



the society for creative anachronism, inc.



**Youth Combat Marshal's Handbook
July 2024**

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Revision History

Summary of changes from previous version (July 2017)

Page	Section	Summary of Change	Date Approved
Cover	Title	Changed “Youth Martial Handbook” to “Youth Combat Marshal’s Handbook” to be consistent with other handbooks.	7/21/2024
varies	varies	Minor wording changes to be consistent with other Handbooks naming conventions. E.g. “Youth combat” instead of “Youth Martial Activities”, which could create confusion as youth are involved in other martial activities not included in this handbook (i.e. archery, thrown weapons, equestrian)	7/21/2024
5	II.C	Minor edit. Replaced “blue card” with “proof from the Corporate Office of a current paid membership”	7/21/2024
6	IV.A	Clarified parent responsibilities. - Added “designated responsible adult,” consistent with III.D. - Minor edits to clarify under 10 years old rule. - Added “2. If the child is 10 years or older, a parent or legal guardian must remain on site of any practice or event and be able to be reached easily and immediately.”	7/21/2024
13	E	Changed chest protection from ‘required for girls’ to ‘recommended for all’. This is now consistent with the Armored Combat and Rapier handbooks.	7/21/2024
13	F	Groin protection changed to be consistent with the Armored Combat and Rapier handbooks. - Added “Testicles must be protected to a standard equivalent to that provided by an athletic cup, secured by straps, or worn in a supporter or fighting garment designed to hold the protection in place.” - Changed girl’s protection and pre-puberty boys protection to recommended, and made it gender neutral.	7/21/2024
16	X.A.11	Added that ‘tips may not be excessively heavy’ to better enable marshals to better use their judgment on questionable construction.	7/21/2024
16	X.A.12	Added “Butt spikes may not be used in Division 1.” From marshal experience, Div 1 fighters have sufficient trouble focusing on the proper use of single-ended weapons, and butt-spikes tends to introduce undesirable chaos.	7/21/2024
22	XIV.B.2	Groin protection changed to be gender neutral.	7/21/2024
23	XV.A	Added “Youth Combat may be placed under the oversight of the Kingdom Armored Combat Deputy.” Consistent with A.C.	7/21/2024
25	XVII.E	Changed “Prior to any combat (practice or tournament) ...” to “Prior to any combat (practice, tournament or melee)...”	7/21/2024

Arabella da Siena, Society Marshal

Table of Contents

Topic	Page #
Introduction/Overview	4
Mission & Goals	4
General Conventions	4
Parent Section	
I. Definitions	5
II. Participation	5
III. Membership	6
IV. Parental Responsibilities	6
Participants' Section - Youth Armored Combat	
V. General Information	7
VI. Rules of the Lists and Conventions of Combat	8
VII. The Use of Weapons and Shields	10
VIII. Acknowledgement of Blows	10
IX. Armor Requirements	12
X. Weapons Standards	15
Participants' Section - Youth Rapier Combat	
XI. General Information	18
XII. Conventions	19
XIII. Weapons and Parrying Devices	20
XIV. Protective Gear	22
Marshals' Section	
XV. Organization	23
XVI. Authorization of Marshals	23
XVII. General Requirements and Restrictions for Youth Marshals	24
XVIII. Marshaling Concerns In Rapier Combat	25
XIX. Adult Training of Youth at Official SCA Activities	25
XX. Injury Procedures	26
XXI. Youth Combat Authorizations	27
XXII. Marshal Responsibilities, Chain of Command, and Reporting	27
XXIII. Experimentation	28
XXIV. Disciplinary Actions	28
Glossary	29

Introduction/ Overview

Mission & Goals

The mission of Youth combat programs is to provide a safe and fun environment where the youth of the SCA can participate in martial activities, mirroring adult Armored Combat and Rapier Combat, at a level appropriate to their age. The goal is to introduce and reinforce the ideals of chivalry, honor, courtesy, service, and heraldic pageantry, both on and off the list field. The program stresses good sportsmanship and parental participation. It is designed to allow the youth to learn more about all aspects of the Society and above all,

HAVE FUN!

General Conventions

Youth Martial activities are regulated by SCA, Inc. Kingdoms are responsible for implementing Youth Martial programs and are responsible for establishing procedures for youth combatant authorization, and the warranting of marshals. Youth Armored Combat and Youth Rapier Combat may be organized as separate disciplines at the kingdom level.

These rules set fundamental standards for minors, ages 6 thru 17, participating in youth combat activities in the SCA. They are designed to allow use by the Kingdoms of the Society as basic rules, to which Kingdom-specific preferences can be added. In keeping with Corpora, Kingdoms retain the right to add rules establishing more restrictive standards. All fighters and marshals are responsible for knowing these rules, as well as the additional rules of their Kingdom.

Rules are designed to promote safe youth combat in the Society. 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. These rules and guidelines apply to all Youth Combat activity age divisions. Specific differences between the divisions are addressed in the appropriate sections.

The basic rules for SCA martial combat are contained in the "Society Armored Combat Marshal's Handbook" and the "Society Fencing Marshal's Handbook". Those guidelines apply to Youth Combat activities unless superseded by this document.

Parent Section

I. Definitions

- A. Minors are defined as anyone who has not reached the age of legal majority. This varies between countries, states and other jurisdictions.
- B. The term “Parent”, as used in this document, includes the biological parents, adoptive parents, or any court appointed legal guardian.

II. Participation

Note: SCA policies relating to the attendance and participation of minors at events and activities are found in the Seneschal’s Handbook. Nothing in this document will be construed to overrule, change, or substitute for those policies.

- A. Parental involvement and participation is a critical component of the Youth Combat program.
- B. Parents must understand these are contact sports and that injuries may occur. Parents are ultimately responsible for the safety and well-being of their children and assume all risks and liabilities for any harm or medical condition arising from the youth’s participation in these activities. This legal requirement cannot be delegated to the SCA or to the marshals on the list field. The assumption of responsibility shall be signified by completion of all legal documents required by the SCA, their resident kingdom, and owners of event sites.
- C. No minor shall participate in Youth Martial activities unless the parent has completed and signed a “Minor’s Consent to Participate and Hold Harmless Agreement” (waiver) form, or a country specific alternate, approved by the Board of Directors. Minors with proof from the Corporate Office of a current paid membership, indicating a waiver at the Corporate Office that is signed by a parent, are treated the same as adult attendees with regard to waivers. Roster waivers are not acceptable for use with minors.
- D. Minors participating in Youth Martial activities must either have a parent present at the event/activity or a properly executed “Medical Authorization Form for Minors” (or a country specific alternate) designating a responsible adult, present at the event or activity, as able to authorize medical treatment in the case of emergency (a form of temporary guardianship). If needed the responsible adult shall also be in possession of a waiver signed by the parent.

III. Membership

A. Neither the parent nor the child are required to be members of the SCA, Inc. to participate in Youth Combat activities. The parent's permission to participate is required.

IV. Parental Responsibilities

A. Youth Martial activities will NOT be used as a babysitting service.

1. If the child is under 10 years old, a parent or the designated responsible adult must remain within sight and sound of the Youth Combat list .

2. If the child is 10 years or older, a parent or the designated responsible adult must remain on site of any practice or event and be able to be reached easily and immediately.

B. Parents have the right and responsibility to remove their child from any contest or activity they may deem inappropriate or hazardous.

C. A Parent shall have witnessed the relevant SCA Youth Martial Activity, or be present at the first training session, before their child may participate.

D. Parents are required to read and understand these rules and standards and make sure that their child follows them.

E. Parents are encouraged to become Youth Marshals.

F. Adults watching Youth Martial activities shall act in a courteous manner toward the combatants, marshals, and other parents. Adults demonstrating inappropriate behavior will be asked to leave the Youth Martial area. This may result in their child having to withdraw from that day's activity.

Participants' Section - Youth Armored Combat

V. General Information

A. Divisional Definitions

1. Participation in SCA Youth Armored Combat shall be divided into at least three divisions, based on age, armor, and weapons. Kingdoms shall follow modern law from local jurisdictions as necessary when setting age divisions.
2. The recommended age ranges are:
 - a. Division 1: Ages 6-9
 - b. Division 2: Ages 10-13
 - c. Division 3: Ages 14-17

B. The listed age range for each division is not absolute. The Marshallate recognizes that some youth will be very small or very large for their age, and that some will mature earlier or later than others. Younger combatants may be moved to a higher division or older combatants may be allowed to remain in a lower division, on a case-by-case basis, at the request of the parent and with the approval of the marshals.

C. Acknowledging that there might be a limited number of youth combatants at an event or practice, combatants may fight others in another division with the following provisions:

1. Permission of the combatant's parent or responsible adult.
2. Permission of the Youth Combat Marshal-in-Charge.
3. Older combatants must adhere to the weapon standards, calibration, and rules of the younger combatants being fought (e.g. Division 2 combatants may fight a Division 1 combatant at Division 1 calibration with Division 1 weapons).

D. Society rules allow a minor, aged at least 16, to authorize in adult armored combat. Minors may continue to fully participate in Youth Combat while training for adult combat. When minors become authorized in adult armored combat, they will be deemed to have graduated from Youth Combat and are not eligible to participate in Youth Combat tournaments, except as bye fighters (i.e. not eligible for prizes). They may still participate in Youth Combat training activities and are encouraged to become Youth Marshals, if allowed by their Kingdom.

E. Kingdoms may establish policies allowing adults to train and spar with youth combatants. Parents may always spar with their own children. See paragraph XIX "Adult Training of Youth at Official SCA Activities" in the Marshal's Section for more information.

F. Authorization Requirements

1. Each Kingdom shall establish a procedure to authorize combatants for participation in Youth Combat activities.

VI. Rules of the Lists and Conventions of Combat

A. Rules of the List and Conventions of Combat as listed in the "SCA Marshal's Handbook," apply to Youth Combat unless superseded by a rule in this document. Conventions may be modified for a specific tournament with the full explanation of the changes given to all of the combatants.

1. All combatants shall adhere to the Society minimum armor and weapons standards for their division and to any additional standards or conventions of the Kingdom in which the event takes place.

2. All youth combatants shall ensure their armor and weapons are inspected by a Youth Combat Marshal prior to combat at each and every SCA - sponsored event or fighting practice.

3. A marshal may disallow use of any weapon, or armor, deemed to be unsafe from use upon the field of combat.

4. All combatants shall act in a courteous and chivalrous manner at all times.

5. No one may be required to participate in combat related Activities.

6. No weapons shall be thrown within the Lists of a tournament. The use of approved thrown weapons for melee shall conform to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat. ^[L]_[SEP]

B. Behavior on the Field

1. Striking an opponent with excessive force is forbidden. ^[L]_[SEP]

2. The instructions of the marshals on the field shall be followed at all times.

3. Each fighter shall maintain control over his or her temper at all times.

4. Should a safety issue arise the marshal will call “HOLD” and all combat activity in the list will stop until the marshal indicates that it is safe to resume.
5. 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.
6. A fighter shall not deliberately strike a helpless opponent.
7. Any fighter who obtains an unfair advantage by repeatedly becoming “helpless” (for example, by falling down or losing their 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.
8. Grappling, tripping, throwing, punching, kicking, and wrestling are prohibited. ^[L]_[SEP]
9. Deliberately striking an opponent with a shield (shield bashing) is forbidden. ^[L]_[SEP]
10. Grasping an opponent’s person, shield, or weapon is prohibited.

C. Target Areas

1. Legal target areas are the same as those in adult Armored Combat, except face thrusts are not allowed in Division 1. Shots to the groin and throat are legal, but discouraged.

D. Melee Conventions

1. Youth fighters may only charge to gain ground. They may not intentionally run into their opponents.
2. Thrown weapons may be used in a melee scenario provided that all marshals and combatants are informed of their use before the melee begins.
3. Deliberately striking from behind without gaining engagement is forbidden.
4. No more than four fighters shall attack a single opponent except in the case of engaged units.
5. Rules of engagement shall conform to the standard of the kingdom or event where the activity takes place.

VII. The Use of Weapons and Shields

- A. Weapons shall be used in accordance with their design. For example, spears may only be used for thrusting, axes for striking along the edge of the blade, etc.
- B. Only weapons approved for thrusting may be used for that purpose. 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.
- C. 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.
1. If a combatant intentionally places an illegal target area (e.g., an empty hand and or lower leg, including the knee and foot) in the path of a blow, the combatant forfeits that attached limb as if it had been struck in a legal target area. ^[L]_[SEP]
 2. Inadvertently bringing the hands in contact with the striking surface of a weapon in motion, as when attempting to block a blow with another weapon shall not be considered to be in violation of this convention. ^[L]_[SEP]
- D. Shields must be controlled by the hand. Use of passive shields (not controlled by the hand) will be treated as decorative armor and subject to effective blow acknowledgment. ^[L]_[SEP]

VIII. Acknowledgement of Blows

- A. Calibration
1. Division 1: Intentional Touch. This is a clean, unimpeded blow that is readily felt through a single layer of medium weight cloth, but is not hard enough to leave a bruise on bare skin. Face thrusts are not allowed.
 2. Division 2: Positive Contact. This is a clean, unimpeded blow that is readily felt through 0.25 inch (6.3 mm) of open cell padding, but is not hard enough to leave a bruise in an area covered by medium weight cloth. Face thrusts have touch calibration.
 3. Division 3: Light Force. This is a clean, unimpeded blow that may be readily felt through 0.5 inch (12.7 mm) of open cell padding, but is not hard enough to leave a bruise through 0.25 inch (6.3 mm) of open cell foam padding. Face thrusts have touch calibration.

4. It is recommended that marshals use open cell foam of the appropriate thickness to demonstrate levels of calibration.

5. Excessively hard blows are not permitted in any division. Any combatant who persists in hitting too hard after appropriate warning shall be removed from the field and may be subject to additional sanctions such as having their authorization suspended.

B. Youth combatants are encouraged to honorably judge the effectiveness of blows they receive. The opposing combatant may not judge the effectiveness of his or her own blow. 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. When necessary, the marshal on the field shall intervene and call blows.

1. Special tournaments or combat rules 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]_[SEP]

C. An effective blow will be defined as one that was properly oriented, and struck with sufficient force.

1. The minimum effective thrusting blow to the face shall be a touch. A correctly calibrated face thrust touches the face grill of the helm but does not move the head.

2. Areas deemed illegal to strike: the hands from 1.0 inch (25.4 mm) above the wrist and below, the legs from 1.0 inch (25.4 mm) above the knees and below; shall be considered safe from all attack.

3. An effective blow to the head, neck, or torso shall be judged fatal or completely disabling, rendering the fighter incapable of further combat. ^[1]_[SEP]

4. 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. A second blow to a disabled arm is considered to have struck the torso.

5. An effective blow to the leg above the knee will disable the leg. The fighter must then fight kneeling, sitting, or standing on the foot of the uninjured leg.

6. The minimum effective blow from any THROWN weapon is touch. Javelins, used as one-handed thrusting weapons, require the same force as any other thrusting weapon appropriate for that division.

D. When judging the outcome of a delivered blow, 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. 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. A blow that includes the dropping of the striking weapon, at the moment of impact, shall not be counted.

IX. Armor Requirements

A. These are minimum required armor standards. Each kingdom may require additional, more extensive, and/or more restrictive standards.

B. While it is the goal of the SCA to encourage a medieval appearance for all participants, given the specific nature of Youth Combat visible modern sports equipment may be worn as armor.

C. Head - All Divisions

1. Helmets must completely cover the head. Hockey helmets, lacrosse helmets, and other sports helmets with facemasks are acceptable. They may need to have additions or alterations to fully enclose the head. Period looking helms are permitted. Bearing in mind the size and development of the youth, the marshal-in-charge may disallow the use of a helm deemed too heavy for the youth to wear safely.

a. The helmet must be constructed of a continuous rigid material. Helmets with "floating" segments, attached only with straps, are not permitted. Helmets may have hanging aventails, camails, or bevors to aid in protecting the neck.

b. All helmets must have grills, rigid mesh, or face plates that prevent a weapon from making contact with the face. No helmet shall have a gap exceeding 2.0 inches (5.1 cm) in the area protecting the face.

c. Helmets must have a chinstrap or equivalent means to prevent the helmet from being dislodged or contacting the wearers face during combat.

d. Helmets in combination with neck protection (such as a gorget) must be constructed so that a weapon may not touch any exposed area of the head or neck.

e. Helmets must fit properly and be padded inside so that the rigid portions of it do not contact the head. Padding must provide progressively resistant give. The mass of the helmet will not be presumed to provide any additional protection.

D. Neck

1. Division 1: The throat and larynx shall be protected by a minimum of light leather or the equivalent.

2. Division 2: A minimum gorget of medium leather with padding is required. The larynx, cervical vertebrae, and first thoracic vertebra must be covered.

3. Division 3: A gorget of rigid material or heavy leather, with padding, is required. The larynx, cervical vertebrae, and first thoracic vertebra must be covered.

4. An aventail, camail, or coif may be substituted or used in conjunction with a gorget as long as all required areas are protected.

E. Body

1. Division 1: All combatants must have the torso, shoulders, and armpits covered with a minimum of cloth. Tunics, shirts, or bodices, and pants, shorts, or skirts are acceptable.

2. Division 2: In addition to Division 1 requirements, kidneys must be protected by a minimum of a medium leather kidney belt with padding or the equivalent. Chest protection of medium leather, heavy quilted material, or the equivalent is recommended.

3. Division 3: In addition to Division 1 and Division 2 requirements, the xiphoid process (small extension of bone just below the sternum) must be protected by a minimum of medium leather and padding or the equivalent. Chest protection of medium leather, heavy quilted material, or the equivalent is recommended.

F. Groin

1. Testicles must be protected to a standard equivalent to that provided by an athletic cup, secured by straps, or worn in a supporter or fighting garment designed to hold the protection in place.

2. A padded skirt, closed-cell foam, heavy leather, or athletic cup/athletic pelvic cup is recommended to cover the pubis bone area.

G. Elbow and Knee Joints

1. Division 1: At a minimum, a layer of cloth must cover the elbows and knees. Elbow and knee joint protection is not required. A long sleeve shirt and long pants, or a short sleeve shirt and shorts with elbow and kneepads meet this requirement.
2. Division 2: Elbows and knees must be protected by a minimum of soft pads.
3. Division 3: Elbows and knees must be protected by rigid material over padding. Hockey, motocross and other similar sports elbow and kneepads are acceptable.

H. Hand and Wrist Protection

1. Division 1: A minimum of light gloves is required.
2. Division 2: A minimum of gloves with at least 0.25 inch (6.3 mm) of foam or padding protecting the fingers, back of the hand, and wrist are required. Street Hockey gloves are acceptable, as is a light glove, with extra wrist protection, in a basket hilt.
3. Division 3: A minimum of a sports glove with at least 0.5 inch (12.7 mm) of foam protecting the fingers, back of the hand, and wrist, and extra thumb protection, such as those for ice hockey or lacrosse goalies, or equivalent. Gauntlets of heavy leather or rigid material lined with closed cell foam or heavy padding are acceptable. Lighter gloves with a basket hilt and additional wrist protection, such as a half gauntlet, are acceptable. Street Hockey gloves alone are NOT acceptable.

- I. Feet: All Divisions: Participants must wear properly fitting, closed-toe shoes that provide safe, reliable footing. Open toes, sandals, toe shoes, flip-flops, crocs, etc. are NOT acceptable.

J. Shields - All Divisions

1. Shields may be made of wood, plastic, foam, aluminum, or an equivalent material.



2. Shield edges must be covered by plastic tubing, leather, or foam at least 0.5 inch (12.7 mm) wide to minimize damage to youth weapons or other fighters.
3. No wires, bolts, screws, or other objects may project more than 0.25 inch (6.3 mm) without padding or tape covering them. Rounded shield bosses are not considered to be projections.
4. Shields should be of a shape similar to that used in period.
5. Shields should be of an appropriate weight for the size and strength of the combatant.

X. Weapons Standards

A. General

1. All weapons must be inspected regularly for deteriorated or compromised foam as well as damaged or broken components
2. No metal may be used in any weapons. This includes, but is not limited to: basket hilts, pommel weights, screws or other fasteners, and hose clamps.
3. Flails are expressly prohibited.
4. No materials that might shatter or splinter on impact may be used for the core or cross hilts of any weapon. PVC is expressly prohibited.
5. Approved materials for weapon cores are:
 - a. Rattan, either shaved or skin-on, with a diameter between 0.75 inch (19.0 mm) and 1.0 inch (25.4 mm) for most weapons. Two-handed weapons longer than 5-1/2 feet (1.67 meters), used in Division 3 only, may use rattan up to, but not exceeding 1.25 inches (32 mm) in diameter.
 - i. Both ends of the rattan shall be rounded.
 - b. Common forms of High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) pipe used for irrigation and plumbing. Examples are Sil-o-Flex® and PEX.
 - i. Any nominal size of HDPE may be used provided the actual outside diameter of the pipe is no less than 0.75 inches (19.0 mm), the youth can securely grip the pipe, and the weapon is within weight limits.

ii. HDPE pipe shall have both ends capped, plugged, or otherwise covered to prevent the pipe from cutting through the foam.

c. Other materials may be approved by: the Society Deputy Marshal for Youth Combat or a Kingdom Deputy Earl Marshal, in accordance with the procedures in paragraph "XVIII. Experimentation".

6. The striking surface of any weapon shall not be less than 1.5 inches (38 mm) wide.

7. Thrusting tips and cutting edges shall be marked in a contrasting color.

8. Wrist straps, lanyards, and triggers are recommended but not required.

9. Pommels, cross-guards, and the butt ends of weapons without butt spikes must be covered with at least 0.375 inch (9.5 mm) closed cell foam and covered with a loose single layer of duct tape or cloth.

10. Weapons may not exceed 8 ounces (226.8 grams) in weight per foot of length.

11. If a weapon has a head, it must be constructed solely of lightweight foam and may not be excessively heavy. The head shall be firmly and securely attached to the haft. Striking surfaces shall have compression characteristics similar to those without a defined head.

12. Butt spikes may not be used in Division 1.

B. Single-Handed Weapons:

1. Striking surfaces must be covered with at least 0.375 inches (9.5 mm) of closed cell foam extending 1.0 inches (25.4 mm) or more past the end of the core material. The foam must be covered with a single loose layer of duct tape or a cloth sleeve.

2. Thrusting tips shall be constructed of closed cell foam covered with duct tape or cloth. They must extend 2.0 inches (5.08 cm) past the end of the core and be at least 2.5 inches (6.35 cm) in diameter. Thrusting tips should be constructed so that they do not fold over.

3. Basket hilts are permitted on single-handed weapons.

C. Two-Handed Weapons: Weapons, which may be used with one or two hands, shall have the following requirements: ^[1]_[SEP]

1. Two-handed weapons shall be constructed in the same way as single-handed weapons except as outlined below.
2. Given the excessive flexibility of HDPE in warm temperatures it is recommended that these cores be limited to single-handed weapons except in Division 1.
3. No weapon may have a cutting and/or smashing surface at both ends.
4. The maximum length of weapons in each division is as follows:
 - a. Division 1: No weapon may be longer than 5 feet (1.52 meters).
 - b. Division 2: No weapons may be longer than 5.5 feet (1.67 meters).
 - c. Division 3: No weapons may be longer than 7.5 feet (2.29 meters).
 - i. Weapons exceeding 6.0 feet (1.83 meters) shall not be used for cutting or smashing and shall be used for thrusting only (spears).

E. Thrown Weapons

1. These weapons may be used for striking and may also be thrown in melee scenarios where thrown weapons are allowed. Examples are thrust-and-throw javelins and axes. ^[SEP]
2. Throwing axes may be used in any division and are constructed from only closed cell foam and tape.
 - a. Axes shall not be excessively large or heavy.
3. Javelins are constructed from a single diameter of HDPE pipe and may be used in melee combat in Divisions 2 and 3. They may be thrown or be used as a single-handed thrusting weapon.
 - a. The thrusting tip must conform to standard weapon thrusting tips.
 - b. The butt end may not be used offensively. It must be padded with foam in such a manner that it will not penetrate a 2.0 inch (5.08 cm) opening. Fins or stabilizers of foam or duct tape may be attached near the backend.
 - c. Javelins must be between 4.0 and 5.5 feet (1.22 and 1.67 meters) long.

Participants' Section - Youth Rapier Combat

XI. General Information

A. Divisions

1. Kingdoms may have as many divisions, as they deem appropriate. Divisions may be based on age, type of weapon, or weapon style. Kingdoms shall follow modern law from local jurisdictions as necessary when setting age divisions.

B. The Marshallate recognizes that some youth will be very small or very large for their age, and that some will mature earlier or later than others. Younger combatants may be moved to a higher division or older combatants may be allowed to remain in a lower division, on a case-by-case basis, at the request of the parent and with the approval of the marshals.

C. Acknowledging that there might be a limited number of youth combatants at an event or practice, combatants may fight others in another division with the following provisions:

1. Permission of the combatant's parent or responsible adult.
2. Permission of the Marshal-in-Charge.
3. Older combatants must adhere to the weapon standards and rules of the younger combatants being fought.

D. Society rules allow a minor, aged at least 14, to authorize in Adult Rapier Combat. Minors may continue to fully participate in Youth Rapier while training for adult combat. When minors become authorized in adult rapier combat, they will be deemed to have graduated from Youth Rapier and may not participate in Youth Rapier tournaments, except as bye fighters (i.e. not eligible for prizes). They may still participate in Youth Rapier training activities and are encouraged to become Youth Rapier Marshals if allowed by their Kingdom.

E. Kingdoms may establish policies allowing adults to train and spar with youth combatants. Parents may always spar with their own children. See paragraph XIX "Adult Training of Youth at Official SCA Activities" in the Marshal's Section for more information.

F. Authorizations

1. Each kingdom shall establish a procedure to authorize combatants for participation in Youth Rapier Combat activities.
2. There are three categories of rapier combat, each requiring separate authorization. Each Kingdom may decide which categories of rapier combat they will permit in their rules. These categories are:
 - a. plastic rapier
 - b. light rapier
 - c. heavy rapier
3. Except where noted, rules apply to all three forms of rapier combat.
4. Cut and Thrust Rapier is not an authorized form in Youth Rapier.

XII. Conventions

A. General

1. Youth Rapier Combat shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of the Lists of the SCA, Inc., the Society Rapier Marshal's Handbook, and such further rules as are established by their kingdom.
2. All combatants shall adhere to the Society minimum standards for weapons and protective gear, appropriate for their division, and to any additional standards or conventions of the Kingdom in which the event takes place.

B. Behavior on the Field

1. All fighters shall obey the commands of the marshals overseeing the field, or be removed from the field and subject to further disciplinary action.
2. Each fighter shall maintain control over his or her temper and behavior at all times.
3. Striking an opponent with excessive force, or with deliberate intent to injure, is forbidden.
4. Upon hearing the call of "HOLD" all fighting shall immediately stop. The fighters shall freeze, check for hazards in their immediate vicinity, and then assume a non-threatening position with their weapons pointed away from their opponents.

5. Conduct obstructive of normal rapier combat, such as consistent ignoring of blows, deliberate misuse of the rules (such as calling HOLD whenever pressed), or the like, is forbidden.

C. Use of Weapons and Parrying Devices

1. The use of weapons and parrying devices by Youth Rapier combatants will be in accordance with the Society Rapier Marshal's Handbook, and such further rules, as are established by the Kingdoms.

D. Acknowledgement of Blows

1. The acknowledgement of blows by Youth Rapier combatants will be in accordance with the Society Rapier Marshal's Handbook, and such further rules as are established by the Kingdoms.

XIII. Weapons and Parrying Devices

A. General

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 break a blade or damage other equipment is prohibited.

a. Light rapier does not permit any equipment that has small rigid openings large enough to admit a properly tipped light rapier blade (i.e. small holes in bell guards, small openings in a cage or swept hilt, any design which has acute angles where a blade could easily be wedged and bent). Knuckle bows are deemed safe for use with light rapier blades.

B. Blades

1. In addition to plastic blades, as detailed below, any blade that meets the criteria stated in the Society Rapier Marshal's Handbook, is considered acceptable for use by Youth Rapier combatants.

2. Plastic Rapier: The only swords allowed are commercially manufactured plastic training foils and epees, size 3 or shorter. (e.g. Nasycon, Leon Paul, Absolute Fencing, Zivkovic, etc.) Non-Acoustic and acoustic versions are allowed.

a. Plastic blades shall be made from a single plastic molding and contain no metal parts.

b. All plastic blades must have a rubber tip attached to the point.

c. Orthopedic (or pistol) grips will not be used unless the fighter has approval for medical reasons, supported by documentation from their health care provider.

d. Plastic weapons in this category of combat may not be used against metal weapons or any other SCA blade type or weapon.

C. Parrying Devices:

1. Any parry device that meets the criteria stated in the Society Rapier Marshal's Handbook is acceptable for use by Youth Rapier combatants.

a. Bucklers may only be used in a defensive manner.

b. When used with plastic rapier, the edges of all rigid parry devices must be covered by tubing, leather, or foam to protect striking weapons.

D. Projectile Weapons

1. Kingdoms may permit mock-gunnery gear (such as rubber-band guns) to be used in rapier melee combat, as long as safety standards for those arts are met.

2. The use of any projectile weapon is forbidden within formal rapier Tournament lists (single combat), or 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.

E. Spears / Pikes / Polearms:

1. Youth Rapier combatants may not use these weapons.

XIV. Protective Gear

A. All Youth Rapier combatants, except those using plastic rapier (see below), must meet the minimum standards of the Society Rapier Marshal's Handbook, and such further rules as are established by the Kingdoms. Kingdoms enacting more stringent standards shall weigh the benefits of more rigorous penetration coverage against the risks of heat illness, exhaustion, and stroke due to heavier or more confining gear.

B. Protective Gear for Plastic Rapier. The following shall be the minimum required protective gear for Youth Rapier age groups using the plastic rapier as their weapon.

1. Head and Neck

a. The front and top of the head must be covered by either a pre-12k or 12k fencing mask, or a commercially manufactured safety mask designed to be used with plastic training foils and epees (e.g. the Nasycon "Aramis" mask and the Absolute Fencing Gear plastic weapons mask).

b. The bib shall be in good condition.

2. Torso and other Killing Zones

a. The entire torso (the chest, back, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits) must be covered with abrasion-resistant material as defined in the Society Rapier Marshal's Handbook.

b. Groin protection - Fighters with testicles are strongly recommended to wear an athletic cup or other equivalent rigid groin protection.

3. Arms and Legs

a. Exposed skin in these areas is acceptable. That being said, all fighters are encouraged to strive for a period appearance on the field.

b. Hands: gloves are recommended, but not required.

c. Participants must wear properly fitting shoes that provide safe reliable footing.

Marshals' Section

XV. Organization

- A. Although Youth Armored Combat and Youth Rapier are combined in this document, kingdoms may administer their programs under a single office, or separately. Youth Rapier may be placed under the oversight of the Kingdom Rapier Deputy. Youth Combat may be placed under the oversight of the Kingdom Armored Combat Deputy.
- B. Kingdoms may appoint Deputy Earl Marshals for each Youth Combat activity.
- C. Each kingdom that establishes a Youth Combat activity program must ensure that appropriately trained Youth Combat Marshals are in charge of any youth combat activity.
- D. Youth Combat Marshals will be warranted separately for Youth ^[SEP]Armored Combat and Youth Rapier combat.
- E. Kingdoms may have types of Youth Marshals other than Authorized Marshals (local Knight Marshals, Constables, etc.) as they see fit. These individuals may be warranted or rostered by the Earl Marshal of the Kingdom. However, unless the marshal has undergone a Youth Combat Marshal's Authorization, they shall not give final approval of the suitability of youth weapons or armor, or be involved in the authorization of youth martial participants.

XVI. Authorization of Marshals

- A. A Youth Combat Marshal may be warranted after demonstrating the ability to supervise youth combatants, inspect youth weapons and armor, and judge a youth combatant's authorization.
- B. Kingdoms may use whatever methods they deem appropriate to warrant marshals including, but not limited to marshal classes and marshal-in-training programs.
- C. Youth Combat Marshals do not need to be authorized in any SCA martial activity unless deemed necessary by their kingdom.
- D. At a minimum, a fully warranted Youth Combat Marshal's authorization shall assess the candidate's knowledge of the Society Rules of the list, Conventions of Combat, and any additional kingdom rules or conventions. In addition, the assessment will include a demonstration of:
 - 1. Promoting safe practices and a willingness to enforce the rules of the list.

2. A good working knowledge of the relevant rules for the youth combat activity engaged in.
3. The ability to inspect weapons and armor for the appropriate youth combat activity.
4. The ability to supervise youth combatants in the lists, during training, tournaments, and in melee combat.
5. The ability to authorize youth combatants according to the rules of their kingdom.

E. All warranted Youth Combat Marshals are considered to be officers and must be members of the Society for Creative Anachronism Inc.

XVII. General Requirements and Restrictions for Youth Marshals

A. Two-Deep Policy: All SCA Youth Combat activities including practices, events, demos, and wars must be under the continuous supervision of at least one background checked adult marshal, warranted in the relevant discipline, and at least one additional unrelated adult (two-deep policy).

B. Background Checks: Youth Combat Marshals must have a valid SCA background check to keep their warrant active. Marshals whose membership or background check expire will have their warrants suspended until such time as they are current.

1. Additional background checks may be required by the state, territory, or province, where the event is held. Contact the appropriate kingdom seneschal to insure you are in compliance with local laws.

2. These rules only apply to groups operating within the USA and Canada. If your group is outside of those two countries, please see your affiliate agreement and governing documents to ensure you follow procedures approved for your jurisdiction, if any.

C. For more information about background checks and the two-deep policy, refer to the SCA Seneschal's Handbook and the policies of your kingdom.

D. Marshal-in-Charge (MiC) responsibilities:

1. A Youth Combat Marshal may not be the marshal-in-charge (MiC) of an event unless warranted or rostered by the Earl Marshal, or the relevant Deputy Earl Marshal, as an officer of the kingdom.

2. The MiC at any official event, including practices, is responsible for ensuring that all waiver and background check policies are complied with.
 3. The MiC is responsible for preparing (or having prepared) all required reports and forms. The MIC should ensure that there are enough marshals and constables to control the activity.
 4. Check that the field can be safely fought upon and an appropriate buffer zone is provided between the list or battlefield and spectators as necessary.
- E. Prior to any combat (practice, tournament, or melee) all equipment must be inspected and shall meet all safety and armor requirements pertaining to the appropriate division.
- F. Marshals shall monitor activities and behavior on the field and immediately stop all potentially hazardous or un-chivalrous activities.
- G. Marshals on the field are expected to take an active role in safety, sportsmanship and assistance in calibration. Youth Marshals have a greater responsibility to intervene than their counterparts in adult martial activities. The younger the combatants, the more active the marshaling becomes.
- H. Marshals shall remove from the field any combatant who refuses to obey the commands of the marshals or other officials.

XVIII. Marshaling Concerns In Rapier Combat

- A. Marshaling concerns, specific to rapier combat, as addressed in the Society Rapier Marshal's Handbook will also apply to Youth Rapier.

XIX. Adult Training of Youth at Official SCA Activities

- A. Kingdoms must establish policies to regulate who may, or may not, spar with youth combatants. Parents may actively train their own children.
- B. All training of youth combatants at official SCA activities, whether or not it includes sparring, must be done under the supervision of a Youth Marshal warranted in the relevant discipline.
- C. Sparring is performed as training with the intent of teaching defensive and/or offensive skills to youth combatants. Sparring may also be part of a demonstration, educational, or morale building exercise.
1. Sparring with youth is normally conducted as one-on-one combat (one authorized adult sparring partner vs. one youth).

2. Group training activities and exhibitions, involving multiple youth and one or more adults, may be allowed at the discretion of the Youth Marshal in charge. Precautions must be taken to minimize risk to all participants.
- D. For the purposes of Youth Armored Combat, sparring has a definite meaning.
1. If the adult is holding a weapon and is attempting to throw shots at the youth, this IS sparring.
 2. If both the adult and the youth are striking each other with weapons, regardless of force or speed, this IS sparring.
 3. If the youth is striking an adult who is holding a shield or buckler and the adult is merely blocking shots, this IS NOT sparring.
 4. If the youth is striking the adult but the adult is not striking the youth, this IS NOT sparring, but considered blow calibration or practice targeting.
- E. Other than parents, any authorized adult fighter may provide training, which does not include sparring, as long as a Youth Marshal is present.
- F. Adults in a training situation with youth combatants shall use weapons appropriate to the division of the youth being trained whether or not sparring occurs.
- G. Adult protective gear:
1. Adults in a training situation with Youth Armored combatants are not required to meet the armor standards of Youth Armored Combat. It is recommended that trainers wear armor appropriate to the training.
 2. Adults in a training situation with youth rapier combatants are required to wear the appropriate protective gear for the weapon used.

XX. Injury Procedures

- A. In the event of any suspected injury on the field, the marshal shall halt all fighting in the area and determine the proper course of action. The parent, or responsible adult, shall be informed immediately and escorted to the list if not already there.

B. When an injury occurs on the field, it should always be remembered that the primary concern is getting to and assisting the injured party. Secondary to this objective, but no less important, is the safety of persons entering the field to help and the well-being of anyone already on the field. (For example, fighters standing around in armor in the sun could be subject to heat problems.)

C. In the event of an emergency, the marshals shall cooperate with any authorized persons responding to the emergency and keep the area clear of would-be spectators.

D. All injuries that require hospitalization or similar care, include a period of unconsciousness, or may require future medical care shall be reported in accordance with the requirements of your kingdom within 24 hours of the incident and also reported to the Society Marshal and the Deputies for Rapier and Youth Armored Combat as appropriate. Include all available details in the report.

XXI. Youth Martial Authorizations

A. Youth Combat Marshals warranted or rostered, in the relevant discipline, by their kingdom to authorize youth combatants must witness the authorization and execute the proper procedures to ensure that the authorization is registered with the appropriate kingdom official. ^[1]_[SEP]

1. Kingdoms may define types of authorization, such as weapon forms, and associated requirements, as may be deemed necessary.

2. Authorizations shall be conducted in a manner appropriate for the division.

B. A parent must be present for their child's authorization.

C. All youth combatants must reauthorize when permanently changing divisions. Youths are expected to practice at the next division before authorizing.

E. If a previously authorized combatant fails to pass an authorization for the next division, s/he may continue to participate in her/his previous division.

XXII. Marshal Responsibilities, Chain of Command, and Reporting

A. Kingdoms shall establish reporting requirements for marshals consistent with their kingdoms policies.

B. Kingdom Deputies for Youth Armored Combat and Youth Rapier Combat shall report quarterly to the Society Deputy for Youth Combat regarding the status of their programs in their Kingdom.

C. An incident involving serious injury to a youth fighter shall be reported to the Society Marshal and the Society Deputy for Youth Combat in addition to the reporting requirements of your kingdom. See "Injury Procedures" (section XX above).

D. Incidents of inappropriate behavior by a youth combatant or participating adult, which is serious enough to require disciplinary action beyond the bounds of a single event, shall be reported to the Society Deputy for Rapier and the Society Deputy for Youth Combat in addition to the reporting requirements of your kingdom.

XXIII. Experimentation

A. Before any alternate or unapproved materials or weapons may be used at Society activities, a test proposal must be submitted to and approved by the Society Deputy for Youth Combat and will follow the "Experimental Weapons and Materials Procedures" of the Society Marshal's Handbook.

B. Experiments in Youth Rapier will be coordinated with the Society Deputy for Rapier and will follow the "Procedures For Experimentation In Rapier Combat" as detailed in the appendix of the Rapier Marshal's Handbook.

C. In addition to the requirements and procedures for experimentation in the Marshal's Handbook or the Rapier Marshal's Handbook, all parents, or responsible adults, must consent to the use of the weapon or material before combat begins. If any of the parents, responsible adult, combatants, or marshals object, the material or weapon may not be used in that fight or battle.

XXIV. Disciplinary Actions

A. Kingdoms shall establish procedures for handling grievances and disputes consistent with their Kingdom policies and the Society Seneschals Sanctions Manual.

Glossary

12k fencing mask – A standard fencing mask covered with 12 kilogram mesh

Abrasion-resistant material – Material that will withstand normal combat stresses (such as being snagged by an unbroken blade) without tearing.

Aventail – A piece of metal, heavy leather, or other rigid material attached to the back of a helmet. It protects the back of the neck.

Bevor – A piece of metal, heavy leather, or other rigid material attached to the front of a helmet. It protects the throat.

Camail – A drape of chainmail, leather, or padded cloth that hangs from the helmet. It protects the neck.

Closed-cell foam – A solid foam made from polyethylene, EPV, or vinyl nitrate without interconnected pores resulting in a higher compressive strength than open-cell foams. Common uses are pipe insulation, camping and fitness mats, and sports padding.

Coif – A cap of chainmail or padded cloth worn under a helmet that extends to the base of the neck. It may be long enough to also cover the shoulders.

Death from Behind – A specialized attack sometimes allowed during melee combat where the attacker “kills” an opponent from behind without attempting to strike. Death from Behind is a minimal contact, or no contact, form of attack.

Gauntlet – An armored glove covering the back of the hand, fingers, and thumb and the points and back of the wrist.

Gorget – A protective collar for the neck. It may also protect the larynx and cervical vertebrae.

Heavy Leather – At least 10 ounce leather, about 3/16 inch thick.

Heavy rapier – Steel rapiers meeting the requirements identified in the Society Rapier rules

HDPE – High Density Polyethylene (see Irrigation pipe and PEX)

Irrigation Pipe – Shatter-resistant plastic pipe made of High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) sized to be a substitute for iron pipe in exterior plumbing applications. Often used for in-ground sprinkler systems. Found in many hardware stores. It is usually black in color. May be orange when used for electrical conduits. See also: Sil-o-flex.

Light Gloves – Gloves made of cloth, canvas, or thin leather.

Light Leather – This is 4 to 6 ounce leather about 3/32 inch thick.

Light rapier blades – Foil blade, epee blade, or similar variant (such as double-wide epee or musketeer blades) from an established commercial manufacturer.

List Field, Tourney Field, or Erik – The defined area for fighting, or the fighting field, usually with a roped-off boundary.

Mass weapons – maces, axes, war hammers, or other weapons designed primarily to crush or punch holes (on account of the weight of the real weapons), rather than primarily to cut (on account of sharp edges on the real weapon).

Medium Leather – This is 7 to 9 ounce leather about 1/8 inch thick.

Melee – Combat fought between teams of two or more persons per side.

Open-cell foam – Foam made with interconnected pores. Common uses are for seat cushions, mattress pads, and packaging.

PEX – Shatterproof plastic pipe made of High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) sized to be a substitute for copper pipe and CPVC pipe in interior plumbing applications. Found in many hardware stores. Available in white, red, or blue colored. Colored orange when intended for radiant floor use.

Plastic rapiers – Commercially manufactured plastic training foils and epees, size 3 or shorter. (e.g. Nasycon, Leon Paul, Absolute Fencing, Zivkovic, etc.). Plastic rapiers shall be made from a single plastic molding and contain no metal parts and must have a rubber tip attached to the point.

Polearms – hafted weapons, generally long, designed to be wielded with two hands (e.g., glaives, halberds, etc.).

Progressively resistant give – As pressure is applied it will compress gradually without bottoming-out.

Puncture-resistant material – Any fabric or combination of fabrics that will predictably withstand puncture.

PVC - Plastic pipe usually white or gray in color. May shatter upon impact. It is NOT legal for Youth Armored Combat.

Rigid Material - Metal, shatter-resistant plastic, heavy leather, or leather that has been hardened.

Rubber Band Gun (RBG) - A type of missile weapon that uses surgical tubing bands as ammunition.

Sil-o-Flex® - Brand name for plastic pipe made of High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) sized to be a substitute for iron pipe in exterior plumbing applications such as in-ground sprinklers. See: Irrigation pipe.

Xyphoid Process - This is the area at the base of the sternum.