

Boffer Combat Guidelines

Crescent Isles of Kingdom of Lochac

0. Preamble.	2
1. Rules of the List.	3
2. Interpretations of the Rules and Additional Guidelines.....	4
3. Marshals.....	6
4. Divisions.	8
5. Blow Calibration and Acknowledgement.....	9
6. Weapons, Armour and Shields.	10
a. Weapons.....	10
b. Armour.....	10
c. Shields.....	11
7. Running a Tourney.	12
8. General Notes.....	14
a. Waivers	14
b. Parents.....	14
9. Notes on Chivalric Behaviour – Combatants & Spectators.....	15

0. Preamble.

Youth Boffer contests are a game that youths can play at SCA events that closely resembles Heavy Armoured Combat within the SCA.

Along with providing entertainment and fun, the major purpose of Youth Boffers is to

promote and instill the values and ideals of Chivalry. With this in mind, the 'First Rule' is always courtesy, respect, chivalry, and honourable conduct. As stated by Duke Deaton Claymore of the Kingdom of Caid, "These contests are not about winning and losing, they are about training the hearts and minds of our future Chivalry."

We are running a padded combat (or "boffer") field for our children because we would like them to:

- Give the children a fun activity that they can get involved with in the Society for Creative Anachronism Inc. (the Society).
- Give the children experience for armoured combat. That is, they will hopefully develop skills such as placing of blows, blade control, and even armour maintenance. After competing in boffer since age six, a child will have approximately twelve years of valuable preparation to authorise in armoured combat.

This style of combat IS NOT A BABYSITTING SERVICE, as we will be enforcing the rules of one parent or legal guardian must be beside the tourney field at all times unless the child combatant is within what has been termed, "The Teen Division".

"Boffers" are pretend swords made of foam, duct tape etc (see 3. Weapons section for details).

1. Rules of the List.

Reprinted from the Kingdom of Lochac Combat Handbook

The basic rules for the SCA combat are contained in the Rules of the Lists. These Rules, however, do not specifically cover non-tourney field activities such as wars, war archery, and period fencing. In practice the rules have been extended to cover these activities, with the observance of honour and chivalry being the overriding element, along with the safety of the combatants. The following is intended to bring together the appropriate rules for conducting both tourney field combat and other SCA combat activities.

Reprinted from Appendix B of the Corpora of the SCA.

1. Each combatant, recognising the possibilities of physical injury to him/herself in such combat, shall assume unto him/herself all risk and liability for harm suffered by means of such combat. No combatant shall engage in combat unless and until he/she has inspected the field of combat and satisfied him/herself that it is suitable for combat. Other participants shall likewise recognise the risks involved in their presence on or near the field of combat, and shall assume unto themselves the liabilities thereof.
2. No person shall participate in Combat-Related Activities (including armoured combat, period fencing, combat archery, scouting and banner bearing in combat) outside of formal training sessions unless he/she shall have been properly authorised under Society and Kingdom procedures.
3. All combatants must be presented to, and acceptable to, the Sovereign or his/her representative.
4. All combatants shall adhere to the appropriate armour 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.

5. The Sovereign or the Marshallate may bar any weapon or armour from use upon the field of combat. Should a rostered marshal bar any weapon or armour, an appeal may be made to the Sovereign to allow the weapon or armour.

6. Combatants shall behave in knightly and chivalrous manner, and shall fight according to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.

7. No one may be required to participate in Combat-Related Activities. Any combatant may, without dishonour or penalty, reject any challenge without specifying a reason. A fight in a tournament lists is not to be considered a challenge, and therefore may not be declined or rejected without forfeiting the bout.

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 combat, used in the context of mutual sport, to be real weaponry.

9. No projectile weapon shall be allowed and no weapons shall be thrown within the Lists of a tournament. The use of approved projectile weapons for melee, war, or combat archery shall conform to the appropriate Society and Kingdom Conventions of Combat.

2. Interpretations of the Rules and Additional Guidelines

1. Combatants shall behave in a courteous, honourable, and chivalrous manner at all times.

2. There is to be no loose jewelry worn. E.g. ear rings, necklaces, etc.

3. Each combatant shall keep control over his/her temper at all times. An angry combatant will be asked by the Marshals to leave the field.

4. Combatants must accept any blow that hits them if it is fair and honourable, clean, not blocked, and a purposely-delivered shot.

5. No combatant will deliver or accept blows from one inch (1") above the knee to the tips of the toes and from one inch (1") above the wrist to the tips of the fingers.

6. A blow to the body, shoulder, or head is accepted as a "killing" blow. Any blow to the arm or leg "injures" the arm or leg, and the arm or leg cannot be used.

Combatants may, after the loss of a leg, fight from a seated or kneeling position. Walking on the knees is prohibited.

7. Crushing Head Shots - If the helmet or neck is contacted with severe force, a warning shall be given. Upon the third offence the striker shall be deemed defeated.

8. The Field of Honour (list field) will not be used to settle mundane disputes.

9. Any behaviour that takes deliberate advantage of an opponent's chivalry or safety-consciousness, or that takes deliberate unfair advantage of an opponent is not allowed. Such behaviour may include, but is not limited to, the following:

a. Walking around an opponent on the ground

b. Blows delivered or accepted from behind a combatant's back during any combat, either tournament or melee. Any blows that hit from behind by mistake shall not count. Any repeated offence will result in the removal of

the combatant. During war this rule will not apply.

- c. Hitting someone that cannot defend him/herself.
 - d. Intentionally becoming "helpless" by repeatedly dropping weapons, falling down, purposefully ignoring valid attempts to gain a combatant's attention, etc.
 - e. Grappling or wrestling in any manner, tripping, pushing, or touching the opponent in any manner except with legal boffers in a legal touch.
 - f. Kicking an opponent's equipment or person.
 - g. Intentionally moving an illegal target into the path of a blow.
 - h. Hitting with excessive force.
 - i. Refusing to acknowledge blows
 - j. Using any weapon, or other piece of equipment, in a manner that it was not made for or in an otherwise forbidden manner.
10. The Marshal will be obeyed at all times.
 11. Make sure your opponent is ready before throwing the first blow
 12. Offer your opponent, when they are kneeling, the option to face away from the sun.

If a combatant throws inappropriate blows or acts in a manner contrary to the rules detailed within this document, the marshallate will follow the 'three strikes and you're out' principle. That is: -

- 1st warning: There will be issued to the child and the parents/legal guardian of the child a warning about the child's behaviour. If this is repeated at a later date, then a second warning will be issued.
- 2nd warning: There will be issued to the child and the parents/legal guardian of the child a second warning about the behaviour of the child. At this stage, the marshallate may impose a suspension from competing at tourneys for several tourneys/months at their discretion.
- 3rd warning: The child will be banned from competing in padded combat for a duration of not less than six months. They cannot be compete for that time.

3. Marshals.

1. The Marshal on the field is expected to take an active role in safety, sportsmanship and assistance with blow calling.
2. There shall be two types of Marshals: the Adult Boffer Marshal, and the Youth Boffer Marshal
3. An Adult Boffer Marshal is a person at least age 18 authorized to:
 - a. Marshal on the boffer combat field
 - b. Inspect weapons and armour of boffer combat
 - c. Authorize Youth Marshals
 - d. Interface with Autocrat, Heavy Marshal of the day and other event officials.
 - e. Supervise the Boffer Marshals, Lists Person and Heralds on the field.

f. Oversee the tourney field, making sure that no one gets hurt and that all safety rules are obeyed.

It is strongly suggested, but not required, that an Adult Boffer Marshal have a current authorization to marshal Adult Chivalric and/or Rapier Combat.

4. A Youth Boffer Marshal is a person in the 15–17 age bracket authorized to:

a. Marshal on the field of Boffer combat under supervision of an Adult Boffer Marshal.

b. Inspect weapons and armour of boffer combat under supervision of an Adult Boffer Marshal.

5. To Qualify as a Boffer Marshal an Individual

- Must attend a Collegium class or equivalent training on the subject,
- Must run 3 tournaments under the supervision of an Authorised Marshal
- Be deemed acceptable by their Baronial Marshal and Constable.

Upon authorization, this person is a direct Deputy to their Baronial Marshal.

6. At least one (1) Adult Boffer Marshal is required for any Training.

7. At least two (2) Boffer Marshals (one of which must be an Adult Boffer Marshal) must be on the field for any tournament bout.

8. For melee and war combat, the number of Boffer Marshals present should be appropriate for the number of participants.

9. Boffer Marshals are ultimately responsible for combat safety. This includes, but is not limited to, checking weapons, observing combat, warning a combatant of inappropriate or dangerous actions, disallowing dangerous weapons, and, if necessary, removing a combatant from the field.

10. It is suggested to allow Youth Boffer Marshals as much control and authority over combat as possible. However the final responsibility on the field is with the Adult Boffer Marshal.

11. Any combatant who refuses to obey the commands of the marshals, including Youth Boffer Marshals, shall be removed from the field. If at anytime a combatant shows disrespect or disregard for safety they shall be deemed defeated with no warnings. Marshals are responsible for ensuring that the participants do not get pummelled! (See Section 2– Three Strikes Rule)

12. Prior to any combat (official fighter training, tournament, or melee) all combatants' armour must be inspected on the body, weapons must be inspected, and shall meet all safety and armour requirements pertaining to the appropriate division. An Adult Boffer Marshal or a Youth Boffer Marshal under supervision of an Adult Boffer Marshal must do all inspections.

4. Divisions.

There will be two age group divisions, for boffer combat in the Crescent Isles

1. Children's division (6 – 12yr olds)
2. Youth division (10 – 17 yr olds)

NB Exceptionally small or large combatants may be placed up or down a division, at the marshal's discretion, based on safety concerns. Combatants may also be moved

up or down a division depending on their skill level, equipment availability and behaviour as directed by the marshals.

The overlap of ages is at the discretion of the marshals.

Whatever division the participant is in the must meet the minimum equipment standard for that division.

5. Blow Calibration and Acknowledgement.

A: Youth Division

1. Solid, non-glancing contact with firm touch required. Any suitable blow that makes a solid edge or point contact to any legal body area of the opponent will be accepted. With weapons which have a thrusting tip (that has been allowed for combat by the marshalls) the thrusting tip shall be made known and shown to the opponent. The thrust shall be to noticeable touch only.
2. Any combatant using sufficient force to injure an opponent will be given a warning and may be removed from the field. The length of this removal is at the discretion of the marshal.
3. Combatants will hit with the edge of the blade. (As defined by tape stripes)
4. Standard armoured combat conventions; 1" (2.5 cm) above the knee and up, 1" (2.5cm) above the wrist and down to the shoulder. Shots to the arm cause the loss of use of that arm. Shots to the leg force a combatant to fight from their knees. Body and head shots are kills. There will be no differentiation based on weapons types.
5. Combatants will acknowledge blows by calling "good" and/or falling down.
6. Groin Shots are highly discouraged and if deemed purposeful, combatant may be warned, suspended or banned from boffer combat.

A: Children's Division

1. Firm, non-glancing contact with no force (Touch only) required. Any blow that makes a solid edge or point contact to any legal body area of the opponent will be accepted. There will be no thrusting allowed in the Children's division though swords will be expected to have suitably padded ends to avoid injury incase of an unintentional thrust. If a thrust is seen by marshals they must call hold and explain to the child that thrusting is not allowed. Continued attempts at thrusting will be grounds for warning, disqualification or suspension at the marshals discretion.
2. Any combatant using sufficient force to injure an opponent will be given a warning and may be removed from the field. The length of this removal is at the discretion of the marshal.
3. Combatants will hit with the edge of the blade. (As defined by tape stripes)
4. Standard armoured combat conventions; 1" (2.5 cm) above the knee and up, 1" (2.5cm) above the wrist and down to the shoulder. Shots to the arm cause the loss of use of that arm. Shots to the leg force a combatant to fight from their knees. Body and head shots are kills.

Head shots will only be allowed if the parents of the participants unanimously agree that head shots be allowed prior to a tournament. If there are any parents or marshals against, head shots will not be allowed.

Even if head shots are disallowed suitable facial protection must be worn by the participants

5. Combatants will acknowledge blows by calling “good” and/or falling down.

6. Groin Shots are highly discouraged and if deemed purposeful, combatant may be warned, suspended or banned from boffer combat.

6. Weapons, Armour and Shields.

Most of the following rules will relate to the Youth division especially with regard to armour requirements. It is appreciated that those in the Children’s divisions will have some difficulty and reservations about acquiring full armour for a child that is likely to out grow out of it in the space of a year. As such the minimum standards for armour for the Children’s division must be met but additional armour is at the parents and marshals discretion.

It is strongly advised that combatants in all age divisions wear a padded gambeson or equivalent

a. Weapons I Youth Division

All weapons must be constructed of schedule 40 PVC with a diameter of 1” (2.5 cm).

Both ends of the PVC must be capped. ½” (1.25 cm) minimum closed cell foam extending the striking length of the weapon to 1.5” (4 cm) past the tip.

Minimum diameter will be 1.75” (4.5cm). Maximum weapon length is 66” (165 cm)

e.g. polearms. All thrusting tips must be a minimum 1.75” (4.5 cm) in diameter and extend 1.5/8” (4 cm) past the end of the PVC. Weapons are to be loosely covered in duct tape,

but not tightly wrapped to affect the resiliency of the foam. Weapons may be singlehanded or two-handed, and will resemble a period weapon. Mass weapons shall have no real mass to them.

We recommend that parents give their child a weapon suitable for their height.

The weapons should be of a solid build i.e. not too flexible, but should be sufficiently padded.

Weapons that could be made in this manner includes but is not limited to Polearms, Glaives, Halbards, Spears (not thrown), Swords (Short, Long and 2-Handed), Axes (not throwing) and Maces.

a. Weapons Children’s Division

A boffer sword of golf tube construction with 10mm foam glued around the golf tube then wrapped loosely with duct tape will be the only acceptable weapon in this grade.

No axes, glaives, maces etc will be allowed.

All swords must be constructed of golf tube, foam and tape only with the exception that the cross guard (if used) may be reinforced with light leather under the tape.

The ends of the golf tube are to be capped or taped with Fibre tape and a foam tip of at least 4cm beyond the end of the golf tube must be included in manufacture.

This is for safety purpose only and it NOT a thrusting tip.

b. Armour I Youth Division

The following items are considered mandatory: -

- **Head:** Helmets must cover the entire head and meet either SCA light combat standards (steel 1.6mm) or be manufactured of a suitable thickness of aluminium which provides an adequate level of rigidity and protection.

(at the time of writing these guidelines there are no approved aluminium designs but Baron Fulk de Cherbourg is undertaking construction tests to try and find some helmets which will be a little lighter for those younger youth division participants)

A chinstrap is required. Spacing on bars must prevent a boffer from striking the face.

- **Torso:** Gambeson or equivalent (2 sweat shirts). It is recommended that females wear a breast sports protector in addition to the gambeson or a gambeson with additional padding in the appropriate areas.
- **Feet:** No open toed shoes or sandals. Boots are to provide ankle support
Lace-up boots are recommended.
- **Groin:** Sports cup for males. Martial arts groin protection for females or adapted Lady heavy combat groin protection.
- **Legs:** Long pants. There is to be no flesh showing (so shorts are out).
- **Neck:** Medium weight leather gorget is recommended. These may become mandatory in the future
- **Arms:** Elbow pads are required, minimum of skate board pads.
- **Hands:** Gloves shall be worn, street hockey gloves or plastic gauntlets are recommended for use with weapons which do not have a basket hilt.
- **Legs:** Kneepads are required, minimum of skate board pads.

It is a recommendation (as we are actually a medieval re-creation group) that all armour should be constructed, or covered, in a manner to resemble pre 17th century attire. Although modern alternatives are available, most of them will require serious modification to become safe for the type of combat in which the children will be using.

b. Armour II Children's Division

- **Head:** Pre 17th century helms are encouraged but sporting helmets with wired, or barred facemasks, such as ice (and in-line) hockey, lacrosse or fencing helmets are acceptable. A chinstrap or tie strap is required. Spacing on bars must prevent a boffer from striking the face. Helmets must be light weight and offer facial protection.

If head shots are to be allowed it is recommended that all participants have at least 8-10mm foam covering any part of the head not covered by the helmet or face mask.

- **Torso:** Gambeson or equivalent (2 sweat shirts).
- **Feet:** No open toed shoes or sandals. Boots are to provide ankle support
Lace-up boots are recommended.

- Groin: it is recommended that groin protection be used, if not a sports cup or martial arts protector then at least a “troy” protector.
- Legs: Long pants. There is to be no flesh showing (so shorts are out).
- Arms: Elbow pads are required, minimum of skate board pads.
- Hands: Gloves shall be worn.
- Legs: Kneepads are required, minimum of skate board pads.

For Children’s division the emphasis is on fun and control so as long as the participant is adequately clothed has suitable facial protection they should be allowed to participate.

c. Shields Youth Division

Shields may be constructed of wood, plastic, aluminium or equivalent. Ply is suggested to be of a minimum of three-ply thickness. Shields must be edged and padded with foam/hose to avoid any injuries if the child accidentally hits with the edge of a shield. Tubing or leather is recommended. All shields must resemble a medieval shield. All bolts will be covered.

c. Shields Children’s Division

Shields should be constructed corrugated cardboard or corflute. Suggested thickness is 3 or 4 layer. Shields must be edged with tape and not have any sharp edged to avoid any injuries if the child accidentally hits with the edge of a shield. All handholds must be straps or similar, no rigid hand guards etc. All shields must resemble a medieval shield.

7. Running a Tourney.

1. Waivers and indemnities must be obtained or checked by the site constable.
(This rule will cover whatever forms etc are currently required within the crescent isles as they may vary from mainland Lochac)
2. Combatants report to the Boffer Lists.
3. Marshals conduct armour inspections and blow strength calibration. Any problems with weapons or armour must be repaired before approval will be granted to participate.
4. The following is an example of how to run a round in a tourney. To save time each pair of participants can be introduced once at the beginning.
 - a. Herald - "Will _____ and _____ arm and Stand Ready." Walk participants to their field. Move on to next pair.
 - b. Herald –
 - i. "On this day do meet _____ and _____"
 - ii. "Milords (Miladys) Salute ye the Crown" (all salute the thrown)
 - iii. "Salute the one who’s favour you bear!" (either their favour, their Parent(s) or the leader of their House)
 - iv. "Salute your worthy opponent"(contestants salute each other)
 - v. "At the marshal's command" (skip if the marshal is doing the

heralding)

c. Marshal –

i. "Are each of you OK with any experimental boffers or shields" (If they are being used)

ii. "Milord/Milady, are you ready?" Check each participant for ready.

iii. "Lay on" (Signifies the beginning of the bout)

5. "Hold" shall be used to stop any bout. When a "Hold" is called combatants are to take a knee and lower their weapons to their sides.

6. "Beware of edge" shall be used when participants get too close to edge of list field.

7. Tourneys shall be run in legal list fields where perimeters are easily recognized. It is recommended that a list field be specially designated for boffers on the main tourney field.

8. Melees

a. Follow same rules as tournaments.

b. There is no killing from behind, striking from behind, or striking an opponent who is unaware of your presence.

c. Different age groups can be combined, but bigger participants must be warned to not hit smaller participants too hard!

9. Wars – Generally held in an open field. Striking from behind is permitted but the preferable method of killing from behind is to place your weapon on your target and call out "Milord/Milady You are Slain". Spectators and Participants will be made aware of the boundaries of the field of combat.

Use scenarios similar to adult combat; capture the flag, pole arms vs. sword/shield, bridge battles, dwarves vs. giants, defend the castle.

8. General Notes.

a. Waivers

All involved, must sign a Site Waiver- the youth, the parents, and the Marshals as per the Kingdom constables decree, and as applicable within the crescent isles at the time.

The youth and their parent(s) must sign a Minor Waiver. All others involved must sign a Site Waiver.

These are handled by the Gate/Troll at each event. The Marshals must ask each parent if they have signed a Minor Waiver for their child, and because we are a society of Honour, we will hold each person to their word.

b. Parents

All parent/guardians will have the opportunity to ask questions of the adult marshals before Youth Boffers begins.

All parent/guardians will inspect, and approve, their own child's armour, equipment, and boffers, before engagement begins.

All parent/guardians will have the right to remove their child from the lists, at any time, if they deem the activity unsafe or inappropriate for their child.

Also there is a requirement of the Lochac chirurgeonate that an authorization to administer first aid be completed by the parents/legal guardian before any children are permitted to participate in any combat related activities where they could possibly get hurt.

We want the parents/legal guardians to be involved with all aspects of padded combat

and to this end the marshalls will interact with them as often as possible. The Parents/legal guardian will be required to:

- Stay beside the tourney field at all times whilst their child is competing in padded combat unless their child/ward is aged 13 or over (teen division)
- Assist with the maintenance of your child/ward's armour and weapons. We want to help build in them an importance of maintaining their own armour, but we need your help to assist in that.
- Know when your child/ward is unsafe to fight. As with full contact (Heavy) combat, a combatant may not take part when angry.
- A combatant may not fight if they are unwell or affected by drugs.
- This is a game that will help them if they desire to authorise in heavy combat and as such, this set of rules reflects heavy combat rules.
- No sideline coaching. We want the children to be able to recognise the opportunities to strike. It also represents a distraction on the field.

9. Notes on Chivalric Behaviour – Combatants & Spectators.

Thank your opponent for the fight. He/she does you honour by facing you in combat. Parents/guardians, please encourage your child/ward to shake hands afterwards in the name of good sportsmanship.

Spectators should be active participants in boffer events. That is they should show their respect and appreciation to the combatants, listen and be silent when the Heralds/Marshals are talking and generally take a positive role in encouraging all participants.

Parents please take note the marshalls will not allow a "little league" mentality to develop within the realms of youth combat. Parents become over "pushy" or aggressive may have their child excluded due to their behaviour.

We don't want this to happen so please everyone, PLAY FAIR and have a good time.