

BALLACHLAGAN

RAPIER MARTIAL CLINIC

Adapted from the
Æthelmearc Policies of the Marshal of Fence,
2008

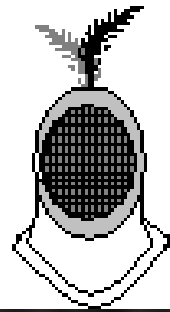
By Lord Ælric Ravenshaw
January 3, 2009

General Requirements

- Minimum Age
 - 18
 - Youth must provide proof of being an emancipated minor.
- All fighters and marshals are responsible for understanding:
 - Rules of rapier combat of both Aethelmearc and Society
 - Rules of the list
- Equipment (weapons and armor) must be inspected before each fencing activity

ARMOR REQUIREMENTS

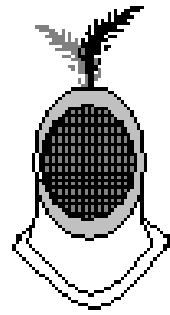
Armor Requirements



- NO SKIN shall show anywhere on the fencer's body regardless of their position.
 - Each article of protection should have 3 inches of overlap to allow adequate protection.

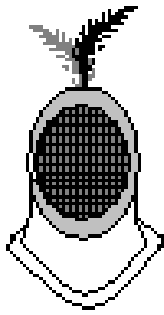


Armor Requirements



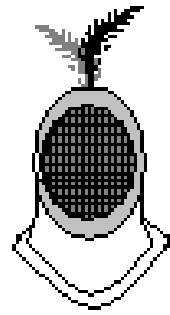
- **Abrasion-resistant material:** material that will withstand normal combat stresses (such as being snagged by an unbroken blade) without tearing.
- Examples:
 - Broadcloth
 - Poplin (35% cotton, 65% polyester)
 - Sweat pants
 - Opaque cotton
 - Poly cotton

Armor Requirements



- **Puncture-resistant material:**
 - 4 ounce (2mm) leather
 - 4 layers of heavy poplin cloth
 - Ballistic nylon rated to at least 550 Newtons
 - Commercial fencing material rated to at least 550 newtons

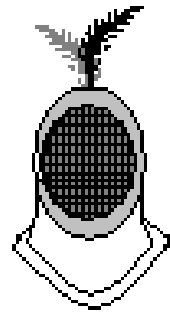
Armor Requirements



- **Rigid material:** puncture-resistant which does not significantly flex, spread apart, nor deform under pressure of 12 Kg applied by a standard mask tester **repeatedly** to a single point.
- Examples:
 - 22 gauge stainless steel (0.8 mm)
 - 20 gauge mild steel (1.0 mm)
 - 16 gauge aluminum, brass, or copper (1.6mm)
 - 1 layer of hardened 8 oz leather (4 mm)

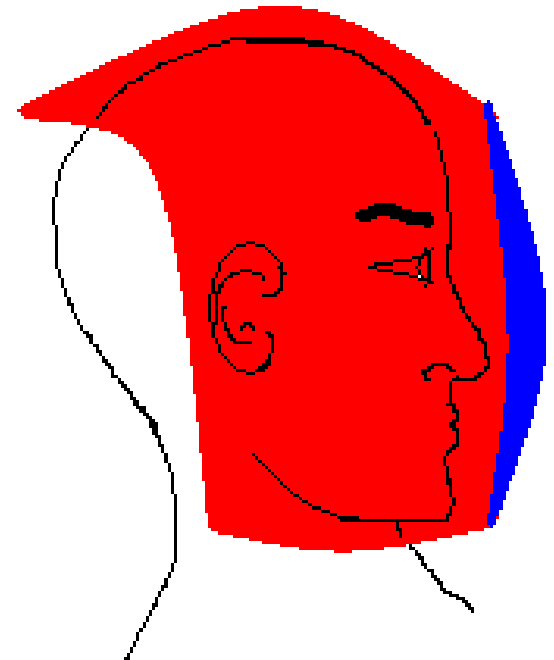
Armor Requirements

Fencing Mask



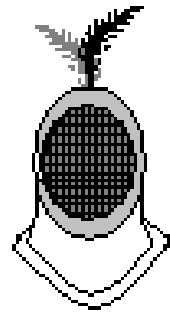
- Front and top of the head must be covered by a rigid material to below the jaw-line and behind the ears.
- Face must be covered with
 - 12kg mesh
 - Perforated metal
 - As per rigid material
 - Holes shall be no larger than 1/8 inch with 3/16 inch offset

Mask must be secure



Armor Requirements

Head and Throat protection

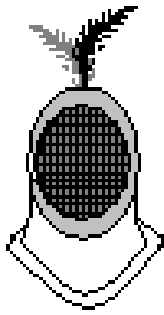
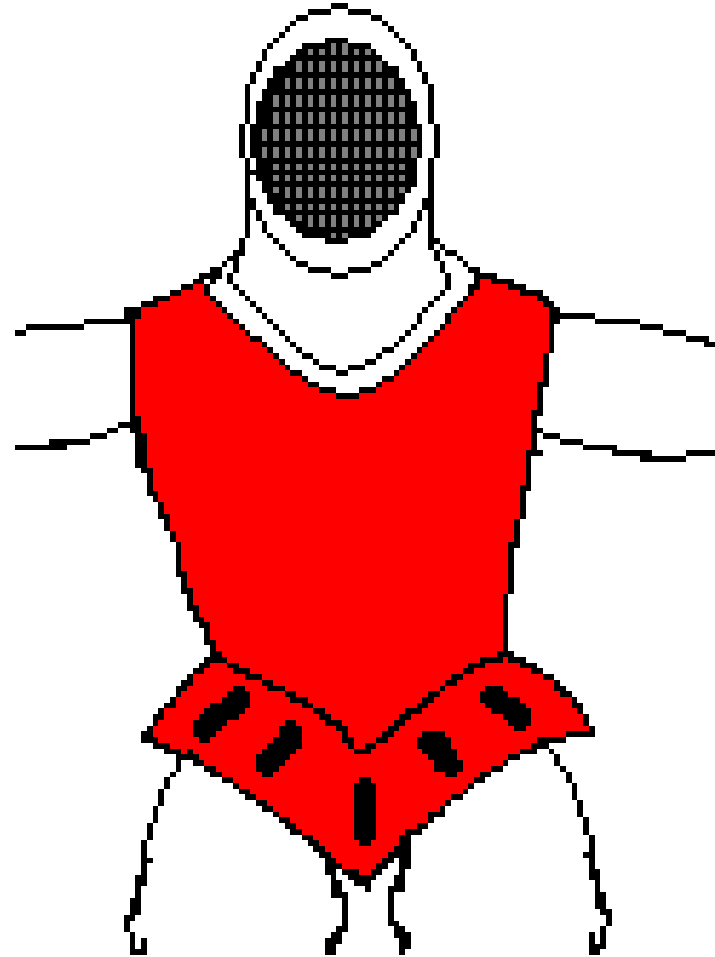


- Must be covered by at least puncture resistant material.
- If Heavy Rapiers are used gorgets constructed of rigid material must be worn.
 - These must be backed with puncture resistant material,
 - ¼ inch closed cell foam,
 - Or its equivalent.
 - The cervical vertebrae shall also be protected by rigid material provided by some combination of gorget, helm, and/or hood insert.

Armor Requirements

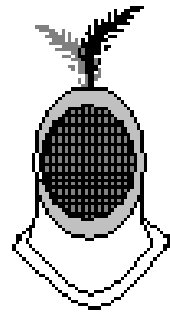
Torso Protection

- Puncture resistant armor shall cover the body from the top of the shoulder to the base of the groin and the underarm area.

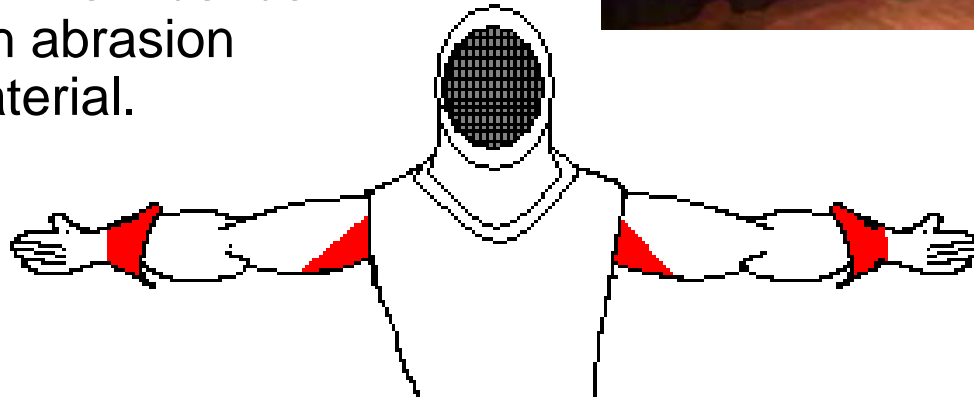


Armor Requirements

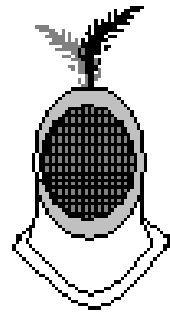
Arm Protection



- Minimum underarm protection is provided by a triangle extending from the armhole seam and covering the lower half of the sleeve extending down the under side of the arm $\frac{1}{3}$ the distance to the elbow.
- The edge of any closure must overlap at least 3 inches.
- Remaining arms must be covered with abrasion resistant material.



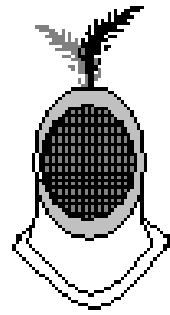
Armor Requirements Gloves



- Must be made of abrasion resistant material must overlap the sleeves by at least 3 inches
- Electric gloves must have their wire openings secured shut.

Armor Requirements

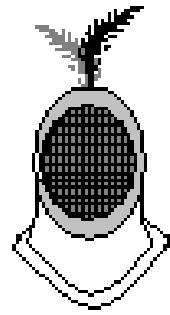
Groin Protection



- Male fencers must wear a cup (rigid material) underneath the lower extremity armor.
- Female fencers must ensure their groin area is covered by puncture resistant material

Armor Requirements

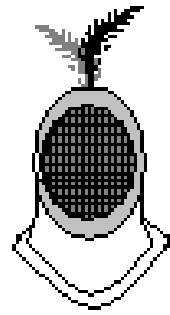
Breast Armor



- As per the torso armor, breasts must be covered with puncture resistant material.
- Female fencers are strongly encouraged to employ additional breast protection, but it is up to their individual discretion.

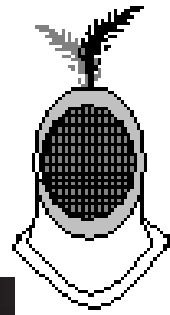
Armor Requirements

Lower Extremity Armor

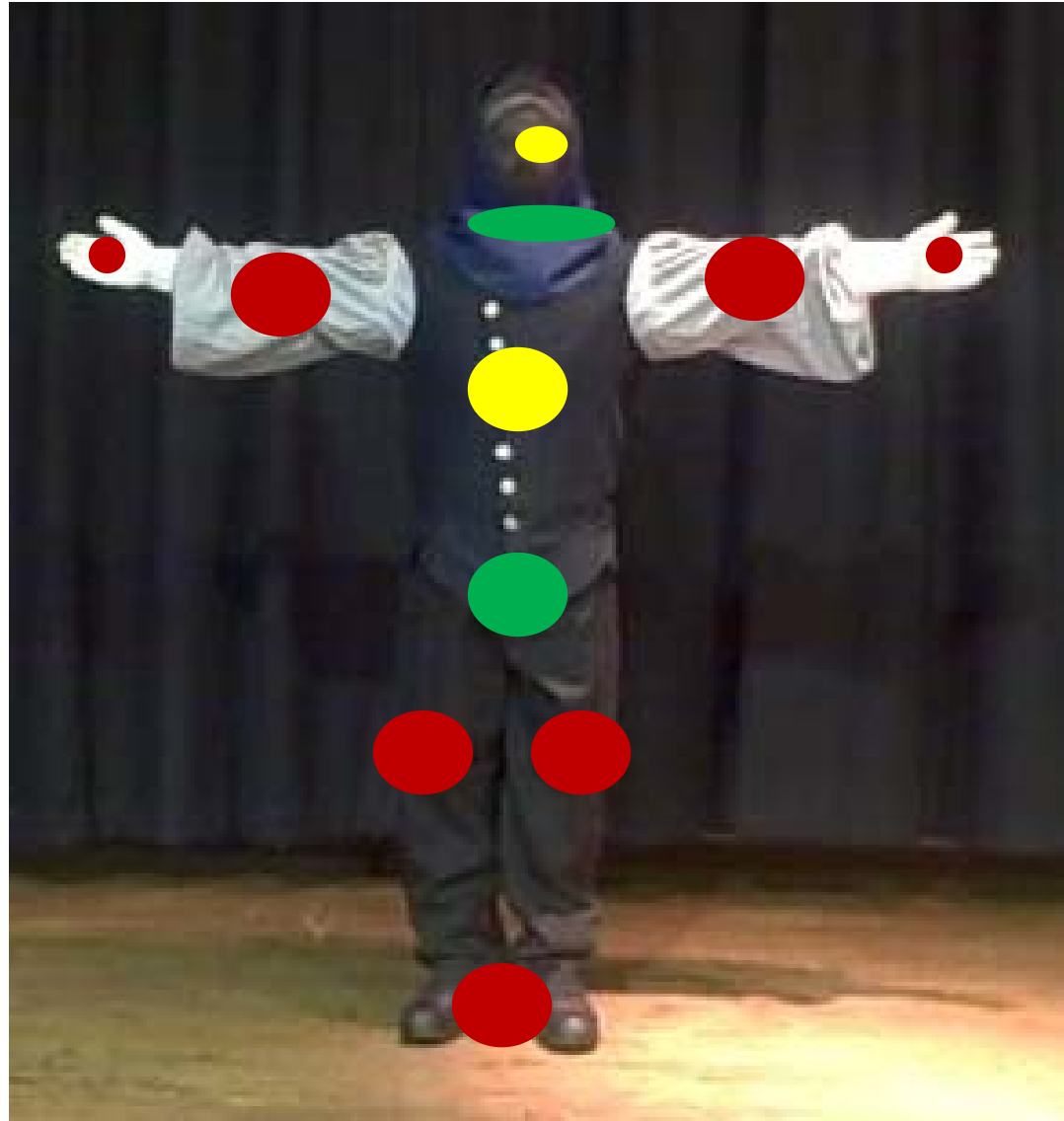


- All portions of the lower extremities must be covered with at least abrasion resistant material.
- Footwear must completely enclose the foot with abrasion resistant material.

Armor Requirements Summary of Materials

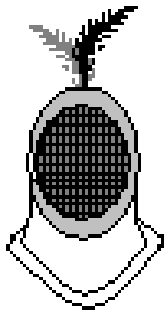


- Abrasive Resistant
- Puncture Resistant
- Rigid Material



Armor Requirements

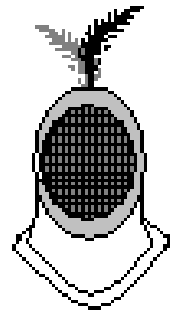
Armor Testing



- Armor shall be tested every 2 years.
- A marshal may retest armor at any time if they suspect something is amiss.

Armor Requirements

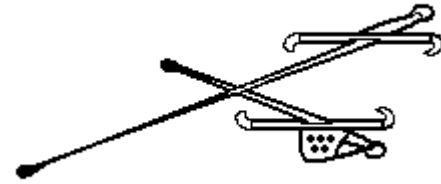
Acceptable Testing Methods



- Garment manufactures' commercial certification that fabric is rated to 550 Newtons.
- Use of a 550 Newton punch test device approved by the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat.
- Use of a Drop Test device
- Use of a flat-broken foil blade thrust against the material. If material is punctured by 2 or more layers it fails.
- Masks – if a commercial mask tester is not available, a marshal may press on the mask with their thumbs. If there is any flex in the mask, then it is not strong enough.

WEAPON SPECIFICATIONS

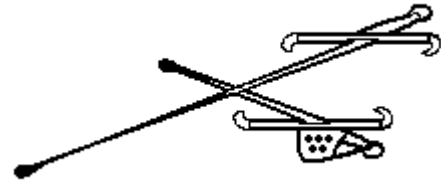
Weapon Specifications



- Two classifications
 - Light Rapiers
 - Foil and Epee only
 - May NOT use saber blades
 - Heavy Rapiers
- Any blade of a given class may only be used against blades of the same class.
- Daggers may be used against either class.

Weapon Specifications

Light Rapier - tips



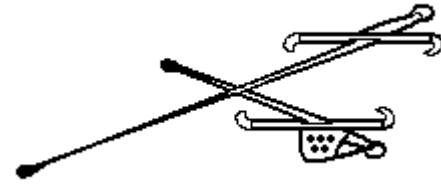
Points must be capped with standard rubber fencing tips.

Tips must be taped with a contrasting color.

Tape may not cover the tip.

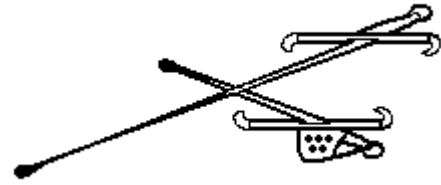
Weapon Specifications

Light Rapier Bells



- May use epee, foil, or saber bells
- Bells with openings large enough to admit a capped light rapier blade must be covered by a rigid material.
- Quillons
 - May be no longer than 12 inches from tip to tip.
 - Ends must be blunted and all edges rounded.
 - May not be able to catch nor trap a light rapier blade.

Weapon Specifications

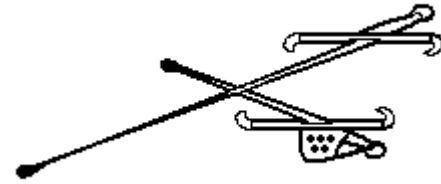


Pistol Grips

- Pistol grips may only be used for medical reasons if documentation is provided by a health care provider.

Weapon Specifications

Heavy Rapier - tips



The point of a Heavy Blade must be filed or cut down flat.

The tip must be covered with a metal casing or washer **and** covered with a rubber archer bird blunt.

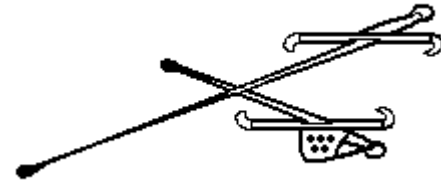
Equivalent tips may be approved only by the Kingdom Marshal of Fence on a case by case basis.

The tip must be tapped onto the sword using tape that contrasts with the tip and the sword.

The tip must not be covered with the tape.

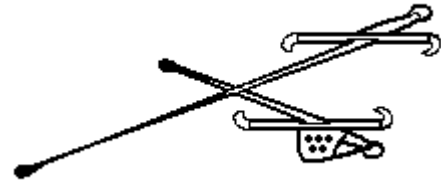
Weapon Specifications

Heavy Rapier - guards



- Open guards and hilts may be used with heavy rapiers so long as they present no sharp edges nor protrusions that would present a hazard to the fencer or an opponent.

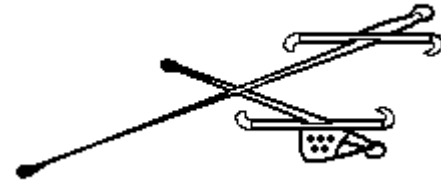
Weapon Specifications



- All rapier weapons shall be fought as light 2-edged weapons with a point.
 - Rapier blades may have a single gradual curve.
 - Sharp bends or more than a single curve (S-curve) are cause for prohibiting the use of the blade.
- Marshals shall disqualify weapons that are in danger of breaking.
- All blades must be able to pass a flexibility test.

Weapon Specifications

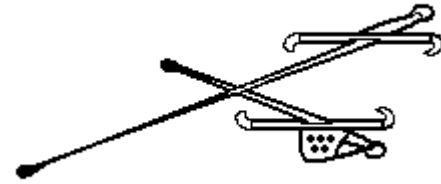
Flexibility Test



- Hold the weapon parallel to the ground, supporting the handle against a table.
- Hang a 3 oz (85 gram) weight just behind the tip.
- A dagger blade that flexes visibly at least $\frac{1}{4}$ inch is sufficient.
- A rapier blade must flex at least $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.

Weapon Specifications

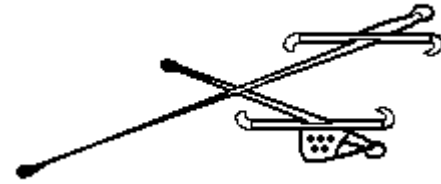
Daggers



- The maximum length from pommel to tip is 25 inches.
- Bells, grips, and quillons shall follow the same specifications of the class of blade with which they are being used.
- Standard thrusting daggers shall be commercial dagger blades as approved by the SRM.
- Daggers shall be capped the same as rapiers.
- Daggers score the same as a rapier.

Weapon Specifications

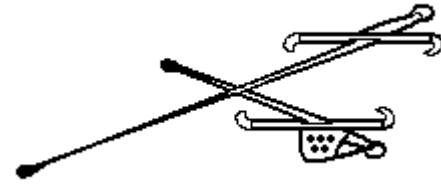
Parrying Objects



- Striking any part of the body with any parrying object is strictly illegal.
- Sharp points, edges, or corners are not allowed anywhere on any equipment.
- Devices that predictably or repeatedly cause entangling are not allowed.

Weapon Specifications

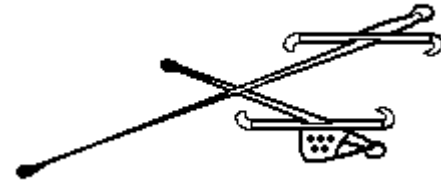
Bucklers



- Maximum area is 315 square inches (20 inch diameter circle).
- Must be constructed of light weight material (1/4 inch plywood).
- Edges must be covered to prevent splintering.

Weapon Specifications

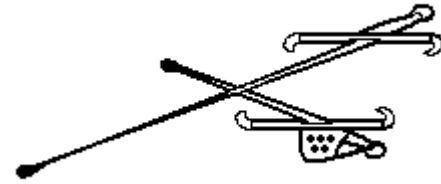
Cloaks



- Size, shape, and weight are the discretion of the user.
- Soft hems are permitted, where as rigid weights are not.
- Cloaks are permitted to take multiple hits without being considered to have taken ruinous damage to the fabric; however, if the marshal sees things getting out of hand, he or she may step in and advise the fencer that the cloak is no longer useful.
- A thrust or cut will do damage to the fencer.

Weapon Specifications

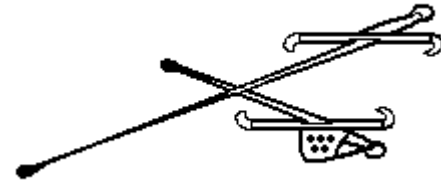
Other Parrying Devices



- Virtually any object may be used as a parry item, provided that the object poses no threat to the safety of the combatants and will not trap and/or break a blade.
- Marshal discretion regarding the safety of the parry item is the deciding factor as to whether or not it will be permitted into the list.

Weapon Specifications

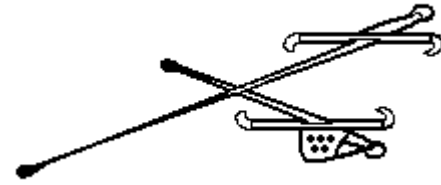
Rubber Band Guns (RBG)



- May be used in rapier melee only.
- Use in melee is at the discretion of the Martial in Charge and may be subject to additional restrictions such as:
 - Limited number of shots,
 - Limited number of RBGs per side,
 - No gleaning rounds,
 - Limited number of shots per target.

Weapon Specifications

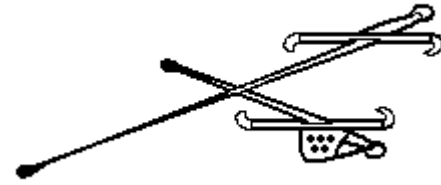
Rubber Band Guns (RBG)



- May NOT be used in a traditional list or in any melee where bystanders can view the battle if they are in range of the RBG.
- Should mimic the appearance of period firearms
- Shall be constructed of wood and/or light metals
- Must confirm to the rules of construction for all parrying devices.
- Gun Barrels large enough to permit the end of a rapier must be capped.
- All RBGs and Ammunition must be inspected before use.

Weapon Specifications

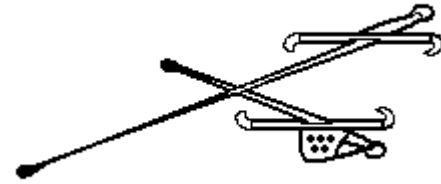
Rubber Band Guns (RBG)



- Ammunition must be made entirely of flexible material except for the plastic connector used to hold the round together, which must be covered either by the round itself or by shrink tube in a manner that prevents the plastic from striking the target of the round.

Weapon Specifications

Rubber Band Guns (RBG)



- All hits to a target count as a thrust to that body part.
- If a round strikes a weapon or parrying device, that weapon and hand wielding it are considered lost.
- Accidental discharges of the gun count as per normal firing of the weapon.
- Ammunition penetrates bucklers and soft non-rigid devices in a straight line.
- **ACTIVE MARSHALLING SHALL BE USED TO AID IN THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HITS.**
- Ill-tempered behavior by fencers shall not be tolerated.
- RBGs may only be used from outside of rapier engagement range.
- While marshalling melees with RBGs, marshals must use masks or protective eye wear as long as they are still able to safely observe the battle.

Weapon Forms

Rapier

Rapier and parrying object

Rapier and dagger

Case of rapier (Florentine)

COMBAT CONVENTIONS

Combat Conventions

Fencing Rules



- All fencers will behave in an honorable and chivalrous manner.
- Blows will be counted as though they were struck with a real blade.
- Consistent excessive calibration shall be grounds for revocation or denial of authorization.
- All fencers are considered to be wearing cotton, linen, or wool street clothing of the period.
- Any clothing which prevents the wearer from accurately calling glows is prohibited.
- It is the responsibility of the fencer to determine what weapons their opponent is using and to resolve any questions about said weapons **before** combat.

Combat Conventions

Fencing Rules



- Any charging, running, hopping, or other attack where the fencer cannot immediately cease movement when a hold is called is strictly prohibited.
- Draw cuts, push cuts, tip cuts are all considered to be valid cut.
- For a cut to be counted, there must be at least 6 inches of movement with the blade or travel the tip against the target.
- Cuts across the width of a limb or throat need not be 6 inches.
- Modern saber attacks are not permitted.
- With Heavy Rapier, cuts made with the flat of the blade will not be counted.

Combat Conventions

Fencing Rules



- Wrestling, grappling, and kicking is prohibited.
- Any part of the body is a legal target.
- Combat between rapier and heavy (rattan) is prohibited.
- A fencer is considered armed as long as one offensive weapon is held.
- Upon hearing “HOLD” all fighting immediately stops and weapons are held in a non-threatening position. Fencers should check their immediate area for hazards. Remain in the same area unless told to move by marshals.
- A HOLD will not be called for a dropped weapon unless it becomes a safety issue.
- A fencer who disarms his or her opponent will have the option of allowing the opponent to retrieve his weapon or forcing the opponent to yield. A person who has been disarmed by their opponent must abide by his or her opponent’s decision.

Combat Conventions

Fencing Rules



- Parries with the empty hand while using single rapier are permitted and are not considered as wounding so long as the blade is not drawn, pushed, nor thrust against the hand.
- Use of the open hand to push aside an opponent's weapon hand is allowed so long as the opponent is not grasped and contact only occurs on the hand just below the bell.

Combat Conventions

Fencing Rules



- Entrapping, catching, or placing an opponent's weapon or parrying device in a position in which it is irretrievable through the use of the hand or any object is prohibited.
- In heavy rapier, light blade grasping is permitted with the consent of both combatants for a maximum of 5 seconds. Torsion or movement of the blade within the grasp of the hand will result in loss of the hand.
- All fencing is to be done in the round.
- No object may be thrown or tossed during the course of a bout.
- At the end of every tournament bout it is the list marshal's duty to ask each fencer if he/she is satisfied with the conduct of the bout.

Combat Conventions

Qualifications for Authorization



- The fencer will have clear understanding of the rules and armor requirements of SCA fencing and particularly of the SCA period fencing rules for *Æthelmearc*.
- The fencer poses no unnecessary risk of injury to either his opponent or his self.
- The fencer can define and demonstrate some defensive capability (a minimum of 2 or 3 parries) including use of the off hand for defense.
- The fencer can define and demonstrate some offensive capability other than just a direct attack.

Combat Conventions

Qualifications for Authorization



- All fencers must authorize in single light rapier as their first weapons form. After that, authorizations for other weapons forms may be attempted in any order.
 - A fencer's authorization in Heavy Rapier must consist of bouting single Heavy Rapier, as well as bouting using any other weapons forms in which the fencer is already authorized using light rapier.
 - Once a fencer has authorized in Heavy Rapier, all subsequent authorizations that he/she attempts must be conducted with both heavy and light rapiers.
- Two warranted Æthelmearc fencing marshals must be present to qualify a fencer, one of which must be from a group other than the fencer's home group.

Combat Conventions

Qualifications for Authorization



- Separate qualifications are necessary for;
 - Single light rapier
 - Single heavy rapier
 - Rapier and parrying object
 - Rapier and dagger
 - Case of rapier

Combat Conventions

Qualifications for Authorization



- In order to authorize in the use of Heavy rapier blades, a fencer must demonstrate:
- A thorough understanding of the rules of fence of the SCA and of the Kingdom of Æthelmearc including all specific rules to Heavy Rapier use.
- The ability to use Heavy Rapier blades safely and competently so as not to present a danger to one's self or one's opponent.
- The ability to define and demonstrate adequate offensive and defensive capability.
- The ability to demonstrate acceptable calibration both in the giving and receiving of blows.

Combat Conventions

Scoring



- Before each round in a tournament, calibration between unfamiliar opponents will be mandatory.
- A kill is considered to be a thrust or cut to the torso, head, neck, groin (to one hand's width down the inside of the leg), the armpit (to one hand's width down the inside of the arm).
- An arm, hand, leg, or foot is rendered unusable after a thrust or cut to it. If an arm or hand is lost, it cannot be used. If a leg or foot is lost, the combatant must kneel or sit. A hip or buttock is part of the leg on the same side.
 - The combatant may not rise up nor use the muscles of the injured leg, but may pull himself along using only arms or hands.

Combat Conventions

Scoring



- Lost limbs may not be used in a defensive manner in any way, shape, or form. Blows that strike a lost limb that would have contacted the body are to be counted as having struck the body.
- Any blow may be counted by the recipient as more damaging than technically required if it in his or her opinion would have caused a disabling wound.
 - No blow may be counted less effective than the above rules require.

MARSHALLING



Marshaling



- The Kingdom Marshallate shall institute such standards and procedures for authorizing participation in fencing at SCA events and for the warranting of fencing marshals as shall be deemed necessary.
- Marshals shall be thoroughly versed in the SCA period fencing rules of the Society and of Æthelmearc and shall practice and enforce such rules during any SCA fencing activity.
- Marshals shall read the Æstel to keep abreast of any changes in law or policy and must have a current copy of the Kingdom Policies of Fence.

Marshaling



- Marshals shall be specifically trained and warranted as per the rules of fence of the Kingdom of Æthelmearc and shall be qualified in a minimum of three weapon forms.
- The Kingdom Marshal retains the sole authority for inspecting and allowing the use of materials other than those specified in these rules.
- Marshals shall thoroughly inspect and test weapons and equipment for compliance with SCA and Kingdom standards prior to allowing their use. Weapons and armor inspection must occur at every practice and every tournament.
- Before tournaments, marshals must mark in a distinctive fashion weapons that either pass or fail inspection. Note that marshals may not destroy nor confiscate a weapon that fails inspection.

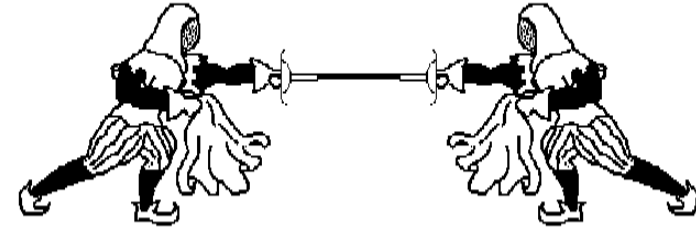
Marshaling



- All bouts must have at least 1 warranted fencing marshal present and attentive.
- The marshal watching the bout has absolute say on a fencer's conduct on the field and may summarily eject any fencer who is guilty of misconduct or unsafe behavior.
- As a representative of the SCA, all fencing marshals are required to maintain current paid membership in the SCA.
- Marshal warrants shall be renewed annually on the anniversary date of membership renewal.

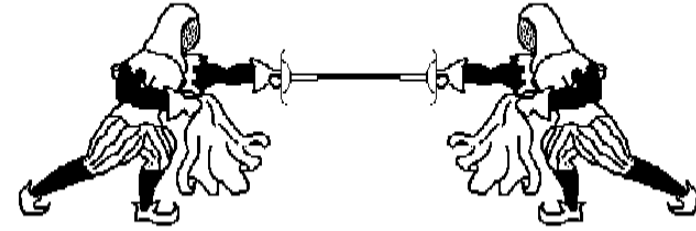
MELEE RULES

Melee Rules



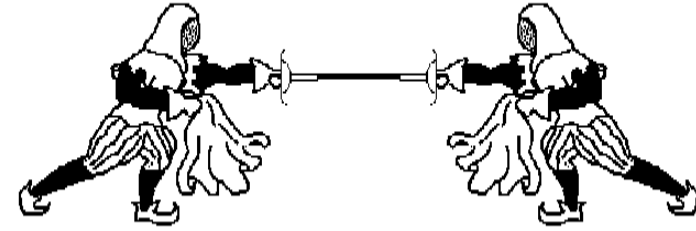
- Melee is defined as any bout involving 3 or more fencers.
- Traditional combat conventions still apply during melee.
- In melee, fighters are engaged with *all* opponents *immediately* upon the “Lay on.”
- All participants in melee must be authorized in Heavy Rapier.
 - At the discretion of the Marshal in Charge, fencers who are not authorized in Heavy Rapier may be allowed to participate using a dagger only if the fencer is authorized in dagger and light rapier.

Melee Rules



- Combatants may strike any opponent with any legal blow if they are within 180 degree arc of the opponent's face **AND** the opponent is aware of their presence.
 - If not within the 180 degree arc, the fencer must gain recognition from their opponent before initiating the attack.
 - Recognition is defined as any communication either visual, verbal, or responsive action that denotes the awareness of the presence.
- A fighter may never strike an opponent from behind.
 - A fighter who approaches an opponent from behind shall not deliver a blow until he is within that frontal arc.
 - A fighter who deliberately ignores an attacker behind them or repeatedly maneuvers to keep their backs to the attacker may receive a warning from the marshal.

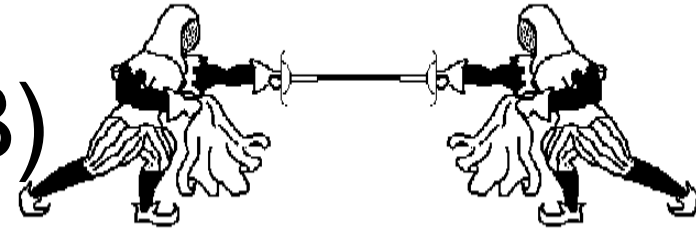
Melee Rules



- A fencer may bind or foul an opponent's blade without having recognition.
- All defeated fencers must remove themselves from the melee field.
 - Defeated fencers shall hold their weapons by their blades or above their heads in a non threatening manner.

Melee Rules

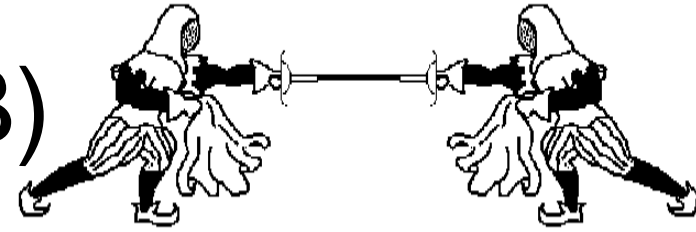
Death From Behind (DFB)



- DFB is permitted if it has been announced before hand.
- If a melee scenario allows DFB, a fighter does so by laying the rapier blade over the opponent's shoulder to at least 1/3 of the blade while calling out "You are dead, my lord" (or other short courteous phrase) in a loud clear voice.
- Reaching around the neck is prohibited.

Melee Rules

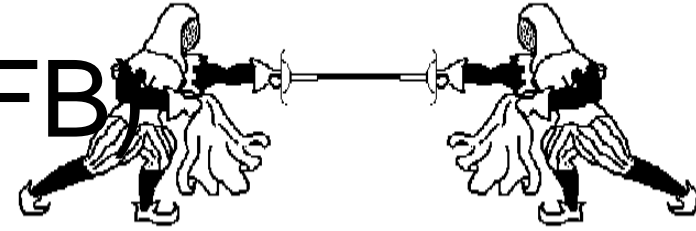
Death From Behind (DFB)



- The attacker must come to a complete stop behind the opponent before attempting the DFB and may not move until they conclude their verbal acknowledgement.
- The opponent will be deemed “Killed” from the instant the blade touches their shoulder.
 - The victim shall not attempt to spin, duck, or dodge.
- In special scenario melees, additional restrictions may be imposed by the marshals as needed.

Melee Rules

Death From Behind (DFB)



DEATH FROM BEHIND
DEMONSTRATION

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

Experimental Procedures



- Before any new weapon or technique can be used in Society Rapier Combat, a test plan must be submitted to **and** approved by the Kingdom Marshal of Fence.
- This plan must describe:
 - The new weapon or techniques
 - Specifics in materials used and construction of the weapon (as appropriate)
 - And the proposed uses of the new weapon or techniques.
- IN cases of new blade types, a sample of the new blade-type must be submitted to the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat for direct evaluation

Experimental Procedures



- It is the prerogative of the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, subject to approval of the Kingdom Earl Marshal and the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat, to allow testing of new weapons or techniques within a kingdom.
- Testing will only occur for a set period of time and may be subject to certain additional restrictions.

Experimental Procedures



- Testing means the weapon or technique may be used first at practice, tourneys, or in small melees under the supervision of the Kingdom Marshal of Fence or a specifically designated representative and only after all combatants and marshals have been informed that the weapon or technique is not SCA approved.
- All participating combatants and marshals must consent to the use of the weapon or technique before combat begins. If the Marshal-in-Charge objects to the test, it may not be performed under his/her jurisdiction.

Experimental Procedures



- At regular intervals the persons designated as “testers” must report to the Kingdom Marshal of Fence with a test summary.
- The summary should include
 - when and where testing occurred,
 - any equipment failure associated with the tests,
 - a list of any injuries that resulted from the use of the weapon or technique,
 - and any concerns from the fighters and marshals arising from the testing.

