Competition Format and Rules

Format et règlement des compétitions

As of WED 21 OCT 2026

Youth Olympic Competition Format

Events

The fencing competition at Dakar 2026 Summer Youth Olympic Games is made up of six individual events. All three types of weapon (épée, foil and sabre) will be used by both men and women. Fencers will compete for the six gold medals. Detailed information on events, including a description of differences in equipment used, allowed target areas, etc., is available in the "Sport Terminology" output on the Games website.

Event	Expected number of participants
Women's Épée Individual Women's Foil Individual Women's Sabre Individual Men's Épée Individual Men's Foil Individual Men's Sabre Individual	- 84 total quota - 14 athletes per event

Weapons

There are three kinds of weapon used in fencing - the foil (or "fleuret," in French terminology), the épée and the sabre - and all will be used by men and women in individual events at Dakar 2026 Summer Youth Olympic Games. The distinction between the weapons is based on their shape, on the target area, and on the rules, which are specific to each weapon.

The three weapons are similar with respect to the basic body position of the fencer (guard position), the footwork, as well as various moves on the piste. There are, however, also substantial differences. For more detailed information regarding weapons, please consult: https://fie.org/fie/documents/equipment

Competition format and progression

Each individual event consists of a pool round and direct elimination phases.

Each individual event will start with a pool round. All fencers will be allocated into pools according to their 2026 FIE cadet rankings and by drawing lots among any fencers who are not in the ranking, with a maximum of seven fencers in each pool. Fencers will compete against all others in their pool. A pool ranking will then be calculated based on FIE rules. This overall pool rank will be used to seed fencers into the direct elimination bracket.

During the pool round phase each bout consists of one period of three minutes. The fencer who first scores five valid hits on the opponent or scores the most hits by the end of the bout is the winner. In the event of a tie at the end of the three minutes, fencers will fence for a further one minute. The first fencer to score a hit is the winner. A draw conducted by the referee prior to the start of this minute will determine the winner if neither fencer scores during the extra time period.

After the pools, a single general ranking is established of all the fencers who have taken part in the pools, taking account, successively, of the index's V/M, HS – HR and HS. (V = victories; M = bouts; HS = hits scored; HR = hits received.)

A pool ranking is then made in the following way:

a) The results written up on the ranking table are added up to ascertain the two indices required

b) The first index, for the initial classification, is obtained by dividing the number of victories by the number of bouts fought, using the formula V/M. The fencer with the highest index (maximum 1) is seeded first.

c) If they remain tied a second index is established, using the formula HS – HR, the difference between the total number of hits scored and hits received. The fencer with the highest index is seeded first.

d) If they remain tied the fencer who has scored most hits is seeded highest

e) If they remain tied, their seeding order will be determined by a draw.

After the pools, a single general ranking is established of all the fencers who have taken part in the pools. This overall pool rank will be used to seed fencers into the direct elimination table.



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After the pool round, the competition is run in direct elimination phases divided into: Table of 16, table of 8, semifinals and finals.

The fencers' overall pool ranks are used as Olympic seeding to allocate fencers in the direct elimination table. The pair draw is not required before the direct elimination phase, to allocate the fencers into the direct elimination bracket.

Each direct elimination bout consists of three periods of three minutes each, with an interval of one minute between periods. There is an exception for Sabre, the first period expiry is when one of the fencers has scored eight hits. The winner is declared when 15 hits are scored or nine minutes have passed. If at the end of regulation time the scores are equal, the fencers fence for a deciding hit, with a maximum time limit of one minute. Before the fencing recommences the Referee draws lots to decide who will be the winner if scores are still equal at the end of the extra minute.

Winners of the semifinals will compete for the gold medal, and losers for the bronze medal. If the score is equal, the final rank of the other fencers will be determined by their overall pool ranking.

Draws

Fencers who are not currently in the 2026 FIE cadet rankings will be seeded by a draw which is organised before the pool round. The draw is required to determine the order of those participants without 2026 FIE Cadet Ranking, or participants sharing the same rank. This draw is required to compose the pools.

Differences between the FIE Junior World Championships and the Summer Youth Olympic Games

There are no team events at the Summer Youth Olympic Games. Also, in the individual World Championships and other individual FIE competitions, there is no match for the 3rd place (bronze medal) and two fencers are ranked third.

Changes since Buenos Aires 2018 Summer Youth Olympic Games

There is no Mixed Continental Team event in the program. Non-combativity FIE rules have been updated.

Sport Rules and Procedures

Tie Break Rules

In case of a tie after the competition time has run out, the so called "Golden Goal" rule applies. In such cases the referee adds 60 seconds. Before starting this last minute, the referee conducts an electronic draw to determine the winner if no hit is made during the extra time. The first hit within the one minute determines the winner immediately and ends the competition. For the avoidance of doubt, in épée the double hit is not to be counted as a determining hit. If there is no hit during the extra time, the referee will declare the draw winner as the winner of the match.

Penalties / Disqualification Rules

Depending on the offence, a fencer/team could be warned (yellow card), or penalised by a point (red card), or could be excluded (P-black card) from a bout or the entire competition.

For more detailed information regarding Penalties / Disqualification Rules, please consult: https://fie.org/fie/documents/rules

Non-combativity (unwillingness to fight) rules for direct elimination phases only

In case of unwillingness to fight when there is a one minute period of fencing without a hit, or without a hit scored off the target, the fencers could be penalised with P cards. In the event of unwillingness to fight, the referee will immediately call "Halt". Unwillingness to fight is sanctioned as specified in the FIE rules table "Offences and penalties".

P-red cards are awarded to both fencers simultaneously, starting with a P-red card. The P-black card is awarded as described in c) below.

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a) When, for the first time, there is one minute of unwillingness to fight, the Referee sanctions both fencers with a P- red card.

b) When, for the second time, there is one minute of unwillingness to fight, a P-black card is awarded as follows:

   i. If the scores of the two fencers are equal, the Referee sanctions the fencer with the lower initial seeding in the competition, which is based on the 2026 FIE Cadet ranking and by drawing lots among any fencers who are not in the ranking, with a P-black card. The fencer with the higher initial seeding in the competition, which is based on the 2026 FIE Cadet ranking, wins the bout.

   ii. If the scores of the two fencers are not equal, the Referee sanctions the fencer with the lower score with a P-black card. The fencer with the higher score wins the bout.

Additional non-combativity rules

a) The P-red (penalty hit) and P-black (the possible losing of a bout) cards received during any one bout are valid only for that bout. They are not transferable to the following bout.

   No P card (red or black) may be awarded in individual competitions at 14-14.

b) In individual competition, fencers who have lost the bout following the award of a P-black card, will be ranked in the final results of the competition as having lost the bout. They receive the corresponding points.

c) In individual competition, the period continues after the awarding of a P-red card

d) The one minute starts again after each hit, each hit off the target, each hit annulled, each penalty hit and at the beginning of each period

e) The referee must record these P-red and P-black cards separately on the score sheet. The sanctions awarded for unwillingness to fight are not cumulative with any other sanction awarded.

f) In individual competition, if, at the end of the regulation time, there is equality of scores, the FIE rule article "Unwillingness to fight (Non-combativity)" does not apply.

Protests / Appeals

Protests must be made immediately by the fencer on the piste. In the individual events, the fencer has in pools, one possible appeal during each bout. In direct elimination bouts, two possible appeals.

In case of the protest against a decision of the referee:

1. No appeal can be made against the decision of the referee regarding a point of fact, except as permitted in FIE technical rules o.105 and t.60-t.63 for video refereeing (cf. FIE technical rules t.136.1/2, t.137.2).
2. If a fencer infringes this principle, casting doubt on the decision of the referee on a point of fact during the bout, he/she will be penalised according to the FIE technical rules (cf. t.158-162, t.165, t.170). But if the referee is ignorant of or misunderstands a definite rule or applies it in a manner contrary to the rules, an appeal on this matter may be entertained. A point of fact includes, but is not limited to, any ruling by the referee analysing what happened on the piste, such as the validity or priority of a hit, whether a fencer left the side or end of the piste or if a person's behaviour is a Group 3 or Group 4 offence.

Protests concerning the world ranking must be made before the head of the Delegations Leaders' meeting.

Note:
For further information please consult: fie.org