

Sword Sparring (Jianshu)

Rules and Responsibilities - The rules of combat sport Jianshu are designed with the emphasis on skill cultivation rather than on historic duel reenactment. Nevertheless, the rules reflect a high level of reality, which allows historical Chinese Jianshu techniques to function as they were originally designed.

The Combat Sport Jian will be provided by the Fall Classic. The jian is made from a polymer material. The maximum blade length of the jian is 30 inches. The maximum weight of the jian is 1.5 kg.

Protective Gear required include:

- Fencing mask (Provided by the Fall Classic)
- Chest protection (Provided by the Fall Classic)
- Gloves that protect the wrists. (Provided by the Fall Classic)
- Pants made of durable material
- Groin protection

The Jianshu match is conducted in a square shaped ring. The ring can also be on a Lei Tai. The on-guard position of each contestant is located such that the front foot of each contestant is 5 feet from the center of the court with the competitors facing each other.

The head judge is located inside the ring. The head judge conducts the match and makes all final decisions. The head judge reserves the right to start and stop the match at any time or when he sees any judge halt the match by yelling “hit or break”.

There are four judges. One for each corner of the ring. The two judges on the same diagonal line are paired into one group. If a judge observes a valid technique that scores a hit on a contestant, he/she will call out “hit or break” and raise his/her hand so that the head judge can stop the match to examine the call and then make the final decision.

Each match starts with competitors standing, salute, and on-guard. The restart of the match will start with an on-guard position.

Each match ends when one competitor reaches 10 or more points or at the 3 minute continuous time limit of the match. Time will only be stopped at the head judge's discretion for injury or a prolonged decision. The judges can at anytime stop the match by calling command “Hit or Break” when:

- One or both competitor(s) make valid techniques either on valid target area or off-target.
- One or both Competitors step out-of-bounds
- Warning, foul or disqualification.
- The match starts getting “undisciplined” (etc. wild swings and not protecting oneself).
- Injury
- Equipment malfunction

If a person steps out of bounds out of fear or out of an attempt to evade the opponent's valid technique, then out of bounds will be assessed as normal.

“Out-of-Bound” can be called by the judges when both of the competitor's feet are out of ring boundary. If a competitor performs a valid technique while being out of bound then the technique is no longer valid.

If one is pushed out of bounds by the opponent by a shove or similar, this does not go against the competitor pushed out of the ring. If the opponent continues to push the competitor out of bounds repeatedly, then a warning and fouls will be assessed against the shoving opponent. This is to emphasize swordsmanship rather than encourage a sumo match to force an opponent out of bounds.

Scoring

Valid Techniques

- Thrusting with the tip of the blade.
- Pecking with the tip of the blade in a quick and percussive manner.
- Cutting with the blade in a circular slashing movement and landing with the first 15 inches of the blade from the tip to the center.
- Cutting with the blade in a linear sawing movement. Approximately six inches of movement are required.
- In order to make these techniques to score, all of them need to be executed with clean offensive intent and sufficient force (should cause the blade of the jian to flex/bend slightly). Techniques that do not meet the requirements are considered non scoring.

There are 2 types of “valid” target areas including:

- Primary area: This includes head (front & side), neck (front & side), and torso covered by appropriate protection gear(s). This is considered a major/critical target area, and will be worth 2 points.
- Secondary area: This includes limbs (arms, hands, legs and feet) covered by appropriate protection gear(s). This is considered a minor/effective target area and will be worth 1 point.
- The inner thigh and groin area are not valid targets
- Other areas will be considered as “off target”. All valid target areas have to be covered by appropriate protection gear(s).

Unarmed/Non-weapon techniques

- No unarmed or non-weapon strike is, in and of itself, a scoring action and they do not stop the action
- The only permissible unarmed strike is a push kick above the belt and below the shoulders. The kick shall be delivered with a pushing action and not be delivered with excessive force. Any other unarmed strikes shall be penalized.
- “Stiff arms,” pushes, traps, and checks are permitted (though non-scoring) hand/arm-based techniques.
- Standing grappling, such as clinching the opponent or grabbing the opponent’s hilt or weapon arm, is permitted. No takedowns or throws are allowed. In the event of a grapple, if the action stalemates or stays at a grapple for over three seconds without a valid technique being executed the head judge may halt the action, separate the competitors, then resume the match as appropriate.

The decision on calling a point will be based on the majority decision among the head judge and corresponding judges. The head judge will have final word in the event of any ties. For each head judge and corner judge, the decision on calling a point will be

- Primary (A valid technique is scored on a primary target)
- Secondary (A valid technique is scored on a secondary target)
- No Hit (No valid technique on a valid target area was executed)
- Off Target (a valid technique was executed but not on a valid target area)
- Abstain (Not sure what happened)
- Both competitors perform valid techniques on valid target area simultaneously (where both contestants executed attacks with intent but the follow through landed slightly different time) then.

Doubles & After-blows - A clean technique is one that is delivered, and a competitor cannot counter within 1 second of the initial contact. Failing to meet this requirement will result in point nullification equal to what the second contestant would have scored. Example: Competitor A cuts for the head (worth 2 points) and one second later during his withdrawal is cut by Competitor B on the arm (worth 1 point). Competitor A’s score is reduced to one point for the head blow instead of two. Competitor B scores nothing on the exchange but reduces the value of Competitor A’s strike.

If both competitors are deemed to have struck at the same instance and same target area no points are given and warnings are issued to protect themselves.

Continued failure to execute clean techniques or defend will result in a warning or disqualification. Example: If one competitor is determined to be at fault in the instance of doubles or failure to defend, e.g., if a competitor continually hurls suicidal attacks to the legs every time the opponent cuts for their head and a double hit occurs, the director may, at their discretion, warn the competitor. If the competitor continues to hurl suicidal attacks or not defend themselves, the head judge has the right to disqualify the competitor at fault rather than both competitors. The disqualification shall be for the match and not from the tournament.

Note: If a ruling result in a point given to a contestant then the director will reset the contestants back to the center of the court.

Fouls/Disqualifications - A competitor will be given a verbal warning or foul at the head judge discretion when:

- the competitor behaves in an un-sportsmanship manner
- the competitor performs invalid/illegal techniques with intent to cause injury to his/her opponent
- The competitor shoves the opponent out of the ring
- The competitor shows a lack of control of the weapon such as by striking with excessive force or dropping the weapon without a disarming technique being performed by the opponent.
- Grabbing the blade of the opponent's weapon

Each foul will cause a competitor to lose 1 point and/or nullifies the point gain.

A competitor will be disqualified by the head judge when:

- The competitor was given more than one verbal warning and has accumulated 3 fouls
- The competitor performs invalid/illegal techniques which cause injury to his/her opponent with or without intention
- Throwing or taking down the opponent with the intent to harm
- Striking the opponent with an invalid unarmed technique with the intent to harm
- Striking to an invalid target area with the intent to harm
- Discourteous behavior such as swearing at or arguing with the judges, spectators, Fall Classic staff

Arbitration - Any coach disputing the results of a match and wishing to have arbitration of a match for any reason must notify the head referee verbally within 15 minutes of the match. The team coach must then file a written request for arbitration along with a \$300 arbitration fee to the Tournament Director within 30 minutes of the match. If the arbitration is settled in favor of the arbitrating team, the coach shall receive a refund of the arbitration fee; otherwise, no refund will be given

***A round or match may be stopped by any of the ring judges, the Tournament Official (s), if so desired, based on a breach of these rules herein**