

Policies of the Earl Marshal of the East Kingdom

1. Interpretation of the Rules of the Lists and the Conventions of Combat are the sole province of the Marshalate.
2. The Marshal-in-Charge is the final arbiter on the field and may make slight modifications of the Conventions of Combat, e.g., waive encounter guidelines for melees, allow capture of combatants, allow “counted blow” systems. Requests for specific (non-minor) modifications for an event must be made to the Earl Marshal prior to the tourney and granted before usage.
3. The Crown's Representatives are defined (in descending order) as the Crown Prince, Earl Marshal, and Deputy Earl Marshals. A local knight marshal may not make decisions reserved in these policies to the Crown or one of its Representatives.
4. The Crown or its Representatives reserve the right to ban any fighter or marshal who, in the Representative's opinion, is unsafe or is deliberately trying to abuse the spirit of the rules without necessarily breaking them.
5. The Marshal-in-Charge of an event and/or the Crown or its Representatives reserve the right to ban any weapon, regardless of construction materials used, if in their opinion the weapon represents a risk in excess of that of normal SCA combat.
6. All requests for warrants shall be made in writing to the Deputy Earl Marshal of the respective region, or to the Principality Marshal. Each Deputy Earl Marshal or Principality Marshal for his region will establish a roster system. The current roster for each region will be submitted to the Kingdom Earl Marshal at least once per year.
7. All Marshals must report quarterly. The Deputy Earl Marshals will report directly to the Earl Marshal by the 1st of March, June, September, and December. Group and At-Large Marshals will report to their Regional Deputy Earl Marshal by the last week of February, May, August, and November.
8. All Companions of the Order of Chivalry who are currently paid members of the SCA, Inc. are considered warranted Marshals and are expected to fulfill the duties and obligations of the Marshalate. The Earl Marshal shall have the right to suspend or revoke the marshal's warrant of any Companion of the Order of Chivalry.
9. All fighters must execute a waiver as part of Authorization. Presenting a “blue” membership card is proof that a waiver is already on file. Non-members (or members with “white” membership cards) must fill out the waiver section of the Authorization form. (Authorization forms and Authorization cards are processed by office of the Minister of the Lists.)
10. The legal age for heavy list fighting is 16 years of age. Minors combating with adults shall be marked in the following manner: A single yellow diamond no larger than 1" (25mm) but no smaller than 0.5" (12.5mm) to be placed on the front hemisphere of the helm (preferably on or near the inspection sticker). Those under 18 Must have MINOR listed in bold print on their authorization card.

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Part I. Rules of the Lists of the SCA, Inc.

A. Each fighter, recognizing the possibilities of physical injury to him or herself in such combat, shall assume unto himself or herself all risk and liability for harm suffered by means of such combat. Other participants shall likewise recognize the risks involved in their presence on or near the field of combat, and shall assume unto themselves the liabilities thereof.

B. No person shall participate in Combat-Related Activities (including armored combat, period fencing, combat-archery, marshaling, scouting, and/or banner-bearing in combat) unless and until he or she shall have been properly Authorized under Society and Kingdom procedures and shall have signed the appropriate waiver. In witness whereof, each participant shall have and be prepared to present a valid Authorization Card to the Sovereign or his or her representative. All participants must sign a waiver form and will be issued a fighter ID card by the marshals. These waivers are effective for two years. At the end of that time, the participant is required to sign a new waiver form and obtain a new Fighter ID card.

C. All combatants must be presented to, and be acceptable to, the Sovereign or his or her representative.

D. All combatants shall adhere to the appropriate Armor and Weapons standards of the Society, and to any additional standards of the Kingdom in which the event takes place. The Sovereign may waive the additional Kingdom standards.

E. The Sovereign or the Marshalate may bar any weapon or armor from use upon the field of combat. Should a warranted Marshal bar any weapon or armor, an appeal may be made to the Sovereign to allow the weapon or armor.

F. Combatants shall behave in a knightly and chivalrous manner, and shall fight according to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.

G. No one may be required to participate in Combat-Related Activities. Any combatant may, without dishonor or penalty, reject any challenge without specifying a reason. A fight in a tournament list is not to be considered a challenge, and therefore may not be declined or rejected without forfeiting the bout.

H. Fighting with real weapons, whether fast or slow, is strictly forbidden at any Society event. This Rule does not consider approved weaponry that meets the Society and Kingdom standards for traditional SCA Combat and/or SCA Period Rapier Combat, used in the context of mutual sport, to be real weaponry.

I. No projectile weapons shall be allowed, and no weapons shall be thrown within the lists of a Tournament. The use of approved projectile weapons for melee, war, or Combat Archery shall conform to appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.

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Part II. Conventions of Combat for the East Kingdom

CC1. The legal target areas are defined as the whole torso, head and limbs, with the exception of the lower legs beginning one inch above the top of the kneecap, and the hand from one inch above the wrist. Blows landing on illegal targets need not be counted, and if thrown intentionally are considered dangerous and a censurable act. Blows to the groin are to be acknowledged; such blows, however, are strongly discouraged and throwing them frequently is grounds for censure. Pickaxe and baseball swings with a great weapon of any kind are forbidden.

CC2. All weapons to be used in combat are to be declared to the opponent and the marshals before the fight. If an auxiliary weapon is to be used, Convention of Combat #5 may be waived subject to the fighters' and marshals' approval. Such a waiver shall be announced before the commencement of combat. Any auxiliary weapon that prevents proper acknowledgment of blows must be given into the marshals' keeping until it is needed.

CC3. Only the fighters and marshals on the field, or the Sovereign or his representative may call a "hold". Others may call a "hold" only in the case of immediate safety hazards. Upon the calling of a hold, combat shall cease, and will not be resumed until the reason for the hold has been corrected and the marshals have given their permission. Anyone beginning a blow after a "hold" is called is subject to censure.

CC4. Judging the effects of blows is left to the honor of the combatants, unless they relinquish this responsibility, with the exception of clear violations of the Rules of the Lists or the Conventions of Combat. Effectiveness of a blow may not be judged by the opposing combatant, the marshal on the field, or other observers. Information unavailable to the combatant being struck may be supplied by the opposing combatant or the marshal, including blade orientation upon impact, apparent force transmitted, or apparent location and angle of the blow's impact based upon the observer's angle of observation.

CC5. A blow only partially deflected by a shield or defensive weapon will be counted as being unobstructed. Blows striking the shield or defensive weapon and then the combatant need not necessarily be counted unless they are of impressive force, or the type of weapon permits a kill while part of the blow is obstructed. For example, an axe or mace blow may kill even though the haft stuck the shield or defensive weapon.

CC6. A blow that includes the dropping or breaking of a weapon need not be counted, unless a sound weapon was clearly broken upon the combatant's body.

CC7. A helpless opponent shall not be struck, and a "hold" must be called. An opponent is helpless if he has slipped or is falling, or has struck the ground, or if he has dropped or broken his weapon. Blows begun before the cause of the hold shall be counted. If a combatant either drops his weapon, or slips and falls without being pushed three times, the combatant will be warned that on the next occurrence he will be considered to be held at sword's point and be forced to yield.

CC8. If during combat a fighter loses his helm or the visor opens up, or if the protective value of the helm is in any way impaired, the fighter is dead and shall leave the field immediately. If necessary, a hold shall be called.

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CC9. Blows landed simultaneously count to both opponents. A kill that follows a wounding blow is a kill (i.e., a wounded opponent is not helpless). A wounding blow thrown simultaneously by a combatant receiving a wounding blow wounds his opponent. A killing blow started before the combatant receives a killing blow counts. Double kills may be re-fought except in melees or wars, where both are deemed dead.

CC10. If, during the course of a fight, a sword is used for three static blocks (braced against the shield or helm), the fighter will be warned by the marshal that at the next occurrence the sword will be considered broken, and the blow good.

CC11. Thrusting and feinting to the face is legal practice. A 'face thrust' is defined as a thrust which lands above the collarbones, below the mid-brow, and between the sideburns. The definition of a telling blow is a face thrust that unmistakably moves the helm, but not the head. Marshals observing such shall inform the combatant that a telling blow may have occurred. Thrusts to the side of the head are not telling nor should they be deliberately thrown. Helm sides, back and tops are proof/impervious to all weapon thrusts except those of Siege engines and thus should not be targeted as such. This rule also includes all combat archery ammunition. This rule does not preclude legal face strikes according to society rules.

CC12. A fighter who has been wounded once loses control of the portion of the limb below the wound. If the arm is struck again below the wound so as to block a further disabling or killing blow, the blow is counted as if the arm was not there. In no way may the wounded limb be used to grasp, or propel the fighter: he is to act as if motor control were absent. If the leg is struck then the fighter may fight on one foot or from his knees, but cannot use the wounded limb for locomotion or support.

CC13. A mace, war hammer, polearm, or great sword blow to the hip kills, as does an ax blow to the inner thigh. Any other weapon blow to the hip disables the fighter, so that he may not rise up on his knees. A blow to the shoulder joint or the inside of the shoulder joint with a weapon listed above kills. A blow on the outside of the shoulder joint disables the arm. Great swords may be used in a half sword manner in that one may grasp their own blade to throw blows or thrusts **. Great swords may have a thrusting tip on the pommel of the weapon, such tips may only be used for telling blows when thrown at the face as a face thrust

CC14. It is the prerogative of any Peer of the Realm to observe the Crown finals from the field. However, the Earl Marshal may recommend to the Crown that a particular Peer not be allowed in the Lists for reasons of safety. All those who wish to observe from the field must have executed waivers to the degree required for all fighters. And if the list size does not allow it to be done safely, then the closest edges of the list shall be given to the peers for their viewing.

CC15. When titles are used on the field, the full title should be announced in cases where possible confusion may result: e.g. Master of the Pelican as opposed to Master of Arms.

CC16. No mention is to be made of magic, religion, superstition, or supernatural powers in connection with combat. Many fighters take such matter seriously, giving an unfair advantage to an opponent who violates this convention by claiming that such powers were involved with his prowess or victories. Needless to say, no honorable fighter would seek such assistance to unfairly insure victory on the field.

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Part III. Conventions of Combat for Melees in the East Kingdom

TERMS for melee:

Line Combat: is defined as, a minimum of two combatants, on the same side, must be in contiguous **mutual** weapons support range, either “side to side” or in “ranks”

Mutual support range: is defined as the maximum effective range of that particular weapons form (ie. W&S 7 ft, Pole arm, 11ft, 9ft spear 14 ft) = weapon length plus 4 ft(about ½ a stride plus arm length.

Joining a line: A combatant may consider himself having joined or rejoined a line only after doing **one** of the following and loudly declaring himself part of the line after getting into mutual support range.

- 1) Touching the shield or weapon of his own team mate,
- 2) Acknowledging mutual support range by giving or creating a defined action (Bumping your own line, getting in range and tapping or throwing a light blow to an armored part of the opposing side. Are some examples)
- 3) The opposing side acknowledges engagement by feinting at or attacking you.

CM1. We do not wish to recreate a real, medieval battle. The same standards of chivalry and courtesy that are shown in the lists shall be displayed in group combat. Anyone who refuses to obey the rules reproduced here, or the rules of the Society, shall be removed from the battle.

CM2. All conventions for single combat apply to melee combat except where superseded by the following rules.

CM4. A fighter who has tripped or fallen or who is otherwise helpless may not be struck.

CM5. A fighter who has lost his weapon during a melee is not considered helpless, and a "hold" will not be called.

CM6. If, during a melee exchange, an arm is lost to a blow, the shield or weapon that was held by that arm need not be discarded. The weapon or shield may dangle at the side of the user as long as it is not used in any way to strike or to parry a blow.

CM7. Except in the case of line combat, no more than four fighters shall attack a single opponent. And in such cases of line combat eye contact need not be required but good sense should govern all blows delivered to the unaware.

CM8. When a fighter is a member of a formed unit (e.g., a shield wall) that is fighting a similar unit, he may strike and be struck by any opponent within range. If a breakthrough occurs in your segment of the unit, you may both strike and be struck by a passing opponent.

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CM9. Attacks not already covered by CM8 must begin within an arc described as 180 degrees of the opponent's front, with the exception of a pass by attack. You are allowed one shot at the passing enemy without taking another step in pursuit. Beginning an attack will include originating with the body motion needed for execution of the blow, i.e., a step taken to the side to throw a wrap shot to the back of an opponent's head. This also means your body or weapon begin the attack with at least half of you or the weapon in front of your opponent. If this is not the case then you have to get engagement per CM10. Once engaged and your opponent is alive you are engaged with the entire line. Once your opponent falls you lose engagement unless the 180° rule now applies again.

CM10. It is both unsafe and unchivalrous to attack and strike an opponent who is unaware of your presence. It is therefore not allowed. You may only strike an opponent under the following conditions: This does not apply to line engagements when two lines meet per CM8 and CM9.

- a) Eye to eye contact has occurred, AND either (b) or (c) below.
- b) The opponent has acknowledged your presence by a nod, blocking a light blow, or by striking at you.
- c) He turns to face you (neither you nor he may deliver a blow as he turns; Florentine fighters especially should be aware of this).

CM11. If an opponent ignores your attempts to attract his attention, you may not proceed to attack him. He may simply have felt that his own team members bumped him. In such an instance you should foul his weapon or shield with your own weapon. In this way you gain the advantage of being to the rear of an opponent without jeopardizing his safety. Deliberate and repeated refusal to acknowledge the presence of an opponent will be treated by the marshals as equivalent to non-acknowledgment of blows as will intentionally presenting your back to opponents in an effort to avoid legal engagement.

CM12. If an opponent has engaged you and then turned his back, he may be struck unless he has moved out of range and you do not maintain contact by stepping into pursuit. At that point contact has been broken and he must be re-engaged.

CM13. If you are unintentionally engaged, attacked and killed by an overzealous teammate, you are dead.

CM14. Fighters killed in a melee must die defensively, and may not give aid in any form to still-fighting comrades.

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Part IV. Sanctions

Violators of the Earl Marshal's rules and policies can be brought to the attention of the Earl Marshal or his Representatives by anyone in the form of a written report for censure or suspension. The report should contain the names of all involved the action involved and include the date event and name of the MIC at the time along with the reporter's name and contact information including an email address and phone number. The marshalate, after consideration and investigation can come back with the following results:

Definitions:

Deferment- A fighter's removal from all participation in any SCA fighting practice or activity, in the Kingdom, or falling under the office of the Earl Marshal, for one day.

Censure- A warning that a continued infraction of the rules can and may result in more punitive actions.

Suspensions- A fighter's removal from all participation in any SCA fighting practice or activity, in the Kingdom, falling under the office of the EM for the recommended time.

Marshal's Court- A court held at any event by the MIC with more than half of the present active marshals in attendance in which an individual may be called in to discuss their actions or behavior on the field. Marshals court may in writing censure a fighter or recommend a DEM look into a suspension. Marshal court recommendation should contain the names of all the participating marshals as well as the individual in question.

Actions:

Deferment- This may be done by any marshal at any time for any violation of the Earl Marshal's rules and policies. This may be done orally and is expressly not subject to the requirement that violations be done in writing. This shall take effect immediately and last for the duration of the fighting practice or activity in the Kingdom or falling under the office of the Earl Marshal. The marshal exercising a deferment shall notify the DEM of the Region in writing of the deferment. The writing shall include the name of the fighter, name of the marshal, date of the deferment and reason for the deferment. The DEM of the Region shall forward the written report to the EM for review and recording.

Censure-This may be done at any time by the DEM's of any form or region or when held at a Marshals Court of an event. In any case such actions should be in writing with a copy sent to the EM for review and recording.

Three month Suspension- A three-month suspension may be done at any time by the DEM's of any form or region, with the approval of the EM.

Six month or One year Suspensions may be recommended by DEM's but will come directly from the EM after his own investigation.

Disputes on six month and one year suspensions may be appealed to the Prince and Sovereign, which will result in a Court of Chivalry per East Kingdom Law.

Suspension for Life- May result only after a Court of Chivalry.

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Part V. Armor and Weapon Standards

The Armor and Weapon Standards of the East Kingdom are those of the Society of Creative Anachronism. These standards may be found within the documents of the Earl Marshal of the Society and the Earl Marshal of the East Kingdom. This should not be construed as barring any fighter from wearing additional armor at their discretion.

The following East Kingdom-specific rules override portions of the Society standards:

AW1. Single handed weapons hafts and blades shall be constructed solely of rattan or rattan-cored Silo Flex. All other construction details for single-handed weapons shall continue to be as described in Society standards.

AW2. GREAT SWORDS. In order to present a more historically accurate portrayal of armed combat, the following standards will apply to the construction of weapon's commonly and collectively known as GREAT SWORDS. This class of swords includes but is not limited to the Katana, Bastard, Hand and a Half, Rumpatha, and Great Sword. They are generally designed to be wielded with two hands and have shorter gripping areas than pole-mounted great weapons and axes. As a class, they generally have different handling characteristics than axes and pole weapons. They usually have a point of balance closer to the rear than weapons possessing a cutting or smashing head.

Construction of two-handed SWORDS shall be as follows: They will not be longer than 6 ½ feet in total length, constructed of rattan with a minimum diameter of 1¼ inches . They shall have a quillion, tsuba or other demarcation designating the end of the grip and start of the blade. They may have both a thrusting tip and pommel-spike, if desired. When thrusting tips/pommel spikes are used, they shall be constructed to the standards found in the Marshals Handbook for two-handed weapons. (thus, Great Swords, being no longer than 6 1/2 feet in total length, may employ "low profile tips" the same diameter as the blade) Swords under 48 in. in length shall not have both a thrusting tip and a pommel-spike. Pommel-spike strikes will be allowed to the face only. Other armored areas are proof against them. The gripping surface may be up to 20 inches in total length, measured from the inside of the tsuba/quillion and including the pommel/pommel spike if present The grip/pommel end may be counter-weighted but the total weight of the weapon shall not exceed 5 lbs. Nothing herein shall restrict the construction of other two-handed WEAPONS to Society Minimum Standards."

** edit, 3/2014: The words "and may grasp an opponents blade during a bind in which neither blade is in motion" have been removed from CC13.

edit, 1/2015:

CC4: added "Effectiveness of a blow ... observer's angle of observation."

Part IV: specified "Earl Marshal's rules and policies" and "censure or suspension."

Part IV: added Deferment definition and action language.