

MARSHAL FIELD DUTIES

(Extracted from the obsolete MidRealm Rapier Rules, Rev 2.5, Section 3)

RUNNING AUTHORIZATIONS

The authorization process is one of the most important safeguards in SCA, Inc. combat. Authorizations must be taken seriously. The first and most important standard for all authorizations is safety. For advanced authorizations, competency is required as well. A marshal does a great disservice to the Marshallate, combatants in general and the combatant in question by ignoring or overlooking any of the standards detailed below as a “favor” to help authorize a combatant. The Kingdom Earl Marshal has at various times reviewed a warrant for such irresponsible conduct. Local marshals and trainers should give the new combatant a clear idea when they have reached the authorization threshold, and wherever possible be present at the first authorization attempt.

Planning

Organizing for authorizations becomes more important the larger your event and the wider your draw from the rapier combat community. Emphasis should always be on getting new authorizations and authorizations for combatants traveling long distances from remote groups handled first. Have the following resources ready and available to keep the process running smoothly:

- List Table: your staff at the List table should have enough of the correct forms and be familiar with completing authorization forms. The Group Rapier Marshal and/or Marshal-in-Charge is responsible to make sure the paperwork (with enough copies of each form) is there and the List staff comfortable with the forms and procedures.
- List Field: plan to have enough room to be able to run more than one set of authorizations at a time, whenever space allows.
- A copy of the Middle Kingdom Rapier Combat Marshals Handbook must be available at the List table at any official event at which authorizations are conducted. Note that this includes a group practice if an authorization is to be attempted there.
- Copies of The Society Rules for Rapier Combat and The Rules of the Lists of the SCA, Inc should also be available.
- No less than two warranted marshals and preferably three are required to authorize a combatant.
 - At least one should be relatively unfamiliar with the combatant authorizing.
 - A single warranted marshal at an event may not authorize combatants.
- Sparring Partners: more is better here too--especially from outside the local area, but familiar to the marshals. Make sure the sparring partner is experienced and has the required authorization
- Authorizations at practices are allowed as long as there are two warranted marshals from outside the group holding the authorizations.
- A marshal cannot authorize someone in a weapons style in which they are not authorized.
- All combatants must authorize first in Single Rapier (SR). In cases where there is good and sufficient reason the Regional Deputy Marshal or above in the Marshallate chain of authority can grant an exception.

- Whatever weapon style the combatant is authorizing in, the combatant is responsible to be **SAFE** with the weapons and/or parrying devices actually used.

General Authorization Procedures

Authorization procedures (for all weapon styles) should follow this recommended pattern:

- Requirements:
 - Has read and is familiar with all required rules
 - Has weapons and protective equipment inspected and approved by a warranted Marshal
 - Has met the age requirement
 - Is a paid member of the Society for Creative Anachronism
 - Has signed the applicable paperwork
- Sparring
 - Combatants acknowledge blows verbally, calling out “good to the head”, “good to the leg”, etc., loud enough for the marshals to hear, but not acting out the blow’s effect.
 - The sparring partner will spend some of the time “pressing” the candidate and some of the time retreating from him/her to encourage a full display of safety and/or skill in both offense and defense.
 - The sparring bout is to last no more than five to ten minutes. A candidate who does not have the endurance to fight in a typical sparring bout can be failed for this reason alone
- Marshal Consultation
 - Following the Sparring Bout, the marshals and the sparring partner consult and discuss the performance of the combatant during the bout. Consensus should be reached as to whether to terminate the authorization and inform the combatant that he/she should train more before attempting to authorize again or whether the authorization should continue to the Formal Bout.
- Formal Bout
 - Combatants conduct themselves as if participating in a real Tournament.
 - All blows are acted out. Victory in the bout is not a consideration for authorization.
 - This bout is held to demonstrate the candidate’s ability to properly and safely act out the effects of the blows received and given in a manner befitting Rapier Combat.
- Final Consultation
 - Following the Formal Bout, the marshals and the sparring partner will again meet; this time to determine if the candidate passes or fails.

Procedures for First-Time Authorization (Single Rapier):

- The candidate must have a warranted Rapier Marshal inspect and approve the weapons and protective equipment prior to the authorization bouts.
- Following the inspection the marshal should confirm that the candidate has read and understands the Middle Kingdom and SCA, Inc. Rapier Combat rules, has had some practice, and is using equipment used in practice before. (This does not require ownership of the equipment, only familiarity. A person who performs poorly and uses equipment problems, as a reason should not be authorized.)
- When authorization bouts are announced, the candidate should be directed to the List table to provide proof of membership in the SCA, Inc, fill out and sign a waiver and an authorization form. The combatant will enter the List armed with a single rapier to the Presiding Marshal when called. The marshal will ask the candidate if they have read and understood The Rules of the Lists of the Society of Creative Anachronism, Inc., The Middle Kingdom Rapier Combat Marshals Handbook and The Society Rules for Rapier Combat.
- If the candidate has not read them (which should not happen) they will be directed to the List table copies, and told to return when they have done the required reading; once they have reviewed the information, they may continue with the attempted authorization.
- First Authorization Standards
 - Exhibits safe and courteous behavior on the field.
 - Begins in and maintains an acceptable stance.
 - Uses weapon safely in offense and defense.
 - Safely delivers blows from a proper range and at a proper strength.
 - Reacts safely to pressure, demonstrating the ability to “fight back” without becoming confused or losing control.
 - Judges blows correctly, both those received and those given.
 - Able to move safely while engaged.
 - Able to parry safely with “off” hand.
 - Able to fence safely with rapier in “off” hand.
 - Able to fence safely when grounded and/or when opponent is grounded.

Advanced Authorization Procedures

- Once a fencer has authorized in Single Rapier, advanced authorizations may be attempted in ANY order.
- The combatant must show their Middle Kingdom Rapier Combat authorization card, and demonstrate competence, as well as safe use of the advanced weapon style. Competence is a subjective standard but should include demonstrated familiarity with the unique characteristics of the weapon style, and awareness of the tactics for both offense and defense with the style.