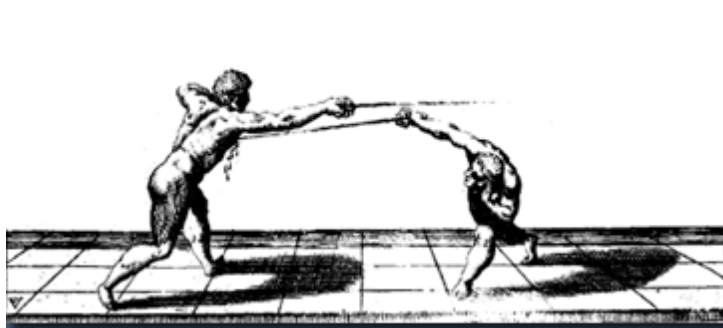


Avacal Book of Fencing Combat

May 2024 revision



This Book of Fencing Combat,
Signed this 26th day of May 2024

John Wernarsson



King Avacal

Bailey



Queen Avacal

Renee Carr

~~Fiona Walker~~

Kingdom Seneschal, Avacal

Roxanne Delaroche



Acting Seneschal

Fergus



Eart Marshal, Avacal

William



Fencing Marshal, Avacal

1. Introduction

These rules are to provide a framework to safely discover and recreate pre-17th Century combat. While these rules give a guideline to practice safe combat, it is impossible to regulate all situations. Reasonable use of good judgement is to be exercised at all time.

1.1. These rules set fundamental standards for SCA Fencing in the Kingdom of Avacal, a branch of the Society for Creative Anacronism (SCA). They establish safety standards and provide a framework for recreating bladed combat without armour, in the historical period embraced by the SCA. Rules reproduced from the Society Fencing Marshal's Handbook are printed in Verdana font (example). Avacal-specific amendments (previously provided in the Avacal Book of Fence) are distinguished by Times New Roman italic font (example). This includes necessary renumbering of Society text.

1.2. In keeping with Corpora, Kingdoms retain the right to add rules which establish more restrictive standards.

1.3. All combatants and marshals are responsible for knowing these rules. *All fighters should familiarize themselves with the rules of any kingdom where they intend to participate in a combat event.*

1.3.1. Though Rapier Combat and Cut & Thrust Combat share this one book, they require separate authorizations. To authorize a combatant, a marshal must have the appropriate Senior Marshal status – either Rapier Combat or Cut & Thrust Combat.

1.4. *Combat in the Society poses risks to the participant. This recognition, however, does not excuse fighters from exercising control of their techniques. If a fighter throws blows which force their opponent to retire from the field, from a real injury (even one which only causes brief incapacitation), the marshal responsible for the field shall take such steps as are appropriate to stop the problem from recurring.*

1.5. *Rules are designed to promote safe combat in the Society. However, no matter how clear or accurate, rules cannot replace common sense, good judgment, and concern for the participants. If a question arises when applying these standards, choose the answer that promotes the greatest degree of safety for all participants. Should a situation arise not explicitly covered by Corporate or Kingdom Fencing rules, the marshals should not*

assume that the situation is forbidden or inappropriate. Rules are not meant to replace common sense, good judgment, and concern for the participants.

1.6. Note: Underlined terms are defined in the glossary. (Appendix A)

2. General Rules

2.1. Within Avacal, *SCA Fencing shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of the Lists of the SCA, Inc. (see 2.8 below), the Avacal Book of Marshallate Procedures, and all other rules in this book..*

2.2. Competence in other SCA combat styles does not automatically mean competence in SCA Fencing. Separate warrants and authorizations in SCA Fencing are required.

2.2.1. *<This paragraph intentionally removed>*

2.2.2. *Avacal fencing include Rapier and Cut & Thrust. Light Rapier is not allowed.*

2.2.2.1. *Avacal authorizations are issued separately for each weapon selection;
Single sword or dagger, with or without defensive object
Combination of single sword or dagger in each hand
Two-handed sword
Spear
Melee participation (including projectile weapons)
Cut & Thrust*

2.2.3. Authorization for SCA Fencing must, at a minimum, verify that the candidate understands the requirements for armor and weapons, and demonstrate that they can participate in SCA Fencing activities in a manner that maintains their safety and that of their opponent, including appropriate calibration of blows and comportment on the field. *Fighters must demonstrate a working understanding of rules governing the authorized subject..*

2.3. All combatants, prior to every combat or practice, shall ensure their armor and equipment are safe, in good working order and have been inspected by a member of the Kingdom Marshallate authorized to inspect SCA Fencing gear.

2.4. At interkingdom events, for a tourney hosted by a single Kingdom, combatants shall meet or exceed SCA standards for protective gear, and shall comply with whatever weapons standards are set by the host kingdom

for that tourney. *The same shall apply to fighters from other kingdoms participating in Avacal events.*

- 2.5. The Crown's representative upon the field and in all matters dealing with SCA Fencing is the Earl Marshal, then the Kingdom Fencing Marshal (possibly referred to as the Kingdom Rapier Marshal), then, by delegation, members of the Kingdom Marshallate.
- 2.6. The minimum age for training and authorization in SCA Fencing is 14. When combatants under the age of 18 undertake training and authorization, the Kingdom Fencing Marshal (or their designated representatives) shall ensure that the minor's parent or legal guardian has observed SCA Fencing in the SCA, is aware of the risk of injury inherent in this martial art, and has signed a statement explicitly acknowledging the above. For youth younger than the age of 14, please refer to the Youth Combat rules at <https://www.sca.org/officers/marshal/youthcombat/>
- 2.7. A combatant under the age of 18 participating in SCA Fencing activities with combatants at or over the age of 18 must have a yellow diamond no smaller than 0.5 inch (12mm) on the cuff of the glove of the dominant hand. On light colored gloves, the diamond should be outlined in black or other dark color for contrast.
- 2.8. SCA Rules of the Lists
[Note: These Rules of the Lists are copied from the SCA Marshal's Handbook, as they apply to SCA Fencing, with clarifications in brackets.]
 - 2.8.1. Each fighter, recognizing the possibility of physical injury to themselves in such combat, shall assume unto themselves all risk and liability for harm suffered by means of such combat. No fighter shall engage in combat unless and until they have inspected the field of combat and satisfied themselves that it is suitable for 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.
 - 2.8.2. No person shall participate in Official Combat-Related Activities (including armored combat, period fencing, and combat archery) outside of formal training sessions unless they have been properly authorized under Society and Kingdom procedures.
 - 2.8.3. All combatants must be presented to, and be acceptable to, the Sovereign or [their] representative.

- 2.8.4. 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.
- 2.8.5. 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.
- 2.8.6. Combatants shall behave in a knightly and chivalrous manner and shall fight according to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.
- 2.8.7. 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 list is not to be considered a challenge and therefore may be declined and forfeit the bout.
- 2.8.8. Fighting with real weapons, whether fast or slow, is strictly forbidden at any Society event. This rule does not consider approved weaponry which meets the Society and Kingdom standards for traditional Society combat and/or Society period rapier [fencing] combat, used in the context of mutual sport, to be real weaponry.
- 2.8.9. No projectile weapons shall be allowed within the Lists of a tournament, nor shall any weapons be thrown. The use of approved projectile weapons for melee, war, or combat archery shall conform to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.

3. Miscellaneous

- 3.1. Combatants are to be authorized by their home kingdom prior to competing in any tournament or melee, and may use only those weapons and defensive objects for which they have been authorized. Combatants may participate in practices without having been authorized by their home kingdom, provided they inform the presiding marshal of their non-authorized status.
- 3.2. Upon hearing the call of "Hold" all fighting 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 away from their opponents. Any person may call a hold, including the combatant(s), marshal, or bystander. Holds are to be called for any safety reason. Holds are not to be called for the loss of a weapon unless that weapon may be a

tripping hazard. *During a hold state, fighters are to avoid unnecessary conversation and follow instructions of the marshallate.*

4. Categories of Fencing

4.1. There are three categories of Fencing in the Society for Creative Anachronism. These are:

4.1.1. Light Rapier (Avacal does not allow this category)

4.1.2. Rapier

4.1.3. Cut & Thrust Combat (C&T)

4.2. The table below summarizes the key differences in *those categories practiced in Avacal*. Refer to the remainder of the rules for further clarification and details.

Fencing Category	Blades Allowed	Other weapons and secondaries	Types of Blows Allowed	Armor Requirements
Rapier	No foils, epees, or similar blades. All blades must be made of steel, and meet the Greater Flexibility standard in table 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sword • Dagger • Defensive object • Spear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thrust • Tip cut • Push cut • Draw cut 	Standard
Cut & Thrust	No foils, epees, or similar blades. All blades must be made of steel, and meet the Lesser Flexibility standard in table 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sword • Dagger • Defensive object • Spear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thrust • Tip cut • Push cut • Draw cut • Percussive blow 	Standard + Abrasion Resistance on limbs. Back of head protection. Elbow protection, Additional hand protection.

Table 1. Overview of differences between the three categories of SCA Fencing. Refer to the remainder of the rules for specifics.

4.3. <This paragraph intentionally removed>

4.4. The different categories of Fencing may not face one another in any type of combat.

5. Types of SCA Fencing Combat

5.1. There are two types of SCA Fencing Combat: single combat and melee combat.

5.2. Single combat is between two individual combatants.

5.2.1. In single combat, combatants are engaged upon the call to lay on.

5.2.2. If an opponent is disarmed of all weapons, their opponent may allow them to regain their weapon/weapons, or require them to yield. (*ie. the opponent drops all offensive items*)

5.3. Melee combat involves more than two combatants.

5.3.1. *A Melee participation authorization is required to participate in any melee combat.*

5.3.2. In melees, combatants are engaged with all opponents immediately upon the call to lay on.

5.3.3. Combatants may strike any single opponent they can safely reach with any legal blow if they are within a 180 degree arc of the opponent's front as defined by the opponent's shoulders, and at an angle they can be reasonably seen by the opponent.

5.3.4. Combatants may strike any opponent who is part of a line if the attack is delivered within a 180 degree arc relative to the local line the opponent is a part of.

5.3.5. Outside of these above stated lines, killing (without striking) from behind may be allowed. The rules governing this are in the section Use of Weapons and Defensive Objects.

5.3.6. A combatant may not deliberately ignore an attacker behind them, or repeatedly maneuver to keep their back to an attacker (thereby preventing an attack on them).

6. Description of Weapons and Defensive Objects

6.1. Weapons

6.1.1. There are five standard types of weapons in SCA Fencing:

- 6.1.1.1. Dagger
- 6.1.1.2. Single Sword
- 6.1.1.3. Two-Handed Sword
- 6.1.1.4. Spear
- 6.1.1.5. Projectile Weapons

6.2. Metal Bladed Weapons

6.2.1. This section refers to metal weapons, which are used in all categories of SCA Fencing. Bladed weapons are daggers, single-handed swords, and two-handed swords.

6.2.2. Bladed weapons can be used for thrusts, cuts, and percussive blows as allowed by the category of combat. Other weapons are thrust only.

6.2.3. The blade of metal bladed weapons must be made of steel and must be produced by a commercial entity and crafted for the purpose of competitive swordfighting. *Any disallowed blades or manufacturers will be listed in Appendix 3.*

6.2.3.1. Hilts, handles, pommels, and other parts of a weapon not meant to strike the opponent can be made of metal, wood, leather, or reasonable facsimile.

6.2.4. Bladed weapons will not have more than one blade.

6.2.5. Weapons are to be maintained in good order, with no loose pieces, and no burrs on metal or wooden edges that can snag the opponent's body or clothing.

6.2.6. Any blade with kinks or cracks shall not be used. Steel blades that develop these defects cannot be repaired and must be retired. Sharp bends that can be re-curved and not redevelop for at least a day's use may be used.

6.2.7. Handles are to be substantially straight, and substantially in line with the main axis of the blade.

6.2.8. <This paragraph intentionally removed>

6.2.9. The ends of quillons must be blunt.

6.2.10. Blades are to have a tip that includes the following components:

6.2.10.1. The end of the metal must be blunt with no sharp edges or corners.

6.2.10.2. A cover of rubber, shatter-resistant polymer, or leather with a minimum size in any direction that strikes the opponent of 3/8" (10 mm)

6.2.10.2.1. Rubber and polymer tips must have a minimum of 1/8" (3 mm) between the striking surface and the tip or edge of the sword

6.2.10.2.2. Leather must be at a minimum 1.6 mm / 1/16" / 4 oz thickness

6.2.10.3. Tape, or equivalent, in a contrasting color to the tip and blade that extends both onto the tip and onto the blade¹. For tips built in a period style, a period alternate to tape may be used, so long as it provides a contrasting color to the blade and the tip and the combination is secured on the sword so that it will not fly off under reasonable fighting conditions.

6.2.10.4. Tape must not cover the front surface of the tip

6.2.10.5. Tape should be somewhat resistant to impact with metal, and its adhesive shall have appropriate adherence to rubber and metal. Duct tape, electrical tape, and colored strapping tape are examples of good tapes for this application. Painters tape, masking tape, and other paper based tapes are not.

6.2.11. Tips are to be replaced if the tip shows evidence of punch through, cracking or bulging or, in the case of polymer tips, discoloration.

6.2.12. Steel blades will not be altered by grinding, cutting, heating, hammering, or other actions that could significantly alter their temper, flexibility or durability. Normal combat stresses and blade care do not violate this rule. Exceptions are:

¹ The tip should fit snugly on to the sword end; if necessary, wrapping the blade at the point where the tip ends to create a shoulder for the tip to set on without wobbling is encouraged. Although the tape will aid in holding the tip on the blade, its primary function is as a visual cue of where the tip is; if the tip flies off during combat, the tape helps marshals and combatants notice it, and the absence of a tip, with some tape left on the sword, is similarly helpful.

- 6.2.12.1. The tang of the weapon may be altered.
- 6.2.12.2. Rapier and Cut & Thrust blades may be shortened so long as they maintain acceptable flexibility.
- 6.2.12.3. A nut or other blunt metal object designed to spread impact may be welded to the tip of Rapier and Cut & Thrust blades so long as care is taken to prevent damage to the temper of the blade.
- 6.2.12.4. The end of a blade may be filed so as to blunt the tip

6.2.13. The length of the blade and grip define the type of weapon. Blade length is to be measured from the base of the blade [i.e. the front face of the guard, or the front end of the quillons for open guard] to the end of the tip. Grip length makes the remainder of the overall sword length. Curved blade length is measured as a straight line from the tip to the base of the blade².

- 6.2.13.1. Blades are to have at most one substantial curve³. Blades that are so curved that the tip does not contact the ground when the grip is perpendicular to the ground (i.e. pointed vertically) are not allowed in SCA Fencing⁴. (See figure 1)

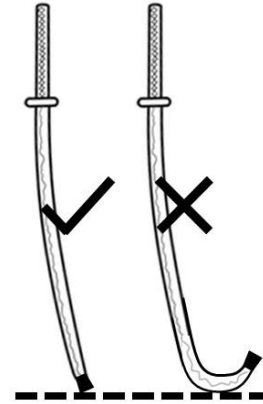


Figure 1. With the handle vertical, the tip must touch the ground. In this example, the sword on the left is allowed, the sword on the right is not.

6.2.14. No weapon shall be longer than the total weapon length specified below in Table 2 and in reference to Figure 2.

- 6.2.14.1. Exceptions to the blade lengths and grip lengths are allowed on a case by case basis by the Kingdom Fencing Marshal. For example, a weapon with a grip of 11" may be allowed, but if the total length is greater than 28" (and no greater than 60") then that weapon is deemed a sword.

² The measurement is done in a straight line rather than along the curve because it is specified according to the reach of the weapon. Highly curved blades that skirt the spirit of this law pose potential issues with an exceedingly long aspect ratio, and can be kept from use at the marshal's discretion

³ Weapons with multiple small waves about a singular axis, such as flamberge weapons, are considered per their main axis; i.e. each wave is not necessarily a "substantial curve"

⁴ Although examples of blades with extreme curves for which this is not the case can be found in period, the use of these swords requires a highly different mechanic than those of the combat intended by these rules, and so are not allowed as weapons in SCA combat, although non-metal versions may be used as a defensive object.

	Weapon Length (W = B+G)	Blade Length (B)	Grip Length (G)
Dagger	$W \leq 28''$ (71 cm)	$B \leq 18''$ (45 cm)	$G \leq 10''$ (25 cm)
Single Sword	$W \leq 58''$ (147 cm)	$18''$ (45 cm) < $B \leq 48''$ (122 cm)	$G \leq 10''$ (25 cm)
Two-Handed Sword	$W \leq 60''$ (152 cm)*	$30''$ (76 cm) < $B \leq 48''$ (122 cm)	$10''$ (25 cm) < $G \leq 24''$ (60 cm)

Table 2. The lengths allowed for the overall Weapon (W), Blade length (B) and Grip (G).

***Note that two-handed sword blade + grip combination must not exceed the maximum sword length of 60" (152 cm) overall.**

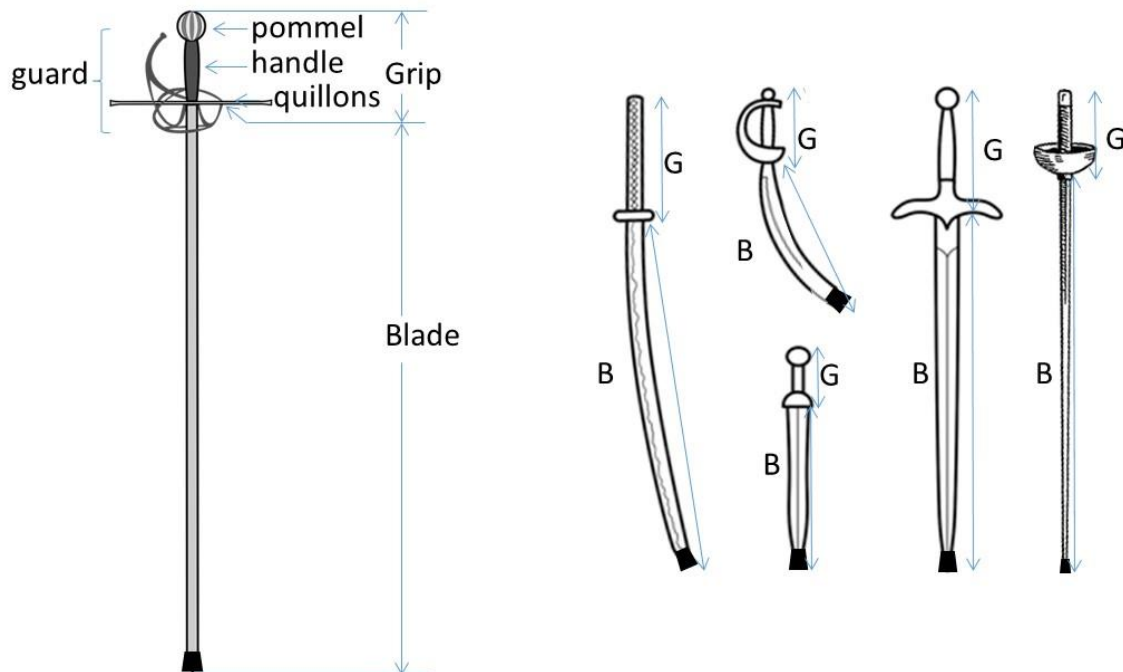


Figure 2. Parts of a weapon, and measurement of the blade and grip.

6.2.15. Blades for Rapier Combat are to meet or exceed the Greater Flexibility Requirement, and those for Cut & Thrust Combat are to meet or exceed the Lesser Flexibility Requirement in the table below. Blades are tested by being held rigidly horizontally and a 6 oz (170 g) weight is placed at the tip. Any flexure due to the blade's weight itself is not counted in the flexibility standard. The blades must meet this standard in each of two directions (i.e. testing the flexibility of the blade along its flatter dimension, then turn the sword over, 180°, and test it again)

6.2.16. *Blades for Rapier Combat or Cut & Thrust will have a cross section less than that of a foil.*

	Greater Flexibility Requirement ~ for ~ Light Rapier and Rapier Combat	Lesser Flexibility Requirement ~ for ~ Cut & Thrust Combat
Dagger	0.5" (12 mm)	0.5" (12 mm)
Single Sword	1" (25 mm)	0.5" (12 mm)
Two-Handed Sword	1" (25 mm)	0.5" (12 mm)

Table 3. Flexibility Requirements for Metal Bladed Weapons, when a 6 oz (170 g) weight is placed on the tip, and the blade is held horizontally.

6.3. Spears

6.3.1. Only rubber headed spears are allowed in SCA Fencing.

6.3.2. Use of spears in combat requires a separate authorization than other weapons forms. *Spears are a standard weapon for melee combat and a non-standard weapon for single combat. (Fighters may choose to not fight against non-standard weapons without forfeit of a bout or loss of honour)*

6.3.3. Rubber Headed Spear Construction

6.3.3.1. *Rubber headed spears are to be made of a rattan haft and a flexible rubber head.*

6.3.3.2. *The spear head must be purchased from a commercial vendor as a spear tip or spike with a minimum head length of 4" (10cm) and a maximum head length of 20" (51 cm). The rubber at the tip must be at least 1/4" (6 mm) thick.*

- 6.3.3.3. *The flexible tip must extend at least four inches past the end of the of the rigid haft*
- 6.3.3.4. *The spear head must flex to 90° with hand pressure, and must substantially return to its original shape within 3 seconds.*
- 6.3.3.5. *Hafts are to be made of rattan with a diameter between 1 1/8th inch (28.5 mm) to 1 3/8th inch (35 mm).*
- 6.3.3.6. *Maximum overall spear length with spear head attached is 9 feet (275 cm) for melee combat. Maximum overall spear length with spear head attached is 6 feet (183 cm) for tournament combat.*
- 6.3.3.7. *Minimum overall spear length with spear head attached is 4 feet (122 cm).*
- 6.3.3.8. Spear points will be friction fit to hafts according to manufacturer's instructions and be taped to the haft with reinforced tape such as strapping tape, fiber tape, or duct tape. A bright band of colored tape or well-affixed ribbon that contrasts with the spear head and the haft is to be wrapped around the base of the spear head so that it adds visual contrast should the spear head come off the weapon.
- 6.3.3.9. The haft must have a flat end at the head end of at least 1/2" (12 mm) diameter. The haft may be rounded on the butt end. *The haft should be tapered to seat in the socket of the spear head.*
- 6.3.3.10. The haft must be inserted into the rubber spear tip at least 2" (5 cm). *The haft must be fully seated into the spear head socket so that there is not flex through the socket. All the flex must be through the spear head itself.*
- 6.3.3.11. Tape may be added to the haft to help prolong the life of the haft; paint and other decorations may be added so long as they do not degrade the structure of the haft or pose a safety risk to the opponent. *Tape may be added to the posterior edge of wings and the transition portion of the spearhead for durability.*

6.3.4. Projectile Weapons

- 6.3.5. Projectile Weapons is limited to mock-gunnery gear (such as rubber-band guns). *Avacal fencing does not allow combat archery or throwing weapons. (Though sections 6.3.6 through 6.3.11 apply to RBGs, they are primarily for combat archery and thrown weapons which Avacal does not allow in fencing combat)*
- 6.3.6. The projectiles must have a mass no greater than 1 lb (460 g)
- 6.3.7. The projectiles must have a minimum diameter of 1/4" (6 mm) in any direction during flight.
- 6.3.8. The striking surface of a projectile must be made of a material with at least 1/4" (6 mm) yield.

6.3.9. No part of the projectile, including the support material underneath the padding, may be sharp.

6.3.10. *<This paragraph intentionally removed>*

6.3.11. The maximum propulsive force is measured according to the type of apparatus primarily dependent on the means by which the propulsive force is imparted to the projectile:

6.3.11.1. *<This paragraph intentionally removed>*

6.3.11.2. *<This paragraph intentionally removed>*

6.3.11.3. A rubber band gun or similar apparatus that fires flexible projectiles using the elasticity of the projectiles as the sole propulsion force may not have a draw strength of greater than 30 lbs (13.6 kg) per projectile.

6.3.11.4. An apparatus that falls outside or between these categories may be used at the discretion of the Kingdom Fencing Marshal or their designated representative.

6.3.12. A projectile firing apparatus must be of a mechanism that can be readily checked by an marshal on the field, using equipment that is readily available in the Society, such as a bow poundage gauge.

6.3.13. Certain types of projectiles may be disallowed from specific scenarios at the marshals' discretion.

6.3.14. *<This paragraph intentionally removed>*

6.3.15. The use of projectile weapons is forbidden in any situation where spectators and non-involved combatants cannot be separated from the potential line of fire by more than the effective range of the projectile weapons to be used

6.4. Defensive Objects

6.4.1. Defensive objects include bucklers, cloaks, sticks, and other objects that, when wielded against an opponent's weapon, can parry, deflect, or immobilize the weapon with safety for both the opponent and the combatant.

6.4.2. *Defensive objects may not have any openings facing the opponent that can inadvertently catch an opponent's weapon (ie. the opening of a scabbard)*

6.4.3. There are two main categories of defensive objects: Rigid and Non-Rigid

6.4.3.1. Rigid parrying devices must be made of sturdy materials, resistant to breakage and splintering.

6.4.3.2. Soft, non-rigid devices may be made of cloth, leather, or similar yielding materials. They may be weighted with soft material such as rope or rolled cloth; they shall not be weighted with any rigid

material nor with materials which are heavy enough to turn the device into a flail or impact weapon.

- 6.4.4. Defensive objects which combine both rigid and non-rigid components must meet the above criteria for each.
- 6.4.5. Cloaks and similar objects may be thrown onto opponents' weapons, body, hands and arms, but may not be thrown deliberately to cover the opponent's face or to cause the opponent to trip. (*"thrown" is used in this rule to include both maintaining a hold of the cloak as well as releasing the cloak*)
- 6.4.6. Objects which even temporarily bind the opponent's weapon to their person, or other weapon, or defensive object, whether by design or repeated mishap, are not allowed. This may include ropes or whips used in this manner. Ropes or whips used in such a way as to deflect and not bind are allowed.

7. Use of Weapons and Other Objects

- 7.1. All blows are to be delivered with control, with the aim of delivering the lightest blow that meets the standard for SCA Fencing (refer to section 8.1). *Fighters must only use weapons or defensive objects in ways that they are always able to exert sufficient control the force being delivered.*
 - 7.1.1. While combatants are encouraged to recreate the technique and style of period fencing, they should not recreate the force required for an actual wounding or killing blow. SCA Fencing does not aim to recreate the force with which a given blow would have been delivered if harm were intended. Such force is beyond that which our protective standards are intended.
 - 7.1.2. Blows intended to deliver force (beyond that which is necessary for acknowledgement) are not allowed – continued infractions of this rule will lead to disciplinary action by the marshallate.
 - 7.1.3. The above requirements are difficult to achieve under all circumstances and training levels. The difference between a blow that is hard enough and too hard may be less than an inch of linear distance between two rapidly moving fighters who may not have a perfect perception of the other's intent.
 - 7.1.4. Deviations from the ideal will occur frequently, through no fault of the combatants, as no scenario and no fighter is perfect.
 - 7.1.5. Fighters and marshals are required to resolve such incidents; no pre-judgment or rule shall be made which defines who was necessarily at fault.

7.2. Valid blows with a dagger, single-handed sword, or two-handed sword in Rapier combat are

7.2.1. Thrust⁵

7.2.2. Tip Cut⁶ (be aware, not all kingdoms acknowledge these)

7.2.3. Push Cut⁶ (be aware, not all kingdoms acknowledge these)

7.2.4. Draw Cut

While placing the blade for a cut, a minimal percussive element may be present. This does not invalidate the blow.

7.3. Valid blows with a dagger, single-handed sword, or two-handed sword in Cut & Thrust Combat include the above and also

7.3.1. Percussive Blow

7.4. Valid blows with a spear

7.4.1. The only valid blow with a spear is a Thrust

7.4.2. A fighter may not "set" this weapon by bracing the base in the ground or against the foot or body, or locking the back arm.

7.5. <This paragraph intentionally removed>

7.6. *Projectile weapons are not to be loaded before the call of 'lay on'*

7.7. A strike from a projectile weapon will be taken as a thrust from a bladed weapon.

7.8. Killing from behind (AKA *Death from Behind, or DFB*) is defined as killing an opponent where the shoulder of the fencer's sword arm (i.e. the one that would wield the blow) is behind the line defined by the opponent's shoulders.

7.8.1. Killing from behind is allowed in melee scenarios *by default*. The MiC may restrict this technique out in the *Temporary Rules and Parameters (TRPs)* beforehand.

7.8.2. Killing from behind is achieved by laying the weapon over the opponent's shoulder, so that the tip is visible to the opponent, while calling out clearly "You have been killed from behind" or other short clear phrase. The combatant must take care not to strike their opponent with the quillons, guard, or other part of the weapon.

⁵ Underlined items are defined in the glossary in Appendix 1.

⁶ Per section 1.2, any kingdom may limit their rules to be more restrictive than these rules.

- 7.9. *A Weapon, defensive object, or any body part may make contact with the opponent's weapon or defensive object to parry or deflect. If a combatant's movement results in any part of the combatant's body making contact with a weapon that is equivalent to a valid blow, the blow is to be taken as having been struck.*
- 7.10. *No grasping of any part of an opponent's weapon or defensive object (ie. buckler) is allowed, except for an opponent's blade in Cut & Thrust Combat. An open hand may be used to redirect the weapon. Any linear motion of the blade in relation to the hand may lead to a valid cut on the deflecting hand. No pressure may be exerted to bend the blade and the hand must not close on a blade's tip. If the blade that is grasped moves or twists in the grasping hand, that hand is deemed disabled*
- 7.11. If an effective blow is thrown before, or on, the same moment as an event that would stop a fight (a "HOLD" being called, the fighter being "killed" themselves, etc.), the blow shall count. If the blow is thrown after the hold, killing blow, or other event, it shall not count. *If the fighter throwing the blow could reasonably have stopped the attack after the fight stopping incident occurs, they shall call the shot back as invalid.*
- 7.12. Though the hand may be used to parry an opponent's weapon, it shall not be used to grasp or strike an opponent. *Unintentional* fleeting contact outside these confines is allowed.
- 7.13. *Control must always be exercised over defensive actions, to prevent forceful contact.*

8. Acknowledgement of Blows

- 8.1. In judging blows, all combatants are presumed to be wearing thin clothing, such as unpadded linen, not armor, and that the opponent's weapon is extremely sharp on point and edge. Any blow that would have penetrated the skin in the judgement of the person receiving the blow shall be counted a good blow.
- 8.1.1. The exception of "armor as worn tournaments" is allowed, in which certain types of armor may be considered to be resistant to specific types of blows for the purposes of scoring.
- 8.1.2. Likewise tournaments with differing victory conditions (for example, "only head shots count") are explicitly allowed.

8.2. The person struck has the responsibility of acknowledging a blow *as beng valid or not*. The receipt of a valid blow shall be acknowledged clearly with words and/or motions, such as “good arm” or “dead”. *The receipt of an invalid blow shall be acknowledged clearly with words and/or motions, such as “flat” or “cut was too short”. The person striking has the responsibility of correcting an invalid blow that is acknowledged as valid. When blows are exchanged, clearly distinguish which blows are being accepted or rejected.*

8.2.1. *Excessive force must not be used as justification for the person struck denyng a valid blow. It is a marshallate issue.*

8.2.2. No accessories shall be worn that prevent a combatant from acknowledging blows. It is up to the combatant to know whether any necessary equipment (such as mask, helm and other safety equipment) renders the acknowledgement of blows in certain areas difficult, and will make every effort to account for this deficit. This includes, but is not limited to, loose clothing designed to hang out from the fencer, such as bulbous sleeves or hoop skirts, or rigid cuffs on gauntlets. Care must be exercised to acknowledge blows that strike these articles of clothing if a sharp blade would have penetrated those articles and struck the body part underneath.

8.3. A valid blow disables the struck part.

8.3.1. A blow to the body⁷ is taken as a kill.

8.3.1.1. The body includes the head and entire mask or helmet, the neck, chest, abdomen, back, and the regions on the inner part of the upper arm and the inner thigh extending 4” down from the armpit and the groin, respectively.

8.3.2. A blow to the arm or hand renders the arm (including the hand on that side) incapacitated

8.3.3. *<This paragraph intentionally removed>*

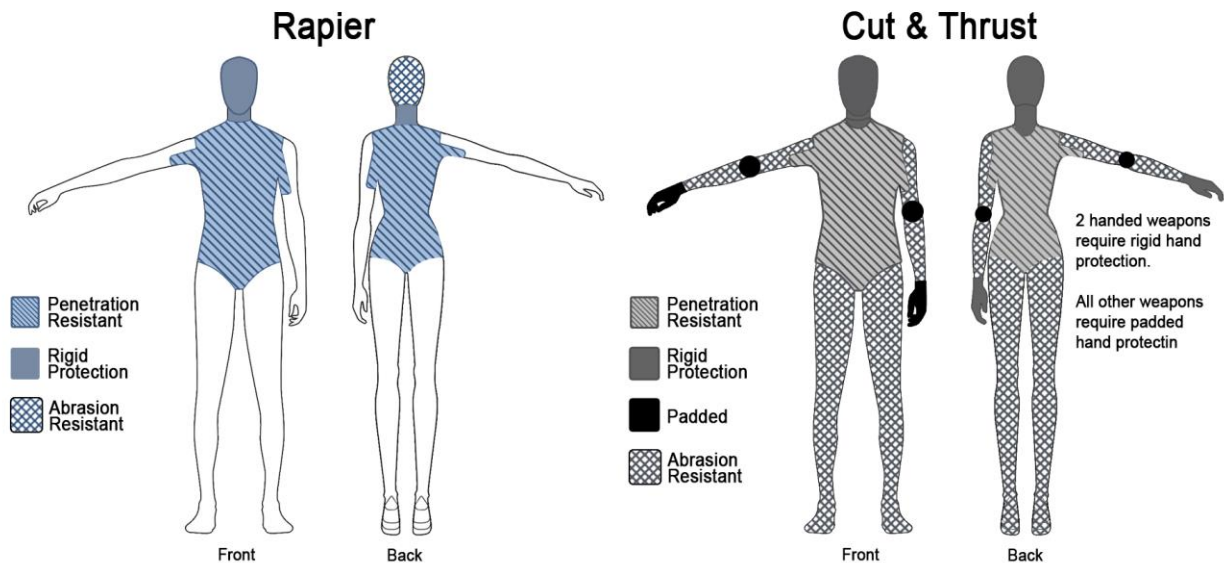
8.3.4. If both *arms* are incapacitated and the combatant has not been dealt a killing blow, the combatant must yield in a single combat tournament.

8.3.5. A valid blow to the foot or leg renders the leg as non-weight-bearing. The combatant must then fight kneeling, sitting, or standing *with their feet set (not more then shoulder width apart) and not moving on the ground. Fighters choosing to remain standing may not significantly shift weight from one leg to the other. A combatant who fights from the ground may fight from and move about on their knees.*

9. Armor Requirements

⁷ Underlined items are defined in the glossary in Appendix 1.

9.1. Four types of armor are defined. These are Rigid, Penetration Resistant, Padded, and Abrasion Resistant. Figure 3 provides a summary of the types of armor and which body parts they cover.



Schematic of the body and minimum required protection. Note that some areas may require rigid protection, depending on the combatant's physiology.

9.2. Limbs

9.2.1. Limbs may be covered by abrasion resistant material if the fighter prefers but is not required. *Gloves and footwear are highly recommended.*

9.2.2. Exceptions

9.2.2.1. The inner arm down to 4" (10 cm) below the armpit, are to be covered by penetration resistant material.

9.2.2.2. The groin must be covered with penetration resistant armor.

9.2.2.3. The armor as worn must cover these areas regardless of the fighter's position (standing, prone or on the ground).

9.2.2.4. <This paragraph intentionally removed>

9.2.3. Additional limb requirements for Cut and Thrust Combat

9.2.3.1. Limbs must be covered by abrasion resistant material

9.2.3.2. Elbows must be protected by a minimum of a resilient padding at least 1/8" (12 mm) thick.

9.2.3.3. The backs of the hands, including fingers and 1" (2.5cm) above the bend of the wrist must be covered by 1/4" (6 mm) open cell foam or equivalent resilient padding.

- 9.2.3.4. If at least one combatant is using a two-handed metal weapon in Cut & Thrust Combat, then the backs of the hands, including fingers, and 1" (2.5cm) above the bend of the wrist on the back half of the forearm must be covered by rigid protection with sufficient coverage to prevent a reasonable percussive blow from contacting the bones of the hand and wrist.
- 9.2.3.5. The rigid protection does not require padding underneath.
- 9.2.3.6. The coverage for rigid protection may be achieved by any combination of gauntlet, sword guard, or defensive object. A shield alone may be considered an equivalent to full hand and wrist protection only if no part of the gloved hand or wrist is within 4" (10 cm) of the edge of the shield while the shield is in use.

9.3. The torso, including the abdomen down to and including the groin in front, and the inner arm down to 4" (10 cm) below the armpit, are to be covered by penetration resistant material.

9.4. The entire front 180 degrees of the neck, as well as at least 5" (12.5cm) centered on the cervical vertebrae, must be covered by rigid material for *Rapier and Cut & Thrust* (figure 4). *The jugular notch and clavicle head must also be covered in rigid material for both Rapier Combat and Cut & Thrust combat.*

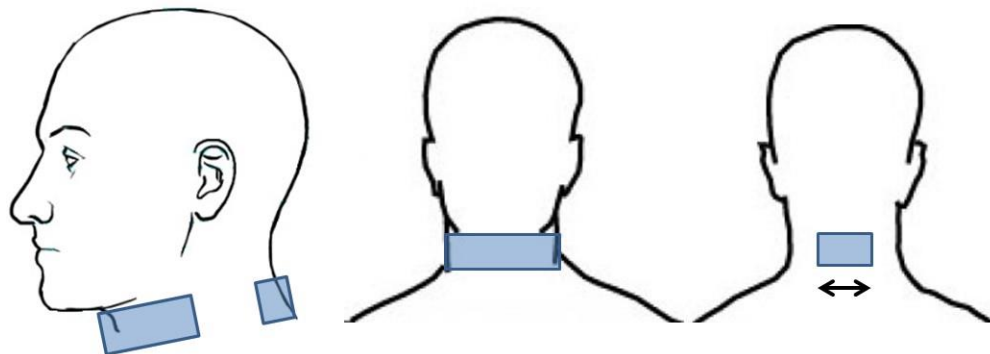


Figure 4. Image of head and neck shown from the left, front, and back. The parts of the neck shown here shaded must be covered by rigid protection for all categories of SCA Fencing Combat. The double headed arrow indicates that the neck, to a total width of 5" (12.5cm) centered on the vertebrae, must be covered.

9.5. The face and sides of the head up to and including a vertical line drawn at the back of the external ear are to be covered by a 12kg fencing mask

or equivalent head protection (Figure 5). The mask must extend down past the chin such that the mask and gorget together do not present a significant section not covered by rigid protection from most reasonable thrusts coming from the front.

- 9.5.1. The metals listed in the glossary under rigid armor are considered equivalent to a 12 kg fencing mask mesh.
- 9.5.2. Masks and helms must be secured to the fighter, so that they cannot be easily removed or dislodged during combat.
- 9.5.3. All parts of a fencing mask or helm that might cause injurious contact with the wearer's head shall be padded or shall be suspended in such a way as to prevent contact with the wearer during combat. There shall be no major internal projections; minor projections of necessary structural components shall be padded. All metal shall be free of sharp edges.
- 9.5.4. The interior of fencing masks must have a minimum of ¼" (6.4 mm) open-cell foam or equivalent resilient padding to create separation between the mask and the wearer. Modern fencing masks (e.g. FIE and USFA type masks) in good working order meet this requirement without additional padding, but may require additional padding as it ages.
- 9.5.5. For helms that utilize a suspension system which does not, on its own, prevent contact between the wearer and any rigid part of the helm, additional padding must be present. This padding must consist of at least ¼" (6.4 mm) open-cell foam or equivalent resilient material.
- 9.5.6. Helms without a suspension system and which rely on foam must use a minimum of ¼" (6.4 mm) closed-cell foam or equivalent resilient padding which provides progressive resistance to create separation between the hard outer shell of the helm and the wearer.
- 9.5.7. Similarly, parts of the inside of the helm that might come in contact with the wearer's neck or body must be padded.

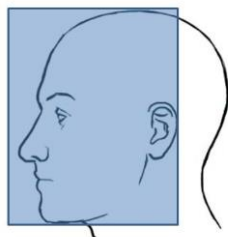


Figure 5. The head and face, indicated here, must be protected by a 12 kg mask or equivalent.

- 9.6. The rest of the head must be covered by abrasion resistant material for Rapier. The rigid protection of a mask must be extended to the entire head for Cut & Thrust Combat to protect against percussive blows.
- 9.7. The neck must be covered by rigid protection in Rapier Combat and Cut & Thrust Combat. *(as described in 9.4)*
- 9.8. In addition, any part of the person vulnerable to significant serious injury or disproportionate bleeding, such as external reproductive organs, or hemangioma, must be covered by rigid protection⁸.
 - 9.8.1.1. Any body-worn medical equipment must also be covered in such a way that they are protected against blows or the possibility of the wearer falling on them
- 9.9. Armor is to be designed and worn so that no gaps form over vital body areas when the combatant assumes any reasonable position.
- 9.10. Armor is to be inspected before each day's combat to check for any tears or signs of wearing. Penetration resistant armor is to be tested no less frequently than every two years using a drop tester⁹, and may be tested at any time within that time frame at the marshal's discretion using the drop tester (see appendix for description of test)¹⁰. The exception to this testing is chain mail armor which meets the definition of Penetration Resistant. This type of armor must be inspected visually for any missing links. More than one adjacent missing link must be replaced before the armor is worn. Split rings with at least two full turns are acceptable replacement links

1. MARSHAL SECTION

Note – This section will not be differentiated between society rules and Avacal specific rules. We are striving for greater consistency between how we handle marshal item between our various disciplines in Avacal.

⁸ This list includes the face, however that is already required to be covered by rigid protection

⁹ The drop test was created to help ensure that a broken blade, with the typical types of breaks seen, or an untipped blade, is less likely to pierce the opponent. No amount of armor will ever be perfect protection and is not meant as a replacement for comportment, training, and control

¹⁰ Sweating and washing can wear out fabric, thinning it out and making it susceptible to penetration

We marshals are, first and foremost, servants of our King and Queen, and on their behalf, servants of the fighters and spectators of Avacal. The primary duty of the marshals of Avacal is to assist the participants in having a safe and enjoyable experience in SCA combat. In this duty, we must see that these rules are enforced in a way that preserves safety, while making sure combat can be enjoyed by the participants and spectators.

During tournaments or wars, all marshals should carry onto the field of combat a marshalling pole that is spirally marked yellow and black at each end for at least 1.5 feet (45mm). The spiral mark is to indicate to the fighter that the pole belongs to the Marshal. The length of pole should allow the Marshal to comfortably direct the fighter without exposing the Marshal to being struck by the weapons.

No marshal shall carry any pole on the field that has sharp or jagged edges (i.e. walking staffs, tree limbs, etc.).

The overriding rule shall be, “How can you get the highest number of combatants on the field safely?” That is your goal as a marshal.

Refer to the Avacal Book of Marshallate Procedures for information on;

~ General Combat Authorization. Fencing specific combat authorization information is below

~ Marshal Authorization

~ Combat Injury Procedures

~ Reporting and Chain of Command

~ Procedures for Sanctions and Grievances

GUIDELINES FOR MARSHALLING ON THE FIELD

The guidelines outlined in this section are not rigid requirements, but are placed here in an attempt to help clarify and to provide examples of acceptable methods and procedures.

A) Marshal in Charge (MIC)

You are responsible for ensuring the TRPs (Temporary Rules and Parameters) have been communicated to participants in advance of combat commencing. If there are any TRPs that restricts or greatly modifies any of the armour or weapon allowances, it is imperative that these are communicated at least 1 week in advance of the activity. These restrictions can include, but

are not limited to; weapon allowances (ie. 2-handed swords only or no 2-handed swords), defensive object dimensions (ie. buckler or other rigid parrying device), armour counts as armour tournaments, no projectile weapons (or restricted subsets) in melee.

You are responsible for organizing the marshalling. This does not mean that you have to do it all yourself.

Things that need to be done prior to all combat related activities:

- 1) Check that the field can be safely fought upon, preferably before the site is reserved for the event. Can someone in Armour, with restricted vision, cross it safely (i.e., without injury; simple tripping is an inherent hazard of combat in rough terrain)? At minimum, check at the beginning of the day to see if there are holes, soft spots, rocks, etc. If they are serious and cannot be worked around, move the fighting somewhere else.
- 2) Arrange for equipment inspection. (See Equipment Inspection Guidelines below.)
- 3) Arrange for marshals for all of the combat, this means an absolute minimum of one marshal per single combat (preferably two). Enough marshals for group combat (melees and war battles) to both surround the fighting (to keep an eye on the boundaries) and keep most of the fights under general surveillance (for detached required Armour, broken weapons, etc.). If volunteers are in short supply, point out to the fighters that they do not get to start until sufficient marshals are available.
- 4) When it is all over, write up a report on the event (see the Paperwork section under Chain of Command).

B) Marshalling Single Combat

- 1) At minimum, there should be one marshal for single combat. Two will be able to see more of the fight. Three or more will get in each other's way and block the view from the sidelines without providing noticeably better marshalling.
- 2) As noted earlier, marshalling has three parts of nearly equal importance: safety, fair witness, and showmanship. Excessive concern for any of these, to the neglect of the other two, will make fighting less enjoyable for all concerned. While these concerns apply to all marshalling, they are most detailed and balanced in single combat.

- 3) Safety:
- (a) The field itself can cause safety problems. Before you begin, look over the area where the fighting will take place. Look particularly for large holes, soft spots, and rocks. (The fighters will generally accept small holes, rocks, etc. as part of the terrain.) Once the fight starts, try to keep it away from these areas. If the hazards are serious, move the fight.
 - (b) As the fighters come out onto the field, take a quick look to see that they have remembered their full Armour, especially ~~elbow~~, neck, and hand Armour. These are the likeliest to be removed and then forgotten. This should not take any time at all; it is not a full inspection, but a quick double-check to help someone who may have been distracted by the excitement of the day.
 - (c) Once the fight has started, watch particularly for broken weapons ~~Armour~~, lost tempers, injuries, and unauthorized people/pets/objects on the field. (Outsiders, especially small children and pets, do not always realize that they are supposed to stay off of the field during combat.) If there is a problem, shout "Hold!" several times if necessary. Remember, incidental gapping of armour over non vital body areas is not cause to call a hold.
 - (d) If the first cries of "Hold!" do not cause the fighters to stop, get in between the fighters (or between the fighters and whoever has wandered onto the field) and block the weapons with your staff until the fighting does stop. (Keep yelling "Hold!" while you do) This is one reason why marshals routinely carry staffs on the field.
- 4) Bear in mind that the various Kingdoms have somewhat differing traditions as to how much marshals should intrude into a fight. On one extreme, some Kingdoms expect marshals to keep their opinions to themselves, except in the case of clear and immediate safety hazards. At the other extreme, some Kingdoms expect marshals to volunteer advice any time they think the fighters might possibly have a question about a blow. If you are new to marshalling, or merely new to the Kingdom you are in, try to find out where in this spectrum your Kingdom lies. It will make a difference in how you act and, perhaps more importantly, it will make a major difference in what the fighters expect of you.

- 5) In Avacal, marshals are expected to perform at or near the “keep their opinions to themselves unless asked, except in the case of clear and immediate safety hazards” end of the spectrum.
- C) Fair Witness
- 1) You are expected to be an impartial witness to exactly what happens during a fight. Ideally, you should be able to describe the last 3–4 blows on your side of the fight: where they started, their angle of approach, how they were blocked or where they landed. (Do not be afraid to say, “I don’t know” if you were looking at one part of the fight when something [allegedly] happened in another part.)
 - 2) Do not try to impose your view unless you see what appear to be major and repeated problems. Leave the blow counting to the participants unless you see clear reason to intervene; usually, they have a much clearer perspective than the marshals do.
 - 3) If the fighters do ask you what happened (or you feel compelled to volunteer), try to do so tactfully. Prefacing your statements with “It looked to me like...” or “It appeared...” is preferable to a dogmatic assertion of what happened. Similarly, it is preferable to ask “Did you feel anything along your shoulder?” rather than saying “That shot ran from tip to hilt all over your shoulder” The latter may be 100% accurate, but it is unnecessarily antagonistic to someone who may honestly have thought the cut length insufficient.
 - 4) In order to be able to answer as accurately as possible, you need as clear a view as possible. This means being close to the fight. You need to strike a balance between getting closer to see better and staying back out of range of the blows. Just what the appropriate distance is for you will depend on your level of experience with fighting (e.g., how well you can judge what the range of the weapons is and whether you are in or near it). In general, for single combat, 20 yards is too far and 2 yards is too close. In the absence of a better idea, consider 5 yards for weapons less than 3½ feet in length and 8 yards if either combatant has a longer weapon. Try to keep moving so that the combatants are roughly centered between you and the other marshals for the fight.
 - 5) It is helpful and advisable to enlist someone of higher rank (member of the Order of Defense for non-belts, Kingdom Fencing Marshal, Kingdom Earl Marshal or Crown for members of the Order of Defense, etc.) if you ‘feel compelled to volunteer’ your opinion unasked.

D) Showmanship:

- 1) Keep an eye on the audience. SCA combat is a spectator sport, just as medieval tournaments were. Your part of the show is to keep things moving and avoid blocking the view from the sidelines except where unavoidable. This means fast pre-fight checks and announcements, a minimum of holds and discussions during the fight, and a strenuous effort to stay out of the way and keep moving. (If it is cold, wear several layers of tunics and move even more; one person in a cloak can interfere with the view of many).

PROCEDURES FOR MARSHALLING WARS

A) Before the War

- 1) The general rules under which the war will be conducted, compromises between conflicting Kingdoms' standards, and the scenario limits for each planned battle shall be negotiated and agreed to in writing in advance by the authorized representatives of all belligerent groups involved. The rules and scenario limits shall be published in the appropriate newsletters. For inter-Kingdom wars, notices shall be published according to SCA publication policy by the groups involved. This publication should take place at least thirty (30) days prior to the event. In addition, copies of all of the rules and agreements shall be available on-site, as a handout. Armour and weapons standards shall default to the established Society minimum standards unless otherwise specified in the event rules and scenario limits.
- 2) Each side in a battle shall provide a reasonable number of trained and experienced marshals. If not enough marshals are available, the sides should arrange for a draft from their armies.
- 3) All marshals should be separately briefed prior to the meetings of all participants. (They should also attend the group briefing.) Emphasis at this briefing should be on enforcing the rules and scenario limits for each battle and on preventing accidents that could arise from hazards related to the scenario limits and to the actual terrain.

- 4) All participants shall be gathered to hear the rules and the scenario limits explained to them. The autocrats and/or the marshals should answer their questions. If the scenario limits vary radically from battle to battle, this procedure should be repeated before each battle.
- 5) Equipment inspection must take place before combat starts, with particular emphasis on any modifications that have been made in making compromises between conflicting Kingdom standards.

B) Marshal of a War

- 1) A Marshal in Charge shall be chosen for each war (and possibly for each battle, if the Marshal in Charge for the war is fighting in the battles or otherwise prevented from being present).
- 2) The Marshal in Charge shall be responsible for the activities of the marshals in his charge.
- 3) If possible, the Marshal in Charge should not be a member of one of the groups on the field.
- 4) The Marshal in Charge for a particular battle may not participate in the battle as a combatant.
 - (a) When "Hold!" is called, all fighting shall cease.
 - (b) The fighters shall ensure there are no hazards in their immediate vicinity than go to one knee (if possible) where they stand.
 - (c) Conversations relating to the conduct of the battle are not permitted between combatants. Keep all other conversations to a minimum to allow the marshals to handle the cause of the hold and give appropriate instruction.
 - (d) Changes of position/location are not permitted, unless ordered by a marshal.
 - (e) If movement away from a boundary of a hazard is necessary, the fighters shall maintain their relative positions and distances.
 - (f) To end a hold, the Marshal in Charge will call "All rise!" (or "Rise if you're able" or some other equivalent statement). When the combatants have resumed their guard, the Marshal in Charge will call "Lay on!" to signal the resumption of the fight.

- 5) "Hold!" will normally be called only for REQUIRED broken weapons and armour, lost tempers, injuries, safety concerns, outsiders wandering onto the field, fighters about to wander off it, or to enforce the rules and scenario limits.
- 6) "Hold!" should not be called for dropped weapons, fighters who have slipped and fallen (unless they are in danger of injury), or the near approach of a fighter to a boundary where there are neither spectators nor any natural hazards, such as cliffs.
- 7) Marshals have the pre-emptory authority to remove from combat and from the field any combatant who violates the rules or scenario limits or who performs any unsafe or dishonourable act. Such removal may be briefly discussed during the battle only if the marshal permits it. The marshals' ruling may be appealed to the Marshal in Charge, the Regional/Principality Marshal, the Kingdom Fencing Marshal, the Kingdom Earl Marshal or the Sovereign, in ascending order.
- 8) Marshals have the authority to regulate the movement of non-combatants on the field and to control the location of spectators.
- 9) Those marshals who are responsible for marshalling wars or large melees may use alternative means to signal "Hold!" or "Lay on!" as long as all fighters know and understand the alternative signalling system. Marshals may use whistles, air horns, or other such devices.
- 10) When marshalling a melee, the witness function is necessarily relegated to a very low priority. (It is not unimportant, but it is impossible for a handful of marshals to be accurate witnesses to the details of a couple dozen separate combats.)
- 11) You should have a minimum of 3 marshals for the first 20 fighters, plus one additional marshal for each 15 fighters up to a total of 500 fighters and 35 marshals. If you have more than 500 fighters (realistically, even if you have more than 50 fighters), you should have an experienced Marshal in Charge and a sizable number of experienced marshals. It is preferable to have more marshals for free-for-all melees.
- 12) Marshals should station themselves around the edges of the fight. This allows them to control the borders while keeping as much of the fighting as possible in view. It also prevents fights from running into them from behind. As always, keep moving and stay close enough to spot safety problems.

- 13) In very large melees, it may be desirable to have some marshals in the middle of the field, in addition to those around the edge. If you are mid-field, be careful that you do not get so interested in the fight in front of you that you back into or forget to watch another bout moving around behind.

Marshalling Projectile Combat

- 1) A minimum buffer zone of no less than 10 yards between the boundary of all combat/combatants and the spectators is required for reasonable safety, unless otherwise determined by the marshals.
- 2) A gorget with a fencing mask or helm is HIGHLY recommended. All projectile combat marshals must wear at least protective shatterproof eyewear, such as safety glasses meeting the ANSI Z 87.1 standard or better. If there is a mixture of helmeted and safety glasses marshals available, the safety glass marshals should stay to the edge of the field.
- 3) Marshals should wear an extremely distinctive tabard clearly marking them as marshals, and carry a marshalling staff.
- 4) It is recommended that the groin be covered according to minimum combatant standards.
- 5) Take care while marshalling not to get between missile combatants and their targets. It is dangerous, as the combatants may not recognize the marshal in the middle of a crowd.
- 6) If a fighter crosses a boundary, you may notify them politely and promptly that they are routed and out of the battle. If a fighter routs another and follows him out of bounds, they are both out of the battle. Alternately, if the scenario allows, they can be shepherded back onto the field after they have been made aware of the boundary. Use common sense and the rules of the scenario as your guide.

COMBAT AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURES

Authorizations are issued separately for each weapon selection;

Single sword or dagger, with or without defensive object

Combination of single sword or dagger in each hand

Two-handed sword

Spear

Melee participation (including projectile weapons)

Cut & Thrust

A) Example

This section describes how Avacal marshals should conduct authorizations for new fencing combatants. The process requires two individuals in addition to the new fighter: One currently authorized fighter with substantial experience to physically test the candidate's skills; and one currently authorized senior marshal to question the new fighter about the rules, and to observe their skills in safely conducting themselves on the field. When possible, it is encouraged that one of these individuals be a member of the Order of Defense. A fighter may authorize in more than one combat form in a single authorization session. In this case, each combat form must be given sufficient time and attention to ensure the applicant meets the requirements for authorization.

- 1) If the fighter does not have proof of a signed waiver (for example, a signed blue membership card) prior to the authorization, the candidate and the authorizing marshal will properly complete a waiver (SCA, Inc. form titled "CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE AND RELEASE LIABILITY").
- 2) The persons conducting the authorization must verify that the candidate is familiar with the Rules of the List and the current rules that specifically govern Avacal. Rules that govern melee combat are handled in a separate authorization.
- 3) The candidate must present themselves on the field in Armour for inspection. The Armour must be inspected on the body and must pass the current Armour requirements for combat. This inspection must be complete and exacting, and any deficiencies must be permanently corrected before the person may authorize.
- 4) Both the experienced authorized fighter and the candidate shall be armed with weapons and secondaries appropriate for the forms in which the candidate seeks authorization

- 5) For the first few minutes of the bout for authorization, the prospective fighter and the authorized fighter shall fight at $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ speed and verbally acknowledge all blows landed. During this phase of the authorization, the marshal should get an impression of the new fighter's style, technique, ability to call blows, and ability to defend themselves. If this portion of the authorization is not satisfactorily completed, the authorization procedure shall be stopped. The candidate shall be told of the problems observed and instructed as to how to correct the problems
- 6) If the first portion of the bout has progressed satisfactorily, then the combatants will be told to fight in list-type combat, counting blows until one is defeated. During this phase, the marshal should observe the new fighter's control, reaction to blows, and ability to cope with pressure. In this portion of the bout the experienced fighter should use as many different combat forms as possible to ensure the applicant's control, reactions and ability to cope are maintained.
- 7) A separate authorization is required to participate in melee. In this authorization, additional to the above requirements, the applicant is required to demonstrate;
 - ~ Familiarity with the rules specific to melee. Including but not limited to engagement, projectiles and DFBs.
 - ~ Safe and responsible use of projectile weapons. Including but not limited to not pointing projectiles at unarmoured combatants or spectators, use of the projectile weapon and inspecting ammunition.
- 8) The marshal, and the authorized fighter shall confer to decide if the new fighter exhibits adequate performance in the minimum criteria for authorization listed below:
 - a) Does the candidate know and apply the Rules of the Lists and the Conventions of Combat?
 - b) Does the candidate exhibit safe behaviour on the field, for both self and others?
 - c) How does the candidate react to pressure? Does he or she fight back or become disoriented and confused?
 - d) Can the candidate defend themselves?
 - e) Is the authorizing fighter able to feel and judge blows, both those received and those thrown?
- 8) If the marshal, and the experienced authorized fighter agree that the candidate meets these requirements.
 - a) The marshal will notify the candidate that they are now authorized. The new fighter and marshal will properly complete the Avacal "Four Year Authorization".

- b) The bottom part should be removed. This is the fighter's temporary authorization card which will be valid for 60 days from signing to be used at events.
 - a. The authorized fighter will be required to go to the Avacal Authorization Database to print off their fight authorization once entered by the Minister of Lists
(http://www.avacal.org/EarlMarshal/authorizationdb/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/Lists/Fighters/AllItems.aspx)
- c) However, the top part of the form must be sent to the Kingdom Minister of Lists by the warranting marshal to be recorded in the authorization database so that the authorization will be official
- d) The Senior Marshal shall follow the guidelines as per section IV.B.4 of the Avacal book of Lists to submit the fighter authorization.

EQUIPMENT INSPECTION GUIDELINES

A) General Information

- 1) At each event, the Marshal in Charge must arrange for the inspection of all equipment to be used in combat (e.g., Armour and weapons). This in no way relieves the individual combatants of their responsibility for following the equipment standards. Ultimately, the fighter is responsible for the condition and safety of their Armour and weapons. However, the marshal's inspection is intended to provide a second pair of experienced eyes and an outside point of view. A reminder: Equipment that was perfectly serviceable at the beginning of the previous event could have broken since, and even the most experienced fighter can occasionally forget some piece of Armour. The inspection outlined below is merely an example. A checklist might be helpful as you do the inspection, until you have done so many that it becomes second nature. (As noted in the section on Marshalling combat, a quick visual check of the combatants just before the start of a bout or battle is also a good idea.) All of this is based on the equipment standards given in sections 6 and 9 above. You should be familiar with them. The fact that one of the requirements is not mentioned on this checklist does not mean that you should not notice if it has not been met.
- 2) Armour inspection must be done with all of the Armour on the body of the fighter who is going to wear it. It is not otherwise possible to get an accurate idea of what is

covered and what is not, nor of where gaps may occur as the combatant moves. In weapon inspections, the primary test is safety. If you, as a marshal, do not believe that the weapon is safe (i.e., if you would not be willing to face it), do not let it be used on the field. When in doubt, ask the prospective user if he or she would be willing to fight against the weapon. If not, it should not be used regardless of whether it meets all other requirements. Before you start, remind yourself that Armour is hot, not to mention heavy. If the weather is hot, try to find some shade in which to hold the inspection or, at least, for the fighters to stand in while waiting to be inspected. (Similar reasoning applies in case of rain, freezing cold, or other inclement weather. Just because it is possible to fight does not mean that it is pleasant or desirable to stand around in Armour.)

B) Sample Armour and Defensive Object Inspection

See Armour Requirements above for Avacal's standards. It is recommended to start at either the top and work down or the bottom and work up. As part of the inspection, you may be required to touch the combatant. Ask for permission first. If the permission is not given ask the combatant if another marshal may perform the inspection, If permission is not given, the fighter may not pass the inspection. (Reminder – coverage must be maintained over all vital body areas)

- 1) Groin: ASK the fighter if they remembered their cup or groin protection. Do NOT attempt to check for it physically.
- 2) Torso: Check that they are wearing puncture resistant material. If you are uncertain of what they are wearing, ask the fighter what they are wearing to ensure it meets the requirements. Ask when the last time the armour was tested (Rule 9.10 states that armour must be tested no less frequently than every 2 years). Have the fighter move into different fighting positions to ensure that coverage is maintained in positions that the fighter could reasonably be expected to experience (ensure that the armpit protection remains protecting the arm pit and not hanging below).
- 3) Neck: Ensure the gorget properly covers the full 180 degrees of the front of the neck and at least 12.5 cm across the cervical spine
- 4) Head:
 - (a) Check the mask or helm off the combatant. Ensure that the materials of the mask meet the rigid material standard and are without excessive rust or dents that weaken the material. Look inside for any substantial (ie > 3 mm) protrusions and check that there is sufficient padding or an adequate suspension system to keep the combatant's head from contacting any rigid surface.

- (b) Check the mask or helm on the combatant. Check for a snug fit that is unlikely to result in the facepiece of the mask or helm contacting the combatant's head or face. Ensure the mask will not easily become dislodged during typical combat activity. It is frequently necessary to push or pull on the mask to ensure it doesn't contact the combatant or become loose. Tell the combatant what you are going to do as you work through the inspection.
 - (c) Have the combatant tilt their head from side to side as well as front and back. Ensure overlap is maintained between the mask/helm and neck protection.
- 1) Shield: Check the rim for exposed sharp edges. (For this purpose, a 90-degree angle is a sharp edge.) Check the rest of the shield for sharp edges, broken or missing rivets, or other signs that it is faulty.
 - 2) Other Defensive Objects: Check that they are constructed of a sturdy material that would not be expected to splinter, break, rip or in any way become unusable. On soft objects, ensure that there is no weighting that would turn it into a flail or impact weapon. On rigid objects, ensure there are no opponent facing openings that could reasonably be expected to allow a blade to get entrapped.

C) Sample Weapon Inspection

See Weapons Standards above for Society and Kingdom minimum standards.

- 1) Metal Bladed Weapons:
 - (a) Check the overall length is within the acceptable range
 - (b) Check the weapon is in good repair (ie doesn't seem like it will fall apart with a parry)
 - (c) Check the blade for nicks that can cut an opponent. You can do this visually or by running your hand in both directions but do so lightly – by it's nature a potentially harmful nick can injure you. If the blade has substantial nicks, they will need to be filed down or sanded before the weapon can be used.
 - (d) Look down the length for kinks. Weapons with kinks consistent with fatigue cannot be used.
 - (e) Check the flexibility of the blade. If in doubt, check the flexibility with a 6 oz weight.
 - (f) Inspect the tip. Check for visible cracks, bulging; discolouration, or any other signs that the sword is starting to punch through the tip. (if you are uncertain of the tip's internal components <ie the tip is made of leather>, ask the fighter to

ascertain that they are familiar with the rules and that the construction is in compliance). Check that the tip is unlikely to come off during combat by pulling on it. Check that the tape extends onto both the tip and blade. If the tip appears to not meet the requirements, it needs to be replaced before the weapon can be used.

(g) Inspect the quillons and pommel: Check that there are no sharp or pointed components.

2) Spears:

(a) Check the overall length is within acceptable range. (6' for tournament, 9' for melee. 4' minimum)

(b) Check the weapon haft is in good repair. No protrusion, splintering or cracking.

(c) Check the haft diameter is within the allowable range (1 1/8" to 1 3/8")

(d) Check the head length is within the allowable range (4" to 20" long and 1/4" thick minimum)

(e) Check the haft is fully seated on the head socket. There should be no flexing through the socket.

(f) Check the head and socket for visible signs of wear or cracking.

(g) Check the head flexibility. It should flex to 90 degrees with hand pressure and return substantially to its original position within 3 seconds.

3) RBG Ammunition:

(a) Check each band for cracking or other signs of excessive wear.

(b) Give each band a stretch to ensure they are not likely to pull apart

(c) Test the draw weight of at least one band of each variation (each colour or/and length difference is a new variation) by using a fish scale and drawing the band to full draw on the RBG. The maximum draw weight is 30 lb.

EXPERIMENTAL WEAPONS AND MATERIALS PROCEDURES

A) Experimental Weapons and Materials

- 1) Before any unapproved weapon or material can be used at Society activities, a test plan and a sample of the proposed weapon or material must be submitted to and approved by the Society Marshal or a designated deputy. This plan shall include specifics on construction (e.g., materials used, how it is assembled, etc.), an outline of the test, and all restrictions that will be imposed on the test. It shall also tell how long the test period would be. Any samples submitted shall be returned to the submitting party no later than the conclusion of the test period, unless otherwise specified.

- 2) It is the prerogative of the Kingdom Earl Marshal to allow limited testing of alternate or unapproved materials and weapons within a kingdom. Limited testing means the weapon or material may be used at fighter practice tourneys and in small melees, but only after all combatants and marshals have been informed the weapon or material is being tested and that it is not approved for general SCA use.
- 3) All combatants and marshals must consent to the use of the weapon or material before combat begins. If any of the marshals or combatants objects to the use of the material or weapon, the material or weapon may not be used. All unapproved materials and weapons shall be marked with alternating bands of red and green tape totalling 6 inches in length. Bands shall be visible during weapon usage.
- 4) Once per quarter throughout the test period, the Earl Marshal will update the Society Marshal on the progress and results of the testing. At the end of the test period, the Earl Marshal will provide the Society Marshal with a test summary. This summary shall include a list of injuries that resulted from the use of the weapon or material and any concerns from fighters and marshals recorded during the testing. The Society Marshal, after consultation with the Earls Marshal, shall determine if the weapon or material is suitable for SCA combat-related activities.

Appendix 1: Glossary

Terms related to Types of Fencing

Line In melee combat, a minimum of two combatants, on the same side, in contiguous mutual weapons support range.

Terms related to Types of Blows

Front or Tip For the purposes of thrust and Tip Cut attacks, the front or tip of the weapon includes the front facing surface and front facing beveled edge of a standard safety blunt which joins the head to the shaft of the covering described in 6.2.10.2

Thrust The front (i.e. head-on cross section) of the point of a blade makes contact with the opponent. *This includes any blow that presses with the front of the blade cap.*

Tip Cut The edge (e.i. the part of head-on cross section aligned with the blade edge) of the point of the blade is placed upon the opponent and moves across the opponent by dragging along the line of the edge of the sword. *The blow is of sufficient length to be valid when placed in this motion.*

Draw Cut The blade edge is placed on slides over the target in the line of the sword by drawing (i.e. contact starts closer to the hilt and ends closer to the tip) . *A cut must have a relative movement to the item being cut of 10 cm or $\frac{1}{4}$ the circumference, whichever is lesser.*

Push Cut The blade edge is placed upon and slides in line of the sword by pushing (i.e. contact starts closer to the tip and ends closer to the hilt). *A cut must have a relative movement to the item being cut of 10 cm or $\frac{1}{4}$ the circumference, whichever is lesser.*

Percussive Blow The edge of the blade is placed upon the target with controlled force such that the opponent can reasonably feel the impact. The only percussive element in Rapier Combat is the minimal force necessary to place the blow.

Terms related to Acknowledging Blows

Body The body includes the head and entire helmet, the neck, chest, abdomen, back, and the regions on the inner part of the upper arm and the inner thigh extending 4" down from the armpit and the groin, respectively

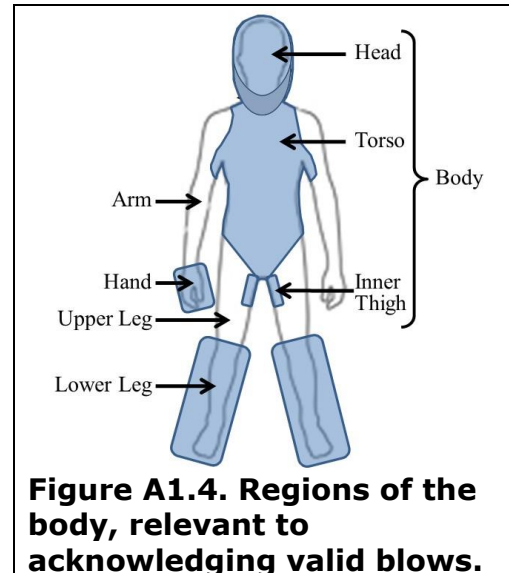
Hand The hand, including all fingers, up to and including the wrist

Arm The arm not including the hand or the part included with the body

Upper Leg The upper leg, not including the part included with the body, down to and including the top of the kneecap and the crease at the back of the knee

Lower Leg The foot, lower leg, and knee below the upper leg

Torso The torso includes the chest, abdomen, back, and the regions on the inner part of the upper arm extending 4" down from the armpit.



Terms related to Arms and Armor

Abrasion Resistant Armor

Material that will withstand normal combat stresses (such as being snagged by burr on a metal blade) without tearing.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- broadcloth
- a single layer of heavy poplin cloth (35% cotton, 65% polyester; "trigger" cloth)
- sweat pants
- opaque cotton, poly-cotton or lycra/spandex mix tights

Nylon pantyhose and cotton gauze shirts are examples of unacceptable materials.

Blunt

(In this use, an adjective) Possessing no sharp edges or point that could reasonably penetrate or scrape bare skin with hand pressure (approximately 5 lb / 2.25 kg)

External Reproductive Organs

In this context, external reproductive organs refers testicles

Hemangioma

A collection of blood vessels at the surface of the skin, characterized as a raised red growth. Hemangiomas which bleed more easily than regular skin must be covered by rigid material.

Penetration Resistant Armor

Material that will predictably withstand puncture as demonstrated by passing a penetration test.

The following materials are known to pass these tests when new:

- four-ounce (1.60 mm) leather
- four layers of heavy poplin cloth
- ballistic nylon rated to at least 550 Newtons
- commercial fencing clothing rated to at least 550 Newtons
- chain mail made of welded or riveted steel rings that will not admit a 5/32" (4 mm) diameter probe. Rings no greater than 0.155" (4 mm) in internal diameter made of wire no less than 0.020" (0.5 mm) thick meets this requirement

The above materials need only be tested at the marshal's discretion; all other materials must be tested the first time new gear is used, or if no marshal on the field knows a given piece of gear to have been tested.

UnderArmour, Spandex, and other similar stretchy materials are not suitable as puncture-resistant materials and must not be included in testing. Kevlar is not an acceptable material as it degrades rapidly.

Resilient Padding

Material which compresses under pressure from a thumb but returns to its shape within three seconds once pressure is removed.

Rigid Armor

Material that will not significantly flex, spread apart, or deform under pressure of 12 Kg applied by a standard mask tester, repeatedly to any single point. Examples of rigid material are:

- 22 gauge stainless steel (0.8 mm)
- 20 gauge mild steel (1.0 mm)
- 16 gauge aluminum, copper, or brass (1.6 mm)
- one layer of hardened heavy leather (8 ounce, 3.2 mm)

Perforated material that meets this requirement must have holes no larger than 1/8" (3 mm) in any direction, and a spacing of at least 3/16" (5 mm) center-to-

center. In using these measurements, the perforated material must meet all the requirements of either the imperial or the metric units (or both).

Vital Body Areas The areas of the body that are required to be covered by penetration resistant armor or rigid armor

Appendix 2 : Refer to the SCA Fencing Marshal Handbook on the construction and use of a drop tester for testing puncture resistant armour.

Appendix 3. Disallowed blades and manufacturers