

Realms of Avalon

Combat Manual



Playtest Version 1.0 March 2003

INTRODUCTION

Welcome, Fellow Warriors!

We bid you greetings to the wonderful world of re-creating the combative arts! While historically these skills weren't always done in fun, *today* we have all pleasure in training our bodies and testing our skills with foes we consider to be our friends. We meet in either single combat or on battlefields full of armies to clash in mighty waves, only to round things off by a good hangout in the tavern or feast afterwards. What a way to make war!

There are two main tracts of combat currently done in Realms of Avalon. The *Armored* tract replicates medieval-era forms and includes Shinai, Waster, and Steel combat styles. The *Rapier* tract replicates renaissance-era forms. In addition to the knighthood tracts, there is also Combat Archery that re-creates missile style combative arts.

Armored: Shinai

Shinai is the usual first step, and use to train for Waster and armored combat. Shinai is named for the lightweight Bamboo weapons used. Light padded armor is easy for even the newest of members to scrounge, make, or buy, and there is very little financial investment

Armored: Waster

Waster is the intermediate step between shinai and armored combat and uses rattan weapons, heavier than shinai and closer to the feel of real weapons. It is for people who have experience and training, and have learned control of their force, blows, and movements. It requires more sturdy armor and more investment in making or purchasing of gear.

Armored: Steel

Steel combat is only for people who had much experience and training, and have proven that they are not only safe, but dedicated to learning and experiencing historical combat. Sometimes referred to as 'live steel' or "heavy" combat, Steel combat uses real steel weapons and real armor, making it a much more historically accurate style of medieval era armored combat. The edges of all weapons are, of course, blunted and the movements modified for sport. Still, it is still a close experience of armored warfare of old, and thusly requires appreciation for practice, control, dedication, and investment into equipment.

Rapier:

This style replicates the combative styles of the renaissance (and is sometimes called "Renaissance" combat). It uses a special blunted and strong blade called a "schlager", often used for stage combat as well as competitive recreation sport. Sometimes surgical-

tubing guns to simulate matchlock pistols are used too. While rapier combat shares the same historical roots as olympic style fencing, it is a very different creature in equipment and application. Rapier is also very different from medieval based combat techniques, and so shinai is not a requirement. Rapier is a combative art form requiring a lot of control, precision, and thought. A word to the newbie: don't let the light weapon fool you. Rapier has the potential to be more injurious than even armored combat using live steel!.

Combat Archery:

Ever wonder what the French said after Agincourt? Archery and missile weapons are an important part of historical warfare, and a fun part of modern sport combat. Light bows and special foam padded missiles make replicating it a lot more fun than it was in history. The use of missile weapons really helps get a closer feel to many historical war scenarios, and can add a realistic and exciting dimension to combat. The details of Combat archery equipment and supplies are mainly included in the Archery Manual and Combat Archery Equipment Guide, though this manual will talk about how combat archers interact on the rules of the field.

Like other re-creation skills in Avalon, those who enjoy spending time on learning certain skills can earn recognition of their efforts by receiving a “knighthood” as they participate in combat. However, anyone with an interest can dabble in combat. There is no requirement that says someone who just wishes to play can't stay with shinai, or spend time on combat archery, rather focusing on the path to knighthood, if they choose.



Interested in the Combative Arts??

This manual contains the rules and requirements we use to make sure people learn and play combat as safely as possible.

Read on to learn more!

Enjoy!

PART ONE: EQUIPMENT FOR COMBAT

I WEAPONS REQUIREMENTS

A. SHINAI WEAPON REQUIREMENTS

Only commercially produced shinai are allowed. Modifications to shinai are subject to approval of the local marshal.

Cross guards may protrude no more than 10 inches and have ends no smaller than the end of the shinai.

There shall be no thrusting tips allowed on shinai .

Shinai pole arms. Maximum length of seven feet. made by attaching a shinai to wood or relatively inflexible PVC in such a way that the shinai will not disconnect from the pole during combat.

Variations on pole arms must be approved by the local marshal before use.

B. WASTER WEAPON REQUIREMENTS

No metal shall be used in any striking surface.

Waster weapons shall be made of combat-quality rattan.

The finished weapon will have a diameter of no less than 1 1/4 inch.

The entire length of blades will be wrapped in such a manner as to prevent rattan splinters from coming free of the weapon.

Blades must have a clearly marked "edge".

Swords must have some form of hand guard.

Guards and pommels must be securely attached .

Guards shall have no protruding points of less than 1 1/4 inch at their end.

Weapons will have a weight of no more than 1 lb. per foot of length.

Suggested materials for add-on construction (axe heads, protrusions on pole arms, etc.) are thick closed cell and/or open cell foam.

1. Waster Hafted Weapons

The hafts must be of rattan.

The heads must not be entirely made of a rigid material.
The head must be securely attached to the haft.

The construction of the head shall allow some give between striking surface and the haft of the weapon.

2. Waster Pole arms

The shafts of pole arms shall be made of rattan.

No pole arm shall exceed 10 feet.

The heads of pole arms shall be constructed in a manner similar to hafted weapons.

Striking surfaces shall be clearly marked.

No pole arm may have cutting or smashing heads at each end.

3. Waster Thrusting

Thrusting tips are permitted at either the end of the blade or as a butt spike.

Thrusting tips shall be 2 inches in diameter or in cross section. shall not protrude more than 1/2 inch into a legal face guard, and shall have progressively resistant "give" and not allow contact with the rigid material of the blade or haft.

C. ARMORED WEAPONS REQUIREMENTS

The striking surfaces of all weapons must be made of metal.

No portion of any weapon may protrude into a legally constructed helm more than 3/4 of an inch.

1. Steel Edged Weapons

Blades of 18 inches or longer may be used for slashing or for thrusting if an approved thrusting tip is in place.

Blades under 18 inches in length are for thrusting only and require legal thrusting tips.

Blades must have a one inch blade width measured two inches from the tip.

The ends of blades shall be rounded such that they do not come to a chisel point

The total weight of one handed weapons shall not exceed five pounds

The total of two handed or hand and a half weapons shall not exceed eight pounds.

2 Steel Hafted Weapons

Total weight shall not exceed five pounds .

The weight of the head shall not exceed two and a half pounds.

Edges of blades shall be no thinner than 1/8 inch

Hooks shall protrude no more than four inches from the haft and have a diameter no smaller than one inch

total length shall not exceed thirty six inches.

Hammer heads shall be no smaller than one inch in diameter and have all square edges rounded .

Hafted weapons may have thrusting tips and/or butt spikes

3. Steel Thrusting Tips

Thrusting tips shall be made of either a sphere of at least one and a half inch diameter , or a flat surface of at least one inch in size.

Butt spikes shall be readily identifiable and be constructed in the same manner as thrusting tips.

4. Steel Pole Arms

All pole arms must have metal on at least one end to be considered lethal for armored combat.

Pole arms shall weigh no more than eight pounds overall.

Pole arms weighing more than five pounds may not be used single-handedly in offense

Pole arms shall not exceed ten feet in length.

Single handed thrusting spears shall not exceed five feet in length.

D. RAPIER WEAPON REQUIREMENTS

All offensive and defensive parrying weapons used in rapier combat must be approved by combat officer of the marshallate (i.e. a Marshal, Marshal of the Field or Minister of Joust and War.)

1. Blades:

Schlager blades, main gauches, or other metal weapons must come from a dealer of repute or an accomplished forge and be designed for sport combat.

No handmade blades are allowed in rapier.

All blades used in rapier combat, including daggers, must have a minimum flex of five inches.

Schlager blades shall be a minimum of 1/2 inch in width, with blunted tip and dull edges.

2. Tips and Points:

Before use in combat a rubber archery blunt (like those sold for bird hunting) must be attached to the tips all rapiers and daggers. The blunt shall be held on by heavy tape in such a way that it shall not easily come off.

In addition to the taped blunt, the tip of all blades shall be covered in a bright, contrasting color so that it can be easily seen. (This is to help ensure that if a tip should snap off a blade, it will be noticed before injury occurs from the jagged edge.)

The tips of parrying daggers shall be no smaller than 1/2 inch *after* blunts are affixed to them.

3. Non-Bladed:

Non-bladed parrying items may have no sharp points and must not be breakable into pieces with sharp points. Marshals will inspect non bladed items for suitability.

Guns designed to fire surgical tubing are allowable in melees, war combat scenarios, and 'fun' combat scenarios or tourneys. Guns are not allowed in point bearing tournaments.

II ARMOR / EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

A GENERAL ARMOR REQUIREMENTS

Gender based protection must be worn at all times when engaged in combat.

Feet must be covered completely in leather footwear. Ankle support is required .

In *no* case shall a "dog collar" style gorget be considered to be sufficient neck protection. All neck protection must cover to the top of the sternum in front, and to the base of the neck in back.

In no form of combat shall there be any bare skin exposed.

All non period materials must be covered, or disguised. (cloth and leather are recommended coverings for large areas)

All protective equipment shall be in sound, working order.

B SHINAI ARMOR REQUIREMENTS

Arms and legs : A single layer of sweat shirt material or equivalent.

Elbow pads: Required.

Knee Pads: *Strongly suggested and recommended.*

Hands: Leather gloves (padded gloves are strongly recommended)

Torso: A padded covering of at least 1/4 inch thickness. (Examples of the thickness required are a moving blanket, or two layers of cotton batting with a layer of trigger cloth.)

Neck: A rigid covering reaching below the neck proper in front and covering the entire neck in the back. Flexible material such as trigger cloth or light leather with rigid attachments are suitable.

Head : A fencing mask (a three weapons mask is suggested), hockey mask, or equivalent. There shall be no opening in the front of the mask large enough to allow the entry of the tip of a shinai. The back of the head must be covered by a padded thickness of 1/4 inch. Rigid protection is recommended.

C WASTER ARMOR REQUIREMENTS

Arms and legs: Arms not covered by shields shall be covered by rigid material. Legs must have heavy padding at a minimum. Elbows and knees must be covered by minimum 16 gauge steel cops, knees and elbows must be covered at all times.

Hands: hands and wrists must be covered by protective coverings at all times. Heavy

padded gloves such as welders gloves with no less than 1/4 inch of closed cell foam covering or lining them, or hockey gloves are permissible if concealed in some manner.

Shield hands need to have a minimum heavy gloves such as welding gloves . A closed basket guard or a caged guard with 1 inch or less space between the bars in conjunction with a half gauntlet covering the wrist and back of the hand is permissible.

Torso: Minimum 15 oz leather or equivalent over the entire torso is required .
Equivalents may include 10 oz leather over 1/4 inch padding, 1/2 inch padding covered by light leather . The entire stomach, chest and spine must be covered. *Rigid protection over sternum, spine and kidneys is strongly recommended!*

Neck and shoulders: The shoulders must be covered by heavy padding at all times. 15 oz leather, 10 oz leather over 1/4 inch padding, 1/2 inch padding covered by light leather. Rigid covering of the point of the shoulder is strongly recommended. The neck must be completely covered at all times by a rigid material. 10 oz boiled leather, 16 gauge steel , 18 gauge steel on 10 oz. non-boiled leather or equivalent.

Head : Helms must be of minimum 16 gauge steel and have a minimum 1/4 closed cell foam padding or equivalent on the interior.

Face grills are permissible if they deny entry of a 1-inch dowel into the helm. grills must be made of 3/16 inch steel. Grills must ensure that there is no exposure of any part of the face or jaw during combat.

A chin strap is required of all helms.

There shall be no projections from nor sharp edges on helms.

D STEEL ARMOR REQUIREMENTS

Arms and legs Must be covered by chain mail over a minimum of 1/2 inches of padded material, or a rigid material. Knees and elbows must be covered by winged steel cops of at least 16 gauge. Shins must be covered by rigid material Shin guards as used in roller hockey, or soccer are sufficient if covered or disguised.

Hands: Full gauntlets of at least 16 gauge steel are required. If a shield has a steel hand guard (such as a 16 gauge steel boss) a heavy leather glove with padding such as a welders glove may be worn. Basket hilts on weapons do not lessen the requirement for full gauntlets.

Torso: Rigid protection over sternum, spine and kidneys is required.

Body must be covered by one or more of the following.

Brigantine or coat of plates: 16 gauge steel plates attached to leather of heavy material such as canvas. There shall be no space greater than 1/2 inch between plates. Boiled 10 oz. leather or 1/4 in ABS high impact plastic may be considered equivalent to 16 gauge steel in brigantine.

Curboli: boiled 10 oz or unboiled 15 oz leather . The curboli may be segmented but there may be no gaps caused by movement.

Plate : 16 gauge steel Entire stomach , chest and spine . Must lap the gorget by no less than 1/2 inch.

Chain: all chain must be of at least 16 gauge steel over 1/4 inch of padding. Maximum interior dimensions of links is as follows 16 gauge -1/2 inch, 14 gauge - 1/2 inch , and 12 gauge -7/8 inch.

Modern: T6 aluminum or ABS 1/4 inch high impact plastic may be considered equivalent if covered by light leather.

Neck and shoulders: (including shoulder blades) must be completely covered at all times. Covering must be of rigid material. Minimum 16 gauge plate, 10 oz boiled or 15 oz non-boiled leather under 18 gauge steel . If chain with sleeve is worn the point of the shoulder being covered by rigid material will suffice.

Head: Full enclosed helm of no less than 14 gauge steel . minimum of 1/4 inch closed cell foam padding or equivalent on interior. Chin strap is required. no opening greater than 3/4 inch in any direction.

E RAPIER ARMOR REQUIREMENTS

Arms and Legs: Covering of 1/4 inch of padding is required on the arms. heavy fabric like trigger cloth on the legs. Elbow pads are suggested as are kneepads .

Hands: Exposed hands shall be covered by medium weight gloves, padding is recommended. Non -exposed hands shall have leather gloves.

Torso: 1/4 inch quilted material or leather buff coat. It is strongly recommended that at least two separate layers be used . Kidney protection is recommended.

Neck: Heavy or rigid material covering the entire neck. Light leather or heavy fabric with rigid attachments is sufficient.

Head : three weapons fencing masks with permanently attached bibs, or full helm with fencing mask type mesh. Metal helms must have 1/4 inch internal padding and a chin strap.



III SHIELD REQUIREMENTS

A. GENERAL SHIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. Sizes and Forms

Shields may be made in any period form

Round shields will not exceed 42 inches in diameter

Oval, rectangular, or kite (*flat or teardrop*) 48 by 36 inches maximum

Heater 24x36 inches maximum

2. Materials and Construction

Metal shields may be used if the edges are rolled or covered to give the edge a thickness of two inches.

Wooden shields may be faced with metal or leather.

All shields must be painted.

No weapon-like or sharp protrusions are allowed.

Wooden shields will be edged. Padded for Shinai and Rapier, leather or heavy hose for waster and steel.

B. SHINAI SHIELD REQUIREMENTS

Wooden shields may not be less than 1/4 inch thickness.

High impact plastic may be used but the plastic must be covered by period looking material.

C. WASTER SHIELD REQUIREMENTS

Wooden shields may not have a thickness of less than 1/2 inch.

Metal shields may be used.

High impact plastic may be used but it must be covered.

D. STEEL SHIELD REQUIREMENTS

Wooden shields may have a thickness of no less than 1/2 inch.

Metal shields may be used

E. RAPIER SHIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. Shields/Bucklers

Round buckler shall be no more than eighteen inches in diameter

Square buckler shall be no more than sixteen inches on a side

Wooden bucklers will be of no less thickness than 1/4 inch

Metal bucklers may have a rolled edge of 1/4 inch thickness

2. Alternative Hand Items

Rapier fighters may use items other than shields for parrying in rapier combat. Almost any item without sharp protrusions or edges that cannot be broken into sharp pieces may be used for parrying. Examples include scabbards, batons, mailed or padded gloves, boat oars, etc.

Marshals have final authority to disallow an object deemed to be unsafe or inappropriate.



PART TWO: RULES FOR COMBAT

I PARTICIPATION OVERVIEW

A. OVERVIEW REQUIREMENTS

Combat in the Realms of Avalon is a contact marshal art. As with all forms of marshal arts there is an inherent risk of potential injury for the participants. Each individual who decides to take part in combat activities in Avalon assumes all risk of injury to themselves.

Those who take part in combat in Avalon need to be in sufficiently good physical shape to keep from injuring or endangering themselves. All participants should have a medical check up before beginning combat in Avalon to ensure their health can take physical exertion, heat, and potential injuries.

No pregnant women shall be allowed to take part in combat.

1. Age

Minimum ages of participation are as follows:

- 13 years for Shinai
- 16 years for Waster
- 18 years for Steel
- 16 years for Rapier

Combat archers must be of the equivalent age for the combat form they are participating in. Minors require parental consent.

2. Membership

Combat is a martial art and contact sport, thus there are inherent insurance obligations the group must meet in order to provide this activity. Insurance for the group, site use, bystanders, property, and participants is provided through memberships with the Realms of Avalon. All combatants must hold some form of membership to participate in combat. There are, however, three levels of membership cost to suit the inclination of each member for activity and cost.

- A. Full Membership:* Qualifies holder to engage in point bearing combat tournaments and contested combat scenarios at wars, as well as practices and non-point bearing events.
- B. Associate membership:* Qualifies holder to to engage only in non-point-bearing combat tourneys and melees in addition to practices.
- C. Insurance card:* Qualifies holder to engage in combat practices only.

3. Participation Requirements

Armored Combat style is really three styles in progression: Shinai, Waster, and Steel. Members doing Armored Combat begin at the shinai level and then progress:

Shinai qualified members may qualify for waster when they have at least eight shinai tournament participations (only one participation is counted per month), at least one of which is be a win.

Waster qualified members may move to steel when they have at least Twelve Waster tournament participations, and at least one of these are a win.

An exception may be made in the case where a combatant can demonstrate to a qualified marshal that they have sufficient experiences, are not a hazard to others, and that they have the equipment to participate at a higher level than they would normally . Note that these individuals must still complete their required tournament at the required levels before achieving a combat knight hood.

Shinai and waster are classified as non-knightly combat. Steel is considered to be knightly combat.

B. QUALIFICATION FOR PARTICIPATION

1. Qualification Requirements

Before being allowed to take part in combat, an individual must be "qualified" for that form of combat.

To be qualified for a form of combat, one must:

- a. Demonstrate a familiarity of the rules pertaining to that particular form
- b. Demonstrate functional knowledge of the general rules of combat
- c. For Armored Combat, have earned needed participation and win points for prerequisite combat styles.
- d. Have appropriate armor for the given combat style (or at least have access to the appropriate equipment)
- e. Demonstrate that they can participate in their form of combat without being a hazard to self and others.

RAPIER Notes:

To qualify for rapier combat, the individual should have completed a minimum of ten hours of instruction specifically on rapier combat. In addition the person attempting to qualify needs to demonstrate a working knowledge of distance , as well as the use of at least three different parries and three different attacks.

Since rapier combat is potentially the most hazardous of the combat forms, care must be taken to ensure that only those who truly are not a hazard are allowed to qualify.

2. Revocation of Qualification for Combat

Because of the physical nature of the sport, requirements for participation can't be waived, and Realms of Avalon reserves the right to remove qualification from individuals when it becomes known that these requirements are not met, for either physical, membership, or behavioral aspects. Participation in combat may be limited, or removed altogether, until the situation is resolved to the satisfaction of the Marshallate.

a. Removal of Because of Behavior or Actions:

Unsafe, being incourteous or belligerent, or unwillingness/inability to follow the guidelines in the Combat Manual shall be grounds for immediate removal from the field of combat in the most severe cases, and will warrant a warning in other cases. Such behaviors can lead to injuries and will not be tolerated. Refusal to moderate such behaviors will lead to removal of qualifications.

Examples of inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, yelling and arguing, refusing to acknowledge blows or injuries, refusing to wear safety equipment, throwing tantrums, mistreating or throwing equipment of self or others, combat styles that cause confusion as to state of health or are potentially harmful, etc.

Revocation Process:

Warnings will be given to any combatant who violates the rules of combat.

A combatant who has been warned three times at an event about shall be removed from the rest of the event.

A combatant removed from two successive events will be barred from combat for four months.

A combatant who is removed from combat for violations of combat rules after a four month suspension may be banned from combat for an additional six months.

No local crown may overrule these decisions.

b. Removal for Medical Reasons:

Individuals are legally responsible for their *OWN HEALTH* and related liabilities if they engage in combat, including before, during, and after

combat activities at Realms of Avalon events

However, if it does become known that a person may have a physical condition that would make combat unsafe for that participant, then the marshals have the right pull the individual from combat until the situation is resolved to the satisfaction of the Marshallate.

Examples of this include, but are not limited to, a lady combatant becoming pregnant, a broken or injured limb or joint. Resolution examples include, (but are not limited to): Recovery of physical injury or condition, signed waiver indicating personal responsibility and choice.

C. COMBAT RELATED MINISTERS**1. Job Duties**

Find more information on job duties, requirements, methods, and training in the Realms of Avalon Marshallate' Manual.

a. Marshall

The Marshall oversees safety-- makes sure people are aware, trained, and using safety requirements for armor, weapons, and participation.

b. Minister of Joust and War

The Minister of Joust and War oversees training opportunities and arranges combat events

c. Field Marshall

The Field Marshals are those trained to watch on site during combat activities to make sure that participant and bystander safety issues are taken care of, and to help determine (or referee) results when participants aren't clear.

2. Crowns, the Marshallate, and Modification of the Manual Requirements

The Marshallate is in charge of all aspects of combat. At the level of the Realm or Subdivision, members of the marshallate are to oversee training , ensure proper application of the rules of combat, officiate during combat, and to communicate with higher echelons of the Marshallate on activities and on problem areas. For more details , see the Marshals Handbook.

Crowns may not overrule the decisions of Marshals of the Field. A crown may or may not be a qualified marshal and may or may not have been present when a ruling was made. Therefore the ruling of the Marshal of the Field is final.

In a case where there is a question of improper use of authority of the office of a Marshal of the Field, a hearing may be requested as per the Codex Adjudica.

Realms may modify the rules of combat within their realm, as may subdivisions of

Principality status, by increasing the the safety requirements, but never by decreasing them. At no time may a crown act to decrease the requirements of the combat manual, nor shall any crown attempt to overrule the decisions of the Marshallate.

For further information on combat safety and marshaling procedures, please see the Avalon Marshals Manual.



II RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

A. GENERAL RULES

All combatants will have proof of membership, and a signed combat card from their Realm indicating which forms of combat the individual is qualified to compete in.

Before engaging in combat every participant must have their armor inspected and approved by a marshal.

Before engaging in combat each combatant will have signed a waiver of liability (*Usually this will be the List Sign-Up, and the Event/Activity Sign-in*)

All combatants shall at all times conduct themselves in a safe and courteous manner. Unsafe or incourteous behavior shall be grounds for immediate removal from the field of combat in the most severe cases, and will warrant a warning in other cases.

Warnings and reminders will be given to any combatant who violates the rules of combat.

A combatant who has been warned three times at an event shall be removed from combat for the rest of the event. A combatant removed from combat at two successive events will be barred from combat for four months. A combatant who is removed from combat for violations of combat rules after a four month suspension may be banned from combat for an additional six months. No local crown may over rule these decisions.

All combat shall take place in a supervised designated area from which bystanders can be separated. Safety of bystanders shall always be a primary consideration in selection, set up, and in using the combat area.

Combat will commence at the command of "Lay on" being given by the primary marshal.

Combat will cease immediately upon the command of "hold".

All combatants will submit to the decision of the marshal of the field.

The combatants and marshals of the field may call hold for any reason.

Audience and others may call hold if they notice an unsafe situation.

B. Combatant Movement

Combatants may not strike with the edge of their shields.

Punch blocks with shields, ie punching forward to meet you opponents weapon, and shield

hooks, ie using your shield to catch the edge of your opponents' to pull it aside are allowed. No combatant may kick, punch, or attempt to grab an opponent or their equipment (see single combat rules for exception in grappling in knightly level combat).

Striking a prone opponent is not allowed, as is throwing a blow while prone. In tournament the combat shall pause and the prone combatant shall be allowed to regain his/her feet or knees as is appropriate. In war combat, the standing combatant may ask his prone opponent to yield or declare him dead.

Combatants may not strike with the edge of their shields.

Combatants may not thrust with weapons which do not have approved thrusting tip.

C. Blows

1. Legal Target area

From one inch above the break of the wrist.

From one inch above the knee.

No combatant shall attempt to purposely strike outside their opponent outside of these target areas. Purposely striking non-target areas will be treated in the same manner as excessive force.

2. Force of Blows

At no time shall combatants strike an opponent harder than needed to ensure that the blow is felt by the opponent. Force of blows is considered a significant safety issue and will be treated accordingly.

The marshals may disallow any blow they deem to have been delivered with excessive force! As a rule of thumb, if a blow still has significant " sting " after a ten second count, the blow may be considered to have been given with too much force.

All combatants should feel free to let their opponents and marshals know when too much force is being used, and combatants should take such friendly reminders with politeness and correct their force. If combatants will not (or cannot) reduce the force of their blows, then they shall be warned, and then subject to removal of combat qualification pending demonstration of retraining.

Refusal to accept blows (rhino-hiding) is considered a safety issue as it leads to heavier force of blows. Force and mass, even without sharp edges, can lead to serious injuries. Individuals who consistently refuse to acknowledge fair blows (*rhino-hiding*) will be warned then subject to removal of combatant qualification pending demonstrating of retraining.

3. General Blows

All combatants are honor bound to acknowledge fair blows received in combat.

Any clear unobstructed blow shall count. Obstruction is a block by shield or weapon that noticeably reduces the momentum of the blow.

No blow will be thrown with greater force than is needed to allow ones opponent to recognize that a fair blow has been struck.

If the combatants can not agree on the outcome of an exchange of blows the marshals will call the blows. In addition a combatant may at any time ask for a ruling from the marshals. The ruling of the marshals is final.

Thrusts with legal weapons are always unobstructed.

Draw cuts are allowed in rapier and shinai combat. A draw cut is where the blade is placed on the opponents and sharply drawn across the target area.

A blow to the arm renders that arm unusable. The arm must be held behind the body until the next round. A combatant who has lost both arms shall be considered as having taken a lethal blow.

A blow to the hip or leg renders that leg unusable. The combatant must go down on that knee. The combatant may move or pivot as long as that knee remains on the ground. When both legs have been made inoperable , the combatant assumes a sitting position on his knees . He may not rise up from that position, and may not move or pivot using his legs, but may drag himself with hands or weapons.

A combatant with two injured legs may be "carried" by another combatant. The "carrier" places both hands on the injured individual and they both move off the field or to another location on the field. When the "carrier" removes his hands from the shoulders of the wounded individual, that person must return to his sitting position.

A clear unobstructed blow to the head or torso is a killing blow.

There may be double kills in the case of simultaneous attacks. Attacks are considered simultaneous if the slower attack has begun before the faster attack has landed.

If a situation arises where the combatants can determine the outcome of an exchange of blows, the round will be re-fought.

B. WAR AND MELEE COMBAT

1. General

Marshals are allowed to call blows at anytime during melee or war combat, declaring combatants dead or injured as is appropriate under the circumstances.

No blows may be thrown from behind. A kill is made by placing the attackers weapon in sight of the person being attacked and calling " dead, my lord" All three words must be spoken for this to be a valid kill.

When killed from behind the combatant may not call out a warning to others.

Individuals who are prone may not be struck and may not throw strikes themselves. They may be verbally called dead at weapon point by their attacker.

2. Missile Weapons

Archers may never be purposely struck with anything but a missile weapon.

Archers may not use their arrows as a single hand weapon.

Archers may be called "dead" if a combatant comes within 10 feet of an undefended archer.

A defended archer is one with a friendly combatant within 10 feet of him.

Small missile weapons such as arrows and throwing axes may be blocked by shields, but may not be purposely blocked by weapons. Anyone who purposely blocks a small missile weapon with a weapon will be called dead by the marshals. A missile weapon which accidentally strikes a weapon is considered to have missed.

Once an archer picks up a hand weapon, they are no longer considered archers but are treated as a standard combatant.

For other information on combat missile weapons, consult the archery manual.

C. SINGLE AND TOURNEY COMBAT

1. General

Whenever possible there should be two qualified Marshals of the Field present for single combat. At least one is required.

Combatants shall always have the right to refuse a challenge for any reason without loss of honor.

Combatants may refuse to accept a challenge with a specific weapon.

Combat challenges are *never* allowed for the purpose of settling real arguments or disputes.

In tournament combat a combatant may always ask for a ruling on the safety or legality of a specific weapon. If a weapon is found safe, a combatant may forfeit rather than compete against it. If a combatant does not choose to compete against a qualified opponent, the combatant may forfeit the match.

At non knightly levels of combat, shields may only used defensively. No shield bashing or grappling is allowed.

At all levels of combat blows are decided by the combatants with the assistance of the marshals. If the combatants can not agree on the outcome of an exchange of blows, then the marshals shall give a ruling on the end result. The decision of the marshals is final.

If the marshals see valid blows not being acknowledged, they will issue a warning and explain the rules for accepting blows. If a second blow is acknowledged the marshals shall make the call and issue a second warning. On a third blow not being acknowledged, the marshals will remove the offending combatant from the field, and award the bout to the other combatant.

2. Variations at knight levels

At knightly levels of combat shield bashing and grappling is allowable if both combatants agree and the marshals are informed in advance of the match. Shield bashing is the striking an opponent with the face of the shield. Grappling is grabbing an opponent by the leg arm or torso but never the head (to prevent possible neck injury). An opponents weapon may also be grappled by grabbing the hilts, pommel or grip, never the blade. A combatant who grabs a blade will be considered to have lost an arm.

Also at knightly levels of combat pommel strikes shall be allowed if both combatants agree and the marshals are informed in advance.

At knightly levels of combat, anyone may decline to use grappling, shield bashing or pommel strikes at any time, for any reason, without loss of honor.

PART THREE: RANKS AND KNIGHTHOODS

Rapier and Armored combat knighthood requirements are the same, except for modifications listed where appropriate. The modifications take into account the differences in combat and tournament styles.

SERGEANT

Eight shinai tournament participations, one of which must be a win.

Rapier modification:

Eight rapier tournament participations, one of which must be a win.

Shinai combat is not compatible/combinable with rapier combat.

Two participations in demonstrations open to the public, that pertain to some aspect of historical combat in our period (*note: Not just showing/telling about our modern sport combat*)

KNIGHT BACHELOR

The combatant must have attained the rank of sergeant.

Ten tournament participations in waster, one of which must be a win.

One participation in an official war.

Three participations in demonstrations open to the public, that pertain to some aspect of historical combat in our period (*note: Not just showing/telling about our modern sport combat*)

KNIGHT BANNERET

The combatant must have attained the rank of Knight Bachelor

Eighteen steel tournament participations, five of which must be wins.

Rapier Modification:

Tournaments must be knights-only lists.

The mixed list is not considered appropriate for advanced level points because the combatant is competing against opponents of lesser skill levels and experience.

Five additional war participations.

Five additional participations in demonstrations open to the public, that pertain to some aspect of historical combat in our period (*note: Not just showing/telling about our modern sport combat*)

The combatant must become a qualified Field Marshall, if not already so.

And finally the combatant must demonstrate some knowledge of historical combat. This may be done by producing a research work on some aspect of period combat, producing some historically accurate item pertaining to period combat, or by passing an examination on the practice of combat in period. (This examination will be set up by the Imperial marshallate. *(or by the BoD before the marshallate is established.)*)

KNIGHT COMMANDER

The combatant must have attained the rank of Knight Banneret

Thirty-six steel tournament participations, ten of which must be wins.

Rapier Modification:

Tournaments must be knights-only lists.

The mixed list is not considered appropriate for advanced level points because the combatant is competing against opponents of lesser skill levels and experience.

Ten additional war participations.

Ten additional demos open to the public dealing with some aspect of combat in period.

The individual must demonstrate a mastery of some aspect of combat in period. this can be done by producing a a research paper or by making an item pertaining to combat , either of which must be of master work quality for an arts and sciences entry.

Alternatively a candidate for Knight Commander may take an examination on a specific subject area pertaining to historical combat in our period. The subject area will be chosen by the candidate and the examination will be made up by the Imperial Marshallate.

PART FOUR: OFFICERS OF THE MARSHALLATE

I The Marshallate

A GENERAL

The Marshallate consists of all the officers and members who oversee the aspects of combat in the Realms of Avalon. National, regional, and local marshals supervise their deputies, and analyze reports of their deputies to see if changes need to be made in area of the Marshallate responsibility. The areas or responsibility include all aspects of combat, combat training, rules and requirements for combat as well as safety and security at events and gatherings. Details can be found in the MARSHALS HANDBOOK and THE SHERIFFS' HANDBOOK.

B MEMBERS AND DUTIES OF THE MARSHALLATE

The job duties of the marshallate are described here. New groups may need to combine some of these positions when needed. When there is a qualified and willing person available, however, deputy responsibilities should be separated so that no one person is overworked in their office, and that no combat style or safety issue thus gets overlooked. *(for example-- a Minister of Joust and war oversees both armored and rapier combat, but if a qualified person is available, the rapier matters may be taken by a deputy Master of Fence)*

1. IMPERIAL (NATIONAL) OFFICERS

Earl Marshall

The *Earl Marshal* is the Imperial head of the Marshallate for the national group, the Realms of Avalon. The Earl Marshal is appointed by the IMPERIAL CROWN, and serves at the discretion of the Crown.

Imperial Field Marshal

The Imperial Field Marshall oversees training and and qualification of Marshals of the Field, and acts as chief marshal of the field when present at Imperial combat events (this duty may be delegated if the Imperial Field Marshal so wishes). Receives reports from:

Imperial Minister of Joust and war

Oversees combat training through out Realms of Avalon . Organizes Imperial wars of succession and civil wars , and any other wars as directed by the Crown . receives reports from and communicates with Crown Minister of Joust and Wars' reports to the Earl Marshal. Appointed by the Imperial Crown in consultation with the Earl Marshal. Serves at the discretion of the Crown.

Imperial Master of Fence, Deputy to the Imperial Minister of Joust and War

Functions as a specialist deputy to the MOJW, the Imperial Master of Fence oversees rapier combat training and rules in the Realms of Avalon. Selected by the Earl Marshal in consultation with the Crown and the Minister of Joust and War. Serves at the discretion of the Crown. Reports to the Imperial Minister of Joust and War , receives reports from and communicates with crown masters of fence.

IMPERIAL SHERIFF

Office responsible for safety at events. Details in the Sheriffs hand book.

2. REALM (REGIONAL) OFFICERS

Crown Marshals

The CROWN Marshal is the head of the Marshallate for the REALM. The Crown Marshal is appointed by the Crown of the Realm , and serves at the discretion of the Crown.

Crown Field Marshal

Oversees training and and qualification of marshals of the field, and acts as chief marshal of the field when present at Crown combat events (this duty may be delegated if the Crown Field Marshal so wishes). Receives reports from Chief Marshals of the fields after events. Appointed by the Crown , in consultation with the Crown Marshal.

Marshals of the Field

These marshals oversee actual combat activities. Marshals of the field have completed the Marshals workshop to become qualified as a marshal of the field. The most senior at an event , or the individual appointed by the Field Marshal, is the Chief Marshal of the field and acts as the marshal in charge at the event.

Crown Minister of Joust and War

Oversees combat training through out the realm. Organizes Crown wars of succession and civil wars, and any other war as directed by the Crown. Receives reports from and communicates with Crown Master of Fence and any Deputies engaged in training combatants. Reports to the Crown Marshal. Appointed by the Crown in consultation with the Crown Marshal. Serves at the discretion of the Crown.

Crown Master of Fence

Deputy of the Crown Minister of Joust and War. Oversees rapier combat training in the realm. Selected by the Crown Marshal in consultation with the Crown and the Crown Minister of Joust and War. Serves at the discretion of the Crown. Reports to the Crown Minister of Joust and War, receives reports from and communicates with Subdivision Masters of Fence.

3 SUBDIVISION (LOCAL) OFFICERS

Deputy Joust and War

Each subdivision will have an individual acting to organize combat practice and oversee training of armored combatants, Reports to the Crown Minister of Joust and War.

Chosen by the members of the subdivision. Activities overseen by the Crown Minister of Joust and War.

Deputy Master of Fence

Each subdivision will have an individual acting to organize combat practice and oversee training of armored combatants, Reports to the Crown Master of Fence. Chosen by the

members of the subdivision. Activities overseen by the Crown Master of Fence.

4 NON-COMBAT OFFICERS OF THE MARSHALLATE

Crown Sheriff

Officer responsible for safety at events see the SHERIFFS' HANDBOOK

Under Sheriff

Officer responsible for safety at the subdivision level

Constable

Deputy to the Sheriff or under sheriff at events.

Have Fun and Play Safe!