

Kingdom of the Outlands Rules of Rapier Combat

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Outlands Rules of Rapier Combat - October 2005
Introduction

I. Introduction

The purpose of these rules is to set fundamental standards for rapier combat in the Kingdom of the Outlands, and to make the Outlands rules comply with Society-wide Rapier standards. All fighters and marshals are responsible for knowing these rules.

Rules are designed to promote safe rapier combat in the Kingdom. 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. Additionally, the SCA is a game about the romantic ideals of chivalry. Where safety is not an issue any interpretation of these rules should bear these ideals and those of honour in mind – after 'don't be stupid' the next rule is 'obey the spirit of the game'.

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Equipment Specifications

II. Equipment Specifications

II.1 General

1. All equipment must be in good condition so as to resist tears, punctures, or breakage.
2. Sharp points, edges or corners are not allowed anywhere on any equipment.
3. All equipment must be able to safely withstand combat stresses.
4. Equipment that is likely to break a blade or damage other equipment is prohibited.

II.2 Blades

All blades must be manufactured by commercial suppliers or other merchants or manufacturers expressly approved by the Society Deputy Marshal for Rapier Combat. They are broken down into three categories as below. Any 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. Daggers may be used against either class of rapier blade providing they have an appropriately designed hilt.

All blade types allowed at the Society level in those forms practiced in the Kingdom will be allowed with the exception of foils and fibreglass rapiers.¹

II.2.a. Fencing type blades

"Fencing type" blades will be those similar to the following:

- Epees.
- Doublewide epees (also called musketeer blades).

Foils are expressly prohibited from use in Outlands Rapier Combat.

II.2.b. Heavy Rapier Blades

Heavy Rapier blades are blades of similar type to the following:

- Oval cross-section schlagers.
- Del Tin rapiers
- Zamorano blades.
- Hanwei rapier blades

This list is NOT inclusive; for a full list of currently allowed blades, see the Society Web site.

II.2.c. Dagger Blades

Dagger blades are blades such as:

¹ As of September 2005, these forms are: Fencing Blade and Heavy Rapier.

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- Flexidaggers.
- Safeflex daggers.
- Scotty daggers.

For a full list of all blades, see the Society Web site.

II.2.d. General Guidelines

1. Blades must be clear and free from pits, nicks and jagged edges likely to weaken the blade or snag on an opponent's armor or equipment.
2. 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.
 - Heavier-type blades may be shortened so long as it does not make them too stiff.
3. All blades must be reasonably flexible. Rigid steel "parrying-only" daggers such as those made from cut down blades will not be allowed.
4. All blade ends must be safely tipped
 - Tips will have a blunt striking surface, presenting a cross-section of at least 3/8-inch (9 mm) diameter, and 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 tip² and must leave the striking surface of the tip clearly visible.
 - Tips may be taped in place or, in the case of a heavy rapier blade with an integral tip of appropriate size this need not be covered.
5. Any blade with kinks, sharp bends, or cracks shall not be used. Blades that develop these defects cannot be repaired and must be retired. Blades with "S" curves shall not be used unless they can be properly re-curved.
6. Any blade that is determined by the marshals to be unsafe (i.e., showing signs of metal fatigue such as a sharp kink or a "soft spot" when it bends) must be removed from use. The failed blade shall be painted red or orange for at least half its length, or else cut or broken off so that it is obviously too short for SCA use. The owner of the blade shall choose the method of marking.
 - If a fighter disagrees with the inspecting marshal's decision, they may have two other marshals inspect the questionable blade. The majority opinion of the marshals shall prevail.
 - The fighter may appeal this decision up the Marshallate chain of command, but may not use the questionable blade while the appeal is in process.
7. Weapons may have a hand guard such as a cup hilt, swept hilt or quillions and knuckle bow.
 - The ends of quillions must be blunt, and may not exceed 12" in total length.

² Black and silver tape are NOT considered to have sufficient contrast.

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- Fencing type blades must have a hilt that has no acute angles (including the curve of the quillions) that can easily trap and break a blade nor frontal openings large enough to admit a standard epee tip.
 - Swept and cage hilts are legal for use with 'heavier' type blades.
 - Knucklebows and pas d'anes ARE deemed safe for use with fencing type blades
- Orthopedic (or "Pistol") grips will not be used unless the fighter has approval for medical reasons, supported by documentation from their health care provider.

II.3 Parrying Devices

1. All parrying devices will be made of sturdy and lightweight materials
2. All parrying devices will be designed to be resistant to accidental breakage and to splintering
3. Any parrying device that repeatedly entangles an opponent of their equipment – by accident of design – will not be allowed.

II.3.a. Scabbards

1. Scabbards must be made of lightweight, break resistant material such as ABS type PVC pipe, lightweight wood or equivalent.
2. If PVC pipe is used, the entire scabbard must be covered with cloth or duct tape to minimize the danger of jagged breaks.
3. The scabbard must be no more than one inch longer than the blade used in the primary hand.
4. The width cannot be less than three-quarter inch outside diameter.
5. The end facing the opponent must be capped or plugged.

II.3.b. Bucklers

1. Bucklers cannot exceed twenty inches in diameter (315 sq. inches in frontal area).
2. The edges of the buckler must be at least one-quarter inch wide, and must be free of splinters and sharp edges.
3. Offensive bucklers are considered non-standard and must be approved on a case by case basis. Any offensive element of such an item must be constructed entirely of soft, flexible materials such as cloth, tape and foam

II.3.c. Cloaks

While the size, shape and material for a cloak is left to the individual fighter, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

1. It must be recognizable as a cloak and not as a whip, dishtowel, flail, etc.
2. They may be weighted with soft materials (e.g. rope or rolled cloth) only. No rigid weights will be used nor materials heavy enough to turn the cloak into a flail or impact weapon.

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II.4 Non Standard Equipment

The Rapier Marshal in Charge must authorize the use of any equipment and/or technique that is not described in these rules. This approval applies only to one competition and must be re-obtained for any subsequent competition. The Rapier-Marshall-In-Charge may revoke approval at any time that he or she believes it necessary or prudent to do so. Anyone wishing to employ such equipment or techniques must also obtain the permission of their opponent; see the Rules of the List, below.

Specific categories are listed below; it is not expected that these be fully inclusive.

II.4.a. Non-Rigid Improvised Weapons

Improvised weapons such as hats, mugs, bottles, fish, fowl, sausage, etc. may be used under the conditions above. Soft materials such as cloth, foam, and tape may be required to ensure compliance with the above rules (no sharp edges, locations where a weapon may be trapped, any point that could snag on an opponents armor etc.)

II.4.b. Projectile Weapons

1. Projectile weapons are non-standard. At the discretion of the Marshal-in-Charge, throwing weapons and/or mock-gunnery gear (such as rubber-band guns) may be used in rapier melee combat, as long as safety standards for those arts are met.
2. The use of any projectile weapon is forbidden within formal rapier Tournament lists (single combat), or in any situation where spectators cannot be separated from the potential line of fire by more than the effective range of the projectile weapons to be used.
3. Except as allowed by this rule, no equipment shall be thrown. Any equipment to be removed from the field shall be handed to the rapier field marshal. With the consent of the marshals and both combatants prior to a bout, cloaks may be thrown, so long as doing so does not compromise the safety of the combatants or spectators.

II.5 Protective Equipment

All fighters will wear protective equipment such that they comply with the Society Rapier Rules. The current definitions from these rules are included as an Appendix to this manual but may be superseded by changes at the Society level.

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Rules of the List

III. Rules of the List

1. Combatants shall know and follow "The Rules of the Lists of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc."
2. There shall be at least two Marshals on the field for a tournament, duel, or melee and at least one for any other combat.
3. Combatants may engage only when the rapier field Marshal has received verbal acknowledgment of readiness from each combatant and has instructed him or her to begin.
4. The engagement will halt when "hold" is called, at which point the combatants will check for immediate hazards and then assume a non-aggressive stance and not move unless directed to by the Marshal.
5. The Marshals, combatants or spectators will call hold when safety is compromised, a rule has been violated, the list field is about to be left or entered by a non-combatant, or when a combatant has a question about a touch. A safety issue could be, but is not limited to, a combatant falling, or involved in a dangerous, uncontrolled motion, equipment failure, or potential equipment failure of any kind.
6. The Marshals shall use the term "matte" or "edge of the world" to warn the combatants if they are approaching the edge of the list field. The combatants should then make an effort to avoid running off the field.
7. At the end of each bout the Marshal shall ask each of the fighters if they are satisfied with the conduct of the bout. Each Marshal is also asked if they have any questions. Any participants who leave the field thereby declare themselves satisfied with the bout.
8. There shall be no combat between fighters using heavy weapons (rattan) and equipment and those using rapier weapons and equipment.
9. As previously stated, any combatant may -- without dishonor or penalty -- reject a bout against any non-standard equipment or technique. The non-standard equipment or technique will then be disallowed for that bout; and, the bout will be resolved using standard equipment and techniques.

IV. Rules of Combat

IV.1 General Information

1. All Rapier Combat at official events in the Kingdom of the Outlands shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of the Lists of the SCA, Inc. and these rules.
2. Combatants from outside the Kingdom attending an Outlands event shall meet SCA standards for protective gear, but shall comply with Outlands weapons standards. Outlands fighters authorized with heavy rapiers should, as a matter of courtesy, match weapons with visitors only authorized with heavy-type rapiers.
3. 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.

IV.2 Behavior on the Field

1. All fighters shall obey the commands of the marshals overseeing the field. Fighters who do not obey the commands of the marshals or otherwise conduct themselves in an unsafe or unchivalrous manner will be removed from the field and subject to further disciplinary action.
2. Disagreements with the marshals overseeing the field shall be resolved through the established mechanisms outlined in the Marshallate Procedures of the SCA, Inc and these Rules.
3. Each fighter shall maintain control over his or her temper and behavior at all times.
4. Striking an opponent with excessive force, or with deliberate intent to injure, is forbidden.
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.

IV.3 Use of Weapons and Parrying Devices

1. Blows are struck by thrusting with the point of the blade (thrust) or sliding the edge of the blade by drawing (draw cut).
2. A valid thrust is any touch that would have penetrated the skin. Any blow that strikes mask, helm or gorget shall be counted as if it struck flesh. A valid touch is not negated due to sliding off after contact.
3. A valid draw cut is any cut delivered by placing the edge of the offensive weapon against the opponent and pulling (drawing, not pushing) the blade. Continuous pressure and a draw length of no less than twelve inches are required for the cut to be valid. Saber cuts, hacking, and slashing are not allowed.
4. Push cuts are considered non-standard and may only be used when agreed to before a melee, tournament or individual bout. The definition is the same as those for a draw cut, save the motion is forward. No contact should be made with either the quillions or any other part of the

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guard during the execution of a push cut.

5. Tip cuts are considered non-standard, and may only be used when agreed to before a melee, tournament or individual bout. A valid tip cut is delivered by placing or laying on an edge in the last 2" of the blade against the opponent and drawing it across their body.
 - Continuous pressure and a draw length of at least 9" are required for the completion of the cut.
 - If the blade is drawn all the way across a limb or the throat and this distance is less than 9", this shall also be considered a valid tip cut.
 - A valid tip cut will be considered the same as any other valid touch, disabling a limb or killing an opponent as any other cut or thrust would.
6. Blows that land with significant percussive force (a chopping or hacking strike) are not permitted.
7. 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.
 - 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, loosely draped over, or weighting down the blade.
8. Striking an opponent with any part of a weapon or parrying device not approved for that purpose is prohibited.
9. Combatants may not grapple.
 - This includes the grasping of the opponent and/or the opponent's equipment, punching, tripping, wrestling, and/or pushing the opponent.
 - This does not preclude sweeping moves designed to clear the opponent's blades from line or prevent a draw cut, even if such motion causes accidental arm to arm contact. Inconsequential body-to-body contact can be expected and is not forbidden.
 - Deliberate body-to-body contact is not allowed.

IV.4 Acknowledgment of Blows

1. The entire body is considered a legal target area.
2. Each combatant shall call all touches received.
3. In judging blows, all fighters are presumed to be wearing common civil attire of the period, not armor³.
4. 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

³ Tournaments 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.

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flesh.

5. A good thrust or draw cut to the head, neck, torso, inner groin (to the fighter's hand width down the inner limb) or armpit (to the fighter's hand width down the inner limb) shall be judged incapacitating, rendering the fighter incapable of further combat.
6. A good blow or hand to the arm will disable the arm, rendering it completely unusable.
7. As long as one offensive weapon is retained, a fighter is considered armed. When disarmed (holding no offensive weapon) the combatant must yield and accept a safe, honorable loss unless their opponent allows them to recover their closest weapon. Diving or scrambling for a weapon is unsafe and is specifically prohibited.
8. A good blow to the foot or leg will disable the leg. The fighter must then fight kneeling or sitting. No forward or upward motion from the seated or kneeling position will be allowed. When engaging a rapier fighter who has lost their leg(s), circling is not permitted. The standing rapier fighter must stay within the forward 120-degree arc of the disabled fencer.
9. 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. Fighters may not grasp blades.
10. If an effective blow is thrown before, or at 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.

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Marshallate Rules

V. Marshallate Rules

V.1 Marshals

1. Field Marshals act under the direction of the Marshal in Charge upon the combat field to oversee the safety and the orderly action of combat. These Marshals are responsible for the enforcement of the Rules of Rapier Combat.
2. The Marshal in Charge is an authorized Rapier Field Marshal who is in charge of the rapier activities at a specific SCA function (event, practice, or demo). This Marshal is specifically responsible for the general enforcement of all Rules of Rapier Combat, supervision of Field Marshals, equipment inspection, and the combatant suspension procedure. There must be a Marshal in Charge at every SCA function where there is rapier activity.
3. Group Rapier Marshals are authorized Field Marshals responsible for reporting and managing the Rapier activities of a specific SCA Group (Barony, Shire, etc.) As an SCA officer they are required to fully understand and enforce current SCA Rapier Policies. The Group Marshal must be or assure that there is a Marshal in Charge at all required times.
4. Authorizing Marshals are appointed by the Outlands Rapier Marshal and are charged with the responsibility of authorizing rapier fighters for competition and Field Marshals to oversee safety and the orderly action of combat.
5. The Outlands Rapier Marshal is the Marshal appointed by the Crown and the Earl Marshal to oversee rapier combat within the kingdom and is the only Marshal who may appoint Rapier Authorization Marshals.

V.2 Combat Authorizations

1. Competence in other SCA combat styles does not automatically mean competence in rapier. Separate authorizations in rapier combat are required.
2. All combatants must be authorized for the weapons forms they use and must show proof of authorization (valid green card or equivalent from another kingdom) before being allowed to participate in any rapier combat activities. The only permitted exception to this rule is:
 - Unauthorized rapier fighters may train with, and under the supervision of, authorized rapier fighters in order to prepare for authorization. However, the unauthorized fencer must satisfy current Kingdom requirements for participation in combat.
3. Authorizations from other kingdoms will be honored in the Outlands; however, if a rapier fighter from another Kingdom stays in the Outlands for three months or more, he or she must obtain an Outlands authorization.
4. Out-of-kingdom rapier fighters must familiarize themselves with the Weapons standards and other rules, requirements, and conventions of Outlands Rapier Combat.
5. There are three combat authorizations:
 - Fencing Blade (FB)

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This will cover the use of a single 'fencing type' blade and the combatant's safety with it. It MUST be the first authorization any combatant attempts.

- Heavy Rapier (HR)

This covers the use of a single heavy rapier (and, if the combatant already has a secondary authorization, the use of a heavy rapier and associated forms). Authorization may occur before or after authorization in secondary.

- Secondary (SEC)

This covers the use of all primary blades that the combatant is authorized with and all standard secondary forms (buckler, dagger, scabbard, case and cloak).

6. Fencing authorizations are valid for a approximately of two years, ending on the closest birthday of the combatant being authorised. Shorter durations are acceptable but no day authorizations shall be issued – a fighter is to be considered safe or not.
7. All authorizations require that the combatant pass a test of knowledge about the equipment specifications and Marshallate rules of the Outlands. The fencer must pass a field test using the appropriate equipment before an authorization is issued (though it is not required that the combatant own his or her own equipment). The Authorization Marshal must answer the following question in the negative: "Is this fencer a danger to him/herself or to others?"
8. The Authorizing Marshal shall issue or update authorization cards for those that pass the authorization test and shall report as per the authorizing marshal's handbook.
9. The candidate who fails the test may be given additional training and may apply for authorization at another time; the combatant must, however, inform the marshal conducting the second authorization of their failure to pass if the test was within 6 months. The candidate who passes the tests will be duly authorized to compete in official Rapier Competitions within the Kingdom.
10. A rapier fighter must be 14 years of age or older in order to participate in rapier combat or marshaling. When fighters under the age of 18 undertake training and authorization, 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 a statement explicitly acknowledging the above.

V.3 Marshaling Authorizations

1. Anyone supervising a duel or bout at an SCA function must be authorized as a Rapier Field Marshal.
2. Such authorization shall consist of an extensive test of Kingdom Rules for Rapier Combat, armor inspection, field protocol, required calls, warning procedures, and combat conventions for the Outlands.⁴ The Authorizing Marshal must answer the following question in the positive: "Is this marshal dependable and capable of supervising a safe list?"
3. The Authorizing Marshal shall issue or update authorizations cards for those people who pass the authorization test and shall return the required documentation to the Kingdom Minister of the Lists and Kingdom Rapier Marshal. The form of this reporting is left to the discretion of

⁴ It is not required that the marshal be authorised as a rapier combatant.

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these individuals.

4. The candidate who fails the test will be given additional training and may apply for authorization at another time. The candidate who passes the tests will be duly authorized to supervise Rapier combat within the Kingdom.

V.4 Inspections

1. No combatant shall be entered into a list without having had all equipment pass inspection by the Marshals appointed for such purpose at that list.
2. If any equipment is found to be unsafe or not in compliance with the Rules of Rapier Combat of the Outlands during an inspection or bout, the fencer 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.
3. Each fencer 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

V.5 Marshalling Concerns

V.5.a. Broken blades

Marshals and fighters shall pay special attention for missing tips or broken blades.

V.5.b. 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.

V.5.c. Melee:

1. Melee combats present special challenges to all involved. Melee conventions are as follows unless stated otherwise before a particular melee:
2. In melees, fighters are engaged with all opponents immediately upon the call to lay on.
3. Fighters may strike any opponent with any legal blow if they are within the 180-degree arc of the opponent's front. A fighter who approaches an opponent from behind shall not deliver a blow until he is within that frontal arc. A fighter may never strike an opponent from behind.
4. Killing from behind is allowed if it has been announced beforehand. 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

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dodge away. Note: 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 to be misusing the rules and shall face the appropriate consequences at the discretion of the Marshal in Charge (the least of which is removal from the field).

5. In special scenario melees (e.g., bridge or town battles), additional restrictions may be imposed by the marshals as needed.

V.5.d. Periodic testing of protective gear

1. All gear shall have been formally tested (including fabric and mask tests, as appropriate) at least once every two years. These tests shall be as mandated by the Society rules.
2. Compliance is the responsibility of the individual fighter.
3. 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.

V.6 Unforeseen Situations

Should a situation arise not explicitly covered by these 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, nor can they mandate every line of the spirit of the game that we play. Remember:

- Do not be stupid.
- Follow the spirit of the game.

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Warnings and Suspensions

VI. Warnings and Suspensions

1. The Field Marshals must warn any fighter whose conduct is deemed unsafe. Unsafe conduct includes, but is not limited to:
 - Intentional trapping of any offensive or defensive equipment against the body
 - Striking with excessive force
 - Slapping/hacking with the blade
 - Consistently ignoring touches
 - Deliberate misuse of rules to gain an advantage over an opponent (such as intentionally falling when pressed).
2. Such warnings must be reported to the Marshal in Charge.
3. For egregious or repeated violations, any Field Marshal may remove a combatant from the field or list.
 - In doing so, the Marshal should consider the circumstances surrounding the incident (such as slippery footing, both combatants lunging simultaneously, or other “situational” factors), the experience of the fighter, their recent level of training, similar past conduct, and the opinion of the other combatant(s) and Marshals.
 - All warnings or suspensions must be brought to the attention of the Marshal in Charge.
4. The Marshal in Charge will discuss any incidents with the field marshals and combatants involved, and determine whether the offending fighter should be allowed to continue fighting at the event or whether a longer suspension is warranted. If a combatant is suspended for any length of time (including the duration of one tournament only), the Marshal in Charge shall report the suspension in writing to the Outlands Rapier Marshal within one week following the suspension.
5. The Outlands Rapier Marshal will investigate any suspension within two weeks of notification. If the suspension is found to be valid the Rapier Marshal will either allow the suspended fencer to re-authorize or work with the Earl Marshal and the suspended fighter to determine a resolution satisfactory to all parties. In the event that the matter cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, the Earl Marshal will schedule the matter for the next available quarter court and thereby abide by its decision.

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Appendices

A. SCA Standards for Protective Gear

This is the current SCA minimum standard for protective rules as of the publication of these rules.

Definitions

In order of increasing resistance

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.

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. (Refer to Appendix 1 on Testing Standards.)

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 heavy leather (8 ounce, 4 mm)

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Appendices

Protection Requirements

The following are the Society norms for protective gear.

Head and Neck

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 helms are also acceptable.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. The rest of the head and neck must be covered by at least puncture resistant material. If heavier-type rapiers are being used, 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.

Torso and other killing zones

1. The entire torso (the chest, back, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits) must be covered with puncture-resistant material.
2. Acceptable minimum armpit coverage is provided by a triangle 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 fighter's elbow.
3. 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.

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Appendices

Arms and Legs

1. 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, comprised of at least abrasion-resistant material.
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. 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.