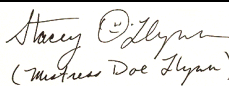



<b>Experiment Name</b>	<b>Ground to Mounted Combat</b>	
<b>POC (name, email)*</b>	Hannah Rafle (Lady Therasia Thoma), <a href="mailto:therasiathoma@gmail.com">therasiathoma@gmail.com</a> Brant Anderson (Sir Alasdair MacDubhghaill), <a href="mailto:branta30@gmail.com">branta30@gmail.com</a>	
<b>Submitting Kingdom</b>	Society level experimental program – DSM Equestrian	1/21/2024
<b>Kingdom Earl Marshal</b>	Society level experimental program - DSM Equestrian	n/a
<b>Deputy Society Marshal</b>	 ( <del>Mistress</del> Doe Flynn)	1/22/2024
<b>Society Marshal</b>		1/22/2024

\* Name and email will be published on the SCA.org website

This experiment is a rewrite/resubmission of a previous experiment, approved by the SM in June 2021.

#### A) Overview (What, Why, Historical Context)

1. The experimental Ground-to-Mounted Combat program extends the existing equestrian mounted combat activities, in combination with armored combat ground fighting activities, to give both the ground fighters and the mounted fighters an opportunity to recreate field battles as they might have been in period times. This program will be administered as Society level program, which includes oversight by a designated Society Deputy. All participants, including horses, must be approved by Kingdom and the Society Deputy. Riders and horses will be approved for participation as a pair. Ground fighters will receive specialized training for movement and combat around horses. Minimum armor will meet Equestrian Mounted Combat rules. Weapons will be based on Youth Combat construction guidelines (ie. padded striking surfaces).

**Historical Context:** The use of calvary in battles against mounted opponents and ground fighters extends back to about 1000 BC, and extends well into the modern age. The cavalry were used for heavy cavalry charges, skirmishing, and general disruption of enemy lines. There are numerous examples and depictions of mounted to ground combat throughout the middle ages. Two prominent ones are the Bayeux Tapestry and Fiore's "Flower of Battle".



- (a) Bayeux tapestry Norman knights engaging with ground fighters at the Battle of Hastings (1066).
- (b) Fiore in the "Flower of Battle" (1404) depicts three counters for a ground fighter against mounted opponent(s).

## **B) Administration: Society level**

1. This program is administered at the society level to mitigate risk and ensure consistency of training and combat conventions. The SEO has a specific deputy in charge of the program, the Ground-to-Mounted Combat Deputy. The Ground-to-Mounted Combat Deputy may have deputies to assist in the program.
  - Society Deputy for Ground-to-Mounted Combat: Lady Therasia Thoma (Outlands)
  - Ground Fighter/Armored Combat Deputy: Sir Alasdair MacDubhghaill (Outlands)
2. Kingdoms may choose to participate, and requires the approval of both the KEO and the KEM. The KEO must notify both the SEO and the Ground-to-Mounted Combat Deputy of the kingdom's intention to participate.
3. KEOs of kingdoms that are participating must send a report to the Ground-to-Mounted Combat Deputy each quarter, and include it in the SEO quarterly report.
4. Riders and ground fighters must submit a report after every event or practice in which they participate in ground-to-mounted activities at [Mounted to Ground Combat Experimental Program Report \(google.com\)](#)
5. The Ground to Mounted deputy must submit a report to the Deputy Society Marshal for Equestrian quarterly (due March 1, June 1, Sept 1, and Dec 1), including any injuries or incidences.
6. The Deputy Society Marshal for Equestrian must submit a report to the Society Marshal quarterly (due March 15, June 15, Sept 15, and Dec 15), including any injuries or incidences.
7. The list of approved participants and horses in the program shall be maintained by the Ground-to-Mounted Combat deputy, who shall inform the SEO of additions and removals each quarterly report. Participants will enter their data at [Request to Join Mounted to Ground Experimental Program \(google.com\)](#), and the Society Deputy, KEO, and approving marshal will verify that person's status before they are added to the official roster.

## **Risks and Mitigation Plans**

To mitigate risk during the experimental phase, the standards to participate are higher than required for regular mounted combat or armored combat:

- a. Upper level horsemanship skills are required for riders.
- b. Upper levels of equestrian training and desensitizing are required for equines.
- c. Specialized training for Ground Combatants is required.
- d. Martial skills for handling weapons while fighting from horseback and against mounted combatants is required.
- e. Ability of both rider and Ground Combatant to recognize equine body language to avoid over stressing the mount is required.

Potential concerns and mitigation plans:

- a. Mounted Combat approved padded weapons will be used during combat, due to the concern that the equine may be accidentally hit. Although we will not be using full strength blows during this activity, participants must always make their best effort to not strike the equine.
- b. Horses must be adequately desensitized to this activity and must not show any aggression towards the ground combatants (ie. biting, striking, kicking). Any horses that show these

- behaviors cannot be used for this activity. Each horse must be approved for use in this program.
- c. Each participant must be acutely aware of the equine's body language to ensure the equine is not becoming stressed to the point of losing control or possibly bolting.
  - d. Rider and ground combatants must be aware of the horse's position to fighters and any other equines present, to assure that no one on the ground gets stepped on or pinned between equines.
  - e. Riders must be in control of their horses at all times, and know when to take themselves off the field should their mount begin to have issues with the activity.

### C) Proposed Equipment

1. Armor: For the purpose of Desensitization Classes
  - a. Rider/Ground Combatants: No armor is required for desensitization classes. Use of non-metal weapons with no sharp edges (ie: approved heavy combat and Mounted combat weapons) will be allowed, as there will be no full contact blows, only tagging and light touch are permitted. Shields approved by heavy combat and mounted combat rules may also be used.
  - b. Equines: Eye protection is recommended.
2. Armor: For the purpose of Ground-to-Mounted Combat fighting
  - a. Rider: Armor must meet normal mounted combat standards as defined in the Society Equestrian Handbook. Elbows must be covered at a minimum with padding (ie. elbow pads, padded gambeson). Hand protection is strongly suggested.
  - b. Ground Combatants: Armor must meet the mounted combat standards or better. Approved armored combat armor is allowed. Elbows must be covered at a minimum with padding (ie. elbow pads, padded gambeson). Hand protection is strongly suggested.
  - a. Equines: Eye protection that meets the standards for Mounted Combat as defined in the Society Equestrian Handbook is required. The use of a chamfron or face protector and poll protection is highly recommended and may be a requirement in the final version of these rules, pending experimentation. As always, it is expected that riders take full responsibility for the safety and well-being of both themselves and their mounts.
3. Weapon Guidelines:
  - a. Swords: Mounted Combat standards as defined in the Society Equestrian Handbook
  - b. Spears, glaives, and halberds may be used. *These combine structure and padding elements of Youth Combat standards and armored combat to maximize safety to the horse.*
    - (1) Base material shall be schedule 40 ½-inch PEX (cross-linked HDPE (high density polyethylene)) pipe, ¾-inch PEX pipe, or 1” rattan for weapons under 7.5 feet in length. When using PEX pipe as the core, both ends must be capped. For spears greater than 7.5 feet, 1.25 inch shaved rattan may be used.
    - (2) Minimum ½-inch closed cell foam padding over all striking surfaces.
    - (3) Minimum diameter of 1.25 inches.
    - (4) Thrusting tips
      1. Weapons with length greater than 7.5 feet - tips shall be no less than 2 inches in

- diameter/cross-section and have 2 inches of resilient material in front of the rigid tip of the weapon, thereby providing progressively resistant give.
2. Weapons with length less than or equal to 7.5 feet - tips shall be at least the same diameter as the shaft of the weapon they are mounted on and have 1.5 inches of resilient material in front of the rigid tip of the weapon, thereby providing progressively resistant give.
  3. Other thrusting tips are at the discretion of the program Testing Marshal or Deputy in charge of the activity at that event or practice.
- c. Other non-metal weapons: These may be evaluated and allowed in the program under the approval of the Deputy for Ground to Mounted and the Ground Fighter/Armored Combat Deputy.

#### **D) Proposed Conventions (Phase 1)**

1. Target Areas
  - a. Rider: Everything above the waist. This is the standard mounted combat convention.
  - b. Ground Combatant: Everything above the waist.
2. Acknowledgement of Blows
  - a. An effective blow is delivered with an effective technique for the particular type of weapon used, properly orientated, and with intentional positive pressure. This is similar to levels of force used in SCA Rapier combat, and is NOT an armored combat level of force.
3. Melees are restricted to a maximum of 5 riders/horses and 5 ground fighters.

#### **E) Participation**

1. A marshal designated for this activity must be present for this activity to take place. The marshal must be authorized to marshal equestrian mounted combat, and approved by the Ground-to-Mounted Combat deputy and KEO.
2. All participants (riders, ground combatants, and equines) must be approved by the Ground-to-Mounted Combat deputy and KEO. Determining additional requirements and an authorization process is a goal of this experimental program. Initial process for approval includes:
  - a) Rider: Must be mounted combat authorized. Upper level horsemanship skills are required for rider. Example tests include:
    - Demonstrates control of horse and weapon at the canter (or fastest gait for gaited horses).
    - Demonstrates ability to control weapon, strike direction, and force of shots against a fighter on the ground.
    - Demonstrates ability to maneuver horse around ground fighters. Includes advance and retreat upon marshals command, and circling a ground fighter within weapon range.
  - b) Ground Combatants: Must show ability to safely use a weapon, safely maneuver on the ground around horses, and be able to judge an equine's body language. Example tests include:

- Ability to strike a mounted rider, while avoiding the horse's head/neck/body.
- Ability to control the weapon when parried by the mounted rider (ie. they can keep the weapon from striking horse's head/neck).
- Demonstrates ability to maneuver on the ground around horses. *Example test: A rider advances such that the ground combatant must move and use their hand/arm to maintain a safe space.*

c) Equine: Upper levels of equestrian training and desensitizing are required for equines. The horse should remain in control during anticipated combat movement, sounds, and incidental contact. Example tests include:

- Ground Combatant in armor walking around the horse, striking a shield with sword.
- Ground Combatant lightly striking the horse on the side, neck, and haunches.
- Ground Combatant lightly bumping (shoulder, body contact) the horse's side.
- The horse should not spook, bolt, rear, kick, or bite in response to normal combat movement.

### 3. Marshal Roles and Responsibilities:

- a. Society Deputy for Ground-to-Mounted Combat: Approves Participants, Marshals, and Equines.
  - b. Approving Marshal: Oversees program activities such as inspecting armor and weapons, marshaling the activity at events and practices. Recommends people for approval into the program. Teaches classes that include non-approved participants.
  - c. Participation Marshal: May oversee program activities that include approved program participants only. Includes inspecting armor and weapons, marshaling at events and practices. They may not teach or include non-approved participants in program activities.
4. A list of approved participants, marshals, and equines in the program shall be maintained by the Ground-to- Mounted Combat Deputy, who shall inform the SEO of additions and removals.
  5. Kingdoms have the discretion to allow the activity in their kingdom. Experimental sessions will not be permitted at events in kingdoms that are not participating in the experimental program. (However, desensitization classes are not specific to this experimental program, and can be held in any kingdom, event, or practice.)

## F) Goals and Metrics

Goal: Establish rules, training, and authorization processes to be able to add Ground to Mounted Combat as an approved specialized equestrian activity.

Phase 1 – Using the initial proposed conventions and weapons standards, collect and evaluate data to inform changes to conventions, standards, and processes for Phase 2.

Phase 2 – Based on Phase 1, develop a proposed final set of conventions, standards, and processes for evaluation for a minimum of 1 year.

Quarterly reviews to the Society Marshal will include data and analysis, and updates to the experimental program conventions and standards under development.

Phases are based on data driven goals. *1 data point = 1 rider or ground fighter, at one event or practice. (Example: 4 riders and 3 ground fighters at a practice = 7 data points)*

Overall Goals of the Program include:

1. To safely and effectively teach Ground-to-Mounted Combat skills to interested participants.
2. To develop armor and authorization processes for both rider and ground combatants.
3. To safely demonstrate the usefulness and versatility of these skills in combat situations.
4. To be able to safely incorporate Ground-to-Mounted Combat into scenarios and event activities.

**Phase 1 Goals:** Target = 200 data points (practice with 3 riders+2 fighters, 6 practices/year = 30)

- a. Establish the training and skills needed to participate, for riders and horses. This will be used to draft the authorization process for Phase 2.
- b. Establish the training and skills needed to participate, for ground combatants. This will be used to draft the authorization process in Phase 2.
- c. Establish the training and skills needed for marshals. This will be used to draft the authorization process in Phase 2.
- d. Establish the acceptable conventions and scenarios/activities, including maximum numbers for melees.
- e. Determine the suitability of the proposed weapons. In particular: the suitability of using 1.25inch shaved rattan for spears greater than 7.5 feet; the suitability of shaved and non-shaved rattan for weapons under 7.5 feet.
- f. Determine the suitability of the proposed Conventions. In particular, maximum numbers for melees.

**Phase 2 Goals:**

- a. Based on Phase 1, develop a proposed final set of conventions, standards, and processes for evaluation for a minimum of 1 year. Collect and analyze data.