

# SABRE

## A DOUBLE HIT GUIDE

The most common cause of confusion and dispute in sabre matches is the allocation of points when both fencers have registered hits. The section, of the rules given here - VALIDITY OR PRIORITY OF THE HIT - governs that situation and is reproduced unedited and unamended.

The *attack* (t.101 to t.104) and the *parry* (t.105) are clearly defined. The procedure for *applying* those definitions to a match is given under rule t.106.

The full rules of fencing are available from the **British Fencing** website as a downloadable pdf: (<https://www.britishfencing.com/the-fie-rulebooks/>)

## VALIDITY OR PRIORITY OF THE HIT

**t.100** The Referee **alone** decides as to the validity or the priority of the hit by applying the following basic rules which are the conventions applicable to sabre fencing.

PREFACE

## RESPECT OF THE FENCING PHRASE

**t.101** 1. Any attack properly executed (cf. t.9.1) must be parried, or completely avoided, and the phrase must be continuous.

ATTACK

2. The attack is correctly carried out when the straightening of the arm, with the point or the cutting edge continuously threatening the valid target, precedes the initiation of the lunge.

3. An attack with a lunge is correctly carried out:  
a) in a simple attack (cf. t.9.1) when the beginning of the straightening of the arm precedes the launching of the lunge and the hit arrives at the latest when the front foot hits the piste;

b) in a compound attack (cf. t.10) when the beginning of the straightening of the arm, on the first feint (cf. t.103), precedes the launching of the lunge and the hit arrives at the latest when the front foot hits the piste.

4. An attack with a step-forward-lunge is correctly carried out:  
a) in a simple attack (cf. t.9.1) when the beginning of the straightening of the arm precedes the step-forward and when the hit arrives at the latest when the front foot hits the piste;

b) in a compound attack (cf. t.10) when the beginning of the straightening of the arm for the first feint (Cf. t.103) precedes the step-forward, followed by the lunge, and the hit arrives at the latest when the front foot hits the piste.

5. The **fleche** and any forward movement in which the rear foot completely passes the front foot is forbidden. Any offence will be penalised as specified for penalties in the 1st group (cf. t.158-162, t.165, t.170). Any hit scored by the fencer at fault will be annulled. However, any hit correctly executed by his opponent is valid.

**t.102** In order to judge as to the correctness of an attack the following points must be considered:

POINT  
IN LINE

1. If the attack is initiated when the opponent has his point 'in line' (cf. t.15) the attacker must first deflect his opponent's weapon. Referees must ensure that a mere contact of the blades is not considered as sufficient to deflect the opponent's blade.

2. If, when attempting to find the opponent's blade to deflect it, the blade is not found (**dérobement**), the right of attack passes to the opponent.

3. If the attack is commenced when the opponent's blade is not 'in line,' the attack may be completed either direct, or by a disengagement or by a cutover, or else be preceded by feints (cf. t.103) which oblige the opponent to parry.

**t.103** 1. In compound attacks the feint must be correctly carried out, i.e:

FEINTS

a) A feint with the point, with the arm straightened and the point threatening the target continuously.

b) A feint with a cut, the arm straightened, the blade and the arm forming an obtuse angle of about 135°, with the cutting edge threatening a valid part of the target.

2. If during a compound attack the opponent finds the blade during one of the feints, he has the right to riposte.

3. In a compound attack the opponent has the right to stop-hit; but, in order to be valid, the stop hit must precede the last movement of the attack by one period

BEAT  
COUNTER

STOP  
HIT

of fencing time, i.e. the **stop hit** must arrive before the attacker has started the last movement of the attack itself.

**t.104** **Attacks by beats on the blade:** 1. In an attack by beating on the blade, the attack is correctly carried out and retains its priority when the beat is made **on the foible of the opponent's blade**, i.e. the two-thirds of the blade furthest from the guard.

2. In an attack by beating on the blade, when the beat is made **on the forte of the opponent's blade**, i.e. the one-third of the blade nearest the guard, the attack is badly executed and the beat gives the opponent the right to an immediate riposte.

**t.105** 1. The parry gives the right to **riposte**; a simple riposte may be direct or indirect, but in order to annul any subsequent movement by the attacker, it must be carried out immediately, without any hesitation or pause.

2. Against cuts with the **cutting edge, the flat or the back of the blade**, the object of the parry is to prevent hits made by the opponent arriving on the valid target; therefore:

a) The parry is **properly carried out** when, before the completion of the attack, it prevents the arrival of that attack by closing the line in which that attack is to finish.

b) When a parry is properly executed, the attack by the opponent must be declared parried, and judged as such by the Referee, even if, **as a result of its flexibility**, the tip of the opponent's weapon makes contact with the target.

## JUDGING OF HITS

**t.106** In applying these basic conventions of sabre fencing, the Referee should judge as follows:

1. When during a phrase both fencers are hit **simultaneously there is either a simultaneous action or a double hit**: The simultaneous action is due to simultaneous conception and execution of an attack by both fencers; in this case the hits exchanged are annulled for both fencers.

2. The double hit (coup double) on the other hand, is the result of a clearly faulty action on the part of one of the fencers. Therefore, when there is not an interval of fencing time between the hits:

### 3. The fencer who is attacked is alone counted as hit:

a) If he makes a **stop hit** on his opponent's simple attack;

b) If, instead of parrying, he attempts to **avoid the hit** and does not succeed in so doing;

c) If, after making a successful parry, he makes a **momentary pause** (delayed riposte) which gives his opponent the right to renew the attack (redoublement, or remise or reprise);

d) If, during a compound attack, he makes a **stop hit** without being in time;

e) If, having his point 'in line' (cf. **t.15**) and being subjected to a beat or a taking of the blade (prise de fer) which deflects his blade, he attacks or places his point in line again instead of parrying a direct hit made by his opponent.

### 4. The fencer who attacks is alone counted as hit:

a) If he initiated his attack when **his opponent had his point 'in line'** (cf. **t.15**), without deflecting the opponent's weapon.  
- Referees must ensure that a mere contact of the blades is not considered as sufficient to deflect the opponent's blade.

b) If he attempts to find the blade, does not succeed (because of a **derobement**) and continues the attack.

c) If, during a compound attack, he allows his opponent to **find the blade**, and continues the attack while his opponent ripostes immediately.

d) If, during a compound attack, he **bends his arm** or makes a **momentary pause**, during which time the opponent makes a stop hit or an attack while the attacker continues his own attack.

e) If, during a compound attack, he is **stop-hit** one period of fencing time (temps d'escrime) before he makes his final movement.

f) If he makes a hit by a remise, redoublement or reprise following a **parry by his opponent** which has been followed by a riposte which is immediate, simple and executed in one period of fencing time without withdrawing the arm.

5. When there is a double hit, and if the Referee is unable clearly to judge from which side the fault has come, he must **replace the competitors on guard**.

BEAT ATTACK

PARRY & RIPOSTE

APPLY