

Draft Lochac Rules for Youth Fencing

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Introduction

One of the standard elements of a proper education for youths during the 15th and 16th Century was instruction in the use of arms. This program is designed to give the youths of Lochac the same educational opportunities.

These rules set fundamental standards for Youth Fencing in Lochac. All fencers and marshals are responsible for knowing these rules, as well as the rapier combat rules of the Kingdom and the Society.

Rules are designed to promote safe fencing in the Kingdom. However, no matter how clear or accurate, rules cannot replace common sense, good judgment, and concern for the participants. If a question arises when applying these standards, choose the answer that promotes the greatest degree of safety for all participants.

Rapier fencing is intended to re-create the rapier fighting styles of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is not an arena for modern "Olympic-style" fencing, although training in that area is useful for safety and skill development. Participants are encouraged to study the fencing manuals of the period, and to develop fighting styles based on their study.

Legal

In Australia all marshals and instructors for Youth Rapier (including Youth Rapier marshals age 16 and over) must have a current Lochac Youth Activities card before involvement in Youth Rapier. The SCA Ltd Background check procedures (<http://sca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Background-Check-Procedures-1.pdf>) specify the procedure for obtaining this. In New Zealand there is currently no requirement for this card.

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.

Rules from the Youth Perspective (Fencers)

Rules of the List for Youth Fencing

1. This is a full contact sport. We are here to have fun and not hurt each other or ourselves. Be sensible and careful, because accidents can still happen.
2. Joining Youth Fencing is a privilege not a right.
3. Youth fencers shall behave in a respectful manner, and shall follow these rules.
4. You cannot fence in a tournament until you have passed the Fencing Safety Test. Until you pass the Fencing Safety Test, you can only participate in an organized practice or training session.
5. Your fencing kit, including weapons and armour must pass inspection by the marshal before you are allowed to fence/train. If they fail the inspection you must fix them and have them re-inspected.
6. No one can make you fence if you don't want to. However if you have entered a tournament, and decide not to fight you will forfeit the bout.
7. You can only fence with equipment identified in these rules. Everything else is not allowed.
8. You cannot throw any weapon

General Rules for Youth Fencing

1. Youth Fencing competition is limited to ages 10-13. Upon reaching the age of 14, fencers shall authorise under the Lochac Rapier Combat Rules. [www.sca.org.au/rapier/rules.htm]
2. The marshals are in charge of the field, and their instructions must be obeyed. Fencing cannot occur until the Marshals tell you to begin.
3. Anyone can call a HOLD – the fencer, the marshal, the parents, the spectators, anyone. HOLD should always be called loudly so everyone can hear. If a HOLD is called, the fencers must immediately freeze and wait for the marshal to tell them what to do and when they can fight again.
4. Youth fencers may not grasp an opponent or their weapons or equipment.
5. Youth fencers are not allowed to circle an opponent on the ground or hit from behind during a melee.
6. A youth fencer may lose their fencing privileges for a period of time if he/she argues with the marshals or acts outside of these rules (e.g. loses his/her temper, whips or hits too hard with the sword or other equipment, grabs or shoves on the field, throws anything, or hits with anything other than a sword or dagger).
7. Youth Fencing melees will use the same melee rules as the Lochac Rapier Combat Rules. The only exception is that death from behind is not allowed, and only light fencing weapons may be used in Youth Fencing melees.
8. In a tournament, the lowest common authorisation level shall be the default.
9. You must call a hit good if you feel it.

Using your weapons

1. You can only use the weapons for which you are authorised.
2. You can only face the weapons for which you are authorised.
3. You can only hit someone with a sword or a dagger. You cannot hit someone with any other equipment.
4. You can use your weapons and other equipment to stop your opponent's weapon from hitting you.
5. Thrusting or stabbing with the point, or by placing the edge of the weapon on the opponent and sliding the edge forwards or backwards makes a good hit. A good hit should be just strong enough that your opponent can feel the hit, and not hurt them.
6. A good hit to the body, throat, neck and head shall be a kill.
7. A good hit to the armpit or inner thigh shall be a kill.
8. A good hit to the hand will disable the hand. You can't use it to hold anything, and must close it into a fist. The disabled hand is now part of the arm.
9. A good hit to the arm will disable the arm. You may not hold anything with it, and must continue by holding it behind your back. If both arms are disabled, the fencer can't fight and has to yield (surrender).
10. A good hit to the foot or leg will disable the leg. You must sit or kneel on the ground to continue.

Protective Kit

1. These rules use the same definitions as the Lochac Rapier Combat Rules.

2. A fencing mask or a helm made of rigid material must cover the top of the head and face. Any head area not covered by the mask or helm must be covered by puncture resistant material.
3. Masks and helms must be secured to the fencer, so that they cannot be easily removed or dislodged during fencing. Conventional fencing masks require an extra closure that will prevent the mask from being dislodged from under the chin.
4. Resilient padding must cover the neck and throat.
5. If heavy rapiers are being used, the neck, throat and cervical vertebrae must also be covered with rigid material.
6. The entire torso (the chest, back, abdomen, groin, and sides up to and including the armpits) must be covered with puncture-resistant material.
7. Acceptable minimum armpit coverage is provided by a triangle of puncture resistant material extending from the armpit seam, covering the lower half of the sleeve at the seam, and extending down the inner/under arm, one-third the distance to the combatant's elbow.
8. Male fencers shall also wear rigid groin protection. Any ventilation holes large enough to admit a broken blade must be covered from the outside with at least puncture resistant material.
9. All other areas shall be covered by abrasion resistant material. There shall be no exposed skin.

Authorisations and Allowed Weapons

Category 1 (Youth Fencing Single)

1. Youth fencers may commence in this Category from age 10 with parental permission.
2. Fencers in this category are only allowed to use Light Fencing weapons, as defined in appendix 1.
3. Fencers in this category may use a single sword, or single dagger. They may also accompany the weapon with a non-rigid defensive item.
4. They may take the Fencing Safety Test, and if successful compete in Youth Fencing Tournaments.

Category 2 (Youth Fencing Double)

1. Youth fencers may commence in this Category from age 11 with parental permission.
2. Fencers in this category are only allowed to use the Light Fencing weapons, as defined in appendix 1.
3. Fencers in this category may extend their allowed weapons to include a second weapon (sword or dagger), or a rigid defensive item.
4. They may take the Fencing Safety Test, and if successful compete in Youth Fencing Tournaments using the additional allowed items.

Category 3 (Youth Rapier)

1. Youth fencers may commence in this Category from age 12 with parental permission.
2. Fencers in this category may extend their allowed weapons to include heavy rapier weapons, as defined in appendix 1.
3. Fencers in this category may also extend their authorisation to include melee fencing.
4. They may take the Fencing Safety Test, and if successful compete in Youth Fencing Tournaments using the additional allowed items, or in Youth Fencing melees. Separate Fencing Tests shall be used for each additional authorisation.

Category 4 (Youth Marshal)

1. Youth fencers may commence in this Category from age 13 with parental permission.
2. Fencers in this category may begin training as Youth Fencing Marshal. This training shall follow the same process as for Rapier Marshals.
3. Successful completion of the training and authorisation will allow the candidate to marshal Youth Fencing only. This category may be retained until they reach the age of 18, after which the candidate shall be required to be examined for a full rapier marshal authorisation.

Fencing Safety Test

1. This is the authorisation process for each category, and shall be conducted by an Authorising Rapier Marshal according to the requirements of the Lochac Rapier Combat Rules.
2. Youth Fencing authorisations shall be renewed every 2 years.

3. The Youth Fencer shall be required to demonstrate during the test that they are:
 - Safe to their opponents and themselves in their weapon and equipment usage;
 - Able to show basic ability in offence and defence;
 - Able to show proper calibration with both thrusts and cuts;
 - Able to verbally demonstrate an understanding of the rules and conventions of Youth Fencing;
 - Able to fence from the ground and attack someone grounded as well;
 - Able to show knowledge of armour and weapons requirements;
 - Able to able to respond properly to a hold called by the marshal and their opponent.

Rules from the Adults Perspective

General Rules for Youth Fencing

1. This program is for minors aged 10 through 13 years. Upon reaching the age of 14, minors shall authorise under the Lochac Rapier Combat Rules.
2. This program is intended primarily as a training and development period for the next generation. While tournaments will be held, it is not expected that tournaments and the glory associated with winning them, will be a primary focus of this program. The main focus will be on chivalry, honour, courtesy, and proper technique.
3. Minors training under this program may practice with adults for instruction and authorization purposes. There shall be no competitive fencing between youth and adult fencers.
4. Parents/Guardians are to understand:
 - This is a full-contact sport, and that injuries may occur.
 - That the Parents/Guardian should behave in a courteous and responsible manner at all times.
 - The Parents/Guardians are responsible for their minor's safety, with the Youth Rapier Marshallate guiding the armouring/safety process.
 - The minor and the responsible adult must know and follow all Kingdom and Society laws and rules that apply.

Parental Involvement

1. At any event in which the minor is involved in SCA fencing related activities the minor must have a parent or guardian present. Alternatively, in Australia, the minor must be in possession of a properly executed "Nomination of Caregiver" form. Said form must designate an adult present at the event as able to authorise medical treatment in the case of an emergency. The form is available at the URL <https://www.sca.org.au/constable/treatminor.pdf>
2. "Present" is defined as within visual and vocal range of the minor. The minor or marshal(s) on the field should be able to find the responsible adult immediately.

Structure of the Youth Fencing Marshalate

The Chain of Command is as follows:

1. Field Marshal - this is the marshal in control of the field or running the inspection.
2. Rapier Marshal in Charge - this is the marshal in charge of the tournament, melee or event.
3. Group Rapier Marshal - this is the marshal who reports for the group hosting the tournament, melee, or event.
4. Deputy Kingdom Marshal for Youth Combat
5. Kingdom Earl Marshal
6. Crown

Marshalling of Youth Fencing

1. Adult Rapier Marshals may marshal Youth Fencing. In all cases, an adult Rapier Marshal must be present as a Rapier Marshal in Charge.
2. At tournaments, every field must have at least one adult rapier marshal, or two Youth Fencing Marshals supervising that field.
3. Additional marshals on each field may be made up of youth marshals or MIT's as available.

When disagreements occur

1. Fencers and Parents should always remember that this is just for fun. No fight or tournament is worth a squabble or risking the safety of a child. If the situation does not seem right and you cannot agree, walk away and come back to fence/train another day.
2. Between fencers - all fighting will cease until a marshal makes a ruling on the disagreement and the fencers agree to abide by the ruling.
3. Between parents - all fighting will cease until the parents either come to an agreement or are removed from the area. If this leaves a child without a responsible adult present as defined above, that child

cannot continue fighting and must forfeit the bout.

4. Between fighter/marshal - If a fighter cannot obey the marshal's instructions he/she will leave the field.
5. Between parent/marshal - Those who wish to appeal the decisions of any member of the Marshalate may do so only by appealing to the very next person UP the chain of command as defined above.

Assisting the fencers

Marshals should be aware that young fencers are still developing their skills in blow calling and blade control. Whether in training or tournament, marshals should watch for missed blows and excessive blows, and make suggestions to the young fencers as needed on how to call and throw those blows.

Adult Marshals

1. Marshals for youth activities must undergo the required authorization and background checks for their State, Territory or the equivalent national requirement if necessary. Contact your local Group Marshal, the Deputy Kingdom Marshal for Youth Combat or the Kingdom Youth Officer for more information.
2. Parents are encouraged to learn these rules, train in marshalling techniques and become an authorized Rapier Marshal.

Deputy Kingdom Marshal for Youth Combat

1. The Deputy Kingdom Marshal for Youth Combat (the Deputy) shall report to the Kingdom Earl Marshal.
2. The Deputy shall coordinate Youth Fencing activities within the Kingdom as directed by the Kingdom Earl Marshal and report on those activities to the Kingdom Earl Marshal.

Reporting

1. Each Group Marshall (Canton/Shire/Barony) shall report on the progress of Youth Fencing quarterly. This report will consist of a paragraph listing the number of youth fencers, their age breakdown, and information on the status of training.
2. This report will be added to the end of the quarterly rapier report, in order to reduce extra reporting. The quarterly rapier report for each Barony will be copied to the Deputy Kingdom Marshal for Youth Combat, the Kingdom Earl Marshal, your group seneschal and the Lochac Children's officer for their information.

Rule Revision

These rules are subject to changes at the Society or Kingdom level for both rapier and youth activities.

Appendix 1

(Close to verbatim from the Society Rapier Rules)

- A. If a blade meets the criteria below, it is considered acceptable for use unless specifically restricted from use by the Kingdom Rapier Marshal for Rapier Combat. If a blade does not meet the criteria established below, it may not be used for any form of rapier combat in the Society, unless it is permitted by the Deputy Society Marshal for Rapier Combat.
- B. All blades are subject to the following:
 - I. Blades must be made of steel or fiberglass.
 - II. Blades must be no longer than 48" as measured from the tip to the top of the tang (i.e. where the tang and forte meet)
 - III. Blades must be reasonably flexible as defined in this table

Weapon Class	Blade Length	Minimum Deflection	Weight
Light Rapier & Heavy Rapier	>18" (45.72 cm) and <= 48" (121.92 cm)	1" (25 mm)	6 oz (170 grams)
Light Rapier & Heavy Rapier	<18" (45.72 cm)	0.5" (12 mm)	6 oz (170 grams)
Cut and Thrust	<= 48" (121.92 cm)	0.5" (12 mm)	6 oz (170 grams)

- IV. Light rapier blades longer than 18" must be a foil blade, epee blade, or similar variant (such as a double-wide epee or musketeer blades) from an established commercial manufacturer. Light rapier blades 18" or shorter need only meet the requirements previously listed.
- V. Blades with a cross-section similar to a foil or epee (i.e., foils, epees, double-wide epees, musketeers and flexi-daggers) are not allowed in Heavy Rapier, nor Cut & Thrust combat.
- VI. Steel blades will not be altered by grinding, cutting, heating, hammering, or other actions that could significantly alter their temper, flexibility or durability. Normal combat stresses and blade care do not violate this rule. Exceptions are:
 - a) The tang of the weapon may be altered.
- C. Puncture resistant material is any fabric or combination of fabrics that will predictably withstand puncture. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - I. four ounce (1.60 mm) leather
 - II. four layers of heavy poplin cloth
 - III. ballistic nylon rated to at least 550 newtons
 - IV. commercial fencing cloth rated to at least 550 newtons

Kevlar is not an acceptable material, as it degrades rapidly. These materials need only be tested at the marshal's discretion; all other materials must be tested the first time new gear is used, or if no marshal on the field knows a given piece of gear to have been tested.
- D. Rigid material is any puncture resistant material that will not significantly flex, spread apart, or deform under pressure of 12kg applied by a standard mask tester, repeated to any single point. Examples of rigid material are:
 - V. 22 guage stainless steel (0.8 mm)
 - VI. 20 guage mild steel (1.0 mm)
 - VII. 16 guage aluminium, copper, or brass (1.6 mm)
 - VIII. One layer of hardened leather (8 ounces, 3.18 mm)