



## Who can compete in Herne's Cup?

Herne's Cup is an intermediate-level tournament aimed at developing the next generation of top HEMA competitors. Herne's Cup is an opportunity to test your skills against your peers, ready to compete at the highest level.

As an intermediate-level tournament, our aim is to exclude the top tier of fencers to allow a level playing field for new and developing fencers. We want our competitors to stand out from the crowd and grow in confidence to enter future UK-based and international tournaments.

As such, the following criteria are in place for entering Herne's Cup.

### **Open tournaments:**

Fencers matching any of the following criteria cannot compete:

- Ranked 1 to 1000 in Open Longsword on HEMA Ratings
- Ranked 1 to 100 in Open Sabre, Rapier & Dagger, or Sword & Buckler on HEMA Ratings.
- Have won any medal in an Open tournament with rankings on HEMA ratings, including the Herne's Cup event held in March 2025 (note - Beginner-level tournaments do not count).

All other fencers are eligible to enter. Entries will be checked against HEMA Ratings at time of purchase and any ineligible fencers will be refunded.

### **Women and Under-represented Gender (W+) tournaments:**

Fencers matching the following criteria cannot compete:

- Ranked 1 to 100 in W+ Longsword on HEMA Ratings.
- If you won a W+ Gold medal at the previous Herne's Cup in March 2025, you cannot enter that same event again in 2026.
  - For example, if you won Gold in Women's + Rapier & Dagger in March 2025, you cannot enter Rapier & Dagger in February 2026, but can enter any other weapon of your choice. This is to encourage new entrants and fresh competition without entirely excluding medalists from W+ tournaments.

All other WURG fencers are eligible to enter. Entries will be checked against HEMA Ratings at time of purchase and any ineligible fencers will be refunded.



## FAQ

- *I am ineligible for Women's + tournaments due to my W+ Longsword ranking, but I do qualify for the Open tournaments. Can I take part in the Open tournaments?*
  - Yes you can.
- *I have won a medal at Wessex League Open Longsword B. Does this disqualify me from entering Open tournaments at Herne's Cup?*
  - Yes, Wessex Longsword B medals do count towards our medal criteria.
- *I have won a medal in a W+ tournament. Am I still eligible to enter?*
  - Yes, W+ medalists can enter as long as they are not in the top 100 of W+ Longsword on HEMA Ratings, with the exception of previous Herne's Cup intermediate W+ Gold medalists entering the same event again.
- *I am ineligible for a tournament due to rating or medal wins in one weapon. Does this mean I am ineligible for other weapons where I am not ranked / have not medalled?*
  - Yes, if you are ineligible for one tournament across Opens or W+, you are ineligible for them all (with the exception of W+ Gold medalists). Your success proves you are an accomplished fencer already, regardless of weapon. We treat Open and W+ as separate, however, so if you are ineligible for W+ but not Opens, you can compete in the Opens.
- *Why is W+ Longsword the only criteria for rankings for W+ tournaments? Also, why are medallists not excluded?*
  - Previously, HEMA Ratings only had official rankings for Women's + Longsword. As of mid-2025, it now has rankings for other weapons, but these have a small sample size due to a small number of W+ tournaments internationally, especially for Rapier & Dagger and Sword & Buckler. In 2025, the number of W+ tournaments in other weapons has hugely increased, which means that the sample size will continue to grow and the data will be more representative of true skill level in the coming years. Until then, the same logic stands for using the W+ Longsword rankings as our means test for W+ fencers. We expect 2027 eligibility criteria to make greater use of HEMA Ratings data for other weapons.
  - We also want to ensure as many W+ fencers get a chance to compete at Herne's Cup as possible, which is why we have not excluded all medallists. We want Herne's Cup to showcase the growing strength of W+ HEMA in the UK, and therefore did not want to exclude a significant proportion of the W+ competing population. This is also why we have excluded previous Gold medal winners from competing in the same event again: we want those winners to compete but also want other fencers to make the leap through eliminations onto the podium, and believe this will encourage that further.