

West Kingdom Rapier Marshal Manual

What is a Rapier Marshal?

Simply put, Marshals are the people responsible for safety on the Rapier field. From the Combat Marshal who watches for gross violations such as non-combatants entering the field to the KRM making policy decisions, it all comes down to allowing our fighters to compete safely in a fun environment by establishing minimum safety levels and enforcing them.

Combat Marshal

Job Description

Rapier Combat Marshals act under the direction of the Rapier Marshal-in-Charge (RMIC) to oversee the safe and orderly conduct of combat. These Marshals are responsible for the on field enforcement of the Rules of Rapier Combat.

There are specific requirements for becoming a Rapier Combat Marshal in the West. These are:

1. Knowledge of the most current Kingdom Rapier Combat Standards including the Rules of the List.
2. General Knowledge of tournament protocol and West Kingdom Conventions.
3. Knowledge and understanding of the warning process and chain of command.
4. Passing the Combat Marshall authorization process with a Senior Marshal.
5. Must be a member of the SCA.

Notice: It is unnecessary to be an authorized rapier fighter to become an authorized Rapier Marshal.

Rapier Combat Marshals are neutral observers of the combat, keeping an eye out for potential safety hazards on the field. They are not to disturb or distract the fighters except when they view any action that could possibly damage the fighters, their weapons, or the audience.

Armor and Weapons Inspections

To assist the Rapier Marshal-in-Charge, Combat Marshals may also be asked to conduct armor inspections. The following list has been developed based upon the Society and Kingdom of the West Rapier Rules to aid in the job of armor inspection.

This list should not be considered a substitute for having a good, personal knowledge of the rules.

When performing armor inspections please BE VERY AWARE of your hands and their position relative to the fighter's anatomy. Rarely do you need to touch a fighter. Ask the fighter to move fabric such as hoods out of the way if it is obstructing your view. If you need to touch the fighter, such as during armor fitting, ask for permission before you grab them or brush up against them.

Overall

- Make sure there is no skin showing anywhere on the fighter.
- There needs to be enough overlap between all armor pieces that minimum protection for any area is preserved when the fighter is in motion.
- Tell the fighter what you are doing. This warning is especially important when we touch the fighter during inspections. Be aware of where your hands are and do not startle anyone.
- Look at the fighter's belt. Combatants may not wear sharp, pointy objects on the field. If the fighter has a fragile item such as a cell phone, advise him/her of its presence.
- Equipment that fails inspection may be repaired or modified and re-presented to the RMIC for re-inspection. If you have questions about the suitability or safety of any equipment, ask the RMIC for his/her opinion.

Mask

- If any dented or rusted areas exist, ask the fighter if the mask has been tested. Test any problem areas that have not been previously tested, if a tester is available. Ultimately, the combatant is responsible for his/her armor.
- Masks with broken wires are not acceptable.
- Snug fit and the spring tongue are not enough to keep a mask on during combat. Masks must be additionally secured. Mask ties, elastic with Velcro, and over hoods are some common methods. Other methods may suffice. They must prevent accidental removal of the mask during combat. If there is a doubt, have the fighter shake his/her head to make sure the mask stays on securely.
- If the mask seems loose, you may check the grating by pushing on it with the fingers. The mask should not 'bottom out' on the fighter's face.
- Rapier helms must comply with the minimum standards which include rigid material below the jaw line and behind the ears. This standard allows for a gap underneath the jaw that has no rigid material. This area should be covered in puncture resistant

material. Chain mail is neither puncture resistant nor rigid for the purposes of rapier combat. It must be backed with an appropriate material.

Throat

- Skin should not be visible when the fighter tilts his/her head back. Use common sense when checking. It is not necessary to drive your fingers under a fighter's hood and/or gorget to look for bare skin. A visual check will do. You may need to brush hoods aside to check for rigid neck protection.
- The throat (front of the neck) *must* be protected by a rigid material backed by resilient padding or puncture resistant material. In addition, the cervical vertebrae (neck bones which do not extend below the shoulders) need to be protected by rigid material. This protection can be provided by some combination of a gorget, mask or fencing helm, and a drape or hood.

Back of the head

- In Heavy Rapier, a coif or hood should be made of puncture resistant material. No skin should be visible in normal combat positions.
- In Cut and Thrust Rapier, rigid material is required for this area. Acceptable methods include, but are not limited to, some form of 'skull cap' or a rapier helm.

Body and kill zones

- The entire torso including the arm pits and the groin needs to be covered by at least puncture resistant material. Men are required to have rigid groin protection. Do not check. Merely ask if they remembered it.
- For the arm pit and groin, gussets are acceptable. Pay attention to seams in these areas as they wear out.
- Ask the fighter to lunge. Check for overlap in the back. Use this chance to check groin seams.

Limbs

- Arms and legs need to be covered by at least a layer of abrasion resistant material.
- For fighters in skirts, long tunics, skirted doublets: if there is overlap between socks or boots and the skirt (so that no skin shows during normal movements), there is no need to require under leggings. Remember, we are only preventing minor scratches on the legs.
- For C&T Rapier, the elbows and knees must be covered by at least resilient padding. This padding needs to cover all three points of these joints. One point is on the back where the joint bends. The other two points are on the sides. Basically, all the bony surfaces need padding. For out of kingdom fighters, only the elbows need be covered.

Gloves

- Gloves must be made of abrasion resistant material. They do not need to be made of leather.
- The cuff should overlap the sleeve completely. This overlap should be maintained under gentle tugging. The sleeve may be over the cuff of the glove.
- Gloves should not have any holes large enough to admit a blade. Holes tend to develop at the wrists and between the fingers. If you can not spot them on a quick glance, they probably are not big enough to cause a problem. Again, we are only preventing minor scratches.
- For C&T Rapier, the back of the hand, fingers and thumbs need to be covered in at least resilient padding. Both points of the wrist and the knuckles need to meet this same standard. Again, the goal is to protect the bony surfaces. This standard is not a requirement for out of kingdom fighters.

Feet

- Feet need to be covered in abrasion resistant material in the form of some sort of shoe.
- Fighters should be advised of tripping hazards such as untied shoe laces, long skirts and other loose garb, but it at their discretion if they would like to correct such issues. Some fighters have adjusted their style to these hazards. If they trip or fall repeatedly while fighting, call a hold and ask them to correct the armor problem at that point.

Offensive Weapons

- Blade ends must be covered with a rubber tip (leather and other materials may be acceptable). Check to make sure the end is not wearing through the tip. Tips must be secured to the blade and covered with contrasting colored tape. The tip should be visible under the tape to facilitate inspection.
- Blades should not have large nicks that would cut a fighter. Run your bare fingers lightly down the blade to check for these.
- Visually inspect areas with rust or pits for impending failure. If there is rust on the blade, this does not necessarily constitute as a failed blade. Use good judgment and discuss with the person being inspected what options might be available to them. These options include, but are not limited to; allow them on the field with the suggestion that they clean it in the near future, have them clean it up a bit then come and see the same marshal that inspected it previously.
- Blades may have a single, gradual curve but should not have a compound or “S” curve. If this cannot be repaired, the blade must be retired as it increases the chances of breakage.

- Quillions, guards, and pommels should not be sharp. Use your common sense in regards to risk. While quillions on a dagger may occasionally hit another fighter in the course of combat, the knuckle bow near the pommel is unlikely to have the same problem. If it does, there are other issues.

Defensive Devices

- Rigid parrying devices must not have any sharp parts or edges. Again, use your common sense in regards to sharp and relative risk. These devices should not be seeing intentional use on the bodies of combatants. If the edge is wider than an oval schlager blade edge, it should be fine.

- Soft parrying devices should not be weighted with rigid materials or metal. Soft weights such as rope should not turn the device into a flail. Rigid materials that stay near the hand such as clasps on a non-throwing cloak may be acceptable.

- Be aware that parrying devices may fall under the non-standard category and can include more than standard batons, bucklers, cloaks, and parrying gauntlets. Use your best judgment on whether these devices meet the spirit of our rules and our safety standards. Be aware that oversized batons and bucklers may fall in the non-standard category. When in doubt the RMIC is the final authority.

Combat Protocol

Rapier Combat Marshals are an integral part of both the safety and the pageantry of a tournament. Marshals serve as the Crown's representative upon the field. Their actions reflect on the entirety of the marshallate and the West Kingdom. Like the combatants, Marshals should conduct themselves with honor and chivalry on the field at all times. Marshals shall carry a marshal's staff. It is the badge of the office and a form of personal regalia.

Before the Bout

As the fighters come onto the field, scan their armor and weapons for problems. Stand with your staff between the combatants. You might ask if the fighters are armored as inspected.

At this point the herald has control of the field and will introduce the fighters to the populace. Point to the fighter being introduced with your staff.

The herald will ask the fighters to make the following salutes:

"Please Salute the Crown/Coronet." (The marshals should salute also.)

"You may Salute the one who's favor you bear." (The marshals may need to move out of the way)

"Please Salute your worthy opponent." (The marshals may move their staffs from between the combatants)

The Herald will then tell the fencers to heed the words of the Marshals and retire from the list.

Now the field belongs to the marshals. One of the Marshals then recites some version of:

“Are you prepared, [NAME or MY LORD/LADY]?”

(Wait for the combatant’s verbal response.)

“Are you prepared, [NAME or MY LORD/LADY]?”

(Wait for the combatant’s verbal response.)

“Lay On!”

The staffs are withdrawn, and the combat begins.

The field now belongs to the fighters until the fight is over or a hold is called.

During the Bout

The fight is between the combatants. Be alert and pay attention to the combat but do not disturb or interfere with the fighters unless you observe any action that could possibly damage the combatants, their weapons, or the spectators.

Ware Bounds/Edge – A call given when combatants are too near the edge of the field. This is merely a warning call, and is not intended to stop combat.

Where a shot landing – When watching the fight, you should be aware of where shots are landing. Sometimes fighters will have questions about where a shot actually landed. Combatants generally resolve this issue themselves, sometimes they will ask for your opinion. **Do not offer an opinion unless asked for it by one of the fighters.** We want to be useful, not to engage in determinate marshalling.

Flat – Blades have a flat and an edge. Draw, push, tip and percussive cuts must be made on edge. If a fighter lands a flat shot and does not notice, pronounce the shot ‘flat’ even if the fighters do not ask for your opinion. Do not let his/her opponent die to it. If a fighter calls a shot ‘flat’ that was not, do not correct them. We want to prevent fighters from dying to invalid shots. We are less concerned if they live to a valid shot. Again, we want to be useful, not to engage in determinate marshalling.

Hold – A call given to stop combat. If the situation is an immediate safety concern, call hold immediately. If you merely want to communicate with the fighter, such as issuing a verbal warning, wait for a break in the action before you call ‘hold’. Below are examples of immediate safety concerns. This list is not exhaustive. Other reasons will occur.

- Blades are broken or severely bent
- Skin showing on a combatant
- Another person, child, or animal is entering/on the field
- Excessive anger/force

- Grappling or grabbing of blades
- Intentional, non-fleeting contact including punching, pommel strikes, and hand on hand parries in heavy rapier and the like.
- Movement from a kneeling position such as launching, running from etc.
- Other things that could be considered a hazard to those on or near the field

A hold may be called by anyone, but only a marshal can lift it.

Verbal warnings – Repeated rules violations are a safety concern. Unsafe and/or unchivalrous behavior should not be tolerated. Although we teach fighters to call a hold when their opponent is doing something unsafe, fighters have a mental barrier against declaring their opponent unchivalrous. We rely on all our opponents responding to us in a chivalrous manner.

If you see unsafe and/or unchivalrous behavior twice in a bout, call a hold during a natural break in the fighting and issue a verbal warning. Be specific about the action of concern. Let the fighter know that you have seen the behavior twice. Let the fighter know that seeing the behavior again will result in removal from the field. If the behavior occurs a third time, call an immediate hold and get the RMIC to remove the fighter from the field. *Note: If at all possible give the fighter the opportunity to do the honorable thing and remove themselves from the field.*

All verbal warnings should be reported to the RMIC for inclusion in the event report. If you notice a trend towards unchivalrous, unsafe behavior (seeing it twice or more), that trend needs to be noted. The PRM needs to know if the fighter is displaying that behavior at multiple events or on multiple fields. The upper levels of the chain of command will determine if this problem was isolated or indicates a need for re-training or other disciplinary action.

Death – In formal, tournament situations, fighters should fall down to signify death unless there is a safety related reason to prohibit it. Falling declares the victor to the other combatant, the marshals and the spectators in a clear manner. It is good pageantry that prevents misunderstandings.

- Be careful when declaring situations unsafe - ground that is unsafe to fall on is probably unsafe to fight on. *Note: Trying to keep armor clean is not a safety related reason.*
- Fighters who are unable to fall for medical reasons should demonstrate death in another equally clear manner such as a deep bow with a salute.
- Fighters that are rendered disinclined and choose to yield may choose not to fall down. After all they are not dead.

After the Bout

When the fighting has finished, the field belongs to the marshals again.

In order to give all involved a fair chance to voice their opinions; the following is the closing protocol after a bout:

- First ask the fighter who took the wounding or killing blow “Are you satisfied?”
- Then ask the fighter who initiated the wounding or killing blow “Are you satisfied?”
- Finally the marshals ask each other if they have any questions regarding the bout and its resolution.

If the fighters or marshals have any questions about the bout, but do not respond at this time, they have forfeited their right to speak. All issues and questions about a particular bout should be resolved on the field (or noted for resolution during the same round). Once the bout is over and the fighters walk off the field, that fight is over and all issues relating to it are considered resolved.

If everyone is satisfied, inform the herald of the victor so s/he may inform the spectators. At this point, the field belongs to the herald until the next pair is announced.

Marshalling Melees

Melees are a bit more complicated. Instead of keeping track of just two fencers, you will be monitoring multiple combatants and their varied weaponry. You'll want to monitor the same sorts of things you would in a tournament situation, with additional attention being paid to the state of people's tempers and the force of their blows. Due to intensity, there is the tendency in melees to not be able to acknowledge blows. The combination of this tendency and adrenaline leads fighters to hit harder. As with tournaments, combatants are expected to maintain control over their tempers at all times, and to exercise careful calibration and blow calling. The same procedure of warning and removal of combatants used during one-on-one fencing should be employed during melees. *Note: Again, give fighters the opportunity to remove themselves from the field before you mandate it.*

Always require fighters to indicate preparedness either verbally or by lifting blades straight up on both sides prior to lay-on. A call of 'Tips up if you are ready' usually works.

Use the same standard for making calls of 'ware bounds or hold that you would in a tournament. If the conventions and size of the combat allow it, holds can be local (contained to a small area of the field near the problem) rather than general (which will stop the entire combat). Be sure you can make yourself heard over the combat when you make calls and be willing to make them. Safety, always the highest priority on the tournament field, becomes even more important during melees.

In melee, many fighters will take a knee during a hold. Remember to give a call of 'rise if you are able' prior to clearing the hold. If a hold is going to be long, you may want to allow fighters to 'pop their hats' and get a drink.

Make sure the conventions for each melee are covered at the beginning of the combat and that all fighters and marshals know what they are. Conventions can include but are not limited to: time limits, death from behind, and victory conditions.

Rapier Advanced Marshal

Job Description

Rapier Advanced Marshals perform all the duties of Combat Marshals in addition to carrying a responsibility for oversight and reporting. Advanced marshals may serve as Rapier Marshals in Charge (RMICs) of events and practices and as Branch Rapier Marshals.

There are specific requirements for becoming an Advanced Marshal for rapier in the West. These are:

1. Knowledge of the current Kingdom rapier rules and regulations, and the Rules of the List.
2. Ability to supervise armor inspections.
3. Knowledge of tournament protocol.
4. Knowledge and an understanding of the warning process and chain of command.
5. Passing the Marshalling authorization process with an Authorizing Marshal.
6. Knowledge and ability to organize all aspects of Rapier events including supervising assisting marshals and making reports.
7. Must be a member of the SCA.

Note: It is not necessary to be an authorized rapier fighter to become a Rapier Advanced Marshal.

Rapier Marshal-in-Charge

The RMIC is responsible for ensuring that the rules are followed and that combat is conducted in a safe manner. The RMIC gives instructions to the field marshals, oversees the rulings by the field marshals, and files an event report within one week of the event. While individual marshals may be responsible for individual tourneys, generally a single RMIC presides over the entire event. There must be a Rapier Marshal-in-Charge at every SCA function where there is rapier activity.

RMICs may fight at practices they are overseeing. They may not fight in tourneys that they are running.

The Rapier Marshal-in-Charge is usually chosen by the autocrat of a particular event. Branch Marshals should be ready to supply qualified Marshals to RMIC for events sponsored by their Branch on request. It is highly recommended that all Branch marshals make contact with autocrats for every SCA function in their area whether Rapier fighting is planned or not. In the case of fighter practice, the Group Marshal is the default Rapier Marshal-in-Charge unless he or she has designated someone else. When in doubt, assignments are coordinated through the appropriate Principality or Marches Rapier Marshal.

RMICs may choose to designate a Rapier Tourney Coordinator (RTC) or they may choose to fill that position themselves. The RTC is responsible for coordination and planning. RTC's need not be authorized marshals or fighters. The RTC works with the Royalty/Seneschal to decide on tourney format, and design war scenarios (RMIC is responsible for ensuring that scenarios and local rules are in keeping with the WK rapier rules). The RTC works with the autocrat to schedule time and space for prizes, tourneys, classes, etc, throughout the event. The RTC works with the Heralds, Lists and Water Bearers for the event to insure that appropriate support staff is available to help. RTCs may fight in tourneys they are planning.

The position of RMIC defaults to the sponsoring group's Rapier Marshal. For instance, for a Cynaguan Coronet, the Cynaguan Marshal is the default RMIC. If the branch group lacks a rapier marshal, the Principality or Marches Rapier Marshal will assign a Rapier Marshal at large. Principality or Marches Marshals maintain a list of RMICs for events held within their geographic region.

Tasks and Timelines

- 4-5 months prior to the event – Contact the Royalty to determine what sorts of activities they would like to have. Have suggestions prepared. Have some knowledge of how much time and space you are likely to have. For Provincial/Shire events coordinate with the seneschal. (For Coronations/Investitures consult lead time shrinks considerably.) If the Royalty or seneschal request a non-standard local rule, run it past the RMIC and appropriate PRM or KRM if you have any questions about safety or legality.
- 4 months prior to the event – Contact the autocrat. Let him or her know how much space you will be needing for the activities the Royalty/Seneschal want. Let him know what start times you are hoping for. "Place in schedule" times such as after morning court, after Roses start, etc are frequently more helpful than chronological ones. Provide the autocrat with a brief written blurb about rapier activities that he can use for the Page copy (due three months prior to the event) and webpage.
- 2 months prior – Contact the Heralds, Lists, and Waterbearers/Chiurgeons for the branch/event. Ask for their help. Let the Heralds/lists know how many fields you think

you will be running and what format (bearpit, round robin, double elim) you anticipate using, so they can help you find an appropriate number of volunteers. For Wars, let water bearers know what fields fighting will be on, and roughly how many fighters you anticipate. If sharing the area with another activity such as Page school or heavy, contact the appropriate officer (marshal/chancellor/etc) and let them know what your plans are and what space you will be using. If running classes, coordinate with the A&S Ministers for the event.

- 1 month prior – Send out announcements with pertinent details to appropriate email and yahoo lists. Finalize plans for any needed special equipment (especially for wars). Let the Royalty know what you are really doing now that the schedule is more solid.
- 1 week prior – Send out announcements with pertinent details to appropriate email and yahoo lists. Double check that your volunteers are still available.
- Day of the Event – Check with the autocrat for last minute changes. Make sure the heralds have any details they need for the duty shouts. Double check with your volunteers. Walk the field and identify any hazards. Hold a marshal's meeting prior to the tournament/war scenario. Remind field marshals of how to deal with any issues that you anticipate. Make sure marshals are clear regarding the rules of the tournament – especially any local rules or conventions. Get on Court business to announce any tournament winners in court. Remember to personally thank Heralds, marshals, water bearers, and lists and all other support staff.
- 1 week after – RMIC must submit a report to the appropriate PRM. The Marshal in Charge of the event and the autocrat should receive courtesy copies. Details of what is needed are in the Rapier Combat Standards. See the reporting section for a sample form. If you suspend a fighter's authorization privileges during the weekend, make sure you call or email the Principality or Marches or Marches Rapier Marshal as soon as you get home so s/he can address the issue. If there is an injury, send the Principality or Marches and Event Chiurgeons a copy of your report.

Branch Rapier Marshal

Branch Rapier Marshals manage the rapier activities of a specific SCA Group. As an SCA officer they are required to fully understand and enforce current SCA Rapier Policies.

- The Group Rapier Marshal must be or assure that there is a Rapier Marshal-in-Charge at all required times.
- Reports quarterly to the Principality or Marches Rapier Marshal, the Branch Marshal and the Branch Seneschal. Reporting deadlines are set by the Principality or Marches Rapier Marshal. See a sample quarterly report below.
- Be at scheduled fighter practices to act as the Rapier Marshal-in-Charge or arrange for someone else to do so. (Please see job description for Rapier Marshal-in-Charge.)

- The branch marshal is not required to teach people to fence although teaching or arranging for teachers helps the community to grow. If s/he chooses to teach, having equipment to loan and spare copies of the rules are handy. If the group has loaner equipment, the branch marshal should work with the Regalia Minister or the Exchequer to keep an inventory.

Reporting

Sample West Kingdom – Branch Quarterly Rapier Report

Please fill in/correct the following information for your branch group and return to your Principality or Marches Rapier Marshal. If you have further information please feel free to include an addendum.

Local Group:

Contact Person/Office:

Rapier Activities (If none, please say so and return):

Practices/Events/Demos:

Name/Type	Date	Location	RMIC #	Participants	Comments
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Sample West Kingdom Rapier Event Report Form

To be submitted by the Rapier Marshal In Charge (RMIC) within one week of the event to the Principality or Marches Rapier Marshal.

Supplementary information will be accepted as well.

Event Description information and date

Event:

Date:

RMIC:

Autocrat:

Hosting Group:

Location:

Number of Rapier Combat Participants:

Rapier Activities (*What did you do? Any Youth Rapier Combat? Any Cut and Thrust? Please provide details. If a tournament, what style? What worked? What didn't? Other pertinent information from the day*)

Any Authorizations (*Highlight or otherwise indicate one.*)? **Yes No**

If Yes, please describe. (*Include the name of the Senior Marshall if other than RMIC. Include Names of participants. Weapons form attempted, and success or failure of said authorizations*):

Aberrations (any negative occurrences during the event)

Any Broken Blades (*Highlight or otherwise indicate one.*)? Yes No

If Yes, please describe the incident(s):

Any Injuries (*Highlight or otherwise indicate one.*)? Yes No

If Yes, please describe the incident(s):

Any unresolved disputes (*Highlight or otherwise indicate one.*)? Yes No

If Yes, please describe the incident(s):

Final notes and comments:

Rapier Senior Marshal

Job Description

Senior Marshals are approved by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, and are charged with the responsibility of authorizing rapier fighters for competition and authorizing Rapier Marshals. Senior Marshals are also responsible for getting contact information from authorized fighters and forwarding that information to the Database Deputy.

Bear in mind that while being a Senior Marshal allows you to issue authorizations, the job *does not* give you the right to revoke those authorizations. The ability to revoke a combatant's authorization is limited to RMICs of events and practices and the Kingdom, Principality, or Marches Rapier Marshals.

Remember too that Senior Marshal is a job description not a rank. Do not think that the position carries any greater authority than other marshallate positions. It just has more work.

Authorizations

The purpose of combat authorizations is to determine that the fighter has knowledge of the rules and is not a danger to themselves or others. The purpose of marshal authorizations is to assure that the candidate has the basic skills to match the job description.

The first step – Check if the candidate is a member or has a waiver on file. If not, have him/her sign one and send it to the PRM.

Basic Rapier

The first step is assessing whether the candidate has knowledge and understanding of the rules. The following are potential questions. The Marshal need not ask all, nor are they limited to only these questions.

1) Have you read the Rules? (This is a mandatory question)

- 2) What are the minimum requirements for Heavy Rapier armor?
- 3) What is a fighter assumed to be wearing unless stated otherwise?
- 4) What are legal targets?
- 5) What are illegal targets?
- 6) Situation: Your opponent has lost the use of their legs. Give an example of corkscrewing.
- 7) If you are legged in Heavy Rapier, what are 3 positions you could take?
- 8) Give two examples of when to call a hold.
- 9) When and how often does your equipment need to be inspected?
- 10) Give an example of a standard offensive weapon.
- 11) Give an example of a standard defensive weapon.
- 12) Are you required to accept a bout against an unusual weapon?
- 13) If a weapon fails inspection what can you do?
- 14) Can you use your buckler against the body of your opponent?
- 15) What parts of the sword can you attack with?
- 16) What are valid cuts in Heavy Rapier? (Length of cut, placement on body)
- 17) Give examples of proper footwear.
- 18) Fill in the blank: _____ pressure is all that is needed for a valid attack.
- 19) What are the advantages of using a parrying gauntlet?
- 20) Situation: If a hold is called on the field just as you land a blow, is it a valid hit?
- 21) What do you do when a hold is called?
- 22) When should a blade be retired?
- 23) What are the standards for a baton?

- 24) What are the standards for a sword?
- 25) What are the standards for a buckler?
- 26) What are the standards for a dagger?
- 27) Can your friend make a blade for you? Why or Why not?
- 28) Can your friend make a hilt/guard for you? Why or Why not?
- 29) Who may call a hold? Why?
- 30) Who may lift a hold?
- 31) Is there ever a time when you may strike someone from behind?
- 32) Who determines if your opponent is dead? In tournament? In war? In a Pas d'Arms?
- 33) Give an example of and where it would be worn:
 - a. Puncture resistant material
 - b. Abrasion resistant material
 - c. Rigid material
 - d. Resilient padding
- 34) Give an example of when you should remove yourself from the field.
- 35) When can you run into a combat situation? Can you run on the field at all?
- 36) Can a rapier fighter fight beside a heavy fighter? An Archer?
- 37) If you approach someone from the side in a melee, how do you engage them?
- 38) When is death from behind permissible in a melee scenario?
- 39) Is there ever a time when you may strike someone from behind?
- 40) Who are you engaged with at the start of a circle/Roman melee?
- 41) Who are you engaged with at the start of a line melee?
- 42) What should you do if a fighter continually turns their back to you?
- 43) If legged in a melee, when is it permissible to move?

44) Demonstrate/describe proper death from behind. What are the “danger areas” in the technique? **(This is a mandatory question)**

45) Can you talk while fighting? Once dead? During a hold?

46) If you are armed, what should you do with your weapon?

47) When can you remove your hat while fighting is going on? If dead and no resurrection? At a resurrection point? During a hold?

The oral exam phase of the authorization can be as intense as you feel necessary. These questions do not have to be answered 100% correctly, but a solid understanding of the rules must be demonstrated. If the candidate gives too many incorrect or incomplete answers, have them review the rules and attempt the authorization again at another time.

Next is the practical portion of the exam. Do not forget the armor inspection for the candidate and the fighter helping you.

Authorizations take three people – the candidate to be tested, a senior marshal, and an authorized, experienced fighter. This individual is sometimes called the usher. Both the Senior Marshal and the usher need to agree that the candidate passes.

Generally speaking the usher and the candidate start at slow speed. As the authorization progresses the usher will increase to a medium speed that is comfortable for both fighters and finish at a top speed.

During the authorization, the candidate must demonstrate safe offense and defense with each hand. S/he needs to fight a legged opponent and fight while legged. S/he needs to be safe fighting at range and fighting in close.

It may take awhile to get the fighter to demonstrate all these activities. Do not be afraid to dictate the fight. Tell the fighter and/or usher to switch sword hands or sit down. Have the usher fight with only a dagger. Put unusual parrying devices in the candidate’s off-hand to see how s/he responds to novelty.

Fighters do not need to demonstrate every cut possible in the course of an authorization. However if there is something you would like to see like a kill with a dagger, tell the candidate so s/he has a chance of achieving your standard.

Resist the urge to teach during an authorization. It does not help the candidate and only slows the process down. If your usher or someone from the sidelines starts teaching, stop them. Authorizations are not a spectator sport. You may need to send coaches away.

Candidates do not need to fight with every weapon they might encounter in the course of their SCA career. It is not possible to test for everything. Also with an authorization we are saying that this candidate has displayed a minimum knowledge to take the field safely. Presumably that means s/he knows what s/he does not have the training to pick up.

There is no set minimum or maximum time to run an authorization. Some fighters take longer. Bear in mind if a fighter is not demonstrating the correct behavior in spite of your attempts to get them too, it may be time to fail them.

Most candidates will have something they lack. Feel free to let them know at the end of the authorization, but keep it brief. Nothing sounds worse than “Congratulations on becoming an authorized fencer. Now here are 30 things you did wrong.” One or two items are forgivable. More should make you question his/her safety. Do not be afraid to ask a marginal candidate to come back on another day. If you fail a candidate, let him/her know what they need to work on before attempting another authorization.

Remember, the ultimate question is “Is this person safe?”

The final step in any authorization is to fill out the paperwork. Get the successful candidate’s Name (SCA and Mundane), address, phone number, email. Make sure you have a waiver if s/he is not a member. Send the information into the Database Deputy at fighterdata@yahoo.com. Remember to include the name of the Senior Marshal and any successful authorizations. The Database Deputy will send the authorization cards.

Other Combat Authorizations

The basic principals are the same. Make sure that the candidate has met the prerequisites for the level. Remember that they have already demonstrated basic skill. Concentrate the oral portion on the additional or different rules. Concentrate the practical portion on the skills listed in the rules.

Cut and Thrust Rapier Combat (see also Basic Rapier)

48) Have you completed the pre-requisite training? (This is a mandatory question)

49) What are the minimum requirements for C&T Rapier armor?

50) If you are legged in C&T Rapier, what position do you take?

51) What are valid cuts in Cut and Thrust Rapier? (Length of cut, placement on body)

52) Describe a “flat” shot. Is it valid?

53) What is valid pressure for a thrust? A percussive cut?

54) Are Draw cuts permitted? Push cuts? Tip cuts?

Marshal Authorizations

Marshal candidates need to meet the requirements listed in the rules. They also need to have knowledge of all the combat forms. Marshal authorizations may only consist of an oral portion. It is OK to teach and share your experiences during the course of a marshal authorization. Remember each level of marshal needs to be capable of meeting the job descriptions listed in this manual.

Combat Marshal (see also all of the above)

55) What is the marshal's job?

56) Describe the grievance procedure on and off the field.

57) Situation: Many personas carry an eating knife. If it is sheathed and peace-tied, is it ok to wear on the field as a part of your outfit?

58) Describe a situation of improper behavior on the field.

59) Describe a situation of proper behavior on the field.

60) What parts of armor are subject to higher amounts of wear and tear?

61) What should you do when someone throws a "flat" shot?

62) Is it ok to repair a weapon presented for inspection?

63) Who may repair a weapon presented for inspection?

Advanced Marshal (see also all of the above)

64) What is grappling? Is it ever allowed?

65) Give an example of instructions you would give to your field marshals prior to a tournament.

66) Give an example of instructions you would give to your field marshals prior to a war.

67) Who gets a report for a branch rapier practice? How often?

68) Who gets a copy of an event report? How soon after the event?

69) Give an example of a situation that should be included in an event report.

70) When should an injury be reported and to whom?

71) When can youth fight adults?

72) If a tier 1 youth meets a tier 3 youth in a tournament, what weapons may they use?

73) For C&T Rapier, what additional armor is required?

- 74) What is the minimum age for each youth tier? What is the maximum age?
- 75) What is the minimum age for “adult” Heavy Rapier? C&T? Melee?
- 76) Are the WK Heavy Rapier Armor Standards equivalent to Society minimum?
- 77) Are the WK C&T Rapier Armor Standards equivalent to Society minimum?
- 78) What are the requirements for a parent/guardian of a youth combatant?
- 79) What minimum armor standards does a visitor from another Kingdom need to meet?
- 80) How many marshals/fighters must there be for a melee?
- 81) Where do the standards for youth weapons differ from those for adults?