

USA Fencing National Tournaments Tournaments 101

See USA FENCING (<https://www.railstation.org/USFencing/>) for all Regional and National Tournament schedules.

As a fencer or parent new to competitive fencing, the structure, schedules, rules, requirements and even the vocabulary, can be confusing. You may hear discussions about NACs, SYCs, ROCs, ratings, rankings and so forth. What does all this mean?

Which competitions should my fencer attend?

You should consult with the head coach before making any final decisions, but here are some *general* guidelines. Beginning recreational and competitive fencers should start with the FRFC club competition. For competitive fencers the next step is local tournaments (Denver or Colorado Springs). For youth age fencers local youth tournaments have age divisions, denoted by the oldest age allowed in the division, for example Y10 is 10 and under. An athletes "fencing age" is the age as of January 1 of that season August 1 – July 31. More experienced fencers can fence in the Regional Youth Circuit ("RYC") tournaments, followed by Super Youth Circuit Tournaments, the USA Fencing North American Cup (NAC) tournaments, and the USA Fencing Summer Nationals.

How much does it cost?

The entry fees for a competition range from \$35 to \$120, with the local tournaments' fees generally being about \$35.

Which even is the correct one to enter?

The Regional Junior Cadet Circuit (RJCC) is designed to promote and develop strong regional tournaments for the Junior/Cadet aged fencer who seeks competitive opportunities beyond local/division levels but below NAC levels.

The Regional Open Circuit (ROC) is designed to promote and develop strong regional tournaments for the Open/Division I-A fencer who seeks competitive opportunities beyond the local/division levels but below the NAC Division I level. Other competitive opportunities in ROC tournaments are provided for Veteran (40+) and Division II (C, D, E or U) fencers.

Regional Youth Circuit (RYC): The RYC tournaments are held throughout the season, similar to the Super Youth Circuit tournaments. There are no national points awarded at Regional Youth competitions. These competitions are one of the possible qualification paths for Y10 and Y12 events at both the March NAC and the Y10, Y12 and Y14 Summer Nationals.

Super Youth Circuit (SYC): Youth fencers may participate in one or more Super Youth tournaments, however, only the competition where the fencer earns the most points (1 best result) will be included in the revised point standings published after the latest SYC. These competitions are one of the possible qualification paths for Y10 and Y12 events at both the March and/or USA Fencing National Championships.

What events am I eligible for?

You can fence in your age group and in one group up. Once you are 13 on January 1 of the season year you can fence in any event y14 and up. We recommend "fencing up" one age group for all fencers that have been competing for more than one year. If you are interested in fencing up more than one age group you should ask the head coach if you are ready. There is a significant jump in ability between age groups, especially at national tournaments. If you have a national ranking in your older age group, then you are eligible to "fence up" to the next grouping. For example, if you are 10, but have national points in Y12, you can fence in Y14.

What Equipment do I need?

Check out the Entering Competitions page on the FRFC website.

<http://frontrangefencing.tripod.com/webonmediacontents/Entering%20Competitions.pdf>

Do I need to be a competitive member of USA Fencing to attend?

Yes! If you joined as a non-competitive member you may pay an additional fee to upgrade. FRFC club competitions do not require competitive level membership.

How do I register and what is asked?

AskFRED.net is a clearinghouse for fencing tournaments. Many, *but not all*, tournaments are listed here. You can search for tournaments, pre-register, see who else is pre-registered, get the day schedule and find out hotel information at askfred. For almost all events pre-registration is required. Information and registration forms for the NACs and some of the Super Youths are available at www.usfencing.org and (check both schedule and documents links). For specific instructions on setting up a profile and registering on askfred.net see the FRFC Entering competitions page. Note the askfred and USA Fencing profiles are different. You may refer to the Competition Quick Feed” on the FRFC site click Member Entering Competitions tab.

When should I arrive?

The event time listed for a tournament is the close of registration time. You should arrive early enough to check-in, get your equipment checked and warm-up. This is 1 hour to 45 min before close of registration. They will conduct a safety test on your mask and glove and check your body cords. Weapons will be checked with weight and shims at the start of each bout to make sure they are legal and working.

What happens at a tournament?

Assuming the tournament is running on schedule, your event should begin about 15 minutes after the close of registration time. The fencers will be divided into pools of no more than 8 fencers. You will fence every fencer in your pool. These bouts consist of best of five points in a three-minute time limit. The results from the pools will be used to seed the direct elimination bouts (just like NCAA brackets). At most youth tournaments, everyone advances to the direct elimination (DE) bouts. DE bouts are 15 point bout fenced with three 3 minute periods, with a one minute break between periods. If you win your DE, you go on to the next round.

Before you fence, your “referee” will check your weapon to make sure it is working properly. You must have at least two weapons available in case one of them fails. If one fails, you will get a yellow card for that bout. If none of your weapons pass the test, you will not be permitted to fence and the victory will be given to your opponent.

What is a rating, why do I want one and how do I get one?

Ratings are designed to indicate a fencer’s ability. Fencers are rated from U (unrated) to E (the lowest rating) then up to A (the highest rating). Ratings are used to seed the pools at tournaments. Whether or not you can earn a rating at a tournament. The rating classification chart is available on the FRFC entering competitions page. Please Note: Cadet and youth events do not use the E1 or D1 classifications. This means that those events are "NR" until they achieve a C1 level or higher.

Event	Min #	Rated Fencers Required	Rated Fencers Must Finish	Classifications Awarded	
Grp E1	6	NONE	N/A	1	E
Grp D1	15	4 E's (or higher)	2 E's (or higher) in top 8	1 2-4	D E
Grp C1	15	2 C's & 2 D's & 2 E's (or higher)	2 C's & 2 D's (or higher) in top 8	1 2-4 5-8	C D E
Grp C2	25	4 D's & 4 E's (or higher)	4 D's (or higher) in top 8	1 2-4 5-8	C D E
Grp C3	64	24 D's & 12 E's (or higher)	4 D's in top 8 & 4 E's (or higher) in top 12	1-4 5-8 9-16	C D E
Grp B1	15	2 B's & 2 C's & 2 D's (or higher)	2 B's & 2 C's (or higher) in top 8	1 2-4 5-6 7-8	B C D E
Grp B2	25	2 B's & 2 C's & 2 D's (or higher)	2 B's & 2 C's (or higher) in top 8	1 2-4 5-8 9-12	B C D E
Grp B3	64	24 C's & 12 D's (or higher)	4 C's in top 8 & 4 D's (or higher) in top 12	1-4 5-8 9-16 17-32	B C D E
Grp A1	15	2 A's & 2 B's & 2 C's (or higher)	2 A's & 2 B's (or higher) in top 8	1 2 3-4 5-6 7-8	A B C D E
Grp A2	25	2 A's & 2 B's & 2 C's (or higher)	2 A's & 2 B's (or higher) in top 8	1 2-4 5-8 9-10 11-12	A B C D E
Grp A3	64	24 B's & 12 C's (or higher)	4 B's in top 8 & 4 C's (or higher) in top 12	1-4 5-8 9-16 17-24 25-32	A B C D E
Grp A4	64	12 A's & 12 B's & 12 C's (or higher)	4 A's in top 8 & 4 B's (or higher) in top 12	1-8 9-16 17-24 25-32 33-48	A B C D E