

# SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE ANACHRONISM, INC.

## RULES OF THE LISTS

The basic rules for the SCA combat are contained in the Rules of the Lists. These Rules, however, do not specifically cover non-tourney field activities such as wars, combat archery, and period fencing. In practice, the Rules have been extended to cover these activities, with the observance of honor and chivalry being the overriding element, along with the safety of the combatants. The following is intended to bring together the appropriate rules for conducting both tourney field combat and other SCA combat activities.

### A. The Rules of the Lists are reprinted from Appendix B of the Corpora of the SCA.

1. 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. No fighter shall engage in combat unless and until he or she has inspected the field of combat and satisfied himself or herself that it is suitable for combat. Other participants shall likewise recognize the risks involved in their presence on or near the field of combat, and shall assume unto themselves the liabilities thereof.
2. No person shall participate in Combat-Related Activities (including armored combat, period fencing, combat archery, scouting, and banner bearing in combat) outside of formal training sessions unless he or she shall have been properly authorized under Society and Kingdom procedures.
3. All combatants must be presented to, and be acceptable to, the Sovereign or his or her representative.
4. All combatants shall adhere to the appropriate armor and weapons standards of the Society, and to any additional standards of the Kingdom in which the event takes place. The Sovereign may waive the additional Kingdom standards.
5. The Sovereign or the Marshallate may bar any weapon or armor from use upon the field of combat. Should a warranted Marshal bar any weapon or armor, an appeal may be made to the Sovereign to allow the weapon or armor.
6. Combatants shall behave in a knightly and chivalrous manner, and shall fight according to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.
7. No one may be required to participate in Combat-Related Activities. Any combatant may, without dishonor or penalty, reject any challenge without specifying a reason. A fight in a tournament lists is not to be considered a challenge, and therefore may not be declined or rejected without forfeiting the bout.
8. Fighting with real weapons, whether fast or slow, is strictly forbidden at any Society event. This rule does not consider approved weaponry which meets the Society and Kingdom standards for traditional Society combat and/or Society period rapier combat, used in the context of mutual sport, to be real weaponry.
9. No projectile weapons shall be allowed 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 the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.

### B. Applications of the Rules of the List

Ref Rule 1: "Other participants" include Marshals, and also support personnel whose activities bring them close to fighting in a situation where boundaries are not

clearly defined. Heralds, List Pages, and similar officers who leave the field entirely before combat begins are exempt from this requirement, as are Water-Bearers and Chirurgeons who remain in fixed support points outside the tournament field or battle area. Water-Bearers and Chirurgeons who take part in mobile support groups within the overall boundaries of a battle area must receive a basic orientation in field safety, and sign a proper Waiver.

Ref Rule 2: The Crown and/or Marshallate of each Kingdom shall establish standards and procedures for the authorization of fighters to participate in combat. These procedures shall adhere to the Combat Authorization Procedures in this Handbook. At Kingdom option, these procedures may involve either a general authorization to participate in armored combat, or a set of separate authorization procedures for the use of (or for combat AGAINST) specific weapons or classes of weapons.

The Crown and/or Marshallate of each Kingdom shall establish standards and procedures for the authorization of combat archers and missile users to participate in combat. Kingdoms may establish such additional limitations on the participation of minors as may be deemed necessary. It is usual for authorizations from other Kingdoms to be accepted, although exceptions may prove necessary in the case of specific individuals.

The Crown may not simply grant an authorization, unless the recipient has successfully completed the authorization process as delineated in Society and Kingdom law.

Ref Rule 4: Kingdoms may apply armor and weapons standards that are stricter than the Society standards, should they be deemed necessary, but may not reduce or waive any Society standard.

Ref Rule 5: If a fighter regards an opponent's weapon or armor as unduly dangerous to face, he or she can request the Marshal of the field to re-inspect the item. Either fighter has the option of appealing the decision of the re-inspecting Marshal to the Marshal in Charge and ultimately to the Sovereign.

Ref Rule 6: Engaging in any Society combat activity with the deliberate intent to inflict bodily harm to an opponent is strictly forbidden.

Ref Rule 7: No one is required to engage in SCA combat should he or she prefer not to do so.

Ref Rule 8: Since fighting with real weapons is forbidden at any Society event, threatening the use of such weapons is likewise expressly forbidden.

At the discretion of the Sovereign and the Marshal in Charge recognized experts may be permitted to present choreographed demonstrations with real weapons under strictly controlled conditions.

Posing for still photographs with real weapons is permitted.

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

Ref Rule 9: The prohibition on thrown weapons refers to weapons in combat, or thrown in a hostile manner. It does not apply to "tossing" as a gentle, short-range method of transferring or removing a tournament weapon or item from the Lists or area of combat.

The use of archery, firearms, slings, javelins, throwing axes, throwing knives, or any other projectile is forbidden within Tournament Lists, or in any other situation where spectators cannot be separated from the potential line of fire by more than the effective range of the weapons.

# CONVENTIONS OF COMBAT

## Introduction:

All traditional SCA armored combat at SCA tourneys, wars and other events shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of the Lists of the SCA, Inc., these Conventions of Combat, and such weapons and equipment standards, and event rules, as are established by the Marshallate of the SCA, Inc., and individual Kingdom Marshallates.

## **A. *General Information:***

1. All Kingdoms shall have as their minimum Armor and Weapons standards those criteria established as Society Minimum Armor and Weapons Standards. Each Kingdom may require additional, more extensive, and/or stricter standards.
  - a. All fighters, prior to combat at each and every SCA sponsored event or fighting practice, shall insure that their Armor and Weapons are inspected by a warranted member of the Kingdom Marshallate.
  - b. Even though a warranted member of the Kingdom Marshallate has inspected the armor and weapons used by a fighter, each fighter shall accept full responsibility for the condition of his or her own equipment. Each fighter has the obligation to himself or herself, the marshals, and all opponents, to see that his or her equipment meets all Society and Kingdom requirements.
2. When not otherwise directed by the Crown, the Crown's representative upon the field and in all matters dealing with Society Combat is the Earl Marshal, and, by delegation, warranted members of the Kingdom Marshallate.

## **B. *Behavior on the field:***

1. Striking an opponent with excessive force is forbidden and considered an unchivalrous act.
2. All fighters shall obey the commands of the marshals on the field, or shall be removed from the field and subject to disciplinary action.
  - a. Disagreements with the marshals on the field shall be resolved through the established mechanisms outlined in the Procedures for Grievances and Sanctions of the Marshallate Procedures of the SCA, Inc.
3. Each fighter shall maintain control over his or her temper at all times.
4. Upon hearing the call of "HOLD" all fighting shall IMMEDIATELY stop.
5. A fighter shall not enter the lists or participate in any form of SCA combat activity while impaired by alcohol or drugs (including, but not limited to: drugs prescribed by a licensed health care provider, over the counter medications, and illegal controlled substances.)
6. Any behavior that takes deliberate advantage of an opponent's chivalry or safety-consciousness, or that takes deliberate unfair advantage of an opponent, is prohibited.
7. A fighter shall not deliberately strike a helpless opponent.
8. Any fighter who obtains an unfair advantage by repeatedly becoming "helpless" (e.g. by falling down or losing his or her weapon) may, after being duly warned by the marshals on the field, be forced to yield the fight at the next occurrence of such behavior. The onus of this is on the marshals, not on the opponent. However, the opponent may ask the marshals to let the fight continue.

### **C. *Target Area***

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

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

- A. Weapons shall be used in accordance with their design (i.e. spears may only be used for thrusting, axes for striking along the edge of the blade, et cetera).
  1. Only weapons approved for thrusting may be used for that purpose. Feinting as if to thrust with a weapon not approved for that purpose is prohibited. Before any bout where a thrusting weapon is used the opponent and marshals shall be informed that such a weapon is on the field, and the thrusting tip shall be shown to the opponent.
  2. The blade of a weapon may not be grasped at any time, nor may it be trapped in contact with the fighter's body as a means of preventing the opponent's use of the weapon. Neither may the blade of a fighter's own weapon be grasped to enhance the block.
  3. Wrestling with or grappling the opponent, to include grasping the opponent's torso, limbs, shield, or weapon's striking surface, blade, or head is prohibited.
- B. The striking surface of a weapon in motion may not be grasped or blocked by the hands or limbs as a means of impeding a blow. Inadvertently bringing the hands in contact with the striking surface of such a weapon when attempting to block a blow with another weapon shall not be considered to be in violation of this convention.
- C. Blows repeatedly blocked by a weapon in contact with a fighter's helm, body or shield at the moment of impact may at the Crown's or Marshallate's discretion, be considered to have broken the blocking weapon. This will force a fighter to forfeit the fight, unless a secondary weapon is carried or the opponent chooses to allow the fighter to rearm with another weapon.
- D. A shield may be used to displace, deflect, or immobilize an opponent's shield or weapon, so long as such use does not endanger the safety of the combatants. Deliberately striking an opponent's head, limbs, or body with a shield is forbidden, unless that shield is designed for use as a weapon, and is approved by the Kingdom Marshallate.

## V. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF BLOWS:

- A. When judging the effect of blows, all fighters are presumed to be fully armored. Special tournaments or combat may be held which may redefine what areas of the body are armored, and to what extent, so long as all the participants are made aware of the special conditions prior to the start of combat.
  1. All “fully armored” fighters are presumed to be wearing a hauberk over a padded gambeson, with boiled leather arm and leg defenses and an open-faced iron helm with a nasal. The helm may be presumed by Kingdom convention to include a very light chain mail drape, permitting vision and resisting cuts by the mere touch of a bladed weapon.
    - a. Under this standard, an acceptable cutting blow to the face would be lighter than to other portions of the head or body. Areas deemed illegal for attack (the wrists from 1” above the hands, from 1” above the knees and below) shall be considered safe from all attack.
    - b. An acceptable thrusting blow to the face shall be a directed touch and shall be substantially lighter than to other parts of the body.
- B. Blows must be delivered with effective technique for the particular type of weapon used, and must strike properly oriented and with sufficient force, to be considered an effective, or good, blow.
  1. An effective blow to the head, neck, or torso shall be judged fatal or totally disabling, rendering the fighter incapable of further combat.
  2. An effective blow from an axe, mace, polearm, greatsword, or other mass weapon which lands on the hip above the hip socket, or strikes the shoulder inside the shoulder socket, shall be judged fatal or totally disabling.
  3. An effective blow to the arm above the wrist will disable the arm. The arm shall then be considered useless to the fighter, and may not be used for either offense or defense.
  4. An effective blow to the leg above the knee will disable the leg. The fighter must then fight kneeling, sitting, or standing upon the foot of the uninjured leg. Kingdoms may place limitations upon the mobility of such injured fighters.
  5. If a wounded limb blocks an otherwise acceptable blow, the blow shall be counted as though the limb were not there.
  6. Kingdoms may institute a “bleed rule” that would render a fighter who has suffered an effective wound to a limb incapable of further combat after a specified time.
- C. Pas d’Arms Dispensation
  1. Fighters participating in a Pas d’Arms tourney may deviate from the above rules in favor of the “blows received” (or counted-blows) method of determining a bout.
- D. All fighters are expected to take into account the nature of the weapon being used by their opponent and the location of the point of impact of that weapon when judging the outcome of a blow delivered. Fighters are also expected to take into account the timing of the blow and the collision of the weapon with any other object other than the fighter’s presumed armor.
  1. The fact that a blow struck a shield or another weapon before striking the combatant may be a reason why the blow was not effective. However, a blow that strikes with sufficient force and proper orientation shall be considered effective, regardless of what it hits prior to striking the combatant.

- E. Sometimes a blow which would normally be accepted occurs at almost the same moment as an event that would cause the fight to be stopped (a "HOLD", being called, the fighter throwing the blow being killed, etc.). If the blow was begun before the occurrence of the event that would cause the bout to be halted, it shall be deemed a legal blow and acceptable if of sufficient force and not blocked or deflected. If the blow was begun after the occurrence of the event that would cause the bout to be halted, it shall be deemed not legal, and need not be accepted.
- F. A blow that includes the dropping of a weapon at the moment of impact need not be counted. (Note: If the force of the blow causes the weapon to be dropped, the rule shall be suspended.)