THE WESTERN LISTS
Information for Fighters

One of the most important elements in making the lists more efficient is the help and cooperation of the fighters. The purpose of this pamphlet is to make fighters aware of how the lists are run, and how their cooperation can help the lists to run well.

How the lists are run:

1. **The lists are "seeded"**
   a. This is a long-standing practice used to make the lists both hard and fair. Dukes are separated as much as possible, then counts, then viscounts, then knights, then "invited" unbelteds.
   b. They are assigned the odd numbers on a list for first round matches. Those who challenge them are assigned the corresponding even numbers.
   c. The resulting ordered list is maintained throughout the tournament.

2. **The field is divided**
   a. Once the list is made, it is separated into four parts, one for each field. The fighters on each field will remain on that field until fields are combined in later rounds.
   b. This has two advantages:
      i. You only have to pay attention to one herald.
      ii. Since you are in a smaller pool of fighters, it will be easier to tell when your next match is approaching.

3. **Matches are determined by a formula**
   a. This is based on the order in which the fighters start the first round.
   b. Generally, the first fighter is matched with the first person down the list with whom a match has not already been fought.
   c. Usually, you will fight in about the same place in each round. If you pay attention to the three or four fighters who are just before you in the first round, you can be ready for arming calls in later rounds.

4. **The lists are circular**
   a. If a fighter gets a bye, that fighter moves permanently to the top of the list, fighting the first fight in the next round.
   b. "Fighting the byes" is not appropriate in the original system, but through misunderstanding, a custom has developed where they are. Either way will work. The presiding Royalty will make and announce a decision on this point.

Things you should do:

1. **Sign up as early as possible**
   a. Early signups help speed up the lists. If you are late, you must petition the King/Prince to allow your entry.
   b. When you sign up, print carefully, and indicate the field nearest to which you are camped.

2. **Avoiding fighting your friends**
   a. If you are a belted fighter and there is some compelling reason why you do not want to fight another belted fighter in the early rounds (same outlying group, some sort of oath, etc.), tell this to the lists officials when you sign up. They will try to assign you to different fields.
      i. Squires should indicate their knights, so they can be assigned to different fields if the squire is invited to the "belted" group.
   b. If you are unbelted, and worried about fighting your squire brother, knight or close friend, be sure that your first challenge is with someone on a different field. Field assignments for belted fighters are announced before challenges.

3. **Pay attention**
   a. Be aware of when you are due to fight. It is an honor to fight in the lists, and you should be proud to do so. Part of this pride should be demonstrated by being ready when called to fight.
   b. Remember that the people who herald, marshall, and run the lists are working to help you have a good time. They are not servants. They should be treated with courtesy and respect.
   c. If you have questions, ask. All of the officers who run the lists will be glad to help you.

THE WESTERN LISTS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. **The basic principle** on which the lists have operated since before year 10 is that they should be made as difficult as possible to win, and as fair as possible to fight.

   The reason for this is two-fold:

   a. **It protects the kingdom** by insuring that the next King or Prince will be a person who is experienced in the Society, and not some talented newcomer who has enjoyed more than his or her share of luck on a particular day.

   b. **It protects the reputations** of the presiding Royalty and the people conducting the lists. By strictly adhering to the established system, they are protected from the possible charge of favoring a particular fighter.

2. **Seeding** – supports the first point. Fighters are seeded - spaced out in the lists - based on their ability.

   a. Dukes are separated in the lists as far as is possible. Counts are then separated, then viscounts, then knights, and last, the 'invited' unbelted. The circularity of the lists should be taken into account.

   b. The strength of the individual fighters, within each rank category, should also be considered. In exceptional cases, a very strong, but lower-ranked fighter should be included in a higher rank category. Likewise, the field of a higher-ranking fighter who has declined in skill or health, will be strengthened by stronger fighters.

   c. The presiding Royalty, or the Earl Marshall, or a designated deputy, with the Lists personnel, should conduct the seeding.

3. **An Algorithm** – supports the second point by determining matches based on the order in which the fighters are listed initially, and which fights have already occurred.

   a. The algorithm used is that the first unassigned fighter on the list fights the first unassigned fighter below him/her whom he/she has not previously fought.

   b. Adjustments can be made, but the principle is to deviate the least amount required.

   c. Only by the direct order of presiding Royalty should the system be modified. They should be made aware that this would likely cause a departure from the fairest selection of matches. For instance, the practice of determining matches by who has lost and who has not is inappropriate, and serves no useful purpose.

4. **Circular Lists** – The lists are essentially circular. A 'bye' is not the same as in the standard single-elimination tree.

   a. If byes are not fought, the fighter receiving a 'bye' in one round, will fight the first fight in the next round.

   b. In this way, the effects of the 'bye' are minimal.

5. **Dividing Fields** – Large lists are usually split into several fields, to reduce the time required to run them.

   a. The score sheet is divided into fields, each with a similar number of matches. No match should be split between fields.

   b. Each field has its own worksheet, and is treated as a separate lists, until fields are combined.

   c. When fields are re-combined, use the original order, modified by any position changes made on the worksheets.

6. **The Finals** – There are actually four methods of running the finals.

   a. Established custom has it that the last two fighters fight a two-out-of-three finals, with prior losses forgiven.

   b. One other method requires losses to be retained.

   c. Yet another option retains only those losses suffered against the other fighter in the finals.

   d. The last method causes the algorithm to be applied until there is only one fighter left. This is not recommended.

7. **Score sheet vs. Worksheet** – The order of fights is determined on a worksheet, which is different from the score sheet.

   a. **Score sheet**
      i. The initial seeding is done on the score sheet.
         1) The seeded fighters are placed on the odd numbers.
         2) The challenging fighters are placed on the even number under the seeded fighter whom they challenge.
      ii. The division into fields is determined.
      iii. Results of matches, and the number of each opponent are recorded on the score sheet.

   b. **Worksheet**
      i. This original order of fighters (their number only) is copied onto the worksheet, with the matches annotated.
      ii. The list of the surviving fighters is re-copied for each round, and new matches assigned.