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# IFHEMA CUP PRESENTATION

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Framework and Rule set For the Test Event



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## I. GENERAL FRAMEWORK AND CORE RULESET

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This section is valid for all editions of the IFHEMA Cup without exception.

### A. PRESENTATION AND FRAMEWORK

#### 1. Preamble

The IFHEMA Cup is a biannual event. Currently, only tournaments with longswords and rapiers are envisaged. For the test event in the year 2023, only the longsword category will be held. IFHEMA Cup is based on the participation of national teams. These teams are assembled by the federation (or equivalent body) which represents the country as a member of IFHEMA. The principles we want to apply are:

- 1) sportive excellence through technical quality
- 2) gender inclusivity in the XXI<sup>st</sup> century setting.

IFHEMA has absolutely nothing against the standard "Open tournament" competition format nor against any of the other competition formats used within the HEMA community. However, IFHEMA does believe that as a country-based international organization, it can add value to the HEMA community by creating a country-based HEMA competition in a format worthy of the twenty-first century. Therefore, the basic IFHEMA Cup philosophy allows for the avoidance of gender segregation while respecting the freedom of choice on the level of the individual participants.

The core ideas are:

- a model of participation based on national teams, rather than individual subscription.
- a framework that allows for different rule sets based on a basic common core.
- evaluation of technical quality of fighting is integral part of the scoring system.
- gender inclusiveness (one team per country with guaranteed minimal quotas).
- a modified "people fights people" principle in which freedom of choice for fight category (X,F,M) for individual competitors is embedded.

For the upcoming edition of the Cup (meaning in 2024), IFHEMA members shall assemble their national teams as they see fit. But in a fair and transparent, clearly communicated manner, and considering the provisions of the ruleset. The result will be a single, diversely composed, national team led by a Team Captain who acts as the sole contact person for the IFHEMA Administration and/or Competition coordinator. Member countries that fail to complete their teams as required by the quota will still be allowed to compete but with a penalty. (See penalty)

The Framework, which was approved by the GA09 of the IFHEMA in 2022, is stable and will remain valid for all future editions of the IFHEMA Cups to come or until the GA decides otherwise. However, the ruleset is specific for the coming edition and is being tested now, so it is still open to adaptation and changes. The ruleset is determined in collaboration with the curating federation (For the 2024 edition this means the French Federation (FFAMHE)), but

following the framework provided by the IFHEMA. *The For example, the Framework of the IFHEMA does not exclude full wrestling, but the curator of a given edition might decide to exclude it (partially or completely).*

## 2. Registration of the National Teams

Participation in the IFHEMA Cup is only possible as a delegate of the national team assembled for this purpose by each member federation/representative association. However, to participate in the Test Event 2023 during the HEMAC Dijon no national team is required, anyone can sign-up.

Registration for participation in the IFHEMA Cup should be done in time via the national team manager (team captain), who is appointed by his/her national federation or equivalent body. The team manager identifies the tournament in which his/her team wishes to participate and pays the participation fee (not required for the Test Event). Participation is not considered booked until full payment has been made. The team manager informs the tournament management/competition coordinator of the names of the delegates who will be competing for his/her team.

Each team has a predetermined number of starting slots for both women and men at its disposal, as determined by the tournament organizer for that. The number of either gender shall in no case be lower than one for teams of 4 to 5 and two for teams of 6.

Starting slots cannot be swapped, i.e., no men can be entered for women's slots, and vice versa. Teams that cannot fill up the slots can participate, but will do so on a penalty, and will have to enter the competition with fewer participants for the total number of fights.

*Example:*

*A team of 5 composed of only men will be able to enter the competition but will receive a penalty and only 4 of them will be allowed to compete. Same rule applies if a team composed entirely of women sign up.*

*A good composition of a team of 5 can be:*

- *4women, 1man*
- *3women, 2men*
- *2women, 3men*
- *1women, 4men*

## 3. Individual delegate

1. Delegates must complete the participant documents in full on-site and sign the disclaimer and privacy policy.
2. Delegates must be able to withstand the physical stress without risk to their own health. In case of inconvenient disabilities, visible injuries, obvious illness, etc., the tournament management may refuse to allow the person concerned to participate.
3. Delegates must be at least 18 years old. All genders are included and will be treated on an equal par.
4. Delegates will indicate at the moment of the inscription in their national team whether they wish to fight mixed or within their gender category only. The tournament manager takes this into account when putting

together the pairs of competing teams on the competition roster. This requirement implements the “people fight people”, principle mentioned in the preamble.

5. Delegates must not be under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or doping during the tournament. If a person appears to be under the influence of any of these substances, the tournament organizer may refuse to allow that person to participate.
6. Delegates must use the equipment specified and defined by the tournament organizer. This will be approved by the judges.
7. The delegates must know, understand, and comply with the tournament rules used, both the Framework and the Core Rules.

## B. EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

### 1. Protective equipment requirements:

1. Upper body: Suitable AMHE jacket. No opening on the front, 350N minimum. It must cover the upper body from the hips, even with arms raised above the head, to the neck, and cover the arms down to the wrist.
2. Head protection: A fencing mask FIE standard level 2 with a stab resistance of at least 1600N (without important deformation).
3. Occipital protection: A mask cover made of a hard material that protects the back of the head and neck from blows.
4. Hands: HEMA "heavy" gloves protecting the wrist as well (Spes, Sparring Gloves, Pro Gauntlet, Kvetun, etc.).
5. Legs: HEMA 350N thigh protection (plate and/or strong padding) and protector made of a hard material that protects the knees and preferably the shins up to the ankle.
6. Throat protector: Made of a hard material that covers the larynx and protects the neck from impact.
7. Elbow pads: Made of hard material.
8. Groin protection: Obligatory for men, recommended for women.
9. Chest protection: Obligatory for women, recommended for men.
10. Shoes: Sports shoes adapted for indoor practice and that do not leave traces on the hall floor.

Additional personal protective equipment (such as back protectors, mouth guards, etc.) or protective applications are allowed.

Any protective equipment that might be dangerous to the opponent is prohibited. That includes the use of protectors with sharp edges or pointed corners, as well as damaged protectors or equipment.

### 2. Weapons requirements

All tested and IFHEMA-approved sports equipment shall be marked in a suitable manner for this tournament (e.g., adhesive tape and tournament abbreviation with the date). The marking is only to be removed after the

tournament. All blades will be subjected to a bending test before the tournament. The blade should show visible deflection.

Simulators tips must be covered/tapped to a strict minimum (tape; rubber seal). A blunted tip that is too large/imposing must be avoided. We recommend less than 20gr and a contact area less than 1cm in diameter. A blunted tip that is bigger than that will affect the behaviour of the sword and have a higher impact on the opponent as it cannot slide off.

For all weapons:

- Point - The point of the blade must be blunt and rounded, if necessary, apply extra tape or leather protectors.
- Edge - Both edges of the blade must be blunt.
- Guard elements - The ends of the crossguard, guard bow, etc. as well as any guard rings and other guard elements must be rounded. If necessary, plastic or leather protectors must be applied.
- Pommel - The pommel must be rounded and must not have any protruding points or edges.
- Blade quality - The blade must not have any cutting or tearing burrs or nicks.

For longsword

Only fencers with the following characteristics are recommended as weapons:

- Blade length - The length of the blade must not exceed 105cm.
- Overall length - The overall length of the weapon must not exceed 140cm.
- Crossguard length - The length of the crossguard must be between 20cm and 30cm.
- Guard rings - are not permitted.
- Mass - The total mass of the weapon must be between 1.2kg and 1.7kg.
- Bending - The blade must visibly yield at a test weight of 15kg.
- Shield - The shield must be rounded, and injury to the opponent by possible points must be excluded.

## C. GENERAL PROCEDURE OF A BOUT

1. Each bout takes place in pairs.
2. The pairing for the upcoming bout is announced by an assistant or a judge.
3. The fencers line up ready to fight immediately.
4. The judges will inspect the protective equipment and the registration of the weapon.
5. The fencers greet his opponent and the judges.
6. The fencers line up at the assigned positions.
7. The judge/arbitrator asks the timekeeper and other judges "Ready?" and waits for their confirmation.
8. After the judge/arbitrator gives the command, the bout starts.
9. The fencers try scoring a valid hit.
10. If a valid hit is scored or the judge has to intervene, the bout is interrupted with the command: "Stop! "or "Halt" If necessary, the time of the bout will be paused.



11. If a criterion for the end of the bout (point, time, etc.) is reached, the judge/arbitrator interrupts the fight with the command: "Stop!" or "Halt" and announces the result.
12. The fencers greet each other and the judges.
13. Wrestling (Ringen) is allowed only if the Curating Federation of a specific IFHEMA Cup edition allows it. Wrestling is always subject to an opt-in/opt-out on the level of the individual fencer.

If a fencer suffers an injury, he is entitled to demand a break of 10 minutes in total (can be divided).

If a fencer voluntarily does not appear for the fencing for understandable personal reasons, the fencing will be evaluated as a victory for the opponent without any counter hits.

## II. SPECIFIC EDITION RULESETS

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This section is only valid for the current (2023) edition of the IFHEMA Cup, hosted by the French Federation. It is subjected to adaptations and changes for the 2024 edition.

### A. POOL BRIEF

It is recommendable to carry out a pool brief. In this edition, we follow the recommendations of the French Federation.

As presented in the FFAMHE Recommendations on refereeing, it is important to carry out a Pool Brief, between the refereeing body, the table, and the fighters. Please refer to the federal document dealing with this subject that you have been provided with.

The two fighters wait at their corner for the starting signal with their coach if they have one.

The main Referee will ask the fighters and the coaches if they are ready, then the fighters greet each other. The bout starts when the referee announces "Fight".

- The friendly touch of blades after the "Fight" has been announced are tolerated and in no case an obligation. However, any fighter who would take advantage of this action will be sanctioned with a yellow card for failing to show respect to his opponent. If you do not wish to take part in this action, please tell it to the judges/referees before the bout. The referee will then announce it to avoid any confusion.
- A bout lasts 3 minutes and ends when the time is up. There are no points limit. The clock is stopped at each "Halt" that is announced by the referees.
- During the pool phase: If at the end of the time limit the teams are equal, the match ends anyway.
- During the finals phase (*if any is held*): In case of a tie in the scoring of both finalist teams, the penalties (cards and double hits) gathered during the entire tournament will be counted, and the team with the least number of penalties will be declared as the winner. In the case where we would still have a tie, then a team sudden death round will be applied.
- The fighters are requested to stop any action at the "Halt"/"Stop" of one of the referees.
- The fighters have the right, if it is for safety reasons, to raise their hand in the middle of an exchange and call for the referees.
- For any other reasons, the fighters or their team captain have the right to ask for help from the referees, but only when they are in their corner and by raising their hand. In order to avoid systematic contestations and to discipline the fighters, each side (fighter or captain) has the right to 2 oral contestations.



## B. LONGSWORD

### 1. Validity and Judgement of Hits:

NOT valid zones => Feet, hands, back of the head, back in general, and genital area. Everything else is considered a valid target.

All valid zone hits are worth 1 point, even the head. The hits from the flat are counted, but the referees will ensure the quality of the hits (See Hit Quality).

One-handed strikes are allowed but limited to 2 per bout.

Regardless of the validity of a hit, any weapon that falls to the ground immediately ends the exchange.

A hit made by a fighter who falls to the ground at the same time as he hits is not considered valid (see Hit Quality).

A fighter who falls to the ground and is hit does not cancel the point of the one who delivered the hit on him.

The halt is only given to the fighters at the end of the exchange, meaning after that the after-blow opportunity has passed OR if the after-blow opportunity cannot be performed. (See After-blow Opportunity).

### 2. Hit quality and technicality of a bout:

We pay a lot of attention to the quality of the hits and technicality of the whole bout. We will experiment with several judging methods during the test event to implement this in the best way possible. An additional table jury evaluating these aspects in each bout might be added to the common setup.

To be clear and square, here are some objective points that allow us to judge an insufficient quality of a scored hit:

- If the structure of the striker is broken: Back excessively bent backward, arm fully extended, and wobbly support.
- If the hit is made by collapsing with the hit/falling to the ground/knees on the ground
- If the strike is a wrist jerk involving no arm and/or chest/shoulder movement.
- If the hit is induced by the rebound of a "dead" blade, i.e., one which has been parried and rested on the opponent without any gesture of striking (cf. previous point).

Here are some points that allow us to judge the technicality of a fighter during a bout:

- Variety of technics used during a bout.
- Success of an initiated attack
- Successful defence

We remind you that the referees and jury are the only ones entitled to judge the quality of a strike, as well as the technicality of a bout/action. The fighters and the team captain cannot make any judgment on the quality, they can however, make a complaint by questioning the quality if they consider it was not present. This is applicable only during a bout and for a maximum of 2 complaints. Any complaint made after the time has run out will be dismissed.

### 3. After blow Opportunity:

To frame the After-blow opportunity, we defined it as follows:

A player who has just been hit has one action and one step to attempt an after-blow, i.e., to hit his opponent in return. So, an after-blow can be executed in the present or the next tempo, NOT in the second. This is the After-blow Opportunity.

- If he succeeds in striking his opponent, no points are awarded for the exchange, and the combatants return to their corners.

- If he is unable to strike his opponent with his action and step if he is unable to make a step or a successful sword action, then he loses his After-blow Opportunity, and the Referee calls a halt.

- If a wrestling entry occurs after a step, it is considered an After-blow Opportunity. The fighter then has 5 seconds to attempt a hit or disarm, allowing him to cancel the point. Projections are not allowed. (See wrestling section)

PAY ATTENTION however! If during a wrestling entry, fighter A who has the After-blow opportunity receives a valid hit again from fighter B, the point is automatically awarded to B. The exchange is then immediately stopped by the Referee's "Halt".

In certain situations, a fighter "B" After-blow Opportunity may be cancelled by the fighter "A" who landed the strike, here is how:

- In the case of a thrust/cut followed by a maintained bind and/or a maintained Connection to the body in case of a thrust (see maintained bind\*) by the fighter "A" who is attacking.

- If the After-blow Opportunity for the fighter "B" is not possible when leaving the bind, then the opportunity is invalidated.

- In the case of a disarm, or loss of control of the opponent's weapon.

Note that for an After-blow Opportunity, one-handed strikes at any target are not considered valid After-blow Opportunities.

PAY ATTENTION however that a wrestling entry by the fighter "B" who attacked does not negate the defending fighter's "A" After-blow Opportunity. The rule on wrestling (cited before) still applies. If the attacking fighter "B" is struck/locked or disarmed in 5 seconds, there are no points awarded.

\* Maintained bind/ Enclosure

For a hit combined with a binding to be considered as an Enclosure, it must:

- ✓ be held for a short time.
- ✓ That it impacts the structure of the one who is touched (bent back and/or wobbly body structure)
- ✓ That it prevents fighter "A" sword movements from touching the fighter "B".

#### 4. Double Hits:

On the subject of double-hits, this does not entail any point penalty.

However, all double-hits are counted. Each fighter receives a certain number of double-hit warnings allowed for the entire tournament. If a fighter reaches the maximum amount of "double-hit warnings" his team has two solutions: to divide the amount of "double hit warning" between the team members OR the fighter is eliminated from the competition.

Double hits are separated into two categories:

- Open double: None of the fighters tried having a safe exchange and did not protect themselves.

=> No score + 1 "Double Hit Warning" to both fighters

- Closed double: Typically happen during an exchange after a few strikes and defence, the situation is unclear and both fighters get hit.

=> No score.

#### 5. Wrestling and Pommel strikes:

Wrestling, without a projection also called Ringen am schwert, is allowed, as is an indicated Pommel strike.

In this ruleset projections from wrestling position are NOT allowed due to hard floor. Only wrestling standing up is allowed (disarm, blocks, counter strike). Full wrestling (Ringen) would be allowed only if mats are present on the ground.

A pommel strike is valid when it is made at the level of the opponent's mask, with a clear arm gesture coming to rest lightly on the mask. NO ACTUAL STRIKE. The pommel strike is only indicated. All use of force in this case (i.e., one that physically and visibly affects the recipient) will however be sanctioned with a red card. (See Penalty section)

A wrestling situation takes place in a maximum of 5 seconds before the "Halt"/" Stop" is pronounced. During these 5s, the fighters have the same rules of strikes and after-blow opportunities as in a non-wrestling exchange.

If a hit takes place before the Wrestle, there are three possible cases:

- Fighter "A" who has delivered the strike comes to wrestle. Fighter "B" gets the After-blow opportunity during a maximum of 5s (time of the wrestle). If in this lapse of time, "B" succeeds in setting a valid hit, in any way, he cancels the point from fighter "A".

- Fighter "A" who has delivered the 1<sup>st</sup> strike comes to wrestle, and controls/disarm/strike a second time fighter "B" then he cancels fighter's "B" After-blow opportunity. The Halt is called, and fighter "A" scores the point.

- If nothing happens within the 5 seconds of wrestling allowed, then the one who has achieved a valid hit before the wrestling started scores the point.

## C. FORBIDDEN ACTIONS AND PENALTY

### 1. Generalities

Teams who do not fulfil the female slot requirements when building and signing up their team to the tournament, are still allowed to enter the tournament but will face a 3 points penalty per bout. Meaning that if the team is set to fight eight bouts the total penalty will be  $8 \times 3 = 24$  points. We, therefore, strongly suggest that you get female fighters involved in your team.

For safety reasons and to maintain fairness, as well as to encourage technically refined fighting in the competition, the following actions are prohibited. Furthermore, all actions that constitute unsportsmanlike conduct or which intentionally endanger the opponent are not permitted and will be sanctioned.

1. Kicks with the foot, lower leg, and knee against joints and soft parts, or leg sweeps.
2. Blows with the fist, hand, edge of the hand, forearm, or elbow.
3. Pommel strikes: intimidation is permitted. (cf. Wrestling and pommel strikes section)
4. Blows with the crossguard (mordschlag)
5. Pushing, shoving, knocking down, or similar without a recognisable technique
6. Blows to the back of the head and neck.
7. Needlessly hard blows and trusts to hands and back. Hitting the hands is "OK" but will not score any points.
8. Blocking with your hands to prevent a hit. Your hands are not a shield. Referees/Judges are allowed to give you a yellow penalty for this behaviour.
9. Leverage techniques against joints
10. Throws
11. Needlessly hard blows.
12. Throwing the weapon or equipment
13. Running into each other without having any sword exchange beforehand. Fighters who run into each other without protecting themselves will lose technical points. Every fighter must display good control over his body and weapon as well as technical abilities.

### 2. Colour cards for penalty

#### **Yellow cards:**

1st yellow card acts as a warning, 2<sup>nd</sup> yellow card concedes a point to the opponent, 3<sup>rd</sup> yellow card concedes a point to the opponent and the bout ends.

Two yellow cards for the same reasons will result in a red card.

Yellow cards are personal and valid only for the current bout.

- ✓ Kick.
- ✓ Punch.
- ✓ Full wrestling.
- ✓ Charging and wrestling/push to provoke an exit.
- ✓ Armed strike that is executed after the halt (if armed before the halt, it does not incur a foul).
- ✓ Full hand grip of a moving blade.
- ✓ Presenting the back without protection.
- ✓ Voluntary exit from the fighting area which (not caused by a push/wrestle) in an attempt to sabotage the exchange.
- ✓ Intentional timewasting/inactivity
- ✓ Removal of protective gear before the command "Halt" / "Stop".

### Red cards:

1<sup>st</sup> red card concedes a point to the opponent, 2<sup>nd</sup> red card concedes a point to the opponent and the bout ends. 2 red cards for the same reason will result into a black card and a loss of 5 points for the team. Red cards are personal and valid only for the current bout.

- Crossguard hit
- Voluntary headbutt
- Pommel strike to the opponent's head, the back of the mask and/or the back of the neck.
- Throwing / projection or "Heavy" take down.
- Sword Throw
- Joint lock
- Refusal to obey the judge or to accept a decision of the judge.
- Inadequate equipment or failure to appear.
- Unnecessary force / uncontrolled fencing

### Black cards

**A black card leads to the end of the bout and a penalty of 5 points.**

- ❖ **Tearing off the opponent's fencing mask, protectors, gloves, etc.**
- ❖ **Any kind of aggressive verbal criticism of the conduct or decisions of judges, insulting or belittling a person or the audience, making threats, throwing equipment or weapons, or similar.**
- ❖ **A fencer refuses to salute his opponent before or after the bout.**
- ❖ **If a tournament participant behaves in an improper manner during the tournament (also outside the bouts), he will be excluded from the tournament.**
- ❖ **Accumulation of faults, actions, and attitudes of a fighter.**

An accumulation of faults, actions, and attitudes of a fighter may lead to an exclusion from the tournament. A discussion with the referees, team leader, and the table will be held, the tournament coordinator may also be involved if the situation is delicate/serious. Depending on the severity of the situation, any black cards can lead to an exclusion from the tournament. It is the responsibility of the tournament organiser to expel the fencer or fencers

from the competition site and/or undertake further action. An proper procedure has to be put in place for such occasion.

### 3. Fouls and Resolution:

Any forbidden action performed prohibits scoring a point, in addition to getting a Card.

Any forbidden action which produces in addition to the foul an obvious injury to the opponent fighter, will pass to the next category. Example: An armed Strike executed after the Halt (yellow) becomes a Red foul if it injures the fighter. The seriousness of the injury is to be considered by the referees to sanction in the best way.

### III. REFEREEING:

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*Please Read the recommendations document provided by the FFAMHE.*

*We expressly invite the Referees but also the participants to read it.*

Inspired by what has been done in Dreynevent for several years, we will experiment with different formats of judging and combinations of them (e.g., line judges, table jury, central referees). This to capture as well as possible hits and technical quality of fight sequences/whole bouts.

For the test event (and the 2024 edition) we will also use the tournaments and judging experience of the FFAMHE.

We welcome any help and/or advise on these aspects, from experienced fighters, coaches, and judges alike.

#### A. REFEREES

The Referees will work in teams of three: 1 main and 2 sides.

- The competition coordinator of the event will also be active during the tournament and can be called upon in case of problems or doubts about a situation.
  - We leave it to the referee teams to decide who will be the Declaring Referee (the one who announces the Start, the Touches, and the Stops).
  - We will not apply a rigid or locked refereeing lexicon beyond "Salute, Set, Go" and "Halt"/"Stop" for bouts. Make sure you are as clear as possible and name the rules when they are significant in your judgment.
- Ex: A's strike on B. Valid area. Insufficient quality. B's after-blow opportunity is valid, no response from A before the Halt, point B.
- We ask the Referees to make a concise but clear statement to the fighters, supported by the ruleset, and, if necessary, explanatory.
  - The Referees possess the right to question a fighter and/or a coach to refine their judgment in case of doubt (this should not be systematic). See FFAMHE Recommendation on Consultation, in the document "Referring Recommendations" provided.

They must, however, remain objective and trust above all their partners. Which will allow to remain in a good dynamic, without too much time wasting.

- In the event of a strong dispute, a time break can happen, and any group of referees can seek the help of the Competition Coordinator or of any experienced Referee available.

A Referee has the right to make a mistake. We encourage Referees to re-set an exchange if there is too much doubt, or if they are aware of their mistake after deliberations.

No post-bout complaints can retroactively influence the results.

## B. TABLE

The table consists of a scribe who takes care of the notations on the score sheet and a timekeeper/scorer.

The table can also consist of a second person taking notes and observing the quality of hits and technicality of the exchanges /bouts. This person is allowed to move around as they see fit to get the best point of view of the fight. It is not a referee. But a referee can ask him/her for help in case of doubt for the quality of a hit.

The table gives the half-time information to the Referees and calls for the preparation of the fighters for the two next bouts, to make everything run smoothly.

If there are 4 secs or fewer left on the clock after the end of an exchange, the bout ends immediately after the Referees have given their judgment.

The contestants and/or their coach have the right to ask the table for the time remaining, which is then announced audibly to the entire crowd.

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We are aware that Refereeing, for both Fighters and Referees, is often associated with frustration and stress in tournaments. We, therefore, expect understanding from both parties and encourage listening, self-discipline, and courteous exchanges.

HEMA tournaments are competitive, martial, and a human experience. The overall atmosphere is in the hands of all the actors of the event. It is necessary to take care together that the actions of only one does not come to disturb the experience of the whole. In this respect, the organizing committee considers the participants as partners.

You trust us, and we trust you.

Now, enjoy the tournament and have fun!

Written by Marine Beaumel, competition Coordinator of the IFHEMA, with the help of the French Federation of HEMA (FFAMHE) and the IFHEMA executive board.