

Kingdom of Caid

Unarmored Combat Handbook 2.0

2014



Version 2.0

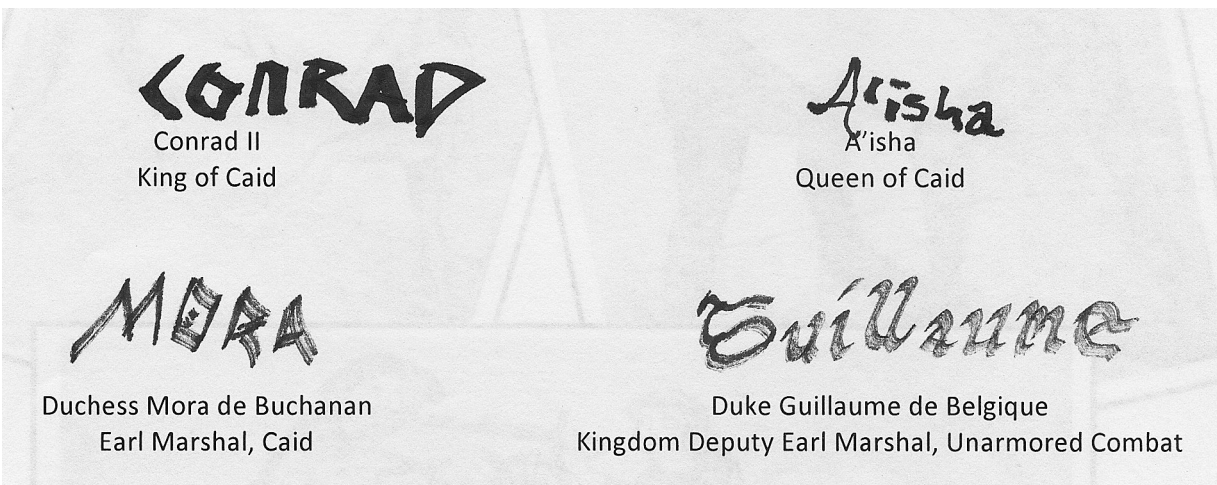
Version 2.0 of the Unarmored Combat handbook is an update from Version 1.1. This edition has been written as an extensive update to the initial rule set. This handbook incorporates many of the “informal” rules revisions that have been in practice for quite some time, and formally recognizes many of the items of commercial equipment that have replaced the handmade “sword simulators” initially used in Caid.

Many thanks to Baroness Muirenn ingen Donnubain for her extensive help in composing this edition, as well as to THL Kolbrandr Kolsson for his work on previous drafts of the Unarmored Combat Handbook, and to Duchess Felinah and Lord Orion Martin for their help with the details and organization of this edition.

In service to the Crown,

Duke Guillaume de la Belgique, Kingdom Deputy Marshal for Unarmored Combat

This handbook was signed into law on March 26, 2014, and replaces all previous editions of the Unarmored Combat Handbook.



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Rules for Unarmored Combat, Kingdom of Caid

Table of Contents

Section/Topic	Page
<i>1. Introduction</i>	4
1.1 “Unarmored” Defined (Combat Treatises & Combat Styles)	4
1.2 Combat Treatises	4
1.3 Combat Styles	4
1.4 Participation (Includes Minors, Visiting Fighters, and Relocating Fighters)	4
1.5 Rules of the Lists	5
1.6 Behavior on the Field	5
<i>2. Weapons</i>	6
2.1 Approved Pre-Made (Commercial) Synthetic Simulators	6
2.2 Constructed Simulators	6
2.3 Sword Types (Long Sword, Arming Sword, Basket Hilted Swords)	6
2.4 Blade Safety (Including Experimental Weapons & Weapon Safety)	7
2.5 Experimental Weapons	7
2.6 Weapon Safety	8
<i>3. Bucklers</i>	8
<i>4. Safety Equipment</i>	8
4.1 Head Protection (Includes Steel Helms)	8
4.2 Throat, Neck, and Shoulder Protection	9
4.3 Body Protection	9
4.4 Elbow, Forearm, and Hand Protection	10
4.5 Kidney Protection	10
4.6 Groin Protection	10
4.7 Knee Protection	10
4.8 Foot Protection	10
Summary Table: Unarmored Protective Gear	10
<i>5. Combat Conventions</i>	11
5.1 Blow Acknowledgement Standards	11
5.1.1 Blow Strength: Percussive Force, Accuracy, and Commitment	11
5.1.2 Accuracy	11
5.1.3 Commitment	12
5.1.4 Types of Attacks With the Weapon (Cut, Tip Cut, Slice, Thrust, Pommel Strike)	12
5.1.5 Target Areas (Mortal vs. Wounding, Other Considerations)	13
Summary Table: Mortal and Wounding Attacks By Target	14
5.2 Acknowledgement of Blows	14
5.3 Other Combat Considerations	15
5.3.1 Simultaneous Blows	15
5.3.2 Blocked or Levered Blows	15
5.3.3 Failed Equipment	15
5.3.4 Dropping A Weapon	15
5.3.5 Blows During A Hold	15
5.3.6 Open Handed Displacement: Acceptable Techniques vs. Trapping	16
5.3.7 Blade Trapping Under Standard Combat Rules	16
5.3.8 Striking Weapons With Excessive Force	16
5.3.9 Other Unsafe and Unacceptable Techniques	16

5.4 Optional Combat Techniques (Blade Grasping, Half Swording, Disarming)	16
5.4.1 Blade Grasping Techniques:	16
5.4.2 Half Sword Techniques:	17
5.4.3 Disarming Techniques:	17
6. <i>Rules for Tournament</i>	18
6.1 Standard counted blow tournament style	18
6.2 List field size	19
6.3 Matching Weapons	19
6.4 Determinate Marshaling	19
7. <i>Appearance On The Field (Garb and Shoes)</i>	19
8. <i>Authorizations</i>	20
8.1 Fighting in tournaments	20
8.2 Fighting at practices	20
8.3 New Authorization Procedure	20
8.4 Authorization Expiration and Reauthorizations	22
9. <i>Unarmored Combat Marshals: Training & Duties</i>	22
9.2 Unarmored Combat Marshal-In-Training (UCMiT)	23
9.3 Warranted Unarmored Combat Marshal (UCM)	23
9.4 Senior Unarmored Combat Marshal (SUCM)	24
9.5 Deputy Earl Marshal (DEM) for Unarmored Combat	24
9.6 Reauthorization for Unarmored Combat Marshals	24
10. <i>Grievance Procedures and Sanctions</i>	24
11. <i>Experimental Programs</i>	28
12. <i>Modifying these Rules</i>	29
<i>Appendix 1: Constructed Weapons</i>	30
<i>Appendix 2: Equipment Sources</i>	31

1. Introduction

This document establishes the rules for Unarmored Combat in the Kingdom of Caid, within the Society for Creative Anachronism. Unarmored Combat refers to the re-creation of dueling and single combat without armor in the Late Middle Ages. This was a common practice in period, in both military and civilian venues, and was done for training, for sport, and for pleasure. At this time, Unarmored Combat draws primarily on German and Italian combat treatises.

The goal of Unarmored Combat in the SCA is to re-create the techniques described in these treatises as accurately as possible, while staying within the accepted safety and appearance standards of SCA combat. All fighters are expected to be familiar with historical fighting techniques, and to attempt to use historically accurate fighting techniques in their combat style.

This document assumes and implies compliance with the SCA “Rules of the Lists,” and all supplemental rules required by the Kingdom of Caid. Where any rule is seemingly contradicted by another, the safer or stricter of the two rules shall be considered to be in effect.

1.1 “Unarmored” Defined (Combat Treatises & Combat Styles)

Use of the word “Unarmored” does not imply that this combat form abjures safety equipment. However, for purposes of practicing this form, safety equipment such as joint protection, gloves, helmets, etc. are NOT considered to be “armor” that would require increased blow power for acknowledgement, or would prevent a blow from being acknowledged. These items are used to maintain the safe practice of the sport, not as a form of armor in the sense of reducing the effectiveness of a delivered blow.

For purposes of Unarmored Combat participation, each fighter is considered to be wearing a linen shirt or tunic; woolen hose; and light leather shoes and gloves - regardless of the protective padding and equipment the individual is actually wearing. Acknowledgement of blows should be based on the assumption that any blow with a sharp sword that would draw blood or cause pain through this sort of “everyday wear” will be considered “good.” (Blows do not need to replicate debilitating wounds or lethal injuries in order to be acknowledged. See 5.1 Blow Acknowledgement below.)

1.2 Combat Treatises

Fighters participating in Unarmored Combat are expected to attempt to fight using historical techniques documented in extant combat treatises. All treatises used for Unarmored Combat should include both cutting and thrusting techniques. The main manuscripts drawn on in Unarmored Combat include Royal Armouries MS I.33, Hans Talhoffer, Fiori Dei Liberi, Achille Marozzo, and George Silver. This list is not exclusive; other treatises may be used for inspiration and guidance. Fighters may base their techniques on treatises not listed in this document so long as the style being employed is documentable and recognizable as such by the marshalle. Unarmored Combat Marshals are expected to have a basic familiarity with these core manuscripts.

1.3 Combat Styles

At present, three types of fighting styles are used in Unarmored Combat: Sword and Buckler, Single Sword, and Long Sword. Each style requires a separate authorization.

1.4 Participation (Includes Minors, Visiting Fighters, and Relocating Fighters)

All persons aged 16 years and older can participate in Unarmored Combat following successful authorization.

1.4.1 Participation of Minors

All fighters under the age of 18 must have a copy of the "Minor's Waiver and Informed Consent to Participate" form and the "Medical Authorization for Minors" form signed by their parent/legal guardian. This form must be submitted along with the fighter's authorization paperwork. Additionally, a parent/legal guardian must be present at all times while the minor is participating. The Kingdom Earl Marshal (or his/her designated representative) shall ensure that the minor's parent or legal guardian has observed Unarmored Combat, is aware of the risk of injury inherent in this martial sport, and has signed the above forms.

1.4.2 Visiting/Relocating fighters

Any visiting fighter may be accorded fighting privilege on presentation of a valid SCA Fighter Authorization Card for the weapons styles authorized under their Kingdom, so long as their Kingdom has adopted Unarmored Combat rules and standards that are essentially compatible with these rules and standards.

A fighter who relocates to Caid must be re-authorized within six months, under the rules of Caid.

1.5 Rules of the Lists

The Rules of the Lists are a governing set of rules set forth by the SCA, Inc. that form the basis of sport combat within this organization. Unarmored Combat rules, current or future, are not meant to conflict with the Rules of the Lists. With that stated, the Rules of the Lists were not written with this combat form in mind. Each has its own perspective. The interpretation of either should not conflict with the other's spirit or intent. Failure to comply with these rules may result in disciplinary action, including immediate revocation of a fighter's authorization, at the discretion of the Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat, based on the severity of the infraction. (See Section 10 for more details.)

1.6 Behavior on the Field

1.6.1 All fighters shall obey the commands of the marshals overseeing the field or be removed from the field and subject to subsequent disciplinary action.

1.6.2 Disagreements with the marshals overseeing the field shall be resolved through established mechanisms outlined in the Marshallate Procedures of the SCA, Inc.

1.6.3 Combatants shall behave in a chivalrous and knightly manner. Each fighter shall maintain control over his or her temper and behavior at all times.

1.6.4 Striking an opponent with excessive force, or with deliberate intent to injure, is forbidden. It is against the rules for any fighter to behave in a manner that is unchivalrous, unsafe, brings question to his or her honor, or is deliberately harmful to an opponent.

1.6.5 Upon hearing the call "HOLD," all fighters shall immediately stop. The fighters shall freeze, check for hazards in their immediate vicinity, and then assume a non-threatening position with their weapons pointed in a safe direction.

1.6.6 Conduct which is obstructive of normal combat, such as consistently ignoring blows, deliberate manipulation or ignorance of the rules, inappropriate displays of anger, or similar discourtesies are forbidden.

1.6.7 It is the responsibility of all fighters to be constantly vigilant for their safety and that of their opponent.

1.6.8 No alcohol or intoxicating substance shall ever be used on the field, while fighting, before fighting, etc. This includes, but is not limited to, alcohol or drugs, including prescription or over-the-counter medications, which might affect a fighter's judgment and capabilities on the field.

1.6.9 No fighter shall take deliberate advantage of loopholes or seek to gain advantage by willful misinterpretation or reinterpretation of the rules. Where a question about the interpretation of a rule exists, the rule shall always be followed in the safest and most "common sense" manner possible.

1.6.10 Grappling, wrestling, and tripping are not allowed in this form of combat. Grappling is defined as closing a hand upon or wrapping a limb around the opponent's person, or otherwise forcibly trapping or inhibiting the movement of an opponent.

1.6.11 A fighter shall not deliberately strike a "helpless" opponent. An opponent is considered helpless when they are unable to reasonably put up a defense, such as dropping their weapon, armor failure, falling to the ground, etc. Common sense should always be applied, and note rule 1.6.9.

1.6.12 A fighter who bodily collides with another fighter due to a deliberate charge shall forfeit the bout.

2. Weapons

Weapons used in Unarmored Combat are intended to simulate weapons documented in Late Medieval fighting treatises, while adhering to an acceptable standard of safety in use. To the best extent possible, these weapons should realistically simulate the approximate weight, balance, dimensions, and appearance of the period weapons. Use of weapons (or weapon parts) which are colored or decorated in a non-historical manner (such as neon colors, or glow-in-the-dark) are prohibited, even if the weapon simulator in question is otherwise legal or pre-approved. (Weapon parts, such as hilts or pommels, which are constructed or decorated with standard heraldic colors are acceptable.)

2.1 Approved Pre-Made (Commercial) Synthetic Simulators

Rawlings synthetic nylon swords are the only pre-approved commercial sword simulators for Unarmored Combat. All parts of pre-approved weapons must be of synthetic (plastic) construction for standard usage. (Metal guards, pommels, etc., are not allowable.) Approved synthetic sword simulators do not require thrusting tips.

2.1.1 Nylon simulators may be purchased from manufacturers other than Rawlings provided that they meet the same safety standards and performance specifications.

2.1.2 Weapons purchased from other manufacturers must be inspected by the Unarmored Kingdom Marshal before use, and will be considered experimental until approved by the marshal for standard usage.

2.2 Constructed Simulators

"Modified shinai" Unarmored weapons made under previous versions of the Unarmored Combat handbook are still legal only in cases where no approved pre-made simulators are available. For approved construction guidelines for these weapons, see Appendix 1.

2.3 Sword Types (Long Sword, Arming Sword, Basket Hilted Swords)

Currently, three types of weapons are permitted within this form: long sword, arming sword, and arming sword with basket hilt. These blades should comply with the specifications outlined below.

2.3.1 Long Sword

A long sword is a double-edged, pointed weapon that is wielded with two hands. Either the scent stopper or disk type pommels and pommel extenders are acceptable for the Rawlings Long Sword simulators.

Any other proposed Long Sword simulators (commercial or constructed) should closely approximate the following specifications: Total length 35 to 50 inches. Total weight: between 1.5 and 2.50 pounds. The total blade length should not exceed 42 inches as measured from the tip to guard along the blade of the weapon. Quillions or cross guards are standard. Basket hilts and compound hilts are not permitted on long swords. Fantasy or other totally non-period guards are not acceptable. Any simulator other than Rawlings or constructed modified shinai must be inspected and approved by the Kingdom Unarmored Combat Marshal before any use.

2.3.2 Arming Sword (single hand sword, broadsword, etc.)

An arming sword has a straight, double-edged, pointed blade, and a simple cross guard, shorter than the long sword. It is designed strictly for single-handed use. Either the scent stopper or disk type pommels and pommel extenders are acceptable for the Rawlings Arming Sword simulators. Polymer cross guards are required for approved standard usage. Arming swords can be used in both sword and buckler, and single-sword combat.

Any other proposed Arming Sword simulators (commercial or constructed) should closely approximate the following specifications: Approximate total length 32 to 42 inches. The total blade length should be 31 to 36 inches as measured from the tip to guard along the edge. Total weight should be 1.50 to 2.25 pounds. Any simulator other than Rawlings or constructed modified shinai must be inspected and approved by the Kingdom Unarmored Combat Marshal before any use.

2.3.3 Basket Hilted Swords

A basket-hilted sword follows the same construction specifications as an arming sword, but is equipped with a hilt that fully encloses the hand, or is shaped in a way to provide superior hand protection (e.g., clamshell and swept hilts, as well as true basket and cup hilts). Minor protective features on a cross guard, such as nagels, knucklebows, or siderings, do not fall under this qualification. Synthetic Basket hilts provided by Rawlings are approved for general use in Unarmored Combat. Only the standard Rawlings polymer "button pommel" provided with synthetic basket hilts is approved; scent stopper, wheel, and extended pommels are not allowed on basket-hilted swords.

Any other proposed basket hilt simulators (commercial or constructed) should closely approximate the weight and performance of the Rawlings model, and must be inspected and approved by the Kingdom Unarmored Combat Marshal before any use.

2.4 Blade Safety (Including Experimental Weapons & Weapon Safety)

All blades used in this form have some degree of flexibility or compression to minimize the risk of injuring one's opponent.

Rawlings synthetic blades are designed to have a wide range of flex in the top third of the blade. These blades must be frequently monitored to ensure that the nylon has not stiffened too much, and that the blades are not showing signs of cracking or other damage that might make them unsafe for sparring. Synthetic blades that have become too stiff and have lost their flexibility, or have been weakened by overuse may be determined to be unusable by the marshals.

2.5 Experimental Weapons

Any weapon which does not fit into an established classification is experimental. Experimental Weapons must be approved by the Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat or designee prior to

being put into use. An experimental weapon test plan will be required prior to implementation of the experimental program, and is described in Section 11 below. After experimental weapons get approval by the DEMUC, they must be tested for safety by the marshal in charge of the field prior to every use, and must be approved by the fighter's opponent.

2.6 Weapon Safety

All fighters should consider it their constant duty to maintain their weapons in proper working order. All fighters should take the safety of their opponent into consideration at all times while on the field.

ALL weapons must be inspected prior to use in combat. An inspection at the start of a tournament is sufficient; additional inspections of weapons may be necessary, particularly for weapons that are experimental. Any weapon may be deemed unsafe by an inspecting marshal at any time.

3. Bucklers

Bucklers are the only class of shield used in Unarmored Combat. A buckler is a handheld shield, of whatever shape, up to 14 inches in diameter. A buckler is grasped in one hand and is NOT strapped to the forearm. Total size should not exceed 155 square inches.

Bucklers may be made of minimum 3/8 inch plywood or equivalent wood, light metal (minimum 20 gauge steel; or T6 aluminum or equivalent, with a thickness of 0.900mm), or synthetic material (plastic). In all cases, the edge must not be sharp, jagged, or splintery. The edges of metal bucklers must be rolled or covered to create a rounded surface. Wooden edges may be covered, and edges and faces of all bucklers should be constructed in such a way as to prevent them from causing undue damage to weapons. In all cases, the cover must be well secured to the buckler, and any modern looking materials should be concealed (painted, covered, or textured). Bucklers must have a period appearance. "Fantasy" or non-period designs are not acceptable

4. Safety Equipment

The term "unarmored" does not imply that fighting in Unarmored Combat can be done without protective equipment. The following requirements are intended to keep fighters reasonably safe in the course of participating in this full-contact martial art. While individuals may always choose to use protective equipment above the minimum standards, fighters are advised against "armoring up" in order to strike with excessive power. Armor that encourages full-power strikes, or that prevents fighters from acknowledging reasonable, controlled blows, may be forbidden by the marshals for the sake of safety.

No undisguised modern sports equipment will be allowed on the field for unarmored combat (see 4.1 below for discussion of the fencing mask). Undisguised modern equipment includes but is not limited to knee and elbow pads, hockey or lacrosse gloves, etc. Modern sports equipment that is concealed or covered by clothing is permitted. Simply taping or blacking-out sports logos may not be sufficient.

Minor exceptions to this rule may occasionally be allowed at the discretion of the Marshal in Charge (e.g., to take into account standards of dress/protective equipment from other lists a fighter may be participating in).

4.1 Head Protection (Includes Steel Helms)

Allowable head protection is a (minimum) 12 kg., 350N-rated fencing mask with commercial lining or equivalent. All fabric on the fencing mask (liner and bib) must be kept in proper repair; holes or excessive wear may cause a fencing mask to fail inspection by the marshals.

The rest of the head must be covered by a minimum of heavy weight denim or equivalent cloth; hardened leather, quilted cloth, closed cell foam, or additional protection on the back of the head is

highly recommended. No significant gap should exist between the back-of-head protection and the top of the gorget or neck guard.

For purposes of “appearance on the field” (as described above), an uncovered fencing mask is not considered “undisguised sports gear,” and may be allowed onto the lists field, at the discretion of the marshals. Large, identifiable commercial logos must be disguised or removed from fencing masks. It is highly recommended that fencing masks be covered with a simple drape, hood, or other covering to disguise their modern appearance.

4.1.1 Steel Helms

Steel helms are permitted for Unarmored Combat, however they must have a grate or screen that will not allow the penetration of the tip of an Unarmored sword into the helm.

Steel helmets with metal screening over the face opening should be constructed such that no exposed screen edge is in a position to cut the wearer or damage weapons striking the helm. The screening for a steel helm must be no more than 0.25 inch (soldered or woven) if round punch, 0.20 inch if square punch. Perforated metal must be at least 20 gauge or heavier, while woven screen must be 16 gauge or heavier.

If a fighter chooses to wear a steel helmet, they must be diligent about recognizing received blows, as blows will be harder to detect in this type of helm. If a fighter has repeated issues with blow recognition while wearing this type of helm, they may be asked to find a different type of helm by the marshals.

4.2 Throat, Neck, and Shoulder Protection

A hard gorget or equivalent rigid throat protection is required. A marshal should not be able to touch any part of the fighter’s windpipe with a standard weapon edge or tip when both head and neck protection are in a comfortable “at rest” position. The rigid throat protection must cover the windpipe to one inch below the sternal notch, and the *interior points* of the collar bones (not the entire collar bone) in the front; and the spine down to the T1 vertebrae on the back. All other portions of the gorget may be constructed of garment leather, 1/2” closed cell foam, quilted fabric, or the equivalent. “Dog collar” style gorgets are not sufficient.

Any gap/seam between the collar and front bib of the gorget (the front of the throat) should not be wide enough to allow penetration by a sword tip.

There should be no significant gap between the back of the head and neck protection.

Shoulder protection is not required.

4.3 Body Protection

The torso, arms, and legs must be covered by cloth fabric at a minimum. Fighting with excessive exposure of bare skin is forbidden; small gaps - such as a gap of less than 2” between a tunic sleeve and the cuff of a glove, or between the boot and the cuff of the pants - are not to be considered excessive, at the discretion of the marshals.

It is recommended that fighters who are concerned about bruises use a light padded gambeson, fencing jacket, or equivalent. Note that using padded clothing may inhibit blow recognition. Each fighter should select protection that allows them to still recognize blows effectively.

Additional breast protection for females is not required, but it is recommended. Hard plastic or metal cups (found at most fencing supply stores) are popular. Leather inserts can also be fashioned. A padded gambeson can also serve as breast protection.

4.4 Elbow, Forearm, and Hand Protection

Elbow pads are required; rigid elbow protection is recommended. Pads that have $\frac{3}{4}$ wrap around to partly protect the inner-elbow are suggested. Elbow padding may be included as part of a gambeson or other arm protection (i.e., “bazuband” style vambraces, elbow cops, etc.).

Hands must be protected by a minimum of leather gloves with full fingers. Padded or reinforced gloves are highly recommended, particularly for longsword.

Fighters may also wish to consider using a vambrace (wrist and forearm guard) or equivalent, but vambraces or forearm pads are not required.

4.5 Kidney Protection

Some form of kidney protection is recommended but not required. A lightly padded gambeson or the equivalent is sufficient.

4.6 Groin Protection

4.6.1 Men

A hard sports or karate cup is required for male groin protection.

4.6.2 Women

Groin protection for women is not required, but some protection is recommended. A fighting skirt or the skirts of a lightly padded gambeson may suffice, or a padded athletic cup specifically designed for females, secured with a “Jill” strap may be used.

4.7 Knee Protection

Kneepads are recommended, but not required.

4.8 Foot Protection

Closed toe shoes are required. Period footwear with smooth leather soles is acceptable as these allow fighters to easily use proper footwork. Boots with heavily treaded soles and/or steel reinforced toes are discouraged, and may be disallowed by the marshals if they prove a danger to other fighters’ feet.

Summary Table: Unarmored Protective Gear

Body Part	Required	Recommended
Head	12kg/350 N Fencing Mask	
Back of Head	Heavy Denim	Hard Leather/Closed Cell Foam
Neck/Throat	Gorget covering throat, collar area, and spine to T1 (see rule 4.2 for full specs).	
Body/Torso	Cloth fabric	Padded fabric
Elbow	Elbow pad	Rigid elbow cop
Forearm	None (Must be covered)	Padded or rigid vambraces
Hands	Leather gloves	Padded or reinforced gloves
Groin	Men: Sports/karate cup Women n/a	Women: skirt, gambeson or other (see 4.6.2)
Knees	None	Knee pads
Feet	Closed shoes	Period footwear

5. Combat Conventions

5.1 Blow Acknowledgement Standards

When judging the effect of blows in Unarmored Combat, all fighters are presumed to be wearing a linen shirt or tunic, woolen hose, light leather gloves and shoes, and no protective covering for the head and face. Any blow, thrust, or other attack that would draw blood or cause pain to a fighter so equipped should be acknowledged as “good.” Although fighters should always endeavor to employ good physical technique (and not merely “tap” each other with their blades), strong, “cleaving,” uncontrolled blows are not required, and may result in a fighter’s removal from the field and/or disciplinary action from the marshallate, as deemed necessary.

At all times, attacks must be controlled and pulled sufficiently so as not to injure the opponent, while still retaining the necessary form, intent, contact and pressure to validate the attack.

5.1.1 Blow Strength: Percussive Force, Accuracy, and Commitment

Unarmored Combat is not a “touch” sport. Blows that land without Percussive Force (i.e., incidental contact) or thrusts without positive pressure are not valid.

5.1.1.1 *Percussive force* is defined as committed, intentional contact with the *cutting edge* of the weapon that can be felt by the receiving fighter. Blow strength should be kept to reasonably light percussive force. Occasional bruises may occur to a fighter who is wearing a lightly padded gambeson, padded gloves, and other minimum protection, but such bruises should not be routine.

5.1.1.2 Thrusts require only positive pressure. *Positive pressure* is defined as committed, intentional contact with the target point that can be felt lightly by the receiving fighter.

5.1.1.3. Strikes, thrusts, or other attacks do not need to “travel through” or “cut past” their targets to be considered good or valid. An attack will be considered “good” if its accuracy and commitment (see below) would result in an injury described above in the standards of Blow Acknowledgement (“drawn blood”) if a sharp steel sword were being used.

5.1.1.4 Excessive power will not be permitted and marshals will be monitoring power levels closely.

5.1.1.4.1 Fighters should either calibrate with their opponent or otherwise make sure that their opponent is not receiving overly hard blows. It is every fighter’s responsibility to respect their opponents and to look out for their opponent’s safety, as well as their own, at all times.

5.1.1.4.2 A blow may be considered excessive if it was delivered with more force than was necessary, or if the force of the contact exceeds reasonable standards. A reasonable and valid blow may occasionally cause a mild thump or sting when received. A blow that lands harder should be discussed briefly amongst the combatants so the fighter that delivered the blow may know to lower their power a little.

5.1.2 Accuracy

All attacks must land accurately in order to be effective. An accurate blow or thrust has good edge or point orientation (the sword’s edge/point makes direct contact with the target), strikes an acceptable target, and is delivered in a realistic manner. An attack that lacks accuracy is not to be considered good.

A grazing, nicking, or flat (delivered with something other than the edge) blow is not accurate.

5.1.3 Commitment

All attacks must come from an intentional, committed action that, if delivered with strength/force, would be capable of causing an actual wound to an opponent. Note: This does not mean that a cut or thrust must hit with “realistic power” in order to be acknowledged, simply that the attack must be delivered in a way such that it *could have* been powered into a wounding attack.

A committed attack requires that the primary hand be within thumb’s reach of the sword blade. Releasing the sword and/or thrusting or striking while gripping by the pommel only is not allowed, and may be cause for removal from the field or other action by the marshallate, if done repeatedly.

5.1.4 Types of Attacks With the Weapon (Cut, Tip Cut, Slice, Thrust, Pommel Strike)

5.1.4.1 Striking with the Edge (Percussive Blow or Cut)

A blow delivered with the edge is a percussive blow. It must land in a fashion such that if a real sword were being used, the sword’s edge would cut into the target. Some blows are delivered with percussion and incision (slicing motion), and these are also considered edge blows.

Back-blade cuts using the false edge, or short edge of the sword that are delivered with realistic and intentional technique are valid and acceptable.

“Wrap-around shots” (i.e. blows delivered from in front of an opponent that pivot around and strike the opponent on the back) are both unrealistic (as indicated by a complete lack of evidence in period fighting manuals) and very difficult to control. “Wrap-around” blows are discouraged in Unarmored Combat, and repeated use may be considered unchivalrous (disallowed by 1.6.4.).

5.1.4.2 Cutting with the Tip

A cutting action with the tip is not valid if it only makes a nicking or grazing contact. If a cut with the tip lands with percussive force, it will be considered a valid blow. “Tip cuts” are also considered valid if the tip is drawn across the target with committed pressure for the duration of the cut, and moves roughly five inches, or fully across a limb or digit, whichever is less. Incidental or unintentional contact with the tip of the sword without committed pressure is not considered a valid tip cut, no matter how far the tip travels.

5.1.4.3 Slice Attacks

A “slice” is defined as any contact with the cutting edge of the weapon delivered *without* enough power or commitment to be considered a valid “percussive blow,” and which is then moved across the opponent’s target area in a slicing manner. Valid attacks must travel, or slice, a distance of roughly 1/3 the blade length of the sword, or the complete width of the limb or digit, whichever is less. Slices must be delivered with committed downward pressure (or “angular pressure”) for the duration of the slice. Draw cuts or push cuts delivered under these criteria are considered valid attacks. By definition, a slice attack cannot be done with the weapon held at full extension.

Back-blade slices using the false edge, or short edge of the sword that are delivered with realistic and intentional technique are valid and acceptable.

5.1.4.4 Thrusting

Thrusting must be done with extreme care and control. A valid thrust requires only positive pressure (see 5.1.1). Thrusts should be delivered with commitment, but never with a stiff arm or locked elbow, or with the full weight of one’s body behind the sword, or with excessive power.

Incidental or unintentional contact with the tip of a sword may be considered a valid thrust if such contact realistically would still have resulted in a wound.

5.1.4.5 Striking with the Pommel

Blows landed with the pommel are valid to the head only. Any such blow is delivered with great care and minimal force. One need only lightly tap their opponent's helm/mask to prove this blow valid. Pommel strikes are prohibited on blades equipped with a basket hilt, as it is too easy to accidentally strike with the basket itself rather than the pommel.

5.1.4.6 No other part of the weapons described (e.g., quillions, handles, etc.) may be used to strike an opponent.

5.1.5 Target Areas (*Mortal vs. Wounding, Other Considerations*)

The full body is a target in Unarmored Combat. The following is a detailed description of all valid target areas for tournament scoring purposes.

5.1.5.1 Head, Neck, and Shoulders

Attacks delivered to the head and neck are considered mortal blows. Attacks that land between the base of the neck and the point of the shoulder are also considered mortal blows.

5.1.5.2 Arms and Hands

The whole arm from the point of the shoulder to the tips of the fingers is a valid target. Fighters should take care to use control when striking at the fingers, hands, and wrists in order to prevent injuries. Deliberate hard strikes to the wrists and hands are not allowed, and repeatedly striking these targets with excessive force may be cause for a fighter to be removed from the field, or other action taken by the marshalls as deemed necessary. Blows delivered to the hands and arms are considered non-mortal, "wounding" blows.

Hand Targeting and Mismatched Swords: If one fighter's sword has a cross guard, and the other's has a basket hilt (or equivalent "superior hand protection," see 2.3.3), the fight will be conducted with target zones of the wrist and hand discounted *on the sword hand only* for both fighters. (All hits to the sword hand below the points of the wrist joint will not be counted.)

5.1.5.3 Torso

Attacks delivered to the torso - rib cage, back, and abdomen - are considered mortal blows.

In striking to the back, fighters must be careful not to strike a helpless opponent (disallowed under 1.6.11). Fighters should avoid using "wrap-around" blows to strike an opponent on the back (see 5.1.4.1).

5.1.5.4 Groin

Attacks to the groin shall be considered mortal blows; however, deliberately targeting the groin is considered unchivalrous behavior and so is not allowed (see 1.6.4).

5.1.5.5 Hips and Legs

The whole leg is a target. Attacks to the legs are considered non-mortal, "wounding" blows.

An attack to the hip shall be considered mortal if it lands above the crest of the hip bone (i.e., into the abdominal cavity). Blows that land on or below the hip bone are considered non-mortal wounding blows.

5.1.5.6 Arteries

Attacks delivered to the inner side of the arm roughly one hand's width below the arm pit, and to the inner thigh within a hand's width of the groin shall be considered mortal blows. These types of attacks would likely sever a major artery if delivered with a real sword, resulting in a fast death or incapacitation.

5.1.5.7 Feet

The foot is a valid target. An attack to the foot is considered a non-mortal, wounding blow.

Deliberate hard blows to the ankle or foot are considered unsafe and so are not allowed (see 1.6.4)

Summary Table: Mortal and Wounding Attacks By Target

Mortal	Wounding
Head	Arm (shoulder point to wrist)
Pommel strike (to the head*)	Hand
Neck (from neck to shoulder point)	Leg (hip bone and below)
Torso (above hip bone)	Feet
Groin	
Arteries (near armpit and groin)	

* Pommel strikes are valid *only* to the head, and are considered a mortal attack. (See 5.1.4.5)

5.2 Acknowledgement of Blows

It is the responsibility of all fighters to acknowledge the blows that they receive. A fighter who does not acknowledge blows may be counseled by the marshals and/or removed from fighting. If an opponent does not acknowledge a blow, it is perfectly reasonable to ask “Pardon me, but was my blow valid?” It is also appropriate to ask a marshal for their opinion of a blow. (In contrast, insisting that your blow was “good,” or asking, “What was wrong with *that one*?” is considered unchivalrous.)

5.2.1 A fighter should also always be aware of the blows that they throw. A fighter should always behave honorably and withdraw any blows, even those called “good” by their opponent, if the fighter who threw the blow feels that it was not a valid blow. This could include bad edge orientation (“flat”) that the opponent didn’t notice, or accidental “uncommitted” contact with the weapon that was acknowledged as “good” by the opponent.

5.2.2 No blow shall ever be considered to have been “blocked” by an opponent’s garb or protective gear. If, for instance, a fighter wearing a long tunic or other draping garment, a pouch, scabbard long belt, etc., is struck by a blow which would have, had the clothing not been present, continued through to cause a wound, then the blow shall be considered good.

5.2.3. Optional Non-Standard Blow Acknowledgment Convention: Fighters always have the **option** to accept any blow as “good” which would not otherwise be counted as valid within the rules *if the receiving fighter feels that blow would have been realistically effective in a fight*.

Examples: A flat blow to the head, or a pommel strike to the ribs might be accepted as “good” blows - though perhaps as “wounding” instead of “mortal.” A slice to the underside of both wrists or across both arms might be taken as two blows instead of one, or even as a “mortal” blow instead of a “wound” if delivered with surpassing skill and technique.

Fighters may consider it a point of skill and honor to acknowledge blows in a manner as realistically as possible, and to consider the guidelines of these rules as the “minimum standard” of acknowledgement. (By the same token, fighters should consider it a point of honor to refrain from using techniques that are specifically designated as invalid or ineffective within the guidelines of the rules - such as throwing blows that will deliberately land “flat,” or using pommel strikes in off-target areas.)

Regardless of the techniques being used in combat, **no fighter is ever under any obligation to accept an invalid blow as “good.”** This is an *optional convention*, meant to increase the level of enjoyment, and technical skill upon the field of Unarmored Combat — not to reward sloppy fighting,

encourage the use of questionable techniques, or to pressure less-experienced fighters into acknowledging blows that are in the “gray zones” of the rules.

5.3 Other Combat Considerations

5.3.1 Simultaneous Blows

Simultaneous blows are defined as any pair of blows that are both in motion simultaneously, regardless of which contacts its target first. In standard Unarmored tournament combat, simultaneous blows are both acknowledged and scored normally. (i.e., A blow thrown by Fighter A is not negated by a blow struck by Fighter B, as long as Fighter A’s blow was moving before Fighter B’s hit its target.)

Any blow which began its motion after a valid blow was landed, or any blow that requires a fighter’s feet to move *after* that fighter has been struck, is *not* considered a “simultaneous blow.”

5.3.2 Blocked or Levered Blows

5.3.2.1 A blow that is effectively blocked by a weapon or shield is considered to be an ineffective blow. Using excessive force to drive or push through what would normally be an effective block to land a “good” blow is not acceptable. However, a committed and accurate blow of normal force that strikes through an insufficient defense is a good blow.

5.3.2.2 A “levered” blow is defined as a blow that lands on an effective block from a shield or weapon and is then see-sawed over the block to strike. Levered blows are not good unless the levering action could have realistically generated a valid wound. This is *not* intended to negate valid, realistic “against the sword” fighting techniques. Marshals may need to help determine if a levered blow was valid. Slicing from a levered blow will be considered ineffective *unless* it would have realistically have generated a wound (i.e., realistic slicing pressure was generated past the “lever point” of the blocking object).

5.3.3 Failed Equipment

Failure or loss of head protection or neck protection during a fight shall result in the immediate call of “hold” to stop the fight. If the mask failure is minor and quickly repaired, or if the failure was due to an overly hard blow, the fight will be resumed once the failure is fixed and the marshals have thoroughly re-inspected the equipment. If the failure is due to poorly maintained or faulty equipment, and/or the failure cannot be fixed in a timely fashion, the fighter whose equipment failed will forfeit the fight.

5.3.4 Dropping A Weapon

An opponent who has dropped their weapon may not be struck, but should be allowed to retrieve the dropped weapon.

5.3.4.1 Because a light grasp is often used as a technique to avoid striking/thrusting with excessive force, a fighter who drops a weapon, or has it knocked from his/her hand in an attempt to “break the wrist” and avoid attacking with excessive power should not be penalized.

However, a fighter who drops a weapon repeatedly (more than once, in the same set of circumstances) may be required by the marshals to yield the fight and retire from the field, if the marshals feel the lack of control is causing an unsafe situation.

5.3.5 Blows During A Hold

Any event that would cause a fight to be stopped - e.g., the marshal’s call “hold,” or a dropped weapon - will cause a blow to be considered invalid, unless the blow was started and in motion before the event occurred.

5.3.6 Open Handed Displacement: Acceptable Techniques vs. Trapping

Open-hand pushing or displacing of weapons and shields is allowed. Momentary, open-hand displacement of an opponent's wrist/forearm is allowed, provided the contact does not persist after the attempted attack has been completed. In any case, the force of such a push must be carefully controlled - use of excessive force in a push or displacement (i.e., using enough force to knock an opponent off balance) is not allowed, even with an open hand. Using the hand to momentarily control the opposing weapon/blade (not at the tip) is allowed; striking it forcefully out of the opponent's grip is not. Grabbing a shield with a closed hand is *not* allowed. Grabbing/gripping a weapon with a closed hand is *not* allowed under standard combat rules, but may be admissible using optional blade-grasping and disarming techniques, if agreed upon prior to combat (see 5.4.1 and 5.4.3)

5.3.7 Blade Trapping Under Standard Combat Rules

Deliberate trapping of an opponent's blade under an arm or in the crook of the elbow or between the arm and torso is not allowed. If a fighter's blade is inadvertently held or trapped by part of the opponent's person, any pulling, pushing, or twisting motion will result in an effective "slicing" attack - regardless of whether the blade actually moves or not. (This rule maybe slightly modified if "Optional Blade Grasping" and/or "Optional Disarming" rules are being used. See Section 5.4 for details.)

5.3.8 Striking Weapons With Excessive Force

Striking an opponent's weapon with deliberate excessive force is forbidden (see 5.3.2.1), as are "force disarms," (trying to hit an opponent's weapon hard enough to knock it out of his/her hand). Disarms which do not involve hitting or wrenching the opponent's blade away may be used (as allowed under Optional Combat Techniques 5.4.3), but grappling with an opponent is forbidden.

5.3.9 Other Unsafe and Unacceptable Techniques

All unsafe blows, blocks or movements are forbidden, including but not limited to the following:

- 5.3.9.1 A fighter shall never strike a disarmed or helpless opponent. (See also 1.6.11)
- 5.3.9.2 Weapons, in whole or in part, shall not be thrown.
- 5.3.9.3 Striking an opponent with any part of a weapon (such as the quillions or basket hilt) or shield not approved for that purpose is forbidden.
- 5.3.9.4 The use of the hand or arm as a block is forbidden. If a fighter deliberately blocks with an arm, the blocked blow is considered to have continued through the arm into whatever is behind it.
- 5.3.9.5 Charging, diving, leaping, or lunging into the opponent is not allowed.

5.4 Optional Combat Techniques (Blade Grasping, Half Swording, Disarming)

The following techniques are legal, but optional "non-standard" techniques which may be allowed in Unarmored Combat. They are based upon fighting techniques documented in multiple historical fighting manuals. Both fighters and the senior marshal on the field must express consent to the use of these techniques prior to each combat. Marshals may disallow use of these techniques in the event of safety concerns at any point thereafter.

5.4.1 Blade Grasping Techniques:

"Blade grasping" is defined as the *momentary* binding or restricting of an opponent's sword with a closed hand, and may not be used to flex or bend an opponent's sword unrealistically. Blade grasping may be used to displace an opponent's sword blade during an attack. Proper and acceptable blade grasping techniques should result in a relatively effortless movement of the defender's sword.

If while being grasped, the *opponent* deliberately moves the grasped blade in any way - e.g., pushes, pulls, or twists - then the hand grasping the blade shall be considered "sliced." A stout tug or push is considered a valid slice, regardless of whether the blade actually moved through the grip of the combatant grasping it. (A nylon blade can be gripped much more firmly than smooth, sharpened

steel. Because of this, any amount of pressure that would cause a steel blade to move through the grasp must be considered “good.”)

Any sort of tugging, levering, or other sustained, forcible contact with a stationary sword should be acknowledged as a valid slice to the grasper’s hand, *regardless of which fighter is actually pulling on the sword*. The marshal-in-charge of the field has the authority to make a “determinate” call of a slice to the hand if more than a single “grasp and displace” movement of a sword is observed during an attempted blade grasp technique. (“See-sawing” or “tug-of-warring” over the sword should be immediately called as a “slice” on the fighter grasping the sword blade.)

5.4.2 Half Sword Techniques:

Half-swording is defined as placing one hand on the handle and the other on the blade of your own weapon with a long sword or single (arming) sword. Half-swording allows both strong parrying options, and offensive use of the blade in close quarters.

5.4.2.1 When held in a half-sword position a sword *may not be used to deliver percussive blows*. Thrusts, slices, and pommel strikes are the only techniques which may be used.

5.4.2.2 Using a nylon blade in a half-sword position greatly reduces the blade’s ability to flex safely in a thrust, so half-sword thrusts should be performed with extreme control. Particular care should be taken when half-swording with a buckler in sword-and-buckler combat, as the added weight of the buckler combined with the shortened length of the thrust can result in much stouter thrusts than intended.

5.4.3 Disarming Techniques:

“Disarming” is defined as deliberately removing a weapon from your opponent’s control and taking it into your own. (No disarms that result in a “loose weapon” are allowed in Unarmored Combat; you must retain control of your opponent’s weapon in order to complete a successful, legal disarm.)

When overseeing a fight in which disarming techniques are employed, marshals should use discretion in making calls about “dropped weapons” (Rule 5.3.4). The intent of the rules regarding dropped weapons is to ensure that weapons and other equipment are *under control at all times*, and do not pose any danger to spectators and non-combatants. As long as this general safety standard is met, marshals do not need to intervene when allowable disarming techniques are in use, as specified by the rules below.

5.4.3.1 Disarming techniques that rely on leverage against the blade, blade grasping, hilt grasping, or superior positioning are allowed in Unarmored Combat.

5.4.3.2 Disarming techniques that create unsafe conditions are *not* allowed, including:

5.4.3.2.1 “Force disarming,” or striking with enough power to knock an opponent’s weapon from their hand (see also 5.3.8).

5.4.3.2.2 Disarming techniques that rely on joint locks, grappling, or any “pain compliance” techniques. No grasping, twisting, or otherwise trapping/controlling of an opponent’s hands or limbs is allowed in disarming, other than momentary “open palm” contact. Attempts to disarm must be done with extreme control and regard for safety.

5.4.3.2.3 Any disarm techniques that result in a “loose weapon,” such as throwing or launching an opponent’s weapon in any way that endangers marshals or spectators, may result in the immediate suspension of the optional disarming rules, or in the forfeiture of a fight, at the marshal’s discretion, without any previous warnings (see also 5.3.9.2).

5.4.3.3 Successfully disarming an opponent is counted as a single, mortal blow. It does not require a fighter to automatically yield the fight in a standard Unarmored Combat lists.

6. Rules for Tournament

The rules for Unarmored Combat tournaments follow SCA standards for conducting a tournament. The standard and default tournament style for Unarmored Combat is single combat with counted blows. This format is similar to a “Blossfechten” tournament described in much of the unarmored combat documentation of the period. These competitions were not fought to maim or to the death, but to apparent wounding, e.g., blood on the clothing.

Alternate single-combat tournament styles may be adopted at the discretion of the supervising marshal provided they fall within the conventions of SCA combat.

6.1 Standard counted blow tournament style

Standard unarmored combat list fights are fought to three valid blows received by one fighter, at least one which must be a mortal blow (see 5.1.5.8 Mortal and Wounding Attacks - Summary Table).

6.1.1 Each fighter must loudly announce when a valid blow has struck them during the fight. The fighter should also acknowledge where the blow was struck. Example: “A good hit to my arm!”

6.1.2 Blows are NOT ACTED OUT, e.g., a blow to the leg does not require a fighter to kneel; a blow to the arm does not debilitate the limb; a fighter does not “fall down dead” when a mortal blow is struck, and a mortal blow does not immediately end the fight.

6.1.3 The marshals are responsible for maintaining an accurate count of mortal and wounding attacks received by each fighter during the list fight, and, if needed, informing the fighters when one is victorious. (Marshals should also be aware of the presence of spectators, and should announce the blows received and the “standing” of the fight clearly and audibly, so that spectators will understand the progress of the combat.)

6.1.3.1 If a fighter has received three wounding blows only, combat will continue until a mortal blow is received. Further wounding blows will be noted for scoring purposes (see 6.1.3.3), but will not result in a loss for the fighter.

6.1.3.2 Should the third blow for each fighter happen simultaneously (i.e. both fighters strike their third good blows at the same time), then the victory would go to the fighter who inflicted the higher number of mortal blows versus wounding blows.

6.1.3.3 If both fighters strike decisive mortal blows (the final blow[s] of the fight) simultaneously, the victory will go to the fighter who has received the lower number of wounding blows. (Example: Fighter A has received six wounding blows, and Fighter B has received three wounding blows - thus, neither has been defeated because neither has been hit with a mortal blow. If both then strike mortal blows simultaneously, the victory would be awarded to Fighter B, who has received the lower number of wounding blows at the time of the decisive mortal blow.)

6.1.3.4 If both fighters have exactly the same “score” at the time of the simultaneously third blow (a “double-kill” situation), they are allowed to continue combat until one fighter strikes the other unopposed, or until one fighter strikes a more serious blow (i.e., one strikes a mortal blow at the same time the other strikes a wounding blow).

6.1.4 Upon receipt of the final blow (or being informed they have received the final blow), the fighter who has been defeated shall drop to one or both knees, or shall offer up the sword in a reversed “surrender” position, or take some other visible action to indicate his/her defeat to the victor and the marshals, herald, and spectators. (It is not required, nor encouraged, for a fighter to “fall down dead” at the conclusion of the fight.)

6.2 List field size

The minimum list field size is 40'x40'.

6.3 Matching Weapons

Tournament bouts will be fought sword and buckler vs. sword and buckler, longsword vs. longsword, or single sword vs. single sword. There are no provisions at this time to mix combat styles in list fights.

6.3.1 The style of combat fought in a bout will be determined by agreement of both opponents, bearing in mind each fighter must have a valid authorization for the chosen style. If one opponent is authorized in only one style, the bout will be fought in the style that person is authorized in.

6.3.2 Should the fighters be unable to agree upon a mutually acceptable style of combat, the round will be conducted with a default style of sword and buckler. If both fighters are not authorized in sword and buckler, the style will default to long sword. If both fighters are not authorized in long sword, then the style will default to single sword.

6.3.3 If the fighters do not share any authorization style, then the fighter who is authorized in sword and buckler will be awarded the victory by default. If neither fighter is authorized in sword and buckler, then the fighter who is authorized in long sword will be awarded the victory by default.

Note: All fighters are encouraged to have a sword and buckler authorization to avoid this situation.

6.4 Determinate Marshaling

At the request of both fighters, marshals may be called upon to be "determinate." In this case, the marshals, rather than the fighters, determine whether blows were good or not. Two marshals are required on the field to make determinate calls, and three marshals are recommended. In the case of disagreement among the marshals, the most senior marshal on the field will be responsible for making the final determinate call for each blow.

7. Appearance On The Field (Garb and Shoes)

A period appearance is an integral part of what we do in the SCA and is required for all Unarmored Combat fighters on the tournament field. While no specific requirements are made in terms of garb and personae, all modern sports gear and equipment bearing modern corporate logos must be covered or disguised in some way (see also 4. and 4.1).

Minor exceptions to this rule may occasionally be allowed at the discretion of the Marshal in Charge (e.g., to take into account standards of dress/protective equipment from other lists a fighter may be participating in, or to accommodate generally acceptable SCA garb.)

7.1 Garb

Garb must be made to resemble period clothing, and all fighters are expected to make a reasonable attempt at pre-17th century garb. While no one will be denied entrance in a tournament for making a fashion faux pas, a fighter may be denied if their garb is clearly not from an appropriate period. "Fantasy" garb with no actual historical precedent is inappropriate. Modern clothing of any type is inappropriate, e.g., an exposed T-shirt, a modern karate *gi*, or HEMA equipment.

7.2 Shoes

Period footwear is strongly encouraged and allows fighters to easily use proper footwork.

Concessions are made to some degree for modern shoes, because of foot comfort and cost. "Sport moc" styles without laces or buckles are acceptable. However, modern looking shoes such as

sneakers, boots with a completely modern appearance, and non-period visible features such as sports logos, Velcro, or lights that flash, are unacceptable. "Spats" that effectively conceal the modern footwear are acceptable so long as they look appropriate themselves.

Lace-up work boots may be used if they blend well and don't look excessively modern. Boots with heavily treaded soles and/or steel reinforced toes are discouraged, and may be disallowed by the marshals if they prove a danger to other fighters' feet.

8. Authorizations

8.1 Fighting in tournaments

All fighters must be authorized to fight in tournaments; no unauthorized fighters will be permitted to fight in a list.

8.2 Fighting at practices

An unauthorized fighter may only fight at practices if a Marshal is present to assist and supervise the unauthorized fighter, and the unauthorized fighter must have authorization paper work in process, or start the process.

8.3 New Authorization Procedure

8.3.1 New fighters may not come to a tournament and complete the authorization process immediately.

8.3.2 Fighters who wish to authorize must participate in at least three practices where a Marshal is present and observes their combat.

8.3.2.1 The Marshal shall inform the fighter where to obtain a rule book to study (or provide one if the fighter does not have access to the electronic version).

8.3.2.2 A prospective fighter must get Marshal signatures on their authorization paperwork indicating that they participated safely and practiced with the Marshal. A Marshal will only sign off on a fighter's pre-authorization worksheet if they have observed the fighter to be safe (i.e., the fighter has acceptable blow power, control, acknowledgement, behavior, and familiarity with the rules).

8.3.2.3 When a fighter has received signatures indicating that they have trained at three or more fighter practices to the approval of the Marshal present and received a copy of the rules, they may then request the authorization test. New fighters should have read over and be familiar with the Unarmored Combat Manual before they take the authorization test.

8.3.3 There are separate authorizations for Sword and Buckler, Long Sword, and Single Sword Combat. All three authorizations may be conducted at the same time, if the fighter is sufficiently prepared in all forms.

8.3.4 The authorization test consists of four steps, given by a Senior Unarmored Combat Marshal:

Step 1. Questions concerning the rules and conventions of unarmored combat.

The fighter must be able to answer a **MINIMUM** of **FIVE** questions on the rules, safety requirements, and combat conventions of Unarmored Combat as detailed in the Unarmored Combat handbook, in order to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the authorizing marshal(s), familiarity with the rules and a commitment to the level of safety and control expected of authorized Unarmored Combat fighters. (A *majority* of the authorizing fighter's answers to these questions should be correct; a fighter does not need to have the rulebook completely memorized to be considered ready for authorization.)

Both of the following questions MUST be included in the authorization.

- a) Identify and describe all the ways in which a sword may be used to score valid hits on an opponent. (Answer: Percussive cuts; thrusts; tip cuts; slices; pommel strikes - with acceptable descriptions of each in the authorizing fighter's own words, see Section 5 for details).
- b) Identify target areas on an opponent's body, and describe which are identified as "mortal" and "wounding." (See Section 5.1.5 for details).

Other questions should include several of the following (authorizing marshal[s] may use other questions of their own choosing, if they wish):

- c) Describe, in your own words, the level of blow strength, accuracy, and commitment required for a blow to be acknowledged as valid or "good" in Unarmored Combat. (See 5.1.1 through 5.1.3 for details.)
- d) What are the areas of the body that are required to be covered by protective equipment? (Refer to the Unarmored Protective Gear Summary Table in rule 4.9 for details.)
- e) If a blow lands in a way, or on a target, that is not designated as a valid hit within the 5.1 Blow Acknowledgement Standards, are you allowed to acknowledge it as a "good" blow anyway - and why or why not? (Answer: Yes, but only if the fighter receiving the blow feels it would have been realistically effective in a fight. The rules only designate the *minimum* standard for acknowledgement.)
- f) Are simultaneous blows allowed, and how are they scored? (Answer: Yes - both blows are considered valid, as long as both were in motion at the same time. They do not need to land simultaneously.)
- g) What is the universal word that should stop all action in a fight? (Answer: "Hold.")
- h) Which fighter (the attacker or the defender) has the final responsibility for acknowledging a "good" blow in combat, and who can help them make that determination? (Answer: The defender, or fighter who is struck by the blow, is responsible for acknowledging "good" blows - that fighter may consult with the marshals and their opponent for input and/or advice.)
- i) How do the target zones on a fighter's body differ if combatants fighting with arming swords each have different hilt styles - cross guard and basket hilt? (Answer: When fighting with mismatched hilts, attacks to the wrist and hand of the sword arm are not counted.)
- j) What are the victory conditions in an Unarmored Combat tournament competition, and how is the victory determined in the event of a "double kill," or a "tie score" situation? (Answer: Victory is determined using a "three blows received" standard. See Rule 6.1.3 and subsections for details.)

(Fighters who are already authorized, and undergoing "additional weapon style" authorization procedure, may have the rules questions waived, at the discretion of the marshal conducting the authorization.)

Step 2. Demonstrating period guards, cuts and thrusts.

For each form the fighter is authorizing, the fighter must physically demonstrate:

- a) Three proper period guards, and name at least one.
- b) A valid cut from each of these guards, and name at least one.
- c) A valid thrust from each of two period guards. Guards may be reused.

The guards and attacks for this portion of the test are chosen and identified by the authorizing fighter.

Step 3. Demonstrating valid blows on a stationary opponent.

The fighter must be able to demonstrate valid blows by striking a stationary sparring partner (standing still in a guard/ward position) with acceptable, appropriate force, using cuts, thrusts, pommel strikes, slices, and other attacks for each form he or she is authorizing. The fighter must also be able to identify each attack as a "wounding" and "mortal" attack at the time the attack is completed.

Step 4. Observed sparring.

The fighter must participate in an observed sparring test against an authorized fighter, and will receive feedback from the sparring partner. The authorizing fighter should be able to demonstrate acceptable control of his/her weapon; acknowledgment of blows; and reasonable adherence to historically accurate combat technique throughout this step. The sparring test will be repeated for each form being authorized.

8.3.5 Outcome of the authorization.

If any part of these tests is failed, the testing marshal may recommend that the authorizing fighter participate in additional practice(s) before granting the authorization, depending upon the degree to which the fighter has failed the test. The final two tests are largely subjective, but a marshal should be able to determine the fighter's level of safety and note any concerns.

If a fighter has passed all four steps of the test, the fighter is then authorized, and must submit paperwork to the Kingdom Marshal Clerk for processing.

Please note that it is the fighter's responsibility to keep track of, maintain, and where necessary, mail in all of their paperwork.

8.4 Authorization Expiration and Reauthorizations

Authorizations will expire no later than four years after the authorization is performed, and will expire on the fighter's birthday.

8.5 Reauthorization

8.5.1 Fighters whose authorization has expired less than a year from the reauthorization date can be reauthorized by two senior unarmored combat marshals who will ask questions on the unarmored combat rules and target areas.

8.5.2 Fighters whose authorization has been expired for more than a year need to go through the same authorization procedure as a new fighter.

9. Unarmored Combat Marshals: Training & Duties

UCM Marshals In Training, UCM Warranted Marshals, UCM Senior Marshals, and Deputy Kingdom Earl Marshal for UC

An SCA member in the Kingdom of Caid may become a Warranted Unarmored Combat Marshal after being authorized by the Kingdom Earl Marshal or the Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat. This marshalling form is separate from all others, and an Armored or Rapier Marshal may not act as an Unarmored Combat Marshal without additional certification. Because marshals are responsible for safety on the field, all marshals (including marshals-in-training) must be 18 years of age or older AND a current member of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.

9.1 Marshal Supervision

A Warranted Unarmored Combat Marshal (UCM) must be present to supervise any Unarmored Combat activities. If a Warranted Unarmored Combat Marshal is not available, no combat activities may occur:

9.1.1 Non-tournament combat (challenges, practices) – one Warranted Unarmored Combat Marshal must be present. A Marshal-in-Training may be permitted to supervise non-tourney combat if given dispensation by the Territorial Unarmored Combat Marshal or the Kingdom Deputy for Unarmored Combat.

9.1.2 Tournament combat – A MINIMUM of two Unarmored Combat Marshals must be present, one of which must be a Warranted Marshal. The second Marshal may be a Marshal-in-Training.

9.2 Unarmored Combat Marshal-In-Training (UCMiT)

An Unarmored Combat Marshal-In-Training is a person who wishes to become an Unarmored Combat Marshal. A UCMiT is under the tutelage of the Marshal's office and is subject to instruction and correction by any warranted Unarmored Combat or Senior Unarmored Combat Marshal.

9.2.1 UCMiTs are to be warranted by an Unarmored Combat or Senior Unarmored Combat Marshal. A copy of the warrant shall be sent to the Kingdom Marshal Clerk for inclusion in the Fighter Authorization list.

9.2.2 Unarmored Combat Marshals-in-Training have the following responsibilities and privileges:

1. Assist warranted Unarmored Combat Marshals with armor inspections;
2. Assist warranted Unarmored Combat Marshals on the field during combat;
3. Can act as Marshal-of-the-Field under the supervision of a warranted Unarmored Combat or Senior Unarmored Combat Marshal;
4. Can function as a Marshal on a challenge field provided a warranted Marshal is present at the event;
5. Call "holds" for safety reasons.

9.3 Warranted Unarmored Combat Marshal (UCM)

9.3.1 The following are required to become a Warranted Unarmored Combat Marshall:

1. Marshal eight events as assistant Unarmored Combat Marshal on the field. To qualify as having marshaled an event, the UCMiT must have marshaled at least three rounds of the tourney, or equivalent. If the UCMiT is a current warranted Rapier or Armored Marshal, he or she only needs to marshal four events as an assistant Unarmored Combat Marshal on the field;
2. Marshal four events as a Marshal-of-the-Field under supervision (see above). If the UCMiT is a current Rapier or Armored Combat Marshal, he or she only needs to marshal two events as Marshal-of-the-Field under supervision;
3. Assist in armor inspections for eight events. If a current warranted rapier or armored marshal, assist in armor inspection at four events;
4. Have the recommendation of at least two warranted Unarmored Combat Marshals or Senior Unarmored Combat Marshals;
5. Have shown a consistent attitude for safety.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of historical Unarmored Combat and familiarity with the manuscripts Unarmored Combat is based on (see 1.2 for suggestions). Marshals must be able to recognize realistic and period techniques.

9.3.2 Warranted Unarmored Combat Marshals have the following responsibilities and privileges for Unarmored Combat:

1. Can serve as Marshal -of-the-Field;
2. Assist the Marshal-in-Charge as required;
3. May function as Marshal-in-Charge of an event;
4. Inspect and approve standard armor and weapons;
5. Train Marshals-in-Training;

6. Must report in writing once yearly (by July 1st each year) to the Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat on his/her activities during the past year;
7. All decisions are appealed to the Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat, the Earl Marshal, or the Crown.

9.4 Senior Unarmored Combat Marshal (SUCM)

To become a SUCM, a Warranted UCM must submit a written request for appointment to the Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat. Approval of such requests will be granted at the discretion of the DEMUC based on observation of the candidate, and considerations of such factors as length of service as a Marshal, respect for the conventions of Unarmored Combat (especially historically accurate fighting technique), and mastery/knowledge of the various Unarmored Combat fighting forms.

Senior Marshals have the responsibilities and privileges of a Warranted marshal in addition to the following:

1. Must be authorized in all forms/styles of Unarmored Combat;
2. May authorize Unarmored Combat fighters;
3. Must report in writing once yearly (by July 1st of each year) to the Earl Marshal and the Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat on his/her activities during the past year;
4. Train Unarmored Combat Marshals;
5. All decisions are appealed to the Deputy Earl marshal for Unarmored Combat, the Earl Marshal, or the Crown.

9.5 Deputy Earl Marshal (DEM) for Unarmored Combat

The Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat has the following responsibilities and privileges:

1. Appointed by the Earl Marshal;
2. Must be a Senior Unarmored Combat Marshal;
3. Must report quarterly to the Earl Marshal;
4. Can approve unusual weapons or equipment, and establish experimental program guidelines.

9.6 Reauthorization for Unarmored Combat Marshals

1. Only two observing marshals are required in addition to the candidate.
2. Unarmored Combat Marshals wishing to re-authorize must only show a verbal knowledge of the rules by successfully answering a minimum of three questions each asked by the two authorizing Unarmored Combat Marshals. (These questions should focus on recent rules updates and additions, experimental programs in process, and alternative tournament/combat rules.) In addition **they must provide proof of membership.**
3. Unarmored Combat Marshals whose authorization has been expired for more than one year, or who do not demonstrate familiarity with the Unarmored Combat rules to the satisfaction of the observing marshals conducting the reauthorization process, must go through the New Authorization procedure (see Section 9.3 for details).

10. Grievance Procedures and Sanctions

Given the nature of this activity, there will occasionally be problems or incidents that occur on the fighting field. The majority of these problems can usually be dealt with at the time the incidents occur, and do not have lasting consequences. However, sometimes the incidents that occur are more serious or occur as a repeated pattern of behavior, and as such require that additional action be taken.

10.1 General Problem Solving

Minor problems can generally be solved by pointing out the issue and asking the fighter to correct it on the spot: minor violations of the rules, malfunctioning equipment, missing safety equipment, proper bow acknowledgement, etc. If the fighter acknowledges the request and corrects the issue, no further action is required. Steps that supervising marshals should take to address issues of this sort are as follows:

1. Point out the issue and ask that it be addressed
2. In the case of missing, inadequate, or malfunctioning armor or weapons, do not allow the combatant to take the field until the issue has been resolved.
3. In the case of a violation of the rules during combat, call a hold and address the issue with the fighter in question. Make sure to clearly point out what the problem was, and ask if he or she understands what happened and why it was in violation.
4. In the case of one or more combatants losing their temper on the field, ask them to leave the field and do not allow them to return until their tempers are under control.
5. If an issue is not resolved through the above steps and additional support is needed, the following chain of command should be observed when calling in additional help:
 - a. Any other marshals who are present;
 - b. Marshal in Charge;
 - c. Territorial Marshal;
 - d. Deputy Earl Marshal (DEM) for Unarmored Combat;
 - e. Kingdom Earl Marshal;
 - f. Local Seneschal;
 - g. Kingdom Seneschal;
 - h. The Crown.

If the violation continues despite all efforts to stop it, it may be necessary for the Marshal in Charge and Seneschal to end the event.

If there is a repeated problem with one fighter, or there is an incident that is not easily resolved following a request to address the issue, a written report of the incident should be submitted to the Territorial Marshal and should be included in the Territorial Marshal's report to the DEM Unarmored Combat.

10.2 Grievance Procedures

If there is a complaint made against a fighter, or if a marshal has a concern regarding the safety, compliance with the rules, or behavior of a fighter that cannot be resolved through regular means, there are two ways to report a grievance which may be employed: Report delivered to the Marshal in Charge, or a report using the online system.

10.2.1 Report Directly to Marshal in Charge, or the Responsible Territorial Marshal

All concerns about fighter conduct and safety at an event should be brought to the attention of the Marshal in Charge of the event, or the Territorial Marshal responsible for the event. Anyone may bring a concern to either of these marshals; it does not have to be a participant in the combat. The marshal receiving the report shall be obligated to review the complaint. He or she may do this by speaking with witnesses, observing the combatant in question, asking the opinions of other marshals, etc.

10.2.1.1 The Investigating Marshal is authorized to address problems such as unchivalrous conduct, use of excessive force, violations of the Rules of the List, use of illegal or uninspected

equipment, etc. The Marshal may also investigate the circumstances leading up to an injury to try to evaluate whether anyone was at fault.

10.2.1.2 The Marshal may delegate a different Warranted Marshal to act in his or her stead in the case of a conflict of interest.

10.2.1.3 The Investigating Marshal is authorized to remove a fighter from the list, warn a fighter that he or she may be removed from the list if the violations continue, suspend a fighter's authorization temporarily, or decide there was no infraction and that combat may continue as is. (A fighter may not participate in any Unarmored Combat activity with a suspended authorization.)

10.2.1.4 Reporting Disciplinary Actions

- a) Any disciplinary actions taken by the Investigating Marshal must be reported to the Territorial Marshal in a timely fashion, no more than one week following the incident (provided the Investigating Marshal is not the Territorial Marshal);
- b) The Territorial Marshal must report any incidents to the DEM Unarmored Combat in a timely fashion, no more than one week following the report;
- c) All suspended authorizations should be reported to the DEM Unarmored Combat within one week of their occurrence in order to allow an expeditious review of the suspension;
- d) All grievance investigations must also be included in the regular (quarterly or yearly) reports of all Marshals involved.

10.2.1.5 Decisions of the Marshal in Charge or Territorial Marshals shall stand until reviewed by the DEM Unarmored Combat. The DEM Unarmored Combat will begin the review process for all decisions brought before them within one week of receipt. All actions taken by the Investigating Marshal and/or Territorial Marshal will be upheld, altered, or disallowed by the DEM Unarmored Combat based on their own investigation and review. Appeals of any decisions will be reviewed by either the DEM Unarmored Combat or the Kingdom Earl Marshal.

10.2.2 Report Using the Online System

Grievances may also be reported directly to the Earl Marshal through the on-line Grievance Report link found under the "All" heading at the Caid Marshal website at: <http://marshal.sca-caid.org/reports.php> The basic grievance investigation procedure outlined in 10.2.1 will be followed for any complaints filed through the on-line Grievance Report form.

10.3 Structured Plans to Address Grievances

If the DEM Unarmored Combat receives two unsolicited complaints from two different parties, he or she will further review the actions and behavior of the involved individuals. If the complaints are found to have merit, the individual involved may be subject to sanctions or other disciplinary action such as the structured plan detailed below. A fighter will be notified privately about the disciplinary action being taken against him or her, and this information will be kept confidential between the marshallate and the involved parties.

10.3.1 Definition of a Structured Plan

A "structured plan" is the preferred method for addressing behavioral concerns that do not warrant extreme action such as immediate revocation of authorization, marshal's court, or other more severe forms of sanction. A structured plan is defined as an agreement between the individual and the issuing marshal that delineates the terms of the individual's continued participation. The structured plan should be put into place for a set period of time (usually a period of 6-12 months). During this sanction period, the fighter's participation will be limited to the terms laid out in the agreement, for example the fighter may be allowed to spar only under direct supervision of a marshal or only spar with a marshal, may be prevented from authorizing, may be limited in the type of weapons they are permitted to use, etc. A fighter will be required to attend a certain number of practices during the time

of sanction so that marshals may gauge whether or not the fighter should be allowed to resume normal participation at the completion of the set sanction period. If the fighter does not attend the number of required practices during this period, the period may be extended, which will be noted in the structured plan agreement. A template for a structured plan agreement can be found on the Marshals Website, or obtained from the DEM Unarmored Combat.

10.3.2 Before a structured plan is issued, the Earl Marshal must be notified, and has the authority to approve or amend the plan before it is implemented, at his or her discretion. The Earl Marshal will receive quarterly updates on the progress of the sanction until the time it is completed, and will be notified right away if there are any changes to the plan or further actions taken.

10.3.3 Notification of Issuance of a Structured Plan

If a fighter is being placed under a sanction of this sort, he or she will be given a written notification detailing all terms and conditions of this structured plan, and given ample time to review the agreement and ask any questions he or she may have.

If the agreement is acceptable to the fighter, he or she will be asked to sign the document and be given a copy of it to keep. A copy will be kept on file with the Territorial Marshal and the DEM Unarmored Combat.

If the involved fighter is unwilling to agree to the terms of the structured plan, he or she may appeal the terms of the agreement to the Kingdom Earl Marshal.

If the involved fighter is unwilling to agree to the final terms of the structured plan as approved by the Earl Marshal, the fighter may be subject to further disciplinary action at the discretion of the Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat, including revocation of authorization.

10.3.4 Additional Sanction

During the period that the fighter is under a structured plan agreement, no further disciplinary action will be taken unless additional complaints are received or additional incidents occur.

10.3.5 Completion of the Structured Plan Agreement

If no additional problems occur and the fighter returns to acceptable standards of behavior during the time of the sanction period, he or she will be able to resume normal combat activities at the end of the sanction period. A fighter under sanction will be notified when the sanction has been completed, and will be notified if there are any changes to the sanction terms during the sanction period.

If additional disciplinary actions do become necessary, the incidents will be reviewed by the DEM Unarmored Combat and the Kingdom Earl Marshal and possibly the Crown.

10.4 Sanctions

If a fighter's behavior warrants additional long-term sanction beyond the scope of a structured plan, the DEM Unarmored Combat, or the Kingdom Earl Marshal may apply more severe sanctions. Procedures and policies defined in Kingdom Law and Marshals' Handbooks will be adhered to if a sanction is necessary.

Possible sanctions include: revoking the fighter's authorization, revoking authorization with a specific weapon type, recommendation to the Crown to banish the individual from participation in events, or recommendation to the Board to banish the individual from the Society and its activities. A fighter may not fight at all, including at practices, while under a revoked authorization. If it is deemed that one of these long-term sanctions is necessary, the DEM Unarmored Combat will report this right away to the Kingdom Earl Marshal, who will in turn report to the Society Earl Marshal.

11. Experimental Programs

Additional weapons types, weapons construction, and fighting styles may be added to the currently approved rules set in the form of experimental programs. Any authorized fighter may submit a proposed experimental program for Unarmored Combat. If the fighter making the proposal is not a marshal, he or she must find a warranted marshal to volunteer to serve as a sponsor for the program. To begin a new experimental program, the following steps must be taken:

11.1 Experimental Plan

Before any combat activities are undertaken, an experimental plan must first be submitted to the Kingdom Unarmored Combat Marshal. The Experimental Plan must include the following elements:

1. Description of the weapon/ weapon build/ style (pictures of the process of creating a new weapon build are requested if possible)
2. Description of the modifications that would be required to the current rules set if this experimental program were to be approved (this can be a general summary – a point-by-point outline of revisions is not required)
3. Documentation demonstrating that this experimental technique is historically accurate
4. Analysis of safety concerns
5. Proposed plan for implementation of experimental procedures including the duration of the test period.

This experimental plan should be submitted in writing to the DEM Unarmored Combat. Once the plan is received, the DEM Unarmored Combat will review it within 30 days and respond in writing with the results of the review. Plans that are approved may be implemented immediately at the DEM Unarmored Combat's discretion. If a plan is not approved, it will be returned to the submitter with questions and requested revisions, or an explanation for its rejection.

11.2 Implementation of Experimental Techniques.

The DEM Unarmored Combat may place stipulations on the approval of the plan, such as: Experimental techniques may be employed only while under direct supervision of a marshal or senior marshal; only fighters who have been authorized for a certain number of years may participate; etc. Experimental procedures may be used at practices and tourneys at the discretion of the supervising marshal as long as all participants meet the stipulations of the experimental procedure and agree to its use. If any participant does not agree, the combat will default to the standard rules. If there are any changes to the experimental procedures during the course of the test period, a revised Experimental Plan must be submitted to the Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat.

11.3 Reporting

11.3.1 Quarterly Reports

The Sponsoring Marshal for the Experimental Program will be expected to provide quarterly reports to the DEM Unarmored Combat regarding the progress of the experimental program, and detailing any issues, changes, or concerns that may have arisen. The DEM Unarmored Combat will in turn report on the progress to the Kingdom Earl Marshal in his or her quarterly reports

11.3.2 Reporting Injuries or Incidents

Any injuries, behavioral issues, or other incidents that occur while experimental procedures are being used should be reported to the Territorial marshal immediately, and should be reported to the DEM Unarmored Combat as soon as possible, but within one week of occurrence.

11.4 Moving from Experimental to Standard

If at the end of the test period, the DEM Unarmored Combat finds the experimental procedures to be safe and acceptable, these experimental procedures can be added into the standard combat conventions described in this manual. This may result in a revision of the Unarmored Combat Handbook. Until a full revision is completed, the new procedures will be added to the Caid Marshal website under the heading "Rulings and New Publications" for information that has not yet been incorporated into a handbook.

If, however, the Deputy Earl Marshal for Unarmored Combat feels the experimental program is not yet ready to be incorporated into the regular rules set, he or she may extend the experimental program, make revisions to the program, or cancel it as needed.

12. Modifying these Rules

This document is intended to be a malleable, dynamic document. As such, any of the rules apart from the Rules of the List that are contained within this rulebook, including this section, may be changed. (The Rules of the List are outside of the control of the Unarmored Combat fighters and marshals, and therefore not subject to amendment by these rules).

Suggestion for modification of any rule or guideline contained herein should be sent in writing (electronic or otherwise) to the local Kingdom's sponsoring marshal or deputy for this combat form as appointed by that Kingdom's Earl Marshal. The Kingdom Earl Marshal should be CC'd on this communication. These marshals are responsible for answering and passing these communications to the inter-kingdom and Society levels.

Questions and suggestions accompanied by supporting reasoning are to be given primary attention.

Appendix 1: Constructed Weapons

Constructed Weapons Simulators

In the original version of the Unarmored Combat Manual, all sword simulators were constructed from scratch using bamboo slats and a variety of other materials. These constructed swords are still permitted under this rules set, however, all combatants are strongly encouraged to transition to the synthetic simulators. Synthetic simulators have been found to be more durable and consistent than the constructed ones, and are much less likely to break or malfunction during combat.

Construction Materials

Weapons may be constructed of a variety of materials. Acceptable construction materials are bamboo (especially the shaped planks from a shinai), closed cell foam (of a suitable, hand compressible density), rubber "heater hose" (0.25 to 0.5 inch), and rattan reed (0.125 to 0.5 inch) or slats.

Rattan sticks as used in SCA armored combat are not considered suitable for creating weapons in this form. Thinner rattan (0.5 inch or thinner) may be used experimentally to reinforce weapons. Up to 1.25 inch diameter rattan may be used for weapon handles and cross guards, but not for any main striking surfaces.

Heavy or boiled leather, bull hide, etc. may be used for cross guards, basket hilts, sword pommels, etc.

All materials should be selected for safety and durability.

Metal of any kind is NOT PERMITTED in the blade or striking area of a weapon. Metal washers or wire may be used to weight the sword hilt; however, any metal weights must be firmly secured to the handle and thoroughly padded. (Duct taping a weight to the handle is not sufficient to secure it).

Edges should be well defined by the shape of the blade, therefore taping or marking the edge is not required or recommended.

Blades constructed with duct tape should be constructed using silver or grey duct tape specifically.

Constructed long swords should closely approximate the following specifications: Total length 35 to 50 inches. Total weight: between 1.5 and 2.50 pounds. The total blade length should not exceed 42 inches as measured from the tip to guard along the blade of the weapon. Quillions or cross guards are standard. Basket hilts and compound hilts are not permitted on long swords.

Constructed arming swords should come close to the following specifications: Approximate total length 32 to 42 inches. The total blade length should be 31 to 36 inches as measured from the tip to guard along the edge. Total weight should be 1.50 to 2.25 pounds.

All constructed swords must include a "piston" type thrusting tip with a cross section no less than 0.75", and total padding of 1.5" that is compressible at least 0.75" by hand.

Appendix 2: Equipment Sources

Weapons

Rawlings Synthetic Swords and Replacement Parts are available from:

Purpleheart Armoury: <http://www.woodenswords.com/Default.asp>

CAS Iberia Swords: <http://casiberia.com/>

(Note: Rawlings sword blades and “furniture” (pommels, cross guards, etc.) are available in a variety of colors. Blatantly unrealistic colors - orange and “glow in the dark” - are not acceptable for use in SCA Unarmored Combat. Silver is highly preferred for blades; black and white are also acceptable, although black blades are very hard to see in dim/dark light conditions. Standard heraldic colors - blue, red, etc., - for hilts and guards, are acceptable.)

Bucklers

Windrose Armory I.33 14” 20 ga. Steel buckler:

http://www.windrosearmoury.com/zc/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=30_31&products_id=92

Cold Steel Medieval Buckler:

http://www.coldsteel.com/Product/92BKP/B/MEDIEVAL_BUCKLER.aspx

(Available from many on-line suppliers)

Protective Equipment

Padded Leather Gloves from Purpleheart Armoury:

<http://www.woodenswords.com/SearchResults.asp?Cat=1819>

Pre-made “back of head” protection from PBT Gear (available in the U.S. through Purpleheart) - intended to be added to any commercial fencing mask:

<http://www.woodenswords.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=P-Head>