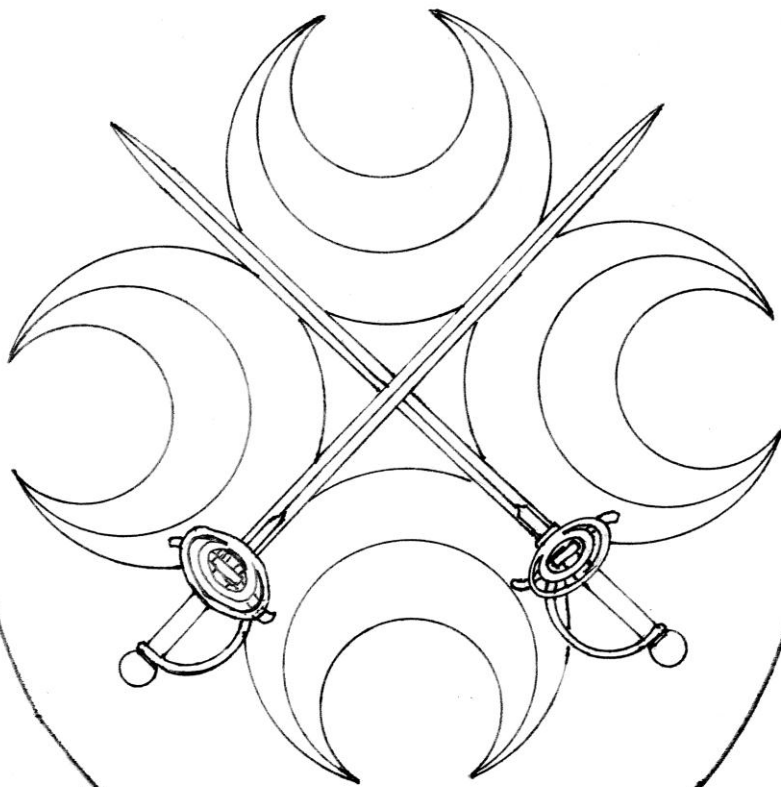


Kingdom of Faid



Rapier Combat Handbook

Presented to Their Royal Majesties of Caid,
Patrick O'Malley of Ulidia
And Kara the Twin of Kelfon
And to the Earl Marshal of Caid, Duchess Mora de
Buchanan
On the 19th day of October, AS XLVII

This Combat Handbook of the Kingdom of Caid for Rapier Combat is a compilation of the Conventions, Standards and Rules of the Lists used by Caid and is based on the Handbook for Rapier Marshals of the Society for Creative Anachronism. The principle changes from the last rules issued in AS XLII (2002) are to make the rules closer to the standards used in the Society, as well as to combine all sources of data into a single reference. Particular items of change include standard blade grasping, death from behind, removal of the written authorization test and armor coverage for the underarms.

These rules are the product of a great deal of work from many members of the Kingdom. Any remaining errors are mine to claim. I would particularly like to thank those members who helped with the writing of these rules: Don Oliver Dogberry, Don Avenel Kellough, THLady Cassandre Loustaunau, Lady Rhua Cat Ifrinn and Lady Enid Gwyr. I would also like to thank the Society Rapier Marshal, Baroness Eyrny and Caid's Earl Marshal Duchess Mora de Buchanan for the suggestions. Finally, this Handbook could not have been started, much less completed, without the driving force of Master Don Laertes Blackavar McBride. I thank you, my friends, for doing all the hard work!

In Service to the Society and Kingdom,

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RULES OF THE LISTS

A. The basic rules for SCA combat are contained in the Rules of the Lists. These rules were not originally designed to cover non-tourney field activities such as wars, combat archery, and period fencing, but have been extended to cover these activities. The observance of honor and chivalry and the safety of the combatants are considered overriding elements. The following is intended to bring together the appropriate rules for conducting both tourney field combat and other SCA combat activities.

B. The Rules of the Lists are reprinted from section IX.B. of the Corpora of the SCA.

1. Each fighter, recognizing the possibilities of physical injury to themselves in such combat, shall assume unto themselves all risk and liability for harm suffered by means of such combat. No fighter shall engage in combat unless and until they have inspected the field of combat and satisfied themselves that it is suitable for combat. Other participants shall likewise recognize the risks involved in their presence on or near the field of combat and shall assume unto themselves the liabilities thereof.
2. No person shall participate in Official Combat-Related Activities (including armored combat, period fencing, and combat archery) outside of formal training sessions unless they have been properly authorized under Society and Kingdom procedures.
3. All combatants must be presented to, and be acceptable to, the Sovereign or his or her representative. [In Caid, the Consort and the Marshallate are the representatives.](#)
4. All combatants shall adhere to the appropriate armor and weapons standards of the Society, and to any additional standards of the Kingdom in which the event takes place. The Sovereign may waive the additional Kingdom standards.
5. The Sovereign or the Marshallate may bar any weapon or armor from use upon the field of combat. Should a warranted Marshal bar any weapon or armor, an appeal may be made to the Sovereign to allow the weapon or armor.
6. Combatants shall behave in a knightly and chivalrous manner and shall fight according to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.
7. No one may be required to participate in Combat-Related Activities. Any combatant may, without dishonor or penalty, reject any challenge without specifying a reason. A fight in a tournament lists is not to be considered a challenge and therefore may not be declined without forfeiting the bout.
8. Fighting with real weapons, whether fast or slow, is strictly forbidden at any Society event. This rule does not consider approved weaponry which meets the Society and Kingdom standards for traditional Society combat and/or Society period rapier combat, used in the context of mutual sport, to be real weaponry.
9. No projectile weapons shall be allowed within the Lists of a tournament, nor shall any weapons be thrown. The use of approved projectile weapons for melee, war, or combat archery shall conform to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.

C. Applications of the Rules of the Lists

Application of Rule 1: "Other participants" include Marshals and also support personnel whose activities bring them close to fighting in a situation where boundaries are not clearly defined. Heralds, List Pages, and similar officers who leave the field entirely before combat begins are exempt from this requirement, as are water-bearers and churgeons who remain in fixed support points outside the tournament field or battle area. Water-bearers and churgeons who take part in mobile support groups within the overall boundaries of a battle area must receive a basic orientation in field safety.

Application of Rule 2: The Crown and/or Marshallate of each Kingdom shall establish standards and procedures for the authorization of fighters to participate in combat. These procedures shall adhere to the Combat Authorization Procedures in this

handbook. At Kingdom option, these procedures may involve either a general authorization to participate in armored combat or a set of separate authorization procedures for the use of (or for combat AGAINST) specific weapons or classes of weapons.

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

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

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

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

Application of Rule 6: Engaging in any Society combat activity with the deliberate intent to inflict bodily harm to an opponent is strictly forbidden. [This is the basic sportsmanship rule for the SCA. It is against the rules for any fighter to be unchivalrous; unsafe; deliberately harmful to the disadvantaged, disabled, or helpless; or behave in such a way as to bring question to his/her honor.](#)

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

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

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

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

Posing for still photographs with real weapons is permitted.

Application of Rule 9: The prohibition on thrown weapons refers to weapons thrown in combat or thrown in a hostile manner. It does not apply to "tossing," defined as a gentle, short-range method of transferring or removing a tournament weapon or item from the list field or area of combat. The use of bows and arrows, firearms, slings, javelins, throwing axes, throwing knives, or any other projectile weapon is forbidden within Tournament Lists, or in any other situation where spectators cannot be separated from the potential line of fire by more than the effective range of the weapon.

INTRODUCTION

These rules set fundamental standards for rapier combat in the SCA. They are designed to allow use by the Kingdoms of the Society as basic rules, to which Kingdom-specific preferences (such as the weapons used) can be added. In keeping with Corpora, Kingdoms retain the right to add rules which establish 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 rapier 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.

CONVENTIONS

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Rapier Combat shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of the Lists of the SCA, Inc., these rules, and such further rules as are established by the Kingdoms.
- B. All combatants, prior to every combat or practice, shall ensure their equipment is safe, in good working order and has been inspected by a member of the Kingdom Marshallate authorized to inspect rapier gear.
- C. At interkingdom events, for any given Kingdom's tourney, guest combatants shall meet SCA standards for protective gear, but shall comply with whatever weapons standards are being used by the host kingdom for that tourney.
- D. Unless otherwise directed by Kingdom Law, the Crown's representative upon the field and in all matters dealing with Rapier Combat is the Earl Marshal, then the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, then, by delegation, members of the Kingdom Rapier Marshallate.
- E. There are three categories of rapier combat, each requiring separate authorization. Each Kingdom can decide which categories of rapier combat they will permit in their rules. These categories are:
 - light rapier
 - heavy rapier
 - cut and thrust rapier

Except where noted, all rules apply to all three forms of rapier combat. One of the major differences in the three forms is the allowable blades, which are specified in Appendix 5.

- F. In order to enter the lists for any given weapons form, visiting fighters must present a valid SCA Fighter Authorization Card for their kingdom with authorization in that weapons form. For any authorized fighter who resides within Caid, reauthorization under the rules of Caid is required within 6 months of relocation into the kingdom.

2. BEHAVIOR ON THE FIELD

- A. All fighters shall obey the commands of the marshals overseeing the field, or be removed from the field and subject to further disciplinary action.
- B. Disagreements with the marshals overseeing the field shall be resolved through the established mechanisms outlined in the Marshallate Procedures of the SCA, Inc.
- C. Each fighter shall maintain control over his or her temper and behavior at all times.
- D. Striking an opponent with excessive force, or with deliberate intent to injure, is forbidden.
- E. 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.
- F. 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.
- G. A Fighter should not "corkscrew" an opponent who has been legged. "Corkscrewing" is defined as circling an opponent to put them at a disadvantage due to being required to turn from their knees. While simply stepping to one side or the other of the opponent as part of a normal offense would not normally be considered "corkscrewing", remaining positioned for an extended time to one side, past the plane of the knees of the legged fighter, would be considered corkscrewing.
- H. A fighter should not intentionally position a legged opponent so that they face into the sun.
- I. Any fighter who obtains an unfair advantage by repeatedly becoming "helpless" (for example, by falling down or losing their weapon or retreating into the ropes or beyond the edge of the field) may, after being duly warned two times by the marshals on the field, be forced to yield the fight at the third occurrence of such behavior. The onus of this is on the marshals, not on the opponent. However, the opponent may ask the marshals to let the fight continue.

3. USE OF WEAPONS AND PARRYING DEVICES

- A. Valid blows are struck by: thrusting with the point of the blade (thrust) or sliding the edge of the blade by drawing (draw cut).
 - i. Kingdoms have the option of including sliding the edge of the blade by pushing (push cut) and/or placing the tip of the blade upon and then drawing it across an opponent (tip cut) as valid blows.
 - ii. Cut and thrust rapier also includes the use of percussive cuts as a valid blow. Percussive cuts must always be delivered with sufficient control so as not to injure the opponent while still delivering the necessary impact for a valid cut.
 - iii. Definitions of attacks:

- a. Thrust: Using the point of the blade to simulate penetrating the skin of the opponent along the line of the blade with minimal positive pressure for the tip to be felt on the skin. E.g. a valid blow that lands with the tip of a blade.
 - b. Draw/Push Cut: Sliding the edge of the blade by drawing or pushing a minimum of five (5) inches or width of the limb, whichever is less. For cuts, constant pressure must be transmitted to the opponent for the duration of the draw/push for the cut to be valid.
 - c. Tip Cuts: A valid tip cut is made by placing the tip of the blade upon, and then drawing it across an opponent a minimum of five (5) inches or across the limb, whichever is less.
 - d. Percussive cuts: A controlled, well-intentioned blow, delivered with the striking edge of the sword with proper mechanics so to have been able to cleave the target
- iv. In Caid, thrusts, draw cuts, push cuts and tip cuts are valid attacks in Light and Heavy Rapier. Thrusts, tip cuts and percussive cuts are valid attacks in Cut and Thrust.
- B. Chopping or hacking blows are not permitted in light or heavy rapier combat. For cut and thrust rapier, they still must be delivered with sufficient control. Fast circular movements (such as moulinets) may be used to place a blade for allowable cuts in all three categories of rapier combat.
 - C. Parrying devices may be used to move, deflect, or immobilize an opponent's weapon or parrying device, so long as such use does not endanger the safety of the combatants.
 - D. Striking an opponent with any part of a weapon or parrying device not approved for that purpose is prohibited.
 - E. In tournaments, standard parrying devices are the buckler, cloak, and baton/scabbard.

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF BLOWS

- A. In judging blows, all fighters are presumed to be wearing common civil attire of the period, not armor (i.e., a shirt, pants/skirt, soft leather shoes). If the blow could have been felt through this attire, regardless of armor actually worn, then it is good.
- B. Tourneys may be held which define areas of the body as if armored, and to what degree, so long as all the participants are made aware of these special conditions prior to the start of combat.
- C. In rapier combat, blows will be counted as though they were struck with a real blade, extremely sharp on point and edge. Any blow that would have penetrated the skin shall be counted a good blow. Any blow that strikes a mask, helm or gorget shall be counted as though it struck flesh. Kingdoms shall not alter this standard.
- D. A valid blow to the:
 - head,
 - neck,
 - torso,
 - inner groin (to the fighter's hand width down the inner limb), or
 - armpit (to the fighter's inner hand width down the limb)

shall be judged incapacitating, rendering the fighter incapable of further combat.

- E. A valid blow to the arm will disable the arm. A valid blow to the hand shall render the hand useless; Kingdoms may decide whether the arm above the incapacitated hand may be used to parry. **In Caid, a valid blow to the hand (below the wrist) shall render the hand useless; the rest of the arm may still be used to parry.**
- F. A valid blow to the foot or leg will disable the leg.
 - i. For light rapier and heavy rapier, the fighter must then fight kneeling, sitting, or standing on one leg. **In Caid, a good blow to the leg (down to and including the ankle) will disable the leg. The fighter must then fight kneeling or seated, but may not rise up from the ground. A good blow to the foot (below the ankle) will disable the foot. The fighter must then fight kneeling, sitting, or standing on one leg (e.g. supporting their weight on one leg). No hopping. If kneeling, the fighter may rise up on one knee as long as the knee of the injured leg stays in contact with the ground (e.g. no lunging from the ground).**
 - ii. For cut and thrust rapier, valid blows to the leg or foot are considered incapacitating, rendering the fighter incapable of further combat.
- G. Parries may be performed with weapons, parrying devices, the gloved hand or any other part of the body. Though the gloved hand may be used to parry, it shall not be used to grasp or strike an opponent. Fleeting contact between opponents is allowed, as long as no grappling, deliberate striking or other unsafe behavior occurs.
- H. In heavy rapier and cut and thrust rapier, fighters may choose to grasp blades, rather than parry them. **Grasping is defined as the momentary binding of a sword with the closed hand.** If the blade that is grasped moves or twists in the grasping hand, that hand is deemed disabled. Grasping techniques shall be used only to immobilize a blade, not to bend it or wrest it from the opponent's grip. Prolonged wrestling over a grasped blade is sufficient grounds for calling a 'hold' and forcing a release of the blade. **Grasping techniques are restricted to the blade and may not be used on the hilt.**
- I. If an effective blow is thrown before, or on, the same moment as an event that would stop a fight (a "HOLD" being called, the fighter being "killed" himself, etc.), the blow shall count. If the blow is thrown after the hold, killing blow, or other event, it shall not count.

WEAPONS AND PARRYING DEVICES

1. GENERAL

- A. Sharp points, edges or corners are not allowed anywhere on any equipment.
- B. All equipment must be able to safely withstand combat stresses.
- C. Equipment that is likely to break a blade or damage other equipment is prohibited.
 - i. Light rapier does not permit any equipment that has small rigid openings large enough to admit a properly tipped light rapier blade (**3/8"**) (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.

2. BLADES

- A. In order to be acceptable for use in rapier combat, it must meet certain criteria. If a blade does not meet the criteria established below, it may not be used for any form of rapier combat in the Society, unless it is first approved by the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If a blade meets the criteria below, it is considered acceptable for use by default unless specifically banned. A list of approved exceptions and banned blades may be found at:
<http://sca.org/officers/marshal/docs/rapier/bladetypes.pdf>.
- i. For light rapier: Foil, epee, double-wide epee, and musketeer blades from established commercial manufacturers are acceptable for use.
 - ii. For heavy rapier, and cut and thrust rapier:
 - a. Blades must be made of steel.
 - b. Blades must be no longer than 48" as measured from the tip to the top of the tang (i.e. where the tang and forte meet)
 - c. Blades must be reasonably flexible. Heavy rapier blades must flex at least 1 inch (25 mm) when tested per the procedures in the Appendix, section 1.B. Dagger blades (those under 18 inches), and cut and thrust blades must flex at least 1/2 inch (12.5 mm). Any blade 18 inches or longer, being used in melee combat, must flex at least 1 inch (25 mm).
- B. All are subject to the following:
- i. Any rapier or dagger blade in a given rapier class may be used against any other blade in that same class, but NOT against blades of the other class. Remember that some blades are allowed in more than one category and so can face a wider range of other blades. Blades must follow all restrictions for a category to be used in it.
 - ii. Only blades listed in Appendix 5 – Blade Types and Conventions are permitted for use. Fighters or marshals desiring an exception must apply [to the Caid KRM who will present the request](#) to the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - iii. Steel blades will not be altered by grinding, cutting, heating, hammering, or other actions that could significantly alter their temper, flexibility or durability. Normal combat stresses and blade care do not violate this rule. Exceptions are:
 - a. The tang of the weapon may be altered.
 - b. Heavy rapier and cut and thrust rapier blades may be shortened so long as they maintain acceptable flexibility.
 - c. A nut or other blunt metal object designed to spread impact may be welded to the tip of heavy rapier and cut and thrust rapier blades so long as care is taken to prevent damage to the temper of the blade. The blunt object will still need some form of coverage, per [2.B.v](#) below.
 - iv. All steel blades must be reasonably flexible. Rigid steel "parrying-only" daggers such as those made from cut down blades will not be allowed.

- v. All blade ends must be capped with rubber, plastic, or leather. In Caid, all blade ends must be capped with rubber or plastic. Those blades restricted solely to Cut and Thrust may alternatively use leather to cover the end.
 - a. Tips will have a blunt striking surface, presenting a cross-section of at least 3/8 inch (9 mm) diameter.
 - b. Tips must be firmly taped or glued in place. The tip must be of a color contrasting with the blade so that the tip's absence is readily apparent. If tape is used, it must contrast with both blade and tip (i.e., black, white, and silver do not contrast).
- vi. Any blade with kinks, sharp bends, or cracks shall not be used. Steel blades that develop these defects cannot be repaired and must be retired. Light rapier blades or flexidaggers with "S" curves shall not be used unless they can be properly re-curved.
- vii. Weapons may use a hand guard such as a cup hilt, swept hilt or quillons and knuckle bow. The ends of quillons must be blunt.
- viii. Orthopedic (or "Pistol") grips will not be used unless the fighter has approval for medical reasons, supported by documentation from their health care provider.
- ix. Rapiers may not exceed an overall weapon length of 60 inches, and hilts for rapiers and daggers may not exceed 18 inches as measured from the back of the pommel to the start of the exposed blade.
- x. Daggers may not exceed a blade length of 18 inches from tip of blade to the hilt.

3. PARRYING DEVICES:

- A. Solid parrying devices will be made of sturdy, lightweight materials, resistant to breakage and splintering.
 - i. Standard bucklers have a maximum diameter of 20 inches or a surface area not exceeding 314 square inches.
 - ii. Batons/scabbards have a maximum length of 46 inches and minimum width of 3/4" outside diameter. The end facing the opponent must be solid, capped or plugged. PVC materials must be completely covered.
- B. Soft, non-rigid devices such as cloaks may be made of cloth, foam, leather and similar materials. They may be weighted with soft material such as rope or rolled cloth; they shall not be weighted with any rigid material nor with materials which are heavy enough to turn the device into a flail or impact weapon.
 - i. A thrust or cut will penetrate a cloak (and similar soft non-rigid devices) and do damage to the fighter. The cloak (or other soft non-rigid parrying devices) may be used to foul an opponent's weapon. It may not be used against parts of the body. It may be thrown upon their opponent's sword (which may include part of their sword arm), between the fighters upon their opponent's sword, or tossed to the ground as long as it does not produce a safety hazard (slipping, etc.).
- C. Devices that predictably cause entangling of an opponent or their equipment, either by design or by repeated mishap, are not allowed.

- D. Offensive bucklers will be considered non-standard devices. These devices must be approved on a case by case basis, in accordance with rules established by each kingdom's Rapier Marshallate. An opponent may decline to face non-standard devices, including offensive bucklers, without forfeiting a bout. Offensive bucklers shall be made of soft flexible materials such as cloth, tape, foam and golf tubes.
- E. In tournaments, standard parrying devices are the buckler, cloak, and baton/scabbard. The Marshal in Charge (MIC) must approve all non-standard parrying devices for use at that event.

4. PROJECTILE WEAPONS

- A. Kingdoms may permit combat archery, throwing weapons, and/or 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 and the MIC approves the use of the weapons.
- B. 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.
- C. Throwing weapons
 - i. These shall be made of the same materials used for non-rigid parrying devices.
 - ii. The "damage" caused by throwing weapons shall be explained before the onset of the scenario.
- D. Mock-Gunnery Gear (rubber-band guns)
 - i. Mock-gunnery gear shall be constructed of solid woods and/or lightweight metals. The ammunition shall be made of surgical type rubber tubing.
 - ii. Mock-gunnery gear may also be used as a rigid parrying device before and/or after it has been fired. If the gun is accidentally discharged while being utilized as a parry device, the shot will be considered a valid firing.
 - iii. Mock-gunnery gear bullets (e.g. rubber bands) striking a fighter's equipment or weapon(s) shall be considered to continue traveling in a straight line, potentially striking the fighter behind the equipment. Mock-gunnery gear bullets cannot be dodged.
 - iv. Damage from mock-gunnery gear should be resolved the same as a thrust.
- E. All non-combatants (including marshals, water-bearers, heralds, etc.) that will be on the field during the combat must be wearing at least shatterproof eye protection.
- F. Thrown hazards (i.e. "flaming hoops" and "cannonballs") will follow all rules for throwing weapons but MAY be used in tournament combat and MAY be thrown by spectators as well as combatants. Safety to the participants, marshals, and spectators shall be the overriding factor for the design and inclusion of these types of thrown objects in combat.

PROTECTIVE GEAR

1. TERMS

- A. Materials are listed in order of increasing resistance.

B. Abrasion-resistant material: material that will withstand normal combat stresses (such as being snagged by an unbroken blade) without tearing. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- broadcloth
- a single layer of heavy poplin cloth (35% cotton, 65% polyester; "trigger" cloth)
- sweat pants
- opaque cotton, poly-cotton or lycra/spandex mix tights

Nylon pantyhose and cotton gauze shirts are examples of unacceptable materials.

C. Puncture-resistant material: any fabric or combination of fabrics that will predictably withstand puncture. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- four-ounce (1.6 mm) leather
- four layers of heavy poplin cloth
- ballistic nylon rated to at least 550 Newtons
- commercial fencing clothing rated to at least 550 Newtons

Kevlar is not an acceptable material, as it degrades rapidly. These materials need only be tested at the marshal's discretion; all other materials must be tested the first time new gear is used, or if no marshal on the field knows a given piece of gear to have been tested. (Refer to Appendix 1 on Testing Standards.)

D. Rigid Material: puncture-resistant material that will not significantly flex, spread apart, or deform under pressure of 12 Kg applied by a standard mask tester, repeatedly to any single point. Examples of rigid material are:

- 22 gauge stainless steel (0.8 mm)
- 20 gauge mild steel (1.0 mm)
- 16 gauge aluminum, copper, or brass (1.6 mm)
- one layer of hardened heavy leather (8 ounce, 3.18 mm)

2. ARMOR REQUIREMENTS

A. The following are the Society norms for protective gear. 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 [and their ability to accurately judge blows in combat](#).

B. HEAD AND NECK

- i. The front and top of the head must be covered by rigid material to below the jaw line and behind the ears. Standard 12 kg fencing masks are known to meet this standard. If built to this standard, fencing helms are also acceptable.
- ii. The face must be covered by either 12 kilogram mesh (e.g, a standard fencing mask) or perforated metal. Such metal must not have holes larger than 1/8" (3 mm) in diameter, with a minimum offset of 3/16" (5 mm) and shall also meet the definition of rigid material.
- iii. Masks and helms must be secured to the fighter, so that they cannot be easily removed or dislodged during combat. The combination of snug fit and the spring-tongue in a conventional fencing mask is NOT sufficient, by itself, to secure the mask to the fighter.

- iv. Both modern fencing masks and rapier helms, when inspected, shall comply with the rigid material standard, provisions on facial coverage, and shall show no evidence of impending failure (e.g., rust which weakens the metal involved, dents or other defects which spread open mesh, broken weld points, etc). If there is concern about the face mesh of a modern fencing mask, it should be tested using a standard commercial 12kg mask punch. Marshals doing the testing shall be trained in the use of the punch. The Kingdom Rapier Marshals may elect to designate certain deputies to administer such testing.
- v. The rest of the head and neck must be covered by at least puncture resistant material.
- vi. For heavy rapier and cut and thrust rapier, additional throat protection is required; it shall consist of rigid material, as noted above, covering the entire throat, and shall be backed by either puncture resistant material (as a hood), one quarter inch (1/4") (6 mm) of open-cell foam, or their equivalents. The cervical vertebrae shall also be protected by rigid material, provided by some combination of gorget, helm, and/or hood insert.
- vii. For cut and thrust rapier, the back of the head must also be covered by rigid material, as noted above sufficient to protect against percussive cuts.

C. TORSO AND OTHER KILLING ZONES

- i. The entire torso (the chest, back, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits) must be covered with puncture-resistant material.
- ii. Acceptable minimum armpit coverage is provided by a triangle extending from the armpit seam, covering the lower half of the sleeve at the seam **as the garment is worn (more than ½ of the armhole)**, and extending down the inner/under arm, one-third the distance to the fighter's elbow.

Note that the purpose of underarm protection is to protect the brachial artery which corresponds to the underarm "kill zone" defined in Conventions section 4.D. The entirety of this area must be protected during combat in all fighting positions.

- iii. Male fighters shall wear rigid groin protection. Any ventilation holes large enough to admit a broken blade must be covered from the outside with at least puncture-resistant material. Female fighters shall wear puncture resistant groin protection.

D. ARMS AND LEGS

- i. Hands shall be protected by gloves, made of abrasion resistant material, that overlap any sleeve openings as below. Feet shall be protected by boots, shoes, or sandals **(with no exposed skin)**, comprised of at least abrasion-resistant material.
- ii. Abrasion-resistant material is required on arms (save as noted above for armpits), legs, and any area not otherwise mentioned in these rules.
- iii. No skin shall be bared. There shall be sufficient overlap between separate pieces of protective clothing, regardless of the fighter's stance or movements, that the minimum protection for that body area be preserved.
- iv. For cut and thrust rapier, elbows must be further protected by a minimum of an athletic pad or equivalent materials. **It is also recommended to wear additional wrist and forearm protection (bracers) and knee pads, provided they do not interfere with blow calling.**

MARSHALLING CONCERNS IN RAPIER COMBAT

1. AUTHORIZATIONS: Competence in other SCA combat styles does not automatically mean competence in rapier. Separate warrants and authorizations in rapier combat are required. Each Kingdom can decide how they wish to control authorizations for each category of rapier combat.
2. BROKEN BLADES: Marshals and fighters shall pay special attention for missing tips or broken blades. [The Rapier Marshal-in-Charge of an event shall report any broken blades during an event or practice to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal. This report should include \(to the best of one's ability\) the names of the combatants, blade age, blade condition, type of combat \(single, melee, heavy, light\), circumstances, type of break, appearance of break, injuries sustained \(if any\) and other damage.](#)
3. CLOAKS: When cloaks are used, "HOLD" should be called if the cloak becomes tangled about either fighter, or about one of the weapons such that the weapon cannot be withdrawn. "HOLD" need not be called if the cloak is merely near the face, deflecting a weapon (assuming that the Kingdom rules allow use of the cloak for blocking or deflection), loosely draped over, or weighting down the blade.
4. BLADE GRASPING: Blade grasping is allowed in heavy rapier and cut and thrust rapier. When a blade has been grasped by an opponent, "HOLD" shall be called if wrestling about the blade occurs.
5. EXCESSIVE IMPACT: Combat in the Society poses risks to the participant. This recognition, however, does not excuse fighters from exercising control of their techniques. If a fighter throws blows which force their opponent to retire from the field, from a real injury (even one which only causes brief incapacitation), the marshal responsible for the field shall take such steps as are appropriate to stop the problem from recurring. [If a fighter is perceived to have a consistent problem with blow strength, marshals and fighters may also utilize Caid's grievance procedure \(see Appendix 6\).](#)
6. MELEE: Melee combats present special challenges to all involved. Society norms are as below:
 - A. In melees, fighters are engaged with all opponents immediately upon the call to lay on.
 - B. Fighters may strike any opponent with any legal blow if they are within the 180 degree arc of the opponent's front. [A nominal definition of "front" is the plane of the opponent's shoulders in an unflexed / untwisted posture.](#) A fighter who approaches an opponent from behind shall not deliver a blow until he is within that frontal arc. A fighter may never deliberately strike an opponent from behind.
 - C. Killing from behind is allowed if it has been announced beforehand. The Society norm for "death from behind" in melees shall be: If a melee scenario allows killing from behind, a fighter does so by laying the rapier blade over the opponent's shoulder, to at least a third of the blade, while calling "Dead, my lord" (or other short, courteous phrases) in a loud, clear voice. Reaching around the neck is forbidden. The opponent will be deemed "killed" from the instant the blade touches his shoulder and shall not attempt to spin, duck or dodge away. [Fighters can not DFB multiple opponents simultaneously.](#)
 - i. If death from behind is not allowed in a given melee, a fighter who deliberately ignores an attacker behind them, or repeatedly maneuvers to keep their back to an attacker (thereby preventing any attack on them) may be considered for misuse of the rules and obstructive behavior. [It is not necessary to ensure that the other fighter is aware of the attacker's](#)

presence if within 180 degrees. If NOT within the 180 degrees, the attacker must gain the attention of their opponent before engaging.

- ii. Daggers may also be used but care must be taken not to punch or strike the fighter with the guard or quillions of the dagger when so used.
 - D. In special scenario melees (e.g., bridge or town battles), additional restrictions may be imposed by the marshals as needed.
 - E. Cut and thrust rapiers may not be used in melees.
 - F. There will be no running once a fighter is in engagement range with an opponent.
 - G. No full-speed or full-strength "suicide charges".
7. MINORS: The minimum age for training and authorization in rapier combat is 14. When fighters under the age of 18 undertake training and authorization, the Kingdom Rapier Marshal (or his designated representatives) shall ensure that the minor's parent or legal guardian has observed rapier combat, is aware of the risk of injury inherent in this martial art, and has signed a statement explicitly acknowledging the above.
- A. A youth rapier fighter may participate in melees with other rapier fighters (youth and/or adult) subject to whatever age requirements and other qualifications that are mandated by their kingdom rules.
 - B. Persons under 18 are subject to the following restrictions:
 - i. May only authorize in Light Rapier or Heavy Rapier.
 - ii. Must provide a "Minor's Waiver and Informed Consent to Participate" form (dated copy required at each official event or practice)
 - iii. Recommended to provide a notarized "Medical Authorization For Minors" form
 - iv. A parent/legal guardian must be present during all fighting at events. At practices another adult may be designated but only with the Medical Authorization for Minors.

The Kingdom Rapier Marshal (or his/her designated representatives) shall ensure that the minor's parent or legal guardian has observed rapier combat, is aware of the risk of injury inherent in this martial art, and has signed the above forms.
 - C. Fighters under the age of 16 are subject to the following additional limitations:
 - i. Combatants in this age group can only be authorized by the KRM or by a Provost Marshal specifically designated to perform this duty.
 - ii. Fighters in this age group may only fight in single combat (one-on-one) situations. Authorized fighters in this age group may not participate in any melee scenarios at any time.
8. PERIODIC TESTING OF PROTECTIVE GEAR: Kingdoms shall require all gear to have been formally tested (including fabric and mask tests, as appropriate) at least once every two years. Compliance is the responsibility of the individual fighter. Any protective gear may be formally tested if there is concern that the gear may have lost protective ability due to age, wear and tear, or other factors. Refer to Appendix 1 on Testing Standards.

9. UNFORESEEN SITUATIONS: Should a situation arise not explicitly covered by Corporate or Kingdom rapier combat rules, the marshals should NOT assume that the situation is forbidden or inappropriate. Again: However, no matter how clear or accurate, rules cannot replace common sense, good judgment, and concern for the participants.
10. The primary duties of a Rapier Marshal are to inspect armor and weapons prior to combat, to watch for missing tips on weapons and missing or loose equipment, and to maintain the safety of combatants and spectators.
11. If no Warranted Rapier Marshal is present, a Rapier Combat event may not be held.
12. All combat must be supervised by a marshal:
 - A. Non-tourney combat (pickups, practices, etc.) – one Marshal-in-Training or one Warranted Marshal.
 - B. Tournament combat – a minimum of two Marshals where one must be a Warranted Marshal.
 - C. Melee (more than two fighters on a field) / War combat - A Warranted Marshal and enough additional marshals (Warranted and MiTs) to both surround the fighting (to keep an eye on the boundaries) and keep most of the fights under general surveillance (for armor and equipment failures, field hazards, etc.).
13. Minimum list field size is 40'x40'.
14. At official practices, any person may participate and practice any form of rapier combat provided they are at least 14 years old and either a member of the SCA with a blue card or sign a waiver. Those persons under 18 must comply with the additional restrictions listed in this section.
15. As with all combat in Caid, the Marshal has a responsibility, upon request of the combatants, to advise the fighters as to the appearance of their blows. Unless a fighter is demonstrating a continuing inability to perceive successful attacks upon him/herself or is exhibiting unsafe behavior, it is always the fighter's prerogative to make the final decision on a blow.
16. If a fighter appears to have difficulty acknowledging his opponent's attacks, the marshals may call a hold and ask the fighters to "calibrate" their blows against their opponents.
17. If the Marshal-in-Charge (the Rapier Marshal in charge of the event) feels that a fighter has a problem that cannot be easily resolved on the field, he should follow the grievance procedure to deal with the problem (see Appendix 6).
18. Any fighter that leaves the field, by definition, declares that he/she is satisfied with the combat. The Rapier Marshal shall attempt to resolve any problems with the combat before the field is cleared.

RAPIER MARSHALLING

A. Marshals

Any SCA member in the Kingdom of Caid may become a Warranted Rapier Marshal after being authorized by the Kingdom Earl Marshal or the Kingdom Rapier Marshal. This marshalling form is separate from all others, and Marshals from other weapons forms may not act as Rapier Marshal without an additional certification.

Because Marshals are responsible for safety on the field, all warranted Marshals must be 18 years of age or older AND a current member of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. In order to become an Warranted Rapier Marshal, all interested participants must first become a Rapier Marshal-in-Training

i. Rapier Marshal-in-Training

- a. A Rapier Marshal-in-Training (RMiT) is a person who wishes to become a Rapier Marshal. An RMiT is under the tutelage of the Marshal's office and is subject to instruction and correction by any warranted Rapier or Provost Marshal.
- b. Rapier Marshals-in-Training may be appointed by a Provost Marshal, KRM or KEM and their information sent to the KRM for inclusion in the Fighter Authorization List.
- c. Requirements to become a Warranted Rapier Marshal:
 - Completed all of the following tasks at a minimum of four (4) events:
 - Assisted with inspections
 - Assisted with authorizations
 - Field Marshal
 - Field marshaled for three (3) events
 - Acted as MiC of a field under the supervision of warranted marshal for one (1) event.
 - Displayed familiarity with administrative aspects
 - Helped fill out reports
 - Knows marshalatte structure, report due dates and grievance procedure.
 - Have the recommendation of KRM or a duly appointed representative.
 - Successfully complete the marshal's test.
 - Those persons who relocate to Caid and hold a marshal's warrant from their home kingdom do not automatically become a Caid Marshal upon request. However, any of the above requirements can be reduced at the discretion of the KRM based on the knowledge displayed by the person in question.

The following tables list the details of the rapier marshallate structure and their corresponding responsibilities.

RAPIER MARSHALLATE STRUCTURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES (TABLE 1)

	Rapier Marshal-in-Training	Rapier Marshal	Provost Marshal	Regional Provost Marshal	Kingdom Rapier Marshal
Appointed by	Provost and above	Provost and above	Kingdom Rapier Marshal and above	Kingdom Rapier Marshal and Above	Kingdom Earl Marshal
Requirements	None	SCA member	SCA member, authorized fighter, Rapier Marshal	Provost marshal	Provost marshal
DUTIES					
Performs armor and weapon inspections	Under supervision	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Supervises tourney combat	Under supervision	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Supervises melee combat	Under supervision	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Acts as Marshal-of-the-Field	Under supervision	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Supervises sparring	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Calls safety-related holds	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Acts as Marshal-in-Charge of rapier for an event	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (is default MiC of Kingdom rapier events, but may appoint others in their place)
Trains subordinate marshals	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Performs authorizations	No	No but can assist	Yes but only forms they are authorized in	Yes but only forms they are authorized in	Yes but only forms they are authorized in
Reports?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reporting		Must report every July 1 to KRM with details of his/her marshalling activities and proof of membership	Must report every July 1 to KRM with details of his/her marshalling activities and proof of membership	Must report quarterly to KRM by the 22nd of every February, May, August and November.	Must report quarterly to Earl Marshal and Society Rapier Marshal by the 1st of every March, June, September and December.
Term	Ongoing	Up To Four Years	Up To Four Years	Serves a one-year term which can be renewed at the discretion of the KRM	Up to two years and must have a current Officer Warrant signed by the Earl Marshal and the Crown.

CONT'D	Rapier Marshal- in-Training	Rapier Marshal	Provost Marshal	Regional Provost Marshal	Kingdom Rapier Marshal
Other			Forwards all marshallate authorization papers to Marshallate Clerk	Responsible for training, informing and supervising Provost Marshals in their area.	May approve non- standard weapons and equipment
				Forwards all marshallate authorization papers to Marshallate Clerk	May set up experimental programs
					Maintains all armor testing equipment provided by the Kingdom
					Forwards all marshallate authorization papers to Marshallate Clerk
					May appoint deputies to oversee special programs (Cut and Thrust, experiments, etc) and at least one deputy be appointed in case they cannot fulfill their role.

SPECIAL FUNCTION MARSHALS (TABLE 2)

	Marshal-in-Charge	Territorial Marshal
Qualifications	Rapier Marshal	At least RMIT, preferably a Rapier Marshal
Duties	Runs any tournament combat at the event.	Runs local official practices (including armor and weapons inspections and membership verification or waiver collection)
	May approve non-standard secondary weapons.	Maintains loaner gear (if available)
		Default MiC of all events in that territory, but this can be delegated as necessary.
Reports	After the event, the MiC must submit a tournament report to the local seneschal, with a copy sent to the local territorial marshal	Must report quarterly to KRM by the 15th of every February, May, August, and November.
Term	One event	Ongoing: When the officer changes, it is the responsibility of the outgoing and incoming officer to notify the KRM with as much notice as possible to ensure continuity of the office and update of all contact information. Must have a current Officer Warrant signed by territorial officials and the KRM.

B. Authorizations Procedures

- i. Competence in other SCA combat styles does not automatically mean competence in rapier. Separate warrants and authorizations in rapier combat are required. Authorizations are required to participate in any SCA event outside of practices.
- ii. There are three (3) rapier combat authorizations:
 - a. Light Rapier (RLR): The fighter must perform the authorization bout with either a defensive or offensive secondary to demonstrate safety.
 - b. Heavy Rapier (RHR): The fighter must perform the authorization bout with both a defensive and offensive secondary to demonstrate safety.
 - c. Cut and Thrust Rapier (RCT). Fighter must show ability to deliver percussive cuts with sufficient control.

- iii. A fighter may authorize in Light Rapier or Heavy Rapier first. In order to participate in the Cut and Thrust Rapier form, at an event or practice, a fighter must be authorized in Heavy Rapier and:
 - a. Maintained that authorization and participated in authorized rapier activities for, at least, one year OR
 - b. Have been authorized in Unarmored Combat and participated in authorized UC activities for, at least, one year.
- iv. TO AUTHORIZE, one must: (*Note, if any one of the following conditions is not met then the candidate may not proceed with the remaining parts of the authorization)
 - a. Be at least 14 years old. (For under 18 years of age, see MARSHALLING CONCERNS IN RAPIER COMBAT – section 7.)
 - b. Read and be familiar with these rules.
 - c. Own (or obtain beforehand) equipment necessary to participate in Caidan Rapier combat.
 - d. Sign a combat waiver or present a current Blue Membership Card.
 - e. Complete and Pass an Authorization Procedure officiated by a warranted Provost Marshal and one other Warranted Rapier Marshal. This procedure will have five parts:
 - i. Pass oral test. The authorizing marshals will conduct an interview to determine the fighter's knowledge of: armor and weapons requirements, the conventions of combat and target areas for weapons. Must show a verbal knowledge of the rules by successfully answering a minimum of three questions asked by each of the authorizing marshals (for a total of six). This is true even if the fighter is already authorized in heavy weapons or other combat forms.
 - ii. Pass armor and weapons inspection.
 - iii. Have the fighter indicate the appropriate response to thrusts and cuts to various parts of the body as pointed out by the Marshal.
 - iv. Have the fighter demonstrate how to properly execute a "death from behind".
 - v. Successfully complete directed combat with an authorized fighter(s) to demonstrate safe use of the equipment and practical application of the rules.
- v. A fighter who fails the test will need to be given additional training based on the recommendations of the officiating Marshals and may apply for authorization at another time.
- vi. For qualifying new fighters, the Provost Marshal shall complete the authorization form by initialing the appropriate sections on an existing authorization card or issuing a new authorization card. The completed authorization form should be sent to the Marshallate Clerk as directed on the form. If a new card is required and the Provost Marshal does not

have access to one, the temporary card on the authorization form should be filed out and kept.

- vii. If the fighter is already authorized in one form of rapier combat, the Provost Marshal shall complete the authorization form and note the additional (rapier) authorizations on the authorization card.
- viii. Cards will expire on the fighter's birthday no later than four (4) years after the authorization is performed. Fighters shall renew their authorizations prior to the current expiration date of their authorization card by consulting with a Provost Marshal who will conduct a "reauthorization". The rapier authorization form must be filled out and the extent of retesting is at the discretion of the Provost Marshal, and will be guided by how active the fighter has been in the previous 6 months. Cards that have been expired for more than 6 months require a full authorization test to be administered.
- ix. Both temporary and permanent authorization cards for fighters under 18 years of age must identify the fighter as a minor. This can be accomplished by writing the word "MINOR" written in large letters on both sides of the authorization card.

C. Inspections

- i. All gear shall be formally tested (including fabric and mask tests, as appropriate) at least once every two years. Compliance is the responsibility of the individual fighter.
- ii. Any protective gear may be formally tested if the marshal or fighter is concerned that the gear may have lost protective ability due to age, wear and tear, or other factors.
- iii. Acceptable field tests shall deliver a consistent force. Tests known to be acceptable are noted in Appendix 1.
- iv. No combatant shall fight at an SCA event without having had all equipment pass inspection by the Marshals appointed for such purpose at that event. A verbal confirmation of groin protection will suffice.
- v. If any equipment is found to be unsafe or not in compliance with the Caid Rules of Rapier Combat during an inspection or bout, the combatant may not participate further in the competition until the equipment in question has been replaced, repaired, or discarded to the satisfaction of the Marshal in Charge.
- vi. Each combatant must be authorized to participate in competition. It is the duty of the Minister of the List to verify each fighter's authorization. If there is no Minister of the List, it is the duty of the Marshal in Charge to verify each fighter's authorization

APPENDIX

1. TESTING STANDARDS FOR SCA RAPIER COMBAT

A. FABRIC TESTING FOR PROTECTIVE GEAR

- i. Tests known to be acceptable include:
 - a. Cloth or garment manufacturer's commercial certification that a fabric is rated to 550N. (Documentation must be available at the time of inspection.)
 - b. Use of 550N garment punch test devices, manufactured by sources acceptable to the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat. Such a device shall be used in accordance with its' instructions.
 - c. Use of a drop test device which delivers a force, on dropping, of 1.5 joules to the fabric sample via a dull, flat 5/32" (4 mm) metal rod. As a general example, this rod can be mounted on a 1.0 kg (2.2 lbs) solid weight and dropped down a guide tube from 15.3 cm (6 inches) onto the fabric sample. The sample must be held firmly over a 3" diameter externally threaded frame by clamps when the drop test is applied. More specifically, the drop tester must be constructed and used as described in instructions found in Appendix 3 of these rules.
 - d. Use of a flat-broken foil blade to thrust against the material. To conduct this test, lay the material to be tested on firm ground or penetrable material (not hard packed dirt, concrete or similarly hard surfaces). Holding the broken blade in both hands, punch the material four times, increasing the force each time. After each punch, examine the material. For these tests, if the material in question has been completely penetrated, or penetrated in more than one layer, it fails. If only the top layer has been damaged, then it passes.

B. BLADE FLEXIBILITY TESTING

To determine if a weapon meets the standard of being "reasonably flexible": Hold weapon parallel to the ground, supporting the handle against table or bench if necessary. Hang a 6-ounce weight (170 grams) one inch (25 mm) distance from the tip. If the blade of a dagger (out to 18 inches blade length) flexes at least 1/2 inch (12.5 mm) the blade is reasonably flexible. For a heavy rapier blade (18" or longer), the blade must flex at least 1 inch (25 mm). For use in cut and thrust rapier, the blade must flex at least 1/2 inch (12.5 mm). Any blade 18 inches or longer, being used in melee combat, must flex at least 1 inch (25 mm).

2. PROCEDURES FOR EXPERIMENTATION IN RAPIER COMBAT

Before any new weapon or technique can be used in Society Rapier Combat, a test plan must be submitted to and approved by the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat. This plan shall describe:

- The new weapon or technique
- Specifics of materials used and construction of the weapon (as appropriate);
- In the case of new blade types, a sample of the new blade-type for direct evaluation by the Deputy Society Marshal

- The proposed uses of the new weapon or technique
- All restrictions that will be imposed during the experimental period
- How long the test period will be

It is the prerogative of the Kingdom Rapier Marshals, subject to the above, and to approval of their Earl Marshals, to allow testing of new weapons or techniques within a kingdom. Testing means the weapon or technique may be used at fighter practice, tourneys, and in small melees after all combatants and marshals have been informed the weapon or technique is being tested and that it is not approved for general SCA use. All combatants and marshals must consent to the use of the weapon or technique before combat begins. If any of the marshals or combatants object to the use of the weapon or technique, it may not be used.

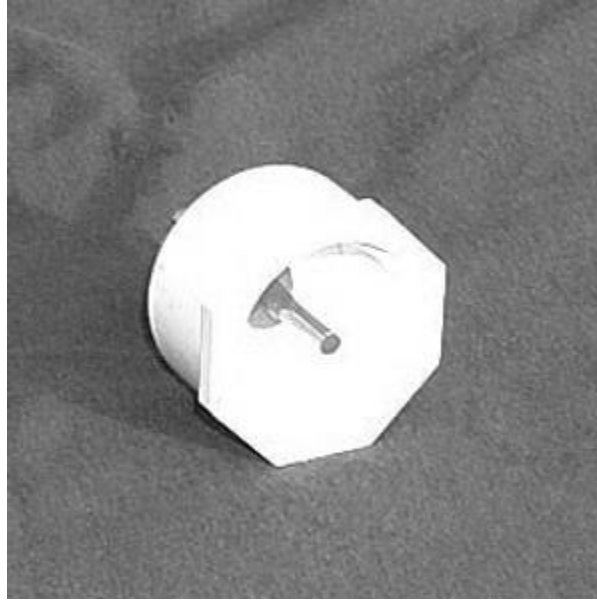
At regular intervals the Kingdom Rapier Marshal shall report to their Earl Marshal, and the Deputy Society Marshal, on the progress and results of the experiment. At the end of the test period the Kingdom Rapier Marshal will provide the Deputy Society Marshal with a test summary, to include a list of any injuries that resulted from the use of the weapon or technique, and any concerns from fighters and marshals arising from the testing. The Deputy Society Marshal, after consultation with the Kingdom Rapier Marshals, shall determine if the weapon or technique seems suitable for SCA Rapier Combat. He shall then report to the Society Marshal for final adjudication.

3. PROCEDURES FOR CREATION OF A DROP TESTER

It is important not to deviate from the construction specifications given below without approval, as seemingly minor changes can affect the test results.

There are three major parts to the tester, the drop probe (the weighted piece), the guide tube, and the round frame (3" flange, below) over which the fabric to be tested is clamped. The actual test method is detailed in Appendix 4 of the Society Rapier Combat Rules but here is a brief overview:

Clamp the fabric over the 3" flange, balance the guide tube over the center of the fabric, and drop the weighted drop probe down the middle of the guide tube, as shown in Figure 1, below. If the rod on the end of the falling drop probe punches through, the fabric fails, if it doesn't punch through the fabric passes.



- 0.156" (5/32") "plus tolerance" diameter gage pin, 2 inch length, such as from Meyer Gage Company, CT, 860-528-6527, Class ZZ, \$2 each, \$10 minimum order (http://www.meyergage.com/products/english_gage_sets.htm)

NOTE: As of 2006, Meyer replaced their Class ZZ gauge pin with a Class Z gauge pin. This pin is also acceptable for use.

- drill bit stop or collar (piece that goes on to a drill bit to set the depth of a hole)
- epoxy (the solid grey type such as JB Weld works well, clear epoxies do not hold up as well)
- 2" nominal diameter PVC or equivalent (material doesn't matter for this), at least 30"
- 3" PVC 3" Male Adp. DWV (short section of PVC, has *external* threads on one end)



- 2 hose clamps, 2.5" to 4" range (large enough to fit over 3" adapter above)



- screwdriver or nut driver (to operate test)

Construction Tools

- Power drill with 5/32" drill bit
- scale capable of measuring to about ½ oz or 10 g (can go to post office and use theirs)
- (optional) saw (some way to cut the PVC pipe above, or can have it done at hardware store)
- (optional) file, sandpaper, to smooth PVC

Construction

Step 1: Make the Guide Tube

1. Cut the 2" nominal diameter PVC tube to 23.6" (60 cm) in length. Try to make the ends square (so when it is placed on a flat surface on either end, it stands up straight). A wood saw is fastest for this, a hack saw will work as well, or get it cut at the store you buy it at.
2. Drill three holes with the 5/32" drill bit near the bottom end of it for air release when the probe drops, the location doesn't matter as long as they are within a couple of inches of the bottom.

Step 2: Make the Drop probe

1. First get a gage pin, at the supplier above. Do not modify the end, these pins are used because they are consistently manufactured. Make sure that the pin is clean of any oil or other chemicals that would keep the glue from sticking properly.
2. Drill a hole in the center of the 1" plastic cap with the 5/32" drill bit.
3. Now put the drill collar on the gage pin with about half of the gage pin sticking out of one side, and apply epoxy. Before it dries, put more epoxy on the gage pin, and shove it into the hole in the cap, with the drill collar on the outside, curved side of the cap. The exact type of drill collar isn't important, it is just to provide some extra grip to keep the gage pin from breaking loose and sliding up into the drop probe with repeated impacts, since the PVC hole alone isn't a great glue surface.

4. When you have it put together and the epoxy is still wet, put it on a flat surface and slide the gage pin down until it bottoms out where the plastic cap sits on the flat surface. It will look something like Figure 2, below, when done. Make sure the gage pin doesn't dry at an angle (it should be parallel to the iron pipe, keep checking visually as it dries). If the pin isn't sticking straight out of the cap, your drop tester will not work properly.

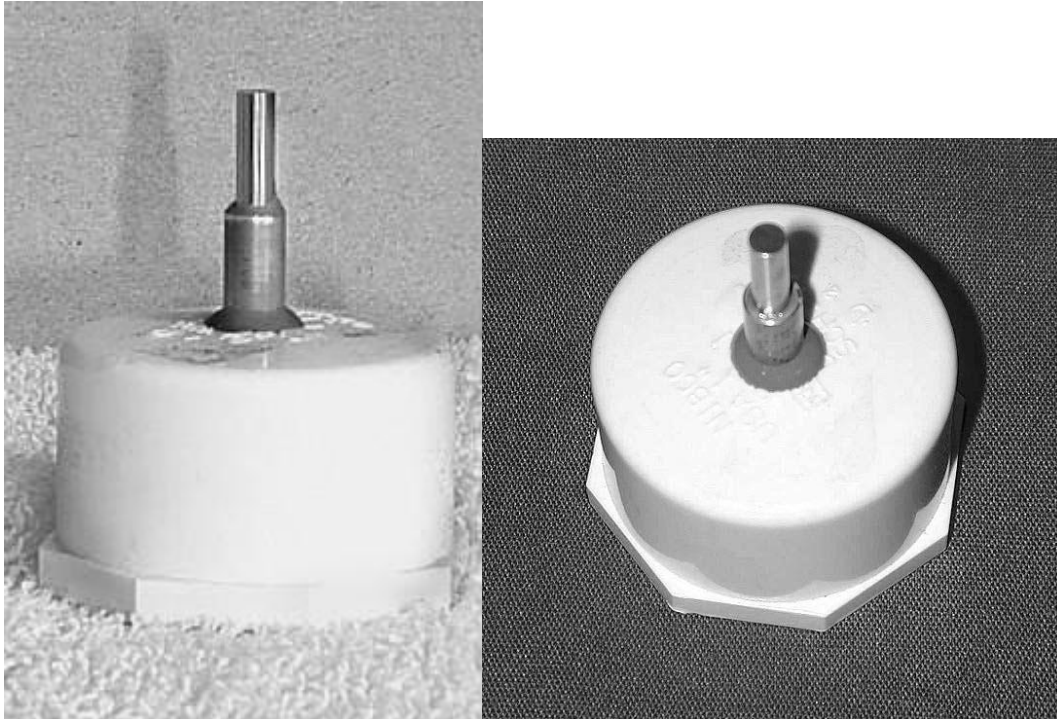


Figure 2 - Plastic cap with gage pin and drill collar sticking out, all epoxyed together (gray)

5. After the epoxy dries, screw the cap on to one end of the pipe (make sure not to get epoxy on the threads, you may want to remove it later!).

6. Weigh the drop probe assembly, using a good scale. It should be able to measure to half an ounce or 10 grams, a postal scale at the post office could work for example. If possible, try to use metric units - it will make calculations easier later on.

7. The height from which the probe will be dropped is directly dependent on the weight of the probe. Since not all cast iron pipe will weight the exact same amount, and the length of the pipe may be off by a small portion, calculate the exact drop height for the probe being constructed. Use the formula below for a 1.5 Joule drop energy to calculate the drop height for your tester.

In Metric units

$$15306 / (\text{the probe weight in grams}) = \text{drop distance (in cm)}$$

or, in American units,

$$212.6 / (\text{the probe weight in ounces}) = \text{drop distance (in inches)}$$

Plug the measured drop probe weight into one of the formulas and calculate the drop distance. It should be between 10 and 20 cm (4 and 8 inches), if not, you found a really unusual pipe stub and should not proceed further.

8. Lay the probe next to the PVC tube from the first step, slide it "up" next to the PVC guide tube until you have that calculated drop distance from the bottom of the PVC tube to the gage pin sticking out of the drop probe, and mark the top end of the drop probe where it lies next to the top of the PVC guide tube (tape, etc.). That is the mark you will want to line up with the top of the PVC tube when you drop the probe. Some of the probe will stick out of the top end of the tube when you have it all together vertically and give you a place to grab it. (The reason metric units are easier is that it's easier to measure fractions of a centimeter than it is fractions of an inch.)

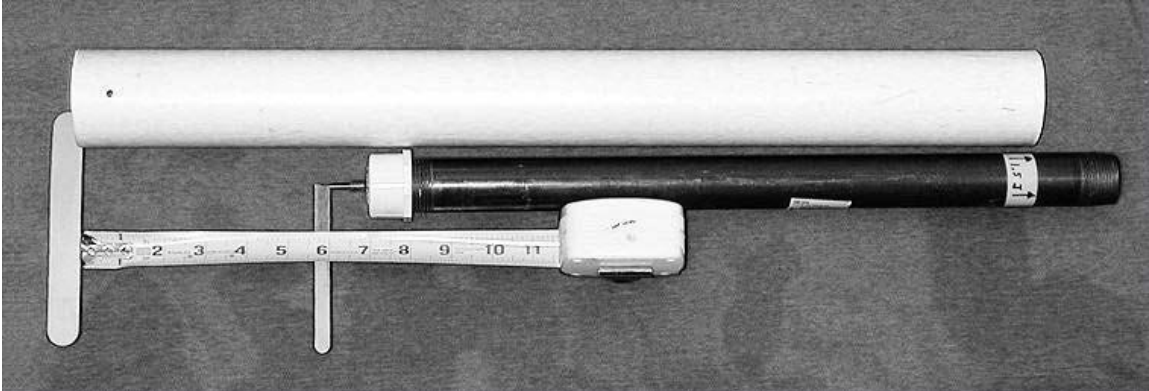


Figure 3 - Lay drop probe assembly (pipe and cap) next to PVC guide tube, and measure your calculated distance from the probe tip to the bottom of the PVC guide tube.

Step 3: The Clamps and Frame

No modifications needed here, you just need the two hose clamps and the threaded flange, along with a screwdriver or nut driver to tighten the hose clamps. Do not substitute other parts for the flange with outside threads, as the grip on this surface has a big impact on fabric slippage, which has a big impact on whether the test passes or fails armor.



Figure 4 - Clamps and "frame" (3" flange) showing how these are assembled to carry out a fabric test.

It is suggested that you get a nut driver (like a screw driver, but with a socket head) for tightening and loosening these hose clamps, it is much easier to use than a screw driver as well as being safer.

4. PROCEDURES FOR USE OF A DROP TESTER

The basic idea behind this test is to drop a known weight a known distance to give a known impact, giving a pass/fail verdict to "unknown" fencing armor. This document will tell you how to use the tester to test armor. See Appendix 3/Building a Drop tester for how to choose and build these items. You should have all six pieces shown in Figure 5, below, including a guide tube, drop probe (unique to your tester), 3" threaded PVC flange, two hose clamps and a screw driver or nut clamp to tighten the hose clamps.

You should only use your probe with the guide tube it was designed for. Interchanging these items between testers may produce inaccurate results.



Figure 5 - Parts needed for SCA Standard Drop Tester for fencing armor.

1. You need a hard surface to work on. Surfaces such as pavement, an extremely sturdy table, concrete, etc are good choices. Carpet or grass are bad choices; they absorb impact and make the test too easy for armor to pass.
2. "Start by setting the threaded PVC flange thread side up and laying the test fabric over it, and loosen the first hose clamp so that it will fit easily over the fabric and flange but pull the fabric somewhat taut as it is pushed down. Tighten that hose clamp, put a second one on and slide it down to touch the first then tighten the second one. It should look something like Figure 6. You may want to invest in a 5/16" nut driver (like a screwdriver with a socket head). It will prevent gashes on your hand from slipped screwdrivers. Note that if you didn't push the first hose clamp far enough down (you may want to lean on it a bit with the screwdriver or nut driver), the second hose clamp won't stay on when you tighten it; it will just barely fit if you do everything right.



Figure 6 - Fabric clamped onto flange with two hose clamps. Notice that the second one will protrude a bit above the level of the fabric with thicker fabrics, but it should still be tight if you push everything down enough.

3. Then, place the guide tube on the center of the clamped fabric. Steady it with one hand, trying not to push downward on the fabric.

4. Put the drop probe into the guide tube, lowering it to roughly the mark that shows where to drop it from, and slowly tilt the guide tube back and forth until the drop probe seems to hang freely, not lying against a side. (You are using the drop probe like a plumb bob to get everything vertical.) Line up the mark exactly with the top of the guide tube, and drop the probe. It should look like Figure 7 below just before you drop it.



Figure 7 - Drop Tester just before making a test drop. Note that the guide tube is centered on the clamped fabric, and the drop probe is being used as a plumb bob to make the guide tube vertical.

5. Let go of the probe.

Now examine the fabric. If the pin punched through anything beyond the top layer of fabric, the material fails. If the pin did not punch through, recheck the top hose clamp with a gentle tug to be sure it is still tight. If there was slippage it will often get loose, so this is a good check to be sure the fabric didn't slip. If it's loose, you need to redo the test. If it's not loose, the fabric passes. Always be sure to check the tightness of the fabric after the drop.

5. PERMITTED AND RESTRICTED BLADE TYPES

The purpose of this list is to serve as an appendix to the Rapier Combat Handbook indicating blade types that are specifically allowed or forbidden.

Section 2 of the Rapier Combat Handbook lists criteria under which a blade may be used in Society rapier combat without further review. This appendix lists blade types that have been

reviewed by the Society Rapier Marshal's office, and either found to be acceptable for use in the Society, or that may not be used in the Society. Note that while individual Kingdom rules may not allow a blade that is not specifically approved by the Society, Kingdoms may restrict the use of certain types of blades that have been approved by Society. Consult the rules for your Kingdom to determine if a particular blade is approved for use.

Any blade listed here must still pass the flexibility testing described in section 1.B of the appendix to the Rapier Combat Handbook.

Acceptable Blades

The blade types below have been reviewed and deemed acceptable for use by the Society Rapier Marshal's office:

Blade	Notes	Approved for	Date
Commercially manufactured fiberglass or plastic foil blades	These blades are often used in youth rapier	Youth Rapier	Jan 2012
Fiberglass constructed blades	Home-made blade simulations made from fiberglass rods. These types of blades were constructed before the wide availability of metal heavy rapier blades and are still used in some parts of the Society due to restrictions imposed by modern law.	Heavy Rapier	Jan 2012

Unacceptable Blades

The blade types below have been reviewed may not be used in any Society rapier activities:

Blade	Notes	Date
Bud K blades, all types		Jan 2012
Saber blades	Saber blades used in modern (olympic) fencing	Jan 2012

6. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

A. General Problem Solving

Usually the combatants are more than willing to correct any problems, or breaches of the rules, which a marshal points out. This is the desired solution – get the problem fixed. However, occasionally some action is required. In the unhappy event that you find it necessary, here is how you shall proceed. (In order of preference):

- i. Point out the violation (missing armor, grappling during combat, etc.) and ask the fighter to correct it.
- ii. In the case of missing or inadequate armor, do not allow the combatant onto the field until it has been fixed.
- iii. In the case of violation of the rules during combat, call a hold to stop the combat and address the issue. In the case of one or more combatants losing their temper, ask them to leave the field and do not allow combat to resume until they have cooled off.
- iv. If you need support, call on (in order):
 - a. Any other marshals who are present, preferably a Provost or Regional Marshal
 - b. The local Territorial Marshal
 - c. The Marshal-in Charge
 - d. The Kingdom Rapier Marshal
 - e. The Kingdom Earl Marshal
 - f. The local Seneschal
 - g. The Kingdom Seneschal
 - h. The Crown
- v. If the violation cannot be stopped, convince the Marshal-in-Charge and the local Seneschal to end the event.
- vi. In any case where voluntary correction was not made after the problem was pointed out; a written report shall be made to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal and Earl Marshal as soon as possible after the event.

B. Grievance Procedures

There are three procedures for dealing with a grievance:

- The Marshal-in-Charge
- The Report System

- Sanctions

Any appeals and all reviews of decisions made under these systems shall be made with the Kingdom Rapier Marshal and the Earl Marshal.

- i. The Marshal-in-Charge - As the Marshal-in-Charge is the head marshal of an event. All problems pertaining to conduct on the field should be brought to his attention. Anyone can bring a matter before the Marshal-in-Charge: a rules violation, unsafe behavior, illegal weapons use, etc., and get an (almost) immediate response. The individual complaining should bring her complaint directly to the Marshal-in-Charge of the event and request they review the matter.
 - a. In the event that the Marshal-in-Charge finds himself with a conflict of interest, he shall select another Authorized Marshal to take his place, preferably a Provost Marshal.
 - b. The Marshal-in-Charge is authorized to handle such problems as unchivalrous conduct, use of excessive force, violations of the Rules of the Lists, use of illegal or un-inspected equipment, etc. He may also review events leading up to an injury, and to examine whom, if anyone was at fault.
 - c. The Marshal-in-Charge has the power to:
 - i. Remove a fighter/participant from the Lists for that event and/or suspend an authorization. A fighter may not practice under a suspended authorization.
 - ii. Warn a fighter/participant that the above actions may be taken if the problem continues.
 - iii. Decide that there was no infraction of the Rules or that other actions may be the cause of the problem and examine those.
 - iv. Any direct action taken by the Marshal-in-Charge (such as removing a fighter/participant from the Lists, suspending an authorization, etc.) must be reported to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal within a week and shall be reviewed as soon as possible by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal.
 - d. Decisions of a Marshal-in-Charge shall stand until reviewed by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal. Appeals of any decisions, either by the complainant or the defendant, shall be reviewed by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal and Earl Marshal.
- ii. The Report System - This system is intended as a means for complaints concerning a given individual to be received and addressed directly by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal. It requires that the Kingdom Rapier Marshal take an active role in the enforcement and oversight of the Marshallate and is essentially a codification of the Kingdom Rapier Marshal's existing powers.
 - a. Upon receipt of 2 or more unsolicited complaints (written or verbal) against a combatant, the Kingdom Rapier Marshal shall review the behavior of the individual involved. These include reports of issues brought before, and actions taken by, a Marshal-in-Charge.
 - b. If the complaints are found to have merit, the individual involved shall be put on report for a specified period of time. The offending individual shall be privately informed that they are on report. Complaints and corrective action

will be forwarded to the individual in question, Earl Marshal, Kingdom Seneschal, and the Sovereign.

- c. While the individual is on report, no further disciplinary action shall be taken under this system unless additional complaints are received.
 - d. If the individual returns to accepted levels of conduct during the report period, no further action will be taken, and the individual will be removed from report.
 - e. If any additional complaints are received during the period that the individual is on report, further disciplinary action will be taken by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal (i.e., revocation of fighting authorization; revocation of a specified weapon class; restriction from fighting except under specified conditions; etc.) on a defined period of time. This decision may and should be appealed to the Earl Marshal and the Crown.
 - f. If further complaints are received and verified during the period of disciplinary action, then the case will be further reviewed by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, Earl Marshal and the Crown for further disciplinary action. The Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier's advice should be obtained.
- iii. Sanctions - In addition to getting the problem combatant off of the field at the time, some long-term sanctions are available. These will be applied by the Marshallate of the Kingdom rather than by a local marshal. Procedures outlined in Caidan Kingdom Law or current Marshal policies shall be adhered to when sanctioning any person.
- a. Possible sanctions include:
 - i. Revoking the authorization of the individual to fight with a particular weapon class, i.e. Heavy Rapier, Cut and Thrust Rapier
 - ii. Revoking the authorization of the individual to fight at all. A fighter may not practice under a suspended authorization.
 - iii. Recommendation to the Crown to banish the individual from participation in events.
 - iv. Recommendation to the Board to banish the individual from the Society and its activities.
 - b. If any of these long-term sanctions are in progress, the Society Rapier Marshal shall be informed by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal.
 - c. If authorization has been revoked, it is desirable to inform the Kingdom Rapier Marshals of any neighboring Kingdoms where the (ex-) fighter might travel. And once the long-term sanction has been applied, a report shall be made to the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier.
 - d. Note that an authorization from any Kingdom may be suspended/revoked in another Kingdom, should it prove necessary and appropriate. Such suspension/revocation means that the fighter may not fight anywhere in the Society until and unless it is resolved. Accordingly, the Kingdom Rapier Marshal shall inform the Kingdom Rapier Marshals of the fighter's Kingdom and the neighboring Kingdoms. Furthermore, if the fighter is subsequently re-authorized, the neighboring Kingdom Rapier Marshals shall again be notified.