

Armored Combat Handbook



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Preamble

All fighters in the Outlands are to know the rules in the Society Marshal's Handbook and the Outlands Armored Combat Handbook. The rules in the SCA Marshal's Handbook take precedence over the Outlands Armored Combat Handbook.

All fighters are equally responsible for their safety, the safety of their fellow fighters, and of the people around them. At all times, safety takes precedence and should be primary.

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I) General Conventions of Heavy Weapons Combat

- A.** Fighters shall make every attempt to cover or disguise mundane aspects of their equipment to help maintain a period atmosphere on the field. Newly authorized fighters shall be given a reasonable grace period to meet this standard.
- B.** A fighter may not circle an opponent who has lost his/her legs, but must stay within the forward plane of the disabled fighter (e.g. may not step past or around the disabled fighter). The standing combatant may not cross the forward plain of the person on his knees.
 - 1)** The plane of a fighter on his knees is established by the fighter on his knees. If the fighter on his knees sets up square, the plane is established by the shoulders. If the kneeling fighter turns to the side and faces the standing fighter with one shoulder, the line is drawn perpendicular to the direction the kneeling fighter is facing. The standing fighter must adjust accordingly.
 - 2)** The standing fighter may not step past the plane of the fighter on his knees. One may step to the side, but may not cross the plane to throw a shot. (Some kingdoms permit one step—Outlands does not permit a step past).
- C.** If a fighter using two weapons loses an arm or drops one weapon during a fight, no hold shall be called as the fighter is still armed. A hold shall be called as usual if a safety concern is seen with the change-over from two to one weapon.
- D.** When two melee lines engage, any combatant in one line within the range of an opponent in the other line is considered engaged and may be struck. Otherwise the killing from behind rule applies (see below).
- E.** Killing from behind is in effect in melees, unless both sides agree prior to combat. Killing from behind is permitted when the opponent is unaware of the presence of the attacker coming from outside the forward engagement. The attacker shall take safety into consideration when killing from behind. Killing from behind shall be accomplished in the following manner:
 - 1)** The attacker comes within obvious weapons range of the defender and moves behind the defender. Combat Archers must use a secondary weapon to kill from behind.
 - 2)** The attacker places his weapon within the defender's field of vision and says loudly and clearly, "You are dead from behind." The defender must acknowledge the kill immediately.
- F.** Combatants are not permitted to fight while lying on the ground. Killing an opponent on the ground in melee combat shall be accomplished as follows:
 - 1)** The defender has fallen, or is lying on the ground.
 - 2)** The attacker must place his weapon/shield on the defender's body/shield and say loudly and clearly, "You are dead on the ground." The defender must acknowledge the kill immediately.
- G.** No holds shall be called in the event of a dropped weapon in a melee, unless there is a safety concern.
- H.** When a hold is called in a melee, all fighters shall drop to one knee, lower all weapons, and remain still without talking until asked to move by a marshal. If assistance is needed for an injured fighter, those nearest should raise their weapons as a signal to the marshals. The marshals will call the chirugionate if they are needed on the field.

II) Armor and Weapons Standards

A. Armor

SEE SCA MARSHAL'S HANDBOOK FOR ARMOR STANDARDS.

- 1) An un-augmented hockey glove, as well as being blatantly mundane (see OACH I.1) shall not meet the requirements for rigid hand protection. A hockey glove may be augmented with plates as to make it rigid to meet the requirements.
- 2) Finger gauntlets must be made of rigid material and arch over the hand/digit to meet the haft when impacted. (See Society ACH IV.5.b)
- 3) Gorgets must provide rigid protection for the front of the throat that will not “crush” when impacted or thrust.

B. Weapons and Shields

SEE SCA MARSHAL'S HANDBOOK FOR ADDITIONAL WEAPONS STANDARDS.

- 1) Center grip shields and madus – The shield itself is not sufficient protection for the hand and fingers. A half-gauntlet behind either may still not be sufficient. There shall be additional protection for the fingers and thumb. This can be accomplished by a full gauntlet, a rigid plate covering fingers and thumb, or any creation that fully protects fingers and thumb and meets Section VI.5 of the Society ACH
- 2) Weapons that allow the fighter to punch (in which the line between the body to the weapon along which force travels is unbroken, rather than a thrust, in which the line between the body and the weapon is angled) are forbidden.
 - (a) If a fighter is using an axe in one hand, the hand must be below the edge of the blade in order to attack with the blade of the axe. Meaning, there are axe blades that are long and curved enough that a fighter's gauntlet rests under the blade itself when holding the handle. The hand must be below the tip of the blade to ensure that there is a sufficient point of angle and not an in-line punch.
 - (b) All thrusting weapons shall be of sufficient length or design as to not impact with the basket hilt, gauntlet or any other non thrusting part of the weapon when used to thrust.
- 3) Butt spikes are not allowed on one or two-handed swords.
- 4) The maximum length of a spear is nine feet (9').
- 5) Shields must be grasped by a handle and be readily detachable from the arm. A shield may not be attached to the armor. A fighter may carry only one shield at a time.
- 6) Weapon Handles/Shafts – The minimum diameter of any weapon is 1 ¼ inches. Handles on one-handed and two-handed swords may be shaved smaller than 1 ¼ inches, provided the sword has a pommel and quillon, or a basket hilt. Shafts and hafts of any other weapon type shall be no less than 1 ¼ inches in diameter. See VII. D1 & E1 Society ACH

III) Structure of the Marshallate

- A. The Earl Marshal maintains safety, warrants for marshals, enforces fighting rules and conventions, oversees the activities of local Knight Marshals, coordinates fighting conventions for Inter-Kingdom events, handles fighting related disputes and grievances, interacts with the Chiurgeonate, and answers correspondence. Other duties are listed in Kingdom Law.

- B.** The Earl Marshal may appoint authorizing marshals as warranted deputies. Authorizing marshals are responsible for testing and authorizing fighters, and act as the Earl Marshal's designated representative. They must report incidents of safety or concern to the Earl Marshal when needed. They must send all authorization paperwork to the Minister of the Lists monthly.
- C.** If there is any combat related activity within a local branch, that group must select a Knight Marshal with the approval of the seneschal and ruling nobility, to be approved and warranted by the Earl Marshal. The Knight Marshal must report to the group and to the Earl Marshal monthly, is in charge of training fighters, enforcing rules and equipment standards, and generally overseeing combat and combat related activity for this group, including fencing and archery.
- D.** Marshals-at-Large are authorizing and warranted marshals with particular responsibility of general enforcement of marshallate rules/standards and play a major role in authorizing fighters. Marshals-at-Large may be the marshal in charge of an event, marshal tourneys, melees, and other combats, and perform equipment inspections.

IV) Authorizations

- A.** Authorizations may be given for a period up to two years. In order to be authorized, a fighter must be a paid member of the SCA. Authorizations will expire on the fighter's date of birth.
- B.** Unauthorized fighters may train with authorized fighters to prepare for authorization. A waiver must be on file locally or a blue membership card must be in the possession of the unauthorized fighter when training at an official SCA event.
- C.** If a foreign fighter stays in the Outlands for three months or more, he must re-authorize in the Outlands.
- D.** All fighters authorizing for the first time must undergo an armored field test and a verbal test of the Society and Kingdom Armor Standards, Rules of the List and the Conventions of Combat. For this process, and Re-authorization, see the Outlands Combat Authorization Procedures.
- E.** The following armored combat activities require separate authorization:
 - (a)** 1W: One-handed Weapon (all single-handed weapons forms)
 - (b)** 2W: Two-handed Weapon (all two-handed weapons forms)
 - (c)** CA: Combat Archery
 - (d)** ACM: Armored Combat Marshaling
- F.** Any authorization may be suspended immediately for the day by the Marshal in Charge of the event or for a period of three months by the Crown or the Earl Marshal in the case of repeated violation of Society or Kingdom Standards and Conventions. The Marshal in Charge must inform the Earl Marshal, in writing, of any suspension within one week of the incident. Following immediate investigation by the Earl Marshal, the fighter's authorization may be restored or suspended for a longer time. A fighter may not participate in combat activities at SCA events (including practices) during suspension.
- G.** Before fighting, minors (aged 16-18) must complete three copies of the minor waiver and medical consent form, signed by a parent or legal guardian and notarized. The local group keeps one copy on file, the Minister of the Lists retains one copy, and the minor keeps one copy with him/her at all times.

V) Combat Authorization Process

A. Authorizations

- 1)** The authorization process is one of the most important safeguards in SCA, Inc. combat.

Authorizations must be taken seriously. Standards for authorizations shall be geared first towards safety and then towards competency.

- 2) All authorizations for armored combat MUST be held at an SCA event (this includes published fighter practices). When a candidate authorizes during an event they may participate in subsequent activities as allowed by their new authorization.
- 3) There shall be present at all authorizations a copy of the Society Marshal's Handbook and the Outlands Armored Combat Handbook.

B. New Authorizations

The authorization requires four persons: an member of the Outlands Chivalry, a warranted authorizing marshal, one authorized fighter in armor (these three shall be called the Authorization Team or "AT"), and the candidate in armor going through the authorization. The warranted authorizing marshal shall conduct the authorization as follows:

- 1) Authorizing marshal must verify candidate is a member of the SCA. Candidate must pass armor and weapon inspection.
- 2) The "AT" conducting the process shall ensure the candidate is familiar with the Society Marshal's Handbook and the Outlands Armored Combat Handbook. Each shall ask the candidate a MINIMUM of three questions directly relating to any of the above mentioned booklets. If there is a majority (two of the three agree) that the questions were answered adequately, the process may continue. If there is not a majority, the candidate's authorization shall end and that fighter must attempt to authorize at a later event. The marshal shall explain clearly and precisely the reasons for ending the process.
- 3) Candidate must show "AT" how to safely fall down dead/cover-up, kill from behind, and kill on the ground correctly.
- 4) The candidate shall spar with the test fighter in armor. Blows shall be exchanged and acknowledged with clear declaration, and loud enough so the "AT" may hear, the blow location and whether the blow was good or light. After a number of acceptable passes, ask the test fighter to pick up the pace and see how the candidate deals with the enhanced pressure. The objective of this step is to determine whether or not the candidate is safe and aware enough to participate in the rest of the authorization. A majority of the "AT" must concur that the fighter has passed this step for the authorization to continue. If not, then the authorization process ends as in step (2).
- 5) The candidate and the test fighter shall take turns fighting one another from their knees and then both shall fight from their knees. Declaration of blows shall be the same as (d). The objective of this step is to determine whether or not the candidate understands the rules of fighting from, and against a person, on the knees. There must be a majority of the "AT" in agreement that the candidate has passed for the authorization to continue. If not, then the authorization process ends as in step (2).
- 6) The final step shall be a tournament type round. During this step, all blows shall be taken in a normal manner (losing one's legs, an arm, and falling down when killed). This is not a pass/fail aspect of the authorization. This portion is to ensure that the new fighter is educated in tournament activities (i.e. proper salutations, falling dead, and courteous etiquette).
- 7) The "AT" shall consult to determine if the authorization was successful. There must be a majority of the "AT" for the candidate to receive authorization. If the majority is positive, the authorizing marshal shall fill out the candidate's "Green Card" and that fighter shall be congratulated and acknowledged as an authorized fighter.

- 8) Four persons required for an authorization: If the AM is also a member of the Chivalry, a fighter who has ACM authorization may serve as the second observing marshal. So, you could have a Chivalry member, an ACM, an authorized fighter in armor, and the fighter to be authorized.

C. Re-Authorizations

- 1) Fighters wishing to re-authorize must show a verbal knowledge of the rules by successfully answering a minimum of three questions each asked by one member of the Chivalry and the authorizing marshal. Those fighters who have not been active within the Kingdom for a period of more than 1 year, or whom the authorizing marshal deems unfamiliar with current combat regulations, must go through the New Authorization process to renew "Green Cards."
- 2) Re-Authorizations: Only the two observing marshals are required in addition to the candidate one Chivalry and the authorizing marshal. If the AM is also a member of the Chivalry, an ACM may be the second questioner.

D. Armored Combat Marshal (ACM) Authorizations

- 1) These individuals may marshal armored combat and assist an authorizing marshal, or marshal-in-charge of an event, with armor/weapon inspection.
- 2) All non-fighters who wish to participate as Field Marshals for armored combat must authorize as such. The "Green Card" of a non-fighter who becomes an authorized Armored Combat Marshal shall be marked ACM only.
- 3) The authorization requires four persons: an Outlands Chivalry, a warranted authorizing marshal, an authorized fighter (these three shall be called the Authorization Team "AT"), and the candidate going through the authorization. Authorizations for ACM shall be conducted at tourneys, practices and melees so that candidate may show knowledge in all combat situations. The authorization process for ACM may take more than one event to complete. The authorization shall be conducted as follows:
 - (a) Authorizing marshal must verify candidate is a member of the SCA.
 - (b) The "AT" shall ensure the candidate is familiar with the Society Marshal's Handbook and the Outlands Armored Combat Handbook. Each shall ask the candidate a minimum of three questions directly relating to any of the above mentioned booklets. If there is a majority (two of the three agree) that the questions were answered adequately, the process may continue. If there is not a majority, the candidate's authorization shall end and that person must attempt to authorize at a later event. The marshal shall explain clearly and precisely the reasons for ending the process.
 - (c) Candidate must show competence in inspecting armor and weapons for safety and to determine repairs, if needed.
 - (d) Candidate must show they can recognize danger to themselves on the field and take evasive action without stopping the fight.
 - (e) Candidates must have the ability to project commands so that may be heard by combatants, before and during combat. The candidate must show a willingness to take control, show style, good technique, show safe behavior, promote safety, react well to pressure, resolve problems well, and show the ability to recognize concerns. If not, then

the authorization process ends as in step (b).

- (f) Once the candidate has shown knowledge and competency in tourney and melee situations, the "AT" shall confer to decide if the candidate exhibits adequate performance as an Armored Combat Marshal. There must be a majority of the three for the candidate to receive authorization. If the majority is positive, the authorizing marshal shall fill out the candidates "Green Card" and that person shall be congratulated and acknowledged as an Authorized Combat Marshal.