

East Kingdom Marshal's Handbook for Rapier Combat

September 2003

Introduction

Rapier combat could not take place without the work of the marshalate. Marshals see to the fun and safety of rapier combat for all the participants. The purpose of this handbook is to give you, the marshal or marshal-in-training, an idea of what is expected of you, how you can best perform your functions, how to interpret some of the rules, and hopefully how to have an enjoyable time doing it all.

The most important tool we have to see to the safety and fun of everyone involved is the discretion of the marshals. The rules, and this handbook, have been written to be as clear as possible and cover most circumstances. However, there will always be unusual events occurring that are not covered by the rules. When this happens, the marshal is not only encouraged, but also expected to apply his discretion to the situation to extend the intent of the rules to cover the circumstances at hand.

Who can be a marshal?

In order to be a marshal, you must meet the following requirements:

- You must be a current, paid member of the SCA, and maintain your membership for the duration of your marshals' warrant
- You must have current authorizations in at least three weapons forms
- You must be acceptable to your Regional Marshal and the Kingdom Marshal of Fence.

Responsibilities of the Marshalate

So what is a marshal supposed to do? Marshals are responsible for seeing that rapier combat is conducted in a safe and honorable fashion in keeping with the goals and ideals of the SCA and the East Kingdom. There are three main goals for a marshal. In order of importance:

Safety: Safety is the primary goal and responsibility of the marshalate. All rapier combat activities in the East Kingdom should be as safe as possible. To this end, marshals are required to enforce the Rapier Combat Rules. While there is risk in any type of combat activity, the marshals are there to minimize the risks to the participants, the marshals, and the spectators.

Fun: Given the first concern for safety, rapier combat should be enjoyable; less a competition than a pleasurable activity.

Period Rapier Combat: Rapier combat should bear as close a similarity as practicable to the methods and practice of the art of defense in the Renaissance. Period technique is something we should encourage and strive. However it is not the role of the marshalate to require period technique from fighters.

As a marshal, your job is to enforce the rules, which are designed to see to the safety of the participants. This includes the use of your own discretion as the situation merits. No set of rules can be all-inclusive and foresee every possible situation. The discretion of the marshal is one of the primary tools to ensure safe,

fun fighting for everyone. The rules should be applied in a consistent manner, supplemented by the discretion of the marshals.

It is your duty as a marshal to keep current with all ideas, discussions, and thinking of the East Kingdom rapier community. You must remain up-to-date on rules and any circumstantial issues. This is especially important for marshals in outlying and isolated areas.

Marshalate Offices

The marshalate of the East Kingdom is structured, from top to bottom, as follows:

Kingdom Rapier Marshal

The Kingdom Rapier Marshal (also known as the Kingdom Marshal of Fence) is ultimately responsible for all rapier combat in the East Kingdom and for ensuring the proper growth, training and supervision of the marshalate. The Kingdom Rapier Marshal may create additional deputies at need beyond the positions defined here. You can find contact information for the KRM in the Pikestaff, or on line at www.eastkingdom.org/officers.html (kmof@eastkingdom.org). The official EK Fencing web site is www.eastkingdom.org/fencing.

Deputy Kingdom Rapier Marshal

The Kingdom Rapier Marshal always has a deputy who can take over in the event that the Kingdom Rapier Marshal resigns, or becomes unable to perform his or her duties. The Deputy Kingdom Rapier Marshal (also known as the Drop Dead Deputy) may have other duties as the KRM sees fit to assign.

Regional Marshal

The Regional Marshal for each of the regions of the East Kingdom is the senior marshal for that region. He or she is appointed by, and is directly responsible to, the Kingdom Rapier Marshal. 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. Ideally, the Regional Marshal will not be the Local Marshal for the group in which he or she resides.

Regional Marshals submit a written report to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal on the status of Rapier combat in his or her Region on a quarterly basis, in the months of March, June, September, and December by the 1st of the month.

There are currently four regions in the East Kingdom: North (covering New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine), Northern Shores (all Canadian Groups), Central (including Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New York state not including New York city), and South (including New York City, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware).

If you want to become a marshal, you should contact your Regional Marshal. Contact information for your regional marshal can be found in Pikestaff.

Local Marshal

The Local Marshal is responsible for ensuring the safe practice of rapier combat within the Barony, Shire, Canton, College, or other local group in which he or she resides. The Local Marshal is directly responsible to the Regional Marshal. The Local Marshal helps train fighters, assists in the authorization of fighters, and brings any candidates for the marshalate to the attention of the Regional Marshal. A Local Marshal has no more authority than a Marshal-at-Large, and is equal to a Marshal-at-Large in the chain of command. There

may be an overlap of local marshals, such as several local marshals within a Barony. If a Barony has both a Baronial marshal and a canton (or other group within a barony or equivalent) marshals, the Baronial marshal will only have authority over the canton marshal in matters of Baronial fencing policy. The Baronial marshal is in no other way superior to the canton marshal in the chain of command.

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

Marshal-at-Large

The majority of marshals are Marshals-at-Large. They are not responsible for a particular geographic area, although they may operate primarily in one place. A Marshal-at-Large is directly responsible to the Regional Marshal of the Region in which he or she resides. A Marshal-at-Large shall perform general marshalate duties, including the authorization of fighters, and the marshalling of bouts and melees as well as bringing any candidates for the marshalate to the attention of the Regional Marshal. The only real difference between a Local Marshal and a Marshal-at-Large is that the Local Marshal should serve as a focal point for fencing in a given area, arranging practices and serving as a point of contact. Local Marshals have to report in regularly, Marshals-at-Large do not.

Marshal-in-Charge

A Marshal-in-Charge (MIC) is someone who is in temporary charge of the fencing for the day at a particular event, or practice. This may be the Local Marshal, but it may just as easily be someone else. The MIC's primary duty is to ensure that the rapier combat activities at a particular event or practice are conducted in a safe manner and that the Rapier Combat Rules are enforced.

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

Becoming a Marshal

If you would like to become a marshal, you should make sure you have a thorough understanding of the Rapier Combat Rules. Once you are comfortable that you know the rules, your next step is to contact your Regional Marshal for the region you reside in. The Regional will provide information and guidance on what you will need to do to become a marshal. In some isolated or remote areas, the Regional may assign a deputy to be a point of contact. If the Regional Marshal feels that it's appropriate, you will become a Marshal-in-Training (MIT). Any marshal, including Local and Marshals at Large, may recommend an MIT to their Regional Marshal. [Note: A MIT is not a legal representative of the SCA, Inc. and has no greater authority than any other fighter.]

The training will include things such as:

- Line marshalling in bouts and melee
- Participation as an observer in authorization bouts
- Weapons and armor inspections
- Participation in the administrative aspects of tournaments
- Introduction to other warranted marshals
- Familiarization with the proper conduct of an authorization
- Familiarization with rules and current standards of the marshalate

MITs will not participate as a combatant in an actual authorization bout, as this practice is unfair to the candidate being authorized. When training in the proper conduct of an authorization is necessary, the marshal training the MIT should set up a mock authorization procedure.

Testing

At the discretion of the Regional Marshal, you may be tested. This test may involve detailed questions on the Rapier Combat Rules or a mock authorization bout.

Issuing the Warrant

When the Regional Marshal or the Kingdom Rapier Marshal warrants a fighter as a fencing marshal, they will fill out the standard authorization form, and include the following information:

- SCA and legal names of the marshal
- Address and telephone number of the marshal
- Date of warrant
- Local SCA group of the marshal
- Event or official practice at which the warranting took place
- SCA signature and office title of the warranting Marshal

If a standard authorization card is used, "Marshal-at- Large" or "Local Marshal" should be substituted for "weapons form".

Authorizations

No one may use any weapons form in a tournament unless they have been properly authorized in that weapons form. Authorizations are one of the key duties performed by marshals. It is an opportunity to see and correct technique before it becomes a problem for the fighter or his opponent.

A person who is not authorized in a particular weapons form may use that form at official practices at the discretion of the Marshal-in-Charge.

General Information

In order to authorize and participate in any Rapier combat tournaments, all fighters must have executed the current waiver. Current waivers should be available from the Mistress/Minister of Lists. If you are a current member of the SCA, there is a waiver on file already, and there is no need to fill out another one. Fencers who are not current members must sign a waiver at each and every event or practice that they attend. On and off in recent years, current paid membership has been required to authorize in any martial art. Marshals should check with their Regional or Kingdom Marshal regarding the current status of this rule.

Each fighter must authorize in Single Rapier before using any other weapons form, as all other forms build upon the skills and techniques of Single Rapier.

Authorizations may be conducted only at SCA events or official practices.

Authorizations are conducted by two warranted marshals who are themselves authorized in the weapons form being attempted. One marshal will fence the candidate for authorization in the form being attempted while the other marshal will observe. Ideally, at least one of the marshals running the authorization should be unfamiliar with the fencing style of the candidate.

"Marshals-in-training" have no official status; while they may observe and comment on the candidate for authorization, they should not fence the candidate as part of the authorization process.

If the candidate has been taught primarily by one person, it is recommended that this person should not be one of the marshals running the authorization. The teacher is encouraged, however, to watch the authorization.

Criteria for Authorization

In order to provide consistency, you will find some guidelines listed here on how to assess a candidate. Each candidate should be assessed on his or her own merits, in light of their performance at the authorization. You should not authorize a candidate unless you truly believe that the candidate can and will fence safely and within the rules. Due to the nature of Rapier combat, assessment of safety must include an assessment of the basic competence of the candidate with the weapons form being attempted. Lacking competence, the candidate will not have control and safety will be compromised. Without basic competence, mere safety is not sufficient to authorize a candidate. However, at no time should this be mistaken for a need to show great skill, merely basic competence.

In order to authorize in any weapons form, the candidate must demonstrate:

- Knowledge and understanding of the Rapier Combat Rules, especially those rules that apply to the particular weapons form being attempted
- The ability to safely execute and properly acknowledge blows
- The safe and effective execution of the offensive and defensive techniques appropriate to that weapons form, in the setting of an actual bout
- The degree of competence and skill commensurate with the weapons form being attempted. Mere safety, without basic competence in the weapons form is insufficient for authorization
- Knowledge and understanding of melee rules and terms of engagement
- An ability to handle special circumstances (i.e. calling 'Hold', fighting from the ground, fighting a legged opponent on the ground, etc.)

Guidelines by Form

Single Rapier – The candidate must be able to demonstrate the following safely and competently:

- Basic footwork (advances, retreats, lunges), while maintaining balance and an awareness of Distance
- Simple straight line attacks
- Basic parries
- Complex attacks, such as feints or beat attacks
- Draw cuts
- Reasonable point control
- Reasonable calibration and blow-calling
- An understanding of, and ability to use, the off-hand.
- An understanding of the melee rules

Rapier and rigid parry object – The candidate must be able to demonstrate the following safely and competently:

- parries (or blocks) of attacks with the rigid parry object
- preventing the rapier and the parry object from becoming entangled
- avoiding striking or attacking with the parry object

- taking blades or making openings with the parry object; and
- use of the parry object in concert with the rapier.

Rapier and non-rigid parry object – the candidate must be able to demonstrate the following safely and competently:

- parries (or blocks) of attacks with the non-rigid parry object
- preventing the rapier and the parry object from becoming entangled
- avoiding striking or attacking with the parry object
- taking blades or making openings with the parry object; and
- use of the parry object in concert with the rapier.

Rapier and dagger – the candidate must be able to demonstrate the following safely and competently:

- attacks with the dagger
- parries (or blocks) of attacks with the dagger
- preventing the rapier and the dagger from becoming entangled
- taking blades or making openings with the dagger
- use of the dagger alone i.e. single dagger with no rapier; and
- use of the dagger in concert with the rapier.

Case of rapier – the candidate must be able to demonstrate the following safely and competently:

- attacks with both blades
- parries (or blocks) of attacks with both blades
- preventing the two blades from becoming entangled
- taking blades or making openings with one blade while making attacks with the other
- use of both blades in concert.

Schlaeger – the candidate must be able to demonstrate the following safely and competently:

- a refined sense of calibration, especially when delivering blows to their opponent – this is the most important element to a schlaeger authorization
- full control of the weapon and awareness of distance

Recommended Authorization Procedures

While there is no single correct way to conduct an authorization, there are several elements which should be included in any authorization. Here is a recommended standard procedure for authorizations. Each case will be different and you should feel free to spend more or less time on a given area as needed. Before you begin, make sure the candidate is aware of the expectations that the marshals have concerning the authorization.

1. The candidate's weapons and armor should be inspected. You'd be surprised how many times someone doesn't get past this step.
2. Ask the candidate several questions about the Rapier Combat Rules. 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. Don't forget about melee rules – many people overlook this area. For a Single Rapier authorization, you'll spend more time in this step than you will with the advanced forms.

3. The candidate then spars with one marshal, remaining primarily in a defensive mode. The candidate should concentrate on parries and blocks, but may riposte and stop thrust when openings present themselves. The candidate should verbally acknowledge valid hits.
4. The candidate next spars with one marshal, taking on a primarily offensive mode. The candidate should perform various attacks in a controlled manner and demonstrate the ability to deliver valid touches with sufficient, but not excessive, force as stated in the East Kingdom Rapier Rules. You as a marshal need to leave openings for the candidate to exploit, and should encourage the candidate to act on those openings.
5. The candidate and the marshal should then engage in several bouts in the usual fashion, each attacking and defending, each properly acknowledging and accepting blows.
6. The candidate should be tested on both East Kingdom standard blow calling, and Society standard blow calling.
7. Test the candidate in special situations if they have not occurred up to this point; e.g. fighting from their knees, fighting an opponent on their knees, fighting with the off hand, etc. Candidates should also, at some point in the authorization bout, be tested in response to potentially hazardous situations to ensure their safety, regardless of the situation of the field (i.e. sudden rushing, partial entrapments, etc).

Outcome of the Authorization

Feel free to give advice and training to the candidate during the authorization.

Once the authorization is completed, the two marshals performing the authorization should then hold a short discussion, aside from the candidate, discussing 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 as to whether or not the candidate is to be authorized. Options available to the marshals include:

1. Declining to grant authorization

It is the responsibility of the marshalate to decline authorization to those persons who are unable to demonstrate safe and competent fencing. Make sure that candidates who are declined authorizations are aware that they can appeal this decision to the Regional Marshal.

2. Authorization

If the candidate is successful, the necessary paperwork must be completed by the marshals.

3. Provisional authorization

In certain instances, with the permission of the Marshal-in-Charge, a borderline candidate may be authorized for the purposes of the particular day, event, or tournament only, in order to provide the marshals with additional time to evaluate him or her. This option should be pursued only when the marshals are certain they will have adequate opportunity to observe the candidate throughout the rest of the day, event or tournament.

Once you've decided, inform the candidate of the outcome. First tell them the outcome, and then feel free to discuss the reasons for your decision. Next discuss any strengths and weaknesses demonstrated by the candidate, as well as provide any suggestions for improvement. If you are declining the authorization, it is best to do so out of earshot of other people out of consideration to the candidate.

If the candidate is successful, the appropriate paperwork should be completed. This paperwork, and the procedures for filling it out, is available from the Kingdom Minister of Lists or your 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.

Visitors to the East Kingdom

Visitors to the East Kingdom who are authorized in Rapier combat in their home Kingdom may participate in Rapier combat in the East without re-authorizing, on the following conditions:

- They should be familiar with the Rapier Combat Rules and should be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Marshal-in-Charge their ability to fence in a safe and honorable manner according to those Policies.
- The Marshal-in-Charge has closely inspected their weapons and armor to ensure that it conforms as nearly as practicable to the standards set out in the Rapier Combat Rules. Where the visitor's armor and weapons conform to the standards of his or her home Kingdom, the Marshal-in-Charge may extend the visitor the courtesy of passing his or her armor or weapons. Marshals should be aware that certain weapons are not legal in the East, and that this courtesy does not extend to those weapons. Since the Eastern rules are the same as the Society minimums, armor inspection to that standard is acceptable.

Any person who expects to reside in the East Kingdom for more than three months must authorize as soon as practicable. In general, multiple authorizations for such a person can be completed in one go to expedite the process.

You may not issue an East Kingdom Authorization to someone who is a resident of another kingdom. For example, in days past when the Middle Kingdom did not have rapier combat, many Midrealm citizens were given Eastern authorizations. This is now forbidden by ruling from the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat.

Inspections

Equipment Inspections

Before fighting at any event or official practice, each fighter must have his or her armor and weapons inspected by a marshal to ensure that they comply with the rules. All weapons or items a fighter intends to use must be inspected. In addition, the fighter's armor must be inspected while all parts are being worn on his or her body. We're not going to re-hash the rules here, but just point out some things to look for during the inspection.

Armor Inspection Checklist

Any armor that prevents its wearer from properly calibrating and acknowledging blows must be disallowed. (For example, but not limited to, excess padding, or fabric, leather belts or pouches or rigid plates.)

1. Fencing Mask

The mask must completely cover the front and sides of the head, and be securely fastened. Some form of mask tie down is required, such as a snug Velcro closure or tie down. Check whether the mask is constructed as a 12 kilo mask or better. Also check for any significant dents or weaknesses in the mesh. If you have doubts about the quality of the mesh, try to get it tested with a mask punch. Do not use a mask

punch unless you have been specifically trained in the proper use of it – you can permanently damage a mask if you use the tester improperly.

For period fencing helms, be sure the material and construction is strong enough and that there are no openings through which a broken blade could enter.

2. Neck Protection

Verify that the fighter is wearing proper neck armor. Instruct the fighter to tip his head back while you look from a low angle. If you can see skin or if you can feel skin with a simple touch while the fighter's head is tipped back, then there may be a problem with the armor. Realize that you will always be able to find skin if you reach far enough or look from a low enough angle; be reasonable. Don't forget about the rigid gorget if the fighter is using schlaeger.

3. Back of the Head Protection

Protection for the back of the head must be puncture-resistant material. A fighter's back of the head protection must extend down below the ears and cover the back of the neck. Again, no skin shall show, regardless of the fencing position of the fighter. If the marshal can touch hair or skin above the base of the neck, the back of the head protection is insufficient.

4. Torso and Arm Armor

The coverage standards for this are detailed in the rules. Make sure it complies with them and that it has been tested.

5. Gloves

Hands shall be protected by gloves made of abrasion resistant material. If gloves designed for electric equipment are used, the openings for the wires must be closed. Gloves must cover the wrist opening of the sleeves adequately (three inches as a guideline), so that a blade cannot go up a sleeve.

6. Groin/Breast Armor

Male fighter: You may not physically check that the fighter is wearing a cup. Ever. Ask the fighter if he is wearing a cup. While a knock on the cup is a comforting reply, the fighter **MUST** supply you with a verbal answer. If the fighter says that they are wearing a cup, then this is sufficient. If you suspect a fighter of lying, consult the Marshal-in-Charge. Female fighter: breast armor is left to their discretion. Simply ask if she is wearing any additional armor she feels she needs. This is just offering the fighter a reminder.

7. Lower Extremity Armor

Make sure it complies with the rules. Footwear is defined as shoes or boots that enclose the foot, including the toes.

Weapons Inspections

1. Rapiers

Weapons specifications for rapiers are set out in Part III, Paragraph A of the Rapier Combat Rules. When inspecting foils and epees, the blades should be straight or have a single gradual bend. Check whether the blades retain a bend, whether they have S-bends or kinks. A good way of checking the bend of the blade is

to place the point on a boot and apply light pressure in the direction of the blade's natural bend. Also check blades for rust, burrs, cracks or discoloration, which are signs of flaws or fatigue in the metal. Hilts should be checked to ensure that they will not catch and break blades. Schlaeger blades receive the same type of inspection, although hilts for Schlaeger can have openings that would not be appropriate for foils and epees. Also look for soft spots where the blade may take a bend and stay bent.

Tips should be checked to ensure that they are not worn through or split. Make sure that the fighter has not taped over the top of the tip, and that the tape and tip are of contrasting color. There should be enough tape on the blade to ensure that it can be seen from a distance.

If a blade feels stiff, test it for flexibility according to the procedure in the rules.

2. Daggers

Flexi-daggers should be examined in the same fashion as ordinary epee or foil blades.

3. Parry Objects

A variety of possible parry objects can be used, ranging from cloaks, to bucklers, to mugs, to rubber chickens. The marshal on the field must ensure that buckler edges, no matter what material they are made of, are covered sufficiently to prevent splintering or jagged edges. There should be no protrusions or "spikes" sticking out of the buckler. There should be no protrusions likely to inadvertently catch and break blades. For cloaks, rigid hem weights, such as bars, rods, or chains are not permitted. Non-rigid hem weights are permitted (rope for example). The marshal should be sure to examine cloaks to ensure that they do not present an undue risk of catching and breaking blades, i.e. tears or pockets that could ensnare a weapon.

When inspecting an unconventional parry object, the marshal should assume the worst, namely that the parry object will somehow come into contact with an opponent in the worst possible way at the least opportune moment. If the marshal does not feel comfortable with this possibility, the parry object should not be allowed in the lists. There should be no protrusions likely to inadvertently catch and break blades.

Marshalling a Bout

There should be at least one warranted marshal for every bout. If possible, there should be one or two extra marshals to observe the boundaries of the list and prevent fighters from running into the ropes. However, too many marshals on the field can be obstructions themselves.

You are there to see to the safety of the fighters, the spectators, and the other marshals. A marshal is only secondarily a referee of the bout, and then only if requested by the fighters, or in the event of a serious safety problem or rules violation. While active marshalling usually is discouraged, a marshal observing a serious infraction should not hesitate to step in and deal with the problem.

The first thing you should do is examine the field. Look for terrain 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 fighters clear of them or otherwise block them off. A marshal has the right and responsibility to restrict the combat zone, particularly for safety reasons.

When the fighters come onto the field, the marshal must make sure that they are fully armored and equipped. Even though they must be inspected before entering the tournament, quickly look over both the equipment and blades to ensure that no problems have developed since inspection.

Before the bout starts, the fighters should calibrate. The standard Eastern calibration practice is for fighters to hit each other with no more force than required to bend a #5 foil two inches. In practice this has become accepted to be the lightest blow they expect each other to feel. Ensure that the fighters understand this policy, and that they thoroughly discuss any problems prior to the bout. Fighters should agree on proper calibration before the start of the bout. Thorough calibration is particularly important when one of the fighters is not from the East Kingdom. Occasionally, a fighter from another kingdom will request a harder calibration from their opponent. Fencers are not allowed to increase their calibration at the request of their opponent. Instead, it is the duty of each fencer to be able to fight at East Kingdom calibration standards. If they are not able to fight at EK standards, then the marshalate should seriously consider whether they should be allowed to fight in this Kingdom.

Once the bout begins, watch the action in case you are asked to give an opinion on a possible hit. You should be paying attention to the bout in front of you. Generally, however, you should not express an opinion on a touch unless asked by the fighters. If asked for an opinion, say what you saw, and try to help the fighters reach an amicable (or at least acceptable) outcome. Be completely honest with your response. It is always an option to arrange a re-fight.

After the bout has been completed, ask the fighters whether they are both satisfied that the conduct of the bout was fair and correct. This is the only chance the fighters may have to raise an objection to the fight.

Marshalling the Melee

Marshalling melees is a difficult process. 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.

When running a melee, make sure that the applicable safety rules are followed. The melee rules for fencing set out in the rules must be enforced.

Decide in advance if death-from-behind will be allowed in the melee, and make sure everyone knows. If you are allowing DFB, realize that it is something new in the East and it may be helpful to explain it, and give a demonstration of the proper and improper use of DFB for everyone present.

If Rubber Band Guns (RBG's) are being allowed in the melee, it is recommended that you explain the use and safety issues, as well as the combat conventions being used, prior to combat.

One of the most frequent problems in melees are problems regarding engagement. Make sure you understand the rules of engagement, and that all the combatants understand them too. Resolve any engagement problems that occur.

Injuries

We do all we can to prevent injuries. But unfortunately they will still occur. Should a fencing-related injury of any kind occur at an event or official practice, the Marshal-in-Charge, in conjunction with the Local Marshal, if any, will submit a detailed report of the injury to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, with a copy to the Kingdom Chirurgeon. This report should include:

- the SCA and legal name(s), addresses and phone numbers of the injured and all persons directly involved in the injury
- the date and place of the injury
- the nature of the injury
- detailed circumstances of the injury

- a description of the action(s) taken by the marshals, the Chirurgeon, or by any other officer or representative of the SCA
- the name(s) of the warranted Chirurgeon(s) in attendance, if any
- any other details of the injury which might be relevant

It's important that injury reports are made quickly and completely. Do not try to gloss over or cover up injuries – it will lead to problems in the long run.

Handling Disputes

When a dispute arises during a bout or other combat, you must play the role of mediator. Tact and firmness are essential to this role. Your ultimate goal as mediator is to ensure that disputes are not taken off of the field to fester.

Listen to both sides of the dispute, adding your own observations if applicable, and attempt to help the fighters come to an agreement. Impartial opinions may be useful if you did not see the problem or if the fighters cannot agree. Fighters 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. Be particularly careful not to lose *your* temper, even when the fighters are losing theirs (often at you). If you feel that are unable to impartially mediate the fighter's dispute, another person should be brought in to help.

Marshalate Sanctions

Sanctions Against Fighters

When a fighter breaks the rules, sanctions may be imposed. If you see a violation of the rules, you should report it to the Marshal-in-Charge. Depending on the severity, it will be reported onward up the chain of command. The Kingdom Rapier Marshal or the Regional Marshal will investigate the situation and will decide on what sanctions are appropriate. For all sanctions, the ability to appeal the sanction up the chain of command should be made clear to the fighter.

The Regional Marshals, the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, and any Deputies (such as the Deputy Kingdom Rapier Marshal, and Deputy Regional Marshals) may immediately hand out a thirty-day suspension. This is only done in fairly severe cases, and will always be followed by an investigation and possibly further sanctions. Sanctions include, from least to most severe:

Reprimand

After an incident which a marshal on the field considers to be dishonorable, unsafe or a violation of the Rapier Combat Rules, the marshal should warn or reprimand the fighter against such action. The marshal should discuss the incident with the fighter, preferably in a private setting, and make sure that the fighter understands the relevant rules or conventions that have been violated. The fighter should be made to understand that continuing such behavior could result in more serious sanctions. A marshal who reprimands or warns a fighter has the option to make a written report to his or her immediate superior. In general, the marshal should inform the marshal-in-charge of the event or practice the fact that a warning or reprimand was issued, and briefly explain the reasons for the reprimand or warning.

Removal from the Bout

If, in the opinion of the marshal on the field, a fighter is unable to continue fencing safely, the marshal may remove the fighter from the bout. The fighter 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 fighter may, at the option of the marshals involved, continue to fence for the rest of the day. A marshal who removes a

fighter from a bout has the option to make a written report to his or her immediate superior. In general, the marshal should inform the marshal-in-charge of the event or practice the fact that the fighter was removed from a bout, and briefly explain the reasons for the removal.

Removal from the Field

The marshal-in-charge of an event or practice may, upon his or her own discretion or with the advice of other marshals, determine that a fighter should be removed from fencing for the day or event. Removal from the field should be imposed for serious violations of the Rapier Combat Rules, the Policies of the Earl Marshal, or the standards of safe and honorable combat. The fighter 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 his or her immediate superior, including the name of the sanctioned fighter, all the details of the incident, and any other relevant information.

Probation

If a fighter engages in repeated and extreme violations, such that his or her ability to fence safely and honorably in accordance with the Rapier Combat Rules is called into question, the Regional Marshal of the Region in which the fighter resides may impose a probationary period on that fighter. The duration of the probation is within the discretion of the Regional Marshal, but the common practice is a duration of six months to a year. During that time, the fighter will be under close scrutiny to ensure that there is no repetition of the offending behavior.

The fighter must be notified in writing about the imposition of probation, its duration, and the reasons for the probation. The Regional Marshal must submit a report in writing to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, including information on all documented incidents involving the fighter. Copies of the report should be sent to all other Regional Marshals. If, at the end of the probation, the fighter has shown improvement, the probation should be lifted. A written report reflecting the fighter's return to good standing should be sent to the fighter, the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, and all Regional Marshals. If, however, the fighter has not improved, more serious sanctions may be imposed.

Removal of Authorization(s)

Only the Kingdom Rapier Marshal may remove a fighter's authorization in one or more weapons form, upon his own discretion or a written request from a Regional Marshal, Local Marshal, or marshal-at-large. A written statement of removal and the reasons for the removal must be provided to the fighter. In addition, a written report including the name of the fighter, the authorization(s) removed, and the reasons therefore must be sent to the Regional Marshals and to the Earl Marshal.

Before either a probationary sanction or a removal of authorization is imposed by the marshalate, the marshal taking the action should discuss the sanction with the fencer.

Sanctions Against Marshals

Only the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, acting upon his discretion or with the advice of other marshals, 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 marshalate. Before sanctions are imposed, the Kingdom Rapier Marshal should discuss the sanction with the marshal.

Appeals of Sanctions

All sanctions may be appealed to the next highest level in the marshalate chain of command. The chain of command is as follows (ascending order):

- Marshal on the field
- Marshal-in-Charge of the event or practice
- Regional/Principality Marshal
- Kingdom Rapier Marshal
- Earl Marshal
- Crown of the East

A fighter sanctioned by a marshal on the field may appeal to the marshal in charge of the event or practice, and so on up the chain. The appeals process is the same for sanctioned marshals.

Appendix A_- Glossary

Authorization:

The process of determining whether a person is safe and competent to enter into tournament bouts.

Bout:

A combat between two fighters.

Drop Test:

A test conducted on fabric or garb to determine whether it is puncture resistant within the meaning of the Rapier Combat Rules. This test delivers a force, on dropping, of 1.5 joules to the fabric sample via a dull, flat 5/32" (4mm) metal rod. See appendix B for more information.

Double-Wide:

A form of epee that is wider in the blade than the standard epee. There is no consistent manufacturer's definition of a double-wide epee. At the present time, a double-wide is treated like any other epee.

Event:

An official activity of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. ("SCA"), which is covered by the insurance policy of the SCA. All participants at events are required to be in Medieval or Renaissance garb. In order to have fencing activities, an event must have a warranted fencing Marshal-in-Charge, and all of the Rapier Combat Rules must be in effect.

Flexi-Dagger:

The product name of a small flexible blade approximately 18 inches in length, tempered only partway down the blade, and with a rolled head like a sabre tip. Flexi-daggers score touches like regular epees and foils.

Marshalate:

The collective body of warranted rapier marshals.

Mask Punch:

A commercially marketed device for testing the strength of the mesh of a fencing mask. The mask punch test should not be confused with the fabric punch ("four-thrust") test, which is performed with a broken foil blade. Marshals must be trained in the use of the mask punch before using it during armor inspections.

Melee:

A combat that involves more than two combatants on the field. Specific safety rules for melees are set out in the Rapier Combat Rules.

Official Practice:

An official activity of the SCA, which is covered by the insurance policy of the SCA. An official practice must have a warranted fencing marshal present, and all of the Rapier Combat Rules must be in

effect. Any practice published in an SCA newsletter should be considered an official practice. Any practice at a site being paid for by the SCA or SCA members should be considered an official practice, and the Rapier Combat Rules must be enforced.

Rapier Combat Rules:

The Rapier Combat Rules of the East Kingdom, as set out in the Laws and Policy of the East Kingdom, colloquially, "the Rules."

Punch Test/Four-Thrust Test:

An obsolete test conducted on fabric or garb to determine whether it is puncture resistant within the meaning of the Rapier Combat Rules. Four thrusts are administered to the fabric or garb with a broken foil blade. This test has been replaced with the Drop Test (see above).

Abrasion Resistant Material:

A woven material with close stitches (i.e., without visible gaps between the threads of the weave). See definition in the Rules for Rapier Combat.

Puncture Resistant Material:

4 oz. leather; 4 layers of twill/trigger/champion cloth; any material which has successfully passed an appropriate test.

Warranted Marshal:

A legal representative of the SCA, Inc., responsible for enforcing the Rapier Combat Rules and for ensuring safety in all SCA Rapier combat activities.