

Youth Combat Handbook

Youth Combat Handbook
Kingdom of Trimaris
Society for Creative Anachronism

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Introduction

The mission of the Youth Combat Program is to provide an environment where the youth of our Kingdom, between the ages of 7 to 17 can practice a martial activity and learn the ideals of chivalry, honor, and respect. The program will also give them the opportunity to learn more about all aspects of the Society and to have fun

Requirements

Parents

A parent or legal guardian must be present at all times that a youth fighter is participating in combat. That includes fighter practices and tournaments.

Fighter

Fighters must be between the ages of 7 and 17 and:

- (1) Obey the rules and the marshal's instructions at all times.
- (2) Have read and know the Rules of the List.
- (3) Have a signed combat wavier.
- (4) Behave in a courteous and honorable manner at all times. Bad tempers will not be tolerated.

Junior Youth Combat Marshal

- (1) Must be a youth fighter between the ages of 12 and 17
- (2) Must be authorized as a marshal by two Youth Combat Marshals.
- (3) Perform the duties of a marshal under the close supervision of a Youth Combat Marshal.

Youth Combat Marshal

- (1) Must be a member of the S.C.A.
- (2) Must be at least 18 years of age.
- (3) Must be authorized by the Kingdom Youth Combat Marshal or their designated representative. An authorization to marshal adult combat activities does not automatically make you a Y.C.M.
- (4) Is responsible for attempting to ensure combat safety.
- (5) Report incidents and injuries to the Kingdom Youth Combat Marshal.
- (6) The Youth Combat Marshal will file a quarterly report to the Kingdom Youth Combat Marshal.
- (7) The Youth Combat Marshal of an event will file an event report to the Kingdom Youth Combat Marshal within two weeks of the event.
- (8) Must be acceptable to the Kingdom Earl marshal and to the Crown.

Kingdom Youth Combat Marshal

- (1) Must be a member of the S.C.A. and be at least 18 years of age.**
- (2) Must be acceptable to the Kingdom Earl marshal and to the Crown.**
- (3) Oversees the Youth Combat Program**
- (4) Must be an authorized adult fighter.**
- (5) File a quarterly report to the Kingdom Earl Marshal.**

I have been asked several times now about how much supervision a YC marshal should interject into Youth Combat. The short answer is total. YC marshalling is only broadly like heavy combat marshalling. With the heavies, fights are more likely to be uninterrupted except for safety reasons or egregious fouls. The fighters are "treated like adults". The central theme that must be adhered to in YC is thus; the Marshals are the only adults, the children are fighting and must be under constant and resolute supervision. We, as Marshals, are actively participating in the shaping of a young person's attitudes in our society. Adults take the field with certain givens i.e. a level of maturity, an understanding of written rules and some control over their bodies. Children may or may not possess any of the above faculties but no matter what, few 7-17 year olds have matured enough mentally or physically to let them control the tempo of fighting 100% of the time. So, what does all this mean? It means that YC Marshals are in charge of everything. The kids must be taught how to bow, do salutes, how to speak, how to acknowledge and execute blows, the tenets of chivalric behavior and personal honor, how to dress and the rules of the list. Most of this will not stick after just one lesson, it must be repeated. It will be much like parenting, and, like parenting, as far as the list field goes, the YC Marshals word is law. You see something you don't like; you stop the fight and say something. You detect a misunderstanding or feel like a rule or concept is not sinking in, you stop the fight and explain things again. You explain plainly to Mom, Dad and kid why something is allowed or disallowed. You let kids fight only when you are comfortable that everybody understands what is expected and has an idea of what will take place. You also encourage wherever possible. Positive reinforcement is an absolute must and should be a guiding principle.

Now, having said all that, don't be a jerk. Be reasonable, be nice and know the rules.

AGE DIVISION DEFINITIONS

- 1. There shall be four (4) Youth Combat divisions. They are as follows:**
 - A. (ages 7 to 9) Jellyfish**
 - B. (ages 10 to 12) Piranhas**
 - C. (ages 13 to 15) Barracudas**
 - D. (ages 16 and 17) Orcas**
- 2 The Marshallate recognizes that some youths will be very small or very large for their age. These youths may, at the request of their parent or permanent legal guardian and with the approval of the Youth Combat marshal and the fighter, be moved up or down in divisions as appropriate. All such instances will be handled on a case-by-case basis.**
- 3 At no time will anyone under the age of 16 participate in rattan armored combat.**

DIVISIONAL STANDARDS

All fighters are encouraged to wear SCA legal heavy style combat armor as far as is practicable for each individual. SCA Heavy Minimum Armor, properly constructed and worn, will ALWAYS pass inspection for Youth Combat. In many cases it will offer an advantage in comfort and mobility. Children who opt for "light leather with 1/2 inch of foam" will be protected but look like they are wearing some sort of space satellite or horse collar! Medium leather backed with 1/4 inch of foam protects better, is less bulky and the weight differential is negligible. However, armor should be constructed that the child will wear, meets the standard and gives Mom & Dad "peace of mind". Ya'll's call.

A Division (ages 7-9) Jellyfish

1. Blow Calibration

- a. Touch only. Any purposeful blows that touch the opponent's body shall be counted. Incidental or accidental contact need not be counted.
- b. All combatants are presumed to be wearing only clothes.
- c. Any combatant using force enough to bruise or injure an opponent will, after one (1) warning, be removed from the field.
- d. NO thrusting with any weapon

2. Educational Goals

- a. Introduction to chivalric behavior on the combat field.
- b. Explanation and practice in use, function, and techniques of Youth Combat weapons.

B Division (ages 10-12) Piranhas

1. Blow Calibration

- a. Solid contact, with some force required. Any purposeful blow that firmly contacts the opponent's body shall be counted. Incidental or accidental contact need not be counted.
- b. All combatants are presumed to be wearing a mid-thigh length gambeson of lightweight leather.
- c. Any combatant using force sufficient to bruise or injure an opponent will, after one warning, be removed from the field.
- d. Thrusts to the body are allowed with two handed weapons only

2. Educational goals

- a. Refinement of techniques in defense, accuracy, and speed.
- b. Continued development in the graces of chivalric combat, honorable conduct, and etiquette both on and off the field.
- c. Introduction to melee combat.

C Division (ages 13-15) Barracudas

1. Blow Calibration

- a. Solid contact. Any purposeful blow that solidly contacts the opponent's body shall be counted. Incidental or accidental contact need not be counted.
- b. All combatants are presumed to be wearing a mid-thigh leather gambeson and leather skullcap.
- c. Any combatant using force sufficient to bruise or injure an opponent will, after sufficient warning, be removed from the field.

2. Educational goals

- a. Refinement of techniques in defense, accuracy, and speed.
- b. Continued development in the graces of chivalric combat, honorable conduct, and etiquette both on and off the field.
- c. Advanced techniques of melee combat and working in small unit teams.

D Division (ages 16 and 17) Orcas

1 Blow calibration

- a. Standard Trimarian calibration with an emphasis on calling minimum strength blows will be taught.
- b. Any combatant using excessive force or striking with the intent to injure an opponent will, after one warning, be removed from the field.

2. Educational goals

- a. Refinement of techniques in defense, accuracy, and speed.
- b. Continued development in the graces of chivalric combat, honorable conduct, and etiquette both on and off the field.
- c. Advanced techniques of melee combat and working in small unit teams.
- d. Emphasis should be placed on leadership and subordinate duties in the melee and large group tactics.

Weapon Standards

All youth combat weapons (Divisions A-C) are made with PVC piping as the core with dense foam pipe insulation covering all striking surfaces. This makes a weapon that is light enough not to cause serious injuries but sturdy enough for it to hold up to hard use. The PVC cannot be filled. It must remain empty. Using a weapon that has been weighted is grounds to have the fighter removed from youth combat fighting permanently. No weapon can weigh more than 2lbs.

Construction Standards

To make the weapons, first start by cutting the PVC pipe to the proper length. The open ends of the PVC are then capped with Schedule 40 end caps with the end caps glued on with PVC glue. The bare PVC then is taped with strapping tape from end cap to end cap.

The foam used for weapon blades is pipe insulation for a 1" copper pipe, 1 1/8" inside dia. with 1/2" wall. There are two sizes of insulation for 1" copper pipe, we use the thicker one.

The foam will then be put on covering the blade of the weapon and extending 1 1/2" beyond the end of the end cap. The foam will then be loosely covered with duct tape, lengthwise not spirally wrapped. Wrapping spirally adds extra weight and compresses the foam so the weapon will have less padding. The duct tape should extend pass the end of the foam onto the handle to secure the foam to the weapon.

Take a 1 1/2" wide piece of foam and roll it. The roll is then stuffed into the opening left by the foam-extending pass the end of the PVC. The tip is then covered with duct tape.

A contrasting color tape is used to mark the edge of the blade. Grip tape can be added to the hilt or handle of the weapon to hide the strapping tape.

Single-handed Swords

- (1) Made from $\frac{3}{4}$ " schedule 40 PVC . This is the lighter weight thin walled PVC commonly available.
- (2) The bare PVC must have glued on end caps and the length taped with strapping tape.
- (3) The blade or striking surface will be padded with foam pipe insulation for a 1" copper pipe and then loosely covered with duct tape.
- (4) Basket hilts can be made of foam, foam-covered plastic, or leather. No metal.
- (5) Must have a lanyard.
- (6) The pommel, or handle end, must be padded in the same way as the blade tip.

Great sword

- (1) Made from $\frac{3}{4}$ " schedule 40 PVC. This is the heavier weight PVC commonly available.
- (2) The bare PVC must have glued on end caps and the length taped with strapping tape.
- (3) The blade or striking surface will be padded with foam pipe insulation for a 1" copper pipe and then loosely covered with duct tape.
- (4) The Quillon or cross bar must be padded in the same way as the blade.
- (5) No butt spikes. The pommel, or handle end, must be padded in the same way as the blade tip.
- (6) Basket hilts or gauntlets must be used.
- (7) Basket hilts can be made of foam, foam-covered plastic, or leather. No metal.
- (8) Maximum length is 5 feet.

Glaive

- (1) Made from 1" schedule 40 PVC. This is the heavier weight PVC commonly available.
- (2) The bare PVC must have glued on end caps and the length taped with strapping tape.
- (3) The blade or striking surface will be padded with foam pipe insulation for a 1" copper pipe and then loosely covered with duct tape.
- (4) (Striking surfaces on two-handed weapons shall have a minimum width of 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. No two-handed weapon shall weigh more than 3 pounds.
- (5) No butt spikes. The butt must be padded in the same way as the blade.
- (6) A contrasting tape mark will be placed on the handle, $\frac{1}{3}$ the length of the glaive.
- (7) The fighter using the glaive will have one hand above the mark and one hand below the mark. This prevents the fighter from swinging the glaive like a baseball bat.
- (8) Gauntlets must be worn as hand protection.
- (9) Maximum length is 6 feet.
- (10) Glaives are allowed to have thrusting tips

Spear

- (1) Made from 1" schedule 40 PVC. This is the heavier weight PVC commonly available.
- (2) The bare PVC must have glued on end caps and the length taped with strapping tape.
- (3) All Spears must have a thrusting tip leather or rubber, covering the last 12 inches of the PVC on the thrusting end. Foam and tape to be a minimum 2 and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter and extend 3 inches past PVC. Striking tip shall also include one half split tennis ball end or equivalent over foam on end.
- (4) Spears require inspection for wear and cracks immediately before each use.

Thrusting tips for swords and glaives are the same : The fun noodle is slid on to the PVC so that two inches are on the PVC and two inches extend past it and is filled with foam just like the sword tip. Do not slice the fun noodle to make it easier to slide on to the PVC. If you spray the PVC with glass cleaner it will temporarily make the PVC slippery

enough to get the fun noodle on. The whole thrusting tip must be taped in a contrasting color tape. (If you have a gray blade on your glaive and use red tape to mark the blade edge then use red tape to mark the whole four inches of the thrusting tip.)

Division D Orcas

. Weapon standards

- a. Standard Trimarian conventions for rattan weapons will be followed with the exception of the following:
 - 1. Fiberglass spears are not allowed.
 - 2. The use of projectile weapons is not allowed.

Shield Standards Division A-C Jellyfish – Piranhas - Barracudas

- a. Shields may not be used as offensive weapons.
- b. Shields will be constructed of wood. 1/4" plywood is the minimum thickness, or material of equivalent wight and density.
- c. All edges must be protected by tubing or leather and covered with foam. Foam pipe insulation is suggested.
- d. Shield size should be proportional in size to the user.
- e. All edges and surfaces shall be free of cracks and splinters. There should be no projecting points, bolts, etc. Any such projections must be covered by a minimum of several layers of duct tape.
- f. Bosses with no sharp projections or right angles are allowed.

Shield standards Division D Orcas

- a. Standard Triamrian Heavy weapons conventions for shields will be followed.

Minimum Required Armor

Division A-B Mild steel 18ga, Jellyfish - Piranhas

Head – Marshalate-approved helm with face protection. Head

Helms can be made from many different materials; the following is a list of those materials and the minim thickness:

Plastic Commercially produced street hockey/ ice hockey/ lacrosse helmets are legal for use, however some attempt should be made to cover their non-period appearance.

Aluminum and other metals may be used as long as they are equivalent to Mild steel 18ga,

Helm Construction

The joints or seams of a metal helm must be either welded or riveted with a spacing of no more then 2.5 inches.

There shall be no major internal projections and the helm shall be padded with closed cell foam. All helms must have a chinstrap.

All helms must have a face guard that prevents standard youth combat weapons from entering any of the face guard openings. The bars of a face guard shall be no less than 1/8 inch in diameter steel with no more than 6 inches unsupported or its equivalent. A street hockey mask uses smaller bars but they have less than 2 inches of unsupported bar work, so it is equivalent to 1/8-inch steel bars with a 6 inch unsupported section.

A helmet with a wire facemask from such sports as Street Hockey and Lacrosse are acceptable provided that the facemask will not allow youth combat weapons to enter and some attempt at a period appearance is made.

Helms made for youth combat must be marked with a one-inch high letter "Y" in the bottom rear of the helm, unless the helm meets S.C.A. heavy combat standards. The "Y" must be permanently marked on the helm. It can be welded in, deeply etched on, drilled in, but not painted.

The marshal has the right and duty to test any helm that is in questioned for safety reasons. Two suggestions for a quick test is to have one person hold the helm and have a adult marshal strike the helm with a youth combat sword hard on the face guard and side of the helm. The next test is to take the helm and throw it at the ground (grass not concrete) with the helm landing on the side and the face guard. There should be no major damage from these tests to the helm. Dents are fine.

Neck

A gorget covering the larynx and cervical vertebrae is required. It should be a minimum of lightweight leather backed by foam.

Torso

A heavy sweatshirt, padded tunic, or gambeson must be worn. It is recommended that females wear breast protection. For females' separate breast cups are prohibited unless connected by, or mounted upon, an interconnecting rigid piece.

Groin

For males an athletic cup is required. Females are to wear female style protection; they cannot use a male style cup.

Legs

Legs must be covered either with War Skirt or Pants. Kneepads must be worn. Sturdy shoes, no bare feet or sandals allowed

Arms and Hands

Elbow pads must be worn. The hand must be protected by a light glove and; a basket hilt, shield basket, or similar protection. When not so protected, as when using a glaive, then a heavy padded glove or gauntlet must be worn. A street hockey glove is adequate as a gauntlet.

Division C Barracudas

Head– Marshallate-approved helm with face protection. Helmets with wire facemasks from sports such as hockey and lacrosse are acceptable provided that some attempt has been made to give them the appearance of period headgear. A covering of light leather or cloth attached to the helmet is suggested. A chinstrap is required. Spacing on helm bars should be adequate to prevent weapon from hitting face (1 inch is suggested). If making or buying a helm for a youth combat fighter, be aware that the young body is still developing and cannot be expected to support a 12-pound helm. 18 gauge mild steel or stainless steel is adequate protection and should be light enough for the youth to support.

Neck – Gorget covering the larynx and cervical vertebrae is required. Minimum of medium leather backed with ½ inch closed cell foam padding.

Torso – Must be covered by shirt, tunic, bodice, etc. Kidney protection is required. Minimum of medium leather backed with ½ inch closed cell foam that sufficiently covers the kidney area and ‘floating’ ribs. Females must have adequate breast protection. A quilted gambeson is acceptable as a minimum. Arms – Elbow protection is required. Foam pads covered with medium leather or plastic reinforced ‘street hockey’ pads are sufficient for elbow joint protection.

Legs – Legs must be covered either with War Skirt or Pants.. Minimum of lightweight cloth. Knee protection is required. Foam pads covered with medium leather or plastic reinforced ‘street hockey’ pads are sufficient for knee joint protection. Sturdy shoes are required, no open-toed shoes, sandals, or brightly colored tennis shoes are allowed.

Groin – For males an athletic cup is required. Females are to wear female style protection; they cannot use a male style cup.

Hands - Light gloves are required for hands protected by basket hilts or shield baskets. Minimum of medium leather gauntlets or hockey gloves are required for use with two handed weapons or weapons without basket hilts.

Recommended Armor

- a. A full padded coif.
- b. Vambraces made of medium leather or the equivalent to cover the forearm area.
- c. Cuisses made of medium leather or the equivalent to cover the thigh area.

Division D Orcas

Standard Trimarian minimum heavy weapons required armor

CONVENTIONS OF COMBAT

1. Each combatant shall keep control over his or her temper at all times.
2. Combatants shall behave in a courteous, honorable, and chivalrous manner at all times.
3. The instructions of the marshal shall be followed at all times. Should a safety hazard occur, the marshal shall call “HOLD” and all combat, activity, and talking on the field should stop immediately, while the marshal corrects the situation.
4. Combatants must accept any blow that hits them if it is fair and honorable, clean and not blocked, and a purposely-delivered shot.
5. No combatant will accept or deliver any blows to the groin, from 2 inches above the knee to the tips of the toes and from 1 inch 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 that arm or leg, and the arm or leg may not be used. The knee of an ‘injured’ leg must remain in contact with the ground at all times.
7. The Youth Combat list field will not be used to settle disputes, nor can anyone be forced to participate in Youth Combat activities.
8. An angry combatant should leave the field with honor intact.

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

- Walking around an opponent with an 'injured' leg in order to gain an advantage over him or her.
- Hitting an opponent from behind in tournament or melee combat. Any blows from behind shall not count.
- Hitting an opponent who cannot defend him or herself. Such as but not limited to an opponent without a weapon, or on the ground.
- Intentionally becoming 'helpless' by repeatedly dropping weapons, falling down, purposefully ignoring valid attempts to gain a combatant's attention, etc.
- Grappling (wrestling with) or kicking an opponents equipment or person.
- Intentionally moving an illegal target into the path of a blow.
- Hitting with excessive force or intent to injure.
- Refusing to acknowledge blows.
- Using a weapon or other piece of equipment in a manner that it was not intended for or an otherwise forbidden manner.

PARENT / LEGAL GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Legal Guardian for the purposes of Youth Combat is meant to construe a court appointed legal guardian or other permanent guardian other than a parent. The normal SCA event definition of legal guardian (i.e. responsibility for a friend's child over the weekend, as an example) is not sufficient for Youth Combat purposes. For a minor to participate in Youth Combat, a parent or a court appointed legal guardian must be physically present at the fighting field for the duration of that minor's participation.

2. Parents/legal guardians are to understand that this is a contact sport and injuries may occur.

3. At least one parent/legal guardian must be present at all times while the youth is involved in Youth Combat (official fighter practice, tournament, melee). 'Present' is defined as within visual and vocal range of the child, and attentive to the Youth Combat activity. The youth or Marshal on the field should be able to find the parent/legal guardian immediately. The combatant and the parent/legal guardian are recommended to wear the same heraldic colors to aid in recognition.

4. The parent/legal guardian present is to have the youth's authorization card or paperwork in his/her possession at all times when Youth Combat activities are occurring.

5. Parents/legal guardians are to behave in a courteous and responsible manner at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, not 'heckling' the marshal or combatants, accepting the decision of the marshal (or at least politely disputing that decision through the proper channels, etc).

6. Parents/legal guardians are responsible for the youth's safety, with the YCAM in charge of the armoring/safety process.

7. Parents/legal guardians are required to read and understand the guidelines set forth in this handbook and to make sure that the child follows them.

DEFINITIONS

ABS: Rigid plastic commonly used to make barrels.

Armor inspection: having the marshal look at your armor to make sure it follows the rules.

Authorize: having a marshal make sure you can do it right and safely.

Blow: when a weapon hits you.

Blow calibration: knowing how hard a blow has to hit you (and how hard you have to hit someone else) in order for the blow to count.

Chivalrous: behaving correctly i.e., being polite and respectful of others, following the rules, helping whenever you can, etc.

Closed cell foam: shock absorbing foam such as Armorflex insulation or camping bedrolls.

Coif: drape of heavy material, chain mail, leather, etc. that hangs all around the bottom of a helm to a persons shoulders.

Combatant: a person who is fighting.

Equivalent: having the same impact resistance.

Excessive force: hitting too hard.

Grappling: wrestling with your opponent or his or her equipment.

Helpless opponent: someone who cannot defend himself or herself.

Illegal target: part of the body that is not allowed to be hit.

Injured limb: an arm or leg that has taken a blow from a weapon.

Killing blow: an accepted blow to the head or body.

Kydex: rigid plastic commonly used in street hockey pads that is easily shaped at low temperature.

Light gloves: hand protection made from thin (2-4 oz.) leather or canvas.

Light leather: 4-6 oz. or approximately 3/32" thick vegetable tanned leather.

List mistress or master: the person who keeps records of the fights in a tournament.

Marshal: the person in charge of the fighting who keeps everything safe.

Medium leather: 7-9 oz. or approximately 1/8" thick vegetable tanned leather.

Melee: Fighting between two or more groups of people.

Mouth Guard: plastic guard used to protect a person's teeth.

Pipe insulation: closed cell foam that can be used to cover Youth Combat weapons and edge shields. Can be found in the plumbing section of hardware stores.

PVC: a flexible plastic pipe, usually white, Schedule 40 (600psi) is the type that is used as the base material for Youth Combat weapons. Can be found in the plumbing section of hardware stores.

Tournament: a series of fights that determines a winner.

Siloflex: a flexible plastic pipe, usually black, that can be used as the base material for Youth Combat weapons.