

Commentaries and Procedures for the Judging and Directing Glossary

Aplomb The “first” position; taken before assuming the guard position.

The body stands upright; the chin is kept down and the head level with the gaze forward. The heels are in contact, forming a ninety-degree angle. The weapon arm is extended forward and away from the body creating an angle with the point of the foil at about six inches from the ground. The opposite arm is lowered down naturally without touching the body at a slight angle with the hand open.



Appel An “*appel*” is also known as a “foot call.” It is made to gain the attention of the adversary, judges and director of combat. It is executed from the guard position by stamping the lead foot twice and then stepping back to wait for recognition.

Martingale A “martingale” is a leather loop on a French foil or dueling sword (*épée*), fixed between the guard and the grip. The fencer passes one or two fingers through the loop. It is intended not only to prevent the weapon from flying out of the fencer’s hand in the event of a disarm, but also to give more security in gripping the weapon. A “martingale” may also be used on a dueling saber.

Pointe d’Arret A triple pointed metal cap that is attached to the “nail-head” button on the point of the blade. The prongs must be mounted parallel to the edges of the blade and must not extend more than two millimeters beyond the waxed thread.



It is attached to the flattened nail-head by tying it with waxed thread. The prongs are aligned parallel to each of the edges of the tri-corner blade. The thread is tied below the nail-head and then each prong is individually wrapped by passing the thread around the base of the nail-head and around each prong three times. This process is repeated until the three prongs are only slightly exposed. The waxed thread is then wound downward (in the direction of the hilt) and then back up towards the point and downward again. The thread is then knotted tightly and the extra thread at the end cut off. This must be done while carefully holding the *pointe d’arret* in place so that it does not become misaligned. After the procedure is completed for each prong the button should resemble a flower bud with a space between the prongs that is hollow. (In the past a drop of red ink was placed in this hollow to indicate where the touch arrived.) Finally each prong should be wrapped with a piece of adhesive tape and the entire point should be wound in tape from the bottom up. This should produce a button with each point protruding the above-mentioned distance of two millimeters. If mounted in this manner the *pointe d’arret* will not shift or come loose during use.

Wrist Strap A “wrist strap” is a loop of leather or other material approximately one inch wide used in securing the Italian *épée* or foil to the wrist. It is worn over the glove while the pommel of the weapon is inserted under the strap. The strap is placed so that the buckle is facing the outside center of the wrist and is intended to give a more secure and firm grip on the weapon, while at the same time allowing the hand a more relaxed hold.