

Kingdom of Northshield



Rules for Rapier Combat

~~2018~~

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1. RULES OF THE LIST AND OF COMBAT

These rules set the fundamental standards for rapier combat in the Kingdom of Northshield. All rapier combatants and marshals are responsible for knowing these rules, as well as the rapier rules for the Society for Creative Anachronism, and the SCA Rules of the List.

These rules are designed to promote safe rapier combat in the Kingdom of Northshield. Should a situation arise which is not explicitly covered by Corporate or Kingdom rapier combat rules, it should NOT be assumed that the situation is forbidden or inappropriate. However, no matter how clear or accurate, rules cannot replace common sense, good judgment, and concern for the participants. If a question arises when applying these standards, choose the solution that promotes the greatest degree of safety for all participants.

SCA Rapier combat is intended to re-create historical unarmored fighting styles. In the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, these fighting styles were sometimes called the "Arte of Defence" or "the Noble Science." As such, participants are encouraged to study historical combat manuals and develop combat styles based on those studies whenever possible. However, such studies are optional and are not required for participation in most rapier activities in Northshield.

Rapier 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 rapier activity in the SCA and the Kingdom of Northshield.

1.1. Rules of the List

1. Rapier 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 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 rapier activities (save practices) without first becoming authorized in rapier combat. A properly filled out and signed authorization card, or a completed authorization form, must be presented to the duly appointed List Person, or the Marshal-in-Charge, prior to taking part in any SCA rapier tournament, melee, or demo.
4. Individuals do not have to be paid members of the SCA to be authorized in rapier combat in the Kingdom of Northshield.
5. Prior to every combat or practice, all combatants shall ensure their equipment and armor is safe, in good working order and has been inspected by a member of the Kingdom Marshallate authorized to inspect rapier gear.
6. Even though a warranted member of the Kingdom Marshallate has inspected the armor and weapons used by a combatant, each combatant shall accept full responsibility for the condition of his or her own equipment. Each combatant 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 Rapier Combat are the Earl Marshal, then the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, then, by delegation, the members of the Kingdom Rapier 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 will be considered to have declared 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), but must still voice their concern to a marshal prior to 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 lists is not to be 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 tourney or melee, guest combatants shall meet SCA standards for protective gear, but shall comply with whatever weapons standards are being used by the host Kingdom for that tourney.
13. Visiting combatants shall be accorded fighting privileges upon presentation of a valid SCA Combatant Authorization Card issued by their kingdom of residence.

Authorized Combatants who move to the Kingdom of Northshield have one (1) year to request that their authorizations be transferred over and receive a Northshield Authorization card. Requests to transfer authorizations must be filed with the KRM or a designated deputy. If the transfer is approved, the combatant will need to provide the Clerk of the Roster any requested supporting documents to show proof of authorization, as well as sign an updated combat waiver.

14. Anyone under the age of 18 years (a minor) MUST have a parent or court-appointed guardian present, or be in possession of a properly executed "Medical Authorization Form for Minors." Emancipated minors shall be required to produce proof of their status when checking in at the list table. Further information on minors in rapier combat can be found in Appendix 3 of these rules.

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 Marshals' Administration 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.
5. Intentional body-to-body contact is forbidden. However, since rapier combat is a martial activity, it is understood that incidental or accidental body-to-body contact will occur from time to time.
6. Conduct obstructive to normal rapier 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.
7. The use of the Fleché (running at an opponent with rapier extended), or similar uncontrolled attacks, is prohibited.

B. Use of Weapons and Parrying Devices

1. Valid blows are struck by: thrusting with the point of the blade (thrust) and drawing the edge of the blade across part of the opponent's body (draw cut).
2. Cuts made by laying the edge of the blade against an opponent and pushing (push cuts), or placing the tip of the blade on an opponent and drawing it across a portion of their body (tip cuts) are optional and need not be acknowledged. A combatant may choose to accept such cuts if he or she so desires.
3. Chopping or hacking blows are not permitted in rapier combat. Fast circular movements (such as the moulinet) may be used to place a blade for allowable cuts.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Purposefully striking an opponent with any part of a weapon or parrying device not approved for that purpose is prohibited.
7. If a combatant is disarmed or drops a weapon, it is up to the opponent to decide whether or not the combatant will be allowed to regain the lost weapon. If the opponent refuses to let the combatant retrieve the lost weapon, the disarmed combatant must be able to draw another weapon from his or her person, or yield. No Hold will be called unless there is a clear and present safety issue.

8. Combatants may choose to grasp, rather than parry, a rapier. Grasping is defined as the brief binding of a sword with the hand for purposes of redirecting, controlling, or otherwise immobilizing the blade; grasping is NOT meant to be used to purposefully bend, wrest, or wrestle the rapier from the opponent's grip. A combatant's hand does not have to close over or around a blade to be considered "grasping": restraining the sword with the hand in any way constitutes grasping for the purposes of these rules.
9. If the grasped blade moves or twists in the grasping/restraining hand, the blade must be released immediately. The grasping hand is deemed disabled.
10. If a fighter attempts to free their sword from an opponent's grasp, even if it is not possible to twist or slide the blade due to the opponent's grip/restraint, the person grasping the blade must release it immediately.
11. Wrestling for control of the blade will result in an immediate "Hold" being called.

C. Acknowledgement of Blows

1. 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.
- d. Tournaments or melees 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.
- e. In rapier combat, blows will be counted as though they were struck with a real blade, 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.
- f. The mandatory minimum length for a draw cut is six (6) inches. Combatants may choose to accept a shorter cut as valid if they so choose.
- g. Constant pressure must be transmitted to the opponent with the edge of the blade for a draw cut to be valid.
- h. A valid thrust is not negated or lessened due to sliding off after solid contact with the tip of the blade has been made.

2. Valid Blows

- a. A valid blow to the:
 - head
 - neck
 - torso
 - inner groin (to the combatant's hand width down the inner limb)
 - armpit (to the combatant's hand width down the inner limb) shall be judged incapacitating, rendering the combatant incapable of further combat.
- b. A valid blow to the arm (down to and including the wrist) will disable the arm. A good blow to the hand will render the hand useless. The arm above a disabled hand may still be used to parry.
- c. A valid blow to the leg will disable the leg. The opponent must then fight either sitting or kneeling ("kneeling" being defined as at least one knee on the ground). Combatants who

have been struck on one leg may continue to be mobile, provided they stay kneeling. If both legs are struck, the combatant loses their ability to be mobile from the knees. Fighters who have lost the use of both legs may not "rise up" off the ground.

- 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. In melees, combatants are engaged with all opponents upon the call of "Lay On."
2. Combatants may strike any opponent with any legal blow if they are within the 180 degree arc of the opponent's front. "Front" shall be defined by the facing of the front of the opponent's mask. A combatant who approaches an opponent from behind or the side shall not deliver a blow until they are within that frontal arc and engaged with that opponent.
3. A combatant may never purposefully strike an opponent from behind. Doing so will result in immediate suspension from the current combat scenario, at minimum.
4. Combatants who deliberately ignore opponents behind them when not otherwise engaged, repeatedly maneuver to keep their backs to opponents, or purposefully twist away to keep an opponent out of their frontal arc are misusing the rules and guilty of obstructive behavior.
5. Combatants and marshals should make every effort to be aware of grounded or legged combatants on the field so as to avoid collisions or falling over someone not in their immediate line of vision.
6. A combatant engaged with a line is considered engaged with the entire line and may be struck by any combatant in that line. If the line legally maneuvers itself behind a combatant, they are required to use Death From Behind rather than striking the combatant in the back.
7. Death From Behind (DFB) can be employed in melee combat only if the RMIC announces its use beforehand. A combatant performs DFB by laying the rapier blade over the opponent's shoulder to at least a third of the blade length, while calling out "You have been killed from behind!" (or some other short, courteous phrase) in a loud, clear voice. Reaching around the neck is forbidden. The opponent will be deemed "killed" from the instant the blade touches his or her shoulder, and shall not attempt to spin, duck, or dodge away.
 - a. Daggers may also be used to perform Death From Behind, but care must be taken not to punch or strike the fighter with the guard or quillons of the dagger when performing the action.
8. Fouling an opponent's blade from behind is permissible and does not require DFB to have been declared. Fouling from behind can only be performed with bladed weapons: cloaks, rigid parry devices, or the fighter's bare hands or limbs cannot be used for this purpose. When performing such an action, the attacker must make every effort to not strike, collide with, or otherwise entangle themselves or their sword with the person being fouled.
9. When "Hold" is called in a melee, all combatants must check for immediate hazards, drop to their knees if able, point their weapons toward the ground, and remain so until told by the marshals to rise. Melee combatants may not regroup or make plans during a hold.

10. The Marshal in Charge may impose additional restrictions on melee combat, based on the needs of the scenario or conditions of the field. Such restrictions must be announced to the combatants prior to the start of the melee.

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

Heavy rapier blades are the only sword blades allowed for use in Northshield. Spears are allowed per rules and regulations found in the SCA Fencing Marshals Handbook. A list of rapier and dagger blades approved for use in Northshield are listed in Appendix 1 of this handbook.

B. Prohibited Blades and Weapons:

Foils and epees are expressly prohibited for use in rapier combat in Northshield. Rigid steel "parrying-only" daggers, such as those made from cut down blades, will not be allowed. Flexidaggers are prohibited in Northshield. ~~Rapier spears are not legal for use in Northshield.~~

C. Definition of Sword Types

	Blade Length*	Grip Length**
Dagger	18" or less	10" or less
Single Sword	30.5" to 48"	10" or less
Two-Handed Sword	30" to 48"	At least 10" but no greater than 1/3 blade length

*"Blade Length" is measured from the tip to the top of the tang (i.e. where the tang and forte meet).

** "Grip Length" is measured from the base of the tang to the end of the pommel

Swords that fall outside of these dimensions may be allowed at the discretion of the Kingdom Rapier Marshal or their duly-appointed representative. The overall length of a weapon must still not exceed 60 inches.

D. All blades are subject to the following:

1. Blades must be approved by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal for use in rapier combat in the Kingdom of Northshield.

2. Rapier blades must be a minimum of 30.5 inches in length (measured from the ricasso/tang juncture, or the "shoulder" of the weapon, to the tip). This is the bottom end of documented adult rapier lengths in period.
3. 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. Rapier 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 will 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.
4. 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. Rapier blades may be shortened so long as the blade continues to meet the flexibility standard outlined in Appendix 2 of these rules.
 - c. A nut or other blunt metal object designed to spread impact may be welded to the tip of rapier blades so long as care is taken to prevent damage to the temper of the blade. The blunt object will still need some form of coverage, as indicated in 2.2.D.6.
5. All blades must be reasonably flexible (as defined in Appendix 2 of these rules).
6. Blade ends must be capped with leather, rubber, or plastic tips.
 - a. Rapier blades and daggers must use tips at least 3/8 inch (9 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 if the tip design allows for it. 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 held in place by tape. The tip and the last inch of the blade shall be covered by tape that contrasts with both the blade and the tip, so that the tip's absence is readily apparent.
7. The striking portion of the tip shall not be covered by tape, so that it may be examined for excessive wear.
8. Weapons may use a hand guard such as a cup hilt, swept hilt, or quillons and knuckle bow. Quillons must be blunt.
9. Orthopedic (or "Pistol") grips will not be used unless the combatant has approval for medical reasons, supported by documentation from their health care provider.

E. Parrying Devices

1. Rigid parrying devices will be made of sturdy, lightweight materials resistant to breakage and splintering.
 - a. Scabbards/Batons: Scabbards/batons must be made of lightweight, break-resistant materials. Possible materials include wood, PVC pipe, or the equivalent. If PVC pipe is used, it must be covered with cloth, leather or tape to minimize the danger of jagged breaks.
 - b. Scabbards must have at least a 3/4 inch outside diameter. The end facing the opponent must be capped, closed or plugged. Scabbards must be wrapped in leather, tape, or the equivalent (i.e. – no bare PVC or metal tubing, etc.).
2. Bucklers:
 - a. Bucklers may not exceed 30 inches in overall diameter.
 - b. 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.
 - c. Offensive bucklers are not permitted.
3. Non-Rigid Parrying Devices:
 - a. 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), nor 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.

F. Projectile Weapons

1. Throwing weapons and mock-gunnery gear, such as rubber band guns (RBGs), may only be used in rapier melee combat as long as safety standards are met and the RMIC approves the use of the weapons. RBG bullets penetrate bucklers and non-rigid parry devices in a straight line (e.g. your buckler is not bullet-proof). Damage from projectile weapons will be resolved the same as for a thrust.
2. The use of projectile weapons is forbidden within formal rapier Tournament lists (single combat), or in any situation where spectators cannot be separated from the potential line of fire by more than the effective range of the projectile weapons to be used.
3. Marshals overseeing melees where projectile weapons are being used must wear protective eyewear. At a minimum, this eyewear must have shatter-resistant lenses and be worn whenever combat is underway.

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. Use

~~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:~~
 - ~~broadeloth~~
 - ~~a single layer of heavy poplin cloth (35% cotton, 65% polyester; "trigger" cloth)~~
 - ~~sweat pants~~
 - ~~opaque cotton, poly-cotton, or Lyera/Spandex mix tights.~~

~~Nylon pantyhose~~ the Society for Creative Anachronism Fencing Marshals' Handbook base rules except where Northshield requires more protection. The following lines in Northshield's Rules for Rapier Combat are the exceptions as follows:

9.2.1. For Northshield, hands shall be protected by gloves made of abrasion resistant material. Feet shall be protected by footwear comprised of at least abrasion resistant material. Limbs will be covered by a minimum of abrasion resistant material down to the elbow (minimum length must accommodate rule 9.2.2.1) for arms 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~~down ~~to:~~
 - ~~Four-ounce (1.60 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~~

~~New 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~~ knees for legs. Incidental exposure of skin beyond these areas is used. ~~Chain mail type armor is not deemed to be automatically puncture-resistant and must be tested before its initial use. An over-layer (tabard, light shirt, etc.) is recommended for use with chain mail armor, but not required.~~

~~Under Armour, Spandex and other similar stretchy materials are not suitable for use as puncture-resistant materials and cannot make up any layer of the tested materials. Kevlar is not an acceptable material, as it degrades rapidly.~~

~~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)~~

~~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 helmets are also acceptable.~~

2. ~~The face must be covered by either 12 kilogram (kg) 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.~~

Masks and helms must be secured to the fighter so that they cannot be easily allowed unless stated otherwise in the rules for Northshield and Society for Creative Anachronism.

3. ~~9.2.2.1. For the inner arm, acceptable removed or dislodged during combat. The combination of snug fit and the spring tongue in a conventional fencing mask is NOT sufficient, by itself, to secure the mask to the fighter. Some other device (such as, but not limited to: a factory installed Velcro or elastic strap, a lanyard around the neck and bib, an extra strap running across the back of the neck, or an external hood) must be used to secure the mask. However, if in the judgment of the inspecting marshal this is not sufficient to secure the mask (the Velcro or elastic is failing, the mask is loose and liable to be dislodged, etc.), an additional means of securing the mask will be required.~~
4. ~~The exterior and interior of masks and helms shall be inspected to confirm compliance with the rigid material standard and provisions on coverage, a snug fit, and no evidence of impending failure. Examples of unacceptable conditions include (but not limited to): the interior padding or suspension system has decayed and fails to prevent contact between the wearer and any rigid part of the helm during combat; the presence of rust which weakens the metal involved; dents or other defects which spread open mesh and/or broken weld points. If there is concern about the face mesh of a modern fencing mask, it should be tested using a standard commercial 12kg mask punch. Marshals doing the testing shall be trained in the use of the punch. The Kingdom Rapier Marshals may elect to designate certain deputies to administer such testing.~~
5. ~~All parts of a fencing mask or rapier helm that might cause injurious contact with the wearer's head shall be padded or shall be suspended in such a way as to prevent contact with the wearer during combat. Either method should ensure a snug fit with minimal shifting of the mask or helm on the fighter's head during normal fighting and upon impact. There shall be NO major internal projections; minor projections of necessary structural components shall be padded. All metal shall be free of sharp edges.~~
 - a. ~~The interior of fencing masks must have a minimum of .25 inches (6.35mm) open-cell foam or equivalent resilient padding to create separation between the mask and the wearer. Modern fencing masks (e.g. FIE and USFA type masks) in good working order meet this requirement without additional padding.~~
 - b. ~~For rapier helms that utilize a suspension system which does not, on its own, prevent contact between the wearer and any rigid part of the helm, additional padding must be present. This padding must consist of at least .25 inches (6.35mm) open-cell foam or equivalent resilient material.~~
 - c. ~~Rapier helms without a suspension system and which rely on foam must use a minimum of .25 inches (6.35mm) closed-cell foam or equivalent resilient padding which provides progressive resistance to create separation between the hard outer shell of the helm and the wearer.~~
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 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 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).-~~

~~Neck protection is required. It shall consist of rigid material, as noted above, covering the entire front 180 degrees of the neck (including the larynx and the carotid arteries) 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~~

~~The entire torso (the chest, back, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits) must be covered with puncture-resistant material.-~~

~~Acceptable minimum armpit coverage is provided by a triangle of puncture penetration resistant material under the arm. This triangle must cover the lower half of the sleeve at the armpit seam and extend down the inner/under arm one third the distance to the combatant's elbow. Armpit coverage must be maintained no matter what the combatant's stance or arm position. seam and extend at least 4" (10 cm) down the inner arm. Armpit coverage should be maintained during~~

~~the combatant's stance or arm position.~~

~~Male combatants shall wear rigid groin protection. Any ventilation holes large enough to admit a broken blade Sleeves or other forms of coverage that are too loose, hang too low to provide full coverage, or otherwise shift or move to reveal the armpit during normal combat activities do not meet this standard and will not pass inspection. This armor is to protect the brachial artery and veins.~~

~~9.2.2.2. The groin (ie-the front portion of your body where your legs meet) must be covered from the outside with at least puncture-penetration resistant armor to protect the femoral artery and veins. External genitals, will be protected by rigid protection.~~

~~9.4. Neck protection is required. It shall consist of rigid material-, as noted above, covering the entire front 180 degrees of the neck (including the larynx and the carotid arteries) down to the jugular~~

~~E. Arms and Legs~~

~~Hands~~

~~notch at the top of the sternum, and shall be protected by gloves made of abrasionbacked by either penetration resistant material (such as a hood), 1/4 inch (6mm) of open-cell foam, or their equivalents. The cervical vertebrae (from that overlap any sleeve openings. Feet the top of the spine to the base of the neck) shall also be protected by boots, shoes, or sandals comprised of at least abrasion resistant material.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.).

9.5. The face and sides of the head up to and including a vertical line drawn at the back of the external ear are to be covered by a 12kg fencing mask or equivalent head protection (Figure 5). The mask or helm must extend down past the chin such that the mask and gorget together do not present openings where an untipped or broken blade might easily penetrate during a normal thrust from the front

9.5.2. Masks and helms must be secured to the fighter, so that they cannot be easily removed or dislodged during combat.

1. ~~Abrasion-resistant material is required on arms (save as noted above for armpits), legs, and any area not otherwise mentioned in these rules.~~

~~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 rapier 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 rapier marshal.~~
2. ~~All gear mandated to be puncture-resistant must be formally tested once every two years (this includes material rated to 550 Newtons that has been in use for at least two years). All face-protection must be formally tested once every two years. Compliance is the responsibility of the individual fighter.~~
3. ~~ANY protective gear may be tested 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.~~
4. ~~The Drop Tester is the only accepted method for testing puncture-resistant material in the Kingdom of Northshield. See Appendices 3 and 4 in the Society Rapier Marshal's Handbook for instructions on how to construct and use a Society designed and approved drop tester.~~

If a mask comes off, hold must be called immediately, and that if it happens again, the person has to either fix the issue to the marshal's satisfaction or yield the field.

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.

3.1. General Requirements

Competence in one SCA combat style does not automatically mean competence in another combat style. Separate warrants and authorizations in rapier combat are required.

All combatants must authorize first in Single Rapier.

The initial authorization in the Kingdom of Northshield shall verify that the candidate is familiar with the following:

1. Rules of the List of the SCA
2. The Rapier Rules and weapon standards of the SCA and the Kingdom of Northshield
3. The conventions of combat for the SCA and the Kingdom of Northshield

If a candidate cannot adequately display their knowledge of the above, they cannot proceed to the combat portion of the authorization.

Rapier authorizations are valid for a period of seven (7) years. It is the combatant's responsibility to track their authorization card's expiration date and request a new authorization card from the Clerk of the Roster.

Participants must be 14 years of age or older to authorize for rapier combat in Northshield. All rules regarding minor participation in combat must be observed for combatants under the age of 18 (see Appendix 3 of these rules).

3.2. Combat Authorization

A. Authorization Standards

1. All combatants must demonstrate appropriate safety and familiarity, as well as meet the required standards, with the weapon or weapons forms they are attempting for authorization.
2. Authorizations will be performed by two warranted Rapier Marshals. 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. The authorizing marshals must execute the appropriate paperwork to ensure that the authorization can be registered with the Clerk of the Roster, but it is ultimately the authorizee's responsibility to make sure their authorization form is sent in.
4. No authorization card may be issued until a properly completed Waiver has been filed with the kingdom. For further details on waivers, see the Kingdom of Northshield Marshal Administration Handbook,
5. There are seven rapier styles a combatant may authorize in:
 - Single Rapier (SR)
 - Rapier and Rigid Parrying Device (RP)
 - Rapier and Non-Rigid Parrying Device (NRP)
 - Rapier and Dagger (DGR)
 - Case of Rapiers (CR)
 - Cut and Thrust Single Sword (CT)
 - Cut and Thrust Two Handed Sword (2H)

B. Authorization Requirements

1. Single Rapier (SR)
 - a. Single Rapier is the default primary rapier authorization form in Northshield. As such, it is the "doorway" to the rapier field and rapier combat in general, and the most important authorization a rapier combatant will undertake. Authorization candidates

will be held to high standards of safety to ensure they are neither a hazard to themselves nor others on the field of combat, and that they are familiar with the basic tenets fundamental to safe rapier play.

b. Authorization candidates will be expected to display:

- Understanding of the rules for rapier combat in Northshield, for both tournaments and melees.
- 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, as well as acceptable blow calibration and the ability call blows.
- Ability to maintain control when pressed.
- Fight from the ground, as well as engage opponents on the ground.
- Properly use, and react to, blade grasping
- Ability to parry with the off hand
- Ability to fight with their sword in the off hand
- Demonstrate basic melee concepts (such as Death From Behind, etc.)
- Understanding of when, and how, to seek out assistance when resolving a dispute on the field.

c. The above list is NOT all-inclusive. Rapier combatants are encouraged to re-read the appropriate sections of the Rapier Rules and/or seek out a rapier marshal or senior rapier combatant to help them prepare for their authorization.

2. By their very nature, Single Rapier authorizations will likely take a bit longer than subsequent authorizations. However, marshals are not doing themselves, the candidate, or rapier combat a favor by either unnecessarily dragging out the process, or rushing it along. Evaluate the candidate as fairly, efficiently, and thoroughly as possible.
3. Any combatant who fails their authorization may undertake additional training and apply for authorization at a later date. Candidates who pass are duly authorized rapier combatants and may compete in official rapier lists, melees, and demos in the Kingdom of Northshield. Successful candidates must send a copy of their authorization paperwork (and, in the case of initial authorizations, their completed Combat Waiver) to the Northshield Clerk of the Roster. Authorization cards will not be issued to new combatants if a Combat Waiver has not been signed.

B. Advanced Authorizations

Once a combatant has successfully completed their Single Rapier authorization, they may attempt the advanced authorizations in any order. A greater emphasis will be placed on competence in these authorizations than during the Single Rapier authorization. Candidates for advanced authorizations are not required to fight from the ground, or against a grounded opponent, but they can be asked to do so at a marshal's discretion.

1. Rigid Parry (RP)

To receive this authorization, candidates must:

- Display competent and safe use of a rigid parrying device.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the rules pertaining to these devices.

2. Nonrigid Parry (NRP)

To receive this authorization, candidates must:

- Display competent and safe use of a non-rigid parry device.
 - Demonstrate knowledge of the rules pertaining to these devices.
3. Rapier and Dagger (DGR)
To receive this authorization, candidates must:
- Display active and coordinated use of the weapons for both offensive and defensive uses.
 - Demonstrate and maintain proper calibration throughout the authorization.
 - Demonstrate knowledge of the rules pertaining to these devices.
4. Case of Rapiers (CR)
To receive this authorization, candidates must:
- Display active and coordinated use of the weapons for both offensive and defensive uses.
 - Demonstrate and maintain proper calibration throughout the authorization.
 - Demonstrate knowledge of the rules pertaining to these devices.

See Appendix 4 for authorization requirements for Cut and Thrust combat

4. MARSHALLING RAPIER

The following is a brief overview of the concerns and duties of the Rapier Marshallate in Northshield, as well as a summary of a rapier combatant's options when dealing with the Marshallate. More detailed information can be found in the Kingdom of Northshield Marshal's Administration Handbook.

4.1. General Rules

During any organized rapier combat, there must be at least one 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 (though there must be a warranted marshal present in some form). For melees, there must be a reasonable number of marshals present to allow for proper observation of the field at all times.

4.2. Marshallate Organization

Below is a list of the Kingdom Rapier Marshallate, organized from the "top" down. More detailed information on the Marshallate's organization can be found in the Kingdom of Northshield Marshal's Administration Handbook.

- Crown of Northshield
- Kingdom Earl Marshal (KEM)
- Kingdom Rapier Marshal (KRM)
- Kingdom Cut and Thrust Deputy Marshal (KCTM)
- Regional Rapier Marshal (RRM)
- Group Rapier Marshal (GRM) / Rapier Marshal in Charge of an event (RMIC)
- Rapier Marshal of the Field (MOF)
- Group Rapier Marshal in Training (GRMiT)
- Rapier Marshals in Training (MiT)

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 Marshal's Administration Handbook.

A. Combatants

1. Marshals of the Field will caution any combatant whose conduct is deemed unsafe. Unsafe conduct includes, but is not limited to: striking with excessive force; slashing with the blade; consistently ignoring touches; deliberately misusing the rules to gain an advantage (such as intentionally falling or calling "Hold" when pressed); purposefully trapping offensive or defensive equipment against the body; or attacking in an uncontrolled or unsafe manner. If, after the initial warning, the unsafe conduct continues, a marshal can remove the combatant from the field for a specified period of time (i.e. - have them "take a break") if they deem such action appropriate.
2. In addition, the Rapier Marshal in Charge can bar a combatant from the field if they believe the combatant poses a real and reasonable risk to themselves or others. The RMIC may, but is not required to, remove a combatant from the rapier field for any of the following reasons (this list is neither exhaustive nor exclusive):
 - The rapier combatant has committed an infraction the RMIC feels is of sufficient gravity to warrant immediate removal from the list.
 - The rapier combatant is unable to control their temper or actions on the field.
 - The rapier combatant refuses to obey the legal commands of the marshals overseeing the combat.
 - The rapier combatant delivered a blow of such force that their opponent was forced to stop combat or physically retreat from the field.
 - The rapier combatant's continued participation in the list could, in the RMIC's opinion, present a hazard to themselves or others.

Note that removal from the field is NOT the same as suspending a combatant's authorization card. Fighters removed from the field may return to the lists at the discretion of the RMIC.

3. Only the RMIC, KRM, KEM, or Crown can suspend a fighter's authorization card in Northshield. Should this be deemed necessary, a detailed report must be sent to the KRM and the KEM within 24 hours. RMICs can suspend a card for the duration of the event. The KRM can suspend an authorization for up to six months. Only the Crown or KEM can suspend a fighter's authorization card for longer than six months.
4. Any combatant may file a written complaint about the conduct of another combatant or rapier marshal with the Kingdom Rapier Marshal. All written complaints received by the KRM will be investigated. Appropriate action will be taken, as deemed necessary by the KRM, 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 KRM will notify the KEM of the situation and describe all actions taken to rectify the problem to date.

Written complaints will remain on file for one year. After that time, the complaint becomes void. The KRM 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.

B. Marshals

1. As a warranted officer, marshals are expected to uphold and enforce the rapier rules for the Kingdom of Northshield and the Rules of the List of the SCA. Should a marshal knowingly violate or ignore any of these rules, or otherwise promote or allow unsafe behavior on the field, they can be sanctioned. The KEM, in consultation with the KRM, will determine the nature and duration of any sanctions.
2. If a marshal's combat authorization has been suspended, their warrant is automatically suspended for that combat activity. When the authorization is reinstated, so is the warrant.

C. Appeals

1. All marshallate decisions regarding removal from the field, suspensions, and the revoking of authorizations can be appealed.
2. Appeals regarding a combatant being barred or removed from the field shall be directed first to the Rapier Marshal in Charge, then to the Regional Rapier Marshal, then to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal. Appeals dealing with the temporary suspension of an authorization shall be filed directly with the KRM. Appeals beyond the KRM will follow the established mechanisms described in the Kingdom of Northshield Marshal's Administration Handbook and by the SCA, Inc.
3. Appeals against rulings shall be taken to the next higher authority whenever possible.
4. Appeals must be lodged within one week of the end of the event where the decision in question was handed down. Appeals to a higher authority must be lodged in writing (letter, e-mail, or fax).

Further information regarding appeals, sanctions, and the disciplinary processes within the marshallate can be found in the Marshal's Administrative Handbook.

4.4 Out of Kingdom Marshals

1. Marshals with rapier warrants from kingdoms other than Northshield cannot authorize combatants in rapier or act as a Marshal in Charge for an event in Northshield. With the permission of the RMIC, they can act as Marshals of the Field (MOFs) at the event, practice, or demo they are attending.
2. Marshals who move into Northshield who have warrants from another kingdom may apply to the KRM for a Northshield rapier warrant. It is strongly encouraged that the out of kingdom marshal spend some time attending events and familiarizing themselves with the marshallate practices in Northshield before applying for a Northshield warrant. At the least, out of kingdom marshals must be authorized in rapier combat in the Kingdom of Northshield before they can be issued a Northshield rapier warrant.

5. EXPERIMENTAL EQUIPMENT

All proposed experimentation with new weapons and/or techniques in the Kingdom of Northshield must first be approved by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal. 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)
- a sample of the device or weapon (if applicable).

If the Kingdom Rapier Marshal supports the experiment, it will be submitted to the Kingdom Earl Marshal for approval (and, if necessary, the Deputy Society Rapier Marshal). The experiment will be monitored and supervised by the KRM, or any representative he/she so delegates for the task. All experimentation is subject to the procedures as specified in the SCA Corporate Rapier Rules.

Experimental equipment can be used at official SCA practices, tournaments and melees. Experimental equipment cannot be used at SCA demos. Experimental blades will be denoted by strips of alternating green and red tape running from near the tip to at least three inches down the blade.

Any combatant may refuse to face an experimental weapon/technique without forfeiting the bout. In a melee, all combatants must consent to the use of the weapon/technique prior to the beginning of combat.

The Rapier 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 experimenter(s) must provide a report of their findings to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal. The KRM will make a final recommendation to the Kingdom Earl Marshal regarding the status of the weapon/technique.

New blade types may be approved by the KRM at his or her discretion.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Allowed Sword and Dagger Blades

Blades suitable for heavy rapier and/or cut and thrust combat (i.e. - do not have the cross section of a foil or epee) produced by the following manufacturers are approved for use in the Kingdom of Northshield. Note that ALL blades, regardless of manufacturer, must still pass the flex test described in Appendix 2 of these rules before their initial use on the field.

In cases where a manufacturer produces both blunt/sparring versions of a blade and a sharp version, only the blunt/sparring version is allowed. Sharpened blades MAY NOT be filed/blunted/or otherwise dulled for use in rapier or cut and thrust combat in the Kingdom of Northshield.

If a fighter has a blade and/or manufacturer they wish to be considered for use in rapier or cut and thrust combat in the Kingdom of Northshield, they should contact the Kingdom Rapier Marshal regarding the current process for evaluating and approving new blade manufacturers.

1. Heavy Rapier Blades & Manufacturers
 - Oval bladed schlagers (any)
 - Diamond bladed schlagers (any)
 - Alchem
 - Angus Trim
 - CAS Iberia/Hanwei
 - Castille Armory
 - Del Tin Armories
 - Danelli/Balefire
 - Darkwood Armory
 - MK Armory
 - Viktor Berbekucz/VB Sword Shop
 - Zamorano
 - Zen Warrior Armory/Triplette

2. Cut and Thrust Blades*
 - Alchem
 - Albion Swords (Maestro Line only)
 - Angus Trim
 - Armor Class
 - Arms & Armor
 - BKS (Baltimore Knife and Sword)
 - Black Horse Blades
 - Castille Armory
 - CAS Iberia/Hanwei
 - Danelli/Balefire
 - Darkwood
 - Del Tin

- MK Armory
- Popinjays
- Regenyei Armory
- Scotty
- Viktor Berbekucz/VB Sword Shop
- Zamorano
- Zen Warrior/Triplette

*= Note that some manufacturers have multiple blade lines, some of which may stand up to the rigors of cut and thrust combat better than others. Combatants may wish to consult an experienced cut and thrust combatant or a cut and thrust marshal when considering different blades types.

3. Dagger Blades

- Scottie daggers
- Alchem
- Castille
- Darkwood
- Triplette/Zen Warrior Armory

Flexi dagger blades are not allowed for use in the Kingdom of Northshield.

Appendix 2: Blade Flexibility Testing

Marshals having any doubt concerning the flexibility of a given blade should test the blade. An acceptable field test for reasonable flexibility is to hold the weapon parallel to the ground, supporting the handle against table or bench if necessary. Hang a 6-ounce weight (170 grams) one inch (25mm) or less from the tip. The blade must have a minimum flex as shown in the following table to be allowed in rapier combat.

Category/Blade Length	Minimum Deflection
Rapier (30.5" to 48")	1 inch (25 mm)
Cut and Thrust Sword (24" to 48")	1/2 inch (12 mm)
Dagger (up to 18" blade length)	1/2 inch (12 mm)

Appendix 3: Minors in Rapier Combat (Minors Fighting Adults)

The following is adapted from the Northshield Armored Combatants handbook, Section 1.B.

Minors (ages 14–17) may authorize in adult rapier combat with these additional requirements:

1. In order to participate in formal training sessions (practices, sparring, etc.), be authorized as a combatant, or become a marshal in training (MiT) in Rapier Combat, an individual must have attained their fourteenth (14th) birthday. No person below the age of eighteen (18) may be warranted as a group Marshal, appointed as Group Marshal in Training, or the Marshal in Charge of an event.
2. The parents or guardians of the minor must witness SCA combat and discuss with a witnessing marshal how it relates to the participation of their child. Afterwards the parent(s) or guardian(s) are to execute a "Minor's Waiver and Informed Consent to Participate in SCA Combat-Related Activities." The witnessing Marshal must countersign the waiver.
3. Only after completion of the above is the minor to be allowed to participate in SCA rapier combat activities. Only the Earl Marshal, the KRM, or their appointed deputies may authorize the minor for SCA rapier combat-related activities.
4. At any event in which the minor is involved in SCA combat-related activities, the minor must either have a parent or guardian present, or must be in possession of a properly executed "Medical Authorization Form for Minors." Said Medical Authorization Form must designate an adult present at the event as able to authorize medical treatment in the case of an emergency.
5. Minors engaging in rapier combat with adults shall be marked in the following manner:
 - A single yellow diamond of at least 1 inch (25.4 mm) in height to be placed on the front hemisphere of the helm (preferably on or near the inspection sticker).
 - A yellow diamond of the same dimension will also be placed on the cuff of the glove of the Minor's dominant weapon hand.
6. Prior to combat activities commencing, all combatants should be made aware of the presence of a minor on the field as best as possible. Adults may choose not to participate with minors without penalty.

Note that Minors Fighting Adults IS NOT the same activity as Youth Rapier. Youth Rapier is a separate combat activity with its own rules set. Contact the Kingdom Youth Rapier Marshal for more information on Youth Rapier.

Appendix 4: Additional Rules for Cut and Thrust Combat

Cut and Thrust combat is a form of rapier combat, and thus falls under the purview of the rapier rules and marshallate in the Kingdom of Northshield. The following rules apply IN ADDITION TO the rapier rules presented in this handbook. All rules for rapier combat apply to Cut and Thrust combat unless otherwise noted. If a particular policy, practice, or equipment standard is not covered below, refer back to the applicable rapier rule(s) for guidance.

A4.1 Rules of the List

Combatants cannot take part in any official SCA Cut and Thrust activities (except practice) without first becoming authorized in Cut and 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 and Thrust tournament or demonstration.

With permission of the Rapier Marshal in Charge (RMiC), Cut and Thrust may be used in rapier tournaments or demos if both combatants have Cut and Thrust authorizations and a warranted Cut and Thrust marshal is present.

No one under 18 years of age may train or take part in Cut and Thrust combat.

A4.2 Rules of Combat

Behavior on the Field

1. Wrap shots as used in armored combat are prohibited.
4. Acknowledgement of Blows
 - a. As with rapier combat, blows in Cut and Thrust will be counted as though they were struck with a real blade that is extremely sharp on point and edge. Any blow that would have penetrated the skin shall be counted as a good blow. Any blow that strikes a mask, helm, gorget, gauntlet, or other piece of rigid armor shall be counted as though it struck flesh. All blows will be called as if the combatants were wearing common civilian attire of the period, not armor.
 1. Specific tournament deviations from the above, such as "armor as worn" tournaments, are permitted, but calibration should not change or increase when striking "armored" areas.
 2. Combatants shall endeavor to maintain the above standards at all times. Combatants shall not ramp up their blows or blow calling due to the dynamic nature of Cut and Thrust combat, nor the additional protection required for its play.
5. Valid Blows
 - a. In Cut and Thrust sword play, valid blows are struck by thrusting with the point of the blade (thrust), laying the edge of the sword against the opponent and pulling (draw cuts), or cutting with percussive impact (percussive cut).
 - b. 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 retreat from the field or otherwise be unable to continue fighting.
6. Effect of Blows:
 - a. Unlike in rapier, blows to the leg or foot in Cut and Thrust will be considered debilitating and end combat. If a "killing" blow (i.e. a blow to the head or torso) lands at the same time as a leg/foot shot, the killing blow will take precedence for determining the point/bout.
 - b. All other blows are called the same as in rapier combat.
7. Melee Combat
 - a. Cut and Thrust is prohibited in melee combat.

A4.3 Weapons and Parrying Devices

Weapons and parrying devices for Cut and Thrust combat must meet the same basic standards as outlined for heavy rapiers. However, there are a few changes that need to be kept in mind when choosing and inspecting Cut and Thrust weapons:

A. Weapons

1. Blades must have at least 1/2 inch (12mm) of flex when measured with a 6 oz. weight, as described in Appendix 2 of these rules.
2. Additionally, blades for Cut and Thrust combat in the Kingdom of Northshield must meet the following standards:
 - a. Blades must be produced by the appropriate manufacturers as listed in Appendix 1.
 - b. Sword blades must be a minimum of 24 inches and a maximum of 48 inches in length as measured from the ricasso/tang juncture to the tip. The edge of the blade must be a minimum of 1/32 inches (0.79 mm) wide.
 - c. Foils, epees, schlagers, fiberglass blades, and rattan blades are expressly prohibited in Cut and Thrust combat in Northshield. All blades marked as great swords, spadones, or montantes are also prohibited for use in Northshield. ~~Rapier spears/pole arms cannot be used in Cut and Thrust combat.~~
 - d. Blade tips must be capped with either leather, rubber, or plastic tips.
 - i. Cut and Thrust blade tips must be at least 1/2 inch (12 mm) in diameter, and meet all other standards listed for rapier tips as given in these rules.

B. Protective Equipment

Cut and Thrust combat requires the same protective equipment as rapier. In addition, Cut and Thrust combatants must make the following modifications and additions to their protective gear:

2. Head and Neck

- b. The back of the head and neck must be covered with rigid material.
 - i. Neck protection shall consist of rigid material covering the **entire** circumference of neck down to the jugular notch at the top of the sternum (note: this differs from rapier gorgets, which require rigid coverage only on the front 180 degrees of the neck, including the jugular notch). The cervical vertebrae must also be covered by rigid material. As in rapier, the gorget and cervical vertebrae coverage must be backed either by puncture resistant material, 1/4 inch (6 mm) open cell foam, or the equivalent.
 - ii. Back of the head protection must padded and/or suspended in such a way as to prevent contact between the rigid material and the wearer's head. This padding/suspension must comply with Section 2.3.C.5 of the main rapier rules.

C. Arms, Legs, and Hands

1. Elbows must be protected by rigid material.
2. The hands shall be protected by gloves with (at minimum) resilient padding covering:
 - the wrist (to 1 inch above the wrist)
 - the back of the hand
 - back of the fingers and thumb (including knuckles)
 - abrasion resistant material covering the rest of the hand not listed above

3. Rigid materials are also acceptable on any of the areas listed above. The weapon or parrying device may provide part of this protection.
4. Resilient padding is defined as any material that absorbs some of the force of the blow. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - 1/4 inch (6 mm) closed-cell foam
 - 5 mm neoprene (mousepads)
 - 8 ounce (3.18 mm) leather
5. If either combatant is using a two-handed sword, both fighters are required to have rigid protection covering the areas detailed above (Apx 3.3.B.2.). This must have enough coverage to also protect the edge of the hand from the full force of a cut.

Examples of acceptable rigid protection includes, but is not limited to:

- Gauntlets or demi-gauntlets made of rigid material covering areas not protected by the weapon's guard.
- Commercial products such as Konig Gloves and SPES Heavy Gloves.

A4.4 Authorizations

Note: Only a warranted rapier marshal authorized in Cut and Thrust can run a Cut and Thrust authorization. Both marshals and the authorizing partner involved in the authorization must be authorized in Cut and Thrust combat. If a marshal is not comfortable performing an authorization, even if they are authorized in that style, they should not feel pressured to conduct the authorization.

Requirements:

2. Initial Authorization: Cut and Thrust - Single Sword (CT)
 - c. Single sword is the default authorization form for Cut & Thrust in the Kingdom of Northshield. As this is an advanced rapier authorization, candidates for Cut and Thrust must first be authorized in Single Rapier (candidates may attempt to authorize in Single Rapier and Cut and Thrust on the same day).
 - d. Since Cut and Thrust combat includes an increased potential for injury with excessive force, combatants are expected to show a higher degree of proficiency than with a typical single sword rapier authorization. Safety, control, and proficiency are the watch words when attempting (and marshaling) a Cut and Thrust authorization.
 - e. In addition to the standard requirements for an advanced rapier authorization, candidates for Cut and Thrust combat must also display:
 - An understanding of the rules for Cut and Thrust combat in Northshield and how these rules differ from those for rapier and armored combat.
 - If performing a series of cutting attacks, the candidate must display the ability to maintain consistent calibration.

As with rapier authorizations, the above list is NOT all-inclusive. Those seeking to authorize in Cut and Thrust are encouraged to review the Kingdom of Northshield's rapier rules in full, as well as seek out a marshal authorized in Cut and Thrust, or a senior combatant, to help them prepare for the authorization.

Once a fighter is authorized in Cut and Thrust, they may use any rapier secondary they are authorized in during Cut and Thrust combat.

Two Handed Sword (2H)

Only rapier marshals authorized in two-handed sword for Cut and Thrust can run a two-handed sword authorization.

As with the initial Cut and Thrust authorization, combat using a two-handed sword holds the potential for increased injury. Exceptional control and proficiency is required before attaining this authorization. The candidate must have the Cut and Thrust authorization before attempting the two-handed sword authorization, although both can be attempted on the same day. In addition to the standard requirements for an advanced rapier authorization, 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 opponent.
- Ability to safely deliver valid blows, including percussive cuts.
- Ability to defend against combatants using a single-handed sword and a two-handed sword.
- Ability to maintain control with attacks involving multiple successive cuts.
- Ability to safely continue the bout within the bind of blades.
- Ability to control the weapon with either one or two hands as applicable.

A4.5 Marshaling Cut and Thrust Combat

In general, the guidelines for marshaling rapier also apply to Cut and Thrust combat. However, there are a few additional concerns to be aware of when acting as a marshal on the cut and thrust field.

- A. Marshals should keep an eye out for increases in calibration, both in terms of giving and calling blows. Given the nature of cut and thrust combat, fighters can sometimes unconsciously "up" their calibration over the course of a fight or tournament. If a marshal thinks this is occurring, they should speak with both combatants (either during a break between fights, or, if necessary, after calling "Hold") to get their thoughts on the matter, as well as remind them of the calibration standard for rapier and cut and thrust if necessary. If calibration continues to be a problem, the marshal may proceed as outlined in the Marshaling Rapier section of these rules.
- B. Since combatants can switch between rapier and cut and thrust over the course of a tournament or event, it is important for cut and thrust marshals to make sure that fighters are armored to the proper level for C&T combat. This includes ensuring the fighter has not removed a piece of protective equipment (back of the head protection, padded or rigid hand protection, etc.) and forgotten to put it back on before returning to the field, or is using a weapon that is not legal on the rapier field (or vice versa).
- C. Marshals should make sure that combatants are wearing the proper hand protection for the weapon style(s) being used. Any opponent fighting with, or against, a two-handed sword must use rigid hand protection that meets the standards set out in section 3.B.3 of the Cut and Thrust Appendix (4).