

# East Kingdom Rapier Combat Rules

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Latest changes:

24 June 2019 - Removal of Section V.C.1.a.ii requiring marshals to be authorized in three weapons forms.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

This document establishes the fundamental standards for adult rapier activities in the East Kingdom. Rapier activities shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of the Lists for the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (the “Society” or “SCA”), the SCA Corporate Rules for Rapier Combat (the “Society Rules”) and these East Kingdom Rapier Combat Rules (the “EK Rules”). All fencers and marshals are responsible for knowing these rules.

The EK Rules are designed to promote safe rapier combat in the East Kingdom. However, no matter how clear or accurate, rules cannot replace common sense, good judgment, and concern for the participants. If a question arises when applying these standards, choose the answer that promotes the greatest degree of safety for all participants.

## II. RULES OF THE LISTS

### A. WHO MAY PARTICIPATE

1. The minimum age to participate in any East Kingdom rapier activity is 18.
2. In order to participate in any East Kingdom rapier activity, a fencer must execute a current waiver on the day of each event or practice, or show proof of SCA membership indicating a waiver on file. Current waivers are available from the East Kingdom Minister of Lists, from the East Kingdom MoL website at <http://mol.eastkingdom.org/>, or from the East Kingdom Rapier website at <http://rapier.eastkingdom.org/resources/>.
3. A visitor to the East Kingdom who is authorized in rapier combat in their home Kingdom may participate in rapier combat in the East without re-authorizing, on the following conditions:
  - a. They should be familiar with the EK Rules and should be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Marshal-in-Charge their ability to fence safely and in accordance with those Rules.
  - b. His or her weapons and armor have passed inspection according to the EK Rules. Since East Kingdom armor standards are the minimum required by the Society Rules, Eastern standards may not be waived. Marshals should be aware that certain blade types approved under the Society Rules are not legal in the East and may not be used.
  - c. Any person who expects to reside in the East Kingdom for more than three months must authorize under the EK Rules as soon as practicable. Multiple authorizations for such a person can be completed in one session to expedite the process.

- d. East Kingdom authorizations may not be issued to a resident of another Kingdom.

## **B. CONDUCT ON THE FIELD**

1. All combatants shall obey the commands of the marshals overseeing the field, or be removed from the field and subject to subsequent disciplinary action.
2. All fencers, prior to every official practice or SCA event, shall ensure their equipment is safe, in good working order and has been inspected by a marshal.
3. Disagreements with the marshals overseeing the field shall be resolved through the established mechanisms, of the East Kingdom rapier marshallate, as described herein.
4. Combatants shall maintain control over their temper and behavior at all times.
5. Striking an opponent with excessive force, or with deliberate intent to injure, is forbidden.
6. "Hold" shall be called whenever a marshal, fencer, or spectator, believe conditions require it. Such conditions include, but are not limited to, (a) a safety hazard, such as equipment failure or a non-combatant on the field, and (b) violations of the EK Rules. Upon hearing the call of "hold" all combat shall immediately stop. The combatants shall freeze, check for hazards in their immediate vicinity, and then assume a non-threatening position with their weapons pointed away from their opponents.
7. Conduct obstructive of rapier combat, such as consistently ignoring or incorrectly recognizing blows, or other deliberate misuse of the rules (such as calling "hold" whenever pressed), or the like, is forbidden.
8. The use of any uncontrolled attack (i.e. an attack that cannot be quickly stopped if "hold" is called or if an unsafe circumstance develops) is prohibited.
9. Grappling with an opponent, or any form of body-to-body contact is prohibited. However, with the express approval of both combatants fleeting contact will be allowed. In any event, no grappling, deliberate striking, or other unsafe behavior is permitted.
10. All issues must be resolved on the field, or noted to the marshallate as soon as practicable if delay is necessary.
11. It is the responsibility of fencers to agree upon what weapons and/or optional blow calling conventions (such as fighting to "first blood" or "armor as worn") shall be used, and to so inform the marshals prior to combat. If this agreement cannot be reached, the fencers may not engage in combat. The Marshal-in-Charge will then make the determination as to how this situation will affect those fencers' continued participation in that event's activities.

## C. USE OF WEAPONS AND PARRYING DEVICES

### 1. Use of Blades

- a. Valid blows are struck by: thrusting with the point of the blade (thrust); sliding the edge of the blade by pulling (draw cut) or pushing (push cut) across the target; or by placing the tip of the blade upon, and then drawing it across the target (tip cut); or by discharging a projectile weapon so that the rubber projectile hits the target (shot).
- b. When using cut and thrust rapier, percussive cuts may be used, but must be delivered with sufficient control. Percussive cuts are delivered by striking the target with the edge of the blade. Percussive cuts (e.g., chopping or hacking blows) are not permitted when using light or heavy rapier.
- c. When using heavy rapier or cut and thrust rapier, cuts with the flat of the blade shall not be counted as valid blows; only cuts with the edge of the blade shall be counted.
- d. Cut and thrust rapier may not be used in melee.
- e. Full length blades (i.e. greater than 18" in length from tip to top of the tang) with a cross-section similar to a foil or epee (i.e., foils, epees, double-wide epees and musketeers) are not allowed in Heavy Rapier, nor Cut & Thrust combat. In addition, flexi-daggers are not allowed for Cut & Thrust combat

### 2. Use of Parrying Devices

- a. Parries may be performed with weapons, parrying devices, the gloved hand or any other part of the body. Though the gloved hand may be used to parry, it shall not be used to grasp or strike an opponent. However, per II.B.9, with the express permission of both combatants, fleeting contact between opponents is allowed, as long as no grappling, deliberate striking or other unsafe behavior occurs.
- b. Though the gloved hand may be used to parry, grasping, or sliding a hand along, the blade will result in the loss of the hand.
- c. Striking a combatant with a parrying device, or with any part of a weapon not approved for that purpose, is prohibited, as is grabbing or trapping a combatant's equipment.
- d. Cloaks and other non-rigid parrying devices may be used to parry or foul an opponent's weapon but shall not be used to entrap a weapon (i.e. entangle a weapon so that it may not be withdrawn from the device).

- e. A valid blow to a non-rigid parrying device will be considered to have penetrated through to the body and to have done damage. Cloaks and other non-rigid parrying devices will be allowed to take multiple hits without being considered to have sustained ruinous damage to the material.

### 3. Use of Projectile Weapons

- a. Projectile weapons (such as rubber band guns or “RBGs ”), may be used in melee only. Their use in melee will be at the discretion of the Marshal-in-Charge, and may be subject to additional restrictions, such as limits to: the number of shots per gun, the number of guns per side, the gleaning of shot or the number of shots per fencer.
- b. The use of projectile weapons is forbidden in any situation where spectators cannot be separated from the potential line of fire by more than the effective range of the projectile weapons to be used or by a barrier that will stop the projectiles.
- c. It shall be understood that fencing helms, large bucklers and heavy cloaks may impede accurate acknowledgement of shot. Active marshaling shall be used to aid in acknowledgement of hits.
- d. Due to the risk of being hit by stray shot, marshals supervising melees in which projectile weapons will be used shall wear eye protection such as protective goggles or close fitting glasses that provide coverage for the full orbit of the eye socket, especially from the side. Examples of sufficient protection include, but are not limited to: shop safety glasses, wrap around sun-glasses, and mountain/sailing glasses with side blinders.

## **D. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF BLOWS**

### 1. Calibration of Valid Blows

- a. In judging blows, all fencers are deemed to be wearing common civil attire, not armor, and blows will be counted as though they were struck with a real blade, extremely sharp on point and edge, or a real firearm firing a lead ball.
- b. When using light rapier or heavy rapier, any valid blow that would have penetrated the skin shall be counted a good blow. There is no such thing as a “light” blow. Therefore, Eastern calibration shall tend toward the lightest touch that may reasonably be expected to be felt through armor constructed to the requirements set forth herein. In practice, this means that:
  - i. A valid thrust is an attack with the point of a blade that is firm enough that pressure in line with the thrust is felt against the body. A valid thrust is not

negated or lessened due to the blade tip sliding after contact with the target.

- ii. A valid draw or push cut is made by placing the edge of a blade against an opponent and sliding 6" of the blade against the opponent's body while maintaining noticeable and constant pressure. Merely laying the blade on the opponent without pressure or movement is insufficient.
- iii. A valid tip cut is made by dragging the tip of the blade a minimum of 6" across an opponent's body. As with a thrust and draw, only pressure sufficient to make the blade felt need be maintained.

c. When using cut and thrust rapier:

- i. A valid thrust is an attack with the point of a blade that is firm enough that pressure in line with the thrust is felt against the body. A valid thrust is not negated or lessened due to the blade tip sliding after contact with the target. Therefore, calibration for thrusts shall tend toward the lightest touch that may reasonably be expected to be felt through armor constructed to the requirements set forth herein.
- ii. A percussive cut, draw cut, push cut, and tip cut shall be acknowledged as valid if such blow would result in a debilitating injury if delivered with a sharp sword against a target wearing civilian clothes, but which does not actually injure the person being struck. This calibration standard for cuts is by definition heavier than that used in light and heavy rapier. Therefore, fencers who choose to participate in Cut & Thrust combat must acknowledge that they will routinely be struck with harder blows than they would normally receive in light and heavy rapier.

d. A valid shot is one that grazes or strikes any place on the body. The impact of the simulated ball is considered sufficient to disable that part of the body with which contact was made. Accidental discharges in combat must be counted as valid by any fencer struck.

e. Any valid blow that strikes a mask, helm or gorget shall be counted as though it struck flesh.

## 2. Effect of Valid Blows

a. A valid blow to the

- i. Head,
- ii. Neck,

- iii. Torso,
  - iv. Inner groin (to the combatant's palm width down the inner leg), or
  - v. Armpit (to the combatant's palm width down the arm), shall be judged incapacitating, rendering the combatant incapable of further combat.
- b. A valid blow to the arm will disable the arm. A valid blow to the hand will only disable the hand. A disabled hand may still be used to parry if left limp; a disabled arm may not be used to parry.
- c. A valid blow to the foot or leg will disable the leg.
- i. When using light or heavy rapier, the combatant must then remain kneeling, sitting, or standing on one leg. A "legged" fencer may rise from a sitting to a kneeling position. A disabled fencer may "knee walk."
  - ii. When using cut and thrust rapier, a valid blow to the leg or foot is deemed incapacitating, rendering the fencer incapable of further combat.
- d. If an RGB shot strikes a weapon, then both that weapon and the hand holding it are lost. No additional injury will be deemed to have been sustained beyond the loss of the hand.
- e. If an RGB shot strikes a parrying device, then both that device and the hand holding it are lost. Further, a shot hitting a parrying device will be deemed to have penetrated the device in a straight line (i.e. parry devices are not bulletproof). Any body part of the fencer holding the parrying device in line of the shot will be deemed hit. Active marshalling shall be used to aid in the acknowledgement of hits.
- f. A fencer is considered armed so long as one weapon is retained. If disarmed (not holding any weapon) a combatant may, at the discretion of their opponent, recover a weapon. If permission is refused the fencer must yield. When a fencer is disarmed, the marshal on the field shall call a hold until one of the above actions is settled upon.

## **E. CONVENTIONS OF MELEE COMBAT**

1. A fencer must obtain engagement before attacking an opponent in melee. Engagement is obtained when a fencer acknowledges an opponent's presence either verbally, physically (i.e. by a nod, a light beat to the blade, or turning to face the opponent), or has in some other way demonstrated awareness of the opponent. A combatant who deliberately ignores an opponent, or repeatedly maneuvers to keep their back to an

attacker (thereby preventing the attacker from obtaining engagement) is abusing the rules of engagement, and will be subject to sanction.

2. Combatants may strike any opponent with whom they have engagement if they are within the 180° arc of the opponent's front, as measured from the plane of the opponent's shoulders. A combatant who approaches an opponent from behind shall not deliver a blow until they are within this arc. A combatant may never strike an opponent from behind except as provided herein. Engagement is broken when a fencer turns their back and steps out of range. While in range, the fencer may still be struck, even with their back turned. Once combatants are out of range of each other, engagement must be renewed. For purposes of this rule, "range" is defined as the distance a fencer can attack with a single action of footwork (i.e. a single lunge, advance, or cross-step).
3. At the discretion of the Marshal-in-Charge, killing from behind may be allowed, but must be announced beforehand. "Death from behind" is performed by laying a blade over the opponent's shoulder, to at least a third of the blade, while calling "Dead, my lord" (or other short, courteous phrases) in a loud, clear voice. Reaching around the neck is forbidden. The opponent will be deemed "killed" from the instant the blade touches their shoulder. "Death from behind" may not be avoided or negated by spinning, ducking or dodging away after contact with the blade is made as described above.
4. Running from place to place in a melee is permitted. Running attacks, against a line or an individual, are prohibited.
5. A fencer positioned behind an opponent may, without obtaining engagement, bind or foul the opponent's weapons using their own weapons. Care should be taken to avoid body-to-body contact in this circumstance.
6. If combatants are fighting in a line and they engage another line then all members of the line are considered to be engaged with all the opponents on the opposite line. If a single combatant engages with one member of a line, they are engaged with everyone in that line.
7. All defeated or disabled fencers should remove themselves from the melee field or die defensively, depending on the conditions of the field. Fencers withdrawing from the field should do so with weapons held above their head to indicate non-combatant status.
8. Any fencer affected by a call of "hold" should immediately cease moving, assume a non-aggressive stance, then, if it is safe to do so, drop to one knee. During a hold, fencers are not permitted to take any action which may confer a tactical advantage (e.g. moving, discussing tactics with teammates, resurrecting, etc.).
9. A fencer whose equipment fails in any way (e.g. a blade breaks, a mask becomes dislodged, a tip falls off, torn clothing reveals bare skin) during a melee must immediately yield and promptly leave the field. Before re-entering the field (whether the melee is

ongoing or not), the fencer must pass a re- inspection and receive permission to re-enter from a marshal on the field.

10. Special scenario melees, such as bridge or town battles, may impose additional restrictions as needed by the marshals. .

## **III. EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS**

### **A. GENERAL EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS**

1. Sharp points, edges or corners are not allowed anywhere on any equipment.
2. All equipment must be able to safely withstand combat stresses.
3. Equipment that is likely to cause bodily injury or break a blade or damage other equipment is prohibited. Any equipment that has small rigid openings large enough to admit a rapier tip will not be used against light rapier blades (e.g. small holes in bell guards, small openings in a cage or swept hilts, any design which has acute angles where a blade could easily be wedged and bent). Knuckle bows are deemed safe and are therefore permitted.

### **B. PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (ARMOR)**

1. Definitions
  - a. Abrasion-Resistant Material: Material that will withstand normal combat stresses (such as being snagged by an unbroken blade) without tearing. Examples include, but are not limited to:
    - i. Broadcloth;
    - ii. a single layer of heavy poplin cloth (35% cotton, 65% polyester or “trigger” cloth);
    - iii. sweat pants;
    - iv. opaque cotton, poly-cotton or lycra/spandex mix tights. Nylon pantyhose and cotton gauze shirts are examples of unacceptable materials.
  - b. Puncture-Resistant Material: Any material or combination of materials that will predictably withstand puncture. Examples include, but are not limited to:
    - i. Four ounce (2 mm) leather;

- ii. Four layers of heavy poplin cloth (35% cotton, 65% polyester or “trigger” cloth);
- iii. Ballistic nylon rated to at least 550 Newtons;
- iv. Commercial fencing clothing rated to at least 550 Newtons.

These materials need only be tested at the marshal’s discretion; all other materials must be tested the first time new gear is used, or if no marshal on the field knows a given piece of gear to have been tested. Kevlar is not an acceptable material, as it degrades rapidly.

Puncture resistant material shall be tested by delivering a 1.5 joules force to a fabric sample using a dull, flat 5/32” diameter surface with the sample stretched firmly over a frame, so that nothing is under the test sample but air. Details on how to construct a tester to these specifications are provided at the EK Rapier website (<http://rapier.eastkingdom.org>). For all tests, if the material in question has been completely penetrated, or penetrated in more than one layer, it fails. If only the top layer has been damaged, then it passes. A piece of armor that fails the punch test must be immediately retired, or re-made and re-tested.

All armor subject to testing as described above must be tested at least once every two years. Compliance is the responsibility of the fencer. A marshal may, at any time, direct that any armor be tested if there is concern that the gear may have lost protective ability.

- c. Rigid Material: Puncture-resistant materials that will not significantly flex, spread apart, or deform under pressure of 12 kg applied repeatedly to any single point. Examples of rigid material are:
  - i. 22 gauge stainless steel (0.8 mm);
  - ii. 20 gauge mild steel (1.0 mm);
  - iii. 16 gauge aluminum, copper or brass (1.6 mm);
  - iv. one layer of hardened heavy leather (8 oz., 4 mm).
- d. Resilient Padding: Material, or combination of materials, equivalent to .25 inch of closed cell foam.

## 2. General Defensive Equipment Requirements

- a. No skin shall be bared. There shall be sufficient overlap (3” is suggested) between separate pieces of protective clothing, that the minimum protection for that body area is preserved, regardless of the combatant’s stance or movements. Openings which could admit entry of a blade, such as button holes or tunic

closures, shall have a protective placket underneath which overlaps the opening by 3”.

- b. Additional protective equipment (beyond what is required in the EK Rules), clothing and/or garb may be worn as long as it does not interfere with the proper acknowledgment of blows. Skirts are to be no longer than ankle length.

### 3. Head

- a. The front and top of the head must be covered by rigid material to below the jawline and behind the ears. Standard 12 kg fencing masks are known to meet this standard. If built to this standard, fencing helmets are also acceptable.
- b. When using cut and thrust rapier, the back of the head must also be covered by rigid material sufficient to protect against percussive cuts.
- c. The face must be covered by either 12kg mesh (e.g. a standard fencing mask) or perforated metal. Such metal must not have holes larger than 1/8” (3 mm) in diameter, with a minimum offset of 3/16” (5 mm) and shall also meet the definition of rigid material.
- d. Masks and helmets must be secured so that they cannot be easily removed or dislodged during combat. The combination of snug fit and the spring-tongue in a conventional fencing mask is not sufficient, by itself, to secure the mask to the combatant.
- e. The exterior and interior of masks and helmets shall be inspected to confirm compliance with the rigid material standard and provisions on coverage, a snug fit and no evidence of impending failure. Examples of unacceptable conditions include (but not limited to): the interior padding or suspension system has decayed and fails to prevent contact between the wearer and any rigid part of the helmet during combat; the presence of rust which weakens the metal involved; dents or other defects which spread open mesh and/or broken weld points. If there is concern about the face mesh of a modern fencing mask, it should be tested using a standard commercial 12kg mask punch. Marshals doing the testing shall be trained in the use of the punch. The Kingdom Rapier Marshal may elect to designate certain deputies to administer such testing.
- f. All parts of a fencing mask or rapier helmet that might cause injurious contact with the wearer’s head shall be padded or shall be suspended in such a way as to prevent contact with the wearer during combat. Either method should ensure a snug fit with minimal shifting of the mask or helmet on the fighter’s head during normal fighting and upon impact. There shall be NO major internal projections;

minor projections of necessary structural components shall be padded. All metal shall be free of sharp edges.

- i. The interior of fencing masks must have a minimum of .25 inches (6.35mm) open cell foam or equivalent resilient padding to create separation between the mask and the wearer. Modern fencing masks (e.g. FIE and USFA type masks) in good working order meet this requirement without additional padding.
  - ii. For rapier helms that utilize a suspension system which does not, on its own, prevent contact between the wearer and any rigid part of the helm, additional padding must be present. This padding must consist of at least .25 inches (6.35mm) open-cell foam or equivalent resilient material.
  - iii. Rapier helms without a suspension system and which rely on foam must use a minimum of .25 inches (6.35mm) closed-cell foam or equivalent resilient padding which provides progressive resistance to create separation between the hard outer shell of the helm and the wearer. Similarly, parts of the inside of the helm that might come in contact with the wearer's neck or body should be padded.
- g. Both modern fencing masks and rapier helms shall show no evidence of impending failure (e.g., significant rust or dents, or other defects including spread open mesh, broken weld points, etc). If there is concern about the face mesh of a modern fencing mask, it should be tested using a standard, commercial 12 kg mask punch. Marshals doing the testing must be trained in the use of the punch.
- h. The rest of the head must be covered by at least puncture resistant material.

#### 4. Neck and Throat

- a. When using light rapier blades, the neck and throat must be covered by at least puncture resistant material. The bib on a modern fencing mask is not sufficient by itself.
- b. When using heavy rapier and cut and thrust rapier, the neck and throat must be additionally protected by rigid material, consisting of some combination of gorget, helm and/or hood insert that covers the neck from all sides, extending down to the collar bone in front and protecting the cervical vertebrae in the back. It is recommended that such rigid material be backed by resilient padding.

#### 5. Torso and Other Incapacitating Zones

- a. The entire torso (the chest, back, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits) must be covered with puncture-resistant material.

- b. Acceptable minimum armpit coverage is provided by a triangle of puncture resistant material extending from the armpit seam, covering the lower half of the sleeve at the seam, and extending down the inner/under arm, one-third the distance to the combatant's elbow.
- c. Combatants with external genitalia shall also wear rigid groin protection. Any openings large enough to admit a broken blade must be covered from the outside with at least puncture resistant material.

## 6. Arms and Legs

- a. Abrasion-resistant material is required on arms (save as noted above for armpits), legs, and any area not otherwise mentioned in these rules.
- b. When using cut and thrust rapier, elbows must be further protected by resilient padding (such as an athletic pad or equivalent materials).
- c. Gloves made of abrasion resistant material shall protect hands and overlap any sleeve openings by approximately 3". If gloves designed for electric equipment are used, the openings for wires must be sealed.
- d. The feet shall be covered by boots or shoes comprised of at least abrasion-resistant material. Footwear must completely enclose the foot, including the toes.
- e. For cut and thrust rapier, hands and wrists require additional protection from being struck by percussive blows:
  - i. Areas of the backs of gloved hands, fingers and thumbs, to one inch above the wrist of both arms not protected by a hilt, parrying device, or rigid armor must, at a minimum, be protected by an additional layer of 1/4" open cell foam or equivalent resilient padding. Rigid protection without padding is acceptable.
  - ii. If any combatant is using a two-handed weapon, all combatants in the bout must have rigid protection for areas listed immediately above. Examples of acceptable protection include (but not limited to):
    - 1. Gauntlets or demi-gauntlets made of rigid material covering areas not protected by the weapon's guard.
    - 2. Commercial products such as Koning gloves, SPES Heavy gloves or hockey gloves which satisfy these requirements. (Note: Blatantly modern gloves are discouraged at official events and practices without attempting to cover logos and modern materials.)

## C. OFFENSIVE EQUIPMENT (WEAPONS)

### 1. General Blade Requirements

- a. In order to be acceptable for use in rapier combat, it must meet certain criteria. If a blade does not meet the criteria established below, it may not be used for any form of rapier combat in the Society, unless it is first approved by the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If a blade meets the criteria below, it is considered acceptable for use by default unless specifically banned.
  - i. For heavy rapier, and cut and thrust rapier:
    1. Blades must be made of steel
    2. Blades must be no longer than 48" as measured from the tip to the top of the tang (i.e. where the tang and forte meet)
    3. Blades must be reasonably flexible. Heavy rapier blades must flex at least 1 inch (25 mm) when tested as described in section III.C.1.f below. Dagger blades (those under 18 inches), and cut and thrust blades must flex at least 1/2 inch (12.5 mm). Any blade 18 inches or longer, being used in melee combat, must flex at least 1 inch (25 mm).
  - ii. For light rapier: Foil, epee, double-wide epee, and musketeer blades from established commercial manufacturers are acceptable for use.
  - iii. Fiberglass Blades are not legal in the East Kingdom.
- b. Orthopedic (or "pistol") grips will not be used unless the fencer has approval from their Regional Marshal to do so for medical reasons, supported by documentation from their health care provider. Such documentation shall be maintained by the fencer, produced to the Marshal-in-Charge upon request, and kept on file with that fencer's Regional Marshal.
- c. Blades may have a single, gradual curve. Any blade with kinks, sharp bends, or cracks shall not be used. Blades that develop these defects cannot be repaired and must be retired. Blades with "S" curves shall not be used unless they can be properly re-curved or re-straightened.
- d. Quillions can be no longer than 12 inches (30 cm) end to end. The ends must be blunted and all edges rounded. Quillions must be fixed in place.

- e. Blades will not be altered by grinding, cutting, heating, hammering, or other actions that could significantly alter their temper, flexibility or durability. Normal combat stresses and blade care do not violate this rule. Exceptions are:
  - i. The tang of the weapon may be altered, (ii) Heavy rapier and cut and thrust rapier blades may be shortened so long as they maintain acceptable flexibility, (iii). A nut or other blunt metal object designed to spread impact may be welded to the tip of heavy rapier and cut and thrust rapier blades so long as care is taken to prevent damage to the temper of the blade. The rapier point must still be tipped per Section C(2), below.
- f. All steel blades must be reasonably flexible. If doubt exists about a weapon's flexibility, an acceptable field test is: Hold weapon parallel to the ground, supporting handle against table or bench if necessary. Hang a 6 ounce weight (170 grams) one inch (25mm) from the tip. If the blade of a dagger (out to 18 inches blade length) flexes at least 1/2 inch (12.5 mm) the blade is reasonably flexible. For a heavy rapier blade (18" or longer), the blade must flex at least 1 inch (25 mm). For use in cut and thrust rapier, the blade must flex at least 1/2 inch (12.5 mm). Any blade 18 inches or longer, being used in melee combat, must flex at least 1 inch (25 mm).

2. Definition of sword types

Sword Requirements:

	<b>Blade Length<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Grip Length<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Dagger</b>	18" or less	10" or less
<b>Single Sword</b>	18" to 48"	10" or less
<b>Two-Handed Sword</b>	30" to 48"	At least 10" but no greater than 1/3 Blade Length

Swords that fall outside of these dimensions may be allowed at the discretion of the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, or the duly-appointed representative. The overall length of a weapon must still not exceed 60".

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<sup>1</sup> "Blade Length" is measured from the tip to the top of the tang (i.e. where the tang and forte meet).

<sup>2</sup> "Grip Length" is measured from the base of the tang to the end of the pommel.

### 3. Blade Points

- a. Light Rapier blades must be tipped by a blunt striking surface of at least 3/8" (9 mm) in diameter. A commercial fencing tip is known to meet this standard. The tip shall be taped or fastened in place using a bright color that contrasts with both the tip and the blade so that a broken blade or the loss of the tip will be readily apparent. The striking portion of the tip shall not be covered so that it may be inspected for excessive wear.
- b. Prior to having a tip applied, the point of heavy rapiers and cut and thrust rapiers must be cut or filed so that the tip is either flat, or rounded, with no sharp edges or burrs. Heavy rapiers and cut and thrust rapiers must be covered with a tip that presents a blunt striking surface of at least 1/2" (12 mm) in diameter. This is most often done with an archery bird blunt of the appropriate diameter. A washer or metal casing shall be put in the end of the tip to prevent the end of the blade from wearing through the tip. Tips must be firmly taped or fastened in place using contrasting colored material as described above.
- c. Tips exhibiting excessive wear must be replaced.

### 4. Projectile Weapons

- a. Projectile weapons should mimic the appearance of period firearms and, if meant to be carried by an individual, must conform to the rules restricting the construction of rigid parry items. Barrel openings should not present a significant risk of catching blades.
- b. There are no size restrictions on projectile weapons (e.g. swivel guns and cannons are acceptable). There is no limit to the number of shot a projectile weapon can fire simultaneously.
- c. Ammunition (shot) must be of entirely flexible material (e.g. no washers), except for the plastic connectors used to hold the round together, which must be covered either by the shot itself or by other flexible material in a manner that prevents the plastic from striking the target of the shot.
- d. All projectile weapons and shot should be checked and tested by a marshal before being used in combat. Testing should include an impact test, where shot are discharged at an armored target to test the force of the shot. Any excessively powered bands or poorly made pistols must be discarded or remade.

## **D. DEFENSIVE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS**

### 1. General Requirements

- a. Virtually any object may be used as a parrying device, provided that the object poses no threat to the safety of the combatants. Examples of acceptable objects include, but are not limited to, sword sheaths, riding crops, coiled whips, beer mugs, etc.
  - b. The marshal's discretion regarding the safety of the parrying device is the deciding factor as to whether or not it will be permitted into the list. Devices that entrap opponents (such that the opponent is blinded, bound or immobilized) or their equipment (such that the equipment cannot be withdrawn from the device), either by design or by repeated mishap, are not allowed.
2. Rigid parrying devices must be made of sturdy materials, resistant to breakage and splintering. Device edges shall not be jagged, rough, or sharp. If a device has the potential to splinter or develop sharp edges, then the device shall be covered in such a way as to minimize the risk of injury.
  3. Non-rigid parrying devices may be made of cloth, leather, foam or similar materials. They may be weighted with soft material such as rope or rolled cloth; they shall not be weighted with any rigid material, nor with materials that are heavy enough to turn the device into a flail or impact weapon.

## **IV. COMBAT AUTHORIZATIONS**

### **A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. No one may use a weapons form in a tournament or melee held at an official SCA event unless they have been properly authorized in that form. Weapons forms for which authorization may be granted are:
  - a. Rapier – The form shall consist of a single light or heavy rapier, with the off hand empty.
  - b. Case of Rapier – The form shall consist of a pair of light or heavy rapiers.
  - c. Rapier and Rigid Parrying Device – The form shall consist of one light or heavy rapier and one rigid parrying device, such as buckler, mug, etc. Blades (daggers and swords) are excluded from this form.
  - d. Rapier and Dagger – The form shall consist of one light or heavy rapier and one dagger.
  - e. Rapier and Non-Rigid Parrying Device – The form shall consist of one light or heavy rapier and one non-rigid parrying device, such as a cloak, hat, etc.

- f. Two-Handed Rapier – The form shall consist of the use of one heavy rapier (used in one hand and in both hands) that meets the measurement requirements of section C.2. No secondary items may be used with this form.
    - g. Cut & Thrust Rapier – The form covers the use of a cut and thrust rapier blade with or without secondaries. A fencer who is so authorized may use cut and thrust rapier with any secondary for which they have obtained a prior authorization described above.
2. A fencer must authorize in Single Rapier before authorizing in any other weapons form. Thereafter, the fencer may move on to secondary authorizations using the same blade type with which they received the first single authorization. Subsequently, a fencer may authorize with the other blade type (be it heavy, light or cut & thrust) but must do so with all secondaries for which authorizations were previously granted.
3. A fencer who is not authorized in a particular weapons form may use that form at official practices at the discretion of the Marshal-in-Charge, and at SCA events for informal bouting, sparring or practice.
4. Authorizations may be conducted only at SCA events or official practices.
5. Authorizations are conducted by two warranted marshals who are themselves authorized in the weapons form that is the subject of the authorization. The suggested format for authorizations is set out in section IV.D. of the EK Rapier Rules. Ideally, at least one of the marshals running the authorization should be unfamiliar with the fencing style of the candidate.
6. Each authorization must be renewed every 4 years. Formal authorization procedures may be waived at the discretion of the authorizing marshals if the subject fencer has been actively fencing within the prior six months. Per the EK Minister of Lists Handbook, fencers who hold an East Kingdom Authorization Card which is about to expire need only one marshal to sign their authorization renewal.

## **B. GENERAL CRITERIA FOR AUTHORIZATION**

1. An authorization may only be granted where a candidate can demonstrate (a) that they are familiar with the EK Rules and (b) that they can fence safely and competently within the boundaries of those rules. It is important to note that BOTH safety and competence must be demonstrated. For purposes of this rule, competence requires that a candidate possess the control necessary to abide by East Kingdom calibration standards, and to avoid injury to both the candidate and their opponents.

2. In order to authorize in any weapons form, the candidate must demonstrate:
  - a. Knowledge and understanding of the EK Rules, especially those rules that apply to the particular weapons form authorization being attempted, and including the melee rules and terms of engagement;
  - b. The ability to safely execute and properly acknowledge blows;
  - c. The safe and effective execution of the offensive and defensive techniques appropriate to that weapons form, in the setting of an actual bout;
  - d. An ability to handle special circumstances (i.e. properly responding to a called 'Hold', fighting from the ground, fighting a legged opponent, use of the blade in the off hand, etc.).

### **C. AUTHORIZATION CRITERIA FOR PARTICULAR WEAPONS FORMS**

1. Single Rapier – The candidate must be able to demonstrate the following safely and competently:
  - a. The ability to advance, retreat, maneuver and lunge, with balance and proper distance;
  - b. Simple, straight line attacks to several different target areas;
  - c. Basic parries;
  - d. A selection of complex attacks, such as feints or beat attacks;
  - e. Performing draw cuts and tip cuts;
  - f. Reasonable point control;
  - g. Calibration and blow-calling according to East Kingdom standards;
  - h. An understanding of, and ability to use, the off-hand.
2. Rapier and rigid parrying device – The candidate must be able to demonstrate safely and competently all elements listed under Single Rapier, above, as well as the following:
  - a. A variety of parries with the rigid parry object;
  - b. Preventing the rapier and the parry object from becoming entangled;
  - c. Avoiding striking or attacking with the parry object;
  - d. Taking blades or making openings with the parry object; and
  - e. Use of the parry object in concert with the rapier. At the marshal's discretion, a candidate may also be required to demonstrate safety with a variety of rigid parry objects.
3. Rapier and non-rigid parrying device – the candidate must be able to demonstrate safely and competently all elements listed under Single Rapier, above, as well as the following:
  - a. A variety of parries with the non-rigid parry object;
  - b. Preventing the rapier and the parry object from becoming entangled;
  - c. Avoiding striking or attacking with the parry object;
  - d. Taking blades or making openings with the parry object; and

- e. Use of the parry object in concert with the rapier. At the marshal's discretion, a candidate may also be required to demonstrate safety with a variety of non-rigid parry objects.
4. Rapier and dagger – the candidate must be able to demonstrate safely and competently all elements listed under Single Rapier, above, as well as the following:
  - a. A variety of attacks with the dagger;
  - b. Parries with the dagger;
  - c. Preventing the rapier and the dagger from becoming entangled;
  - d. Taking blades or making openings with the dagger;
  - e. Use of the dagger alone (i.e. single dagger with no rapier); and
  - f. Use of the dagger in concert with the rapier.
5. Case of rapier – the candidate must be able to demonstrate safely and competently all elements listed under Single Rapier, above, as well as the following:
  - a. A variety of attacks and parries with both blades;
  - b. Preventing the two blades from becoming entangled; and
  - c. Use of both blades in concert.
6. Two-Handed Sword – the candidate must be able to demonstrate safely and competently all elements listed under Single Rapier, above, as well as the following:
  - A refined sense of calibration with the two-handed sword.
  - Use of the two-handed sword in a single hand
7. Cut and thrust rapier – the candidate must be able to demonstrate the following safely and competently:
  - a. All the elements applicable to the use of single rapier and particular secondaries (e.g. dagger, cloak, etc.) as outlined above, with which the candidate seeks to authorize; and
  - b. a refined sense of calibration and control of the rapier at all times.

## **D. CONDUCT OF AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURES**

1. Following is the suggested procedure for authorizations. Marshals may, at their discretion, spend more or less time on a given element as needed to properly assess a candidate. Before attempting to authorize, a fencer should review these procedures, and should be aware of the expectations of the marshallate, as described below.
  - a. The candidate's weapons and armor must be inspected.
  - b. The marshals should assess the candidate's knowledge of the EK Rules through verbal questioning. Rules to be covered by such questions should include, but are not limited to: (a) armor requirements, (b) blow calling, (c) calibration standards, and (d) melee engagement and safety. For a first authorization, the candidate should be more thoroughly questioned about the rules in general. For later authorizations, the candidate should be questioned about rules applicable to the particular weapons form being attempted.

- c. The candidate then spars with one marshal. The emphasis in the authorization is on (a) the demonstration of a variety of parries and blocks, (b) recognition of opportunities to riposte and, (c) the demonstration of a variety of different attacks, while (d) maintaining control. Special attention should be paid to the candidate's calibration. The marshal should make an effort to leave openings for the candidate to exploit, and should encourage the candidate to act on those openings. The marshal should make an effort to: (a) perform a variety of simple and complex attacks at various targets on the candidate's body, and (b) intentionally present the candidate with opportunities to stop thrust or riposte. The candidate and marshal should verbally acknowledge valid blows.
      - d. The candidate and the marshal should then engage in several bouts as if conducted in a tournament list, each attacking and defending, each properly acknowledging and accepting blows.
      - e. During the course of sparring or bouting, the marshals should assess the candidate's performance in a variety of situations, including: (a) fighting from their knees, (b) fighting an opponent on their knees, and (c) fighting with the off hand. Candidates should also demonstrate an ability to respond to potentially hazardous situations safely. Such situations may include an aggressive press attack, or a dropped or entrapped weapon. If a candidate is not displaying a skill about which the marshal is concerned, the marshal should ask the candidate to make an effort to demonstrate such skill, (e.g. asking a candidate to demonstrate use of the off hand, or different types of attack or parry).
2. Once the sparring and bouting are completed, the two marshals performing the authorization should then, outside the presence of the candidate, discuss the strengths and weakness demonstrated in the course of the authorization. They may accept suggestions and observations from other marshals, marshals-in-training, or observers, but they must make the final decision regarding authorization. Options available to the marshals include:
  - a. Declining to grant authorization. It is the responsibility of the marshallate to decline authorization to those persons who are unable to demonstrate safe and competent fencing. Marshals declining authorization should provide candidates with detailed reasons for doing so, and with advice regarding further work that may be done to prepare for authorization. Candidates who are declined authorizations should be informed of their right to appeal this decision to the Regional Marshal.
  - b. Granting authorization. If the candidate is successful, the necessary paperwork must be completed by the marshals. This paperwork, and the procedure for filling it out, are available from the Kingdom Minister of Lists or a Regional Marshal. It is

advisable to make a copy of all paperwork sent to the Kingdom MOL, in case it is lost, misplaced, or needs verification.

- c. Provisional authorization. In certain instances, with the permission of the Marshal-in- Charge, a candidate may be authorized for the purposes of a particular day, event, or tournament only, in order to provide the marshals with additional time to evaluate the candidate. This option should be used only (a) when the marshals are certain they will have adequate opportunity to observe the candidate throughout the rest of the day, event or tournament, and (b) where the candidate has adequately demonstrated the ability to safely use the form in which the provisional authorization has been granted.
3. Candidates should be promptly informed of the outcome of the authorization, and the marshals' reasons for the grant or denial of authorization. Marshals are encouraged to discuss with the candidate the strengths and weaknesses demonstrated in the authorization, as well as to provide suggestions for improvement.

## **V. THE RAPIER MARSHALLATE**

### **A. THE FUNCTION OF THE MARSHALLATE**

1. In General
  - a. Marshals are responsible for seeing that rapier combat is conducted as safely as possible. To this end, marshals are required to enforce the EK Rules. However, no set of rules can be all-inclusive and foresee every possible situation. Therefore, marshals are not only encouraged, but also expected to exercise their discretion to apply the intent of the EK Rules to such situations. Further, it is the duty of all marshals to remain up-to-date on all rules changes.
  - b. The study and recreation of period techniques are to be encouraged, and emphasis should be placed on the practice of the art of defense, not on competition. However it is not the role of the marshallate to require the use of period techniques.
  - c. Marshals are recognized as legal representatives of the S.C.A., Inc., the personal representatives of the Kingdom Earl Marshal and, ultimately, the Crown.
  - d. Equipment Inspection: Before fencing at any official practice or event, each fencer must have their armor and weapons inspected by a marshal to ensure compliance with the EK Rules. All weapons or items a fighter intends to use must be inspected. In addition, the fencer's armor must be inspected while all parts are being worn on their body. Inspecting marshals shall request and receive permission before touching the person they are inspecting. In most cases, it is

possible to conduct an authorization without touching the person. The following is an example inspection procedure (minor variations are allowed):

- i. Ensure the puncture-resistant portion of the armor covers the required areas of the body, including when the combatant assumes a fighting stance.
- ii. Ask the combatant if the puncture-resistant portion of the armor has been drop-tested within the last two years.
- iii. Visually examine the armor, including the gloves, for holes.
- iv. Check the fit of the mask by having the combatant shake their head. If you are unsure whether there is enough padding on the inside for parts that may come in contact with the combatant's face, have them remove the mask so you can visually examine the inside.
- v. Confirm that the gorget is present and covers the necessary area.
- vi. Ask the combatant "Are you wearing rigid protection as required by your anatomy?"
- vii. If the combatant will be participating in Cut & Thrust, ensure the additional padding and rigid protection is present.
- viii. Inspect blades for significant burrs and S-curves or other bends that could indicate a structural problem. Ask the combatant if there is metal inside the tip. Give the tip a gentle tug to ensure it is properly secured. Confirm the tape is a contrasting color to both tip and blade. Check the flexibility by giving the blade a gentle bend.
- ix. Inspect rigid and soft parry items for proper construction.

## 2. Marshal Function at Events

### a. Marshalling the Bout

- i. There should be at least one warranted marshal for every bout. Where list space is restricted, additional marshals should be present to observe the boundaries of the list.
- ii. It is the responsibility of each marshal on the field is to ensure the safety of the fencers, the spectators, and the other marshals. A marshal is only secondarily a referee of the bout, and then only if requested by the combatants, or in the event of a serious safety problem or rules violation.

While active marshalling is discouraged, a marshal observing a serious infraction should not hesitate to step in and deal with the problem.

- iii. Before fencing begins, the marshal should examine the terrain for problems such as large rocks, holes, wet areas, soft spots, etc. Fields and floors that are slippery or otherwise lack traction can contribute to injuries. If there are unavoidable problem areas, marshals should try to keep fencers clear of them or otherwise block them off. A marshal has the right and responsibility to restrict the list field, particularly for safety reasons.
- iv. When the fencers come onto the field, the marshal must make sure that they are fully armored and equipped. Even though fencers must be inspected before taking the field, equipment, particularly blades and tips, should be quickly examined to ensure that no problems have developed since inspection.
- v. Before the bout begins, it is recommended that fencers calibrate. The standard Eastern calibration practice is for fencers to exchange a variety of blows (e.g. thrusts, cuts and draws to various parts of the body) which each fencer believes meets, but does not exceed, the East Kingdom standard for calibration defined elsewhere in these rules. Fencers must understand East Kingdom calibration before the start of the bout, and thorough calibration is particularly important when one fencer is not from the East Kingdom. Fencers may not request from their opponents a calibration standard in excess of that defined in these rules. Instead, it is the duty of each fencer to be able to fight at East Kingdom calibration standards.
- vi. Once a bout begins, a marshal should observe in order to (a) watch for any unsafe conduct or conditions during the course of the bout, and (b) render an opinion, if required, on the particulars of the bout. Generally, marshals should not express an opinion on a blow unless asked by the fencers. If asked for an opinion, the marshal should give a complete and honest account of what they witnessed, and should try to help the fencers reach an amicable (or at least acceptable) outcome. The marshal may, at their discretion, suggest that the fencers re-fight a disputed bout.
- vii. At the end of each bout, before the result of the bout is heralded, the marshal shall ask each fighter if they are satisfied with the conduct of the bout. If either combatant is dissatisfied with the conduct of the bout, they must state any grievances before walking off the field. Any fighter who leaves the field without stating grievances is declaring his/herself satisfied with the bout.

b. Marshalling the Melee

- i. With a larger number of fighters on the field, a larger number of marshals are needed to watch for safety problems. The number of marshals necessary depends on the number of fighters, the space in which the melee is taking place, and the relative experience of both the melee fighters and the marshals. In general, sufficient marshals should be present to (a) observe all combatants on the field, and (b) prevent fencers, and spectators, from crossing any list boundaries.
- ii. Any special conventions or scenarios applicable to a particular melee, such as the use of death-from-behind or projectile weapons, should be explained beforehand.
- iii. One of the most frequent problems in melees is with regard to engagement. The rules for melee engagement should be reviewed prior to the melee.

c. Reporting Injuries

- i. Should a fencing-related injury of any kind occur at an SCA event or official practice, the Marshal-in-Charge, in conjunction with the Local Marshal, if any, must submit a detailed report of the injury to the appropriate Regional Marshal and the Kingdom Marshal of Fence. This report should include: (a) the SCA and legal name(s), addresses and phone numbers of the injured and all persons directly involved in the injury; (b) the date and place of the injury; (c) the nature of the injury; (d) detailed circumstances of the injury; (e) a description of the action(s) taken by the marshals, the chirurgionate, or by any other officer or representative of the SCA; (f) any other details of the injury which might be relevant.
- ii. It is important that injury reports are submitted promptly and contain a complete and accurate description of the injury and related circumstances. An informal report, via telephone or e-mail, may be made prior to preparing a written report, in order to inform the marshallate of the incident as quickly as possible.

d. Handling Disputes

- i. When a dispute arises on the field, the marshal acts as mediator. Tact and firmness are essential to this role. The marshal's ultimate goal as mediator is to ensure that disputes are not taken off of the field to fester.

- ii. The marshal should listen to both sides of a dispute, adding their own observations if applicable, and then should attempt to help the fencers come to an agreement. The marshal, at their discretion, may also solicit opinions from other marshals or from witnesses to disputed events, if such opinions would aid in resolving the dispute. Fencers who lose their tempers or are unwilling to resolve their differences may be asked to step out of the tournament or the melee until they regain their composure. If the marshal feels that they are unable to impartially mediate the fencers' dispute, another marshal should be brought in to help.

### 3. Disciplinary Actions

#### a. Sanctions Against Fencers

- i. Violation of the EK Rules should be reported to the Marshal-in-Charge. Depending on the severity of the incident, the report may be passed up the chain of command, and may result in further sanctions. Before a sanction is imposed by the marshallate, the marshal taking the action should discuss the sanction with the fencer. For all sanctions, the ability to appeal the sanction to the next marshallate level should be made clear to the fencer.
- ii. Sanctions available to the marshallate include, from least to most severe:
  1. Reprimand: After an incident which a marshal on the field considers to be unsafe or a violation of the EK Rules, the marshal should warn or reprimand the fencer against such action. The marshal should discuss the incident with the fencer, preferably in a private setting, and make sure that the fencer understands the relevant rules or conventions that have been violated. The fencer should be made to understand that continuing such behavior could result in more serious sanctions. A marshal who reprimands or warns a fencer should inform the Marshal-in-Charge that a warning or reprimand was issued, and briefly explain the reasons for the reprimand or warning.
  2. Removal from the Bout: If, in the opinion of the marshal on the field, a fencer is unable to continue fencing safely, the marshal may remove the fencer from the bout. The fencer must be told why such action is being taken, with reference to the specific rules or conventions that have been violated. Once removed from the bout, the fencer may, at the option of the marshals involved, continue to fence for the rest of the day. A marshal who removes a fencer from a bout must make a written report to the Marshal-in-

Charge. The report should briefly explain the reasons for the removal.

3. Removal from the Field: The Marshal-in-Charge may, upon their discretion or with the advice of other marshals, determine that a fencer should be removed from fencing for the day or event. Removal from the field should be imposed for serious violations of the EK Rules. The fencer must be informed why the action is being taken, with reference to the specific rules or conventions which have been violated. The Marshal-in-Charge must make a written report documenting this action to their Regional Marshal, including the name of the sanctioned fencer, all the details of the incident, and any other relevant information.
4. Probation: If a fencer engages in repeated violations of the EK Rules the KMoF or Regional Marshal of the Region in which the fencer resides may impose a probationary period on that fencer. The duration of the probation is within the discretion of the KMoF or Regional Marshal. During that time, the fencer will be under close scrutiny to ensure that there is no repetition of the offending behavior. The fencer must be notified in writing of the imposition of and reasons for the probation, and its duration. The Regional Marshal must submit a report in writing to the KMoF, including information on all documented incidents involving the fencer. Copies of the report should be sent to all other Regional Marshals. If, at the end of the probation, the fencer has shown improvement, the probation should be lifted. A written report reflecting the fencer's return to good standing should be sent to the fencer, the KMoF, and all Regional Marshals. If, however, the fighter has not improved the probationary period may be extended, or more serious sanctions may be imposed.
5. Suspension: The Regional Marshals, the Kingdom Marshal of Fence, and the Deputy Kingdom Marshal of Fence may immediately hand out a thirty-day suspension, during which time the suspended fencer may not participate in fencing activities at any SCA event or official practice. This is only done in severe cases, such as where a combatant's conduct poses a safety risk to himself or others, or where a combatant refuses to follow the instructions of the marshals on the field. Suspension will always be followed by an investigation by the marshallate.
6. Removal of Authorizations: Only the Kingdom Marshal of Fence may remove a fencer's authorization, upon their own discretion. A

written statement of removal and the reasons for the removal must be provided to the fencer. In addition, a written report including the name of the fencer, the authorization(s) removed, and the reasons therefore must be sent to the Regional Marshals and to the Earl Marshal.

b. Sanctions against Marshals

- i. Only the Kingdom Marshal of Fence, acting upon their discretion, may remove a marshal's warrant. Cause for removal of a warrant include, without limitation, actions detrimental to the goals, ideals, and responsibilities of the SCA, Inc., the Kingdom of the East, and/or the marshallate.
- ii. Before sanctions are imposed, the Kingdom Marshal of Fence should discuss the sanction with the marshal. A written statement of removal must be sent to the marshal so sanctioned, and to the Kingdom Minister of the Lists.

c. Appeal of Sanctions

- i. All sanctions may be appealed to the next highest level in the marshallate chain of command. The chain of command is as follows (in ascending order):
  1. Marshal on the field
  2. Marshal-in-Charge of the event or practice
  3. Regional Marshal
  4. Kingdom Marshal of Fence
  5. Earl Marshal
  6. Crown of the East
- ii. As sanctions against marshals may be imposed only by the KMoF, sanctioned marshals may appeal directly to the Earl Marshal.

## **B. MARSHALLATE ORGANIZATION**

1. The Kingdom Marshal of Fence (also known as the Kingdom Rapier Marshal) is ultimately responsible for all rapier combat in the East Kingdom and for ensuring the proper growth, training, and supervision of the marshallate. Contact information for the

KMoF may be found in the Pikestaff, or online at [www.eastkingdom.org/officers.html](http://www.eastkingdom.org/officers.html). The official EK Fencing web site is [rapier.eastkingdom.org](http://rapier.eastkingdom.org).

2. Deputy Kingdom Marshal of Fence: The KMoF is required to have a deputy who can take over in the event that they resign, or becomes unable to perform their duties. The Deputy KMoF may have other such duties as the KMoF sees fit to assign. The KMoF may create additional deputies at need.
3. Regional Marshal: The East Kingdom is divided into four Regions, as defined on the East Kingdom website at [www.eastkingdom.org/branches.html](http://www.eastkingdom.org/branches.html). The Regional Marshal is the senior marshal for each region. They are appointed by, and is directly responsible to, the KMoF. The Regional Marshal is responsible for ensuring the safe practice of rapier combat and for the training, warranting, and supervision of all Local Marshals and Marshals-at-Large within the Region. The Regional Marshal also has certain disciplinary authority, as described in Section V.A.3. of the EK Rules. Ideally, the Regional Marshal should not be the Local Marshal for the group in which they reside. Regional Marshals submit a written report to the KMoF on the status of Rapier combat in their Region on a quarterly basis, in the months of February, May, August, and November by the 20th of the month.

A fencer wishing to become a marshal should contact their Regional Marshal regarding becoming a Marshal-in-Training, as described below. Contact information for the Regional Marshals can be found in Pikestaff.

4. Local Marshal: The Local Marshal is responsible for ensuring the safe practice of rapier combat and encouraging its growth within the Barony, Shire, Canton, College, or other local group in which they reside. The Local Marshal should serve as a focal point for fencing in a given area, arranging practices and serving as a point of contact. The Local Marshal helps train fencers, assists in the authorization of fencers, and brings any candidates for the marshallate to the attention of the Regional Marshal. A Local Marshal is equal to a Marshal-at-Large in the chain of command. There may be an overlap of areas covered by local marshals. For example, if a Barony has both a Baronial Marshal and canton (or shire, borough, etc.) marshals, the Baronial Marshal will have authority over the other local marshals only in matters of Baronial fencing policy. The Local Marshal is directly responsible to the Regional Marshal.

Local Marshals submit a written report to the Regional Marshal for their Region on a quarterly basis, by the 15th in the months of February, May, August, and November.

5. Marshal-at-Large: A Marshal-at-Large performs general marshallate duties, including the authorization of fighters, and the marshalling of fencing activities at SCA events and official practices, as well as bringing any candidates for the marshallate to the attention of the Regional Marshal. A Marshal-at-Large is directly responsible to the Regional

Marshal of the Region in which they reside. Marshals- at-Large have no reporting obligation.

6. Marshal-in-Charge: The marshal responsible for running fencing activities at a particular event or official practice is the Marshal-in-Charge. The Marshal-in-Charge's primary duty is to ensure that the rapier activities at a particular SCA event or official practice are conducted in a safe manner and in compliance with the EK Rules. The Marshal in Charge may dictate special conditions in effect only for that particular practice, melee or tournament. Any warranted marshal may serve as a Marshal in Charge.

After any event with rapier combat, the Marshal-in-Charge must submit a written report to the autocrat of the event. If there are issues, such as injuries or disciplinary actions, to be reported from an event, the MiC must send reports to the Local Marshal, the Regional Marshal, and any other relevant Kingdom official.

7. Marshal-in-Training: A marshal in training (MiT) is a fencer participating in a marshal training and authorization program under the supervision of a Regional Marshal, as described below. As part of such a program, MiTs may perform the various functions of the marshallate, but only under the direct supervision of an authorized marshal. MiTs are not legal representatives of the SCA, Inc., and have no authority over fencers beyond that exercised as part of the MiT training program.

## **C. MARSHAL AUTHORIZATION**

### **1. Eligibility for the Marshallate**

#### **a. Marshals must meet the following requirements:**

- i. They must be a member of the SCA, and must maintain membership for the duration of their warrant;
- ii. They must be acceptable to the Regional Marshal of the area in which they reside, as well as to the Kingdom Marshal of Fence. Being acceptable to the Regional Marshal and KMoF may include:
  1. Demonstrating an understanding of these rules and how they are applied;
  2. Demonstrating the ability to act responsibly and exercise sound judgment;
  3. Having undergone training in marshalling techniques from one or several warranted marshals;

4. Being recommended by a warranted marshal as competent; and
5. Any other matters bearing on a candidate's knowledge, judgment, experience or fitness to be a marshal.

## 2. The Warranting Process

- a. Upon contacting their Regional Marshal, the candidate may, at the Regional Marshal's discretion, become a Marshal-in-Training, and begin a training program under that Regional Marshal's supervision.
- b. First and foremost, candidates for the marshallate must have a thorough understanding of the EK Rules. Once the Regional Marshal is satisfied that the candidate has such understanding, the candidate will participate in a training program which will include:
  - i. Line marshalling in bouts and melee;
  - ii. Performing equipment inspections under supervision of a warranted marshal;
  - iii. Participation in the administrative aspects of tournaments;
  - iv. Introduction to other warranted marshals;
  - v. Familiarization with the proper conduct of an authorization. NOTE: MITs will not participate as a combatant in any actual authorization bout. When training in the proper conduct of an authorization is necessary, the marshal training the MiT may set up a mock authorization procedure;
  - vi. Familiarization with rules and current standards of the marshallate.
- c. Testing: The Regional Marshal may test marshallate candidates at their discretion.

## 3. Issuing the Warrant

- a. When the Regional Marshal or the KMoF warrants a fencer as a marshal, that fencer will fill out the standard authorization form and submit such form to the Kingdom Minister of the Lists. Only one signature is required and it must be that of the new marshal's Regional Marshal or the Kingdom Marshal of Fence.

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# Appendix A: Experimental Rules

## Grappling Experiment

The SCA, Inc. has not included grappling or wrestling within its martial activities, although techniques of grappling or wrestling are documented to the combat arts of pre-17th century Europe. Outside of the SCA, there are groups that study the martial arts of medieval and renaissance Europe that safely use these historical grappling techniques. There are also similar techniques have a long history of safe use in modern martial systems derived from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds. We believe that, with appropriate training and oversight (especially utilizing individuals who have experience in one or both of these domains) grappling actions can be safely incorporated into some of the martial activities of our organization, specifically Cut and Thrust combat.

- If you have questions about this experiment, contact Master Donovan Shinnock at [donovan.shinnock@gmail.com](mailto:donovan.shinnock@gmail.com)
- We recognize that we have only two initial trainers – Donovan Shinnock and Anastasia da Monte – and they are both located in the Central Region. Our goal is to make ourselves as available as we can, and get at least one trainer in each region as quickly as possible!
- If you're interested in authorizing or becoming a trainer, by all means email Donovan and work out when good events for practice and authorization will be.
- We'll be running classes and demos of varying formality at events that we're at which have suitable space, but seriously if you're interested, just ask.
- This is explicitly an addendum to Cut and Thrust. Cut and Thrust authorization is required to authorize in Grappling, including appropriate armor. That said, we can certainly show people what it's all about before you get that C&T auth.
- Note the specific gorget requirement. Basically, we're looking for a gorget that has a part that rests flat on your collarbone, and doesn't only have a vertical part that covers your throat.

## **Current Rules:**

### **1. Grappling and Wrestling**

- a. Grappling and wrestling will occur within the context of SCA cut & thrust combat, and all rules of authorization, equipment, and behavior associated with that activity apply. In addition, all grapplers must meet additional equipment requirements (see “Equipment”, below).
- b. Prior to beginning an individual (single-opponent) bout of cut & thrust combat, the participants may agree to include grappling and wrestling if and only if both combatants are authorized grapplers. This explicit agreement is required at the beginning of any new series of bouts. Once grappling and wrestling is agreed upon, either combatant may unilaterally revoke permission to include grappling and wrestling from further bouting, with a simple verbal indication.
- c. Permitted grappling and wrestling techniques will include pushes, throws, and locks, within the constraint the safety of the combatants must be maintained at all times. Participants are permitted to engage in techniques with a hand that is holding equipment, but must take particular care when doing so to avoid striking the opponent with unapproved equipment. NOTE: Blade grabbing is explicitly permitted solely while grappling and wrestling are in effect, due to the fact that a combatant whose blade is grabbed now has permissible responses to the grab. If the blade that is grasped moves or twists in the grasping hand, that hand is deemed disabled. Grasping techniques shall be used only to immobilize a blade, not to bend it or wrest it from the opponent’s grip.
- d. Pushes to the opponent’s limbs or torso are allowed; these do not necessarily end the engagement themselves, though they may be used to position an opponent in such a way as to allow a blow or subsequent grappling technique.
- e. Locks should be attempted only by participants who have significant prior experience in these techniques. All locks end the bout as soon as they are successfully engaged: the lock should not be forced to the point of causing pain. The participant who is establishing or controlling the lock is encouraged to liberally call hold upon engaging locks, to allow both participants to discuss the martial efficacy of the technique. Any technique which is likely to result in a joint dislocation or broken joint or limb is strictly forbidden.
- f. Throws end the bout as soon as they are set, unless combatants have previously agreed upon further continuation of the play, such as situations that continue on the ground. In most cases completing a throw will be safer than attempting to halt the action prior to the execution of the throw. Therefore, completion of throws is allowed, and the combatant initiating the throw should aid the partner in executing a safe fall.

g. Other fight enders shall as be considered as valid victory conditions. These include, but are not limited to, choke holds, pushing an opponent's head into the ground, or otherwise immobilizing them.

h. Participants may indicate a hold to end an engagement (to signal a lock, to signal a throw, or for any other reason) using a non-verbal cue, such as tapping their opponent or the ground. This shall be considered equivalent to calling "hold".

## **2. Equipment**

Grapplers must comply with the following rules, which supplement the equipment rules for cut & thrust:

a. The gorget must be constructed such that it rests upon the shoulders, with at least semi-rigid material (such as unhardened 8 oz. leather). The gorget must not terminate perpendicular to the clavicle, as is the case with "dog collar" style gorgets.

b. The helmet shall be secured to the point where it will not likely come off in the midst of grappling.

c. In order to prevent unintended hooking or catching, rigid armor pieces must not include any unnecessary protrusion longer than 3".

## **3. Authorization**

a. Before attempting to authorize in grappling, a fighter must first already be authorized in cut & thrust combat.

b. Before attempting an authorization, a fighter must have first worked with a warranted trainer. The fighter must receive approval from that trainer indicating the fighter's sufficient understanding of the rules of the grappling list. The authorization must then be conducted by a different warranted trainer.

c. During the authorization process, fighters will first demonstrate the ability to safely execute falls and techniques without helmet, gorget, or weapons. If successful, the participant will then demonstrate falls and techniques with a partner, including at speed in free play, while wearing and wielding weapons and armor legal for cut & thrust combat. These falls include falling backwards, falling to the right, falling to the left, and falling backwards.

d. A fighter must demonstrate their ability to safely discard their weapon while they themselves are being thrown in such a fashion as to avoid having the weapon exit the list, or be in the way of either of the grapplers falling.

- e. A fighter must demonstrate the recognition of the moment at which a throw becomes inevitable (based on the relative balance of both participants), and the ability to aid their opponent in the safe completion of a throw.
- f. A fighter must be able to initiate locking techniques, without continuing them to the point of painful submission.
- g. A fighter must respond to an opponent tapping them with an empty hand, weapon pommel, or other equipment, exactly as they would respond to a verbal cue of “hold”.

#### **4. Marshallate**

- a. There shall be a two tier system in regards to grappling marshals.
- b. The first tier shall comprise of already warranted cut & thrust marshals who have successfully authorized in grappling. These marshals shall have the authority to oversee any bouting within the purview of grappling.
- c. The second tier shall be referred to as grappling “trainers.” These trainers shall have, in addition to being able to oversee bouting, the authority to conduct grappling authorizations. In order to be certified as a trainer, one must already be a grappling marshal. At that point, they will be required to help run four different grappling authorizations. For each of these authorizations, the grappling deputy must be notified for recordkeeping.
- d. Any and all authorizations will require the oversight a warranted trainer, as well as either a second trainer or a grappling marshal.