

Society Combat and the Rules of the Lists

(From the SCA Organizational Handbook, April 2001 Edition, Updated June 11, 2009)

IX. SOCIETY COMBAT

A. Society Combat-Related Activities

1. Society combat-related activities are defined as armored combat, fencing, combat archery, marshalling, scouting, and banner bearing in combat. Other activities clearly falling within the scope of the above are also to be considered combat-related activities.
2. A participant in any of the Society combat-related activities as defined above must be authorized by a marshal warranted and designated by the Earl Marshal of a kingdom or his representative as able to authorize individuals in the appropriate activity.
3. Requirements for authorization for all combat-related activities are delineated in the Marshal's Handbook. Kingdoms may define such additional types of authorization (such as weapons forms) as they deem necessary.
4. Authorizations shall be registered with and kept on file by the Earl Marshal or other designated official of each kingdom.
5. Waivers, indemnities, or other required documents must be signed as appropriate before training for authorization, being authorized, or participating in SCA combat or related activities. Proof that the required document, if applicable, has been signed must be presented before an individual may participate in the above mentioned activities. (For more detailed information on waivers, see Corporate Policies of the SCA, Inc., section IV – VI.)
6. A Combat Authorization Card shall be issued to each authorized participant in a Society Combat-Related Activity. This card shall be presented to the Lists Official at a Society event to register for such activities and shall establish that the person is authorized. This card must be shown to any marshal or lists official upon request. The Society Marshal shall establish procedures for the notification and registration of authorizations and the issuance of the Combat Authorization Cards.
7. No person who has not attained his or her sixteenth (16th) birthday may be authorized in armored combat or the marshaling of armored combat. No person who has not attained his or her fourteenth (14th) birthday may be authorized for any form of Society combat-related activity.
8. Prior to the authorization of a minor in any Society combat-related activity, the parent or guardian of the minor must witness the activity, discuss it with a witnessing marshal, and execute a Waiver, indemnity, or other required document for the minor. The witnessing marshal must be explicitly authorized to perform this function by the Earl Marshal of the kingdom. The marshal who authorizes a minor person for any form of Society combat-related activity must be the Kingdom Earl Marshal or the Principality Marshal OR A DESIGNATED DEPUTY. This need not be the same person as the witnessing marshal.
9. Any minor involved in Society combat-related activities at an event must have a parent or a properly-executed document designating some adult person present at the event as able to authorize medical treatment for that minor in the case of any emergency.

B. The Rules of the Lists

1. Each fighter, recognizing the possibilities of physical injury to himself or herself in such combat, shall assume unto himself or herself all risk and liability for harm suffered by means of such combat. Other participants shall likewise recognize the risks involved in their presence on or near the field of combat, and shall assume unto themselves the liabilities thereof.
2. No person shall participate in Combat-Related Activities (including armored combat, fencing, combat archery, marshalling, scouting, and banner-bearing in combat) outside of formal training sessions unless and until he or she shall have been properly authorized under Society and kingdom procedures.
3. All combatants must be presented to, and be acceptable to, the Sovereign or his or her representative.
4. All combatants shall adhere to the appropriate Armor and Weapons Standards of the Society, and to any additional standards of the kingdom in which the event takes place. The Sovereign may waive the additional kingdom standards.
5. The Sovereign or the Marshallate may bar any weapon or armor from use upon the field of combat. Should a warranted Marshal bar any weapon or armor, an appeal may be made to the Sovereign to allow the weapon or armor.
6. Combatants shall behave in a knightly and chivalrous manner, and shall fight according to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.
7. No one may be required to participate in Combat-Related Activities. Any combatant may, without dishonor or penalty, reject any challenge without specifying a reason. A fight in a tournament lists is not to be considered a challenge, and therefore may not be declined or rejected without forfeiting the bout.
8. Fighting with real weapons, whether fast or slow, is strictly forbidden at any Society event. This rule does not consider approved weaponry that meets the Society and kingdom standards for traditional Society combat and/or Society rapier combat, used in the context of mutual sport, to be real weaponry.
9. No projectile weapons shall be allowed and no weapons shall be thrown within the Lists of a tournament. The use of approved projectile weapons for melee, war, or Combat Archery shall conform to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.

C. Rapier Fighting in the Society

The Board acknowledges rapier combat as an ancillary activity of the Society when properly supervised by the Marshals and when approved by individual kingdoms. Rapier combat may take place within a kingdom only by rules established by the Marshallate of that kingdom and after the approval of those rules by the Marshal of the Society. The Marshal of the Society will maintain guidelines for rapier combat within the Society. Rapier combat, not having been part of formal tournament combat in the Middle Ages, shall not be a part of formal tournament lists for royal ranks and armigerous titles.