THE WESTERN LISTS

Information for Royalty

The following is meant as an aid to presiding Royalty, to help Them understand the lists, and how They can effectively participate in the running of Crown or Coronet Tourneys.

Items for Consideration

1. **Before the Lists**

    a. There is a series of events, which lead up to the start of the lists.

        i. Each of these events takes time, and must be scheduled appropriately if the lists are to start on time.

        ii. Times for certain events should be published in the Page - specifically lists closing, and Invocation.

    b. For instance:

        i. The Heralds need about 1.5 hours to prepare for court.

        ii. The royal pavilion needs to be put up. Armor inspection must occur, and fighters must have time to arm up.

        iii. Various meetings occur at 9am. Some of these last up to 1/2 hour.

        iv. Court usually takes about 45 minutes.

        v. Invocation takes 30 to 45 minutes.

        vi. The Lists personnel need time after Invocation to set up the first rounds, and to annotate fight cards.

2. **Decisions for Royalty**

    a. **Seeding the Lists - ** ** *Important* ** – Royalty, the Earl Marshall, or Their deputy, should conduct the 'seeding' of fighters, and the choosing of the unbelteds added to the knights' group. <u>This is essential</u> to keep the list fair and difficult.

    b. **The System** – The lists are run using an established system, and with a definite formula to determine matches. While there is some flexibility, it would be wise for Royalty to consult with Their officers before departing from this system. Departures from the system, such as assigning winners to fight winners, and losers to fight losers, are incorrect.

    c. **Fighting the byes** – is not appropriate in the system used to run the lists. The lists are circular, and a person receiving a 'bye', fights the first fight in the next round. However, due to a widespread misunderstanding, there is a long-standing custom of "fighting the byes." Either way will work. The presiding Royalty should understand the pros and cons of either choice, and make a decision on this point prior to the start of the lists.

    d. **The Finals** – there are actually four methods of running the finals. If the presiding Royalty wishes to use one of the alternate methods, the decision should be announced before the lists begin. (See "Finals" on the next page for choices.)

    e. **Late Round Adjustments** – It is possible, in the very late rounds, for a decision to be required as to whether to assign a fighter his/her second bye, or to have two fighters fight each other for a second time.

        i. It has proven popular in the past to allow the remaining fighters to make the decision.

        ii. Presiding Royalty may, of course, choose to make the decision.

        iii. The default of the system is to assign the second bye.

    f. **Separating fighters** – from households or outlying regions in the lists can be done. The lists officials should receive such requests at signup. It is only necessary for the "belted" group, since the unbelted fighters can simply challenge knights on different fields. It can be done later, but the degree of difficulty, and time required, increase dramatically.

    g. **Late arrivals** – can be included, in very limited numbers, preferably before the unbelted fighters are added to the knights.

3. **Speeding up the lists**

    a. Melees scheduled in the middle of the lists cause lengthy delays, and are unnecessary in a smoothly-run lists.

    b. Ceremonies between rounds, even ceremonies as brief as allowing defeated fighters to reclaim their banners, cause a significant delay, especially if the next round must wait to start after the ceremony. If the lists are run properly, there are no pauses between early rounds, and only minimal delays between later rounds.

    c. Royalty can take an active role in speeding up fights that are taking too long. There are methods of shortening fights when the fighters are becoming much less effective. The senior Marshallate can offer advice in this matter.

    d. It would be extremely helpful if attending Royalty would very strongly encourage fighters to take some pride in their participation in the lists. This pride should, at least in part, be reflected by attention and courtesy being paid to the Heralds, and by being ready when arming calls occur.

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, rather than just their rank, should also be considered. In some cases, a very strong, but lower-ranked fighter should be included in a higher rank category. Also, if a higher ranking fighter is declining in skills, or is unpracticed, that field should be strengthened by adding other strong fighters.

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

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. In this method, if a fighter receives a 'bye' in one round, he/she should fight the first fight in the next round.

   b. In this way, the effects of the 'bye' are minimal. The concept of 'fighting the byes' is not appropriate in this situation.

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 <u>initial seeding</u> 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 <u>division into fields</u> is determined.

      iii. <u>Results of matches</u>, 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.