

# **Kingdom of Northshield**



# **Armored Combat Handbook**

**February 2009 Edition**

The basic rules for SCA combat are contained in the Society Marshal's Handbook. Those rules and conventions are fundamental to all combat and must be followed without exception. Listed below are the Northshield additions and clarifications to those rules.

### **1. Northshield Additions to SCA Conventions of Combat**

- A. The first authorization shall be with single handed weapon and shield. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis by the Earl Marshal, Deputy or Regional Marshal as unusual circumstances may warrant.
- B. A fighter who is legged and fighting from the ground must not be 'corkscrewed' or circled. Stepping to the side is acceptable, and a good guideline is at least one foot should be in front of the grounded fighter at any time.
- C. No combatant may deliberately cause an opponent to strike an illegal target area. Any combatant who does so (for example, lifting your leg) will be required to accept the blow as good. Note: Turning the head to avoid a face thrust or missile contact is considered the same as ducking or dodging a blow. This action does not cause the blow to fall on an "illegal" target area.
- D. Anyone under the age of 18 years (a minor) MUST have a parent or court-appointed guardian on site in any instance that minor is to be participating in SCA sponsored marshal activities. Emancipated minors shall be required to produce proof of their status when checking in at the list table.

### **2. Northshield Additions to SCA Armor Requirements**

No additions to the SCA armor standards exist at this time for adult participants. Please see the Society Marshal's Handbook for a full description of the armor standards.

These items are mandatory for 16-18 year old participants, and strongly recommended for all adult beginning armored combatants:

- A. Vambraces or other armor covering the forearms are required.
- B. Leg harness, which include cuisses, or other manner of thigh protection is required.
- C. Shoulder protection covering the shoulder points is required.
- D. Body armor which covers the ribs required.
- E. Armor which covers the clavicle is required.
- F. A white diamond at least three inches high on at least either side of the helmet indicating a 16-18 year old combatant.

These items are less critical than the SCA minimum required armor, and therefore are not as restrictive as requiring the strict 'hard over soft' standard. The armor itself must provide reasonable protection for the covered areas, and at least some padding is preferred. Each individual piece must be assessed on its own merit for whether it is reasonably effective protection. Each inspecting marshal shall use his or her judgment for whether the protection is adequate.

The purpose of these additional armor standards is to protect teenagers from the remarkable contusions and possible broken bones that can occur with society minimum armor.

If a 16-18 year old combatant is visiting from another kingdom, it is acceptable for them to participate if their armor is acceptable to their own kingdom's armor standard. Visiting 16-18 year old participants must have the helm marking listed above.

### **3. Northshield Additions to SCA Weapon Requirements**

#### **A. Prohibited Weapons**

1. Thrusting shields and punch daggers are prohibited. Thrusting tips or striking surfaces may not be mounted on a shield. Punch daggers are thrusting weapons which are in line with the forearm, either by how the grip is configured or strapped to the forearm itself.

#### **B. Fiberglass spears**

1. Fiberglass spears must be a minimum of 8 feet in length.

#### **C. Combat Archery**

1. Only siloflex shafted bolts and arrows, with the appropriate heads, fletchings, and nocks as outlined by the society handbook are legal for use within the borders of Northshield.
2. Those authorized in combat archery within Northshield may use shafted bolts and arrows, and the equipment that goes with them, while attending events in other kingdoms which allow their use.

### **4. Northshield Weapon Styles and Definitions**

- A. Single-handed Weapon and Shield (W/SH): Single handed swords, maces, axes hammers and shield. Includes regular and face thrusting.
- B. Two Handed weapon (TH): Greatswords, polearms, great axes, etc. Includes regular and face thrusting.
- C. Two Weapon (TW): Any combination of previously authorized weapon styles. Must also demonstrate regular and face thrust ability with both hands.
- D. Spear (SP): Two handed thrusting only weapon greater than 7 ½ feet in length. Must demonstrate regular and face thrust ability.
- E. Combat Archery (CA): Bows/crossbows using specially constructed combat arrows.
- F. Siege Weapon (SW): Siege weapon operation.

### **5. Northshield Additions to SCA Melee Conventions**

- A. There may be no more than four attackers on a single combatant, except when lines engage (see below for line engagement). Multiple combat archery opponents do not count for this rule.

- B. When two opposing lines engage, all combatants in each line are considered engaged with the other line facing them.
- C. A combatant or combatants that deliberately charges into a group of opponents may be struck from any angle by those opponents during the charge.
- D. A combatant charging through a line may be struck as he goes through the line but must be engaged again once past the line. It is not acceptable to follow the charging fighter and strike him/her from behind.
- E. An opponent in a melee who is unaware of one's presence is not struck. This rule does not pertain to line engagement or charges as listed above.  
When attacking an opponent, a combatant must take specific action to notify his or her opponent of his or her presence, (a light tap with the weapon, shield contact, verbal warning, etc.), and receive acknowledgment that their opponent is aware of them before making a serious attack. Combatants may not deliberately ignore attempts to engage them, unless turning to acknowledge would cause a currently engaged fighter to put themselves in an unsafe position.
- F. Combatants may foul the weapons or make shield contact (as when rolling a flank) with opponents they may not strike; in doing so, they must show restraint in the interests of safety. When reaching around an opponent, restraint must be used in the interests of safety to prevent a reaching-around fouling technique from violating the rules against person to person contact.
- G. Dead combatants should die defensively by protecting themselves under their shields or weapons, then leave the field as soon and as safely as possible at the marshal's direction. Dead combatants may neither hand weapons nor shout advice to the living. Dead combatants should not disrupt opposing lines and formations while exiting the field.
- H. When "HOLD!" is called in a melee, all combatants must drop to their knees and ground all great weapons until the marshals call "EN GARDE" or equivalent. Holds in melees are not to be used to regroup or make plans. If a melee must be moved to the center of the field, the same relative positions must be maintained to preserve the tactical situation.
- I. Loss of armor that will cause a fighter to fall below minimum armor standards, and is not correctable immediately, shall result in the fighter being considered 'dead'. The fighter may not re-enter the field until he/she has been re-inspected to verify the problem has been corrected.
- J. Combatants may attempt to grasp the hafts of spears or great weapons only if the hand is fully armored.

## **6. Northshield Additions to SCA Missile Combat and Thrown Weapons Rules**

### **A. Thrown Weapons**

1. Individuals using javelins, stabelins, throwing axes, throwing maces or other thrown weapons must wear full gauntlets.
2. Javelins are to be used only for throwing. Stabelins may be used for thrusting and/or throwing.
3. Thrown weapon hits must land with sufficient force for them to be taken.

4. Any thrown weapon that has been damaged during a melee must be removed.

#### B. Combat Archery Conventions

1. Archers may hold either rattan weapons or their bows, but not both.
2. If you notice that a bow or crossbow has been hit by a rattan weapon, confiscate that bow for the duration of the battle and make sure it is given to a marshal for inspection before it is returned to use.
3. Blocking with bows or crossbows is illegal.
4. Arrows must hit according to the Universal Shot Standard as established in the Society. Arrows must hit point-first, non-glancing and strike with sufficient force to be noticed to count. The only person who can judge if the arrow shot is good is one who was struck.
5. Fighters may not touch the bow or nocked arrow of an archer in an attempt to disrupt the archer from firing. Marshals shall warn any fighters that do so, and remove them if they continue.

#### C. Rules of Engagement with Combat Archery

1. Everyone is engaged with missile fire once combat commences. In layman's terms, this simply means that anyone may be hit by arrows regardless of whether or not they have eye contact with, or even know the whereabouts of, the archer
2. Fighter attacks on archers:
  - a. Fighters may legally attack an archer only when they are engaged with that archer at the weapon range of the fighter.
  - b. If an archer shoots at an approaching fighter and then turns to run before the fighter is within their weapon range, the fighter may not attack the archer from behind.
  - c. If the archer waits until the fighter is within the fighter's weapon range to run, the archer is considered directly engaged at weapon range with that fighter, and is subject to all legal attacks that any other fighter would be subject to, including attacks from behind, if they turn to flee.
  - d. If a fighter "sneaks up" on an archer, it is no different than if the fighter approached another fighter in that same manner. The archer is not able to be attacked until they are properly engaged. Fighters may not foul the bow or arrow of the archer.
3. Archer attacks on fighters:
  - a. Archers may NOT deliberately shoot a fighter in the back.
  - b. Fighters may not turn their backs to avoid an archer's shot. If this happens, the shot is still considered good.
  - c. All arrow shots received must be taken if hit in a legal area, (see the society marshals handbook, section III.C.). Although archers must keep in mind letter "a" above.
  - d. Fighters may not walk backwards towards archers to avoid being hit by arrow fire (see "b" above).