

# **KINGDOM OF NORTHSHIELD**



# **CUT & THRUST HANDBOOK**

**June 2012 Edition**

## **Preface to the Kingdom of Northshield Cut & Thrust Rules:**

Welcome to the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the Northshield Cut & Thrust Handbook. These rules have been designed in order to allow Cut & Thrust combat to become separate from rapier combat and form its own division within Northshield combat, opening this activity to more combatants from both the armored and rapier fields. As Cut & Thrust combat began within the auspices of Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) rapier combat, you will see that many of the rules are similar to those of the rapier field. This is in large part due to the excellent job done by Masters Simon Morcar, Julio Galva'n, and Kou no Toshikage in writing the first two editions of the Northshield rapier rules.

That said, this is a different combat form and there have been numerous changes from Northshield's kingdom rapier rules. Do **not** assume that because you are familiar with that rule set that you will be familiar with all of the rules contained here. Be sure to read this handbook carefully, even if you are already authorized in Cut & Thrust combat under the old rules.

Cut & Thrust combat began in the SCA as a way to open more avenues into the study of period combat and explore these techniques in greater depth. While we do not require the study of historical styles forms in order to authorize, I invite all combatants to examine these techniques which are especially well suited to this form of combat.

This must be read in combination with the Northshield Marshal's Administration Handbook, which has the policies, procedures, and forms to be used by all marshals in the Kingdom of Northshield.

Regards,  
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# 1. RULES OF THE LIST AND OF COMBAT

These rules set the fundamental standards for Cut & Thrust combat in the Kingdom of Northshield. All Cut & Thrust combatants and marshals are responsible for knowing these rules, as well as the rapier rules for the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) regarding protective gear, and the SCA Rules of the List.

These rules are designed to promote safe Cut & Thrust combat in the Kingdom of Northshield. Should a situation arise which is not explicitly covered by Corporate or Kingdom Cut & Thrust combat rules, it should NOT be assumed that the situation is forbidden or inappropriate. Conversely, just because a situation may arise that can be construed to technically fall within the allowable rules, these rules are not an endorsement of unsafe or unwise behavior. 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 solution that promotes the greatest degree of safety for all participants.

SCA Cut & Thrust combat is intended to re-create unarmored fighting styles throughout the time period of the Society. As such, participants are encouraged to study historical combat manuals and develop combat styles based on those studies whenever possible. Such studies are optional and are not required for participation in Cut & Thrust activities in Northshield.

Cut & Thrust combat is a martial activity. All reasonable efforts should be made to keep it both safe and fun at all times. However, as this is a contact sport, abrasions, bruises, muscle strains, and other sports-related injuries will occur from time to time. ALL COMBATANTS should be aware of the risks involved before taking part in any form of Cut & Thrust activity in the SCA and the Kingdom of Northshield.

## 1.1. Rules of the List

- 1) Cut & Thrust combat shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of the List of the SCA, Inc., the Society Rapier Rules, and these rules. All combatants and marshals must know and understand these rules.
- 2) Combatants will conduct themselves in an honorable and chivalrous manner at all times.
- 3) Combatants cannot take part in any official SCA Cut & Thrust activities (except practices) without first becoming authorized in the appropriate category of Cut & Thrust combat. A properly completed and signed/initialed authorization card (or a completed authorization form) must be presented to the duly-appointed List Person or Marshal-in-Charge, prior to taking part in any SCA Cut & Thrust tournament or demonstration.
- 4) As an advanced authorization, combatants must have at least two years of active experience as an authorized rapier or armored combatant before being able to attempt a Cut & Thrust authorization. Experience with other historical martial arts groups can apply, at the discretion of the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal (KCTM).
- 5) With permission of the rapier Marshal-in-Charge (MiC), Cut & Thrust may be used in rapier tournaments if both combatants have rapier and Cut & Thrust authorizations. Cut & Thrust may NOT be used during armored tournaments as the difference in calibration will greatly increase the chances of injury.
- 6) All combatants, prior to every combat or practice, shall ensure their equipment is safe, is in good working order, and has been inspected by a member of the kingdom marshallate who is authorized to inspect Cut & Thrust gear. However, each combatant shall accept full responsibility for the condition of his or her own equipment and has the obligation to see that his or her equipment meets all Society and kingdom requirements.
- 7) The Crown's representative upon the field and in all matters dealing with Cut & Thrust combat is first the Kingdom Earl Marshal, then the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal, then, by delegation, the members of the kingdom Cut & Thrust marshallate.

- 8) All combat will immediately stop upon the call of "Hold." Combatants will check for immediate hazards, assume a non-threatening stance with their weapons pointed away from their opponents, and not move until so instructed by a marshal. "Hold" may be called by marshals, combatants, or spectators.
- 9) Marshals will use the term "Ware Edge," or a similar concise phrase, to warn combatants if they are approaching the edge of the field. Combatants should then make an effort to avoid running off the edge of the field. Such warnings do not halt combat.
- 10) At the end of each bout, the presiding marshal(s) will ask the combatants if they are satisfied with the conduct of the bout. Each marshal overseeing the bout will also be asked if they have any questions about the combat. Any participants who leave the field without voicing a concern automatically declare themselves satisfied with the bout. Combatants who are not satisfied can ask that the matter be discussed at a later time, rather than on the field (assuming it does not change the outcome of the bout); however, the concern must be brought to the marshal's attention before the formal close of the bout.
- 11) Any combatant may, without dishonor or penalty, reject any challenge without specifying a reason. A fight in a tournament list is not considered a challenge, and therefore may not be declined or rejected without forfeiting the bout. Combatants may not recruit other combatants to fight in their stead to avoid fighting a tournament bout.
- 12) At inter-kingdom events, for any given kingdom's tournament, guest combatants shall meet SCA standards for protective gear, but shall comply with whatever weapons standards are being used by the host kingdom for that tournament.
- 13) Visiting authorized Cut & Thrust combatants shall be accorded fighting privileges upon presentation of a valid SCA combatant authorization card issued by their kingdom of residence.
- 14) Combatants relocating to Northshield may apply to the KCTM, or their designated deputy, to have their authorizations transferred to Northshield. It is up to the KCTM or appointed deputy to determine to what degree, if any, the authorizations will transfer. Such applications must be made within six months of taking up residence in the kingdom; after that, the combatant must fight a standard field authorization to receive a Northshield Cut & Thrust authorization.
- 15) All authorized combatants and warranted marshals shall disguise, cover, or remove modern corporate logos and sport gear unless necessary for medical reasons.

## **1.2. Rules of Combat**

### **A. Behavior on the Field**

- 1) All combatants shall obey the commands of the marshals overseeing the field or be removed from the field and subject to further disciplinary action.
- 2) Disagreements with the marshals overseeing the field shall be resolved through established mechanisms outlined in these rules and in the Kingdom of Northshield Marshal's Administrative Handbook.
- 3) Each combatant shall maintain control over his or her temper and behavior at all times. Combatants who fail to maintain such control will be subject to disciplinary action at the marshal's discretion.
- 4) Striking an opponent with excessive force or with deliberate intent to injure is forbidden. As Cut & Thrust combat is a martial activity, it is understood that incidental or accidental body-to-body contact will occur from time to time.
- 5) Conduct obstructive to normal Cut & Thrust combat, such as consistently ignoring blows, deliberate misuse of the rules (such as calling HOLD or purposefully backing into the list ropes when pressed) or the like is forbidden. Marshals may, at their discretion, impose limitations or disciplinary measures on any combatant(s) they feel are deliberately undertaking such actions.
- 6) If a combatant's mask or helm becomes dislodged during combat, a HOLD must be called immediately. The combatant can re-secure the mask/helm, pending the approval and subsequent re-inspection by a marshal. If the helm/mask becomes dislodged again, the combatant must yield the bout and remove himself from all further combat until the mask/helm has been repaired to the satisfaction of the Marshal-in-Charge.

- 7) The use of the Fleche (uncontrolled running at an opponent with the sword extended), or similar uncontrolled attacks, is prohibited.
- 8) Armored combat wrap shots are prohibited. Wrap shots are defined as false edge cuts delivered to the back of the head or torso.

## B. Use of Weapons and Parrying Devices

- 1) Parries may be performed with weapons, parrying devices, the gloved hand or any other part of the body. Though the gloved hand may be used to parry, it shall not be used to grasp or strike an opponent. Fleeting contact between opponents is allowed, as long as no grappling, deliberate striking or other unsafe behavior occurs.
- 2) 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.
- 3) Purposefully striking an opponent with any part of a weapon or parrying device not approved for that purpose is prohibited.
- 4) If a combatant is disarmed and has no other weapons on their person to draw, it is up to the opponent to decide whether the combatant will be allowed to regain the lost weapon(s) or must yield. No hold will be called to allow them time to draw a new weapon.
- 5) Combatants may choose to grasp, rather than parry, their opponent's weapon. Grasping is defined as the momentary binding of a weapon with the hand or arm for purposes of redirecting or immobilizing it. Grasping is NOT meant to be used to purposefully bend, wrest, or wrestle the sword from the opponent's grip.
  - a) If a grasped blade moves or twists in the grasping hand, the blade must be released immediately, and the grasping arm is deemed disabled. If the weapon is grasped by the hilt, the hand is considered uninjured.
  - b) Wrestling for control of the blade will result in an immediate HOLD being called.

## C. Acknowledgement of Blows

- 1) Valid Blows
  - a) In Cut & Thrust swordplay, valid blows are struck by thrusting with the point of the blade (thrust) or cutting with a percussive impact (percussive cut). Percussive cuts must always be delivered with sufficient control so as not to injure the opponent while still delivering the necessary impact for a valid cut. An injury is defined as something that causes the person to be unable to continue fighting, even briefly'.
  - b) Cuts made by laying the edge of the blade against an opponent and pushing (push cuts) or pulling (draw cuts) are valid. The mandatory minimum length for a draw or push cut is six (6) inches. The cut must also have sufficient pressure to be felt through clothing with the force of a minimum valid thrust.
- 2) General
  - a) The entire body is considered a legal target area.
  - b) Each combatant shall call all valid blows received.
  - c) In judging blows, all combatants are presumed to be wearing common civil attire of the period, not armor. Common civil attire is defined as: a linen shirt, a long sleeved wool doublet or cote, breeches or a skirt, stockings, and shoes.
  - d) Tournaments may be held that define areas of the body as armored, and to what degree, so long as all the participants are made aware of these special conditions prior to the start of combat. If an area is defined as armored, that does NOT affect the calibration of the attacks thrown. The effect of armor is defined as:
    - i) **Mail armor makes the area invulnerable to cuts, but not thrusts.**
    - ii) **Plate armor makes the area invulnerable to cuts and thrusts.**
  - e) This **ONLY** applies if the MIC has defined the tournament in this format. Gauntlets and elbow protection are not considered armor in standard bouts.

- f) Blows will be counted as though they were struck with a real blade which is extremely sharp on point and edge. Any blow that would have penetrated the skin shall be counted a good blow. Any blow that strikes a mask, helm or gorget shall be counted as though it struck flesh. Slaps, or merely brushing the cloth, are not considered good.
  - g) A valid thrust is not negated or lessened due to sliding off after solid contact with the tip of the blade.
  - h) A percussive cut should be thrown to strike the opponent properly, but restrained so that the cut falls with appropriate force. The focus of a percussive cut should be directed just short of the target, and not through the target. However, the cut will not be considered valid if it lands with insufficient force.
- 3) Effect of Blows
- a) A valid blow to the:
    - head
    - neck
    - torso
    - legs
    - armpit (to the combatant's hand's width down the inner surface of the limb)shall be judged incapacitating, rendering the combatant incapable of further combat.
  - b) A valid blow to the arm (down to and including the hand) will disable the arm.
  - c) If one opponent throws a successful blow to the body or head as their opponent throws a valid blow to the leg, the head or body blow will take precedence in determining the victor of the bout.
  - d) If a valid blow is thrown before, or at, the same moment as an event that would stop a fight (a "HOLD" being called, the combatant being killed himself, etc.), the blow shall count. If the blow is thrown after the hold, killing blow, or other event, it shall not count.

#### **D. Melee Combat**

- 1) Cut & Thrust Swordplay may not be used in melees.

## 2. EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

### 2.1. General Standards

- 1) Sharp points, edges, or corners are not allowed anywhere on any equipment.
- 2) All equipment must be able to safely withstand combat stresses.
- 3) Equipment that is likely to break a blade or damage other equipment is prohibited.

### 2.2. Weapons and Parrying Devices

#### A. Weapons

In keeping with the standards of the SCA, blades for Cut & Thrust Swordplay must have a at least ½” (12mm) flex with a 6 oz. weight as described in Appendix 6.1.

Additionally, blades for Cut & Thrust combat in the Kingdom of Northshield must meet the following standards:

- 1) Blades must be produced by the approved manufacturers listed in Appendix 6.2
- 2) Sword blades must be a minimum of 24 inches and a maximum of 48 inches in length from the ricasso/tang juncture to the tip. The edge must be a minimum of 1/32 inches (0.79 mm) wide.
- 3) Dagger blades shall not exceed 18 inches in length.
- 4) Prohibited Blades: Foils, epees, schlagers, fiberglass blades, and rattan blades are expressly prohibited for use in Cut & Thrust combat in Northshield. Rigid steel "parrying-only" daggers, such as those made from cut down blades, will not be allowed. All blades marketed as Greatswords, Spadones, or Montantes are also prohibited for use in Cut & Thrust combat in Northshield unless the given blade is specifically added to Appendix 6.2.
- 5) Blades must be free of pits, rust, and jagged edges likely to weaken the blade or snag on an opponent's armor or equipment.
  - a) Any blade with kinks, sharp bends, or cracks shall not be used. Blades that develop these defects cannot be repaired and must be retired.
  - b) Sword blades with "S" curves must have the "S" removed/re-curved before being used in combat. This process can be repeated as necessary, and does not mean the blade should be failed.
  - c) If a combatant disagrees with the inspecting marshal's decision, two other marshals must inspect the blade in question in the presence of the first inspecting marshal. The majority opinion of the marshals shall prevail. The combatant may appeal this decision up the Marshallate chain of command, but may not use the failed blade while the appeal is in process.
- 6) Blades will not be altered by grinding, cutting, heating, hammering, or other actions that could significantly alter their temper, flexibility or durability. Normal combat stresses and blade care do not violate this rule. Exceptions are:
  - a) The tang of the weapon may be altered.
  - b) Cut & Thrust blades may be shortened so long as the altered blade continues to meet the flexibility standard outlined in Appendix 6.1 of these rules.
- 7) Blade ends must be capped with leather, rubber, or plastic tips.
  - a) Cut & Thrust blades and daggers must use tips at least ½ inch (12 mm) in diameter. A metal washer or a strip of four ounce leather (or the equivalent) must be placed between the tip of the blade and the inside of the rubber/plastic tip unless it is a Darkwood brand blunt. Leather tips must be constructed of at least three layers of four ounce (or heavier) leather and have a surface area equal to or greater than a standard tip.
  - b) Tips must be firmly taped in place. The tip and the last inch of the blade shall be taped in a color that contrasts with both the blade and the tip, so that the tip's absence is readily apparent.



- c) The striking portion of the tip shall not be covered by tape, so that it may be examined for excessive wear. Note: leather "tip covers" and "tip bags" are allowed to present a more period look, but must be removable to allow for inspection of the tip beneath.
- d) Weapons may use a hand guard such as a cup hilt, swept hilt, or quillons and knuckle bow. Quillons must be blunt.
- e) Orthopedic (or "pistol") grips will not be used unless the combatant has approval for medical reasons, supported by documentation from their health care provider.

## **B. Parrying Devices**

- 1) Rigid parrying devices will be made of sturdy, lightweight materials resistant to breakage and splintering.
  - a) Bucklers:
    - i. Bucklers may not exceed 30 inches in overall diameter.
    - ii. The edges of the buckler must be finished, so that there are no splinters, burrs, or rough edges that could cut or snag an opponent's armor or equipment.
    - iii. Offensive bucklers (such as matus) are expressly prohibited.
  - b) Batons:
    - iv. Batons may be up to 36 inches in length and must be straight.
    - v. They must be constructed of metal or wood with no splinters, burrs, or rough edges that could cut or snag an opponent's armor or equipment
    - vi. If there is no hand protection built into the baton to prevent a blade from sliding into the hand, rigid protection is required for the hand holding the baton.
- 2) Non-Rigid Parrying Devices:
  - a) Soft, non-rigid devices may be made of cloth, foam, leather or similar materials.
  - b) Non-rigid parry devices may be weighted with soft materials, such as rope or rolled cloth; they shall not be weighted down with any rigid materials (such as chains or fishing weights) or any materials heavy enough to turn the device into a flail or impact weapon.
  - c) Devices that predictably cause entangling of an opponent or their equipment, either by design or repeated mishap, are not allowed.

## **2.3. Protective Equipment**

### **A. General Coverage**

No skin shall be bared. There shall be sufficient overlap between separate pieces of protective clothing so that, regardless of the combatant's stance or movements, the minimum protection for that body area will be preserved. Combatants can wear more armor as desired as long as it does not impede their ability to call blows.

### **B. Definitions**

- 1) Abrasion-Resistant Material: Material that will withstand normal combat stresses (such as being snagged by an unbroken blade) without tearing. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - broadcloth
  - a single layer of heavy poplin cloth (35% cotton, 65% polyester; "trigger" cloth)
  - sweat pants
  - opaque cotton, poly-cotton, or Lycra/Spandex mix tights.
 Nylon pantyhose and cotton gauze shirts are examples of unacceptable materials.
- 2) Puncture-Resistant Material: Any fabric or combination of fabrics that will predictably withstand puncture. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - Four-ounce (1.6 mm) leather
  - Four layers of heavy poplin cloth
  - Ballistic nylon rated to at least 550 Newtons

- Commercial fencing clothing rated to at least 550 Newtons  
Kevlar is not an acceptable material, as it degrades rapidly.  
Material commercially rated to 550 Newtons or higher need only be tested at the marshal's discretion; all other materials must be tested the first time new gear is used. A swatch of fabric is NOT the same as testing the armor itself, even if constructed out of the same materials, and cannot be substituted for testing purposes.

- 3) 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 (0.8mm)
- 20 gauge mild steel (1.0 mm)
- 16 gauge aluminum, copper or brass (1.6 mm)
- one layer of **hardened** leather (at least 8 oz / 3.18 mm)

- 4) Resilient Padding: Any material that absorbs some of the force of a blow. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- ¼ inch (6 mm) closed-cell foam
- 5 mm neoprene (mousepads)
- 8 ounce (3.18 mm) leather

### C. 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. The back of the head and neck must also be covered by rigid material in a manner that is sufficient to protect against percussive cuts. This can allow holes large enough to allow a thrust, such as a hockey face grill. Any holes must have puncture resistant material behind them (see point # 5 below).
- 3) Masks and helms must be secured to the combatant so that they cannot be easily removed or dislodged during combat.
- 4) Both modern fencing masks and helms shall comply with the rigid material standard and 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 12 kg mask punch. The marshal doing the testing shall be trained in the use of the punch tester; the **Kingdom Rapier Marshal** will designate which marshals can administer such testing and train others in the use of a mask punch tester.
- 5) The rest of the head and neck must be covered by at least puncture resistant material. This material must provide sufficient overlap so as to prevent excessive displacement of the material during combat. Coverage may be achieved by having the puncture resistant material either under the mask (as in a hood worn on the head), or over the mask (as with a drape attached to the mask).
- 6) Neck protection is required. It shall consist of rigid material, as noted above, covering the entire circumference of the neck down to the jugular notch at the top of the sternum, and shall be backed by either puncture resistant material (such as a hood), 1/4 inch (6mm) of open-cell foam, or their equivalents. The cervical vertebrae (from the top of the spine to the base of the neck) shall also be protected by rigid material, provided by some combination of gorget, helm and/or hood insert. These areas must stay covered during normal combat situations (turning the head, lifting the chin, etc.), and must provide coverage against attacks from obtuse angles (attacks from the side, etc.).

#### **D. Torso and Other Killing Zones**

- 1) The entire torso (chest, back, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits) must be covered with puncture-resistant material. Padding on the area of the collarbone is recommended, but not required.
- 2) Acceptable minimum armpit coverage is provided by a triangle extending from the armpit seam, down the inner/under arm, one-third the distance to the combatant's elbow. This coverage must be maintained no matter what the combatant's stance or arm position.
- 3) Male combatants shall wear rigid groin protection. Any ventilation holes large enough to admit a broken blade must be covered from the outside with at least puncture-resistant material.

#### **E. Arms and Legs**

- 1) Elbows must be protected by a rigid material.
- 2) The hands shall be protected by gloves with (at minimum), resilient padding covering the wrist bones (both points), the back of the hand, and the back of the fingers and thumb (including knuckles), and abrasion resistant material for the rest of the hand. Rigid materials are also acceptable, and the weapon or parrying device may provide part of the protection.
  - a) If a combatant is using a two-handed sword, rigid protection for the hands and fingers will be required. This must have enough coverage to also protect the edge of the hand from the full force of a cut.
- 2) Rigid knee protection is required. Skateboarding knee pads that meet the definition of a rigid material are sufficient.
- 3) Abrasion-resistant material is required on arms (except as noted above for armpits), legs, and any area not otherwise mentioned in these rules.
- 4) Feet shall be protected by boots or shoes comprised of at least abrasion-resistant material.

#### **F. Periodic Testing of Protective Gear**

- 1) All protective gear required by the rules to be constructed out of puncture-resistant material must be tested by a warranted marshal prior to its first use in a tournament, melee, demo, or practice. A swatch of identical fabric is not an acceptable substitute when testing armor. Should a piece of armor be significantly altered (such as, but not limited to, adding or removing layers, patching tears/holes, etc.), it is the responsibility of the combatant to have the armor re-tested by a warranted marshal.
- 2) All protective gear mandated to be puncture-resistant must be formally tested once every two years. All face protection must be formally tested once every two years. The testing marshal(s) will initial and date the combatant's authorization card to indicate when testing was performed on each item. In the case of combatants who have multiple sets of protective gear, it is incumbent on the combatant's honor to make sure each additional set has been tested in the last two years.
- 3) Combatants who cannot show proof that their protective gear has been tested in the last two years will not be allowed to take part in Cut & Thrust combat in Northshield until proof is provided, or the protective gear has been tested.
- 4) ANY protective gear may be tested at any time at the discretion of the inspecting marshal if there is concern that the gear may have lost its protective ability due to age, wear, or other factors.
- 5) See the Society Rapier Marshal's Handbook, Appendixes 1, 3, and 5 for procedures for testing protective equipment.

## 3. AUTHORIZATIONS

Participation in SCA combat is a privilege, not a right. All candidates for authorization will be held to the appropriate standards outlined in these rules.

Note that the initial warrant in Cut & Thrust Swordplay allows the holder to marshal Cut & Thrust combat, run a practice, or act as MIC of an event if they are a warranted rapier marshal. However, an additional warrant from the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Swordplay Marshal (KCTM) is required to become an Authorizing Marshal. This will require participation in a minimum of three (3) Cut & Thrust authorization bouts as an assistant authorizing marshal.

### 3.1. General Requirements

- 1) Competence in one SCA combat style does not automatically mean competence in another combat style. Separate warrants and authorizations in Cut & Thrust combat are required.
- 2) Candidates will attend a minimum of 3 practices with a Cut & Thrust marshal before being allowed to attempt authorization.
- 3) All combatants must authorize first in Single Sword.
- 4) Candidates for authorization must show proof of authorization in either rapier or armored combat.
- 5) Cut & Thrust authorizations are valid for a period of seven years.
- 6) Participants must be 18 years of age or older to authorize for Cut & Thrust combat in Northshield.

### 3.2. Combat Authorization

- 1) All combatants must demonstrate appropriate safety and familiarity with the weapon or weapons forms they are attempting for authorization.
- 2) Authorizations will be performed by at least 2 warranted Cut & Thrust Authorizing Marshals, one of whom must be from a different home group than the authorizee and preferably not familiar with the candidate's fighting. All examiners (including the authorization partner) must agree on the safety and acceptability of a candidate for the authorization to be issued.
- 3) Authorizations may be held at any official SCA event, demo, or practice.
- 4) The authorization partner will use the same weapons that the combatant is authorizing in.
- 5) There are four Cut & Thrust styles a combatant may authorize in:
  - Single Sword (SS)
  - Defensive Secondary (DS)
  - Offensive Secondary (OS)
  - Two-Handed Sword (2H)

#### A. Authorization Requirements

##### 1) Initial Authorization: Single Sword (SS)

Single Sword is the default primary Cut & Thrust authorization form in Northshield. As this is considered an advanced authorization and Cut & Thrust combat includes a high potential for injury with excessive force, combatants are expected to show a higher level of proficiency as well beyond minimal safety than with other initial authorizations to ensure that they will not be a hazard to themselves or others on the field of combat.

Authorization candidates will be expected to display:

- Understanding of the rules for Cut & Thrust swordplay in Northshield and how these rules differ from rapier and armored combat.
- The ability to check their own weapons and armor for defects.
- Proper movement and an understanding of range and distance.
- The ability to safely execute various attacks and defenses.

- Acceptable blow calibration and the ability call blows.
- Ability to maintain control when pressed.
- Ability to maintain control with first, second, and third intention attacks.
- Sufficient proficiency with the sword in the off-hand.
- Understanding of when & how to seek out assistance when resolving a dispute on the field.

The above list is NOT all-inclusive. Cut & Thrust combatants are encouraged to read the armor section of the Rapier Marshal's Handbook. They should also seek out a Cut & Thrust marshal, or senior combatant, to help them prepare for their authorization.

Any combatant who fails their authorization may undertake additional training and apply for authorization at a later date. Candidates who pass are duly authorized Cut & Thrust combatants and may compete in official Cut & Thrust lists and demos in the Kingdom of Northshield. Once a combatant has successfully completed their Single Sword authorization, they may attempt the other authorizations in any order.

Successful authorization candidates must mail a photocopy or e-mail a scan of their paperwork to the Northshield Clerk of the Roster.

## **2) Defensive Secondary (DS)**

This authorization covers both Rigid and Non-Rigid parry devices. To receive this authorization, candidates must:

- Display competent and safe use of these parry devices. These will include buckler and cloak. The use of a baton during the authorization bout is not required.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the rules pertaining to these devices.

## **3) Offensive Secondary (OS)**

This authorization covers both 'sword and dagger' and 'case of sword.' To receive this authorization, candidates must:

- Display active and coordinated use of these weapons for both offensive and defensive uses. This includes the ability to defend their dagger hand.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the rules pertaining to these devices.

## **4) Two-Handed Sword (2H)**

As with the initial Cut & Thrust authorization, combat using two-handed swords includes an increase in the potential for injury. Exceptional control and proficiency is required before attaining this authorization.

The candidate must have the single-hand weapon Cut & Thrust authorization before attempting this authorization, although both can be attempted on the same day. In addition, the candidate must display:

- Knowledge of the rules pertaining to two-handed swords. This includes the change in armor standards for both the combatant and their opponents.
- Ability to safely deliver valid blows, including percussive cuts, and defend against combatants with both single-handed and two-handed swords.
- Ability to maintain control with first, second, and third intention attacks.
- Ability to safely continue the bout within the bind of blades.
- Ability to control the weapon with either one or two hands as applicable.

## 4. MARSHALLING CUT & THRUST COMBAT

The following is a brief overview of the concerns and duties of the Cut & Thrust Marshallate in Northshield, as well as a summary of Cut & Thrust combatant's rights and options when dealing with the marshallate. More detailed information can be found in the Marshals Administration Handbook for the Kingdom of Northshield.

### 4.1. General Rules

During any organized Cut & Thrust combat, there must be at least one Cut & Thrust marshal on the field at all times, termed the **Presiding Marshal**. This marshal cannot be engaged in combat while acting as Presiding Marshal. The only exception to this rule is in the case of practices, where there need not be a Presiding Marshal (although a warranted marshal must be present in some form).

### 4.2. Marshallate Organization

Below is a list of the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshallate, organized from the "top" down. More detailed information on the marshallate organization can be found in the "Kingdom of Northshield Marshals Administration Handbook."

The Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal (KCTM) can create or designate subordinate marshals and marshallate positions (Group Cut & Thrust Marshal, Regional Cut & Thrust Marshal) as they become necessary, with approval from the KEM. These positions will follow the established kingdom marshallate structure:

- a) Crown of Northshield
- b) Kingdom Earl Marshal (KEM)
- c) Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal (KCTM)
- d) Group Cut & Thrust Marshal (GCTM) / Cut & Thrust Marshal in Charge of an event (MIC)
- e) Cut & Thrust Marshal of the Field (MOF)
- f) Group Cut & Thrust Marshal in Training (GCTMIT)
- g) Cut & Thrust Marshals in Training (MIT)

If combatants have a dispute over a Cut & Thrust bout within a rapier tournament, the appeals process goes from the MiC to the KCTM and then to the KEM.

Combatants are urged to familiarize themselves with the duties, authority, and responsibilities of the various marshals.

### 4.3. Disciplinary Procedures

More detailed information on disciplinary procedures and the appeals process can be found in the Kingdom of Northshield Marshals Administration Handbook.

#### A. Combatants

- 1) Marshals of the Field must caution any combatant whose conduct is deemed unsafe. Unsafe conduct includes, but is not limited to: striking with excessive force; consistently ignoring touches; deliberately misusing the rules to gain an advantage (such as intentionally falling or calling HOLD when pressed); or attacking in an uncontrolled or unsafe manner.

- a) A formal warning may be issued by a marshal for either repeated violations of the rules or blatantly unsafe conduct. All formal warnings must be reported to the Marshal-in-Charge at the time of issuance.
  - b) If a marshal deems that the conduct or calibration of a combatant is sufficiently unsafe, they may remove the combatant from the field without a previous warning.
- 2) The Cut & Thrust Marshal-in-Charge will, at the least, remove any combatant from the list if they receive a second formal warning. The Marshal-in-Charge may also (at their discretion) suspend the authorization of any Cut & Thrust combatant for the duration of the event.
  - 3) The Cut & Thrust Marshal-in-Charge will report any suspension, in writing, to the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal, the Kingdom Earl Marshal, and the Crown, within one week of the suspension.
  - 4) The Cut & Thrust Marshal-in-Charge may bar a combatant from the field if they believe the combatant poses a real and reasonable risk to themselves or others.
  - 5) The Marshal-in-Charge may, but is not required to, remove a combatant from the field for the remainder of the event for any of the following reasons (this list is neither exhaustive nor exclusive):
    - a) The combatant has committed an infraction the MIC feels is of sufficient gravity to warrant immediate removal from the list.
    - b) The combatant refuses to obey the legal commands of the marshals overseeing the combat.
    - c) The combatant delivered a blow of such force that their opponent was forced to stop combat or physically retreat from the field.
  - 6) Any combatant may file a written complaint about the conduct of another combatant or marshal with the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal. All written complaints received by the KCTM will be investigated, and appropriate action taken, *as deemed necessary by the KCTM*, based on the severity of the issue(s). If multiple complaints against a person are filed, either from different sources or about separate issues/instances, the KCTM will notify the KEM of the situation and all actions taken to rectify it to date.
  - 7) Written complaints will remain on file for one year. After that time, the complaint expires. The KCTM may indefinitely extend the “life” of a complaint if it is felt the issue is either unresolved, chronically recurring, or of a severity that merits further observation.
  - 8) Any marshal who knowingly allows a Cut & Thrust combatant to engage in combat with any equipment that does not pass safety standards will have their warrant suspended for a minimum of one year. Application to re-warrant after the suspension has ended must be presented to the Crown and KEM through the KCTM.
  - 9) Any Cut & Thrust marshal who has their authorization suspended will have their Cut & Thrust marshal's warrant suspended as well.
  - 10) Any marshal who knowingly ignores or condones illegal and unsafe practices on the field will have their warrant suspended. Marshals who have had their warrant suspended cannot reapply for marshal status for two years. Application to re-warrant after the suspension has ended must be presented to the Crown and KEM through the KCTM.

## B. Appeals

- 1) All marshallate decisions regarding removal from the field, suspensions, and revocation of authorizations can be appealed.
  - a) Appeals regarding a combatant being barred or removed from the field shall be directed first to the Marshal-in-Charge, then to the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal.
  - b) Appeals dealing with the suspension or revocation of an authorization shall be filed directly with the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal.
  - c) Appeals beyond the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal will follow the established mechanisms described in the Kingdom of Northshield Marshals Administration Handbook and by the SCA, Inc.
- 2) Appeals against rulings shall be taken to the next higher authority whenever possible.
- 3) Appeals must be lodged within one week of the decision that is being appealed. Appeals to a higher authority must be lodged in writing (letter, e-mail or fax).

## 5. EXPERIMENTAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES

All proposed experimentation with new weapons and/or techniques in the Kingdom of Northshield must first be approved by the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal (KCTM).

Experimenters must submit a plan, including: details about the weapon/technique, construction guidelines (if applicable), proposed methods for the use of the weapon/technique, documentation on the weapon/technique as used in period (if applicable), and a sample of the device or weapon (if applicable).

If the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal supports the experiment, it will be submitted to the Kingdom Earl Marshal and Society Cut & Thrust Marshal for approval. The experiment will be monitored and supervised by the KCTM, or any representative he/she delegates for the task.

All experimentation is subject to the procedures as specified in the SCA Corporate Rules.

- 1) Experimental equipment can be used at official SCA practices and tournaments. However, experimental equipment cannot be used at SCA demos.
- 2) Any combatant may refuse to face an experimental weapon/technique without forfeiting the bout.
- 3) The Cut & Thrust Marshal-in-Charge must approve the experimental weapon/technique for use at every event. This approval can be withdrawn at any time.

At the conclusion of the experiment, the Kingdom Cut & Thrust Marshal will make a final recommendation to the Kingdom Earl Marshal and Society Cut & Thrust Marshal regarding the status of the weapon/technique.



## 6. APPENDICES

### 6.1. Blade Flexibility Testing

Marshals having any doubt concerning the flexibility of a given blade are strongly urged to test the blade. An acceptable field test for flexibility is to hold the weapon parallel to the ground, supporting the handle against a table or bench if necessary. Hang a 6-ounce weight (170 grams) just behind the tip. The blade must have a minimum flex as shown in the table below.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Minimum Required Flex</b>
Dagger (maximum 18" blade length)	more than 1/2 inch (12 mm )
Cut & Thrust sword	1/2 inch (12 mm)

### 6.2. Approved Blade Manufacturers

Before purchasing a blade, it is recommended that you let the manufacturer know that you intend to use it for SCA combat. Several of the approved manufacturers also make blades which are not designed for SCA combat and will not have the required flex.

If you have a manufacturer that you wish to see added to this list, contact the KCTM.

Alchem  
Armor Class  
Del Tin  
MK Armory  
Zamorano

Albion Swords (Maestro Line Only)  
Arms & Armor  
Flagellum Dei  
Popinjays  
Zen Warrior

Angus Trim  
Darkwood  
Hanwei  
Scotty