

Trying to repair that broken body cord and having no success with the trial and error method? Spending all that time rewiring that epee and still having a problem that's sometimes intermittent?

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TROUBLESHOOTING

Up to this point, we have discussed how to find faults with individual pieces of equipment. This chapter is devoted to troubleshooting the scoring system when on strip. You might call them immediate action drills for fencing malfunctions.

FOIL

OK. So now you show up to the strip with your shiny new weapons and functional body cords. And you start fencing (for the sake of discussion, we'll start off with foil). After a particularly rough exchange the off-target light starts continuously going off. Crap. Here are the steps to take to find out what the problem is. Before you do anything, though, make sure the Referee is right there with you as you go through the troubleshooting process. If there is a question of annulling or awarding a point, the Referee should really do the troubleshooting. This is because if you find the fault and not the Referee, and if the annullment of a point is involved, you have just invalidated any possibility of it being thrown out.

Take the body cord out of the weapon socket and place the edge of the guard between the pins of the plug (assuming you are using a two prong connector), twist so that the two pins contact the guard. If the blinking off-target light stops blinking and remains off, then there is something wrong with the weapon. Normally, if the weapon is bad, you replace it with one of your back up

weapons. Down to your last one? Bummer. Perhaps the situation is salvageable.

As we did when checking out our weapon before the tournament, start at the tip. Make sure you still have one. Did it fly out? Is your blade broken? Pretty obvious stuff. If you still have it, twist it to make sure the tip isn't stuck. You can also place the blade on the floor (next to the strip, not on the strip) put your foot on the blade about 12" from the tip and flick the tip against the floor to see if that will dislodge the tip. Works sometimes, but not always and it can wreck the barrel by distorting it. Mostly it makes a lot of noise and looks like you have some magical technique. Check to see if the barrel has come loose. As a last resort, switch weapons with your opponent. If his light goes off, then the weapon is truly dead, borrow another one and take the Yellow Card like a man (because you didn't come to the strip with two working weapons).

If the weapon is good, and the light stays on, then the next thing to do is check the body cord. Partially pull the cord out of the reel socket (but making sure they are still making a connection) and take the blade or a small screwdriver or other piece of metal and short across the pins of the connector. If the light persists on going off, the problem is either the reel or floor cord. Now it is the Referee's problem. To confirm this, unplug the floor cord from the machine and short the B and C-lines against your guard like you did in the first place with your body cord or

BODY CORDS and MASK CABLES

There are basically two types of body cords, one for epee and one for either foil or saber.

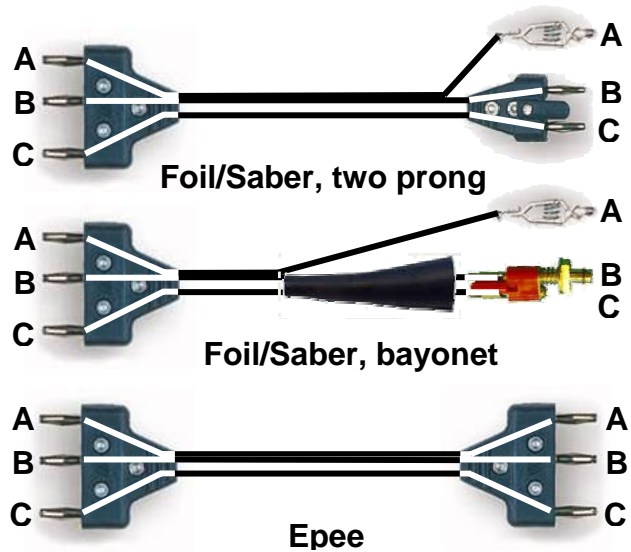
One end of the body cord attaches to the scoring machine, by either the reel or in the case of world level saber competitions the wireless transmitter, and the other to the weapon. The reel end of the body cord is always the same three socket configuration as was discussed in the connector chapter. The other is configured to whatever connector you have on your weapon. Ok, another “duh” moment.

The epee body cord, shown at the bottom has a basic one-to-one connection from one plug to the other. That is, A-line to A-line, B-line to B-line, C-line to C-line, whereas, the two prong foil/saber body cord, shown on the top left, has A-line to clip, B-line to small pin and C-line to big pin. The bayonet foil/saber body cord, shown on the top right, has A-line to clip, B-line is connected to the center pin/probe and the C-line is connected to the metal piece that grounds to the weapon.



Epee

If you don't remember which line is which, refer to the illustration below.



For saber there is a short cord that connects the jacket to the mask to make the mask target area. There are two clips similar to the one found on the body cord, on either end. The two styles, straight and coiled are shown below.



Foil/Saber, bayonet



Coiled



**Straight
Saber Mask Cables**