

East Kingdom Rapier Combat Rules
Effective January 1, 2006

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I. INTRODUCTION

This document establishes the fundamental standards for 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 or from the East Kingdom MoL website.
3. A visitor to the East Kingdom who is authorized in rapier combat in his or her home Kingdom may participate in rapier combat in the East without re-authorizing, on the following conditions:
 - a. He or she should be familiar with the EK Rules and should be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Marshal-in-Charge his or her 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.
4. A person who has a medical condition that may affect or be affected by rapier combat must provide written permission from his or her physician before being allowed to participate. 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. Compliance with this requirement is the responsibility of the fencer.

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. Wrestling with an opponent, or any form of body-to-body contact is prohibited.

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. Saber cuts, chopping or hacking blows are never permitted. Fast circular movements (such as moulinets) may be used to place a blade for tip, draw or push cuts.

c. When using heavy 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. Any blade in a given rapier class, as defined in the EK Rules, may be used against any other blade in that same class, but not against blades of the other class. Daggers may be used against either class of rapier blade.

2. Use of Parrying Devices

a. Though the gloved hand may be used to parry, it shall not be used to push, grasp or strike an opponent. Grasping, or sliding a hand along, the blade will result in the loss of the hand.

b. Striking with a parrying device or with any portion of a weapon other than the blade is prohibited, as are other street fighting techniques such as kicking, whipping with the cloak, chopping with the buckler edge, and grabbing or trapping an opponent's equipment.

c. 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).

d. 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: limit to the number of shots per gun, a limit to the number of guns per side, no gleaning of shot or a limit to 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.

b. 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. Any valid blow that would have penetrated the skin shall be counted a good blow. 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.

(iv). A valid shot is one that grazes or strikes any place on the body. It is not lessened by grazing as 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.

c. An attack must be acknowledged as valid if it is felt. There is no such thing as a “light” blow from either blade or shot. 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.

d. 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

- head,
- neck,
- torso,
- inner groin (to the combatant’s palm width down the inner leg), or
- 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 will disable the foot. The combatant must then fight kneeling, sitting, or standing on one leg, without placing weight on the injured foot.

d. A good blow to the leg will disable the leg. The combatant must then fight kneeling, sitting, or standing on one leg without placing weight on the injured leg. If a fencer takes a valid blow to the hip joint or the buttocks, or loses the use of both legs, the fencer must sit on the ground and may not rise up on the leg muscles.

e. If an RBG 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.

f. If an RBG 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.

g. 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 his or her 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 his or her 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 he or she is within this arc. A combatant may never strike an opponent from behind except as provided herein. Engagement is broken

when a fencer turns his or her back and steps out of range. While in range, the fencer may still be struck, even with his or her 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 his or her 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 his or her 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.

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 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:

- broadcloth;
- a single layer of heavy poplin cloth (35% cotton, 65% polyester or “trigger” cloth);
- sweat pants;
- Woven knit tights 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:

- Four ounce (2 mm) leather;
- Four layers of heavy poplin cloth (35% cotton, 65% polyester or “trigger” cloth);
- Ballistic nylon rated to at least 550 Newtons;
- 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 in Appendix [X] to the EK Rules. 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:

- 22 gauge stainless steel (0.8 mm);
- 20 gauge mild steel (1.0 mm);
- 16 gauge aluminum, copper or brass (1.6 mm);
- one layer of 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 jaw line 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. 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.

c. Masks and helms 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.

d. 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.

e. 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 blades, the neck and throat must be additionally protected by some combination of rigid 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. Male combatants 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.

d. Additional breast armor for females is left to individual discretion. However, female fighters are strongly encouraged to wear additional breast armor of resilient padding or an equivalent, or a modern rigid fencing breast protector, especially when using heavy rapier blades.

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. 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.

c. 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.

C. OFFENSIVE EQUIPMENT (WEAPONS)

1. General Blade Requirements

a. The following classes of blades shall be used in the East Kingdom:

(i). "Heavy Rapier" blades, including oval and diamond cross section "schlager" blades. Heavy Rapier blades approved for use in the East Kingdom are those approved

for use by the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat and listed under “Rapiers-Heavy” at <http://www.sca.org/officers/marshal/combat/rapier/bladetypes.html>, excepting that fiberglass blades may not be used.

(ii). “Light Rapier” blades, including foil, epee and double-wide epee blades. Light Rapier blades approved for use in the East Kingdom are those approved for use by the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat and listed under “Rapiers-Light” at <http://www.sca.org/officers/marshal/combat/rapier/bladetypes.html>.

(iii). “Dagger” blades. Dagger blades approved for use in the East Kingdom are those approved for use by the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat and listed under “Daggers” at <http://www.sca.org/officers/marshal/combat/rapier/bladetypes.html>, excepting that neither fiberglass nor rattan blades may be used.

b. Blades must be of commercial manufacture. Artisans desiring an exception must apply to the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat and will be considered on a case by case basis.

c. Orthopedic (or “pistol”) grips will not be used unless the fencer has approval from his or her Regional Marshal to do so for medical reasons, supported by documentation from his or her 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.

d. 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.

e. 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.

f. 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, and
- (ii). Heavy Rapier blades may be shortened so long as it does not make them too stiff.

g. 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 3 ounce weight (85 grams) just behind the tip. If the blade of a dagger (out to 18” blade length) flexes visibly (more than 1/4 inch (6 mm)), the blade is sufficiently flexible. For any rapier blade (greater than 18”), the flex must be 1/2 inch (12 mm).

2. 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 heat shrink for example) 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 must be cut or filed so that the tip is either flat, or rounded, with no sharp edges or burrs. Heavy 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.

3. Rubber Band Guns

a. RBGs 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 RBGs (e.g. swivel guns and cannons are acceptable). There is no limit to the number of shot a RBG 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 RBGs 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. may be used

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 rapier, with the off hand empty.
- b. Case of Rapier – The form shall consist of two light rapiers.
- c. Rapier and Rigid Parrying Device – The form shall consist of one light rapier and one rigid parrying device, such as buckler, mug, etc. Daggers are excluded from this form.
- d. Rapier and Dagger – The form shall consist of one light rapier and one dagger.

e. Rapier and Non-Rigid Parrying Device – The form shall consist of one light rapier and one non-rigid parrying device, such as a cloak, hat, etc.

f. Heavy Rapier – The form covers the use of a heavy rapier blade with or without secondaries. A fencer who is so authorized may use heavy rapier with any secondary for which he or she has obtained a prior authorization described above.

2. A fencer must authorize in Single Rapier before authorizing in any other weapons form.

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 bouts, 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 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.

B. GENERAL CRITERIA FOR AUTHORIZATION

1. An authorization may only be granted where a candidate can demonstrate (a) that he or she is familiar with the EK Rules and (b) that he or she can fence safely and competently within the boundaries of those rules. It is important to note that BOTH safety and competence must be demonstrated. However, the level of competence required is only that minimal level required to demonstrate to the marshals that a candidate possess the control necessary to abide by East Kingdom calibration standards, and to avoid injury to both the candidate and his or her opponents.

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

- Knowledge and understanding of the EK Rules, especially those rules that apply to the particular weapons form authorization 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;
- Knowledge and understanding of melee rules and terms of engagement;
- 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:

- The ability to advance, retreat, maneuver and lunge, with balance and proper distance;
- Simple, straight line attacks to several different target areas;
- Basic parries;
- A selection of complex attacks, such as feints or beat attacks;
- Performing draw cuts and tip cuts;
- Reasonable point control;
- Calibration and blow-calling according to East Kingdom standards;
- An understanding of, and ability to use, the off-hand;
- An understanding of the melee rules.

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 variety of 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.

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 variety of 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.

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 variety of 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.

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 variety of attacks and parries with both blades;
- Preventing the two blades from becoming entangled; and
- Use of both blades in concert.

6. Heavy Rapier – the candidate must be able to demonstrate the following safely and competently:

- In addition to the elements applicable to the use of particular secondaries (e.g. dagger, cloak, etc.) as outlined above, the candidate must exhibit a refined sense of calibration, especially when delivering blows to his or her opponent – this is the most important element to a heavy rapier authorization; and
- Full control of the weapon and awareness of distance.

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, remaining primarily in a defensive mode. The emphasis in this part of the authorization is on (a) the demonstration of a variety of

parries and blocks, and (b) recognition of opportunities to riposte. Thus, the candidate should concentrate on defense, but should riposte and stop thrust when openings present themselves. 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 next spars with one marshal, taking on a primarily offensive mode. The emphasis in this part of the authorization is on (a) the demonstration of a variety of different attacks, while (b) 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.

e. 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.

f. During the course of sparring or bouting, the marshals should assess the candidate's performance in a variety of situations, including: (a) fighting from his or her knees, (b) fighting an opponent on his or her 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 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.

2. Marshal Function at Events

a. **Equipment Inspection:** Before fencing at any event, each fencer must have his or her 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 his or her body. A checklist is provided in Appendix A to aid the marshal when inspecting fencers on the field.

b. Marshalling the Bout

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.

- 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 he or she witnessed, and should try to help the fencers reach an amicable (or at least acceptable) outcome. The marshal may, at his or her discretion, suggest that the fencers re-fight a disputed bout.

- 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.

c. Marshalling the Melee

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.

d. Reporting Injuries

- 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, the Kingdom Marshal of Fence, and the Kingdom Chirurgeon. 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 chirurgeonate, or by any other officer or representative of the SCA; (f) the name(s) of the warranted chirurgeon(s) in attendance, if any; (g) any other details of the injury which might be relevant.

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.

e. Handling Disputes

- 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.

- The marshal should listen to both sides of a dispute, adding his or her own observations if applicable, and then should attempt to help the fencers come to an agreement. The marshal, at his or her 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 he or she is 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:

- **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.

- **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 his or her immediate superior and should inform the Marshal-in-Charge that the fencer was removed from a bout. The report should briefly explain the reasons for the removal.

- **Removal from the Field:** The Marshal-in-Charge may, upon his or her 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 his or her immediate superior, including the name of the sanctioned fencer, all the details of the incident, and any other relevant information.

- **Probation:** If a fencer engages in repeated and extreme 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.

- **Suspension:** The Regional Marshals, the Kingdom Marshal of Fence, and any Deputies thereof 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.

- **Removal of Authorizations:** Only the Kingdom Marshal of Fence may remove a fencer's authorization, upon his or her 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 his or her 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):

- Marshal on the field
- Marshal-in-Charge of the event or practice
- Regional Marshal
- Kingdom Marshal of Fence
- Earl Marshal
- 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 on line at www.eastkingdom.org/officers.html. The official EK Fencing web site is www.eastkingdom.org/fencing.

2. **Deputy Kingdom Marshal of Fence:** The KMoF is required to have a deputy who can take over in the event that he or she resigns, or becomes unable to perform his or her 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. The Regional Marshal is the senior marshal for each region. He or she is 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. EK Rules. Ideally, the Regional Marshal should not be the Local Marshal for the group in which he or she resides. 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 March, June, September, and December by the 1st of the month.

A fencer wishing to become a marshal should contact his or her 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 he or she resides. 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 his or her 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 he or she resides. 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 Kingdom official involved, such as the Chirurgeon.

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). He or she must be a member of the SCA, and must maintain membership for the duration of his or her warrant;
- (ii). He or she must have current authorizations in at least three weapons forms;
- (iii). He or she must be acceptable to the Regional Marshal of the area in which he or she resides, as well as to the Kingdom Marshal of Fence. Being acceptable to the Regional Marshal and KMoF may include:

- Demonstrating an understanding of these rules and how they are applied;
- Demonstrating the ability to act responsibly and exercise sound judgment;
- Having undergone training in marshalling techniques from one or several warranted marshals;
- Being recommended by a warranted marshal as competent; and
- Any other matters bearing on a candidate's knowledge, judgment, experience or fitness to be a marshal.

2. The Warranting Process

a. Upon contacting his or her 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 his or her 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, including the following information:

- (i). SCA and legal names of the marshal;
- (ii). Address and telephone number of the marshal;
- (iii). Date of warrant;
- (iv). Local SCA group of the marshal;
- (v). Event or official practice at which the warranting took place (if applicable);
- (vi). SCA signature and title of the warranting marshal.

b. If a standard authorization card is used, "Marshal-at-Large" or "Local Marshal" should be substituted for "weapons form". The warrant is in effect upon the signing of the authorization form by the warranting marshal.

VI. APPENDICES

A. EQUIPMENT INSPECTION CHECKLIST

- **In general:** Any armor that prevents its wearer from properly calibrating and acknowledging blows must be disallowed. Examples of armor which may impede proper calibration or blow calling include, but are not limited to, excess padding or fabric, leather belts or pouches, or rigid plates.

- **Mask or Fencing Helm:** The mask must completely cover the front and sides of the head, and be securely fastened. Some form of mask tie down is required. The mask should be checked for any significant dents or weaknesses in the mesh. If a marshal has doubts about the quality of a mask's mesh, he or she may request that the mask be tested with a commercial mask punch. A mask punch should only be used by one specifically trained in its proper use, since masks can be permanently damaged if the punch is used improperly.

For period fencing helms, the marshal should confirm that the material and construction are sufficient to withstand stresses associated with normal use, and that there are no openings through which a broken blade could enter.

- **Neck and Throat Protection:** No skin should be visible when the head is tilted forwards or backwards. Protection for the throat must be constructed from puncture-resistant material. A rigid gorget must be worn if the fencer is using heavy rapier.

- **Back of the Head Protection:** Protection for the back of the head must be constructed from puncture-resistant material. A fencer's back of the head protection must extend down below the ears and cover the back of the neck. No skin should be visible, regardless of the stance of the fencer. If the marshal can touch hair or skin above the base of the neck, the back of the head protection is insufficient.

- **Torso and Arm Armor:** The fencer should be able to describe the construction and material of his or her torso armor. The marshal should confirm that the armor has been punch tested within the past two years.

- **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 is acceptable), so that a blade cannot go up a sleeve.

- **Groin/Breast Protection:** A male fencer should be asked if he is wearing a cup. Marshals must receive a verbal reply (i.e. a fencer knocking on his cup is insufficient). Marshals may never physically check for the presence of a cup. An appropriate level of breast armor, beyond that which is required by the armor standards, is left to the discretion of the female fencer. Therefore, as a reminder, a female fencer should be asked whether she is satisfied with her level of breast protection.

- **Lower Extremity Armor:** A fencer should be able to describe the construction and material of his or her leg armor. Footwear must enclose the foot, including the toes.

- **Rapiers:** Light rapier blades should either be straight or have a single gradual bend. The blade should not have an S-bend or kink, and should return to its normal shape when bent. 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. Blades should not exhibit significant 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. An inspecting marshal should be aware that heavy rapier hilts may have openings that would not be appropriate for light rapiers.

Tips should be checked to ensure that they are not worn through or split. Tape should not cover a tip. Tape, tip and blade must be of contrasting color. There should be enough tape on the blade to ensure that the tape/tip combination can be seen from a distance.

If a blade feels stiff, it may be tested for flexibility.

- **Daggers:** Daggers should be examined in the same fashion as light rapier blades.

- **Parry Objects:** The marshal on the field must ensure that device edges, no matter what material they are made of, are constructed so as 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 non-rigid parry objects, rigid hem weights, such as bars, rods, or chains are not permitted. Non-rigid hem weights are permitted (e.g. rope). The marshal should be sure to examine cloaks to ensure that they do not present an undue risk of catching and breaking blades, (e.g. 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.

ADDITIONAL APPENDICES MAY BE FOUND ON THE EAST KINGDOM FENCING WEBSITE:

APPENDIX B. SOCIETY BLADE FLEXIBILITY TEST

APPENDIX C. PUNCH TESTER CONSTRUCTION