

KINGDOM OF GLEANN ABHANN CUT AND THRUST SWORDPLAY RULES

Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay is an advanced authorization specifically intended to allow free-play in the study and recreation of historically documentable unarmored combat styles using the framework of SCA rapier combat. Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay is specifically meant to be inclusive of styles that predate the use of the rapier. Some examples of such combat styles can be found in the works of de Liberi, Vadi, Lichtenauer, Ringneck, Meyer, as well as the more familiar side sword or rapier masters - Marozzo, D'All Aggochie, Manciolino, Viggiani, Agrippa, DiGrassi, Saviolo, Silver, Capo Ferro, Fabris, Giganti, Caranza, Narvaez, and Saint-Didier.

Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay is first and foremost a training partnership. It establishes the place where the Period Art and Science of Combat combine with what we call 'fighting'. It is a place where the Art is the Fight. Victory is not declared simply by 'who hit whom first' but is realized by how well each participant used his or her knowledge of period technique to strike their partner.

The Rules for Rapier Combat in Gleann Abhann generally apply to Cut-and-Thrust, with the exception of the following revisions and additions:

BLOW CALLING

A. VALID BLOWS

Valid blows for cut-and-thrust are struck by either thrusting with the point of the blade ("A thrust") or a controlled percussive cut ("a cut"). Percussive cuts must always be delivered with sufficient control so as not to injure the recipient, while still delivering the necessary impact for a valid cut. An injury is defined as something that causes the person to be unable to continue fighting, even briefly'.

B. INVALID BLOWS

- 1) Push cuts, tip cuts, and draw cuts are not valid blows for cut-and-thrust, unless they are reasonable recreations of a documented blow (such as an "abschnitt"). Cut and thrust partners should discuss between themselves the presumed efficacy of cuts with questionable percussion.
- 2) Chopping or hacking blows are not permitted. Percussive cuts must be delivered with control.
- 3) Cuts which land "flat" (the edge of the blade does not come in contact with the target) are not valid.

C. JUDGING BLOWS

The VALIDITY of any given blow shall be judged by the recipient of that blow. However, cut-and-thrust participants are always encouraged to discuss questionable blows with each other.

INCAPACITATING BLOWS

Any valid blow to the head, neck, torso, leg, foot, or armpit (to the fencer's hand width down the inner arm) shall be judged INCAPACITATING, rendering the fencer incapable of further combat.

BLOWS TO THE UPPER LIMBS

A valid blow to the hand or arm may, at the mutual agreement of both cut-and-thrust participants, be deemed incapacitating to that limb, without ending the fight. The participant struck in the hand or arm may then continue, without the use of the struck limb.

BLOWS TO THE LOWER LIMBS

Within Cut-and-Thrust combat, a valid blow to the leg or foot shall be judged INCAPACITATING, rendering the fencer incapable of further combat.

RULES FOR MELEES

Cut and thrust may NOT be used in melees. Blades which are approved for cut-and-thrust rapier, but not for heavy rapier, may not be used in melees.

ARMOR REQUIREMENTS

These requirements are in addition to those required for Rapier Combat in Gleann Abhann.

HEAD AND NECK PROTECTION

A. PROTECTING THE HEAD

The front, back, sides and top of the head must be covered by rigid material to below the jaw line and below the ears. Standard 12 kg fencing masks are not recommended for cut-and-thrust rapier. If a standard fencing mask is used, it must be supplemented with rigid material on the back of the head and sufficient padding (¼ inch closed cell foam or equivalent) to protect the head from injury. Fencing helms built to this standard are also acceptable.

B. PROTECTING THE FACE

The face must be covered by rigid perforated metal, with holes no larger than 1/8" (3 mm) in diameter with a minimum offset of 3/16" (5 mm), or by a 12 kilogram mesh (e.g. a standard fencing mask) or equivalent.

C. PROTECTING THE THROAT AND NECK

The entire throat, including the cervical vertebrae, shall be covered by rigid material, backed by either puncture resistant material, 1/4" (6 mm) of closed cell foam, or their equivalents.

D. TORSO PROTECTION:

Cut-and-thrust participants are encouraged to wear additional rigid or padded material for torso protection. Such protective equipment must not interfere with the participant's ability to call valid blows. . Padding or other protection on the area of collarbone is recommended, but not required.

E. HAND, ARM, LEG AND FOOT PROTECTION

In addition to standard armor requirements for Heavy Rapier, elbows are required to have rigid protection ('cops') and knees must be protected by a minimum of athletic pads or equivalent materials. At the minimum, a fighter should wear commercially available "street hockey" style elbows and athletic knee pads or their equivalent as judged by an authorized Cut & Thrust marshal.

For cut and thrust combat, the backs of hands and wrists shall be protected by eight oz. leather half-gauntlets or the equivalent in padded material. Standard abrasion-resistant gloves alone will not be sufficient, unless the hilt of the sword protects the area in question. Vambraces are recommended, but not required.

WEAPONS / PERMITTED BLADES

Cut-and-Thrust blades: - All cut-and-thrust blades listed in the Rules for Rapier Combat in the Society for Creative Anachronism are legal for use in Gleann Abhann.

FLEXIBILITY OF BLADES

Cut-and-Thrust blades are tested using the same method as other rapier blades, but may be deemed sufficient so long as the blade (of length greater than 18 inches) flexes at least 1/4" (6 mm).

AUTHORIZATIONS

CUT-AND-THRUST AUTHORIZATION

Any Society member residing in the Kingdom of Gleann Abhann may attempt to authorize for cut-and-thrust combat. However, the candidate must have the Single Rapier authorization before attempting this authorization. The candidate must display understanding of the rules for cut-and-thrust swordplay in Gleann Abhann and how these rules differ from heavy rapier combat.

Cut and-thrust participants are encouraged to demonstrate a basic familiarity with at least one system of documented pre-17th century combat (whether Fiore, Vadi, Tahlhofer, Lichtenauer, Marozzo, Meyer, or any other). At a minimum, the candidate shall be able to demonstrate some guards and attacks from at least one style, school or manual, and should be able to incorporate this familiarity into his or her "free play" with a partner. The candidate must be able to demonstrate the ability to safely deliver valid blows, including percussive cuts.

Cut-and-Thrust authorization candidates must also have a sponsoring cut-and-thrust marshal. The role of the sponsoring marshal is to advise the candidate as to his or her own readiness to attempt authorization, and to provide initial training and instruction (including the development of a repertoire of documented historical technique).

CUT AND THRUST MARSHALS

Note that a Rapier Marshal who is authorized in Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay may NOT marshal Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay without an additional warrant. An authorized cut-and-thrust marshal is required to organize and oversee cut-and thrust activities.

For cut and thrust combat, the following will apply to authorizations:

- a. The Kingdom Rapier Marshal shall appoint a deputy, Kingdom Cut and Thrust Marshal, with the authority to authorize Cut and Thrust fighters and marshals and to revoke those authorizations.
- b. The Kingdom C&T Marshal will authorize such C&T marshals as are needed. Those marshals will have the authority to marshal C&T fighters but not authorize them.
- c. Authorization as a Cut and Thrust Combat Marshal shall be separate from that of Rapier Marshal. C&T marshals will be authorized or re-authorized by the Kingdom C&T Marshal or Kingdom Rapier Marshal.
- d. All authorizations for C&T fighters must be conducted by a minimum of two C&T authorizing marshals. One of the marshals shall participate in three or more passes with the candidate, while the second observes, then the second marshal will participate in three or more passes with the fighter while the first marshal observes. The two marshals must both be in agreement that the fighter is safe and capable before he/she is issued an authorization.
- e. All authorizations for C&T marshals will proceed exactly like a C&T fighter authorization

with the addition that one of the authorizing marshals must be the Kingdom Cut and Thrust Marshal or Kingdom Rapier Marshal.

- f. C&T marshals can only be re-authorized after an authorizing bout with the Kingdom C&T Marshal or Kingdom Rapier Marshal participating in either a combatant or observing capacity.

Contact the Kingdom Cut-and-Thrust Marshal for more information on becoming a warranted Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay marshal.

CUT-AND-THRUST AUTHORIZING MARSHALS

An additional warrant is required to authorize new participants for cut-and-thrust.

All cut-and-thrust authorizing marshals are expected to be able to evaluate not only the safety but also the historic knowledge of an authorization candidate. This does not require that the Authorizing marshal has knowledge of every documented historical system of combat, but rather that the marshal is able to determine when an authorization candidate is speaking outside of his or her actual expertise.

Applicants for this advanced warrant should contact the Kingdom Cut-and-Thrust Swordplay Marshal (KCTSM).