Not Your Standard Tourney

Tournaments that Keep it Interesting,
while
Preserving the Spirit of Our Martial Art

by Duchess Kaylah the Cheerful, MSCA, MoD, OP
A Handbook for those who Love a Well Run List
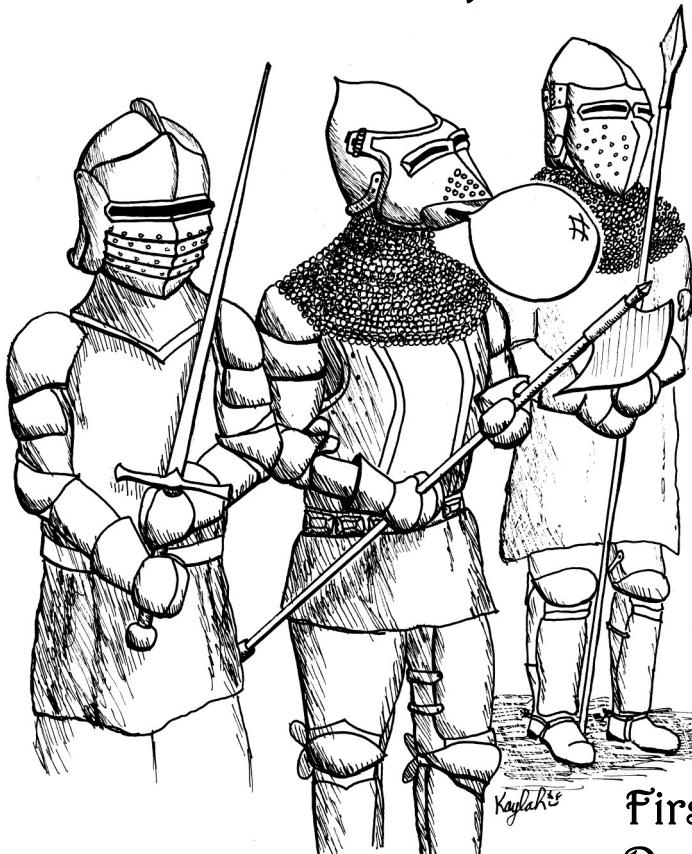
Winter 2026

Electronic Version 5.0

First published on actual paper in 1991.
Revised regularly for the past 3 decades.
Major revision and updating 2026.

It's the eternal quest for perfect tournament lists!

Fun Alternatives!
Keeping it Interesting, while Preserving the Spirit of Our Martial Art

Fun Alternatives to Double Elimination and Round-Robin:
Introduction

I love combat. Fencing, fighting, fun!

You know what's not fun? Arriving at an event and suddenly discovering a whacky format.

It's not fun to be in a tournament that tests your abilities in areas that we simply do not practice.
We put a lot of effort into becoming good fighters within the rules or our combat system.
The tournaments contained in this handbook all honour the combat system in which we work so hard to be competent. They give you a chance to showcase all skill in a fair contest.

If there is a tournament format that you would like to see included in this book, please let me know!
Enjoy your tournaments!

In Service,
Kaylah

Parallax   by Duchess Kaylah the Cheerful

I've been to 25 different cities this year, and they all look just like this list field.

Accessibility

The list field is a busy place. Participants are eager to know what is going on with the tournament. The more the fighter knows about how the tournament is proceeding, the more smoothly it will go.

Visual Accessibility:

When possible, use a **black Sharpie Marker** to fill in the trees, grids and scorecards.

The larger you can neatly print, the better!

Fighters are not wearing their reading glasses!

Hearing Accessibility:

Always announce the "Called to the Lists" in the traditional order.

Always announce the "Salutes" in the traditional order.

Avoid speaking and spinning at the same time. Limit your words to only what is necessary.

When possible, the field herald should face the participants and speak directly to the participants who are up next.

Fighters are not wearing their hearing aides, the hall is noisy, the helmet is well padded with foam.

Parallax   by Duchess Kaylah the Cheerful

"Marshal! That guy is thick as stone!"
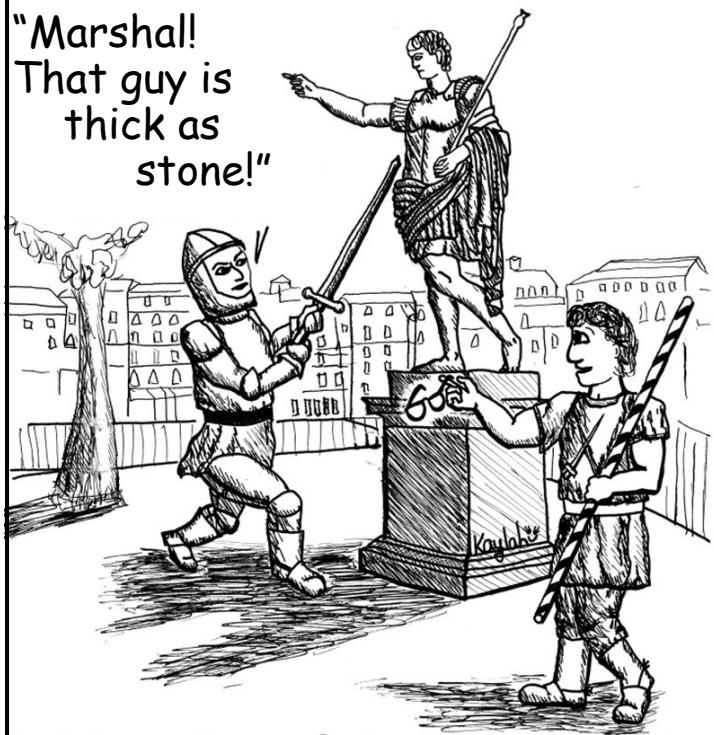
Fighter's focus failure fuels futile Forum flurry on favourite figure.
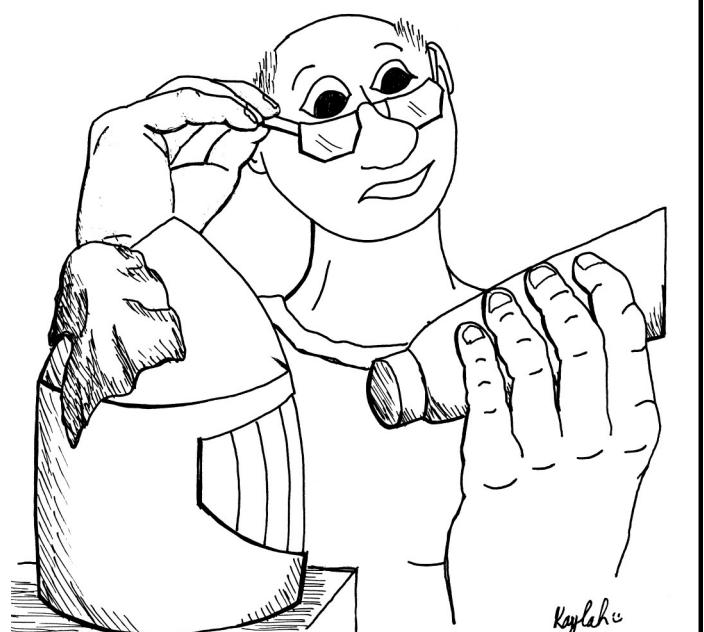
Old age happens to us all. Polishing your helm with joint pain remedy only happens to a few.

The Field Herald's Reference Sheet

Calling:

The field herald will call three sets of names. The standard formula for calling the list is as follows:

1. **"Called to the List":** fighters **names** entering the list <u>right now</u>

2. **"On Deck":** fighters **names** standing ready because they are <u>up next</u>

3. **"Preparing to Arm":** fighters **names** who will be up soon, <u>get ready</u>

Making Salutes:

The ritual salutes are as follows:

1. Please **Salute the Crown of Ealdormere**.

2. Please **Salute the one who inspires you today.**

3. Please **Salute your most noble opponent**.

After the salutes, the marshal will may ask if the fighters bear any offensive steel.

Then the marshal will call "On your guards, lay on".

The field herald does Not call the "lay on", that is the marshal's responsibility.

What's in a Name? Keep it Simple!

For the first round, semi-finals and finals, the full name and titles of the combatants can be used.
In the finals, the names of the consorts can also be mentioned.

The rest of the time, calling the list is for purely for function. Help the list run smoothly!

Use title and first name.
Note: In the case of Japanese personas, their personal name is listed last.

An example of a title really helping in a noisy hall: Two similar names for fighters
"On deck: Duke Trum*brand"*
"Preparing to arm: Sir *Brand"*

An example of *don't do this :* "Preparing to arm: Duke Trumbrand for Duchess Kaylah"
This is very confusing, as both combatant and consort are in the tourney.
Even if the consort isn't in the tourney, extra words are just clutter the message.
Remember: calling the list should be functional.

Tournament Sign Up

	Auth. Card	Inspection		Auth. Card	Inspection
1.			22.		
2.			23.		
3.			24.		
4.			25.		
5.			26.		
6.			27.		
7.			28.		
8.			29.		
9.			30.		
10.			31.		
11.			32.		
12.			33.		
13.			34.		
14.			35.		
15.			36.		
16.			37.		
17.			38.		
18.			39.		
19.			40.		
20.			41.		
21.			42.		

Bear Pits : Fun and Flexible!

The Bear Pit is a fun and flexible tournament that allows everyone to participate as much or as little as they want. Fighters can join in at any time during the tournament, and rest whenever they feel the need.

Variations on the theme of "who has the most wins" abound, such as: wounds retained, mercy limit, token and the ever popular "Poker Tourney".

Try one today and you'll have a bunch of happy fighters!

Basic Bear Pit 101 :

If everyone knows each other's names, just go for it. Ortape a number onto each participant's helm to aid in easy identification, when the defeated fighter reports to the list (ie." #5 was defeated by #7")

1. Setting Up the List fields (Pits):

You'll need more pits depending on number of participants. No one wants to wait in line longer than a few minutes! That's a long time to wait with your helm on.

A rule of thumb is to try and have one pit for every 6 to 8 participants.
For example, in a Bear Pit tournament with 30 people, 5 pits would be lovely, 4 would be adequate.

The more pits you have, the less time needed to run the tournament because everyone gets to play more frequently and get tired sooner. Then you can move on to another tournament or do melees!

2. Ending the Tournament

A bear-pit needs to have a defined ending, usually a pre-determined length of time. Depending on the number of participants, a bear-pit can run from 20 minutes up to a maximum of 90 minutes.

Be cautious making it too long as folks get tired, and tempers will flare.

3. Feeding the Pits: Fighters form a single line and enter the first "pit" that becomes available.

Maintain a single line, and run multiple pits. The fighter at the front of the line must enter the first available pit. This keeps the line moving along, and prevents the phenomenon of fighters choosing which line to join based on whom is in which pit. (You know, avoiding Duke Invincible..)

4. Scoring

The person who loses the fight reports to the list table.

The person who wins the fight stays in the list

Score two points for a win, one point for a loss. This score system allows everyone to increase their final total. It is rewarding for both the winner and the defeated fighter. Earning a participation point also acts as an incentive for the defeated party to remember to report to the results to the list table.

Sample Bear-Pit Scoring Sheet: Most tournies give a participant at least a point, win or lose.
Some tournies give just one point to both participants, win or lose. Variations abound!

#	Name	Score: Use four lines crossed by a fifth for easy totaling	Final Total
1	Battle Bob	~~NW~~ ~~NW~~ ~~NW~~ II	17
2	Lady Mary	~~NW~~ ~~NW~~ ~~NW~~ ~~NW~~ ~~NW~~ ~~NW~~ IIII	34
3	Simple Simon	~~NW~~ ~~NW~~ ~~NW~~ ~~NW~~ III	23

Bear Pit Tracking Sheet
Using the Tally method: Typically, assign 2 points for a win, 1 point for a loss.   卌 II

# and Name	Tally score
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	
20.	
21.	
22.	
23.	
24.	

Bear Pit Tracking Sheet
Using the Tally method: Typically, assign 2 points for a win, 1 point for a loss.   卌 II

# and Name	Tally score
25.	
26.	
27.	
28.	
29.	
30.	
31.	
32.	
33.	
34.	
35.	
36.	
37.	
38.	
39.	
40.	
41.	
42.	
43.	
44.	
45.	
46.	
47.	
48.	

Bear Pit Variations

While Duke Sir Invincible is having a wonderful time and providing an inspirational challenge to all those folks in line, even he doesn't want to fight the same old type of bear pit event after event.

Bear pit variations abound. Some don't require any extra work on the part of the list table, others need a few props prepared in advance. All are fun!

Parallax   by Duchess Kaylah the Cheerful

The victor yet again, Duke Sir Invincible!

Bear-pit tournaments in Hell

Bear Pit Variations

Mercy Limit : After a pre-determined number of victories, (3-5) the victorious fighter returns to the line.

Even if Duke Sir Invincible wins his fifth fight, he must still relinquish the list and return to line. This allows two new persons to enter the pit, one of whom may be able to establish their own mini-dynasty of five wins.

Wounds Retained: The victor of the fight remains in the pit, but retains any wounds from the previous fights.

Retaining wounds adds an extra layer of challenge for Duke Sir Invincible, who now doesn't want to sacrifice an arm for a win. It also can add a sense of cooperation to the fighters waiting in line, along the lines of "I'll take his leg, then you can take his arm, then she can finish him off!" "Yippee! I took his arm!" Group victory!

Reverse Bear pit : This one is a great fight practice exercise. The defeated fighter stays in, earning the chance to "try, try again" and meeting a wide variety of opponents. If you choose to run this as an actual tourney, remember that points are **only** earned when a fighter leaves the pit to return to line. When the winner of the fight returns to line, score 2 points. The defeated fighter scores 1 single point only after reaching the mercy limit, usually 3-5 fights, at which point he returns to line. When a previously defeated fighter wins, score the usual 2 points and return to line. No additional points are scored for those fights he lost.

Tokens Bearpit : Instead of a time limit, the limit is the number of tokens available.
Beware: handling tokens and weapons at the same time is often awkward and may be unpopular.

Variation A : Bank of Tokens The list table gives tokens to the participants from the List Bank (2 for a win, 1 for a loss). It is helpful if the fighters have bags to keep their tokens. The fighter with the most tokens wins. Tourney ends when the bank is out of tokens.

Variation B: Collect Your Opponent's Tokens Each fighter begins with a set of tokens .
When defeated, they give a token to the victor. When your bag is empty of tokens, you are out of the tourney. The Victor either has all the tokens, or has the most tokens after a time limit.

Variation C: Bank of Tokens, Different Tokens for Each Pit Style Each pit has a different weapons form (sword & shield, two-weapon, great weapon), and a different Bank Bag of Tokens. These tokens should be visibly different from each other for scoring at the end. When all the tokens in the bank of a specific weapons form have been won, that pit is closed. There will be several victors; the fighter with the most overall tokens and the fighters with the most tokens of their type of pit. (ie. winner of the sword/shield pit, winner of the two-weapon pit, etc.) Bonus points for the person with the widest variety of tokens at the end.

This variation is an exception to the one-line rule. There will be a different line for each type of pit. If there are more than one pit of a certain weapons type, (eg. sword/shield pit), then there is only one line leading to each of those pits.

Bear Pit Variations

October features the infamous Poker-Card Tourney at Huntsman's Harvest.

This "just-for-fun" variation on a Bear Pit can be won by anyone on whom Lady Luck is smiling!

All you need is a few decks of cards! Join the fun, enjoy the fights and experience the agony of what to discard… do you go for the Royal Flush or five of a kind?

Poker Card Tourney : A Bear Pit Variation

How to Play: Get several decks of cards. The more participants, the more decks you will need.

Fighters form a single line, feeding into an appropriate number of list fields, or "bear pits".
Like a Reverse Bear-Pit tourney, the victor leaves the list and the fighter who lost remains in the list.

Instead of counting up points, victorious fighters earn a playing card from the 'Mega-Deck O'Cards' held by the list table. The card is given on their way out of the list field and they get back into line to contemplate their poker hand.

The defeated fighter stays in the list, up to a mercy limit of 3 fights, then returns to line, earning a playing card.

Only players returning to the line get a card. Win or lose, you only get a single card.

After attaining a full poker hand of 5 cards, a fighter must surrender one card back to the list table <u>before</u> re-entering the list. Surrendered cards are placed in the discard deck, not reshuffled in.

The tournament is over when the mega-deck is empty. It is recommended that at least three decks of cards be used to ensure everyone has enough fighting.

Winner of the tourney has the best poker hand!

Include wild cards for some crazy hands!

<u>Notes:</u> To keep the fun of the random luck element, <u>the fighters must not trade cards among themselves</u>. Strongly encourage the fighters to trust to the luck of the draw, and to continue entering the list in the hopes of bettering their hand!

<u>Variation</u>: After attaining a full poker hand of 5 cards, a fighter, may fight again, but must surrender one card back to the list table <u>before</u> re-entering the line up. This allows fighters to hold up to 6 cards and make wiser choices on which to discard.

POKER HAND RANKINGS

1	Royal Flush*	10♠	J♠	Q♠	K♠	A♠
2	Straight Flush*	4♦	5♦	6♦	7♦	8♦
3	Quads*	8	8	8	8	
4	Full House	A	A	J	J	J
5	Flush	K♥	4♥	J♥	8♥	2♥
6	Straight	6	7	8	9	10
7	Three-of-a-Kind	2	2	2		
8	Two Pair	10	10	Q	Q	
9	One Pair	K	K			
10	High Card	A				

* Hands so rare that it's always unprofitable to assume your opponent is holding them

▢ Kickers used to tie-break via High Card when you both have the same hand

Sorting Tournaments : Hunter Tourney

November is the traditional Feast of the Hare, which often features Dame Eleanor Cadfan's Hunter's Tournament.

Fighters advance up the food chain to become the highest form of animal life. According to the citizens of Skraeling Althing, that is the most noble Hare.

Baroness Eleanor's Hunter Tourney

The goal of this tourney is to work your way up the food chain to become the highest form of animal life: the Hare !

- All combatants start as Wolves.
- Win 2 fights as a Wolf to become a Boar.
- Win 3 fights as a Boar to become a Stag.
- Win 4 fights as a Stag to become a Hare.

All bouts will be challenges, selected by the individual fighters. Coloured armbands will be distributed for easy identification of the various species. Fighters are encouraged to challenge within your own level or higher. If there is no one at your own level yet, you will have to challenge down.

The winner of each bout must report to the List Table, who will be keeping track and dispensing the species armbands (green for Boars, blue for Stags, and red for Hares).

In the great Feast of the Hare tradition, this Tourney is self-regulating. You can fight as much as you want, the only limits being time and the number of willing challengers.

The victor of the Tourney will be determined by the total number of wins.
In a tie, a round robin or best of three shall be fought.

Feast of the Hare : Hunter's Tourney Score Sheet   1 hour time limit

Combatant Name	Wolf — 2 wins to advance to Boar	Boar — 3 wins to advance to Stag	Stag — 4 wins to advance to Hare	Hare — The Highest form of life!
Lord Bob	II	I		
Lady Mary	II	III	IIII	I
Sir Invincible	II	III	IIII	III
Master Fred	II	III	II	

After an hour of fighting, Sir Invincible has won. He is a Hare, and has 3 points in that category.
Lady Mary also is a Hare, but only has 1 point in that category.

Feast of the Hare : Dame Eleanor's Hunter's Tourney Score Sheet

time limit set at: _____

Combatant Name	Wolf 2 wins to advance to Boar	Boar 3 wins to advance to Stag	Stag 4 wins to advance to Hare	Hare The Highest form of life!

Shrewsbury Circle

This fun circular tournament is a bit like a round-robin. Everyone gets to fight everyone! Because the Challenger is in one long continuous position of action, recommended maximum is a circle of 10 participants.

If you have more than ten, simply form two circles and then have a semi-finals & finals with the top scores for each circle.

How to run a Shrewsbury Circle Tournament

Note: all participants will keep their helms on, and weapons ready to use throughout this tournament.

1. Form a circle (or two) on the fighting field. This is the list field, using people instead of ropes. The circle should be large enough to accommodate a good fight.

2. Person #1 enters the circle. They are the Challenger.

3. Person #2 joins them in the circle. Person #2 is the Defender. Fight. Record Person #1's result (W or L).

4. Person #2 returns to their place in the circle. Now Person #3 enters the circle to fight Person #1.

5. Continue until Person #1 has fought everyone in the circle.

6. After fighting everyone in the circle, Person #1 returns to their place in the circle, and Person #2 enters as the Challenger. They will fight Person #3.

Person #1 gets to rest a bit while Person #2 goes around the circle, but eventually, Person #1 will fight Person #2 as they complete the circle.

6. Repeat until everyone has had a turn as the Center Challenger.

Shrewsbury Circle Example Scoring:

Score straight across as each Center Challenger goes around the circle.
The Defender does not get any marks in the tally sheet.

Circle **Defender** ⟶

Circle Center **Challenger**	Battle Bob	Squire Suzy	Lady Mary	Sir Invincible	Master Fred	Total
Battle Bob		L	L	L	L	0
Squire Suzy	L		W	L	W	2
Lady Mary	L	W		L	W	2
Sir Invincible	W	W	W		W	4
Master Fred	W	W	W	L		3

Unlike the standard round-robin, do not mark the scores twice.

In the example, note that Battle Bob lost to Squire Suzy in the first round of the circle when it was his turn in the center as Challenger. But when it was Squire Suzy's turn as Challenger, Battle Bob defended and won.

Poor Battle Bob did not win any of his fights in the center, but as a Circle Defender he did great, causing two of the Challengers to record a Loss.

Shrewsbury Circle : Scoring Sheet

In the Circle Center: **Challenger** →

Around the edges of the Circle **Defender** →

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	Challenger Total
1.	▨										
2.		▨									
3.			▨								
4.				▨							
5.					▨						
6.						▨					
7.							▨				
8.								▨			
9.									▨		
10.										▨	

For Fencing: Round-Robin Finesse Points Tourney

*This tournament style is best suited for fencing combatants. It is not recommended for armoured combat, where losing limbs can be painful. It could be done in armoured combat, but the pain/damage factor should be taken into account as repeatedly striking limbs starts to sting after a while.

Points are earned for taking an opponent's limbs and for the kill:

The kill earns 2 points.
The leg earns 1 point (max).
Each arm earns 1 point (2pts max + 2 pts kill =4 pts)

Example:
2 points for the kill
+
1 point for the leg
3 points earned
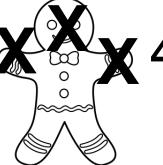
The strategy here is to play with your food! Draw blood on your opponent before the kill and earn more points! A fencing Laurel tells me this is actually period.

One caveat: an opponent that has lost both arms and can not defend themselves must be dispatched immediately. This mercy avoids the cheesy move of taking the leg of an armless opponent prior to the kill.

Track the progress of the fight on the gingerbread men. Each participant gets their own score sheet. Even if they don't get the kill, they may still earn points with finesse.

Examples Individual Personal Tracking sheets:

Participants may give their tracking sheet to the list table to fill in during the fight, or fill in their own tracking sheets after the fight.

Battle Bob's Score Sheet	Squire Suzy	Rapier Ralph	Total Points Earned
	2	4	6

In this example, Battle Bob killed Squire Suzy, earning 2 points for the kill. However, Suzy took Bob's arm during the fight, so she earns 1 point.

In Bob's fight with Ralph, he took both of Ralph's arms, then the mercy kill, earning 4 points. Ralph did manage to take Bob's leg, scoring 1 point.

Squire Suzy's Score Sheet	Battle Bob	Rapier Ralph	Total Points Earned
	1	4	5

Rapier Ralph's Score Sheet	Battle Bob	Squire Suzy	Total Points Earned
	1	1	2

Round-Robin Finesse Points Tournament

**Individual Tracking Form for up to 14 Participants**

Score: 2 points for the kill; 1 point each arm (up to 2 points); 1 point for the leg (maximum 1 leg!).

*Once both arms are gone, you must dispatch your opponent immediately.

No, you can't take a free and easy leg from an no-arm opponent. That's just cheesy!*
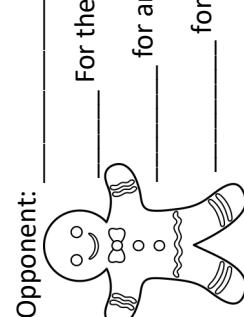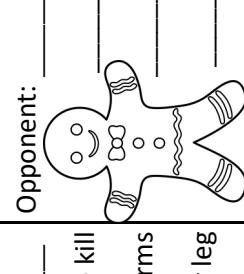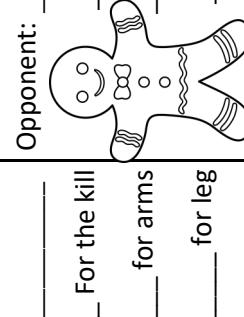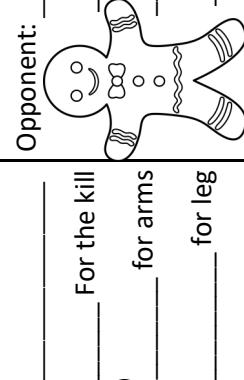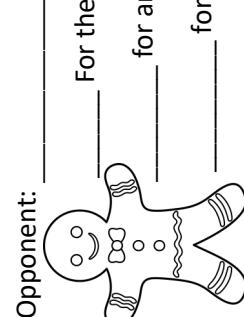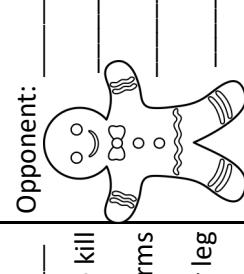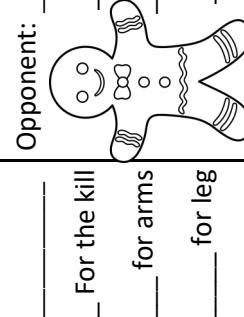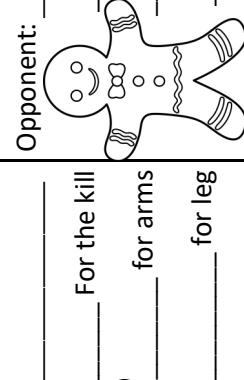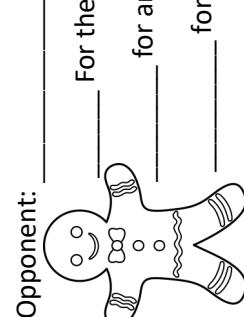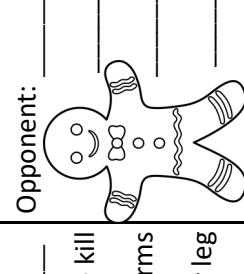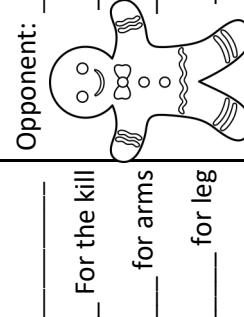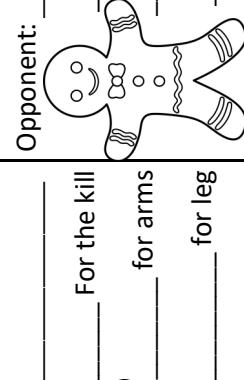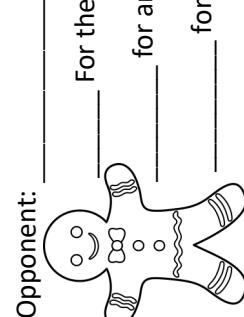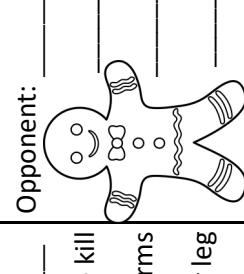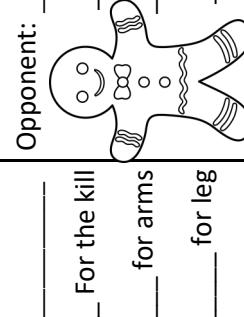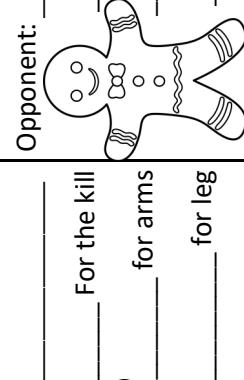
Tracking form for: _____

(fighter's name here)

Examples

X X

1 point for the arm
+ 1 point for the leg
+ 2 points for the kill
5 points earned

1 points for **each** arm
+2 points for the kill
4 points earned

Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____	Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____
Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____	Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____
Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____	Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____
Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____	Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____
Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____	Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____
Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____	Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____
Opponent: _____ ____ For the kill ____ for arms ____ for leg Total: ____	Final Score: Add up all boxes _____

Random Draw Tournaments

No list tree! Just a pile of cards. The emphasis here is on the word "Random". Yes, this will be very random. The byes will appear randomly. The fighters will fight random opponents which will be a mix of persons with different numbers of lives. You may fight the same person twice, or more. Let the randomness ensue!

Random Draw can be run with any number of lives, from 1 - 3, depending on the number of participants and their energy levels.

However, like the round-robin format, it's annoying if someone drops out mid-tournament. In this case, it's particularly frustrating because there's no way to get back your lives that you lost to the drop-out. So in practice, 3 lives is the most recommended.

How to Run a Random Draw Tournament

Random draw tournaments have the advantage that they can be run with any number of lives and any number of participants. The disadvantage is that the odds are good that someone in the tourney will complain that they have had to fight the same person twice.

1. Sign Up: Each participant's name goes onto a card. Mark the number of lives the participant has at the start. One easy method is write numbers on the card, each number is a life.

2. Shuffle & Draw: Give the cards a good shuffle. Now find someone with a high rank and ask them to take responsibility for the draw. This is useful for the list-person because you can always say "Not my fault you're fighting Super Duke this round. Her Majesty drew the cards." Yes, this is a great opportunity to pass the buck upwards!

    As the high ranking person draws the fights, remember keep the cards together in pairs!

3. Calling the List: Give the first three pairs of cards to the field-herald. A good list herald will announce the pairs as follows: The first set will be "Called to the List", the second set will be "now arming" and the third set will be "Preparing to Arm".

4. Marking the Results: After each bout, the field-herald will return the pair of cards to you with the victor on top. Or if you don't have a field herald, the loser will bring both cards to the list table. Cross off one of the lives from the card of the defeated fighter. Put both cards back into the shuffle pile.

****   If one of the participants is out of lives, remove their card to someplace safe where it won't accidentally get shuffled back into the tournament.****

Sir Super Whack Lives: **1** **2** **3**	Vs.	Lord Hopeful Lives: **1** **2** ~~**3**~~

> Sir Super Whack defeats Lord Hopeful.
> Lord Hopeful is now down to 2 lives.
> Cross off the third life.

5. Continuing the Round: Give the field-herald the next pair of cards.

6. End of the Round: When you are out of cards, everyone has fought this round.

Now return to Step 2 to re-shuffle and re-draw for the next round.

Why Bother with List Trees?
The Challenges of Random Draw Tournaments

The Twelfth Night season is a time for games! Folks cheerfully roll the dice and play the odds to win.

Frequently we hear combatants who have encountered each other in the lists say: "Oh no! What were the odds that we car pooled together to this event six hours away and we end up fighting each other?"

Well, in the Twelfth night spirit, let's do the math! Come on, it will be fun!

For those of you with advanced Engineering and Mathematics degrees, watching stick-jocks calculated probabilities could be a Twelfth night treat all in itself! I fully expect to hear from you if there are errors in the calculations in below !

(You—in the front row with your hand in the air saying "Ooo! Ooo!" Yes, for a single elimination tourney tree in which each combatant has a 50% chance of winning, the answer is $1/2^{n-1}$ where n represents the number of pairings.)

Why Do I Keep Fighting The Same Person Over and Over Again?

Fun With Numbers : Understanding Random Draw Statistics

Random draw tournaments have the advantage that they can be run with any number of lives and any number of participants. The disadvantage is that the odds are good that someone in the tourney will complain that they have had to fight the same person twice.

So you drove six hours and you're going to enter the tournament. What are the odds that you will fight your carpool friend, "Battle Bob" from your home fight practice?

If there are 4 participants in a random draw tournament, the probability of meeting your buddy, Battle Bob in the first round can be calculated as:

> **P(fighting Battle Bob in any given round) = 1/(number of participants in tourney –1)**

There are three slots available in the tournament, but only one of those slots results in you fighting Buddy Bob.

1. You
2.
3.
4.

Once your name has already been drawn, there are three participants left in the hat.

The probability of drawing Battle Bob is 1 of 3, or 33%.

In a random draw tournament, <u>each round is independent of the next round</u>. Even if you get through the first round without meeting Battle Bob, the formula applies again for the second round.

If this was a two-life tourney, after the first round no one has yet been eliminated. So the odds of meeting in the second round are exactly the same as meeting in the first round! (ie. 1/3 or 33%)

What is the probability of you meeting Battle Bob in <u>both</u> the first and second rounds? Just multiply the two probabilities, 1/3 x 1/3 = 1/9, or 11%

Of course, we know that Lord Murphy has quite a sense of humour and it will feel like you meet Battle Bob a lot more than the mathematics would suggest.

Speed Tourney : Double Elimination without a List Tree

How to Run a Speed Tournament

The basic premise is that everyone starts with two-lives. The line folds randomly, and folks fight the person across from them. This creates two groups: 2-life and 1-life. The 1's fight each other, and folks with no lives left are eliminated. Then the 2's fight each other, which sends folks over to the 1-life side of the field,

Alternate these rounds until there is only a few fighters left, and enact a finals.

Example: 13 fighters with a 2vs.2 Crossover Finals

All the fighters start with 2 lives (green).

The marshal has chosen a fold to start the tourney.

The fighters at the end of the line walk out and forward to meet their partner.

Partners fight, all at the same time if the field has space.

The odd man out gets a bye and moves immediately to the end of the field nearest the thrones.

This will be the 2-life side for the rest of the tourney.

I get a bye!
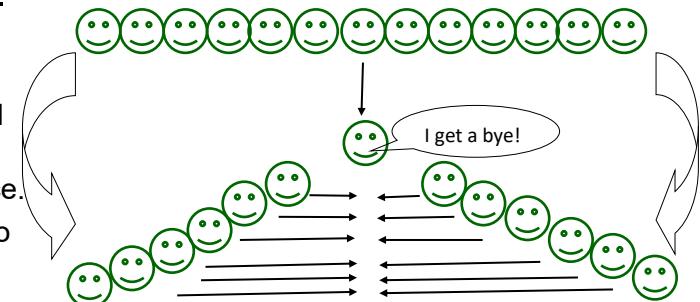
After the first round there are 7 victors with 2-lives, and 6 fighters with 1-life, (yellow).

2-lives wait at throne end of the field while the 1-life side fights

We wait while the 1's fight.

We won! we stay on the 1-life side of the field. There is no crossing back to the 2's side.

We are out of lives. Good-bye.

Next, the 2-lives fight.

I get a bye!

Victorious 2's remain at thrones.

We waited while the 2's fought.

Defeated fighters cross to the 1-life side

Now there are 4 victors with 2-lives, and 6 fighters with 1-life.

1-lives fight again

We wait while the 1's fight.

We won, we stay on the 1-life side.

Goodbye

Remaining 1-lives fight a Round-robin removing one fighter, And leaving a pair of 1-lives

Goodbye

2-lives fight.

Defeated fighters move to one-life side of field.

1-lives fight again

A pair of 2's ready for the semi-finals.

A pair of 1's ready for the semi-finals.

Goodbye

Speed Tourney : Cheat Sheet for 8 - 16 Fighters

| Round #1	Start with: 8 fighters	9 Fighters +1 BYE	10 fighters	11 Fighters +1 BYE	12 fighters	13 Fighters +1 BYE	14 fighters	15 Fighters +1 BYE	16 fighters
#2	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out
#3	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 over	2-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 over
#4	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out
#5	1-lifer side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 2 over	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 over	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 over	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 over	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-lifers, Fight 4 Send 2 out
#6	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	Fight 4 1-life side: Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over
#7	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out
#8	Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out
#9			1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over
#10			Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out
#11						Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1

Speed Tourney : Cheat Sheet for 17 – 24 Fighters

Round #1	Start with: 17 Fighters +1 BYE	18 Fighters	19 Fighters +1 BYE	20 Fighters	21 Fighters +1 BYE	22 Fighters	23 Fighters +1 BYE	24 Fighters
#2	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 9 1 BYE Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 9 1 BYE Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 10 Send 5 out	1-life side: Fight 10 Send 5 out	1-life side: Fight 11 1 BYE Send 5 out	1-life side: Fight 11 1 BYE Send 5 out	1-life side: Fight 12 Send 6 out
#3	2-life side: Fight 8 1 BYE Send 4 over	2-life side: Fight 9 1 BYE Send 4 over	2-life side: Fight 10 Send 5 over	2-life side: Fight 10 Send 5 over	2-life side: Fight 10 1 BYE Send 5 over	2-life side: Fight 11 1 BYE Send 5 over	2-life side: Fight 12 Send 6 over	2-life side: Fight 12 Send 6 over
#4	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 9 1 BYE Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 10 Send 5 out	1-life side: Fight 10 Send 5 out	1-life side: Fight 10 Send 5 out	1-life side: Fight 11 1 BYE Send 5 out	1-life side: Fight 12 Send 6 out	1-life side: Fight 12 Send 6 out
#5	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out
#6	2-life side: Fight 4 1 BYE Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 over
#7	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 5 1 BYE Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out
#8	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 2 over	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 over	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 over	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 over	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 over	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 over	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 over	2-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 over
#9	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out
#10	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out
#11	Finals 1:1	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over	2-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 over
#12		1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 2 Send 1 out
#13		Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1	Finals 1:1

Speed Tourney : Cheat Sheet for 25 - 32 Fighters

Round #1	Start with: 25 Fighters +1 BYE	26 Fighters	27 Fighters +1 BYE	28 Fighters	29 Fighters +1BYE	30 Fighters	31 Fighters +1BYE	32 Fighters
#2	1-life side: Fight 12 Send 6 out	1-life side: Fight 13 1 BYE Send 6 out	1-life side: Fight 13 1 BYE Send 6 out	1-life side: Fight 14 Send 7 out	1-life side: Fight 14 Send 7 out	1-life side: Fight 15 1BYE Send 7 out	1-life side: Fight 15 1BYE Send 7 out	1-life side: Fight 16 Send 8 out
#3	2-life side: Fight 13 1 BYE Send 6 over	2-life side: Fight 13 1 BYE Send 6 over	2-life side: Fight 14 Send 7 over	2-life side: Fight 14 Send 7 over	2-life side: Fight 15 1BYE Send 7 over	2-life side: Fight 15 1BYE Send 7 over	2-life side: Fight 16 Send 8 over	2-life side: Fight 16 Send 8 over
#4	1-life side: Fight 12 Send 6 out	1-life side: Fight 13 1 BYE Send 6 out	1-life side: Fight 14 Send 7 out	1-life side: Fight 14 Send 7 out	1-life side: Fight 14 Send 7 out	1-life side: Fight 15 1BYE Send 7 out	1-life side: Fight 16 Send 8 out	1-life side: Fight 16 Send 8 out
#5	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out
#6	2-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 over	2-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 over	2-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 over	2-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 over	2-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 over
#7	1-life side: Fight 6 Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 7 1 BYE Send 3 out	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out	1-life side: Fight 8 Send 4 out
#8	1-life side: Round Robin 3 Send 1 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out
#9	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over	2-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 over
#10	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out	1-life side: Fight 4 Send 2 out
#11	Semi Finals Crossover 2:2	Semi Finals Crossover 2:2	Semi Finals Crossover 2:2	Semi Finals Crossover 2:2	Semi Finals Crossover 2:2	Semi Finals Crossover 2:2	Semi Finals Crossover 2:2	Semi Finals Crossover 2:2

Specialty Tournies

Specialty tournaments work better at larger events, with a larger pool of fighters to draw from.

Specialty tournaments can be lots of fun if they are sufficiently advertised in advance. Want to have a Danish Axe tournament? Go for it, just make sure that combatants attending the event know what to pack!

It is also good manners to offer a regular tournament for those who are not in a position to fight the specialty tournament.

Remember: not everyone is authorized or comfortable with every weapon form. Some tournies have very specific participation criteria, such as being new, or unbelted, or from a particular century, or within a certain age range.

Weapons Forms

Enthusiasts of particular weapons forms will welcome a tournament in their favourite style. Options include: Great Weapons, Two-Weapon, Buckler, Axe, etc.
For extra challenge, try offering a small tourney for each weapons form with a finals made of the finalists from each of those tournaments.
Ensure the specific weapons forms are well advertised in advance. It's disappointing to realize you didn't pack our buckler, or your gauntlets, etc.

Age and Experience

Go pick on someone your own age/experience! "Newbie" tournaments are always popular. Ensure the definition of newbie is well advertised ahead of time. Commonly, it's 2 -3 years of authorization.

Age is no barrier! The "Greybeards" tournament lets the older folks show off that they can still swing a sword after all these years. Ensure the definition of "Grey Beard" is well advertised ahead of time, as it can vary from 50-65 years of age. Accommodate all the older participants by giving special prizes to the highest scores over 55, over 60 etc.

Century

Some centuries have more enthusiastic followers than others. The 14th Century has a particularly keen group interested in the authenticity of their armour. Advertise ahead of time to ensure they pack their authentic kit!

Time of Day

Notwithstanding the cartoon on the right, "Time of Day" tournaments can be problematic. Early bird tournaments may be sparsely attended. Torchlight tournaments have their own issues, both with ensuring that there is enough light for safe combat and in making sure the participants haven't been indulging in adult beverages prior to fighting.

Personally, I'm fond of starting tournaments at noon.

Parallax by Duchess Kaylah the Cheerful

Well. That explains why the marshal wanted the tourney over by midnight.