Division.

Sportsmanship - Foremost of all values is to learn a sense of fair play. Become humble in victory, gracious in defeat. We will foster friendship with teammates and opponents alike.

Respect for the individual - Treat all others as you expect to be treated.

Integrity - We seek to foster honesty and fair play beyond mere strict interpretation of the rules and regulations of the game.

Pursuit of excellence at the individual, team, and organizational levels - Each member of the organization, whether player, volunteer or staff, should seek to perform each aspect of the sport to the highest level of his or her ability.

Enjoyment - It is important for the fencing experience to be fun, satisfying, and rewarding for the participants.

Loyalty - We aspire to teach loyalty to the ideals and fellow members of the sport of fencing.

Teamwork - We value the strength of learning to work together. The use of team work is reinforced and rewarded by success in the fencing experience.