

Neu Kunstliches Fechtbuch

New Illustrated Fencing Book



Jakob Sutor von Baden, 1612

The following are translations of pages from Neu Kunstliches Fechtbuch dealing specifically with the longsword. The longsword section runs from page 2 to page 19.

- Pages 2,3 - Description of sword fighting
- Page 4 - Ox and Plough
- Page 5 - High Guard and Fool
- Page 6 - Crossed Guard and Hanging Point
- Page 7 - Bounce Strike
- Page 8 - Glancing Strike
- Page 9 - Changer and Key
- Page 10 - Breaking the Traverser
- Page 11 - Plane Match and Change Through
- Page 12 - Bent Strike (Krumphau)
- Page 13 - Wrathful Guard
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- Page 19 - Leg Throw

Description of sword fighting, such that a man can take up the sword and so learn its Guards and Stances.

Pages 2 and 3



Firstly, the phases of fencing with the long sword are the Start, Middle, and End phases. The Start is "pre-fencing" which can be used to fence, whether one has fenced before or not. Opening and pre-fencing present the initial face from the primary and secondary stances.

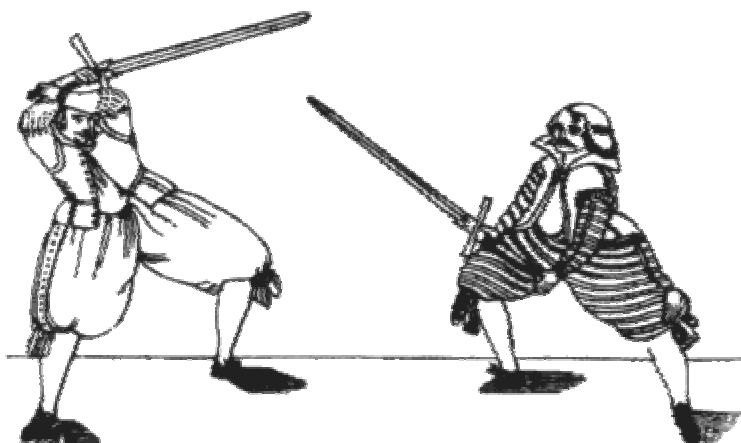
There are four **primary stances**: the Roof, Ox, Fool and Plough. The **secondary stances** are: Wrathful Guard, Long Point, Window Breaker, Unicorn, Crossed Guard, Key, Iron Door, Changer, Lower Guard, and Hanging Point. Against these, the sword strikes are grouped as Principal or Main strikes, Secondary strikes, and Master strikes. The **Main Strikes** are Over, Under, Middle, and Wrathful. The **Secondary Strikes** are Short, Glancing, Gliding, Bending, Bouncing, Winding, Dazzling, Cover, Knee Hollow, Plunging, and Changing Strikes. **Master Strikes** are: Wrathful, Bent, Traversing and Splitting Strikes.

The Middle Phase is the handwork phase, when one is in the blow and counterblow phase of fencing, making use of all applicable methods. The handwork of the Middle phase is the greatest art. All clearing and binding sword moves, winding, changing, following, enticing, cutting, disengaging, lunging, faking, slashing, fore striking, twitching, jerking, displacing, wrestling, advancing, delaying, throwing, and running through, come into play in the Middle. Here we also address the targets, of which there are four, and which is why there are four Primary Stances for man and sword in the opening phase, from which one can properly stand and move.

The End is the completion, where either the fencer or his counterpart will extract himself without being damaged. The sword's pieces, or components, are the Pommel, Point, Cross, Barrel, Grip, Binding, and the Blade. The blade's components are the Strong, Weak, Short and Long Edges, that is the Forward and Trailing Edges. The sword's strong is the region from the Cross or Grip to the middle of the blade. The Weak goes from the middle to the point or end of the sword. The Long Edge is the full edge from the fingers directly to the furthest end. The Short or Half Edge (one can call them sword jerks) involves the gripping of the blade between and against the thumb and palm. Furthermore the sword attack modes are fourfold. The first mode is with the haft, or binding with the cross, pommel striking, charging in, grappling, throwing, and various other methods. The second mode involves cutting, winding, and striking with the Strong. The third

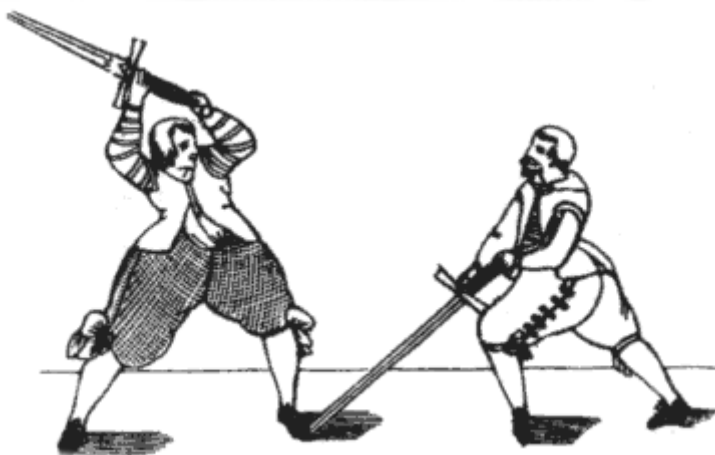
mode involves the middle of the sword, the outer Strong and the Weak, where half swording is used. The fourth mode involves the Weak in Changing Through, Rushing, Peering, and other closing methods. The fencer should view his opponent in terms of Upper and Lower, and also Left and Right, targets, as seen from the figure on the right of the above illustration. Target these to fence, aim high to split the head, and then go for the throat or knees on either side. Move to the proper stance or ward to achieve advantage and superior position and threaten the entire body with your sword by aiming at all openings, Upper, Lower, Left and Right. From these foundations, Start, Middle, and End, rises the art of fencing

Page 4.



The man on the left is in the appropriate stance for The Ox, which is a leading guard with two modes, Right and Left. In the right Ox, stand with your left leg forward, hold the sword with the grip near your head, held high on the right side, so that your forward point stands against your opponent's face. In the left Ox, stand with the right leg forward, hold the sword with the grip near your head and held high to the right, etc.

The man on the right stands in the correct stance for the Plough, which is also two moded, Right and Left, and is only for stabbing out from below. In the right Plough, stand with your right foot forward, hold the sword with the grip near your forward knee, aim the point at your opponent's face as if you wanted to stab it from below. In the left Plough stand with the left leg forward, etc., and hold it just like on the right.

Page 5.

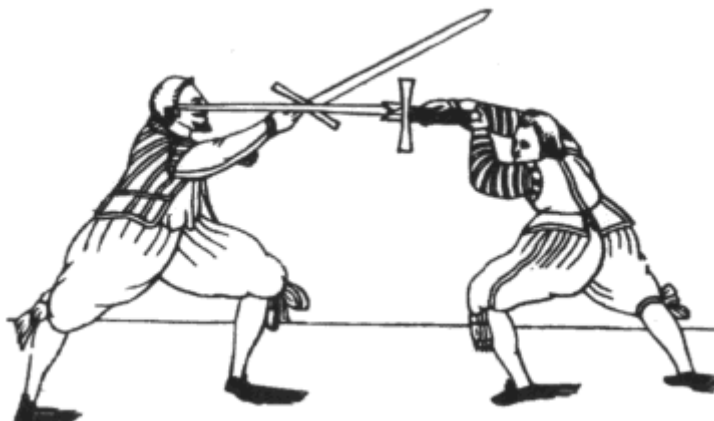
The image on the left side show a man in the stance called the High Guard: Stand with the left foot forward and hold the sword high over your head so that you are pointing high.

The image on the right shows a man in a version of the stance called Fool: stand with the left leg forward, hold the sword with the point forward and aimed at the ground in front of your leading foot, allowing a cut upward with the false edge, and against long cuts to your lower openings.

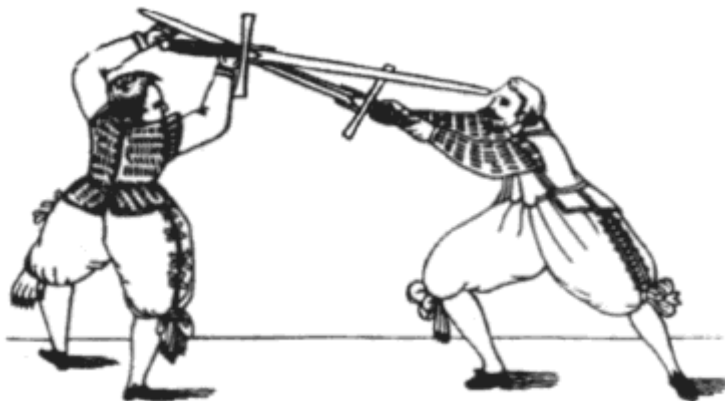
Page 6.

The man on the left stands in a stance called Crossed Point: stand with the left foot forward, hold the sword with hands crossed and with the point forward and pointing down at the ground.

The man on the right stands in a stance called the Hanging Point: stand with the right foot forward, hold the sword with arms outstretched in front of you, with the blade somewhat downward.

Page 7.

The image on the right shows a man in the Bounce Strike which is both a single and double strike. The single Bounce Strike is a response to an overhead strike. Engage first at the Weak, barely touching, then raise the sword over your head and hit from the left with a quick agile strike against his ear, allowing the sword to follow through the momentum with a slice to his head (second strike) while pushing against the strong. The man on the right started in the position called Hanging Point: stand with your right foot forward, hold your sword with arms outstretched ahead and over your face, so the sword hangs somewhat downward.

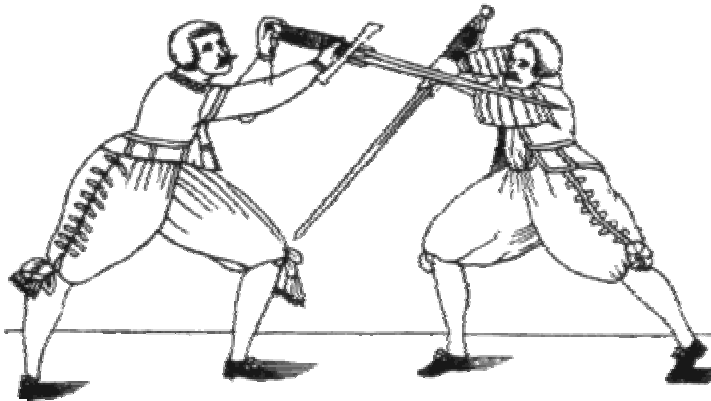
Page 8.

The image on the left shows a man in the position called the Glancing Strike: stand in the High or Wrathful Guard with the left foot forward and when your opponent strikes at you, you strike also, but in the motion of the strike, meet his blow with the false edge and hit with free hands on the inside, step with your right foot to his left while simultaneously hitting him on the head.

Page 9.

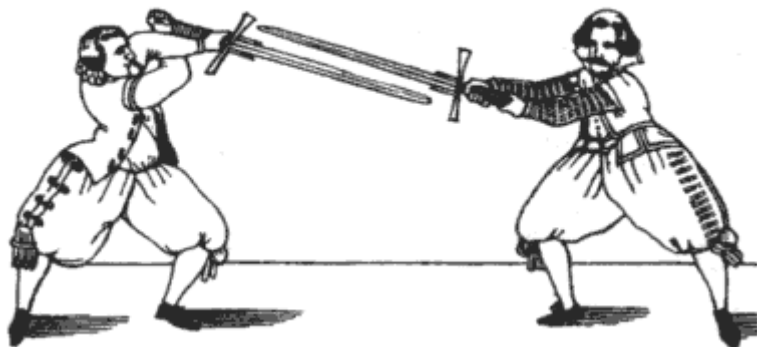
The image on the right shows a man in a Guard stance also called the Changer: stand with your right foot forward, hold your sword with the point near the ground and your arms outstretched so a cut with the false edge is threatened.

The man on the left stands in the Key stance: stand with your left foot forward, hold your sword by the grip with hands crossed in front of your chest and ready to strike, so the false edge lies against your left arm, and aim for your opponent's face.

Page 10.

The image on the right shows a man breaking through: bind your strong to the left against his sword, in contact stab from high downward driving through with your right arm. Hit his blade from the closing with full force from high on your right, then with crossed hands strike with your sword held front and downward, so he is forced to retreat from the strike and has no space to press on.

The image on the left shows a man in the Traversing Strike: when you bind high, or close when he strikes, if he wants to strike forcefully with the Traverser, strike to his front and break through under his sword and strike his throat.

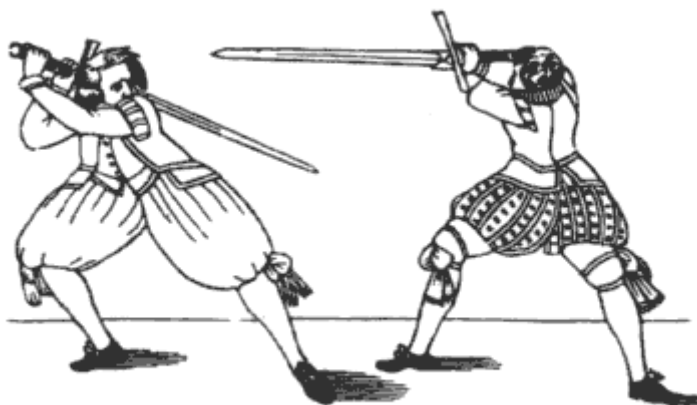
Page 11,

The image on the left shows a man in a Guard stance extending a Long Point: stand with your left foot forward, hold your weapon with outstretched arms in front of your face, so that your far point is aimed at his face. You now can recover the outstretched arms by stepping and striking at his left ear, so he must quickly parry and withdraw, follow through with a false edge cut to his left while sinking down, and thrust with your grip overhead, strike swiftly with a false edge cut to his right ear so that your hands complete the strike in crossed position.

Page 12,

When you move from pre-fencing and come into the High Guard, let the sword drop in front of you and strike on your left, twitch to the head, step and strike a high breaking traverse cut to the right side of his neck with the true edge, subtly switch its course, step and strike a high cut directly from above with the true edge.

These three actions must be struck swiftly against your opponent, giving you more space to switch your lead and head to the left. Pull the weak or false edge upward on your left side and strike through on his right against his strike to your right, again raising your sword high in the air, strike with the middle edge from above down and then raise crossed hands to your right ear as a fail safe and a lead into a false edge Wrathful strike to his left. Thus you have put him away.

Page 13,

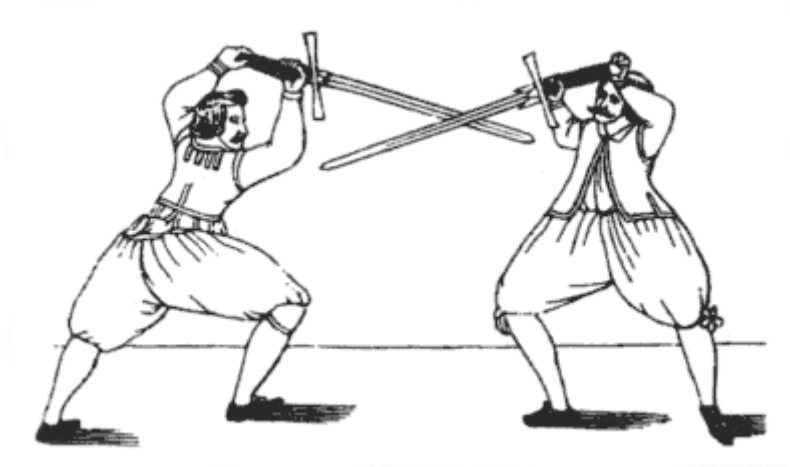
The man on the left is in the stance called the Wrathful Guard: stand with your left foot forward, hold your sword off your right shoulder so that it hangs behind you ready to strike, take more distance than you would for the Ox but use it to entice your opponent forward. Attack your opponent from above then step and flatten to strike in a high traverse cut from your right as he withdraws so that you cut with the half edge to his left ear, close against further withdrawal, move to your right while transitioning left over his head, step and hit his right ear with another traverse with the Weak, striking through the middle line.

Page 14,

From your stance in pre-fencing bring your sword high and transition to the Right Ox (for fencers who must counter with the double Bounce Strike) twitch your sword ahead, strike with a twisting Weak from your right down the sword to your Strong so you can duck your head under his strike while following the spindle, step forcefully with your right leg to his left and follow your unwinding hands to hit your intended target with the far Weak.

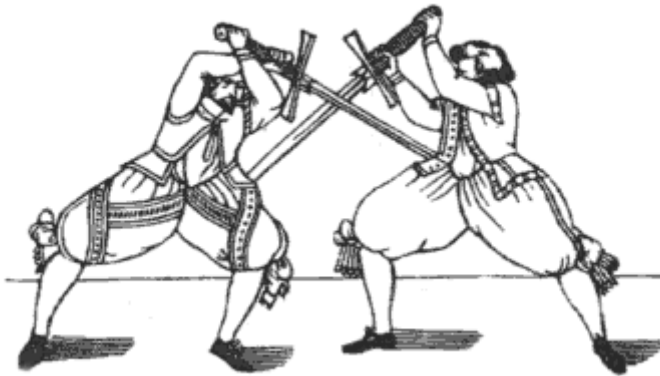
Note that you move to the Ox from your stance by raising your sword to your head, strike with the far Weak directly to his left ear while crossing with your right Strong, then continue on course against his head, hit with the far Weak from the right side to break against this secondary fencing strike, then you will defeat it well.

Page 15,



When he binds with outstretched blade against your sword, react as soon as he makes contact, rapidly disengage and change under and through, quickly flick past on the other side of his blade with your Strong and strike to his ear. From this following through there are many good hits, think about them. Attack once in the pre-fencing from under, then strike him high on his sword, and see that you cross in front and come under his blade where he cannot meet you soundly with the Strong, and let your sword reach far and high under his hanging blade, strike him thus with your quillons under you so that you can put your sword into a half cut to his head.

Page 16,



If you cross from below in such a way that he can't get under your sword, then catch his cross and shift ahead to his hilt, thrust your pommel ahead while extending your right arm, wind your long edge to the outside from below while thrusting out from the pommel. Note that if you attempt a glancing strike against a long strike, target his right side, don't let him come against your sword but change under, strike to his right and drive through on your left and inside his long edge..

Note: this is describing the action taken by the fighter on the left. He is breaking a free strike with a glancing traverse counter to his opponent's right. This is a winding down thrust that starts

from a crossed guard and glances off an incoming blow and can then skip up inside the oppsing blade to counter. See also Talhoffer tafel 6 for a similar setup.

Page 17,



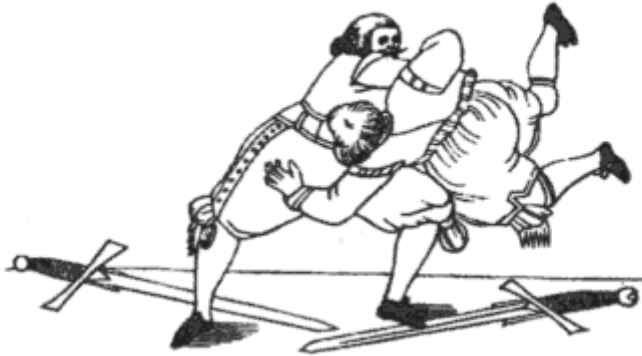
If your opponent strikes high at you from pre-fencing, step and strike from your left with crossed hands and the short edge against his right arm. In this Krumphau (Bent Strike) step full on to him, push your sword through, follow under him to your right while he is raising his arms high so that you can get under them, then drive with your hilt between his arms, take your left hand off the grip to grab your sword's blade and wrench him over. This crosses while the left hand is free, so he thus raises to strike in vain, and you follow after his upward movement to cut against his arms and so not allow him to operate further.

Page 18,



When you have, using the sword, closed under his guard and are in close quarters, throw your sword away and behind him, duck down under and in front of him, and gripping both his legs with both of your hands, pull toward yourself so he falls from the wrenching.

Page 19,



When you and your opponent come so close together by advancing that you must resort to grappling, then step with your right foot between his legs, release your left hand from the sword and with your right hand put your sword under his right arm by thrusting between it and his body, use your left hand to grab his leading right leg, the lower the better, so that with your right foot fully between and beyond his legs so that you can grab, hold and throw to the outside in a wrench over and onto his head.