

West Kingdom Rapier Combat Rules

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1. INTRODUCTION

Rapier combat in the Kingdom of the West is an attempt to recreate what is arguably the most important aspect of a Courtiers life and responsibilities. For as Baldesare Castiglione wrote, *"I hold the principal and true profession of the Courtier must be that is of arms..."*. He goes on to say, *"I judge it his first duty to know how to handle every kind of weapon, both on foot and on horse, and to know the advantages of each kind; and be especially acquainted with those weapons that are ordinarily used among gentlemen..."*. To this day Castiglione's Book of the Courtier, written at the very beginning of the 16th century, serves as a guide to what is noble, courtly, and worthy of renown.

You may ask why the art and science of arms was so central to his thoughts on the courtier. One of the answers must be that few, if any, places are better suited to forging, testing, and displaying so many virtues as the combat field. So what does this have to do with period fencing in the West and with these rules? Simply put, the Arte of Defense is more than mere skill at arms. Fencing with skill is enough to become well known. However, someone who is well known without being respected and admired for how they fight, no matter how skilfully, is merely notorious. To achieve more requires more. It requires a relentless determination to place honour, courage, friendship, and even style above simple victory. The reward is that combination of notice and respect known as renown. Which, we suggest, was the true currency of the Courtier both then and now.

To that end these rules have been carefully designed to meet two important needs. First, and always foremost, to provide a basis for safe and consistently managed rapier combat within the Kingdom of the West and it's diverse regions. Second, is to provide a common structure for competition allowing us to test ourselves against each other. The marshallate along with the Guild of Fence will set the standards for honour, courage and style which we all strive to attain. They will also organise our re-creations of pre 1600's rapier combat here in the West; thus setting the stage for us to gain notice, respect and eventually renown.

2. RULES OF RAPIER COMBAT

2.1. GENERAL RULES OF THE LIST FOR RAPIER COMBAT

- 2.1.1. 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 Kingdom of the West.
- 2.1.2. 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 authorised to inspect rapier gear.
- 2.1.3. At inter-kingdom 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.
- 2.1.4. 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.

2.1.5. For the purpose of these rules the following definitions will apply:

Arm	The arm is deemed to include that part of the limb between the centre of the shoulder joint and the wrist.
Hand	The entire hand to the wrist.
Leg	The leg is deemed to include that part of the limb from the ankle up to the hip joint not including the groin.
Foot	The entire foot from the tips of the combatant's toes to the ankle.
Torso	The chest, back, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits.
Neck	The whole of the neck trunk, front and back, from above the collarbone to the jaw line. The throat is the front section of the neck, including the carotid and jugular regions.

2.2. BEHAVIOR ON THE FIELD

- 2.2.1. All combatants shall obey the commands of the marshals overseeing the field and the Rules of the List, or be removed from the field and subject to further disciplinary action.
- 2.2.2. Disagreements with the marshals overseeing the field shall be resolved through the established mechanisms outlined in the Marshallate Procedures of the SCA, Inc.
- 2.2.3. Each combatant shall maintain control over his or her temper and behaviour at all times.
- 2.2.4. Striking an opponent with excessive force, or with deliberate intent to injure, is forbidden.
- 2.2.5. Conduct obstructive of normal rapier combat, such as consistent ignoring of blows, deliberate misuse of the rules (such as calling HOLD whenever pressed), or the like, is forbidden.

2.3. USE OF WEAPONS AND PARRYING DEVICES

- 2.3.1. Blows are struck by: thrusting with the point of the blade (thrust); sliding the edge of the blade by drawing (draw cut) or pushing (push cut); or (with the mutual consent of the combatants) by placing the tip of the blade upon, and then drawing it across an opponent (tip cut).
- 2.3.2. Sabre cuts, slashing, chopping or hacking blows are never permitted. Fast circular movements (such as moulinets) may, however, be used to place a blade for thrusts, draw or push cuts.
- 2.3.3. Parrying devices may be used to move, deflect, or immobilise an opponent's weapon or parrying device, so long as such use does not endanger the safety of the combatants.
- 2.3.4. Striking an opponent with any part of a weapon or parrying device not approved for that purpose is prohibited.

2.4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF BLOWS

- 2.4.1. In judging blows, all combatants are presumed to be wearing common civil attire of the period, not armour.
- 2.4.2. The entire body is target area.
- 2.4.3. Tournaments may be held which define areas of the body as if armoured, and to what degree, so long as all the participants are made aware of these special conditions prior to the start of combat.
- 2.4.4. Valid Attacks
 - (a) A valid attack 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.
 - (b) A valid thrust is not negated or lessened due to sliding off after solid contact with the tip of the blade.

- (c) A valid draw cut is to place the edge of an offensive weapon against an opponent and slide the blade while maintaining noticeable and constant pressure against the opponent's body. At least 8 inches (20 cm) of the rapier or dagger blade must be used. As with a thrust, only minimal, but noticeable, pressure need be maintained. Merely laying the blade on the opponent without pressure or movement is insufficient.
 - (d) Tip cuts are not a valid draw cut unless agreed upon by the combatants. See Appendix.
 - (e) Sabre cuts, slashing, hacking or chopping are illegal.
- 2.4.5. A good thrust to the head, neck, torso (including the hip area and groin), inner leg (to the combatant's hand width down the inner limb), or armpit (to the combatant's inner hand width down the limb) shall be judged incapacitating, rendering the combatant incapable of further combat. Draw cuts to these locations shall be judged incapacitating. Tip cuts may be considered incapacitating to any or all of these regions at the discretion of the combatants.
- 2.4.6. A good blow to the arm will disable the arm (Point of the shoulder to wrist). A good blow to the hand shall render the hand useless (wrist down).
- 2.4.7. A good blow to the foot will disable the foot. The combatant must then fight kneeling, sitting, or standing on one leg without placing weight on the injured foot.
- 2.4.8. A good blow to the leg will disable the leg. The combatant must then fight kneeling, sitting, or standing on one leg without placing weight on the injured leg. No rising up is allowed once a combatant is on the ground.
- 2.4.9. An attack must be acknowledged as valid if it is felt through the armour. There is no such thing as a "light" blow.
- 2.4.10. All attacks should be calibrated to the lightest possible touch able to be felt through the opponent's armour. Calibrations should be done with realistic attacks before a bout with an unfamiliar opponent.
- 2.4.11. No new offensive actions may be started once an incapacitating blow or Hold occurs. If the blow is thrown after the hold, incapacitating blow or other event it shall not count.
- 2.4.12. A bout shall be won by rendering one's opponent "disinclined to continue", for whatever reason. The opponent may concede the bout because of an incapacitating blow, because of a disabling wound or series of wounds, because of "accumulated blood loss", or even because of any small scratch, depending upon agreements previously made by the combatants or the scenario in which they are competing.
- 2.4.13. 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 push, grasp or strike an opponent. Grasping or sliding a hand or arm along the blade will result in the loss of the hand or arm unless a parrying gauntlet is being used.
- 2.4.14. 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 combatant 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.
- 2.4.15. A combatant is considered armed so long as one offensive weapon is retained.
- 2.4.16. When disarmed (not holding any offensive weapon) a combatant may, at the discretion of their opponent, recover a weapon/s. If permission is refused they must yield, accepting a safe honourable loss of the bout. In any other situation, the marshal supervising the bout shall call a hold until one of the above actions is settled upon.
- 2.4.17. The following conventions shall be used if a combatant is using the specified defensive equipment:
- (a) Armored Parrying Gauntlets:
 - The protected (armoured) part of the parrying gauntlet shall not be considered to extend farther up the arm than the wrist bones.
 - Parrying gauntlets may be used only to parry an opponent's weapons. The hand

must not close around the parried blade nor grasp it in any fashion, however, sliding along the blade will not cause loss of the hand.

- The block of a straight thrust will be considered to have disabled the hand, since chain mail would not necessarily stop such a thrust from a rapier.
- (b) Cloaks and other non-rigid defensive equipment (hats, etc.):
- These may be used only to parry an opponent's offensive equipment.
 - The block of a straight thrust will be considered to have penetrated through to the body, if any, which was directly behind it. For example, a cloak wound around an arm will not stop a thrust to the arm. While a draping cloak will stop a thrust to the body that is hidden behind it by a distance greater than 8 inches (20 cm).
 - Cloaks with a drop length greater than 36 inches (90 cm) from the shoulder may not be thrown.

2.5. INDIVIDUAL COMBAT RULES FOR RAPIER COMBAT

- 2.5.1. No live steel (non-rebated weapon) is allowed on the list field with marshals or combatants at any time.
- 2.5.2. Each combatant, recognising the possibilities of physical injury to him/herself in rapier combat, shall assume unto him/herself all risk and liability for harm suffered by means of such combat.
- 2.5.3. Engaging in rapier combat with the deliberate intent to inflict injury on an opponent is forbidden.
- 2.5.4. All issues must be resolved on the field or noted to the marshal for later resolution if delay is necessary.
- 2.5.5. The use of Fleche (running at an opponent with rapier extended) or similar uncontrolled attacks is prohibited.
- 2.5.6. A combatant may decline any challenge without dishonour, and without specifying a reason. In a tournament this may result in forfeiture of a bout.
- 2.5.7. Combatants may reject the use of a particular weapon by an opponent, should they deem the weapon unusually dangerous, or it is a non-standard piece of equipment. Before rejecting the use of a standard item however, the opinion of the Rapier Marshal in Charge should be sought.
- 2.5.8. All rapier combat shall be done in the round. The one exception is if a combatant has been put on the ground, such as by loss of a leg. In that case the mobile combatant may not "corkscrew", or require the grounded combatant to turn more than approximately 120°.
- 2.5.9. There shall be no combat between rapier combatants and SCA armoured combatants.
- 2.5.10. Combat between rapier combatants and combat archers may not take place in the Kingdom of the West.
- 2.5.11. No equipment, other than cloaks with a drop length less than 36 inches (90 cm), may be thrown except in controlled actions to remove the equipment from the field.
- 2.5.12. Combatants may engage only when the marshal who is supervising the bout has received verbal acknowledgment of readiness from each combatant and has instructed them to begin.
- 2.5.13. Unsafe or illegal conduct is prohibited. A supervising marshal shall, as necessary, warn or remove from the field any combatant whose conduct is considered unsafe or in violation of the rules. Examples include, but are not limited to:
- (a) Grasping, grappling, tripping or striking the opponent with one's hand or body. This does not include incidental and fleeting contact, such as a break from a corps-a-corps situation or sweeping motions intended to clear the opponent's weapon from the line of attack or to prevent a draw cut.
 - (b) The use of excessive force, whipping or chopping at an opponent, or the unsafe use of equipment.

- (c) Intentionally striking an opponent with any part of an offensive weapon not designed for it, or with any equipment not legal for offensive actions.
- (d) Deliberately grasping or trapping an opponent's equipment, against the body.
- (e) Problems with the acknowledgment of blows.
- (f) Deliberate misuse of the rules to gain advantage over an opponent, such as intentionally falling or dropping weapons when pressed.
- (g) Intentionally ignoring a marshal's command.

2.6. MELEE RULES FOR RAPIER COMBAT (FORBIDDEN IN THE KINGDOM OF THE WEST)

Melee Rapier combat is forbidden in the Kingdom of the West. The following conventions are listed for the understanding and benefit of West Kingdom citizens who may travel to other Kingdoms that allow melee combat.

2.6.1. SOCIETY CONVENTIONS FOR MELEE COMBAT

- A. In melees, combatants are engaged with all opponents immediately upon the call to lay on.
- B. Combatants may strike any opponent with any legal blow if they are within the 180 degree arc of the opponent's front. A combatant who approaches an opponent from behind shall not deliver a blow until he is within that frontal arc. A combatant may never 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 combatant 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. Note: If death from behind is not allowed in a given melee, a combatant who deliberately ignores an attacker behind them, or repeatedly manoeuvres to keep their back to an attacker (thereby preventing any attack on them) may be considered misuse of the rules and obstructive behaviour.
- D. Special scenario melees such as bridge or town battles may impose additional restrictions as needed by the marshals.

2.7. HALTING RAPIER COMBAT

- 2.7.1. Upon hearing the call of "HOLD" all fighting shall immediately stop. The combatants shall freeze, check for hazards in their immediate vicinity, and then assume a non-threatening position with their weapons pointed away from their opponents. Masks should not be removed. Combatants should not move unless directed to do so by the marshal supervising the bout.
- 2.7.2. Holds may be called by anyone for one of the following reasons:
 - (a) Broken or damaged armour and weapons
 - (b) Injuries
 - (c) Terrain and List Boundaries
 - (d) Violations of the rules
 - (e) Requests for calibration
- 2.7.3. Once a hold is called, only a marshal can lift it.

3. EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

3.1. GENERAL EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1.1. No piece of equipment may have rough or sharp edges that could cause bodily injury or damage other equipment, nor may it be constructed so as to be likely to damage other equipment, such as break blades, entrap a tipped blade, tear protective equipment or rip cloaks, etc.
- 3.1.2. All equipment shall be in good repair so as to resist tearing, puncture, breakage or other failure.
- 3.1.3. All equipment shall make an attempt at being period in appearance.

3.2. PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (ARMOUR)

3.2.1. DEFINITIONS

3.2.1.1. 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
- Woven knit tights or lycra/spandex mix tights

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

3.2.1.2. PUNCTURE-RESISTANT MATERIAL

Any fabric or combination of fabrics that will predictably withstand puncture. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Four-ounce (2 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.

3.2.1.3. RIGID MATERIAL

Puncture-resistant material that will not significantly flex, spread apart, or deform under pressure of 12 kg applied repeatedly to any single point. Minimum examples of rigid material are:

- 22 gauge stainless steel (0.8 mm)
- 20 gauge mild steel (1.0 mm)
- 16 gauge aluminium, copper, or brass (1.6 mm)
- One layer of heavy leather (8 ounce, 4 mm) with padding equivalent to ½ inch (13mm) of closed cell foam

3.2.1.4. RESILIENT PADDING

Material or combination of materials that absorbs some of the force of a thrust. One-quarter inch (5-6 mm) of closed-cell foam or the equivalent. The standard padded bib

of a modern epee or three-weapon mask may meet this requirement, depending on construction

3.2.1.5. SFAT (Standard Fencing Armour Test)

Acceptable field inspections shall deliver a consistent force. Tests known to be acceptable include:

- (a) Cloth or garment manufacturer's commercial certification that a fabric is rated to 550 N. (Documentation must be available at the time of inspection.)
- (b) Use of 550 N 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 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.
- (d) For all 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.

3.2.2. GENERAL DEFENSIVE EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 3.2.2.1. There shall be no holes through which a blade may penetrate so as to slide under the layers of protective equipment. Any button hole, lacing hole or other opening that could admit the entry of a blade shall have a protective placket underneath which overlaps the join by at least 3 inches (75 mm) to prevent a blade from sliding inside.
- 3.2.2.2. No skin shall be bared. There shall be overlap of at least 3 inches (75 mm) between separate pieces of protective clothing. Regardless of the combatant's stance or movements, the minimum protection for that body area shall be preserved.
- 3.2.2.3. Additional protective equipment (beyond what is described herein) may be used as long as it does not interfere with the proper acknowledgment of blows.

3.2.3. HEAD PROTECTION

- 3.2.3.1. 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 helmets are also acceptable.
- 3.2.3.2. The face must be covered by either 12 kg mesh (eg, 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.
- 3.2.3.3. Masks and helmets must be secured to the combatant, so that they cannot be easily removed or dislodged during combat. The combination of snug fit and the spring-tongue (with or without the elastic) in a conventional fencing mask is NOT sufficient, by itself, to secure the mask to the combatant.
- 3.2.3.4. Both modern fencing masks and rapier helmets, when inspected, shall comply with the rigid material standard, provisions on facial coverage, and shall show no evidence of impending failure (eg, 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 12 kg mask punch. Marshals doing the testing shall be trained in the use of the punch. Combatants are required to get their mask tested annually. This test is to be performed with a commercial 12 kg mask punch device.
- 3.2.3.5. The rest of the head must be covered by at least puncture resistant material.

3.2.4. NECK AND THROAT PROTECTION

- 3.2.4.1. The entire neck must be covered by rigid material.
- 3.2.4.2. Either puncture resistant material (as a hood) or resilient padding shall back the rigid material. The use of resilient padding is recommended for metal gorgets.
- 3.2.4.3. The cervical vertebrae shall also be protected by rigid material, provided by some combination of gorget, helm, and/or hood insert.
- 3.2.4.4. Throat protection must rest on the collarbone in order to distribute the force of a blow. It must also cover from 1 inch (25 mm) below the hollow of the throat, up to 1 inch below the jaw line. A snug fit is required.

3.2.5. TORSO PROTECTION

- 3.2.5.1. The entire torso (the chest, back, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits) must be covered with puncture-resistant material.
- 3.2.5.2. Acceptable minimum armpit coverage is provided by a triangle of puncture resistant material extending from the armpit seam, covering the lower half of the sleeve at the seam, and extending down the inner/under arm, one-third the distance to the combatant's elbow.
- 3.2.5.3. Male combatants 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 combatants shall wear puncture resistant groin protection.

3.2.6. ARM AND LEG PROTECTION

- 3.2.6.1. Gloves made of abrasion resistant material shall protect hands and overlap any sleeve openings. The feet shall be protected by boots or shoes comprised of at least abrasion-resistant material. Sandals and tennis shoes are forbidden.
- 3.2.6.2. Abrasion-resistant material is required on arms (save as noted above for armpits), legs, and any area not otherwise mentioned in these rules.

3.3. STANDARD OFFENSIVE EQUIPMENT (WEAPONS)

3.3.1. GENERAL OFFENSIVE EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 3.3.1.1. Standard offensive weapons are:
 - Oval & Diamond bladed schlagers
 - Del Tin Practice Rapiers
 - Fibreglass blades
 - Flexidaggers
 - Society approved equivalents to the aforementioned blade types
- 3.3.1.2. Any blade may be used against any other blade.
- 3.3.1.3. All weapons must have a straight grip. Orthopedic and pistol grips are not permitted. Where verifiable medical reasons exist, supported by documentation from their health care provider, the combatant may apply to their Branch Rapier Marshal for an authorisation to use an orthopaedic grip. The Marshal shall note this exemption on their authorisation card. The Branch Rapier Marshal must inform the Kingdom or Principality Rapier Marshal of the exemption within 30 days.
- 3.3.1.4. 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. Steel rapiers or flexi daggers with "S" curves or more than one curve in any 12 inch (30cm) length shall not be used unless they can be properly re-curved by a marshal.

- 3.3.1.5. Weapons may use a hand guard such as a cup hilt, swept hilt, etc. Quillons or a cross guard of some type are required. Quillons may be no longer than 12 inches (30cm) and must have blunt ends of at least ¼ inch (6mm) diameter.
- 3.3.1.6. All equipment must be able to safely withstand combat stresses.
- 3.3.1.7. Foil, Sabre and Epee blades may not be incorporated into weapons that are to be used in rapier combat within the West Kingdom.

3.3.2. BLADE POINTS

- 3.3.2.1. Blade points must be covered with plastic or rubber tips, which must be firmly taped or glued in place in such a way that they will not come loose during normal combat.
- 3.3.2.2. Tips for steel blades must be backed by leather, metal (such as a washer) or equivalent (as permitted by the PRM) to prevent a blades tip from cutting through the inside of the rubber or leather tip. Tips should be inspected internally at least once every six months to determine internal wear.
- 3.3.2.3. Tips will have a blunt striking surface, presenting a cross-section of at least 3/8 inch (9 mm) diameter.
- 3.3.2.4. The tip must be of a colour 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.
- 3.3.2.5. Tips exhibiting excessive wear or abuse must be replaced.

3.3.3. STEEL RAPIERS

- 3.3.3.1. Steel blades must be of commercial manufacture. Artisans desiring an exception must apply to the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.3.3.2. Schlager blades shall be at least 34" (86cm) in length.
- 3.3.3.3. 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:
 - The tang of the weapon may be altered
 - Schlager and Del Tin blades may be shortened so long as it does not make them too stiff
- 3.3.3.4. All steel blades must have a flattened or rolled tip.
- 3.3.3.5. All steel blades must be reasonably flexible. Rigid steel "parrying-only" daggers such as those made from cut down blades will not be allowed.

3.3.4. STEEL DAGGERS

- 3.3.4.1. The length of the blade from guard to tip may not exceed 18 inches (47 cm).
- 3.3.4.2. The entire weight of the flexi-bladed dagger may not exceed 1.5 pounds (680 g).
- 3.3.4.3. Rigid Steel "parrying only" daggers such as those made from cut down blades will not be allowed.

3.3.5. FIBREGLASS RAPIERS

- 3.3.5.1. The weapon shall have a blade constructed solely of fiberglass rod or equivalent and fiberglass tapes, except that the metal hilt may extend 4 inches (10 cm) along the blade for mounting purposes.
- 3.3.5.2. The weapon shall have a flexing resistance no greater than a standard epee.
- 3.3.5.3. The blade shall be wrapped in vinyl duct tape (not cloth backed), or such other tape as will not tear readily. Fibreglass strapping tape may be used in constructing the weapon,

but must be completely covered by the outer wrapping tape.

- 3.3.5.4. The blade must be capable of easily bending to 90° and show no signs of failure or fatigue when so flexed.

3.3.6. FIBREGLASS DAGGERS

- 3.3.6.1. No Dagger will have a blade longer than 25 inches (64 cm).
- 3.3.6.2. The Dagger will be constructed in the same manner and from the same materials as fibreglass rapiers.

3.4. STANDARD DEFENSIVE EQUIPMENT

3.4.1. STANDARD DEFENSIVE EQUIPMENT

- 3.4.1.1. The standard defensive equipment shall consist of buckler, baton, cloak, and parrying gauntlet. All other defensive equipment shall be considered non-standard.

3.4.2. RIGID PARRYING DEVICES

- 3.4.2.1. Rigid parrying devices will be made of sturdy, lightweight materials, resistant to breakage and splintering.
- 3.4.2.2. Offensive bucklers will be considered non-standard devices.
- 3.4.2.3. The buckler size shall not exceed 20 inches (50cm) in diameter. The edges shall be covered to prevent splintering or sharpness. The shield may have any shape as long as the area of the shape doesn't exceed the maximum area of a 20 inch (50cm) diameter circle.
- 3.4.2.4. Batons may be of any reasonable length but should not exceed 1.5 pound (680 g). The RMIC shall be the sole judge of what is or is not a reasonable length.
- 3.4.2.5. Where a scabbard or other open ended item (ie. tube) is used as a baton the end facing the opponent shall be capped, plugged or otherwise sealed where a hole exists that would allow a tipped weapon to enter.

3.4.3. NON-RIGID PARRYING DEVICES

- 3.4.3.1. 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 that are heavy enough to turn the device into a flail or impact weapon.
- 3.4.3.2. Cloaks shall not have any metal or rigid material in the construction of the cloak, except for fasteners near the neck area where the combatant grasps it.
- 3.4.3.3. If the cloak is to be thrown, no rigid materials (metals) are allowed at all.
- 3.4.3.4. Armoured Parrying gauntlets shall be a glove of mail, leather or equivalent resistant material that completely covers the entire hand and wrist area.

3.4.4. NON STANDARD EQUIPMENT:

- 3.4.4.1. Equipment that has been improvised modified or is not previously defined, as standard in these rules is considered non-standard. The use of any equipment, standard or otherwise, in a fashion that is not defined as the normal use of that equipment is considered non-standard equipment use.
- 3.4.4.2. The Rapier Marshal in Charge shall specifically authorise all non-standard equipment and non-standard equipment use. Approval is limited to that competition, unless the Rapier Marshal in Charge previously revokes it.
- 3.4.4.3. Non-standard equipment or equipment use must not pose a greater risk of injury or equipment damage than standard equipment or equipment use.

- 3.4.4.4. Only consenting opponents need face non-standard equipment or equipment uses, and then only after they have been made aware of the nature of the variation. Any combatant may, without dishonour, penalty or forfeiture of the bout, reject a bout against any non-standard offensive or defensive item. If a combatant refuses to face a non-standard item then his or her opponent must either re-equip or forfeit the bout.
- 3.4.4.5. Non-standard equipment shall be constructed as to be recognisable as the original item.
- 3.4.4.6. Devices that predictably cause entangling of an opponent or equipment either by design or by repeated mishap are not allowed. Quillions are exempt from this rule.
- 3.4.4.7. All non-standard offensive equipment shall be constructed of any normal, safe material conforming to the following rules for non-standard offensive equipment.
- 3.4.4.8. Offensive equipment shall be constructed exclusively of cloth, foam, tape, leather or the equivalent, and must not contain rigid material. The offensive part shall provide progressively resistant "give" without allowing contact with any underlying rigid material.
- 3.4.4.9. Experimentation with offensive equipment not allowed under this Code of Rules is permitted only with the specific permission of the Kingdom or a Principality Rapier Marshal. Such permission may be granted for a limited period of time only and is subject to a report and/or recommendation on the item of equipment being tested.

4. RAPIER ADMINISTRATION

4.1. RAPIER MARSHALATE ORGANIZATION

Group rapier marshals must make quarterly reports to their superiors. Their superior will inform them of the due dates of these reports when their office is confirmed.

4.1.1. KINGDOM RAPIER MARSHAL

- 4.1.1.1. Coordinates all Rapier Combat within the Kingdom of the West.
- 4.1.1.2. Maintains the Rules for Rapier Combat in consultation with the Kingdom Earl Marshal and the Crown.
- 4.1.1.3. Is the final arbiter in conjunction with the Earl Marshal of the West and the Crown of the West in cases where a Principality or Marches rapier marshal makes an application for permanent revocation of a marshal's warrant, or combatant authorisation.
- 4.1.1.4. Maintains the roster of Rapier Marshals and Combatants.
- 4.1.1.5. The Kingdom Rapier Marshal can issue Rapier Combat Authorisation Cards, and Rapier Marshal Authorisations.

4.1.2. PRINCIPALITY AND MARCHES RAPIER MARSHALS

- 4.1.2.1. Coordinate Rapier Combat within their Principality.
- 4.1.2.2. Issue Rapier Combat Authorisation Cards and Rapier Marshal Authorisations to members in their region.
- 4.1.2.3. Maintain the roster of authorised rapier marshals and combatants for their region.
- 4.1.2.4. Serve as the head of the disciplinary committee of their region, and is responsible for implementing disciplinary procedures up to and including twelve month suspensions of authorisation.
- 4.1.2.5. Are responsible for forwarding information on injuries and disciplinary actions to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal.

4.1.3. BRANCH RAPIER MARSHALS

- 4.1.3.1. Coordinate Rapier Combat in their local branch (Baronies, Shires, etc).
- 4.1.3.2. Ensure that a qualified marshal is appointed as the "Rapier Marshal in Charge" of any event sponsored by his/her Branch.
- 4.1.3.3. Ensure that the Rapier Marshal in Charge of each event sponsored by that Branch files all the necessary reports within 30 days of the event.
- 4.1.3.4. Report to the appropriate Principality Marshal.
- 4.1.3.5. Forward warrant and authorisation documents to their superiors so that warrant/authorisation cards can be issued in a timely fashion.
- 4.1.3.6. Report breaches of the safety regulations and disciplinary actions taken by the RMIC's of events to ensure that further disciplinary action can be taken where appropriate.

4.1.4. RAPIER MARSHALS IN CHARGE

- 4.1.4.1. Oversee all aspects of safety and proper conduct of rapier combat at a proposed event.
- 4.1.4.2. Select the marshals to assist with an event.
- 4.1.4.3. May suspend combatants from fighting for the duration of the event.
- 4.1.4.4. May not participate in any Rapier Combat during the event if he/she is the only marshal present. They may not marshal their own bout. Otherwise, they may participate in rapier activities (so long as another marshal is present).
- 4.1.4.5. Need not be constantly present in the vicinity of all rapier combat, but must be readily accessible to any Marshal of a particular bout at the event for which they are RMIC.
- 4.1.4.6. Must submit an event report which includes:
 - (a) The name of the Rapier Marshal in Charge and the names of all the Marshals who assisted.
 - (b) A list of all authorisations, whether successful or not, and the results of those attempts.
 - (c) The names of all the participants in Rapier Combat.
 - (d) A description of any problems or disputes that occurred during the fighting, and of any injuries that occurred.
 - (e) A list of those combatants who were suspended from fighting for the duration of the event, the reasons for the suspensions and recommendations for any higher level disciplinary action they consider that might be required.

4.1.5. RAPIER MARSHALS AT LARGE

- 4.1.5.1. Assist in inspections and the running of all practices and lists.
- 4.1.5.2. Conduct authorisations if qualified to do so.
- 4.1.5.3. Provide reports to the PRM of any authorizations successfully completed.

4.2. RAPIER EVENTS

4.2.1. EQUIPMENT INSPECTION

- 4.2.1.1. At least one marshal must be present to perform equipment inspections.
- 4.2.1.2. The marshal conducting equipment inspection shall not damage a combatant's equipment unduly, such as by repeatedly bending the combatant's weapon blade to test flexibility or curvature, performing the SCA Standard Fencing Armour Test (SFAT) (see Section 3.2.1.5 for test procedure) on the combatant's protective equipment. A list of materials which are known to satisfy the SFAT requirements are listed in Section

3.2.1.2.

- (a) If such testing is deemed to be necessary, then it is preferable that the SFAT be performed on a sample of the combatant's protective equipment, if the combatant desires to use the equipment in question.
- (b) When checking for groin protection the Marshal shall ask the combatant to self-test.

4.2.1.3. Equipment that fails inspection may not be used.

4.2.1.4. An appeal can be made on any equipment that fails the field inspection. Such appeals are addressed to the RMIC first, then the Principality Rapier Marshal and finally to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal who will make a final decision.

4.2.1.5. Equipment may be re-presented to the inspecting marshal after it has been modified or repaired to meet the standards.

4.2.2. CONDUCT OF COMBAT

4.2.2.1. Because of the nature of the weapons being used, marshals, and combatants should pay special attention to missing or broken tips, and for badly bent or fatigued blades.

4.2.2.2. The marshal supervising a bout or melee shall enforce the rules and conventions governing rapier combat. If infractions occur during a bout, the supervising marshal shall warn the combatants involved and take steps to prevent their recurrence. If no other solutions are workable, the combatant responsible will be deemed defeated.

4.2.2.3. All infractions of this type shall be reported to the Rapier Marshal in Charge, as they must be included in the event report.

4.2.2.4. The Rapier Marshal in Charge may suspend a combatant and remove him/her from the competition field for the duration of the event for any of the following reasons. (If the Rapier Marshal in Charge is not available during the bout, the supervising marshal may take this action, thereafter reporting to the Rapier Marshal in Charge.)

- (a) The combatant has made his/her third violation of the rules during a bout.
- (b) The combatant, through demonstration of behaviour on the field, poses a risk to the safety of him/herself or others and the supervising marshal believes that the combatant shall continue to pose a risk regardless of verbal warning.
- (c) The combatant refuses to obey the legal commands of the marshals supervising the combat.

4.2.2.5. Any rapier combatant who has been suspended may not participate further in any Rapier Combat until the suspension has been resolved. For such resolution the appeal must first go to the RMIC, then PRM and finally to the KRM for a ruling.

4.2.2.6. Unsafe or excessive force blows shall be discussed on the field, and failing a mutually satisfactory resolution, the aggrieved combatant shall write an official letter of complaint to the Kingdom/Principality Rapier Marshal. Three letters of complaint of separate instances shall automatically suspend the individual from combat until the Kingdom/Principality Rapier Marshal can establish the factual basis of the complaints.

4.2.2.7. At the end of a combat the supervising marshal shall ask whether the combatants are satisfied. Any combatant who leaves the field without stating a problem is declaring their satisfaction with the outcome of the combat. Disagreements with the Marshalleads shall be resolved off the field through the appropriate West Kingdom grievance and appeal procedures.

4.2.2.8. Supervising marshals are responsible for reporting any injury requiring the attention of a health professional (eg. Doctor, Nurse, Chiropractor, or Paramedic) to the Kingdom & Principality Rapier Marshals within 24 hours. The KRM and PRM will investigate the incident and provide a report to the Kingdom Earl Marshal within 10 days of the incident being reported

- 4.2.2.9. If for any reason it becomes impossible to conduct Rapier Combat safely, and in accordance with the rules, or if any officer acting with their due authority removes sanction from an event, the Rapier Marshal in Charge shall cooperate to halt all Rapier Combat at the event. If the Rapier Marshal in Charge makes this determination but is unable to stop Rapier Combat then he/she must withdraw sanction for Rapier Combat from the event. This action and why it was taken must be included in the event report, and all efforts made to immediately contact the Kingdom (and/or, if applicable, Principality) Rapier Marshal and sponsoring Branch Seneschal.
- 4.2.2.10. An attending marshal must supervise all rapier combat bouts. The Rapier Marshal in Charge shall delegate additional marshals to supervise the Marshalling of each bout if more than one is being run at any given time:
- (a) Each bout of 2 combatants shall be supervised by at least 1 marshal. If the bout is part of a tournament it is recommended that there be an additional marshal.
 - (b) If there are not enough marshals available then the number of bouts being run at any given time must be reduced to match the number of marshals. In no case is a bout to be run without a marshal to supervise the combat.

5. AUTHORISATIONS

5.1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1.1. The applicant must provide their Society and Legal names, and a mailing address by which they may be contacted, and complete a waiver or indemnity (whichever is applicable to their region) for the Lists files.
- 5.1.2. The result of the test is not considered valid unless Principality Rapier Marshal receives completed authorisation paperwork no later than 30 days after the date of the authorisation. It is the responsibility of the authorising marshal to ensure that such information is promptly sent.
- 5.1.3. A temporary card will be issued at the time of the test, certifying the qualifications of the applicant, and is valid until a Combat Authorisation Card is received from the PRM.
- 5.1.4. Each qualification must be renewed every two years. Renewals will be conducted by performing a repeat of the test appropriate to the qualification level in the same manner as when applied for the first time. Combatants who have been actively fighting within the last 6 months will have the re-authorisation waived unless letters of complaint have been received by the PRM/KRM.
- 5.1.5. All cards bearing certifications for rapier qualifications must be signed and dated in ink, and the name of the authorising marshal written clearly under the signature.

5.2. COMBAT AUTHORISATIONS

- 5.2.1. In all authorisations safety will be the paramount consideration. A display of minimum skills will also be required in order to pass.
- 5.2.2. Two marshals shall perform the authorisation. One of the marshals should be someone who does not train regularly with the person authorising in order to have a non-biased view. The two marshals must agree on a promotion. There may be more than two marshals involved in an authorisation, but the impartial marshal has veto power over the authorisation.
- 5.2.3. One of the two required marshals must fight while the other observes.
- 5.2.4. Anyone relocating to the West who is already authorised in fibreglass or schlager may continue to use those weapons forms until their card expires from out of Kingdom or 6 months pass. They must still abide by our armour standards and rules of the list while in the West. They must have proven their competence to the West's Marshallate in this time in order to receive a Western Rapier Authorisation card. If they have not and their card expires then they must go through the normal authorisation process.
- 5.2.5. There are 6 authorisations through which Rapier combatants may go through on their way to

mastering the Art of Defense. The combatant may not authorise for the use of steel weapons until one month after their second authorisation. An authorisation for Defensive Devices carries over automatically to steel weapons. Combatants must authorise in Single Fibreglass Rapier and Offhand Defensive Devices first.

- Single Fibreglass Rapier
- Offhand Defensive Devices
- Offhand Weapons (Fibreglass)
- Steel Rapier
- Steel Rapier & Dagger
- Case of Steel Rapier

5.2.6. Requirements:

(a) Single rapier authorisations:

- Safe weapon usage.
- Basic footwork including advances, retreats, crossover steps and lunges.
- Basic defenses including parries made by the rapier, the off hand and the proper use of distance.
- Basic offense is the ability to attack their opponent in at least 3 different ways while maintaining proper calibration. Such as a thrust, lunge, draw cut, push cut, etc.
- The authorising person must verbally demonstrate an understanding of the rules and conventions of combat in the West
- They must fight from the ground and attack someone grounded as well.
- They must be able to inspect themselves and their opponents armour and weapons.
- They must be able to respond properly to a hold called by the marshal and their opponent.
- They must be able to recognise a situation where a Hold should be called and then call it effectively. Examples include their opponent grasping their weapon, repeatedly hitting too hard and requesting a re-calibration, etc.

(b) Off hand defensive devices:

- Competent and safe use of the device must be demonstrated.
- Knowledge of the rules pertaining to the use of these devices must be demonstrated.

(c) Rapier and Dagger

- Active use of the dagger must be demonstrated for both offense and defense.
- Proper calibration must be demonstrated.
- Knowledge of the rules pertaining to off hand daggers must be demonstrated

(d) Case of Rapier:

- Active and coordinated use of the two rapiers must be demonstrated.
- Proper calibration with both weapons must be demonstrated with both thrusts and cuts.
- Knowledge of the rules pertaining to case of rapier must be demonstrated.

5.3. MARSHALLATE AUTHORISATIONS

- 5.3.1. Anyone interested in becoming a marshal must first be a Marshal in Training (MIT) for at least 6 months in the Kingdom of the West unless otherwise indicated by the KRM. They must also be authorized rapier combatants.
- 5.3.2. MIT's may marshal and assist in the training of rapier combatants and the running of a list under the direct supervision of a marshal. Said marshal must be present with the MIT and not engaged with any other activity. ie. They must marshal the same list together, not one each.
- 5.3.3. All MIT's must have a Marshal as a sponsor to learn from and who will arrange for the eventual authorisation of said MIT.
- 5.3.4. MIT's must demonstrate their familiarity with all the rules of the list in the West pertaining to rapier combat.
- 5.3.5. They must have assisted in marshalling at least 3 separate tourneys.
- 5.3.6. MIT's must be familiar enough with the weapons forms and styles of combat to be able to ensure a safe environment for the rapier combatants in the list or practice.
- 5.3.7. The Authorisation must include an oral exam including the following subjects:
 - (a) Rules of the list and how to conduct a tourney field
 - (b) How they should handle safety issues and Holds
 - (c) They must know their chain of command
 - (d) Knowledge of the armour and weapons requirements
- 5.3.8. There must be at least 2 marshals involved in the authorisation of an MIT (not including the MIT).
- 5.3.9. To be an authorising marshal the MIT must satisfy the following:
 - (a) MIT's must be able to teach the basics required for someone to satisfy the requirements for the first 3 combat authorisations. They must also have demonstrated the ability to teach these skills in the 6 months prior to the authorisation.
 - (b) A scenario must be run where they "authorise" a marshal who is acting as a fencer. The MIT will run the authorisation from verbal questioning to inspection, observing the combatant and fighting a part of the authorisation. The MIT must then pass or fail the "candidate" with specific reasons. The reasons must have been discussed with the other marshals present. The MIT must also recommend a course of action if the "candidate" fails, in order to bring them up to an acceptable standard.
 - (c) More than one scenario is recommended. The MIT should have been tested thoroughly on all pertinent issues.

6. APPENDICES

6.1. TIP CUTS

- 6.1.1. Tip cuts may be used in practice or tournament by agreement of both combatants and the supervising Marshal. The following standards must be adhered to when using tip cuts.
- 6.1.2. A valid tip cut is to draw the point of the blade a minimum of 3 inches (76 mm) across an opponent's body. As with a thrust, only minimal, but noticeable, pressure need be maintained. Only tip cuts to critical areas need be called, these areas are:
 - The neck, especially at the front of the throat and the sides of the jugular veins.
 - The brachial arteries, on the inside of the upper arm between shoulder and elbow.
 - The femoral arteries, on the inside of the upper leg between groin and knee.
 - The abdomen, between the bottom of the rib cage and the pelvis.

6.2. DISCIPLINARY RULES

6.2.1. COMBATANTS

- 6.2.1.1. Any combatant who is suspended from fighting at an event or practice shall have their combat authorisation temporarily suspended. The PRM/KRM shall then establish the factual basis of the suspension. If the PRM/KRM upholds the suspension, they shall then notify the combatant and all local branch rapier marshals that the combatant's combat authorisation has been suspended.
- 6.2.1.2. Upon receiving a suspension notification, the combatant, in conjunction with their local branch rapier marshal must make arrangements for retraining under an authorising marshal. Retraining shall continue until the appointed trainer feels that the combatant has overcome the problems that resulted in the suspension.
- 6.2.1.3. Once retraining is completed, the trainer must arrange a re-authorisation bout for the combatant with 2 impartial authorising marshals. The trainer must also prepare a report for the impartial marshals, that outlines the training undertaken, prior to the re-authorisation bout. Both impartial marshals must agree that the suspended combatant has overcome the problems that resulted in the suspension. If the combatant is found acceptable, the impartial marshals shall then complete authorisation paperwork and forward it to the PRM/KRM, along with the trainer's report. If the combatant is not found acceptable, the marshals shall discuss further requirements they feel necessary with both the combatant and their trainer.
- 6.2.1.4. Upon receiving the re-authorisation paperwork, the PRM/KRM shall ensure that the re-authorisation process has been followed correctly, and if satisfied shall notify the suspended combatant in writing that the suspension has been lifted.
- 6.2.1.5. Any combatant who is reinstated after a suspension shall be placed on probation for a 6 month period. Any probationary combatant who is suspended shall have their authorisation revoked for 12 months. After an authorisation revocation, the combatant must restart the authorisation process from the beginning as a new combatant.
- 6.2.1.6. Any combatant who has their authorisation revoked twice shall be recommended to the Earl Marshal and Crown by the KRM, for permanent revocation of their rapier authorisations.
- 6.2.1.7. Combatants who knowingly take the field with previously failed equipment (masks, weapons, armour) shall have their authorisation suspended for a period of 12 months, subject to review by the Rapier Marshallate.

6.2.2. MARSHALS

- 6.2.2.1. Any marshal who knowingly allows a combatant to engage in combat with any equipment that does not pass safety standards shall have their marshallate authorisation suspended for a period of not less than one year, subject to review by the Rapier Marshallate.
- 6.2.2.2. Any marshal who recommends the reinstatement of a suspended combatant, whose authorisation is later revoked, shall have their marshallate authorisation suspended for 6 months. Following the suspension, the marshal shall have to pass the trial authorisation bout before the marshallate authorisation is reinstated.
- 6.2.2.3. Any marshal, who has their rapier combat authorisations suspended, shall also have their marshallate authorisations suspended. Marshallate authorisations can not be reinstated until the probation period has expired, after which they must retake the marshallate authorisation qualifications.
- 6.2.2.4. Any marshal, for whom the PRM/KRM has received 3 letters of complaint, shall have their marshallate authorisation temporarily suspended. The PRM/KRM shall then establish the factual basis of the complaints. If the PRM/KRM upholds the suspension, they shall then notify the marshal and all local branch rapier marshals that the marshal's authorisation has been suspended.

6.2.3. APPEALS

- 6.2.3.1. All marshallate decisions regarding suspensions and authorisation revocations may be appealed.
- 6.2.3.2. Appeals shall first be directed to the RMIC, then the Branch Rapier Marshal, then the Principality Rapier Marshal then the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, then to the Earl Marshal, then to the Crown, then finally to the Society Rapier Marshal / Earl Marshal and BOD.
- 6.2.3.3. Appeals against rulings shall only be taken to a higher authority if a satisfactory resolution cannot be found at a lower level. A lower authority cannot over rule rulings made by a higher authority.
- 6.2.3.4. All appeals must be lodged within 72 hours of being informed of the decision. Appeals to a higher authority must be lodged in writing (electronic mail, surface mail or fax).

6.3. WEST KINGDOM ROYAL GUILD OF FENCE

In AS 33, a Royal Guild of Fence was established for the promotion and teaching of rapier combat within the West Kingdom. Participation within the Guild is required for rapier combatants within the Kingdom, as the Guild is the recognised organization for the training and development of period fencing. The Charter was amended in AS 35 to reflect changes necessary for the continued development of period fencing in the Kingdom of the West. The following Charter is provided for the information of all those interested in the Royal Guild of Fence.

THE CHARTER

This Charter through the Wisdom and Might of Jade our most Noble Sovereign King of the West and the Grace and Beauty of Siobhan, our most Revered Queen of the West does herewith create and endow the Esteemed Royal Guild of Fence in the Kingdom of the West. With the exception of the matters that fall under the responsibilities of the Rapier Marshallate and its processes, which shall be operated through the offices of the Kingdom Earl Marshal, and as directed by that office, the Royal Guild of Fence and its lawful agents are empowered to manage and control all manner of things that pertain to the good ordering of the practice of the Arte and Science of Rapier Combat within the Kingdom of the West.

This Royal Charter herein sets forth, for all posterity, the powers, rights and privileges of the said Royal Guild of Fence, and doth specify all things that must be specified in regard to Guild Ranks, Qualifications, and the Examination of candidates for all the specified Ranks of the Guild, Furthermore, this Royal Charter empowers the Ancient Guild Masters of Fence, as specified Herein, and the Guild

Masters of Fence who may join their Company as allowed for Herein, to do all such things as are necessary and Lawful to bring these Arts and Sciences into good repute throughout the Kingdom of the West, and the Knowne World.

GUILD RANKS

There shall be five ranks within the Guild

1. Scholar
2. Free Scholar
3. Journeyman
4. Provost
5. Guild Master of Fence / Courtier To The Crown Of The West

Each of these ranks save Guild Master of Fence can be attained through diligent study and application of the Rules of the Guild which can be found published here and through the same level of the study of the Rules of Rapier Combat in the Kingdom of the West. No member may make their Prize for advancement without the consent of a Guild Master, Provost or Journeyman who shall deem them ready as laid out in the statutes of this charter.

In addition to qualify for each rank a candidate must play their prize against at least two opponents who have already attained the Rank being sought. These opponents and the Guild Master of Fence or Provost conducting the examination must agree that the candidate has fulfilled the requirements for qualification for the new Rank.

A failed Prize may not be re-fought until a full three months has elapsed since the most recent failed attempt.

LORD GUILD MASTER OF FENCE

There shall be chosen from among those Ancient Guild Masters of Fence, and such Guild Masters of Fence who may join the fifth rank of the Guild, one who shall be the Lord Guild Master of Fence and who shall be the Principal of the Guild in matters that concern it.

This position shall be held for a period not to exceed two years, after which the Body of Guild Masters of Fence shall recommend by majority opinion, one of his or her own number to be acknowledged by the Crown of the West to this role, unless the Crown expresses displeasure with the candidate. In such cases, the Body of Guild Masters of Fence will continue to propose candidates, by majority opinion, until the Crown deems a candidate worthy. No person may ever hold this position for more than two consecutive terms. Those who hold this position shall be of high regard in the Kingdom, and shall have their names recorded in a document to be kept with this Royal Charter. It was the pleasure of the Crown to name the Ancient Guild Master of Fence, Arenwald von Hagenberg, as the Principal of the Guild, and first Lord Guild Master of Fence. The Ancient Guild Master of Fence, Francois Henri Guyon, has since succeeded him.

SCHOLAR

Any person who professes an interest in the Noble Arte of Fence shall be immediately admitted to the rank of Scholar, to undertake study with whichever Guild Master, Journeyman or Provost can be found to take them as a student. This, with the proviso that no Guild Master, Journeyman or Provost shall charge a fee for their instruction or prevent them from gaining instruction from any other Guild Master, Journeyman or Provost of the Guild who may from time to time wish to impart Knowledge of their Arte and Science shall be made in accordance with the statutes set out in the Rules of Rapier Combat of the West Kingdom and with the intention of preparing the Scholar to play his Prize. No Scholar shall be permitted to play the prize until after one month has elapsed since commencing their instruction. Further, no scholar may play their Prize until they have successfully authorized for Rapier Combat as detailed in the West Kingdom Rapier Combat Rules.

FREE SCHOLAR

Upon successfully playing the Free Scholars Prize a Scholar shall be admitted to the rank of Free Scholar within the Guild. As a sign of this new rank each Free Scholar shall be entitled to wear the Badge of the Guild in plain silver metal upon their person. In addition Free Scholars are permitted to participate in

displays of Combat and to participate in the playing of Prizes of any other aspiring Scholar wishing to join them in this rank. Each Free Scholar may further their practice and study of rapier, and upon demonstration of sufficient competence before a Guild Master or Provost may be allowed to play their Journeyman's Prize. No Free Scholar may play their Journeyman's Prize within three months of playing their Prize to become a Free Scholar. Further, no Free Scholar may play their Journeyman's prize until they have successfully authorized in at least 3 of the weapons forms detailed in the West Kingdom Rapier Combat Rules.

JOURNEYMAN

After successfully playing their Journeyman's Prize a Free Scholar shall be admitted to the company of Journeymen of the Guild. The Journeyman may wear the Badge of the Guild upon a sash of Green cloth as a sign of their status within the Guild. Journeymen of the Guild may be called upon to act as agents of the Guild to Assist in the management of such Prizes and other displays of Rapier Combat as may occur from time to time. In addition, with the permission of a Provost or Guild Master, a Journeymen may engage to teach such Scholars and Free Scholars as may wish to learn under their tutelage, and may, with the permission of those Provosts and Guild Masters within their area, establish their own Schools of Fence for the benefit of the Kingdom and the enrichment of their fellow citizens. Such Journeymen as wish may further study the subtleties of the Guild with such Guild Masters or Provosts, who will train them to prepare themselves to play their Provosts Prize. Journeymen of the guild are expected to participate in the playing of the Journeymen's Prizes of other candidates wishing to be elevated to that rank within the Guild. At least two Provosts or one Guild Master must sponsor journeymen who wish to advance to the rank of Provost. Such sponsorship will be granted only when the sponsors have determined that the Journeyman has achieved a level of participation in the Kingdom, which includes activities beyond the scope of the Guild. No Journeyman may play his Provosts Prize until after a full six months have elapsed since attaining the Rank of Journeyman.

PROVOST

Upon successfully playing the Provosts Prize a Journeyman shall immediately be acclaimed as a Provost of the Guild, and be entitled to all the rights and responsibilities of that rank as laid down in the statutes of the Guild. As a sign of their rank Provosts of the Guild are permitted to wear the Badge of the Guild displayed on a sash of Blue cloth so that all may know of their skill and prowess. In addition to the duties and responsibilities of a Journeyman, Provosts of the Guild may be called upon to Organise and Coordinate Rapier activities within the Kingdom, and to participate in playing the Prize with any Journeymen who might wish to advance by playing their Provosts Prize. Before any Provost may attempt to play the Prize to be a Guild Master they must endeavor to enrich the Principality in which they live, or to serve the Kingdom in some notable fashion. Such efforts may take any form typically recognized as the pursuit of noble Services, Arts or Sciences in the Realm. No Provost may play their Guild Masters Prize except upon invitation from the Body of the Guild Masters of Fence and the Crown. No such invitation may be made until a Provost has held this rank for a minimum of 6 months from the time that they successfully played their Provost's Prize, although longer intervals shall be deemed no insult. Such an invitation must be agreed upon by a majority of the Guild Masters of Fence resident in the Principality or region in which the candidate lives. Meetings may be held to determine potential candidates at the Crown and Coronation events for the Central West & Marches, and at Coronet and Investitures in Lochac & Oertha.

GUILD MASTER OF FENCE

This Charter, doth for the good of the Kingdom and the proper Development of the Noble Arte of Rapier, also known as the Noble Science of Fence establish within this Kingdom these Ancient Guild Masters of Fence, namely Sorcha de Careman, Sir Georg von Schlager, Xeno, Coronado, Jan Kees Dudle D'Ende, Edmund the Lamé, Francois Henri Guyon, Dameon Greybeard, and Arenwald von Hagenburg and entrust to them the management of Rapier within this our Kingdom. To these noble and Ancient Guild Masters of Fence we also entrust the proper training of all citizens who wish to study these several noble Arts and Sciences, following the Regulations laid out in the Rules of Rapier Combat in the Kingdom of the West.

We charge these Ancient Guild Masters of Fence and all other Guild Masters of Fence who may join them to properly bring to our notice all other Provosts worthy of the title Guild Master of Fence that We may consider them for elevation to the rank of Guild Master of Fence within the Kingdom of the West. Upon such a decision, such Provosts as have been so invited may play their Prize before the Crown or its duly authorised representative and be elevated to the Rank of Guild Master of Fence within the Guild.

This position being confirmed by our letters and a Grant of Arms within the Kingdom of the West. So too do we confirm the rights and titles of these Ancient Guild Masters and confirm unto them a Grant of Arms within the Kingdom of the West.

Each Guild Master of Fence shall have all the rights and prerogatives laid out in this Royal Charter. A Guild Master may wear a sash of Black cloth bearing the Badge of the Guild in Gold as a symbol of this rank. A Guild Master may also choose to wear a black Glove bearing the Badge of the Guild in Gold as a symbol of this Rank within the Guild. It is the solemn duty of all Guild Masters to teach any who come to them for instruction, and to support the endeavours of all members of the Guild whatever their Rank, and to provide all citizens the means for advancement within the Guild, that being the provision of Knowledge through teaching.

It is the duty of the individual Guild Masters of Fence to bring to the attention of the Body of Guild Masters of Fence any Provost who, by his exceptional accomplishments in the study and teaching of the Arte and Science of Period Fencing, and his efforts within the Guild, grace of character, and skill at arms, may be worthy of Playing his Guild Master's Prize.

After due deliberation by the Body of Guild Masters of Fence, such applicants as are deemed worthy shall be brought to the attention of the Crown by the Lord Guild Master of Fence, or his duly appointed representative. If the Crown concurs that the person has the necessary attributes, the Body of Guild Masters shall ask the Crown to nominate a date within a six month, upon which the applicant may play his Guild Master's Prize. This Prize shall be duly publicised, and it is the solemn duty of the Guild Masters of Fence to endeavour to be present to Play the Prize with the applicant, if they are at all able. At least two Guild Masters of Fence must be present for the Prize to be played.

During the six month, prior to the applicant's Prize, the candidate will prepare either an original document, or an oral presentation and accompanying physical display demonstrating their knowledge of at least one Period School or Treatise of Fence, to be presented to the Crown, or it's duly appointed representative prior to the commencement of their Guild Master's Prize.

The Guild Master's Prize shall take the form of bouts, to the first touch, with as many Guild Masters of Fence as wish to try the skills of the applicant. Each applicant must be tested in each of the categories of combat specified in the Rules of Rapier Combat in the Kingdom of the West. Upon the conclusion of the Playing of the Prize, the Guild Masters Present, and the Crown or its duly authorised representative shall convene a meeting to determine whether or not the applicant has successfully Played the Prize.

Should the applicant be judged as having successfully Played his Guild Master's Prize, he will be created a Guild Master of Fence at the next Royal Court, using the Ceremony as specified in this Royal Charter. At the time that a member of the Guild achieves this level of recognition, they shall be given an opportunity to choose as their lasting title either that title noted herein, "Guild Master of Fence" or as alternate, if more suited to the candidate's persona, "Courtier To The Crown Of The West". These two titles are and will always be considered equivalent to each other, and are allowed for the purpose of persona development within the Guild. Should a Guild Master of Fence / Courtier To The Crown Of The West have appropriate reason to use the other title, they shall be allowed such privilege without let or hindrance.

With respect to this alternate title, the Court Herald performing the induction ceremony for a new candidate to the top rank of the Guild will use the appropriate title in all places appropriate in the below Ceremony.

CEREMONY FOR CREATION OF A GUILD MASTER OF FENCE / COURTIER TO THE CROWN OF THE WEST

Herald: His Noble Sovereign Majesty Jade, Rex Occidentalis, and Her Revered Majesty Siobhan, Regina Occidentalis, did in the Centennial Reign, in the year 33 Anno Societatis, for the benefit of this Great Kingdom of the West, recognize by Royal Charter and Decree the Most Esteemed Royal Guild of Fence. Further, They granted to the Ancient Guild Masters of Fence, to wit Sorcha de Careman, Sir Georg of Glacier's Edge, Xeno, Coronado, Jan Kees Dudle D'Ende, Edmund the Lamé, Francois Henri Guyon, Dameon Greybeard, and Arenwald von Hagenburg the responsibility for the proper development and direction of the Arte and Sciences of Rapier within the Kingdom of the West.

They did also provide the means for new Guild Masters to recognised, for which purpose _____, by Right of Arms King of the West, and _____, through Grace and Beauty Queen of the West, call such of the afore mentioned Ancient Guild Masters of Fence that are yet living, and the Body of Guild Masters of Fence in its entirety to present themselves to Their Majesties.

<Guild Masters assemble>

Herald: Let all here present know that it is Their Majesties' intention to entertain a Petition from Their Royal Guild of Fence. Let _____, the Lord Guild Master of Fence (or Let _____, duly appointed representative of _____, Lord Guild Master of Fence) present the Petition to Their Majesties.

<LGMF or Representative presents Scroll to Crown>

LGMF or Representative :

It is the Petition of the Body of Guild Masters of Fence, of the Western Royal Guild of Fence, that _____, a Provost of the Guild who has successfully Played his Guild Masters' Prize, be named a Guild Master of Fence by the Crown, and be granted by Royal Letters the right to teach the Noble Arte and Science of Fence of Fence within the Kingdom of the West.

King: (if present for Prize)

Having Ourselves observed the notable skills of _____, and having found _____, to be worthy as an example for others in this Noble Endeavour, We do acknowledge this petition.

OR

(if not present for Prize):

Having had the notable skills of _____, witnessed and attested by Our representative, _____, and thus hearing that _____ is worthy as an example for others in the Noble Endeavour, We do acknowledge this petition.

King: _____, We do grant unto you the rank of Guild Master of Fence, within Our Royal Guild of Fence in the Kingdom of the West. Wear this sash, and these gloves, entokened with the badge of Our Guild, that all may recognise your achievements.

Herald: Let all know that _____, and _____, the Noble and Undoubted King and Queen of the West do hereby Grant unto _____ the rank of Guild Master of Fence within the Royal Guild of Fence of the Kingdom of the West, and herewith confirm their sole and unique right to bear arms by Letters of a Grant of Arms in the Kingdom of the West, and do charge them with the duties and responsibilities of a Guild Master of Fence as set forth in the Royal Charter of that Guild.

Three Cheers for the newest Guild Master of Fence...!