

Society Youth Combat Rules

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Overview-

Youth Combat is a program designed for minors ages 6 to 17. This program emphasizes armor and weapon construction techniques, proper etiquette, the concepts of Chivalry, Honor, and Courtesy, teamwork and good sportsmanship, and effective fighting arts in a competitive environment that parallels Adult Armored Combat. It is not intended as a substitute for normal play.

Participation-

Any youth desiring to participate in youth combat shall have a responsible adult assume all risks and liabilities for any harm or medical condition arising from the youth's participation in these activities. The assumption of responsibility shall be signified by all legal documents required by the SCA and their resident kingdom. For the purposes of youth combat a responsible adult is defined as the youth's parent or court-appointed legal guardian.

No youth shall participate in youth combat unless the responsible adult has completed a “Minor’s Consent to Participate and Hold Harmless Agreement” form. This form is submitted to the local seneschal who will forward it to the Kingdom Waiver Secretary. The minor should also have a copy of this form with him/her at all times.

Youths may not participate in tournaments or large melees unless first authorized for youth combat using the procedures of their resident kingdom. They may practice or engage in small scale melees of 12 fighters or less prior to authorizing.

Parental Involvement-

- 1) Youth Combat is NOT a babysitting service.
- 2) Parents/guardians have the right to remove their child from any contest or activity which they may deem inappropriate or hazardous.
- 3) At least one parent/guardian must be present at the lists at all times for Division 1 fighters (ages 6 to 9).
- 4) At least one parent/guardian must be on the site where youth combat is taking place at all times for Division 2 fighters (ages 10 to 13).
- 5) A parent/guardian of a Division 3 fighter (ages 14 to 17) must have the program and rules explained to them during the minor’s first visit to an SCA youth combat function. After this they may designate an adult to be responsible for the minor at an SCA function. However, in addition to the “Minor’s Consent to Participate and Hold Harmless Agreement” form, a copy of the “Medical Authorization for Minors” form must be on file with the kingdom waiver secretary. A copy of this form must also accompany the minor. Parents should be available via electronic communications (e.g.- cell phone) in the event of an emergency.
- 6) Adults watching youth combat activities shall act in a courteous manner toward the combatants, marshals, youth combat officials, and other parents. Jeering and heckling your child’s opponent is NOT acceptable. Adults demonstrating bad behavior will be asked to leave the youth combat area. This may result in their child having to withdraw from that day’s activity.
- 7) Youth Combatants must either have a current signed blue membership card or have their parent/guardian execute a “Minor’s Consent to Participate and Hold Harmless Agreement” in order to participate in every practice, event, demo, or war. This form must be forwarded to the kingdom Waiver Secretary by the local seneschal.

Rules of the List-

- 1) All combatants shall act in a courteous and chivalrous manner at all times.
- 2) The instructions of the marshal shall be followed at all times. Should a safety issue arise the marshal will call “HOLD” and all combat activity in the list will stop until the marshal indicates that it is safe to resume.
- 3) A fighter shall not take deliberate advantage of an opponent’s safety or chivalry. This includes:

- a) Walking around an opponent who has lost the use of his legs (corkscrewing).
- b) Hitting an opponent from behind.
- c) Hitting an opponent who cannot defend himself (e.g.- laying on the ground).
- d) Continually dropping a weapon or running into the list ropes.
- e) Grappling.
- f) Shield on body contact.
- g) Hitting with excessive force.
- h) Using a weapon in a manner for which it was not intended.
- i) Refusing to acknowledge blows.
- j) Shield on shield contact for the purpose of unbalancing or knocking down an opponent (shield bashing).
- k) Throwing or launching weapons at an opponent in the list. (Javelins may be thrown in melee combat.)

Youth Combat Authorizations

Kingdoms may use whatever system they prefer for authorizations as long as the following criteria are met:

- 1) At least one Adult Youth Combat Marshal must witness and approve the authorization.
- 2) Youth combatants must demonstrate their knowledge of the rules of Youth Combat.
- 3) Youth combatants must demonstrate that they can safely spar with other youths.
- 4) They must be able to effectively block shots.
- 5) They must be able to consistently throw shots at the appropriate level of calibration to legal target areas.
- 6) Kingdoms must provide documentation in the form of a card/document which shows that the youth is authorized to engage in youth combat in his or her Division. This card/document must be shown to youth combat officials before a youth combatant engages in youth combat activities including tournaments and melees.
- 7) A youth combatant who permanently moves up a Division must reauthorize.

Marshals-

Kingdoms may use whatever methods they deem appropriate to warrant marshals including, but not limited to marshal classes and marshal-in-training programs.

All marshals shall know the Youth Combat Rules. They should be able to supervise youth combatants both in the lists and in melee combat. They should promote safe practices and enforce the rules of the list. They should be able to inspect weapons and armor. They should be able to authorize youth combatants according to the rules of their

kingdom. All marshals must have a current blue signed SCA membership card, or have signed an Adult waiver form, and also have proof that they have been warranted by their kingdom to marshal youth combat (e.g.-warrant card).

There are four levels of youth combat marshals-

- 1) BC Adult Youth Combat Marshal- These are marshals who have been warranted by their kingdom and have passed a current SCA background check. All Youth Combat Marshals do NOT have to have an SCA background check, however each area of youth combat activities must have somebody present who has passed a current SCA background check. Further information on background checks may be found in the SCA Youth Policies.

Adult Youth Combat Marshals- These are marshals who have been warranted by their kingdom, but have not submitted an SCA background check. They are fully warranted marshals, but must have somebody present (not necessarily a marshal) who has a current SCA background check.

- 2) Adult Youth Combat Sparring Marshals- These are adult warranted marshals who have been warranted by their kingdom to spar with youth combatants. They must use weapons, armor, and calibration levels appropriate to the Division of the youth combatant with whom they are sparring. Parents can always spar with their own children. Adults may not participate in youth combat tournaments or melees.
- 3) Limited Marshals-This includes minor marshals (ages 12 to 17) and marshals-in-training. These marshals may perform all of the duties of a warranted marshal, but must be supervised by a BC Adult Youth Combat Marshal or Adult Youth Combat Marshal. Additionally, kingdoms may elect to have "line marshals" who work under the supervision of a BC Adult Youth Combat Marshal or Youth Combat Marshal. Line marshals do not perform inspections or conduct authorizations, but provide an "extra set of eyes" in the lists during tournaments or during melees.

Marshaling-

- 1) All SCA youth combat activities including practices, events, demos, and wars must have at least one BC Adult Youth Combat Marshal or an Adult Youth Combat Marshal and an adult who has a current SCA background check supervising the activities in each youth combat area at all times.
- 2) In accordance with the Society Youth Policy's "Two-Deep Rule" at least 2 adults not related to each other must be present in each area where youths are engaged in youth combat activities.
- 3) Marshals shall make sure that all armor and equipment is inspected and safe to use.
- 4) Marshals shall monitor activities and behavior on the field and immediately stop all potentially hazardous or unchivalrous activities by calling "HOLD".

Melee Rules-

- 1) An opponent may not be struck from behind, but their weapon maybe “fouled”.
- 2) Fighters may only charge to gain ground. They may not intentionally run into their opponents.
- 3) Fighters who have fallen down may not be struck. They must be allowed to rise and defend themselves before they may be struck.
- 4) Holds will not be called for dropped weapons unless dropping the weapon compromises the safety of the fighter. For example, if dropping a sword with a basket hilt compromises the safety of the fighter’s hand.
- 5) One of two options may be used during melees- Recognition or Death From Behind. Either, but not both methods may be used during a melee. Fighters and marshals should know before the melee begins which is being used and the rules for that method.
 - a) With Recognition, a fighter must have visual contact with his opponent before striking him. A fighter may not look away or avoid eye contact for the purposes of avoiding recognition.
 - b) With Death From Behind, a fighter must place their weapon on their opponent’s shoulder and announce in a loud, clear voice “You are dead from behind”.

Reporting-

Youth Combat is a subsidiary of Armored Combat. Kingdom Youth Combat Marshals should report their activities to their Kingdom Earl Marshal with three exceptions.

- 1) Any progress reports about using pre-approved experimental weapons should be reported to the Society Deputy for Youth Combat.
- 2) An incident involving serious injury to a youth fighter should be reported to the Society Deputy for Youth Combat as well as the Kingdom Earl Marshal. A serious injury is something which involves emergency medical treatment or hospitalization.
- 3) Incidents of inappropriate behavior by a youth combatant or participating adult which is serious enough to warrant revoked authorization, warrant, a court of chivalry, possible banishment, or legal action should be reported to the Society Deputy for Youth Combat as well as the Kingdom Earl Marshal. A copy of this report will be forwarded to the Society Special Deputy for Family and Youth Programs.

Age Divisions-

There are three age divisions-

Division 1- Ages 6 to 9

Division 2- Ages 10 to 13

Division 3- Ages 14 to 17

Crossing Divisions-

Younger combatants may permanently move to a higher division with the approval of the combatant's parent/guardian and the Kingdom Youth Combat Marshal or a representative designated by the Kingdom Youth Combat Marshal.

Acknowledging the fact that there might be a limited number of youth combatants at an event or practice, combatants may fight others in another division with the following provisions-

- 1) Permission of the combatant's parent/guardian.
- 2) Permission of the youth combat marshal-in-charge.
- 3) Older combatants must adhere to the weapon standards, calibration, and rules of the younger combatants being fought (e.g.- Division 3 combatants must fight a Division 1 combatant at the Division 1 level).

Youth Rattan-

A number of kingdoms have programs with youth combatants under 18 years of age using adult rattan weapons and armor. Given that local, state, and national laws can vary greatly as to the nature of minors participating in full contact martial activities, kingdoms may institute their own programs in regard to youth combatants fighting under adult rattan combat rules. However, all SCA armored combat conventions and rules must be adhered to at a minimum.

A kingdom may elect to allow youth combatants who are currently fighting in adult rattan combat to fight Division 3 youth combatants using Division 3 weapons and calibration. However, these combatants may NOT fight Division 1 or 2 opponents. In all cases, youth combatants who display a consistent lack of control or good conduct may be removed from the field and/or have their authorizations suspended.

Calibration-

Division 1- Intentional Touch- This is a clean, unimpeded blow which is readily felt through a single layer of medium weight cloth, but is not hard enough to leave a bruise on bare skin. No face thrusts.

Division 2- Positive Force- This is a clean, unimpeded blow which is readily felt through ¼ inch of open cell padding, but is not hard enough to leave a bruise in an area covered by medium weight cloth. Face thrusts have touch calibration.

Division 3- Light Force- This is a clean, unimpeded blow which may be readily felt through ½ inch of open cell padding, but is not hard enough to leave a bruise through ¼ of open cell foam padding. Face thrusts have touch calibration.

It is recommended that marshals use open cell foam of the appropriate thickness to demonstrate levels of calibration.

Excessive blows are not permitted in any Division. Any combatant who persists in hitting too hard after appropriate warning may be removed from the field and/or have their authorization suspended.

Targeting-

“Edged weapons” must strike with the “blade” in order to be considered good.

Legal target areas are the same as those in adult rattan combat. A good blow is one inch above the wrist results in the loss of that arm. A good blow is one inch above the knee results in the loss of that leg. A good blow the torso, neck or head results in the opponent being “killed”. Shots to the groin and throat are legal, but discouraged. Face thrusts are not allowed in Division 1.

Alternative formats maybe used to determine victory such as counted blows or first blood provided that the combatants know and understand the format being used.

Armor Requirements-

These are minimum required armor standards. A kingdom may require that additional armor be worn. While it is the goal of the SCA to encourage a medieval appearance for all participants given the specific nature of youth combat, visible modern sports equipment may be worn as armor.

Armor Requirements (All Divisions)-

Head- Helmets must completely cover the head. Hockey helmets, lacrosse helmets, and catcher’s helmets with face masks are acceptable. They may have to have additions or alterations to fully enclose the head. Period looking helms are permitted, but bearing in mind the size and development of the youth the marshal-in-charge may disallow the use of a helm deemed too heavy for the youth to wear safely.

- 1) All helmets must have grills, rigid mesh, or face plates which prevent a weapon from making contact with the face. No helmet shall a gap exceeding 2 inches in the area protecting the face.
- 2) The helmet must be constructed of a continuous rigid material. Segmented or jointed helmets are not permitted. Helmets may have hanging aventails, camails, or bevors to aid in protecting the neck.
- 3) Helmets must have a chin strap or back strap to hold it securely on the head.
- 4) Helmets must be padded inside so that the rigid portions of it do not contact the head.
- 5) Helmets must fit properly.
- 6) Helmets in conjunction with neck protection (such as a gorget) must be constructed so that a weapon may not touch any exposed area of the head or neck.

Body- All combatants must have the torso, arms, and legs covered with a minimum of cloth. Long sleeve tunics, shirts, and long pants or skirts are acceptable.

Groin- Boys must wear a sports cup or the equivalent. Girls must have padding or the equivalent.

Feet- All combatants must wear shoes which cover the feet. Sandals, flip-flops, crocs, etc are NOT acceptable.

Shields-

- 1) Shields may be made of wood, plastic, aluminum, or an equivalent material.
- 2) Edges must be covered by plastic tubing, leather, or foam.
- 3) No wires, bolts, screws, or other objects may project more than ¼ inch without padding or tape covering them.
- 4) Shields should be of a shape appropriate to that used in period.
- 5) Shields should be of an appropriate weight for the size and strength of the combatant.

Additional Armor Requirements by Division-

Division 1-

Neck- The throat and larynx shall be protected by a minimum of light leather or the equivalent.

Hands- A minimum of light gloves is required.

Division 2-

Neck- A minimum gorget of rigid material or medium leather with padding is required. The larynx and cervical vertebrae must be covered. Aventails, camails, and coifs may be substituted or used in conjunction with gorgets as long as all required areas are protected.

Torso- Kidneys must be protected by a minimum of a medium leather kidney belt with padding or the equivalent. It is recommended but not required that girls have chest protection.

Arms- Elbows must be protected by a minimum of soft pads.

Legs- Knees must be protected by a minimum of soft pads.

Hands- Gloves with a minimum of at least ¼ inch padding protecting the fingers, back of the hand, and wrist are required. Street hockey gloves or light glove in a rigid basket hilt with wrist protection is acceptable.

Division 3-

Neck- A gorget of rigid material or heavy leather with padding is required. The larynx and cervical vertebrae must be covered. An aventail, camail, or coif may be substituted or used in conjunction with gorgets as long as all required areas are protected.

Torso- Kidneys and the xyphoid process must be protected by a rigid material or medium leather and padding. Girls are required to have chest protection of medium leather, heavy quilted material, or the equivalent.

Arms- Elbows must be protected by a rigid material covering padding. Hockey, motocross elbows and other similar sports elbows are acceptable.

Legs- Knees must be protected with a rigid material covering padding. Hockey shin guards with attached knee protection or similar sports equipment are acceptable.

Hands- A gauntlet of heavy leather or rigid material lined with at least ½ inch of closed cell foam or heavy padding are required. An ice hockey glove or lacrosse glove with additional thumb protection is acceptable. Light gloves with a half gauntlet and a basket hilt of rigid material are acceptable. Street hockey gloves alone are NOT acceptable, but may be used in conjunction with a basket hilt or additional added protection.

Weapon Specifications-

All Divisions-

- 1) All weapons must be inspected regularly for deteriorated or compromised foam as well as damaged or broken components.
- 2) No weapon shall use materials which might shatter or splinter on impact. Materials may be tested by placing the material on an anvil and striking it several times with a hammer. PVC may NOT be used in any component of a weapon.
- 3) No metal may be used in any weapons. This includes, but is not limited to: basket hilts, pommel weights, and hose clamps.
- 4) Flails, pole axes, and two ending striking surfaces are not permitted.
- 5) Weapons may not be excessively heavy. Weapons may not exceed 8 ounces per foot in weight.
- 6) Thrusting tips shall be constructed of closed cell foam covered with duct tape or cloth. They must extend 2 inches past the end of the core and be at least 2.5 inches in diameter.
- 7) Striking surfaces must be covered with at least 3/8 closed cell foam extending at least 1 inch past the core material. The foam must be covered with a single loose layer of duct tape or a cloth sleeve.
- 8) Thrusting tips and “edges” must be marked with contrasting colored tape.
- 9) Thrusting tips should be constructed so that they do not fold over.
- 10) Pommels and the butt ends of weapons without butt spikes or basket hilts must be covered with at least 3/8 inch closed cell foam extending at least 1 inch past the end of the core material. This must be covered with a loose single layer of duct tape or cloth.

- 11) Lanyards or triggers are required on all single-handed weapons.
- 12) Basket hilts are permitted on single-handed weapons.
- 13) Experimental weapons must be approved by the Society Deputy for Youth Combat.

Division 1-

- 1) The following are permitted as core materials for Division 1 weapons- rattan with a diameter between $\frac{3}{4}$ and 1 inch, golf tubes, siloflex with a diameter of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch, PEX tubing with a diameter of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.
- 2) Rattan core weapons must have the ends rounded and/or covered with cloth or leather to prevent the edges from cutting through foam tips.
- 3) All other core materials must have the ends covered with cloth, leather or similar material.
- 4) Two-handed weapons made with golf tubes shall be constructed of two tubes taped together with an over lap of 3 inches.
- 5) Butt spikes are NOT permitted in Division 1.
- 6) All weapons must be proportional to the combatant. No weapon may be longer than 5 feet.
- 7) Spears are not permitted in Division 1.

Division 2-

- 1) The principle core material for all weapons is rattan with a diameter between $\frac{3}{4}$ and 1 inch. One inch diameter PEX or Siloflex may also be used as a core material, but both ends must be capped with leather, unbreakable plastic, or similar material. Given the excessive flexibility of PEX or Siloflex in warm temperatures it is recommended that these cores be limited to single-handed weapons.
- 2) Both ends shall be rounded and/or capped with cloth or leather to prevent the rattan from cutting through the foam.
- 3) Butt spikes are permitted on two-handed weapons.
- 4) Spears are not permitted in Division 2.
- 5) All weapons must be proportional to the combatant. No weapons may be longer than 5.5 feet.

Division 3-

The same weapon standards as Division 2 apply with the following exceptions:

- 1) Spears up to 7.5 are permitted. They may not have butt spikes.
- 2) Pole arms up to 6 feet are permitted.
- 3) Two-handed swords up to 6 feet are permitted. The hafts may not exceed 18 inches in length.
- 4) Weapons longer than 5.5 feet may use rattan up to, but not exceeding 1 and $\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter.

Javelins-

Javelins made of one diameter PEX or Siloflex may be used in melee combat in Divisions 2 and 3. They may be thrown or be used as a single-handed thrusting weapon.

- 1) The thrusting tip must conform to standard weapon thrusting tips.
- 2) The butt end may not be used offensively. It must be padded with foam in such a manner that it will not penetrate a 2 inch opening.
- 3) Javelins must be between 4 and 5 ½ feet long.
- 4) Fins or stabilizers of foam or duct tape may be attached near the backend.
- 5) Calibration level for a THROWN javelin is intentional touch.
- 6) Calibration level for a javelin used as a one-handed thrusting weapon is the same as any weapon appropriate for that division.
- 7) Face thrusts are legal for thrown javelins.

Links to Minor Waivers-

<http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/chldwaiv.pdf>
<http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/treatminor.pdf>
<http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/treatminor-notary.pdf>
<http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/FloridaWaiver.pdf> (for use in Florida)

Glossary-

Aventail- A piece of metal, heavy leather, or other rigid material attached to the back of a helmet. It protects the back of the neck.

Bevor- A piece of metal, heavy leather, or other rigid material attached to the front of a helmet. It protects the throat.

Camail- A drape of chainmail, leather, or padded cloth which hangs from the helmet. It protects the neck.

Coif- This is cap of chainmail or padded cloth worn under a helmet which extends to the base of the neck. It may be long enough to also cover the shoulders.

Gorget- This is a protect collar which protects the neck. It may also protect the larynx and cervical vertebrae.

Heavy Leather- This is at least 10 ounce leather about 1/4 inch thick.

Light Gloves- These are gloves made of cloth, canvas, or thin (2 to 4 ounce) leather.

Light Leather- This is 4 to 6 ounce leather about 3/32 inch thick.

Medium Leather- This is 7 to 9 ounce leather about 1/8 inch thick.

Melee- This is fighting between teams of two or more persons per side.

PEX- This is flexible, shatterproof, white plastic pipe which can be found in some large hardware stores.

PVC- This is flexible pipe usually white or gray in color which may shatter upon impact. It is NOT legal for youth combat.

Rigid Material- This is shatterproof plastic, heavy leather, or leather which has been hardened.

Siloflex- This is flexible, shatterproof tubing which can be found in many hardware stores. It is usually black in color.

Xyphoid Process- This is the area at the base of the sternum.