

**KINGDOM OF  
NORTHSHIELD  
RAPIER  
HANDBOOK**

## **Introduction from the Kingdom Earl Marshal**

Welcome to the 2nd edition of the Northshield Rapier Handbook. It must be read in combination with the corresponding Society handbooks and policies for rapier combat. This must also be read in combination with the Northshield Marshal's Administration Handbook. This Handbook has the policies, procedures, and forms to be used by all marshals in the Kingdom of the Northshield. This is to cut back on the redundancy in the numerous handbooks we now have for the marshallate.

These handbooks are to be printed in a 3-ring binder format, so that when updates are made they can easily be placed in the book. As part of the duties of the position, the Adjutant Marshal will publish updates, (if there are any), on a quarterly basis in the Northwatch and online.

I ask all of you to keep in mind the tough job marshals have. This is their fun time too, which they are giving so you may play. This time involves the many aspects of running a tourney, the pleasant and the unpleasant. Please be patient on the field when things are not going quite smoothly. The marshals have a lot to contend with, from the participants to the autocrat and Crown. So, even if you'd rather these marshals would look the other way, let something slide, etc.; remember that they're doing this for you, and for your safety. Throughout the history of the S.C.A. there have been many injuries. Our rattan swords don't need an edge to deliver fatal blunt trauma; necks can be broken by a fall from a horse; blades break in fencing; arrows and thrown weapons can go astray. Imagine what could happen in just a heartbeat if the marshal's weren't there doing their (unpaid) job. Please show your appreciation of the marshals; your safety is in their hands.

To all the marshals, thank you for your time, energy, and enthusiasm. You are an integral part of the game we play. Keep up the good work; but don't forget to take time to play yourself.

Master Kevin O'Shaughnessy, OL, OP, OWS

Second Earl Marshal of Northshield

April, A.S. XL

(2006)

Mistress Cassandra Antonelli, OP

First Earl Marshal of Northshield

16 October, A.S. XXXVIII

(2004) Northshield Rapier Handbook 4

## **Preface to the Kingdom of Northshield Rapier Rules, Second Edition:**

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the second edition of the Kingdom of Northshield Rapier Rules. With the exception of the inclusion of Cut and Thrust, you will find very few changes from the first edition. This is a testament to the care and good design that went into the first edition piloted by Don Simon Morcar.

The Cut and Thrust rules were principally designed by Don Toshikage. I would like to thank him and all the others who have contributed to this project. Our third form of rapier combat will open new avenues of period study and competition.

These rules need to be used in conjunction with the new society rules and the Northshield Marshal rules. Please make sure you are familiar with all three documents.

I would like to thank everyone who has allowed me to serve the marshalling community. I had the good fortune to be the first principality rapier marshal of Northshield and now can serve you as a Kingdom Rapier Marshal. I have seen numerous changes since I was warranted in 1994. It is a pleasure to see our community grow from less than 20 fencers to over the 200 fencers today.

Remember to play safe and have fun.

Regards,

Maestro Julio Galva'n

Northshield Kingdom Rapier Marshal

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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 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.

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## 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 the appropriate category of rapier combat**. A properly filled out and signed/initialed 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) All combatants, prior to every combat or practice, shall ensure their equipment is safe, in good working order and has been inspected by a member of the Kingdom Marshallate authorized to inspect rapier gear.
- 5) 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.
- 6) The Crown's representative upon the field and in all matters dealing with Rapier Combat is the Earl Marshal, then the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, then, by delegation, the members of the Kingdom Rapier Marshallate.
- 7) 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.
- 8) 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.
- 9) 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.
- 10) 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.

- 11) 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.
- 12) Visiting combatants shall be accorded fighting privileges upon presentation of a valid SCA Combatant Authorization Card issued by their kingdom of residence.
- 13) Combatants relocating to Northshield may apply to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, or his designated deputy, to have their authorizations transferred to Northshield. It is up to the KRM, or the 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 rapier authorization.
- 14) Anyone under the age of 18 years (a minor) **MUST** have a parent or court-appointed guardian on site in any instance that minor is to be participating in SCA sponsored marshal activities. Emancipated minors shall be required to produce proof of their status when checking in at the list table.

## **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. Intentional body-to-body contact is forbidden. However, as rapier 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 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.
- 6) The use of the Fleche (running at an opponent with rapier extended), or similar uncontrolled attacks, is prohibited.



## B. Use of Weapons and Parrying Devices

- 1) In Light Rapier and Heavy Rapier, 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). In Cut-and-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'.**
- 2) In Light Rapier, Heavy Rapier, and Cut-and-thrust swordplay, cuts made by laying the edge of the blade against an opponent and pushing (push cuts) are optional and need not be acknowledged. In Cut-and-thrust swordplay, cuts made by laying the edge of the blade against an opponent and pulling (draw cuts) are optional and need not be acknowledged. A combatant may choose to accept such a cut if he or she so desires.
- 3) Chopping or hacking blows are not permitted in Light Rapier or Heavy Rapier combat. **For Cut and Thrust Swordplay, 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. Fast circular movements (such as moulinets) may be used to place a blade for allowable cuts in all three categories of rapier combat.**
- 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 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, heavy rapier **or cut-and-thrust** blades. Grasping is defined as the momentary binding of a sword with the **hand** for purposes of redirecting or immobilizing the blade; grasping is NOT meant to be used to purposefully bend, wrest or wrestle the rapier from the opponent's grip.
  - a. **If the grasped blade moves or twists in the grasping hand, the blade must be released immediately. The grasping hand is deemed disabled.**
  - b. **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. Common civil attire will be defined as: a linen shirt, breeches or a skirt, stockings, and shoes.
- 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, 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.
- 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 the 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.

### 2) Valid Blows

- a) Valid blows are defined in section 1.2.B.  
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). For Cut and Thrust Swordplay, valid blows to the leg or foot are considered incapacitating, rendering the combatant incapable of further combat.

- 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.

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## 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 shall not deliver a blow until he is within that frontal arc.
- 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) is the default standard for melee combat. It can be disallowed if announced by the MIC 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 "Dead, my lord," (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.
- 8) When "Hold" is called in a melee, all combatants must check for immediate hazards, drop to their knees, 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.
- 9) 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.
- 10) Cut and 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

The default rapier blades in Northshield are those classified as **Heavy Rapiers**. Northshield also allows **Light Rapier** blades under limited circumstances (see section 2.2.B below). A list of **Light Rapier blades, Heavy Rapier blades, Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay blades, and dagger blades** approved for use in Northshield are listed in Appendix 1 of this handbook.

#### B. **Light Rapier** Blades:

**Light Rapier** blades may NOT be used in tournaments or melees in Northshield, (with the exception of Youth Rapier tournaments and melees; see Section 8: Youth Rapier Combat). They are included here so combatants may practice and authorize with them for use at Out Of Kingdom (OOK) events. A combatant must first be authorized in Single Rapier before they can practice with a **Light Rapier** or attempt an authorization in this style.

Any equipment that has small rigid openings large enough to admit a 3/8 "standard" plastic epee tip (e.g., small holes in bell guards, small openings in cage or swept hilts, any design which has acute angles where a blade could be easily wedged and bent) will not be used against **Light Rapier** blades. Knuckle bows ARE DEEMED SAFE for use with **Light Rapier** blades.

#### C. Prohibited Blades:

Foils, fiberglass blades and rattan blades 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 **as of** January 1, 2006.

#### D. All blades are subject to the following:

- 1) Any blade in a given rapier class may be used against any other blade in that same class, but NOT against blades of the other class. Dagger blades may be used against **any** class of rapier blade.
- 2) Blades must first be approved for use by the Deputy Society Rapier Marshal. Blades must subsequently be approved by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal for use in rapier combat in the Kingdom of Northshield.
- 3) **Light Rapier and Heavy** 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.

- 4) 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) **Heavy Rapier or Cut-and-Thrust 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) **Light Rapier** blades with permanent "S" curves must be retired.
  - d) 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.
- 5) 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) **Heavy Rapier or Cut-and-Thrust 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 heavy rapier and cut and thrust 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.7.**
- 6) All steel blades must be reasonably flexible (as defined in Appendix 2 of these rules).
- 7) Blade ends must be capped with **leather, rubber or plastic tips**.
  - a) **Heavy Rapiers, Cut-and-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. **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) **Light Rapiers** may use tips measuring at least 3/8 inch (9mm) in diameter. They are not required to have additional materials between the tip of the blade and the rubber/plastic tip.
  - c) **Tips must be firmly taped in place. The tip and the last inch of the blade shall be taped in a bright color that contrasts with both the blade and the tip, so that the tips absence is readily apparent.**
  - d) **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.**

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.

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## 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.
- The scabbard may be no more than one inch longer than the blade used in the primary hand, and must have at least a  $\frac{3}{4}$  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.).
- Batons may be of any length.

b) Bucklers:

- Bucklers may not exceed 30 inches in overall diameter.
- 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.

2) Non-Rigid Parrying Devices:

- Soft, non-rigid devices may be made of cloth, foam, leather or similar materials.
- 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 (such as sand or metal filings) to turn the device into a flail or impact weapon.
- 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 for those arts are met and the MIC approves the use of the weapons. RBG bullets penetrate bucklers and soft non-rigid parry devices in a straight line (e.g. they are 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.**

### 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 (2 mm) leather
- Four layers of heavy poplin cloth
- Ballistic nylon rated to at least 550 Newtons
- **Commercial fencing clothing rated to at least 550 Newtons**

Kevlar is not an acceptable material, as it degrades rapidly.

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 / 4 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 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.

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- 3) Masks and helms must be secured to the combatant so that they cannot be easily removed or dislodged during combat. The combination of snug fit and the spring-tongue in a conventional fencing mask is NOT sufficient, by itself, to secure the mask to the combatant. 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) 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.
- 5) Both modern fencing masks and rapier helms, when inspected, shall comply with the rigid material standard, provisions on facial coverage, and shall show no evidence of impending failure (e.g. - rust which weakens the metal involved, dents or other defects which spread open mesh, broken weld points, etc). If there is concern about the face mesh of a modern fencing mask, it should be tested using a standard commercial 12 kg mask punch. Marshals doing the testing shall be trained in the use of the punch. The Kingdom Rapier Marshal will designate which marshals can administer such testing and train others in the use of a mask punch.
- 6) 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). **For Cut and Thrust Swordplay, 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.**
- 7) **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**

- 1) The entire torso (the chest, back, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits) must be covered with puncture-resistant material. **For Cut and Thrust Swordplay, padding on the area of 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.

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- 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) Hands shall be protected by gloves made of abrasion resistant material that overlap any sleeve openings. Feet shall be protected by boots, shoes or sandals, comprised of at least abrasion resistant material. **For Cut and Thrust Swordplay, elbows must be further protected by a minimum of an athletic pad or equivalent materials. For Cut and Thrust Swordplay, knee pads, vambraces and demigaultlets are recommended, but not required.**
- 2) 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 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 rapier combat in Northshield until proof is provided, or the protective gear has been tested.
- 4) 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.
- 5) See Appendix 3 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.

### 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 rapier combat are required.
- 2) All combatants must authorize first in Single Rapier. **Heavy Rapier blades** are the default rapier blade of the Kingdom of Northshield, and must be used for a Single Rapier authorization.
- 3) Candidates for authorization must show proof of membership in the SCA, Inc. Non-members of the SCA cannot authorize for rapier combat in the Kingdom of Northshield.
- 4) Rapier authorizations are valid for a period of four years.
- 5) Participants must be 18 years of age or older to authorize for rapier combat in Northshield. The minimum age for training in rapier combat is 14. All rules regarding minor participation in combat must be observed for combatants under the age of 18 (see Section 6 of these rules).

### 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 two warranted Rapier 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) 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)**
  - **Light Rapier (LR)**
  - **Cut and Thrust Swordplay (CTS)**

## **B. Authorization Requirements**

### **1) Single Rapier (SR)**

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. 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, and engage opponents on the ground.
- Properly use, and react to, blade grasping.
- Ability to parry with 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.

The above list is NOT all-inclusive. Rapier combatants are encouraged to read the authorization section of the Rapier Marshal's Handbook and/or seek out a rapier marshal or senior rapier 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 rapier combatants and may compete in official rapier lists, melees and demos in the Kingdom of Northshield. Once a combatant has successfully completed their Single Rapier authorization, they may attempt the advanced authorizations in any order. Successful authorization candidates must send a copy of their authorization paperwork (and, in the case of initial authorizations, their completed Combat Waiver and a Self Addressed Stamped Envelope) to the Northshield Clerk of the Roster. Authorization cards will not be issued to new combatants unless a signed Combat Waiver and SASE is included with the authorization paperwork.

### **2) Rigid Parry (RP)**

To receive this authorization, candidates must :

- Display competent and safe use of both linear (baton/scabbard) and planar (buckler/shield) parrying devices.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the rules pertaining to these devices.

### **3) 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.

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#### **4) 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.

#### **5) 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.

#### **6) Light Rapier (LR)**

Light Rapier authorizations are primarily for those combatants who are either a) planning to travel and fight Out of Kingdom (OOK), to ensure they are familiar and safe with the weapon form; or b) to spar with youth rapier combatants as a Youth Rapier Marshal. Rapier combatants cannot practice with or attempt a Light Rapier authorization until they have successfully passed the Single Rapier authorization. Light Rapier authorizations are run very similar to the Single Rapier authorization. Once a person is authorized in Light Rapier, they can use any authorized secondary in conjunction with the weapon, so long as the secondary meets the specific requirements listed under the Light Rapier Blades section of these rules. (**Youth rapier combatants** are exempt from having to authorize in Heavy Rapier before attempting an Light Rapier authorization. See Section 8 of these rules for more information.)

#### **7) Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay (CTS)**

The candidate must have the Single Rapier authorization before attempting this authorization. If a candidate wishes to use a secondary item (rigid, non-rigid, dagger, or case), they must have the appropriate rapier combat authorization (NOT rattan combat) in addition to the Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay authorization.

In addition to the requirements for a Single rapier authorization, the candidate must display

- Understanding of the rules for cut-and-thrust swordplay in Northshield and how these rules differ from light/heavy rapier combat.
- Ability to safely deliver valid blows, including percussive cuts.

Note that a warranted marshal who is authorized in Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay may NOT marshal Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay without an additional warrant. Contact the Kingdom Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay Marshal (KCTSM) for more information on becoming a warranted Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay marshal.

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## 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 rapier combatant's rights and 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."

- a) Crown of Northshield
- b) Kingdom Earl Marshal (KEM)
- c) Kingdom Rapier Marshal (KRM)
- d) Regional Rapier Marshal (RRM) / Kingdom Youth Rapier Marshal (KYRM) / **Kingdom Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay Marshal (KCTSM)**
- e) Group Rapier Marshal (GRM) / Rapier Marshal in Charge of an event (MIC)
- f) Rapier Marshal of the Field (MOF) / Youth Rapier Marshal (YRM)
- g) Group Rapier Marshal in Training (GRMiT)
- h) Rapier Marshals in Training (MiT) / Minor Rapier Marshal (MRM)
- i) Constable of the Field

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 must 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.

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- 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.
- 2) The Rapier 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 rapier combatant for the duration of the event.
  - 3) The Rapier Marshal in Charge will report any suspension, in writing, to the Kingdom Rapier Marshal, the Kingdom Earl Marshal, and the Crown, within one week of the suspension.
  - 4) The Rapier 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 Rapier Marshal in Charge may, but is not required to, remove a combatant from the rapier field for the remainder of the event for any of the following reasons (this list is neither exhaustive nor exclusive):
    - The rapier combatant has committed an infraction the MIC feels is of sufficient gravity to warrant immediate removal from the list.
    - 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.
  - 6) 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, and appropriate action will 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 all actions taken to rectify it to date.
  - 7) 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.
  - 8) Any marshal who knowingly allows a rapier 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 KRM.
  - 9) Any marshal who has their authorization suspended will have their marshal’s warrant suspended as well.
  - 10) Any marshal who knowingly ignores or condones illegal and unsafe practices on the rapier field will have their warrant suspended. Marshals who have had their warrant revoked 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 KRM.

## B. Appeals

- 1) All marshallate decisions regarding removal from the field, suspensions and the revoking of authorizations can be appealed.
  - 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 suspension or revoking 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.
- 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).

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## 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), and 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. 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.

- 1) Experimental equipment can be used at official SCA practices, tournaments and melees. 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) In a melee, all combatants must consent to the use of the weapon/technique prior to the beginning of combat.
- 4) 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 Kingdom Rapier Marshal 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, after they have first been passed the Deputy Society Rapier Marshal, and approved for use in Northshield by the KEM and the Crown.

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## 6. YOUTH RAPIER COMBAT

Except for the important differences listed below, youth rapier combat follows the exact same rules and standards set forth in the Kingdom of Northshield Rules for Rapier Combat. All youth rapier combat competitions will be minor versus minor.

### 6.1. Minor Participation & Parental Consent

Minors can authorize and participate in youth rapier combat in Northshield at 14 years of age. Minors may also begin the Minor Rapier Marshal program at age 14. At age 18, all youth authorizations and warrants will automatically transfer to adult status.

No minor may participate in any martial activity, including demos and practices, without parental approval. The combatant must have a signed and dated waiver from their parent or legal guardian. If the parent or legal guardian is not at the tournament/melee field, then the combatant must have a "permission to treat" slip that authorizes someone on site to offer treatment.

#### A. Parental/Guardian's Responsibilities

- 1) Parents/Guardians are to understand:
  - a) This is a contact sport, and that injuries or death may occur.
  - b) That the Parents/Guardian should behave in a courteous and responsible manner at all times.
  - c) The Parents/Guardians are responsible for their minor's safety, with the Youth Rapier Marshal guiding the armoring/safety process.
  - d) They are required to read and understand the rules and standards for rapier combat in Northshield, and make sure their minor has read and follows them.

### 6.2. Weapon Specifications

Youth rapier is broken up into two age brackets for the purpose of weapon usage. These brackets do not effect combat or tournament pairings, and are used solely to make distinctions for training purposes. The **Leon Paul "stamped" epee** is the default rapier blade for tournament and melee combat in youth rapier in Northshield. As such, youth rapier is the sole exception to the rule that disallows Light Rapier blades to be used in tournaments, melee and demos in Northshield, provided the proper blade is used. No other type of Light rapier blade, other than the Leon Paul "stamped" epee, can be used for purposes of youth training or youth combat in Northshield.

Anyone under the age of 18 years (a minor) **MUST** have a parent or court-appointed guardian on site in any instance that minor is to be participating in SCA sponsored marshal activities. Emancipated minors shall be required to produce proof of their status when checking in at the list table.

#### A. Youth Rapier Bracket

- 1) Youth rapier combatants 14 and 15 years of age fall into this bracket, and can only use the Leon Paul "stamped" epee for their rapiers. Youth rapiers must 1) have quillons, and 2) be balanced between 0 and 1 ½ inches in front of the guard. This is to better simulate the movement and balance of a heavy rapier, which the youth rapier combatants are ideally working towards. Purely

modern guards (such Olympic-style epee, foil, or saber guards) do not meet these criteria, and are thus not allowed on youth rapiers.

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- 2) In certain instances, combatants in the youth rapier bracket may attempt a heavy rapier authorization. Such combatants must have written parental consent, the support of their local Youth Rapier Marshal, and pass a rigorous special authorization. This authorization will focus on the use of proper technique and control with a heavy rapier by the combatant, as well as safety with the weapon.
- 3) Youth rapier combatants may use any legal dagger, rigid parry, and non-rigid parry device allowed by the rules.

## **B. Transitional Bracket**

- 1) Youth rapier combatants who are 16 and 17 years old are in the transitional bracket, and may begin to practice with heavy rapier blades. Since heavy rapiers are balanced and perform differently than fencing-type blades, transitional combatants are urged to get used to them gradually over time. This will not only ensure they are familiar and safe with the heavier blades, but also that they do not potentially strain or injure themselves due to the changes in blade types, weapon balance, and so on.
- 2) Combatants in the Transitional Bracket can use heavy rapiers in youth rapier tournaments as long as both combatants are authorized in the weapon style and it is acceptable to the marshals.
- 3) Heavy rapier blades cannot be used in youth rapier melees.

## **6.3. Training and Sparring**

- 1) Youth Rapier Marshals and the parent/guardian of the minor can train youth rapier combatants in full speed or near full speed sparring at any time. Additionally, the Youth Rapier Marshal in Charge at an event (or a practice) can designate any authorized rapier combatant they deem sufficiently safe as able to fence with youth rapier combatants. Such designations do not extend beyond the individual event or practice, and can be withdrawn by the YRMIC at any time.
- 2) There must be at least one Youth Rapier Marshal present at all youth rapier practices and tournaments.
- 3) All combatants must use the same class blade (youth epee vs. youth epee and heavy rapier vs. heavy rapier) when sparring or training in youth rapier.

## **6.4. Authorizations**

- 1) Youth rapier authorizations are run exactly like adult authorizations, save that a youth rapier combatant's first authorization must be in Light Rapier (LR), using the Leon Paul "stamped" epee only. After that, the combatants can authorize in Rigid Parry, Non-Rigid Parry, Rapier and Dagger, and Case of Rapiers when they feel ready. Combatants in the Youth Rapier bracket may also opt to attempt a heavy rapier authorization, as detailed under 6.2.A.2 above.



- 2) Combatants in the Transitional Bracket can get a separate authorization in heavy rapier (SR) after they are comfortable with the weapon style. Youth rapier combatants with SR authorizations can use heavy rapiers in tournament competition

## **6.5. Marshalling Youth Rapier**

More detailed information on youth rapier marshalling can be found in the Kingdom of Northshield Marshal's Administration Handbook.

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## 7. APPENDICES

### 7.1. Appendix 1: Allowed Rapier and Dagger Blades

The following classes of blade are allowed for use in Northshield:

1) Heavy Rapier Blades:

- Oval bladed schlagers
- Diamond bladed schlagers
- T03 Triplette (Zen Warrior Armory) Rapier
- Del Tin or Darkwood Armory Practice Rapier
- Del Tin or Darkwood Armory Bated Rapier
- Zamorano Rapier
- Hanwei Practical Rapier (those with buttons on the end)
- Angus Trim rapier blade (AT 1691)

2) Cut and Thrust Swordplay Blades:

- Del Tin or Darkwood Armory Flexible Sidesword
- Del Tin or Darkwood Armory Flexible Backsword
- Popinjay Sidesword
- Del Tin or Darkwood Armory Bated Rapier
- Del Tin or Darkwood Armory Practice Rapier
- Zamorano Rapier
- T03 Triplette (Zen Warrior Armory) Rapier
- Scottie Armory Renblade
- Hanwei Practical Rapier (those with buttons on the end)
- Hanwei "Renblade"
- Angus Trim rapier blade (AT 1691)

3) Dagger Blades:

- Scottie daggers
- SafeFlex Mark II daggers – (15/6 stiffness)

- Triplette T05 dagger
- Darkwood “Diamond-flex” daggers
- Darkwood “Wide-flex” daggers

4) Light Rapier Blades:

- Epees
- Doublewide epees

5) Youth Rapier blades:

- Leon Paul “stamped” epee

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## 7.2. Appendix 2: 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 weapon parallel to the ground, supporting handle against table or bench if necessary. Hang a 3-ounce weight (85 grams) just behind the tip. **The blade must have a minimum flex as shown in the table.**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Minimum Required Flex</b>
<b>Dagger (out to 18" blade length)</b>	more than 1/4 inch <6 mm>
<b>Light Rapier</b>	1/2 inch (12 mm)
<b>Heavy Rapier</b>	1/2 inch (12 mm)
<b>Cut and Thrust Swordplay</b>	more than 1/4 inch <6 mm>