



Western Armored  
Combat Manual  
And Marshals'  
Handbook

## LEGEND

- **Black – Society rules (Published November 2013)**
- **Red – West Kingdom additions and specifications (May 2014)**
- **Purple – Missile and Siege Rules (Soon to be updated)**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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This handbook is the latest revision of a set of rules and guidelines that have been adapting and evolving over the last forty years. What you find within these pages reflects a vast body of experience and knowledge gathered from across the Knowne World and compiled through the efforts of many. While the traditions and laws of each kingdom vary, these rules represent the minimum requirements for equipment and conduct required for participation in SCA armored combat.

As a marshal it is your duty to know and understand these rules and to teach and share them with the participants we train and authorize. Be aware of changes and updates to these rules and policies and clarifications made to your kingdom and Society standards. Frequently visit your kingdom and Society websites to stay up-to- date and stay active.

As we gather at our events to recreate the ideals of honor and chivalry of the Middle Ages, remember that these rules and standards are but the foundation of the fighting community, set to ensure that we may continue to enjoy SCA combat. No book of rules can replace common sense, which must also be exercised to keep all combatants and spectators safe. In all combat activities, safety must always be paramount.

We all participate in the SCA because we enjoy it. So, as you go about your tasks, duties, and activities, remember to have fun and to help others do the same. The rules must be followed, work must be done, and safety considered first above all, but always remember why we're all here: Have fun, and be safe!

Fight with honor, fight often, and read the handbook!

# PARTICIPANT'S SECTION

## I. COMBAT AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENTS

### A. General

1. All persons who wish to participate in SCA combat activities must authorize under the Society and Kingdom-of-residence authorization procedures. SCA combat activities are defined as armored combat, Society period fencing, combat archery siege, and marshaling. Other martial activities clearly falling within the scope above are also considered combat-related activities. Youth combat programs are not supervised at the Society level, but participation in such programs requires authorization following Kingdom-of-residence procedures.
2. Each Kingdom shall establish a procedure to authorize combatants for participation in SCA combat-related activities. These procedures shall verify that the candidate is familiar with the following:
  - a. Rules of the Lists of the SCA.
  - b. The Armor and Weapons standards of the SCA.
  - c. The Conventions of Combat for the SCA.
  - d. Kingdom-of-residence-specific Conventions of Combat.
  - e. Kingdom-of-residence-specific Armor and Weapons Standards.
3. In addition to the above requirements, candidates must demonstrate the ability to function on the field in a manner that is safe both to themselves and to their opponents.
4. Only a warranted or rostered authorized marshal may perform an authorization. This authorizing marshal must witness the authorization and execute the appropriate paperwork to ensure that the authorization is registered with the appropriate kingdom official.
  - a. **Only Senior Marshals may authorize new fighters and new marshals.**
5. Authorization shall be registered with and kept on file by the Minister of the Lists or another designated official of each kingdom. This office shall be responsible for keeping properly completed waivers and maintaining the registration of authorizations. This office shall provide the Earl Marshal with a list of all current combat authorization cards upon request.
  - a. **There is a Special Database Deputy who fulfills this duty.**
6. No authorization card may be issued until a properly completed Waiver is filed with the Kingdom.
7. Signed waivers for SCA combat-related activities shall be kept on file for a period of seven (7) years.
8. Combat authorizations may be issued for a period of time equal to the time that the combat participant has an active waiver on file.
  - a. **The Kingdom Earl Marshal may shorten this period of time.**

9. Authorizations shall not be issued to persons residing in a kingdom other than the one in which the authorization is being issued, unless a specific royal treaty defines the person seeking authorization as a subject of the issuing kingdom.
10. Kingdoms may define additional types of authorization, such as weapon forms, field marshals, and missile combat marshals, and requirements for them, as may they deem necessary.
  - a. The West Kingdom only requires one authorization to fight with all heavy combat weapons forms. However, one must authorize separately for Rapier, "Cut and Thrust", Siege, and Missile Combat. Authorization in one form does not imply authorization in any of the others.
  - b. Additionally, there are separate authorizations for different levels and disciplines of marshals.
11. Valid combat authorization cards shall be accepted outside the issuing kingdom as proof of authorization, as long as proof of a signed and active waiver is available. Kingdoms may define additional requirements before renewing an authorization card for a person who has moved into that kingdom from another kingdom.
12. A marshal from any kingdom may revoke the authorization card of a fighter from any other kingdom for just and stated cause. The marshal in charge (MIC) of the event should be notified immediately and the Earl Marshal of the fighter's kingdom of residence should receive a detailed report of the incident.
  - a. A Fighter-in-training may participate in practices after executing a waiver but prior to completing authorization, as long as the practice is being supervised by a rostered Marshal-in-Charge or Branch Marshal.

## B. Minor Authorization

Minors (ages 14–17) may authorize with these additional requirements:

13. In order to be authorized as a combatant or marshal in adult armored combat, an individual must have attained his or her sixteenth (16th) birthday. In order to be authorized as a participant, combatant, or marshal in any other form of Society combat-related activity, except youth combat, an individual must have attained his or her fourteenth (14th) birthday.
14. No person below the age of eighteen (18) may be warranted as a group Marshal, or the Marshal in Charge of an event.
15. The parents or guardians of the minor must witness SCA combat, discuss with a witnessing marshal how it relates to the participation of their child, and execute a "Minor's Waiver and Informed Consent to Participate in SCA Combat-Related Activities." The witnessing Marshal must countersign the waiver.
16. Only the Earl Marshal, the Principality Marshal, or a designated deputy may authorize the minor for SCA Combat-Related Activities. If the authorizing marshal does not have a current and clear SCA-approved background check on file, then the minor's parent or legal guardian must be present for the authorization procedure.

- a. If another responsible party who has a current and clear, SCA-approved background check on file, is present, then the minor authorization can proceed in the absence of a parent or legal guardian.
17. At any event in which the minor is involved in SCA combat-related activities, the minor must either have a parent or guardian present, or must be in possession of a properly executed “Medical Authorization Form for Minors.” Said Medical Authorization Form must designate an adult present at the event as able to authorize medical treatment in the case of an emergency.
18. Minors engaging in combat with adults shall be marked in the following manner: A single yellow diamond no larger than 1 inch (25.4 mm) but no smaller than 0.5 inch (12.7 mm) to be placed on the front hemisphere of the helm (preferably on or near the inspection sticker). Minors competing with adults in Rapier will have the same diamond on the cuff of the glove of their dominant weapon hand.

## **II. RULES OF THE LISTS**

### **A. The Rules of the Lists**

The basic rules for SCA combat are contained in the Rules of the Lists. These rules cover all combat within the SCA including but not limited to tournaments, non-tourney martial field activities such as wars, combat archery, and Society period fencing. The observance of honor and chivalry and the safety of the combatants are the overriding goals of these rules. The following is intended to bring together the appropriate rules for conducting SCA combat activities.

The Rules of the Lists are reprinted here from section IX.B. of the Corpora of the SCA:

1. Each fighter, recognizing the possibilities of physical injury to themselves in such combat, shall assume unto themselves all risk and liability for harm suffered by means of such combat. No fighter shall engage in combat unless and until they have inspected the field of combat and satisfied themselves that it is suitable for combat. Other participants shall likewise recognize the risks involved in their presence on or near the field of combat and shall assume unto themselves the liabilities thereof.
2. No person shall participate in Official Combat-Related Activities (including armored combat, period fencing, and combat archery) outside of formal training sessions unless they have been properly authorized under Society and Kingdom procedures.
3. All combatants must be presented to, and be acceptable to, the Sovereign or his or her representative.
4. All combatants shall adhere to the appropriate armor and weapons standards of the Society, and to any additional standards of the Kingdom in which the event takes place. The Sovereign may waive the additional Kingdom standards.
5. The Sovereign or the Marshallate may bar any weapon or armor from use upon the field of combat. Should a warranted Marshal bar any weapon or armor, an appeal may be made to the Sovereign to allow the weapon or armor.
6. Combatants shall behave in a knightly and chivalrous manner and shall fight according to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.



7. No one may be required to participate in Combat-Related Activities. Any combatant may, without dishonor or penalty, reject any challenge without specifying a reason. A fight in a tournament list is not to be considered a challenge and therefore may be declined and forfeit the bout.
8. Fighting with real weapons, whether fast or slow, is strictly forbidden at any Society event. This rule does not consider approved weaponry which meets the Society and Kingdom standards for traditional Society combat and/or Society period rapier combat, used in the context of mutual sport, to be real weaponry.
9. No projectile weapons shall be allowed within the Lists of a tournament, nor shall any weapons be thrown. The use of approved projectile weapons for melee, war, or combat archery shall conform to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.

#### B. Applications of the Rules of the Lists

1. **Application of Rule 1:** “Other participants” include marshals and support personnel whose activities bring them close to fighting in a situation where boundaries are not clearly defined. Heralds, list pages, and similar officers who leave the field entirely before combat begins are exempt from this requirement, as are water-bearers and surgeons who remain in fixed support points outside the tournament field or battle area. Water-bearers and surgeons who take part in mobile support groups within the overall boundaries of a battle area must receive a basic orientation in field safety.
2. **Application of Rule 2:** The Crown and/or marshallate of each kingdom shall establish standards and procedures for the authorization of fighters to participate in combat. These procedures shall adhere to the combat authorization procedures in this handbook. At kingdom option, these procedures may involve either a general authorization to participate in armored combat or a set of separate authorization procedures for the use of (or for combat AGAINST) specific weapons or classes of weapons.
3. **Application of Rule 3:** The Crown and/or marshallate of each kingdom shall establish standards and procedures for the authorization of combat archers and missile users to participate in combat. Kingdoms may establish such additional limitations on the participation of minors as may be deemed necessary. It is usual for authorizations from other kingdoms to be accepted, although exceptions may prove necessary in the case of specific individuals.  
  
The Crown may not simply grant an authorization, unless the recipient has successfully completed the authorization process as delineated in Society and kingdom law.
4. **Application of Rule 4:** Kingdoms may apply armor and weapons standards that are stricter than the Society standards, should they be deemed necessary, but may not reduce or waive any Society standard.
5. **Application of Rule 5:** If a fighter regards an opponent’s weapon or armor as unduly dangerous to self or opponent, he or she can request that the marshal on the field re-inspect the item. Either fighter has the option of appealing the decision of the re-inspection marshal to the marshal in charge and ultimately to the sovereign.

6. **Application of Rule 6:** Engaging in any Society combat activity with the deliberate intent to inflict bodily harm to an opponent is strictly forbidden.
7. **Application of Rule 7:** No one is required to engage in SCA combat should he or she prefer not to do so.
8. **Application of Rule 8:** Since fighting with real weapons is forbidden at any Society event, threatening the use of such weapons is likewise expressly forbidden.

At the discretion of the sovereign and the MIC, recognized experts may be permitted to present choreographed demonstrations with real weapons under strictly controlled conditions.

No one may wear any real weapon onto the field while participating in combat or present during combat. At the discretion of the sovereign and the MIC, an exception may be made for marshals or other noncombatants to wear knives bonded with peace straps.

Posing for still photographs with real weapons is permitted.

9. **Application of Rule 9:** The prohibition on thrown weapons refers to weapons thrown in combat or thrown in a hostile manner. It does not apply to “tossing,” defined as a gentle, short-range method of transferring or removing a tournament weapon or item from the list field or area of combat. The use of bows and arrows, firearms, slings, javelins, throwing axes, throwing knives, or any other projectile weapon is forbidden within tournament lists, or in any other situation where spectators cannot be separated from the potential line of fire by more than the effective range of the weapon.

### III. CONVENTIONS OF COMBAT

#### A. General Information

1. All traditional SCA armored combat at SCA tourneys, wars, and other events shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of the Lists of the SCA, Inc., these Conventions of Combat, and such weapon and equipment standards and event rules as are established by the marshallate of the SCA, Inc., and individual kingdom marshallates.
2. All kingdoms shall have as their minimum armor and weapons standards those criteria established by the Society minimum armor and weapons standards. Each kingdom may require additional, more extensive, and/or stricter standards.
  - a. All fighters, prior to combat at each and every SCA-sponsored event or fighting practice, shall ensure that their armor and weapons are inspected by a warranted member of the kingdom marshallate.
  - b. Even though a warranted member of the kingdom marshallate has inspected the armor and weapons used by a fighter, each fighter shall accept full responsibility for the condition of his or her own equipment. Each fighter has the obligation to his- or herself, the marshals, and all opponents, to see that his or her equipment meets all Society and kingdom requirements.
  - c. Combat archery ammunition each must be inspected individually before

every use.

- i. Siloflex-equivalent and tennis ball ammunition may be inspected by the archer and used again immediately.
  - ii. Fiberglass-shafted ammunition must be taken off the field and reinspected under the supervision of a combat archery marshal before being used again.
3. When not otherwise directed by the sovereign, the sovereign's representative upon the field and in all matters dealing with Society combat is the Earl Marshal, and, by delegation, warranted members of the kingdom marshallate.

## B. Behavior on the Field

1. Striking an opponent with excessive force is forbidden.
2. All fighters shall obey the commands of the marshals on the field or shall be removed from the field and subject to disciplinary action. Disagreements with the marshals on the field shall be resolved through the established mechanisms outlined in the Procedures for Grievances and Sanctions of the Marshallate Procedures of the SCA, Inc.
3. Each fighter shall maintain control over his or her temper at all times.
4. Upon hearing the call of "HOLD" all fighting shall IMMEDIATELY stop.
5. A fighter shall not enter the lists or participate in any form of SCA combat activity while impaired by alcohol or drugs (including, but not limited to: drugs prescribed by a licensed health care provider, over-the-counter medications, and illegal controlled substances.)
6. Any behavior that takes deliberate advantage of an opponent's chivalry or safety-consciousness, or that takes deliberate unfair advantage of an opponent, is prohibited.
7. A fighter shall not deliberately strike a helpless opponent.
8. Any fighter who obtains an unfair advantage by repeatedly becoming "helpless" (for example, by falling down or losing their weapon) may, after being duly warned by the marshals on the field, be forced to yield the fight at the next occurrence of such behavior. The onus of this is on the marshals, not on the opponent. However, the opponent may ask the marshals to let the fight continue.
9. Grappling, tripping, throwing, punching, kicking, and wrestling are prohibited. Unintentional contact between combatants' bodies, shields, and weapons is expected in corps-a-corps or mêlée situations.
  - a. **Any intentional shield-to-body, or body-to-shield contact is expressly forbidden**
10. Deliberately striking an opponent's head, limbs, or body with a shield, weapon haft, or any part of the body is forbidden.
11. Grasping an opponent's person, shield, weapon's striking surface, or bow/crossbow is prohibited.
12. Intentionally striking an opponent outside the legal target areas is forbidden.

### 13. Western Customs:

- a. Extend the utmost courtesy to your opponent. You do each other honor by meeting on the field. If there is question regarding a point of honor (such as blow strength), give your opponent the benefit of the doubt as far as is reasonable.
- b. It is considered courteous to turn a kneeling fighter so that he or she is not facing into the sun.
- c. It is considered discourteous and dangerous to intentionally target the groin area. If such blows are thrown repeatedly, it shall be presumed to be a violation of the Rules of the Lists - number six.
- d. Unimpeded blows swung at or below the knee are both discourteous and dangerous. Fighters who repeatedly throw such a blow shall be duly warned by the Marshals. If such blows continue to be thrown, the fighter can be prohibited from throwing leg blows or be caused to forfeit the fight.

### C. Target Areas

1. Torso: All of the body above the points of the hips, excluding the head and arms and including the groin, shoulder blades, and the area between the neck and shoulders.
2. Face: the area between the chin and the middle of the forehead and between the ear openings.
3. Head: The whole head and neck except the face as defined above.
4. Thighs: The leg from one inch [25.4mm] above the top of the knee to a line even with the bottom of the hip socket.
5. Hips: Area between the bottom of the hip socket to the point of the hip (iliac crest).
6. Shoulder: From the point of the shoulder down to a line even with the top of the underarm.
7. Arms: From the shoulder to one inch [25.4mm] above the wrist.
8. Blows that land outside the legal target areas shall not be counted, unless an illegal target area has been intentionally placed in the path of an impending blow.

### D. Combat Archery Conventions

1. Upon a hold being called, all archers must unload their weapons (crossbows may remain cocked).
2. Archers may have a backup weapon on them, but may not draw it until their bow has been safely disposed of (taken off the field, discarded in a low traffic area, handed to another combatant, etc). Upon drawing a backup weapon to enter combat, hands must be appropriately armored.
3. Archers may carry and use thrown weapons without need to discard their bow or change hand armor.
4. Archers need to be aware of what is beyond their target area to ensure that errant shots do not endanger anyone.

5. An archer's minimum range is dictated by ensuring that the ammunition completely clears the bow before contacting the opponent.
6. Ammunition dropped onto the ground is considered dead as if it had been fired, and needs re-inspection.
7. Live combatants may pick ammunition off the field for re-inspection (as long as re-inspection is allowed during the scenario) and reuse it during the same battle. Dead combatants may clear ammunition from the field for use in future battles if scenario rules allow.
8. Within scenario limits, ammunition may be taken from caches stored on or off the field and from other combatants (dead or alive) with permission of the owner.

#### **IV. THE USE OF WEAPONS AND SHIELDS**

##### **A. Weapons**

Weapons shall be used in accordance with their design. For example, spears may only be used for thrusting, axes for striking along the edge of the blade, etc.

1. Only weapons approved for thrusting may be used for that purpose. Feinting as if to thrust with a weapon not approved for that purpose is prohibited. Before any bout where a thrusting weapon is used, the opponent and marshals shall be informed that such a weapon is on the field, and the thrusting tip shall be shown to the opponent.
2. The blade of an opponent's weapon may not be grasped at any time, nor may it be trapped in contact with the fighter's body as a means of preventing the opponent's use of the weapon. Armored hands may grasp the haft of an opponent's weapon.

##### **B. Striking Surface**

The striking surface of a weapon in motion may not be grasped or blocked by the hands or limbs as a means of impeding a blow.

1. If a combatant intentionally places an illegal target area (e.g., an empty hand and or lower leg, including the knee and foot) in the path of a blow, the combatant forfeits that attached limb as if it had been struck in a legal target area.
2. Inadvertently bringing the hands in contact with the striking surface of a weapon in motion, as when attempting to block a blow with another weapon, shall not be considered to be in violation of this convention.

##### **C. "Anviling"**

Blows repeatedly blocked by a weapon in contact with a fighter's helm, body, or shield at the moment of impact may, at the sovereign's or marshal's discretion, be considered to have broken the blocking weapon. This will force a fighter to forfeit the fight, unless a secondary weapon is carried or the opponent chooses to allow the fighter to rearm with another weapon.

##### **D. "Interfering"**

A shield or weapon may be used to displace, deflect, or immobilize an opponent's shield or weapon, so long as such use does not endanger the safety of the

combatants. A shield or haft may be safely placed against the opponent's body to restrict his ability to strike or defend.

1. A fighter may not place their shield on any part of their opponent's body, nor may they use any part of their body to manipulate their opponent's shield.

#### E. Controlling Shields

Shields must be controlled by the hand; use of passive shields (not controlled by the hand) will be treated as decorative armor and subject to effective blow acknowledgment.

#### F. Archers' Shields

A combat archer may carry and use shield or pavise; however, as long as they are carrying it, they cannot span nor fire their weapon.

### V. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF BLOWS

#### A. Judging Blows

Judging the effects of blows is left to the honor of the combatant being struck by the weapon, unless he or she relinquishes this responsibility, with the exception of clear violations of the Rules of the Lists or the Conventions of Combat.

Effectiveness of a blow may not be judged by the opposing combatant, the marshal on the field, or other observers. Information unavailable to the combatant being struck may be supplied by the opposing combatant or the marshal, including blade orientation upon impact, apparent force transmitted, or apparent location and angle of the blow's impact based upon the observer's angle of observation.

#### B. Effect of Armour

When judging the effect of blows, all fighters are presumed to be fully armored. Special tournaments or combat rules may redefine what areas of the body are armored, and to what extent, so long as all the participants are made aware of the special conditions prior to the start of combat.

1. All "fully armored" fighters are presumed to be wearing a chain hauberk over a padded gambeson, with boiled leather arm and leg defenses and an open-faced iron helm with a nasal. The helm may be presumed by kingdom convention to include a very light chain mail drape, permitting vision and resisting cuts by the mere touch of a bladed weapon.
  - a. All fighters are assumed to have a chain mail drape across their face.
2. Under this standard, an acceptable cutting blow to the face would be lighter than to other portions of the head or body. Areas deemed illegal to strike (the wrists from 1 inch [25.4mm] above the hands; the legs from 1 inch [25.4mm] above the knees and below) shall be considered safe from all attack.
3. The minimum effective thrusting blow to the face shall be a directed touch and the maximum shall be substantially lighter than to other parts of the body.

#### C. Effective Blows

An effective blow will be defined as a blow which was delivered with effective technique for the particular type of weapon used, properly oriented, and struck with sufficient force.

1. An effective blow to the head, neck, or torso shall be judged fatal or completely disabling, rendering the fighter incapable of further combat.
2. An effective blow from an axe, mace, polearm, greatsword, or other mass weapon, which lands on the hip above the hip socket or strikes the shoulder inside the shoulder socket, shall be judged fatal or completely disabling.
  - a. A thrust to the hip or shoulder from a mass weapon, great sword, pike, or polearm is not considered fatal or totally disabling, only wounding.
  - b. An effective blow landing on the top of the shoulder anywhere between the shoulder point and the neck is considered fatal or totally disabling.
3. An effective blow to the arm above the wrist will disable the arm. The arm shall then be considered useless to the fighter and may not be used for either offense or defense.
4. An effective blow to the leg above the knee will disable the leg. The fighter must then fight kneeling, sitting, or standing on the foot of the uninjured leg. Kingdoms may place limitations upon the mobility of such injured fighters.
5. If a wounded limb blocks an otherwise acceptable blow, the blow shall be counted as though the limb were not there.

#### D. Blow Acknowledgement Criteria & Circumstances

1. Changes to blow acknowledgment standards may be made on a per-combat, per-scenario, or per-tournament basis, but thereafter will revert to the standards above. Alternate acknowledgment standards do not alter the allowed target areas, nor do they increase the basic force level for a telling blow. All combatants must be informed of any changes to standard blow acknowledgment before they participate in the combat.
2. When judging the outcome of a delivered blow, all fighters are expected to take into account the nature of the weapon being used by their opponent and the location of the point of impact of that weapon. A blow that strikes with sufficient force and proper orientation shall be considered effective, regardless of what it hits prior to striking the combatant.
3. Sometimes a blow that would normally be accepted occurs at almost the same moment as an event that would cause the fight to be stopped (a "HOLD" being called, the killing of the fighter throwing the blow, etc.). If the blow was begun before the occurrence of the event that would cause the bout to be halted, and if of sufficient force, it shall be deemed a legal blow and acceptable. If the blow was begun after the occurrence of the event that would cause the bout to be halted, it shall be deemed not legal and need not be accepted.
4. A blow that includes the dropping of a weapon at the moment of impact need not be counted. (Note: If the force of the blow causes the weapon to be dropped, the rule shall be suspended.)
5. Owing to safety limits placed on combat archery equipment arrows and the low mass of the ammunition, arrows, and bolts strike with less force. They need not strike with the same force as hand-held weapons for the strikes to

#### E. Against Kneeling Fighters

1. When one combatant is kneeling other is standing, it is forbidden for the standing fighter to circle or "corkscrew" the kneeling fighter.
2. It is forbidden for a standing fighter to run over or press a kneeling fighter to the point that the kneeling fighter cannot straighten his upper body perpendicular to the ground. This rule is meant to allow the kneeling fighter to straighten if they desire and is not intended to keep the standing fighter from leaning forward to stay in range if the kneeling fighter leans back.

#### F. Special Circumstances

1. A fighter is not required to stop a combination when an opponent is wounded. Thus, if a blow to a limb of a fighter is followed immediately by a killing blow to fighter, the killing blow will be counted as good.
2. Any fighter whose helmet or chinstrap breaks, or visor opens, or becomes seriously dislodged in combat will be considered dead. If both contestants wish to appeal to the Sovereign, as a Kingdom law, this may be rescinded by the Sovereign's decision.
3. Any fighter that wishes to change weapons form or type during the course of one round of combat must obtain their opponent's consent. Failure to object when asked, or at the time the change is occurring shall be presumed to be consent.

## VI. ARMOR REQUIREMENTS

### A. Armored Participants

All participants on the field during adult armored combat shall meet the Society minimum armor standards for a fully armored combatant. This includes, but is not limited to, combat archers, siege engineers and other combatants.

It does not include marshals, water-bearers, or chirurgeons. All authorized combatants and warranted marshals shall disguise, cover, or remove modern corporate logos and sport gear unless the gear is necessary for medical reasons. Special attention should be paid to appearance and the atmosphere of a medieval event should be maintained.

#### 1. Responsibilities

- a. Each fighter is responsible for obtaining and wearing in melee combat (tournaments, melees, and wars) armor sufficient to reduce the probability of injury to the areas listed below to an acceptable level.
  - i. The head and neck, including the face, throat, and cervical vertebrae
  - ii. The kidneys, short ribs, and groin
  - iii. The knee joints
  - iv. The elbow joints
  - v. The hands and wrists
- b. Each fighter is responsible for determining which other portions of his or her body are exposed to an unacceptable level of risk by melee combat, and for obtaining and wearing in combat armor sufficient to reduce this risk to an acceptable level.



- c. The Marshallate is responsible for establishing guidelines for construction and materials of melee combat armor under which fighters may make reasoned and informed choices in selecting armor for the portions of the body that are exposed to the risk of injury by melee combat.

## B. Helms

1. Helms shall be constructed from steel which has a thickness of no less than .0625 (that is, 1/16) inch (1.6 mm), or of equivalent material. Alternative materials, such as stainless steel, brass, bronze, or like materials, are permissible as long as the material is structurally equivalent to 0.0625-inch-thick steel. The mass of the helm is an important part of the protection. As such, no titanium, fiberglass, aluminum, or other ultra-light materials may be used unless they meet the equivalent mass, strength, and weight of steel which has a thickness of no less than .0625 (that is, 1/16) inch (1.6 mm). Proof of construction technique, materials, and equivalency must be provided to the kingdom earl marshal (KEM) for an approval for in-kingdom use. If a spun-metal top is to be used in the construction of the helm, it shall be a minimum of 0.075 inch (14-gauge or 1.905 mm) steel. The process of spinning the top thins the metal, thereby requiring a heavier gauge.
2. All joints or seams shall be constructed in one or a combination of the following ways, with all welds sound and rivets secure:
  - a. Welded on the inside and outside.
  - b. Welded with a single bead that extends through both surfaces.
  - c. Lap joints welded or brazed at the edges of both pieces.
  - d. Helms will be riveted with iron or steel rivets no more than 2.5 inches (63.5 mm) apart, or with equivalent riveting techniques. Screw- and pop-type rivets, along with other lightweight rivets, are not to be used.
3. Face guards shall prevent a 1 inch (25.4mm) diameter dowel from entering into any of the face guard openings.
4. The face guard shall extend at least 1 inch (25.4mm) below the bottom of the chin and jaw line when the head is held erect.
5. Bars used in the face guard shall be steel of not less than .1875 (that is, 3/16) inch (4.8 mm) in diameter, or equivalent. If the span between crossbars is less than 2 inches (50.8 mm), .125 (that is, 1/8) inch (3.18 mm) diameter bars may be used.
6. All movable visors shall be attached and secured in such a way that there is minimal chance that they will become detached or come open in normal combat use.
7. There shall be NO major internal projections; minor projections of necessary structural components shall be padded. All metal shall be free of sharp edges. Face guard bars or mesh should not attach to the interior of the helm, unless of structurally superior design and workmanship.
8. All parts of the helm that might cause injurious contact with the wearer's head shall be padded with a minimum of .5 inch (12.7 mm) of closed-cell foam or equivalent padding, or shall be suspended in such a way as to prevent contact

with the wearer during combat. Similarly, parts of the inside of the helm that might come in contact with the wearer's neck or body should be padded.

a. Open-cell foam may only be used in addition to the minimum layer of closed-cell foam required above. Open-cell foam alone is forbidden.

9. All helms shall be equipped with a chin strap or equivalent means to prevent the helm from being dislodged or metal contacting the wearer's face during combat. An equivalent might be, for example, a bevor or a chin-cup suspension system. A "snug fit" is NOT an equivalent. The chin strap shall be, at a minimum, .5 inch (12.7 mm) in width and shall not be placed in the helm in a manner that could strangle the wearer.

a. Recommendations

- i. Each face guard/visor opening should be less than 3 inches (7.6 cm) long, in order to minimize the probability that the bars will be deformed by impacts.
- ii. Helms should be fitted to the wearer's head in such a way that they are comfortable, difficult to dislodge, and do not move around on the head when struck. In fitting a helm, an extra roll of foam should be placed below the base of the skull, and pads should be placed below the ear, and between the chin and cheekbones and the helm.
- iii. A style of chin strap which tends to keep the helm on and to resist the helm being driven into the face, is one which forms a cup around the point of the chin, and is attached fairly low and far back on the sides of the helm.
- iv. The helmet should be constructed in such a manner as to prohibit thrusting tips from contacting the chin or jaw. The addition of a chainmail drape or bevor may achieve this.
- v. Ideally, each fighter should own their own helm: borrowed helms rarely fit right, and are therefore a considerably greater risk to the borrower.

### C. Eye Wear

The lenses of all eyewear shall be constructed of shatterproof industrial safety glass or plastic. Ordinary glass lenses are prohibited. The wearing of contact lenses or "sports glasses" is strongly recommended.

1. Eyeglasses, if worn inside the helm, must not press against the helm or protrude through the bars, during normal use.

2. Recommendations

a. The wearing of standard metal or plastic eyeglass frames inside helms is discouraged

### D. Neck Armor

The neck, including the larynx, cervical vertebrae, and first thoracic vertebra must be covered by one or a combination of the following and must stay covered during typical combat situations, including turning the head, lifting the chin, etc.:

1. The helm

2. A gorget of rigid material
3. A mail or heavy leather camail or aventail that hangs or drapes to absorb the force of a blow. If the camail or aventail lays in contact with the larynx, cervical vertebrae, or first thoracic vertebra, that section must be padded with a minimum of .25 inch (6mm) of closed cell foam or equivalent
4. A collar of heavy leather lined with a minimum of .25 in (6mm) of close cell foam or equivalent
5. **Recommendation**
  - a. **It is strongly recommended that every fighter wear rigid armor over the larynx and the cervical vertebrae, even if mail or other flexible armor is being worn.**

#### E. Body, Shoulder, and Groin Armor

1. The kidney area and the floating ribs shall be covered with a minimum of heavy leather worn over .25 inch (6 mm) of closed-cell foam or equivalent padding.
  - a. **Chainmail over a gambeson is not considered adequate protection.**
2. For men, the groin must be covered by a minimum of a rigid athletic cup (e.g., an ice hockey, soccer, karate, or baseball cup) worn in a supporter or fighting garment designed to hold the cup in place, or equivalent armor.
3. For women, groin protection of closed-cell foam or heavy leather or the equivalent is required to cover the pubic bone area. The wearing of a male athletic cup by female fighters is prohibited.
4. Separate breast cups are prohibited unless connected by or mounted on an interconnecting rigid piece, for example, a heavy leather or metal breastplate.
  - a. **Recommendations**
    - i. **Armor made of rigid material for the kidneys is strongly recommended.**
    - ii. **Additional padding is recommended for the shoulders and collarbone, the upper spine, the scapulae (Shoulder blades), the sternum (breastbone), solar plexus, stomach, and pelvis (hipbones).**
    - iii. **Armor of plate or rigid material for the entire torso, with segments large enough to distribute impact over a good-sized area, worn over ¼ inch closed-cell foam covering the spine, kidneys, and groin are strongly recommended.**
    - iv. **Women are strongly recommended to wear a one-piece breastplate, made from at least heavy leather, which covers all soft tissue to minimize the risk of transmitting impact directly to the breast and underlying tissue.**

#### F. Hand and Wrist Armor

The outer surfaces of the hand, to one inch above the wrist of both arms and including the thumb, must be covered by one or a combination of the following:

1. A rigid basket or cup hilt with enough bars or plates to prevent a blow from

striking the fingers or the back of the hand. If a basket or cup hilt, shield basket, or center-grip shield is used, a vambrace and or partial gauntlet shall cover the remaining exposed portions of the hand and wrist.

2. A gauntlet of rigid material either lined with .25 inch (6 mm) of closed-cell foam or equivalent or designed to transfer potentially injurious impact to the surfaces being grasped.
3. A gauntlet of heavy leather lined with .5 inch (12 mm) of closed-cell foam or heavy padding. (Note: An ice hockey glove is considered to be the equivalent, but looks blatantly modern; their use is discouraged.) Street hockey gloves are NOT equivalent, as the padding is lighter than a regular ice hockey glove. Street hockey gloves will be treated only as padding.
  - a. Note: Commercial hockey, lacrosse, or kendo gloves are acceptable without reinforcement provided that the fingers cannot be easily felt through the padding. However, note these options offer less protection.
4. A shield with a shield basket or equivalent. A shield alone is NOT sufficient, since it covers the back of the hand, but not the fingers, thumb, or wrist.
5. Combat archers and siege engineers may use as a minimum hand protection "archer's gauntlets" or partial gauntlets made of rigid material, lined with ¼ inch (6mm) of closed-cell foam or equivalent, while operating archery or siege equipment. "Archer's gauntlets" shall consist of an ice hockey gloves with the fingers cut off or equivalent, protecting the back of the hand and the wrist.

#### G. Arm Armor

The elbow point and bones at either side of the elbow joint must be covered by a rigid material underlain by at least .25 inch (6 mm) of closed-cell foam or equivalent padding. This armor shall be attached in such a way that the elbow remains covered during combat.

1. A shield alone is NOT sufficient, as it does not cover the 3 points of the elbow, during regular combat.
2. Recommendations
  - a. Plate elbow cups (coutes) are strongly recommended.
  - b. Padding covering the tendons above the point of the elbow is recommended.
  - c. Rigid material or heavy leather vambraces (forearm armor) and rearbraces (upper arm armor) are strongly recommended.

#### H. Leg Armor

1. The kneecap, including the area one inch (25.4 mm) above and below it, and both sides of the knee joints, must be covered by rigid material, lined by at least .25 inch (6 mm) of closed-cell foam or an equivalent padding. This armor shall be attached in such a way that the knee remains covered during combat.
2. Combatants should wear footwear that provides adequate protection and support for the terrain and activity of combat.

- a. **Sturdy boots that cover the ankle are recommended.**

## I. Shields

1. Shields shall be edged with leather, padding, or other covering or constructed in such a way as to minimize damage to rattan weapons or other fighters.
2. No bolts, wires, or other objects may project more than .375 (that is, 3/8) inch (9 mm) from any part of a shield without being padded. Rounded shield bosses are not considered to be projections.
  - a. **Handles or other forms of hand protection are not included in this category.**
3. Shields may be constructed with leg(s) so that they can act as freestanding pavises during melee combat.
  - a. The leg(s) used to keep the pavise standing must be at least 1.25 inches (31.8 mm) in diameter or 1.25 inches (31.8 mm) square and be well-attached.
  - b. Pavises are destroyed by a single hit from siege engine ammunition. Combatants behind the pavise are not killed. The pavise must then immediately be removed from the field or dropped flat.
  - c. A pavise can be carried in a manner which does not require hand control (such as by a shoulder strap). In this case, the fighter is not allowed to actively block with it, nor can they use their own weapon, and if struck by a hand weapon, the blow is counted as if the pavise was not there.
4. **Shields are not to be used or constructed as offensive weapons. Shields may be used for hooking and pressing, but may ONLY make contact with your opponent's weapon or shield.**
5. **Recommendations**
  - a. **A layer of padding between the arm and the back of the shield will increase comfort and help avoid bruises.**
  - b. **Metal reinforcement for the edge of wood shields will improve the shield's life span.**
  - c. **A basket hilt-like guard which cups around the handgrip, mounted on the back of the shield, will fulfill the hand protection requirement and avoid bruised or broken fingers.**
  - d. **No shield should be designed in such a way as to confer an inauthentic or unfair advantage upon its user (e.g., a shield that can be seen through, or one with a mirror-polished face.)**

## VII. WEAPONS STANDARDS

### A. General

1. With the exception of the hilts, guards and pommels, no metal or non-approved rigid, granular, or liquid material may be used in the construction of single or two-handed weapons including spears.
2. Primary weapons used single-handed shall have a wrist strap (or equivalent restraint) which will keep the weapon from leaving the immediate area of the

user if released during any part of a bout or combat. Restraints are not required on hafted weapons used single-handed, or on single-handed back-up weapons.

- a. However, if spectators are in extremely close proximity to the combat, as decided by the Marshal in Charge, all back-up weapons must have lanyards. Melee weapons used by full-contact missile combatants shall be considered back-up weapons for the purpose of this section.
3. Flails are expressly prohibited.
4. Mechanical devices known as “sliders,” which are used to guide or propel spears, are prohibited.
5. All weapons shall have all cutting edges and thrusting tips marked in a contrasting color.
  - a. The flange of the mace are considered “smashing” edges and do not need to be individually marked.
6. The striking surfaces of all weapons, including the tip, shall be wrapped in a manner that allows no rattan splinters to protrude.
7. All thrusting tips and striking heads and pommels must be securely attached to the weapon.
  - a. If lag bolts are used to attach a pommel, they shall be of no less than 5/16-inch (8 mm) diameter and thread at least 3 inches (7.6 cm) into the base of the haft.
  - b. Nails are NOT an acceptable means of affixing either a hand guard or pommel. If hose clamps are used to affix the hand guard or pommel, they shall be covered by tape.
8. The edges and tips of all striking surfaces shall be rounded.
9. No part of a weapon shall have sharp edges or protrusions with cross-section of less than 1.25 inch (31.8mm) in diameter. Guards, pommels, hooks, etc., shall be firmly and securely affixed to the weapon haft.
10. It shall not be possible to force into a legal face guard, any part of a weapon which may reasonably be expected to contact an opponent during combat more than .5 inch (12.7 mm). Rattan weapons may have a handle section which is less than 1.25 inch (31.8 mm), so long as it meets this criterion. Combat archery shafts may be thinner as long as the head and tail meet the criteria.
11. Rattan shall not be treated in any way that will substantially reduce its flexibility (e.g., treated with wax, resin, fiberglass, etc.).
12. No weapon shall exceed 6 pounds (2.73 kg).
13. No missile weapons intended to simulate firearms, slings, slingstaves, nor atlatls can be used on the field of armored combat.
14. No “punch weapons” or thrusting weapons that have the blade or tip more perpendicular than parallel to the grip.
15. No shovel handles on any thrusting weapon.

## B. Single-Handed Weapons

Weapons that shall be used in one hand shall have the following requirements:

1. Single-handed weapons shall be constructed of one of the following:
  - a. Rattan
  - b. Rattan-cored Siloflex or Siloflex-equivalent
  - c. Natural polypropylene round rod (maximum diameter: 1.25 in. (31.8 mm) ...and shall be not less than 1.25 inches (31.8 mm) in total diameter (including tape) along its entire length excepting the handle.
  - d. Siloflex is only allowed for thrust and throw weapon use.
2. Rattan-cored Siloflex or Siloflex equivalent weapons shall be constructed using tubular materials meeting ASTM standard D-2239 or the international equivalent, with a pressure rating of 160 PSI or greater, having at least a 1.25 inch (31.8 mm) diameter on the outside and at least .125 (that is, 1/8) inch (3.2 mm) walls, and having an inner core of rattan that fills the interior of the tubular material entirely. Periodic inspection shall be made to determine the condition of the inner core.
3. If the weapon has a head, it shall not be constructed of solely rigid materials. The head shall be firmly and securely attached to the haft. The head shall allow at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) of progressive give between the striking surface and the weapon haft.
4. No weapon may have a cutting and/or smashing surface at both ends.
5. When thrusting tips are used, they shall be at least the same diameter as the shaft of the weapon they are mounted on and have at least .75 inch (19.1 mm) of resilient material in front of the rigid tip of the weapon providing at least .375 (that is, 3/8) inch (9.53 mm) of progressively resistant give across the face of the thrusting tip. (Note: Pressing with the thumb into the center of the thrusting tip is not an adequate test. The give must be across the entire face of the tip.)
6. Swords shall have a hand guard, such as a basket hilt, quillions, or equivalent.
7. Total weapon length shall not exceed 48 inches (1.22 m)
8. Total weapon mass shall not exceed 5 pounds (2.27 kg)
9. Striking surfaces may be padded with flat material such as leather, split hose, or webbing. No material (such as rope) which reduces the striking surface to less than 1 inch (25.4 mm) shall be used.
10. Cross-grips or shovel handled punch daggers are specifically prohibited.

## C. Two-Handed Weapons

Weapons which may be used with one or two hands shall have the following requirements:

1. Weapons shall be constructed of rattan of not less than 1.25 inch (31.8 mm) in diameter (including tape). Polearms may contain blades constructed of split rattan, so long as the piece(s) are securely fastened to the haft.



2. The weapon shall not be excessively flexible.
3. If the weapon has a head, it shall not be constructed of solely rigid materials. The head shall be firmly and securely attached to the haft. The head shall allow at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) of progressive give between the striking surface and the weapon haft, **and should not bottom out or fold over allowing contact with the haft in normal use.** Semi-rigid ultra-lightweight shaped foam heads and laminated or split rattan construction techniques do not require .5 inch (12.7 mm) of progressive give, so long as their construction imparts striking characteristics similar to an unpadded weapon constructed of a single piece of rattan.
  - a. Rounded rattan splints, no less than 1 1/4 inches (32 mm) across, and taped as to prevent splinters from protruding, may be attached outside of the padding to provide striking surfaces.
  - b. Thrusting tips and butt spikes are permitted
4. No weapon may have a cutting and/or smashing surface at both ends.
5. Thrusting tips:
  - a. When thrusting tips are used on rattan weapons with greater length than 7.5 feet (2.286 m), they shall be no less than 2 inches (50.8 mm) in diameter/cross-section and have 2 inches (50.8 mm) of resilient material in front of the rigid tip of the weapon, thereby providing progressively resistant give.
  - b. When thrusting tips are used on rattan weapons with length less than or equal to 7.5 feet, they shall be at least the same diameter as the shaft of the weapon they are mounted on and have 1.5 inches (38.1 mm) of resilient material in front of the rigid tip of the weapon, thereby providing progressively resistant give.

(Note: Pressing with the thumb into the center of the thrusting tip is not an adequate test. The give must be across the entire face of the tip.)
6. Weapons exceeding 7.5 feet (2.286 m) shall not be used for cutting or smashing and shall be used for thrusting only.
7. Total weapon length shall not exceed 12 feet (3.658 m).
8. **No pike/spear shall be designed so that the grip is perpendicular to the haft (i.e., shovel-handle style).**

#### D. Fiberglass Spears/Pikes

1. Fiberglass spears/**pikes** shall not have a cutting or smashing head.
2. Fiberglass spears/**pikes** shall be constructed with pultruded fiberglass shafts with an outside diameter of no less than 1.25 inch (31.8 mm) and no greater than 1 5/16 inch (33.38 mm). Minimum manufacturer specified wall thickness shall be .125 (that is, 1/8) inch (3.2 mm) and the minimum measurable wall thickness shall be 3/32 inch (2.38 mm).
3. The end of the shaft which will have the thrusting tip attached must be covered with a schedule-40 PVC cap with an interior diameter the same as the outside diameter of the shaft (1.25 inches or 31.8 mm). The thrusting tip will then be attached over this cap.



4. All fiberglass spears/**pikes** must have a thrusting tip that is a minimum of 2 inches (50.8 mm) in diameter/ cross-section and have 2 inches (50.8 mm) of resilient material in front of the PVC end cap, thereby providing progressively resistant give without allowing contact with the PVC end cap.
5. Mandrake style rubber 2" tips (black and red) are to be considered an equivalent to 3" tips for use on fiberglass spear-shafts up to 9' in length as of March 1, 2011. Mandrake tips must be attached as per the instructions and all included foam discs must be used as directed in the included instructions. Tips may not be taped or attached in such a way that the mechanical properties of the tip are altered significantly.
  - a. **All other pre-manufactured 2" tips are experimental and must have prior approval by the Earl Marshal before use. They shall be marked with alternating bands of red and green tape totaling 12 inches in length underneath the head.**
6. Shafts may be spliced using a fiberglass rod or tube with a sidewall of .125 inch (3.2 mm) of the same or equivalent material, having an outside diameter of 1 inch (25.4 mm) and a length of 8–12 inches (203–304 mm). Only two splices will be allowed per spear shaft. Each end to be spliced shall be cut square and clean of cracks or frayed fibers. The rod shall extend at least 4 inches (101.6 mm) into each spliced end. One or both of these two methods shall secure the splice:
  - a. Epoxying both ends of the fiberglass rod before insertion.
  - b. Epoxying one end of the fiberglass rod before insertion and thoroughly taping the splice over with fiber tape.
7. The butt end of the shaft shall be smooth and free of cracks or frayed fibers. The butt shall be taped over or otherwise sealed. If a weapon is completely taped, a marshal may require that one section be un-taped enough to determine that pultruded fiberglass has been used in the construction of the shaft.
8. Total spear/pikes length shall not exceed 12 feet (3.658 m).

#### E. Throwing Weapons

These weapons may be used for striking and may also be thrown in melee scenarios where thrown weapons are allowed. Examples are thrust-and-throw javelins, axes, knives, etc.

1. Shafts shall be constructed of rattan not less than 1.25 inch (31.8 mm) in diameter along its entire length or of two layers of Siloflex or equivalent. The outer layer shall be 1 inch (25.4 mm) inner diameter Siloflex (1.25 inch [31.8mm] outer diameter) and the inner layer shall be 0.75 inch (19.1 mm) inner diameter Siloflex. All Siloflex used for throwing weapons must have a pressure rating of 160 PSI or greater.
2. If Siloflex is used, both ends of the shaft shall be covered with either a schedule-40 PVC cap with an interior diameter the same as the outside diameter of the shaft (1.25 inches [31.8 mm]), or with a rubber stopper or equivalent means to prevent the tubing from penetrating the thrusting tip(s), fastened securely in place by tape and/or glue.
3. Thrusting tips shall be used on any tip that can be reasonably assumed to

contact a fighter when the weapon is used or thrown. Tips shall be no less than 2 inches (50.8 mm) in diameter/cross-section and have 2 inches (50.8 mm) of resilient material in front of the rigid tip of the weapon, thereby providing progressively resistant give.

4. If the weapon has a head, it shall not be constructed of solely rigid materials. The head shall be firmly and securely attached to the haft or handle. The head shall allow at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) of progressive give between the striking surface and the weapon haft or handle.
5. Total mass of the weapon shall not exceed 2 pounds (0.91 kg).
6. **The weapon must have the owner's name, kingdom, and branch clearly and legibly printed on it in English characters for identification.**

#### F. Combat Archery Bows/Crossbows

1. During inspection, all equipment must have its poundage and draw physically measured with a ruler or other metered device and poundage scale.
2. Marshals must calibrate their bow scales regularly to be accurate at either 30 or 50 pounds, depending upon the most prevalent bow in their kingdom, as measurements obtained with commonly-used, standard spring-type scales can vary over time.
3. No compound bows, nor compound crossbow prods are allowed.
4. No non-Society period sights, spring/flipper rests, plunger buttons, stabilizers, clickers, or modern string release aids may be used.
5. Bows/Crossbows must be powered solely by the flex of the limbs.
6. If both Light and Heavy bows/crossbows, by the standards as defined below, are on the field at the same time, then all Heavy bows/crossbows must have their upper limb (or one limb for crossbows) covered with at least 4 inches (10 cm) of red material (tape, cloth, etc).
7. Handbows
  - a. A handbow's power is measured at 28 inches (71 cm). If the bow cannot be drawn 28 inches (71 cm), then it cannot be used in SCA combat.
  - b. The minimum measurement for all handbows is 20 pounds (9.1 kg) at 28 inches (71 cm).
  - c. Light handbows measure 30 pounds (13.6 kg) or less at 28 inches (71 cm).
  - d. Heavy handbows measure 50 pounds (22.7 kg) or less at 28 inches (71 cm).
8. Crossbows
  - a. Crossbows are measured by inch-pounds ("#), which is calculated by taking the poundage of the bow measured at the lock, multiplied by the distance (in inches) from the front of the string at rest, to the front of the string when in cocked position. (A metric measurement of kilogram-centimeters (kg-cm) is also allowed.)
  - b. The minimum measurement for all crossbows is 400"# (461 kg-cm).

- c. Light crossbows measure 600”# (691 kg-cm) or less.
- d. Heavy crossbows measure 1000”# (1152 kg-cm) or less.
- e. No crossbows may have a modern pistol grip.

#### G. Combat Archery Ammunition

1. All ammunition must have the owner’s name and kingdom displayed clearly on it.
2. No ammunition may be more than 10% covered in the color yellow.
3. No metal can be used as ammunition construction material.
4. All ammunition has a maximum length of 28 inches (71 cm) from the back of the blunt, to the string acceptor on the nock.
5. Optionally, ammunition may have fletches as long as they are securely attached and made of a soft material. Fletches may not project farther than .5 inch (12.7 mm) from the shaft if they are less than 1.5 inch (38.1 mm) thick.
6. Light Ammunition (for use in light bows or light crossbows)
  - a. Shafts of light ammunition must be solid pultruded fiberglass of between .25 (6.5 mm) and .375 inch (9.5 mm) diameter.
  - b. Fiberglass shall be of a good quality, defined as significant ‘bending’ pressure as applied by a marshal not causing the shaft to break.
  - c. The shaft must be covered from behind the blunt, to the front of the anti-penetration device (APD), in a sturdy tear-resistant tape, such as strapping, electrical, or duct tape.
  - d. Anti-Penetration Devices (APDs)
    - i. APDs must be attached no further than .5 inch (12.7 mm) from the end of the arrow or bolt (including nock).
    - ii. APDs must be attached securely via tape, glue, cable ties, etc. The method does not matter as long as it is securely attached and will not come off during normal use. This will be tested by Marshals will test this by grabbing and pulling on the APD with moderate force while twisting it slightly. If it detaches or moves lengthwise along the shaft, then it is unsafe.
    - iii. The following are the ONLY approved styles of APDs:
      - 1) Siloflex equivalent
        - a) APDs must be of Siloflex equivalent material with a pressure rating between 75 and 200psi. The outer diameter must be at least 1.25 inches (31.8 mm) or the inner diameter must be at least 1 inch (25.4 mm).
        - b) There may be no cuts in the back end of the APD.
        - c) The length of the top edge of the APD must be at least 1.25 inches (3.2 cm) if the front is cut square, or .625 (that is, 5/8) inch (16 mm) if the front is cut at a 45 degree angle.

- d) APD may have a channel routed in the bottom, and/or cuts made in the front edge for helping tape attachment.
    - e) All sharp edges must be eased.
  - 2) Asgard
    - a) Asgard APDs have only the following modifications allowed: Cutting the nock off flush for use on a crossbow, making small holes for helping attachment, and roughing surfaces for gluing.
- e. Blunts
  - i. All blunts must be securely attached via tape, glue, cable ties, etc. The method does not matter as long as it is securely attached; however at least one piece of strapping, electrical or duct tape must extend over the blunt and be securely attached to the shaft on both sides. This will be tested by marshals by grabbing and pulling on the blunt with moderate force while twisting it slightly.  
If the blunt shows signs of moving off of the shaft, then it fails. (Twisting around the shaft is okay.)
  - ii. Baldar Blunts
    - 1) Baldar Blunts must be of a type designed for use on fiberglass shafts (.25 inch shaft acceptor), and can only be used with .25 inch or 6.5 mm shafts.
    - 2) Only the original 2-piece mold Baldar Blunt is allowed. Blunts must be attached in such a way that the blunt can be inspected for the parting line visible around the circumference of the thickest part of the blunt in the 2-piece molds. If no parting line is seen the blunt cannot be used.
  - iii. UHMW (Ultra-High Molecular Weight Polyethylene)
    - 1) UHMW blunts are constructed of at least 1.25 inches (31.8 cm) diameter UHMW rod with a hole drilled in it to accept the shaft.
    - 2) The shaft hole must be at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) deep, and there must be at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) of UHMW in front of the shaft.
    - 3) At least .5 inch (12.7 mm) and at most 1.25 inch (31.8 cm) of resilient padding after taping must be added in front of the blunt and be at least the same diameter as the blunt.
    - 4) The head must have a side-wrap of foam that extends from the tip of the padding to at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) over the UHMW that brings the total diameter of the head to at least 1.5 inch (3.81 mm) after taping.
    - 5) The front edges of the blunt must be rounded over.
    - 6) As long as all other requirements are met, the blunt may have material removed for aerodynamic or weight reducing

purposes.

7. Heavy Ammunition (for use in heavy bows, heavy crossbows, light bows, or light crossbows)

Heavy ammunition must be of one of three styles: tubular, tennis ball, or Fellwalker.

- a. Tubular Ammunition

- i. The shaft must be constructed of Siloflex Equivalent with a pressure rating of 100PSI, 1.25 inches (31.8 mm) exterior diameter or 1 inch (25.4 mm) interior diameter.
- ii. The tail must be left solid for at least 1 inch (25.4 mm). Cuts may be made beyond that in order to install fletches if desired but must have holes drilled at the ends of each cut to keep the cut from spreading. The tail may be slit if a 1 inch (25.4 mm) or longer section of Siloflex is reinserted at the end and laced in place. A nock may be cut into the tail end, but may be no deeper than .5 inch (12.7 mm). Wooden nocks can be installed as long as they are securely attached by drilling and lacing with string.
- iii. The head must be constructed in one of the following manners.

Regardless of the construction method, the head must be firmly attached by the use of tape and/ or string. Marshals will check head attachment by pulling on them with a moderate level of force and twisting slightly. If the head shows signs of loosening, it fails inspection.

- 1) Rubber Stopper – A rubber stopper, size 6.5, is placed in the end of the tube such that it enters the tube at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) and is well attached. Resilient padding of at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) and at most 1.25 inch (31.8 mm), after taping, is then added on top of it. The head must also have a side-wrap of foam that extends from the tip of the padding to at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) over the rubber stopper to bring the total diameter of the head to at least 1.5 inch (3.8 cm) after taping.
- 2) Baldar Blunts – Baldar blunts may be used by cutting the support fins away so that the blunt slides over the Siloflex and attaches securely. At least .5 inch (12.7 mm) and at most 1.25 inch (31.8 mm) of resilient padding after taping must be added to the tip. The diameter of the foam after taping must be at least 1.5 inch (3.8 cm). Any classic style of Baldar Blunt can be used in this manner, whether 1 or 2 piece mold or designed for fiberglass or wood.
- 3) Tennis Ball – A tennis ball is placed at the end of the tube and attached via tape and/or string. The ball shall not be perforated as this leads to it getting dirt/water inside of it.

- b. Tennis Balls

- i. Regulation tennis balls may be used as ammunition, as is, with the following restrictions.

- 1) Ball must weigh less than 3 ounces (85 grams).
  - 2) Ball must not be covered in tape and cannot be yellow. (Dyes or stains may be used to change the color)
- c. Fellwalker Bolts
- i. The “Fellwalker design” is approved for crossbows only
  - ii. The shaft is of solid fiberglass of between .25 inch (6.5 mm) and .375 (that is, 3/8) inch (9.5 mm) diameter.
  - iii. The blunt is made from UHMW rod of at least 1.25 inches (31.8 mm) diameter with a hole drilled in it to accept the shaft.
  - iv. The shaft hole must be at least 1 inch (25.4 mm) deep, and there must be at least 1 inch (25.4 mm) of UHMW in front of the shaft.
  - v. The striking surface must have at least 1 inch (25.4 mm) and at most 1.25 inches (31.8 mm) of resilient foam after taping and be at least the diameter of the blunt.
  - vi. The head must have a side-wrap of foam that extends from the tip of the padding to at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) over the UHMW that brings the total diameter of the head to at least 1.5 inch (3.8 cm) after taping.
  - vii. The tail end must have a disk of UHMW installed that is at least 1.25 inches (31.8 mm) diameter, at least .5 inch (12.7 mm) thick, and drilled at least .25 inch (6.5 mm) deep to accept the shaft. The leading edge of the blunt and all edges of the APD shall be rounded over.

## VIII. SIEGE COMBAT

### A. General

Siege engines or structures may be used in combat during melees and wars in accordance with the rules set forth in the Siege Engines Handbook.

### B. Munitions

1. Siege-class munitions are denoted by being primarily yellow and include ballista bolts and rocks (1-pound [0.45 kg] foam or 4-tennis-ball clusters).
2. Small-arms munitions include single tennis balls and tube shafted combat archery arrows and bolts.

### C. Blow Acknowledgment

1. A blow from siege class ammunition to any legal target area shall be judged fatal or completely disabling.
2. Blows from siege class ammunition to shields shall be judged fatal or completely disabling to the bearer of the shield unless otherwise specified by scenario rules.
3. Hand-held weapons struck by siege class munitions shall be considered destroyed.
4. Small-arms munitions fired from siege engines shall be treated as combat

archery projectiles.

5. Siege munitions are considered spent upon striking a target, the ground, or a battlefield structure.

#### D. Destroying Siege Engines.

1. Fighters shall stay clear of moving parts and, when possible, approach siege engines/structures from the side.
2. Striking or thrusting siege engines/structures with hand-held weapons is strictly prohibited.
3. Siege engines may be destroyed by placing a hand-held weapon on the engine/structure and declaring “this weapon is destroyed,” or by being struck by siege-class munitions from another siege engine.
4. Siege engine crews are fully armored combatants and should be treated as would be any other fighter on the field.
5. If fighting occurs within 5 feet (1.524 m) of an engine that is cocked or loaded, a hold shall be called and the engine shall be declared destroyed and removed from the combat area and made safe.

# MARSHALS' SECTION

## **I. HEAVY COMBAT MARSHALL CLASSIFICATIONS AND DEFINITIONS**

### **A. Marshal in Training:**

1. A marshal in training is a deliberate classification. One must be sponsored by an authorized marshal (combat marshal or above), to be a marshal in training. The primary duty of a marshal in training is to learn the rules of the lists, the conventions of combat, and the methods of performing marshalate duties, with the intent of becoming an authorized marshal. This can and should be accomplished through both of the following methods:
  - a. Instruction, both theoretical and practical, from an authorized marshal
  - b. Familiarization with the various rules and conventions of heavy combat and heavy combat marshaling
2. Documents available to marshals include:
  - a. Armored combat manual
  - b. Rules of the Lists
  - c. Conventions of combat
  - d. Heavy armored combat marshal procedures
  - e. Heavy armored combat authorization procedures
  - f. Heavy armored combat marshal authorization procedures
3. No responsibilities of heavy combat marshaling are inferred to a marshal in training. As such, an marshal in training may NOT:
  - a. Be a marshal in charge
  - b. Be a branch marshal
  - c. Run inspections
  - d. Run a field
  - e. Instruct or train other marshals
4. All official activities performed by a marshal in training must be supervised by an authorized combat marshal. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Armor inspection
  - b. Marshaling single combat
  - c. Marshaling melee or war combat
5. A marshal in training, at the direction of an authorized combat marshal, may perform boundary control, without the direct supervision of an authorized marshal

### **B. Combat Marshal:**

1. This is the general classification for an authorized, standard heavy combat marshal



2. Duties and requirements:
  - a. Be a member of the SCA
  - b. Have a good working knowledge of the Rules of the Lists, Conventions of Combat, and the Heavy Armored Combat Standards
  - c. Train marshals in training
  - d. Supervise marshals in training
3. Privileges:
  - a. Perform armor inspection
  - b. Marshal heavy single combat, heavy melee combat, and heavy war combat
  - c. Serve as a branch marshal
  - d. Act as marshal in charge of a practice
  - e. Serve as a marshal in charge of a NON-ROYAL tournament. “Royal tournaments” include:
    - 1) Kingdom Crown Tournament
    - 2) Principality Coronet Tournament

#### C. Senior Marshal:

1. Duties:
  - a. Be a member of the SCA
  - b. Have an authoritative knowledge of the Rules of the Lists, Conventions of Combat, and the Heavy Armored Combat Standards
  - c. Train marshals in training
  - d. Supervise marshals in training
  - e. Be available to perform authorizations when needed
2. Privileges:
  - a. Perform heavy combat authorizations
  - b. Perform heavy combat marshal authorizations
  - c. Serve as a Regional Marshal. This includes:
    - 1) Principality Marshal
    - 2) Marches Marshal
  - d. Serve as MiC of any event or practice

#### D. Branch Marshal:

1. Act as the authority for all martial activities performed in a given branch, on the local level. This could include practices and/or fighting events.
2. Duties:
  - a. Be a member of the SCA
  - b. Oversee all martial activities in one’s branch

- c. Provide quarterly reports on the state of martial activities in a given branch, to the Regional Marshal that oversees one's branch
    - 1) This can include information on sub-groups, with one's branch (cantons, shires, etc.)
    - 2) Include any compiled information provided by branch marshals of any sub-groups
  - d. Organize any needed marshal for fighting events that take place in one's branch
  - e. Ensure there is a marshal in charge for any practices that take place in one's branch
3. Branch marshals report to the Regional Marshal, whose region includes one's branch

**E. Regional Marshal:**

- 1. This is the marshal of a Principality or of The Marches (or a region of The Marches)
- 2. Duties:
  - a. Be a member of the SCA
  - b. Be an authorized Sr. Marshal
  - c. Oversee all martial activities in the region
  - d. Provide quarterly reports on the state of martial activities in the region, to the Kingdom Earl Marshal
    - 1) This includes information on sub-groups, with the region
    - 2) Include any compiled information provided by branch marshals of any sub-groups
  - e. Organize any needed marshal for fighting events that take place in one's branch
  - f. Ensure there is a marshal in charge for any practices that take place in one's branch

**F. Marshal in Charge:**

- 1. The marshal designated to oversee all combat-related activities for a specific event or practice
- 2. Duties:
  - a. For royal tournament events, an MiC must be an authorized Sr. Marshal
  - b. For any other event or practice, an MiC must at least be an authorized combat marshal
  - c. For events:
    - 1) Ensure all proper safety measures, as they relate to combat, are met per the applicable rules and regulations of the Society and West Kingdom
      - a) This can be delegated to the appropriate personnel

- 2) Coordinate with the event organizers and the royalty (if applicable), to become informed as to the planned martial activities for the event
  - 3) If applicable, coordinate with the discipline MiC's for the event (rapier, EQ, etc.)
  - 4) Staff the event as needed. This includes securing marshals and lists mistresses/masters, as so required to support the martial activities
  - 5) Provide an event report to the marshal officer that has authority over the event (local/branch, Principality/Marches, Earl Marshal, etc.)
- d. For practices:
- 1) Ensure all proper safety measures, as they relate to combat, are met per the applicable rules and regulations of the Society and West Kingdom
  - 2) Make sure all combat participants are either duly authorized for the type of combat in which they plan to participate, or have signed a combat-related-activities waiver and are being supervised by an authorized & experienced marshal

#### G. Earl Marshal:

1. The Earl Marshal is a Great Officer of the Kingdom and the representative of the Crown on all matters concerning combat within the Kingdom
2. The Earl Marshal and those specific Marshals selected as their deputies are the only individuals who may authorize a fighter under the age of 18 for Heavy Armored Combat
3. The Earl Marshal is the only one who may elevate a marshal to the position of Senior Marshal
4. The Earl Marshal reports directly to the Crown and the Society Earl Marshal
5. Must be a member of the SCA to hold this office. This is a warranted position.
6. Must provide quarterly reports to the Society Earl Marshal
7. Must provide a report to the assembled royalty and officers, at each Kingdom Officer's Meeting, and a "Doomsday" report for the final report of the year

## II. PROCEDURES FOR THE AUTHORIZATION OF MARSHALS

### A. General Requirements

There are three near-equal priorities in marshaling; safety, fair witness, and showmanship. Overemphasizing any one of these at the expense of the others will tend to make the fighting less enjoyable for everyone (although, if you must go overboard on one, pick safety).

1. A marshal may be authorized after demonstrating the ability to oversee combat, judge a fighter's authorization, and inspect weapons and armor.
2. Unless warranted or rostered by the Earl Marshal as an officer of the kingdom, a marshal may not be the marshal-in-charge (MIC) of an event or sign the paperwork to authorize fighters.
3. Kingdoms may have other types of Marshals other than Authorized Marshals (local Knight Marshals, Constables, etc.) as they see fit. These individuals

may be warranted or rostered by the Earl Marshal of the Kingdom. However, unless the marshal has undergone a Marshal's Authorization, they shall not give final approval of the suitability of weapons or armor, or be involved in the authorization of combat participants.

4. Only the Earl Marshal or designated Deputy Earl Marshal(s) may perform a Marshal's Authorization.
  - a. **Senior Marshals may authorize Combat marshals, Mixed marshals and Advanced Marshals.**
  - b. They must witness the authorization and execute the appropriate paperwork to ensure that the authorization is registered. At a minimum, a Marshal's Authorization shall include the following:
5. The candidate must have a good working knowledge of the Rules of the Lists, the Society Conventions of Combat, and any additional kingdom rules or conventions.
  - a. The candidate must be willing to enforce the Rules of the Lists, the Society Conventions of Combat, and any additional kingdom rules or conventions.
  - b. The candidate must have a good working knowledge of the Society minimum armor and weapons standards and any additional kingdom armor and weapons standards.
  - c. The candidate must demonstrate the ability to conduct an inspection of armor and weapons for use in combat.
  - d. The candidate must demonstrate the ability to conduct an inspection of combatants.
  - e. The candidate must demonstrate the ability to safely control SCA combat, whether this is single combat, team combat, general melee, or part of a war environment.
6. The term "Knight Marshal" applies to the marshal of a branch. This title of office is used regardless of whether the marshal is a belted fighter; in fact it is used whether or not the branch marshal is an authorized fighter.
7. All warranted or rostered marshals shall be members of the Society for Creative Anachronism Inc.

### **III. PROCEDURES FOR MARSHALING WARS**

#### **A. Before the War**

1. The general rules under which the war will be conducted, compromises between conflicting kingdoms' standards, and the scenario limits for each planned battle shall be negotiated and agreed to in writing in advance by the authorized representatives of all belligerent groups involved. The rules and scenario limits shall be published in the appropriate newsletters. For inter-kingdom wars, notices shall be published according to SCA publication policy by the groups involved. This publication should take place at least thirty (30) days prior to the event. In addition, copies of all of the rules and agreements shall be available on-site, as a handout, for people who do not receive (or did not read) the newsletters. Armor and weapons standards shall default to the established Society minimum standards unless otherwise specified in the event

rules and scenario limits.

2. Each side in a battle shall provide a reasonable number of trained and experienced marshals. If not enough marshals are available, the sides should arrange for a draft from their armies.
3. **All** marshals should be separately briefed prior to the meetings of all participants. (They should also attend the group briefing.) Emphasis at this briefing should be on enforcing the rules and scenario limits for each battle and on preventing accidents that could arise from hazards related to the scenario limits and to the actual terrain. There should be an understanding among the marshals regarding the rules and scenario specifics and any possible safety issues that may arise. At inter-kingdom events the differences between the attending kingdoms should be discussed and compromises and clarity in the rules and scenarios regarding those differences should be worked out.
4. All participants shall be gathered to hear the rules and the scenario limits explained to them. The event stewards and/or the marshals should answer their questions. If the scenario limits vary radically from battle to battle, this procedure should be repeated before each battle.
5. Equipment inspection must take place before combat starts, with particular emphasis on any modifications that have been made in the process of making compromises between conflicting kingdom standards.

#### B. Marshal of a War

1. A supervising marshal (marshal in charge) shall be chosen for each war (and possibly for each battle, if the MIC for the war is fighting in the battles or otherwise prevented from being present).
  - a. The marshal-in-charge shall be responsible for the activities of the marshals in his charge.
  - b. If possible, the marshal-in-charge should not be a member of one of the groups on the field.
  - c. The marshal-in-charge for a particular battle may not participate in the battle as a combatant.
2. When "Hold!" is called, all fighting shall cease.
  - a. Fighters shall drop to one knee (if possible) where they stand.
  - b. Conversations relating to the conduct of the battle are not permitted between combatants.
  - c. Changes of position/location are not permitted, unless ordered by a marshal.
  - d. If movement away from a boundary of a hazard is necessary, the fighters shall maintain their relative positions and distances.
  - e. To end a hold, the marshal-in-charge will call "All rise!" (or "Rise if you're able" or some other equivalent statement). When the combatants have resumed their guard, the marshal-in-charge will call "Lay on!" to signal the resumption of the fight.

3. "Hold!" will normally be called only for broken armor, lost tempers, injuries, safety concerns, outsiders wandering onto the field, fighters about to wander off it, or to enforce the rules and scenario limits.
4. "Hold!" should not be called for dropped weapons, fighters who have slipped and fallen (unless they are in danger of injury), or the near approach of a fighter to a boundary where there are neither spectators nor any natural hazards, such as cliffs.
5. Marshals have the preemptory authority to remove from combat and from the field any combatant who violates the rules or scenario limits or who performs any unsafe or dishonorable act. Such removal may be discussed during the battle only if the marshal permits it. The marshals' ruling may be appealed to the Marshal in Charge.
6. Marshals have the authority to regulate the movement of non-combatants on and near the field and to control the location of spectators.
7. Those marshals who are responsible for marshaling wars or large melees may use alternative means to signal "Hold" or "Lay on," as long as all fighters and marshals know and understand the alternative signaling system. Marshals may use whistles, air horns, or other such devices.

#### **IV. MARSHALING REQUIREMENTS**

##### **A. Combat Archery is present**

1. When combat archery is present on the field all marshals, heralds, etc. on the field must wear protective shatterproof eyewear, such as safety glasses meeting the ANSI Z 87.1 standard or better.
2. A buffer zone needs to be provided between the edges of the battlefield and spectators at all times. This needs to be increased when combat archery is included. The marshal-in-charge must ensure that it is a safe distance (it should not be possible to hit a spectator, either with direct fire or with a bounced arrow), taking into account the type of scenario, to minimize the chances of deflected shots traveling into the spectators. Physical barriers may eliminate the need for a buffer zone or lessen the distance needed.

#### **V. COMBAT INJURY**

##### **A. Procedures**

1. When an injury occurs on the field, it should always be remembered that the primary concern is getting to and assisting the injured party. Secondary to this objective, but no less important, is the safety of persons entering the field to help and the well-being of anyone already on the field. (For example, fighters standing around in armor in the sun could be subject to heat problems.)
2. All injuries that require hospitalization or similar care, include a period of unconsciousness, or may require future medical care need to be reported to your Kingdom Earl Marshal within 24 hours of the incident. Include all available details in the report.
3. In the event of an emergency, the marshals shall cooperate with any authorized persons responding to the emergency and keep the area clear of would-be spectators.

4. In the event of any suspected injury on the field, the marshal shall halt all fighting in the area and determine the proper course of action. The hold may be a local hold as long as the safety of the injured person can be maintained. The overall situation should be assessed, and, as the injured party is tended to, every effort shall be made to release as much of the field as possible so that combat may proceed.
5. If the injured person is conscious, they may be asked if they would like assistance. No conscious person will be forced to accept treatment without his or her consent. No non-combatant shall enter the combat area until summoned by a marshal.
6. A marshal shall call for assistance if they suspect that a participant is experiencing more than momentary distress. It is an extremely serious matter to delay the application of first aid when it is needed, and marshals who ignore injuries may be subject to revocation of their authorization to supervise combat-related activities.
7. No one may remove an injured fighter from the field without the consent of the event marshal-in-charge or an appointed deputy.
8. Any immediate and significant problems associated with an injury on the field shall be reported to the kingdom Earl Marshal.

## **VI. GUIDELINES FOR MARSHALING ON THE FIELD**

The guidelines outlined in this section are not rigid requirements, but are placed here in an attempt to help clarify and to provide examples of acceptable methods and procedures.

### **A. Preparing to Marshal Combat Activities**

As marshal-in-charge, you are responsible for organizing the marshaling. This does not mean that you have to do it all yourself.

Things that need to be done prior to all combat activities:

1. Check that the field can be safely fought upon, preferably before the site is reserved for the event. Can someone in armor, with restricted vision, cross it safely (i.e., without injury; simple tripping is an inherent hazard of combat in rough terrain)? At minimum, check at the beginning of the day to see if there are holes, soft spots, rocks, etc. If they are serious and cannot be worked around, move the fighting somewhere else.
2. Arrange for equipment inspection. (See Equipment Inspection Guidelines below.)
3. Arrange for marshals for all of the combat. That means an absolute minimum of one marshal per single combat (preferably two or three); enough marshals for group combat (melees and war battles) to both surround the fighting (to keep an eye on the boundaries) and keep most of the fights under general surveillance (for detached armor, broken weapons, etc.). It is relatively common for a marshal-in-charge to draft anyone he or she feels is competent to serve as field marshals during an event. Whether these individuals are warranted marshals is a matter of kingdom choice. The advantage of being a warranted marshal is that you are an official of the Corporation, which gives you certain legal protection from lawsuits (if any) arising from your actions as a marshal. Since the Society and its officers have never faced a lawsuit over

fighting on the field, this may not seem critical, but it is worth thinking about. If volunteers are in short supply, point out to the fighters that they do not get to start until sufficient marshals are available.

4. When it is all over, write up a report on the event (see the Paperwork section under VII. Chain of Command).

## B. Marshaling Single Combat

1. At minimum, there should be one marshal for single combat. Two or three will be able to see more of the fight. Four or more will get in each other's way and block the view from the sidelines without providing noticeably better marshaling.
2. As noted earlier, marshaling has three parts of nearly equal importance: safety, fair witness, and showmanship. Excessive concern for any of these, to the neglect of the other two, will make fighting less enjoyable for all concerned. While these concerns apply to all marshaling, they are most detailed and balanced in single combat.
3. Safety
  - a. The field itself can cause safety problems. Before you begin, look over the area where the fighting will take place. Look particularly for large holes, soft spots, and rocks. (The fighters will generally accept small holes, rocks, etc. as part of the terrain.) Once the fight starts, try to keep it away from these areas. If the hazards are serious, move the fight.
  - b. As the fighters come onto the field, take a quick look to see if they have their full armor, especially elbow, neck, and hand armor. These are the likeliest to be removed and then forgotten. This should not take any time at all; it is neither a full inspection nor an attempt to catch someone trying to play silly games with the rules—just a quick double-check to help someone who may have been distracted by the excitement of the day. **Ask the fighters if they have all the Equipment they were inspected with. If they have changed weapons or armor, inspect the new items before beginning combat.**
  - c. Once the fight has started, watch particularly for broken armor, lost tempers, injuries, and unauthorized people/pets/objects on the field. (Outsiders, especially small children and pets, do not always realize that they are supposed to stay off of the field during combat.) If there is a problem, shout "Hold!", several times if necessary. (Most fighters will hear and respond to a cry of "Hold!" even when they won't notice their own names being called.)
  - d. If the first cry of "Hold!" does not cause the fighters to stop, get in between the fighters (or between the fighters and whoever or whatever has wandered onto the field) and block the weapons with your staff until the fighting stops. Keep yelling "Hold!" while you do so that eventually they may notice. That is one reason why marshals routinely carry staffs on the field.
  - e. Bear in mind that the various kingdoms have somewhat differing traditions as to how much marshals should intrude into a fight. On one extreme, some kingdoms expect marshals to keep their opinions to themselves,



except in the case of clear and immediate safety hazards. At the other extreme, some kingdoms expect marshals to volunteer advice any time they think the fighters might possibly have a question about a blow. If you are new to marshaling, or merely new to the kingdom you are in, try to find out where in this spectrum your kingdom lies. It will make a difference in how you act and, perhaps more importantly, it will make a major difference in what the fighters expect of you. Blatant violations of the rules and safety concerns should always be brought up either immediately if necessary for safety issues, or as there is a “hold” called for rules discussions that can wait until then.

- i. Judging the effects of blows is left to the honor of the combatant being struck by the weapon, unless he or she relinquishes this responsibility, with the exception of clear violations of the Rules of the Lists or the Conventions of Combat. Effectiveness of a blow may not be judged by the opposing combatant, the Marshal, or other observers. Information unavailable to the combatant being struck may be supplied by the opposing combatant or the Marshal, including blade orientation upon impact, apparent force transmitted, or apparent location and angle of the blow’s impact based upon the observer’s angle of observation.
- ii. The marshal of a tournament bout may offer information regarding blow orientation without being asked since it is not required that a fighter take a blow that is not hit on the striking edge of a weapon. In all other matters, Western Marshals general wait to be asked by the fighters before giving their opinion.

#### 4. Witness

- a. You are expected to be an impartial witness to exactly what happens during a fight. Ideally, you should be able to describe the last 3–4 blows on your side of the fight: where they started, their angle of approach, how they were blocked or where they landed. Do not be afraid to say, “I don’t know” if you were looking at one part of the fight when something (allegedly) happened in another part.
- b. Do not try to impose your view unless you see what appears to be major and repeated problems. Leave the blow counting to the participants unless you see clear reason to intervene; usually, they have a much clearer perspective than the marshals do.
- c. If the fighters do ask you what happened (or you feel compelled to volunteer), try to do so tactfully. Prefacing your statements with “It looked to me like...”, “It appeared...”, or “to the crowd it looked like...” is preferable to a dogmatic assertion of what happened. Similarly, it is preferable to ask “Was that dent in your helm before?” rather than saying, “That blow put a 6-inch dent in the side of your helm.” The latter may be 100% accurate, but it is unnecessarily antagonistic to someone who may honestly have thought the blow too light.

#### 5. How to observe combat

- a. In order to be able to answer as accurately as possible, you need as clear a view as possible. This means being close to the fight. You need to strike a

balance between getting closer to see better and staying back out of range of the blows. Just what the appropriate distance is for you will depend on your level of experience with fighting (e.g., how well you can judge what the range of the weapons is and whether you are in or near it). In general, for single combat, 20 yards is too far and 2 yards is too close. In the absence of a better idea, consider 5 yards for weapons less than 3 feet in length and 8 yards if either combatant has a longer weapon. Try to keep moving so that the combatants are roughly centered between you and the other marshals for the fight.

6. Showmanship
  - a. Keep an eye on the audience. SCA combat is a spectator sport, just as medieval tournaments were. Your part of the show is to keep things moving and avoid blocking the view from the sidelines except where unavoidable. This means fast pre-fight checks and announcements, a minimum of holds and discussions during the fight, and a strenuous effort to stay out of the way and keep moving. (If it's cold, wear several layers of clothing and move even more; one person in a cloak can interfere with the view of many).

### C. Marshaling Melees

1. When marshaling a melee, the witness function is necessarily relegated to a very low priority. (It is not unimportant, but it is impossible for a handful of marshals to be accurate witnesses to the details of a couple of dozen separate combats.)
2. You should have a minimum of 3 marshals for the first 20 fighters, plus one additional marshal for each 15 fighters up to a total of 500 fighters and 35 marshals. If you have more than 500 fighters (realistically, even if you have more than 50 fighters), you should have an experienced Marshal in Charge and a sizable number of experienced marshals. It is preferable to have more marshals for free-for-all melees.
3. Marshals should station themselves around the edges of the fight. This allows them to control the borders while keeping as much of the fighting as possible in view. It also prevents fighters from running into them from behind. As always, keep moving and stay close enough to spot safety problems.
4. In very large melees, it may be desirable to have some marshals in the middle of the field, in addition to those around the edge. If you are mid-field, be careful that you do not get so interested in the fight in front of you that you back into or forget to watch another bout moving around behind you.

## VII. COMBAT AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURES

### A. Example

This example of an authorization is for an armored combat fighter. This procedure may be used as-is by a kingdom, or it may be modified as required to reflect differences in culture and convention. This authorization procedure requires that a member of the Chivalry (to act as a witness and provide a second opinion), a warranted authorized marshal, and an experienced authorized fighter be present. This outline is general and does not deal with the specifics of armor and weapons rules, since these rules may vary. Warranted (or rostered) authorized marshals will

be trained in the specifics as they change.

We require a Senior Marshal and one to two experience fighters/marshals to administer the authorization. An experience fighter in full armor will act as the opponent.

1. If the fighter does not have proof of a signed waiver (for example, a signed blue membership card) prior to the authorization, the candidate and the authorizing marshal will properly complete a waiver (SCA, Inc. form titled CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE AND RELEASE LIABILITY).
2. The persons conducting the authorization must verify that the candidate is familiar with the Rules of the List and the current rules that specifically govern the Kingdom of residence.
3. The candidate must present themselves on the field in armor for inspection. The armor must be inspected on the body and must pass the current armor requirements for combat. This inspection shall be complete and exacting, and any deficiencies must be permanently corrected before the person may authorize.
4. Both the experienced authorized fighter and the candidate shall be armed with sword and shield or the weapon in which the candidate seeks authorization, if the kingdom requires separate weapon authorization. (The Earl Marshal may permit a substitute weapons system.) **The West Kingdom authorizes an armored combatant in all weapons forms without separate tests. We require only the demonstration of one weapon form during the authorization bout.**
5. For the first few minutes of the bout for authorization, the prospective fighter and the authorized fighter shall fight at 1/2 to 3/4 speed and verbally acknowledge all blows landed. During this phase of the authorization, the marshal and the member of the Chivalry should get an impression of the new fighter's style, technique, ability to call blows, and ability to defend themselves. If this portion of the authorization is not satisfactorily completed, the authorization procedure shall be stopped. The candidate shall be told of the problems observed and instructed as to how to correct the problems.
6. If the first portion of the bout has progressed satisfactorily, then the combatants will be told to fight in list-type combat, counting blows until one is defeated. During this phase, the marshal and member of the Chivalry should observe the new fighter's control, reaction to blows, and ability to cope with pressure.
7. The marshal, the member of the Chivalry, and the authorized fighter shall confer to decide if the new fighter exhibits adequate performance in the minimum criteria for authorization listed below:
  - a. Does the candidate know and apply the Rules of the Lists and the Conventions of Combat?
  - b. Does the candidate exhibit safe behavior on the field, for both self and others?
  - c. How does the candidate react to pressure? Does he or she fight back or become disoriented and confused?
  - d. Can the candidate defend him or herself?
  - e. Is the authorizing fighter able to feel and judge blows, both those received

and those thrown?

8. If the marshal, member of the Chivalry, and authorized fighter agree that the candidate meets these requirements, the marshal will notify the fighter that they are now authorized. The fighter and marshal will properly complete any paperwork required by the kingdom in addition to the previously completed Waiver for SCA Combat-Related Activities.
9. The fighter will send these properly completed forms to the kingdom official responsible for issuing authorization cards. Upon receipt of these properly completed forms, an authorization card will be issued. *The fighter shall be issued a temporary card or keep a copy of the authorization form and waiver if he or she intends to fight prior to receiving the authorization card. The card should be received within one month. If the card is not received, the fighter should contact the authorization official and forward any information or paperwork required.*
10. Information shall be sent to fighterdata@yahoo.com by the authorizing marshal. This information shall include the fighter's SCA name, mundane name, address, phone number, e-mail address, and membership number. If they are not a member, a copy of their waiver will need to be sent as well before their card will be sent to them.

## **VIII. EQUIPMENT INSPECTION GUIDELINES**

### **A. General Information**

1. At each event, the marshal-in-charge must arrange for the inspection of all equipment to be used in combat (e.g., armor and weapons). This in no way relieves the individual combatants of their responsibility for following the equipment standards. Ultimately, the fighter is responsible for the condition and safety of their armor and weapons at all times. This includes periods between bouts, between battles, and day to day periods between battles at a multi-day event. However, the marshal's inspection is intended to provide a second pair of experienced eyes and an outside point of view. A reminder: Equipment that was perfectly serviceable at the beginning of the previous event could have broken since, and even the most experienced fighter can occasionally forget some piece of armor. The inspection outlined below is merely an example. For purposes of illustration, the inspection described is for regular SCA combat without missile weapons. It does not necessarily include checks for additional requirements that your kingdom may have added. A checklist might be helpful as you do the inspection until you have done so many that it becomes second nature. (As noted in the section on marshaling combat, a quick visual check of the combatants just before the start of a bout or battle is also a good idea.) All of this is based on the equipment standards given in the Appendix. You should be familiar with them, as well as with any other requirements that your kingdom may have instituted. The fact that one of the requirements is not mentioned on this checklist does not mean that you should not notice if it has not been met.

### **B. Armor Inspection**

Armor inspection must be done with all of the armor on the body of the fighter who is going to wear it. It is not otherwise possible to get an accurate idea of what is covered and what is not, of where gaps may occur as the combatant moves. In

weapon inspections, the primary test is safety. If you, as a marshal, do not believe that the weapon is safe (i.e., if you would not be willing to face it), do not let it be used on the field. When in doubt, ask the prospective user if he or she would be willing to fight against the weapon. If not, it should not be used regardless of whether it meets all other requirements. Before you start, remind yourself that armor is hot, not to mention heavy. If the weather is hot, try to find some shade in which to hold the inspection or, at least, for the fighters to stand in while waiting to be inspected. (Similar reasoning applies in case of rain, freezing cold, or other inclement weather. Just because it is possible to fight does not mean that it is pleasant or desirable to stand around in armor.)

### C. Sample Armor Inspection

See Section VI, “Armor Requirements” above for Society minimum standards.

1. Leg Armor: Check that the front and sides of the knee are covered. Have the fighter flex their knees (either a deep knee bend or one knee at a time) and see that the knee remains covered and that the articulation (if any) does not gap. Check for sharp edges, broken or missing rivets, or other signs that the equipment is falling apart.
2. Groin: ASK the fighter if they have remembered their cup or groin protection. Do NOT attempt to check for it physically.
3. Kidneys: Check for kidney armor. (Kidneys are located in the back, at the bottom of the ribs, but the armor should also extend around to the sides.)
4. Elbows: Check that the point and sides of each elbow are covered. Have the fighter flex their elbows and see that the elbow remains covered and that the articulation (if any) does not gap. Check for sharp edges, broken or missing rivets, or other signs that the equipment is faulty.
5. Hands and Wrists: Check the gauntlet and/or basket hilt. Look to see whether the gauntlet will pinch the hand if it is hit. Check for sharp edges, broken or missing rivets, or other signs that the equipment is faulty.
6. Neck and Head:
  - a. Check that the neck, larynx, and cervical vertebrae are covered.
  - b. Check the face plate and eye slots, both for the size of openings (a 1 (one)-inch dowel is a quick way to check and hard to argue with) and to be sure that it is firmly secured.
  - c. Put your hand on the front of the helm, and have the fighter push against it. See that their face does not hit the faceplate. (A gentle touch of the tip of the nose at maximum pressure may not be desirable, but is not necessarily grounds for rejecting the helm.) Repeat with the sides and back of the helm.
  - d. Have the fighter turn their head toward their shield side. See that the neck is still not exposed.
  - e. Have the fighter tilt their chin up as far as possible and check the neck again (this is intended to simulate the position they might be in if they had just taken a blow high up on the front of the helm). If you can reach in (with your fist, or the dowel that you used to check the face openings) and

touch bare throat, the problem should be repaired before the fighting starts.

- f. Have the fighter move their chin down as far as possible and repeat for the back of the neck.
  - g. Lift gently on the front of the faceplate to make sure that the helm does not rotate easily to expose the face or throat.
  - h. After making sure that the fighter does not have their tongue between their teeth, test the chinstrap (or equivalent) by lifting up sharply on both sides of the helm. It should not rise up so far as to expose the head or neck.
  - i. Check for sharp edges, broken or missing rivets, or other signs that the equipment is faulty.
7. Shield: Check the rim for exposed sharp edges. (For this purpose, a 90-degree angle is a sharp edge.) Check the rest of the shield for sharp edges, broken or missing rivets, or other signs that it is faulty.

#### D. Inspecting Swords

See Section VII, “Weapons Standards” above for Society minimum standards.

1. Swords:
  - a. Check that they meet the minimum diameter (1.25 inch [31.8mm]). A 1.25 inch (31.8mm) marshaling gauge will speed this up enormously.
  - b. Check that the ends are taped and that there are no exposed cuts in the rattan.
  - c. Check the quillions or basket hilts for sharp edges, broken or missing rivets, or other signs that they are coming apart.
  - d. Check the wrist strap or other means of keeping the sword from flying away.
2. Thrusting Tips: Check that they have the minimum cross section. Push on the end to verify the required amount of resilient give. Check that the tip is constructed in such a manner that it cannot be forced more than .5 inch (12.7 mm) into a legal faceguard.
3. Mass Weapons: Check the padding for give. Check the wrist strap (single-handed mass weapons only). Consider the total mass of the weapon.
4. Pole Weapons: Check the thrusting tip, if any. Check the padding for give. Consider the total mass of the weapon. Check that the weapon meets the relevant length restrictions.

#### E. Sample Combat Archery Inspection

1. Bow/Crossbow
  - a. Ensure that the string is not showing excessive wear.
  - b. Measure the power of the bow with a calibrated scale to ensure it is within appropriate specs.
  - c. Check the bow itself for cracks or gouges, as well as for significant limb twist that could make the string leave the tips.
2. Crossbow Only

- a. Check that the lock mechanism releases smoothly under simulated pressure.
  - b. Check that the lock mechanism is solid and will not accidentally fire.
  - c. Ensure the stock has no failures between the bow and lock.
3. Ammunition
- a. Based upon the type of ammunition, measure all dimensions for conformance
  - b. Grab both head and tail and pull with moderate force while slightly twisting. If either end moves laterally it fails.
  - c. If the ammunition is with made with foam, check that the tip is constructed in such a manner that it cannot be forced more than .5 inch (12.7 mm) into a legal faceguard.
  - d. Check the shaft for signs of cracking or other failure. Check that it is properly labeled and taped.
  - e. Remember that ammunition cannot be more than 10% yellow as yellow is reserved for siege ammunition.

## **IX. EXPERIMENTAL WEAPONS AND MATERIALS PROCEDURES**

### **A. Experimental Weapons and Materials**

1. Before any unapproved weapon or material can be used at Society activities, a test plan and a sample of the proposed weapon or material must be submitted to and approved by the Society Marshal or a designated deputy. This plan shall include:
  2. Specifics on construction (e.g., materials used, how it is assembled, etc.),
  3. A detailed outline of the test and its scope.
  4. All restrictions that will be imposed on the test.
  5. How long the test period would be.
  6. If requested, any samples submitted shall be returned to the submitting party no later than the conclusion of the test period, unless otherwise specified.
  7. It is the prerogative of the kingdom Earl Marshal to allow limited testing of alternate or unapproved materials and weapons within a kingdom after receiving approval from the Society Marshal. Limited testing means the weapon or material may be used at fighter practice tournaments and in small melees, but only after all combatants and marshals have been informed the weapon or material is being tested and that it is not approved for general SCA use.
  8. All combatants and marshals must consent to the use of the weapon or material before combat begins. If any of the marshals or combatants object to the use of the material or weapon, the material or weapon may not be used in that fight or battle. All experimental materials and weapons shall be marked with alternating bands of red and green tape totaling 6 inches (15.2 cm) in length. Bands shall be visible during weapon usage.
9. Once per quarter throughout the test period, the Earl Marshal will update the

Society Marshal on the progress and results of the testing. At the end of the test period, the Earl Marshal will provide the Society Marshal with a test summary. This summary shall include a list of injuries that resulted from the use of the weapon or material and any concerns from fighters and marshals recorded during the testing. The Society Marshal, after consultation with the Earls Marshal, shall determine if the weapon or material is suitable for SCA combat-related activities.

## **X. MARSHAL RESPONSIBILITIES, CHAIN OF COMMAND AND REPORTING**

### **A. Reporting Requirements**

1. If you are a Marshal-at-Large:
  - a. Whatever processes your Kingdom requires of a warranted marshal.
  - b. Reporting on any incident observed, either during or related to combat, on which the Marshal in Charge was required to report.
2. If you are the Marshal in Charge of an event:
  - a. Whatever processes your Kingdom requires of a warranted marshal.
  - b. A brief report on the event, including any incidents in which:
    - i. Someone was injured.
    - ii. A fighter or marshal had to be disciplined.
  - c. Event reports shall go to the Principality Knight Marshal or the Kingdom Earl Marshal. (Reports should not go to the Marshal of the Society!)
  - d. Any other reports that the Earl Marshal of your Kingdom requires. (If you do not know, write and ask what he or she will want before the event. It is a lot easier that way.)
3. If you are the Knight Marshal of a branch:
  - a. Whatever processes your kingdom requires of a warranted marshal.
  - b. Regular reports on the state of fighting in your branch. If there are subsidiary branches (e.g., cantons or ridings), this includes summarizing the reports that you get from them. Ask your immediate superior how often you need to do this.
  - c. Any other reports that the Earl Marshal of your kingdom requires.
4. If you are the Principality or Deputy Kingdom Earl Marshal or Knights Marshal:
  - a. Whatever processes your kingdom requires of a warranted marshal.
  - b. Regular reports on the state of fighting in your principality or region.
  - c. Any other reports that the Earl Marshal of your kingdom requires.
5. If you are the Earl Marshal of a kingdom:
  - a. An agreement to serve as Earl Marshal.
  - b. Quarterly reporting to the Society Marshal regarding the state of fighting in your kingdom. (If you are required to make a similar report to the



Crown, a copy to the Society Marshal is sufficient.)

- c. If disciplinary action that extends beyond the bounds of a single event is being taken against a fighter in your kingdom (e.g., authorizations suspended or revoked, Courts of Chivalry), a brief account of what was done, to whom, and why. (If more information is needed, for example because of an appeal of the action, the Society Marshal will let you know.)
  - d. Either individual warrants must be provided for each member of the marshalate in your kingdom, or a roster must be maintained. (Information on the roster system may be obtained from your kingdom seneschal.) This task may be partially delegated to the regional or principality marshal of your kingdom, if any.
  - e. Answer correspondence from the Knights Marshals of your kingdom.
6. If you are Marshal of the Society:
- a. On a quarterly basis, report to the President (and thence to the Board) on the state of the marshalate
  - b. Provide warrants for the Earls Marshal as they are appointed.
  - c. Answer correspondence from the Earls Marshal.

## **XI. PROCEDURES FOR GRIEVANCES AND SANCTIONS**

### **A. Grievances and Disputes**

Usually the combatants are more than willing to correct any problems or breaches of the rules pointed out by a marshal. This is the desired solution: get the problem fixed. However, occasionally a marshal must take action. In the unhappy event that you find it necessary, here is how you shall proceed. In order of preference:

1. Point out the violation (missing armor, grappling during combat, etc.) and ask the fighter to correct it.
2. In the case of missing or inadequate armor, do not allow the combatant onto the field until it has been fixed.
3. In the case of violation of the rules during combat, ask the combatant to leave the field, and do not allow combat to resume until he or she has cooled off. This particularly includes removing from the field anyone who has lost his or her temper.
4. If you need support, call on (in order):
  - a. Any other marshals who are present (especially the marshal-in-charge).
  - b. A regional, deputy, or principality Earl or Knight Marshal.
  - c. The kingdom Earl Marshal
  - d. The local Seneschal
  - e. The principality or kingdom seneschal
  - f. The Crown
5. If the violation cannot be stopped, convince the marshal-in-charge and the local seneschal to end the event.

6. In any case where voluntary correction is not made after the problem has been pointed out, a detailed written report shall be made to the Earl Marshal as soon as possible after the event. In cases where the fighter has made corrections voluntarily a report should be sent to the Earl Marshal if a pattern of problems, even minor ones from the same fighter is occurring.

## B. Sanctions

1. In addition to removing an unsafe combatant from the field at the time, long-term sanctions are available. These will normally be applied by the marshalate of the kingdom rather than by a local marshal. Procedures outlined in kingdom law or kingdom marshal policies shall be adhered to when sanctioning any person.
2. Possible sanctions include:
  - a. Revoking the authorization of the individual to fight with a particular weapon. (This sanction may be applied whether or not your kingdom does authorizations by weapon forms.)
  - b. Revoking the authorization of the individual to fight at all.
  - c. Recommendation to the Crown to banish the individual from participation in events.
  - d. Recommendation to the Board to banish the individual from the Society and its activities.
3. If any of these long-term sanctions are in progress, the Society Marshal shall be informed.
4. If authorization has been revoked, it is acceptable to inform the Earls Marshal of any neighboring kingdoms to which the currently unauthorized fighter might travel. Once long-term sanctions have been applied, a report shall be made to the Marshal of the Society.
5. An authorization from any Kingdom may be suspended/revoked in another Kingdom, should it prove necessary and appropriate. Such suspension/revocation means that the fighter may not fight anywhere in the Society until and unless the issue is resolved. **Accordingly, the Earl Marshal of the kingdom issuing the suspension shall inform the Society Earl Marshal and the Earls Marshal of the neighboring kingdoms.**
6. Furthermore, if the fighter is subsequently re-authorized, the neighboring Earls Marshal shall again be notified.

## GLOSSARY

The definitions that follow apply throughout the Handbook, unless specifically stated otherwise. They are intended to clarify usage and establish a frame of reference for the various materials used in SCA combat.

### A. Armor Materials

**Archer's Gauntlets:** Hand protection worn by combat archers and siege engineers consisting of ice hockey gloves with the fingers cut off, so that the back of the hand and the wrist are protected. A partial gauntlets made of rigid material, lined with ¼ inch (6mm) of closed-cell foam is equivalent.

**Aventail:** flexible curtain of chainmail on a helmet, extending to cover the neck and shoulders.

**Bars:** Used in the visor or faceplate of helms, bars shall be mild steel a minimum of 3/16 inch (4.5mm) in diameter, or the equivalent. If the distance between crossbars is 2 inches (50.8 mm) or less, .125 (that is, 1/8) inch (3.2 mm) bars may be used.

**Camail:** flexible curtain of mail or leather on a helm, extending to cover the neck (also *aventail*).

**Closed-cell foam:** stiff foam with closed cells, less dense than resilient foam (e.g., Ensolite).

**Equivalent:** virtually identical to the specified material in effect or function, including impact resistance, impact distribution, and impact absorption characteristics, but not necessarily in physical dimensions.

**Foam:** any open- or closed-cell foam, including foam rubber, foam neoprene, polyurethane, etc.

**Gauge:** U.S. sheet metal standard. Note that 16-gauge is officially 1/16 inch (.0625 inch or about 1.6mm), but commercially available sheet is frequently rolled to .058 or even .055 inch—much too thin for helms.

**Gauntlet:** An armored glove covering the back of the hand, fingers, and thumb and the points and back of the wrist.

**Gorged:** a piece of armor designed to cover the throat and neck.

**Heavy leather:** stiff, oak-tanned leather nominally 11/64 inch (.171875 inch or 4.4 mm) thick. This is referred to as 11 ounce leather.

**Mail:** any fabric of small metal components either linked together (e.g., chain) or attached to a flexible backing (e.g., ring or scale).

**Padding:** quilted or multi-layered cloth material, such as mattress pads, moving pads, carpet, felt, or equivalent

**Partial gauntlet (also called a half-gauntlet or demi-gauntlet):** An armored glove covering the back of the hand and at least the first knuckle of the thumb, as well as the points and back of the wrist.

**Plate:** large components of rigid material.

**Resilient foam:** dense, plastic, closed-cell foam such as ethyl polymer.

**Rigid material:**

Steel of no less than 18 gauge, or aluminum of no less than 0.075 inch (1.9mm)

Other metals of sufficient thickness to give similar rigidity to those listed above to include treated steel or aluminum

High-impact-resistant plastics such as ABS or polyethylene of sufficient thickness to give similar rigidity to those listed above

Heavy leather (as defined above) that has been hardened in hot wax, soaked in polyester resin (properly catalyzed), or treated in such a manner as to permanently harden the leather

Two layers of untreated heavy leather (as defined above)

Other materials equivalent to those items listed above (Any armor of unusual construction or materials must meet the approval of the kingdom or Principality Earl Marshal or their designated deputy.)

**Steel:** cold- or hot-rolled mild steel or equivalent ferrous material

B. Weapons

**Striking surface:** Because of the nature of our activities and the ability of our weapons to break during use the “striking surface” of a weapon is to be considered throughout the entire striking portion, blade, or head, of the weapon, not only the outside “skin” or layer. This includes all interior construction materials and parts no matter how “deep” inside.

**Approved rigid plastics:** Siloflex and Siloflex equivalents are currently the only rigid plastic approved for the striking surface of a weapon.

**Bow:** A projectile launcher consisting of a material held under tension by a string. Also referred to as a Handbow.

**Crossbow:** A projectile launcher consisting of a bow (called a prod) being mounted to a stock, with a lock mechanism to hold the string and full draw and allow its release via a trigger.

**Flail:** a weapon with a striking surface attached to the handle via a flexible arm or pivot.

**Laminated rattan:** Two pieces of rattan, each being at least 1 inch (25.4 mm) in diameter, attached to one another with a short overlap by tape or other method of binding. Maximum length of the overlap shall be 18 inches (85.7 cm) or half of the length of the added rattan, whichever is shorter. Note that use of glues, epoxies, or adhesives, which substantially reduce the flexibility of the rattan, is prohibited.

**Missile weapon:** any weapon which is intended to deliver a blow without being held in the hand (e.g., arrows, javelins, quarrels, or various soft projectiles from catapults).

**Polearms:** hafted weapons, generally long, designed to be wielded with two hands (e.g., glaives, halberds, etc.).

**Progressively resistant give (as used in discussions of thrusting tips):** As pressure is applied directly to the thrusting surface, it will compress gradually, without bottoming-out or bending to the side enough to expose the end of the blade or haft of the weapon to which it is attached.

**Quillions:** cross-guards of a sword.

**Siloflex:** A brand-name polyethylene tubing made from PE3408 resin and conforming to ASTM D2239 standards. The material is approved for various uses throughout the rules in pressure ratings ranging from 75 PSI to 200 PSI. Please check the standards in the appropriate area of the rules for what is allowed.

**Siloflex equivalent:** other tubing or pipe, typically made for drinking water applications, made from polyethylene resins with the ASTM classification of PE 3408 and produced to the ASTM D2239 standard.

**Spears:** hafted weapons designed for thrusting only; also called pikes.

**Single-handed mass weapons:** maces, axes, war hammers, or other weapons designed primarily to crush or punch holes (on account of the weight of the real weapons), rather than primarily to cut (on account of sharp edges on the real weapon). Maximum length for single-handed mass weapons is 48 inches (122cm).

**Slider:** a tube or similar device that wraps around the shaft of a spear and is held in one hand, allowing the spear to slide through it. Use of sliders is prohibited.

**Split rattan:** Rattan of at least 1.25 inch (31.75 mm) diameter which has been split in two and applied to a weapon such that the striking surface of the split piece retains a cross section of 1.25 inch (25.4 mm). Split rattan construction does not place the split rattan directly against the non-split haft of the weapon, but rather spaces the split off of the haft to allow give in the head by flexion of the split of rattan.

**Swords:** single- or double-edged, bladed cutting weapons (including swords with thrusting tips).

**Two-handed cutting or smashing weapons:** includes two-handed swords, greatswords, bastard swords, polearms, and similar weapons.

**UHMW:** Ultra-High Molecular Weight Polyethylene – A wear resistant plastic with outstanding impact strength.

#### C. Other Definitions

**Armored combat:** A full contact, non-choreographed re-creation of medieval foot combat utilizing clothing, protective armor, and simulated weapons constructed in accordance with SCA standards, with the overall goal of recreating the appearance and methods of combat from the historical period covered by the SCA. For purposes of this definition, all combatants are held to be equipped in the same manner, defined as that of approximately 1100 AD: a knee-length mail hauberk, one-piece helm with nasal, and boiled leather defenses for the lower arms and legs. Weapons and armor are constructed from approved materials as defined by the Society Marshal. Adult armored combat as defined above does not include light contact martial forms, such as rapier and youth combat. Adult armored combat includes all combat archery and siege weaponry used in melees or for war.

**Armored fighter:** a combatant equipped in inspected and approved armor, who meets at least the minimum requirements for combat using rattan weapons, and who uses said rattan weapons in combat.

**Authorization:** a procedure which determines that the individual fighter has, at minimum, read and become familiar with the rules of combat, been observed while fighting, and met any further requirements for authorization to ensure that he or she does not constitute an

exceptional safety hazard (either to self or to others). Details of the procedure used vary from kingdom to kingdom and may include further requirements. (Note: The former term “qualification” is still heard, but should be avoided.)

**Battle:** a single combat event in a war or war game wherein a specific scenario is enacted.

**Combat archer:** a combatant equipped in inspected and approved armor, who meets at least the minimum requirements for combat using rattan weapons and who will be using archery equipment in combat. Rules for combat archery weapons and conventions are found in this handbook.

**Directed touch:** a thrust that contacts the face-guard of the helm and, while maintaining contact with the face-guard, continues to travel in the direction of the face.

**Earl Marshal:** the warranted chief marshal of a kingdom.

**Effective blow:** a blow delivered with effective technique for the particular type of weapon used and struck properly oriented and with sufficient force.

**Eric, List Field, Tourney Field:** the defined area for fighting, or the fighting field, usually with a roped-off boundary.

**Fully armored:** For the purposes of acknowledging blows, a fully armored fighter is presumed to be wearing a lightweight, short-sleeved, knee-length, riveted-mail hauberk over a padded gambeson, with boiled leather arm and leg defenses and an open-faced iron helm with a nasal. (The helm may be presumed to include a very light chain mail drape permitting vision and resisting cuts by a mere touch of a bladed weapon.) Also, the hands, wrists, knees and lower legs, and feet, including the areas up to 1 inch (25.4 mm) above the kneecap and 1 inch (25.4 mm) above the bend of the wrist, are not legal targets.

**Helpless opponent:** an opponent who is unable to defend him- or herself from attack for reasons beyond their control. An unarmed opponent is not necessarily helpless.

**Knights Marshal:** The warranted chief marshal of a Principality, Barony, Province, Shire, Canton, etc.

**Missile weapons:** projectile weapons including, but not limited to, bows and arrows, crossbows and bolts, slings and stones or bullets, javelins, darts, and throwing axes.

**Marshal:** someone who is monitoring the conduct of combat on the field. (The marshal in charge of an event shall be a warranted marshal; other individual marshals may or may not be, so long as the marshal in charge finds them competent to do the job.)

**Rattan weapons:** rattan or equivalent weapons including, but not limited to, swords of all lengths, great weapons, mass weapons, pole arms and spears.

**Rostered:** An appointed marshal who is listed on a roster. The roster must include the legal and Society names, address, phone number, and the appointment and expiration dates for each officer. It must be signed by the appropriate royalty and the responsible superior officer, and be updated regularly. The roster must contain a statement that it is the current roster of (office) for the (kingdom, principality) of the Society as of (date). Local Knights Marshal and marshals who are able to perform authorizations must be either warranted or rostered.

**Scenario limits:** The body of rules and definitions which apply to a specific battle,

such as the description of real or imaginary terrain features, obstacles, weapons limitations, allowable conduct, and scoring.

**Siege Engineer:** a fully armored participant in armored combat who operates a siege engine.

**Society Marshal, Marshal of the Society, Society Earl Marshal (SEM):** the warranted chief marshal of the Society for Creative Anachronism.

**War:** a declared state of feigned hostility between two or more kingdoms, branches, or other recognized SCA subdivisions, for the express intent of holding group combat.

**War maneuvers:** group combat events not involving a state of declared hostility, usually with both sides drawn from all of the kingdoms, branches, or other recognized SCA groups participating.

**Warranted:** An appointed marshal who has been appointed by a Warrant of Appointment to Office of the SCA Inc., signed by the appropriate Royalty and the responsible superior officer. Local Knight Marshals, as and marshals who are able to perform authorizations must be either warranted or rostered.

**Youth combat** is a program designed for minors ages 6-17. These programs require armor, require certain weapon construction techniques and materials, train young fighters in proper etiquette, the concepts of Chivalry, Honor and Courtesy, teach teamwork and good sportsmanship, as well as effective fighting arts, in a definitely competitive environment that parallels Adult Armored Combat. It employs Marshals, authorizations and strict controls. The Marshallate is responsible for Youth Combat, and each Kingdom is allowed to develop and run its own program.

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