

Adelaide Swords Club

Health and Safety Policy

Date	July 2013
Version	4

REVIEW

It is the intention of the club committee to raise any issues and review this policy as required through club committee meetings.

Adelaide Swords Club Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

This policy is designed to promote health and safety within the Adelaide Swords Club. The committee of the Adelaide Swords Club wishes to promote safety in the club and seeks the cooperation of all club members and visitors for that purpose. It is an individual and shared responsibility; therefore there are many ways in which club members can reduce the risk and incidence of injury and accidents.

Although the sport of fencing is low risk, accidents can happen in any environment. It is the objective of the committee to reduce the incidence of accidents and subsequent injuries to an absolute minimum. The guiding principle when participating in fencing, whether training with a coach or bouts, should be that common sense is always the best guide.

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1. SAFETY PROCEDURES

1.1 General safety requirements

- 1.1.1 The most common fencing injuries are either strained muscles or ankle/knee injuries. All persons participating in training, lessons and bouts should remember the following principles:
- Warm up thoroughly.
 - Understand the importance of correct footwork. Footwork sessions are run twice each week. All members should attend as often as possible.
 - Always wear indoor sports shoes that provide suitable high impact protection and good grip.
- 1.1.2 The floor of the hall can be slippery. Persons training and bouts should exercise caution. If the floor becomes too slippery, stop fencing and alert a committee member.
- 1.1.3 Adequate space must be left between pistes to allow for blade movements and foot traffic. Ground leads and extension cords should be neatly laid to minimise the risk of tripping/slipping. Fencers should avoid leaving the piste while still connected to a spool to reduce obstruction by spool wires.
- 1.1.4 Fencing bags and other personal items should be stored away from pistes and practice areas.
- 1.1.5 Always obey the instructions of club coaches and officials. Be cognisant of advice given by members of the club in relation to safety issues.
- 1.1.6 Any member of the club seeing a person not complying with this safety policy should point this out to the person and politely ask them to take the steps necessary to comply. In the unlikely event that the person refuses to comply, an official of the club should be advised so that an appropriate action can be taken.

1.2 Equipment Requirements

- 1.2.1 Individual lessons
A coach should wear (at minimum): mask, glove and coach's padded jacket. A student should wear all equipment required by the coach conducting the lesson, but the minimum required by this policy is: mask, glove and appropriate footwear.
- 1.2.2 Group lessons
Coach(es) required to wear glove, mask and coach's padded jacket. Students are required to wear breast plate (for women), plastron, jacket, mask, glove, long pants or breeches and long socks, and appropriate footwear.
- 1.2.3 Bouting
Fencers are required to wear breast plate (for women), plastron, jacket, mask, glove, long pants or breeches and long socks, and appropriate footwear.

1.3 Equipment Standards

It is the responsibility of individual fencers to ensure that the equipment they are using is in a safe condition, and ensure the repair or replacement of any personally-owned equipment. Fencers should check their own equipment regularly for any faults.

It is the responsibility of the committee to repair any broken equipment that belongs to the club. If a fencer notices a piece of equipment that is unsafe or needs repair, they should bring it to the attention of the armourer/committee/coach.

Breast plate

Are compulsory for all female fencers aged 10 years and over. Elastic should be in good condition and there should be no cracks in the plastic.

Plastron/Jacket

Should not have holes or splits, or be structurally damaged in any way.

Pants

Fencing breeches may be worn with long socks (and are encouraged for electric bouting). Tracksuit pants may be worn but no skin should show around the ankle. Do not wear shorts, ¾ pants or skirts.

Glove

Must not have any holes or worn stitching.

Mask

Should not show signs of rusting, deformation or weakness in the mesh. The bib should be firm and well attached. There should be no excess wear in the inside lining of the mask. Fencers should ensure the mask fits correctly.

Weapons

Steam: check the condition and attachment of the rubber tip.

Check for split, cracked, broken or deformed blades. Any sharp bends indicate weakness in the blade. Any mild bends should be straightened by an experienced fencer. **DO NOT use a blade that you know to be defective.**

See the appendix for an example of appropriate fencing attire.

1.4 Beginners

Beginners should be given instruction on safety principles (e.g. never raise your blade when people around you are not wearing masks) and how to dress themselves properly with the equipment. Beginners should be instructed by a coach or experienced fencer who will be responsible for ensuring that safety principles are upheld. Senior fencers are expected to be role models for beginners.

1.5 Safety on the Piste

- Never raise your point or cross blades without putting on your mask and ensuring your opponent has their mask on and is ready to begin.
- Be aware of your surroundings: Don't step out on to the piste area without making sure it's safe. Be aware of coaches' lesson trajectories – do not get in the way.
- Do not drive your opponent in to a wall or a hazard.
- Be mindful of your fencing distance
- If you are repeatedly colliding with your opponent, stop fencing until you can correct the error.
- Stop fencing IMMEDIATELY if you think something is wrong, or if your opponent indicates something is wrong, or if your opponent falls over.
- Do not fence if you know your or your opponent's equipment (especially blades) is faulty.
- Aggressive fencing is tolerated; violent uncontrolled fencing is not. Nothing you do should cause intentional pain or harm.

Dangerous fencing

The committee and coaches have the authority to warn any fencer whose behaviour could cause injury to an opponent, him/herself, or other people in the club. Dangerous behaviours include hard or brutal hitting, jostling or violent physical contact, using unsafe protective clothing and weapons. The committee and coaches have the right to expel a fencer they deem to be a danger to themselves or others.

See the Appendix for an example of how to set up the Piste's to minimise trip hazards and provide adequate space between the Piste's for fencing.

1.6 Safety procedures: accidents

In the event of an accident, do not panic, keep the injured person calm and comfortable, and contact the following:

- Any club member with first aid or medical training
- The fencer's emergency contact if required
- Urgent medical assistance (if required) 000

There is a first aid box in the storage cupboard. Please note that small items (e.g. bandaids) should be replaced, and reusable items washed and returned.

If something is missing, or if you take the last of an item, contact the committee.

The first aid box is to be audited by an appropriate representative of the club as required.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Club Committee, Officials

- Integrate, promote and monitor health, safety and welfare into all aspects of fencing and the club.
- Make a First Aid Kit available, and keep it stocked and maintained.
- Maintain clothing and equipment at regular intervals and remove and repair/replace any that are unsafe.
- Ensure all fencers are familiar with the club's occupational health, safety and welfare policy.
- Bar any person behaving in such a manner to cause injury.

2.2 Coaches

- Provide information, instruction and supervision to enable all beginners to fence safely.
- Ensure appropriate fencing etiquette is taught and followed at all times.
- Ensure participants have warmed up.
- Provide support to all fencers.

2.3 Club Members/Visitor Fencers

- Become registered / licensed with Fencing SA so they have the benefit of insurance cover.
- Procure own appropriate personal protective equipment at standard for high intensity work.
- Protect own equipment from being damaged.
- Observe rules where applicable.
- Fence and train in a safe manner.
- Observe all safety instructions to avoid unnecessary risks.
- Be responsible for safe fencing conduct.
- Make proper use of personal protective equipment whenever necessary and when instructed to do so.
- Report any unsafe conditions that may come to their attention to club officials.
- Keep club clean and tidy.
- Be safety conscious at all times.
- Club members, fencers and visitors must not misuse or damage any equipment provided to them on loan in the interests of health, safety or welfare nor place themselves at risk or any other person through their actions.
- Be familiar with the hazards that may occur in the fencing environment.
- Ensure the use and wear of protective safety equipment that is provided for when fencing on the piste.
- Ensure equipment is maintained and generally taken care of.

3. CODES OF BEHAVIOR

3.1 Sportsman's Code of Behaviour

- Play by the rules
- Never argue with an official/referee
- Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials or other players is not permitted in the sport
- Work equally hard for yourself and/or for your team
- Be a good sport. Applaud all good plays whether they be by our team, opponent or the other team
- Co-operate with your coach, teammates and opponents
- Avoid use of derogatory language

3.2 Members'/Fencers' Code of Behaviour

- Most fencing injuries are from muscle, ligament and tendon trauma. Always warm up before fencing
- Inspect your weapon periodically; see that the blade's curve is uniform and that the button is secure
- Label all of your equipment
- Pay club fees on time
- Encourage and assist all beginners and juniors to learn
- No selective bouting
- Be available to assist with official jobs

3.3 Coaches' Code of Behaviour

- Be reasonable in your demands on young children and adult beginner fencers' time, energy and enthusiasm
- Teach new fencers that rules of the sport are mutual agreements, which no one should evade or break
- Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards
- Avoid use of derogatory language

3.4 Officials' Code of Behaviour

- Condemn unsporting behaviour and promote respect for all opponents
- Ensure that your behaviour is consistent with good sporting behaviour
- Avoid use of derogatory language

3.5 Parents' and Friends' Code of Behaviour

- Encourage participation according to the rules
- Never ridicule or yell at participants' efforts
- Applaud good plays by all participants
- If you disagree with an official, raise the issue through the appropriate channels rather than questioning the official's judgment and honesty in public
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities
- Recognise the value and importance of volunteer coaches and officials

4. APPENDIX

4.1 Piste Layout

Piste layout in the hall as indicated in the photograph below.

Use the floor markings as guides to keep the Pistes straight and orientated correctly relative to each other.

Adequate space between score boxes for 2 Pistes to simultaneously fence – approximately 4 to 5 meters and 2 meters from nearest wall for end Piste.

Spool and power leads to be neatly gathered together when laid out on the floor to prevent trip hazard to fencers moving on the Piste.

Spools are to be positioned at either end of the Piste to allow maximum travel possible in the available hall space, but leaving at least 1 meter of clear space behind the Piste to allow for traffic.



4.2 Fencing Attire



Jacket

Plastron

(Females > 10years old to wear breast plate underneath the Plastron)

Glove

Breeches

(Tracksuit pants acceptable alternative, but not tights, shorts, ¾ pants or skirts)

Long Socks

Appropriate footwear

(Sneakers, fencing shoes or cross trainers)

Not shown: Mask.