

Toward Worthy Modern Chivalric Deeds of Arms: THE DEKOVEN CONCORD

A Governing Covenant for Conducting Chivalric Deeds of Arms GOAL

In keeping with the chivalric nature of the medieval deeds of arms that inspire us, we resolve to display the reconstructed arts that we study to the best of our ability in an historically evocative environment echoing that used by the original practitioners, while using appropriate equipment within a sportive context under the governance of the host and giving conscious attention to the chivalric virtues.

This document consists of the Goal (above), Conventions (sections headed with “we expect that”) which are the basic “rules”, Glosses (within single-line boxes) which are explanations of rules and notes on areas in which unanimous agreement among signatories is absent (and thus more likely to change from deed to deed) and Specifications (within double-line boxes) which are armor and weapon specifics potentially subject to change as needed.

CONVENTIONS

REGARDING DISPLAYING THE RECONSTRUCTED ARTS

We expect that

- Combatants will have training in one or more medievally-based fighting arts, preferably with a focus on historical armored combat as depicted in existing *fechtbücher* and treatises.
- Combatants will have experience in executing the art which they study and will strive to stay within the parameters of that art.
- Combatants will have experience in wearing and fighting in armor.
- Combatants will give and receive proper strikes.
- Combatants will understand that a deed of arms is an opportunity to display skill and honor, not a venue to display brute power or ruthlessness.

Glosses on Displaying Reconstructed Arts

Executing the Art

Those who do not stay within the parameters of their art should not expect to be singled out as worthy.

Experience

Combatants should not be fighting in harness for the first time at a deed, except if they are entered into a “squire’s list.” See Appropriate Equipment: Squires List.

Proper and Fair Strikes

To be deemed “proper,” a strike should be seen to be supported by body structure and to be using the blow mechanics needed for that weapon to work against the protection on the target. See Weapons Efficacy.

Insufficiently delivered (weak and/or poorly structured) blows will not be counted as “fair blows.”

Displaying Skill and Honor

Excessive power in blows is brutality.

Powerful strikes to “immune” targets will be considered unnecessary force and, thus, brutality.

Striking an unresisting opponent after they have fallen to the ground or when they have backed away to acknowledge a blow is improper and likely to be deemed ruthless.

Those who display brutality or ruthlessness should expect to be warned and possibly to be ejected from the deed.

All combatants recognize and acknowledge, regardless of their armor choices and prior training, that armored combat is a rough game that can result in injury. The choice to participate means that risk of injury has been voluntarily assumed.

REGARDING EVOKING AN HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT

We expect that

- The deed will take place in a formal manner within a discrete field, called the “list.”
- A boundary enclosure of rope supported by uprights is a minimum. A mediievally styled barrier fence is preferred.
 - An outer boundary creating a “safe zone” between any audience and the list boundary proper is preferred.
- The default format of a deed to be one in which the combatants are divided into two teams: the “tenans,” who hold the field, and the “venans,” who come to challenge the tenans. Typically the division of fighters between the teams will be determined by the host/presider, who often picks the tenan team.
- The fighting portion of the deed should have a formal opening and closure.
 - The combatants in a paired match (called a “bout”) should be introduced before they fight.
 - The weapons they use and any restrictions or modifications to the default rules should be announced.
 - The weapons in use in a bout should be mutually agreed upon by the combatants, subject to the chief marshal’s approval.
 - At the end of the bout, the victor should be announced.
- The deed will be performed as paired matches, each fought to a conclusion. See Historically Based Bout Conclusions.
- The deed will be controlled and monitored by a chief marshal and such assistants as needed/desired under the direction of the host and/or presider.
 - The deed should include such assistants as necessary in order to ensure the safety of combatants and spectators.
- The deed will take place surrounded with a modicum of pageantry.
 - All deed participants are encouraged to have a certain minimum of personal kit to convey their supposed station.
 - The deed will take place with suitable display of heraldry/affiliation.
 - The host is encouraged to have one or more identifying flags or banners to display.

Glosses on an Historical Environment

RECOMMENDED FOR COMBATANTS

Beyond **armor and weapons**, a combatant, we recommend:

A **non-modern, preferably historical reproduction style, seat** for themselves to occupy between bouts and from which they may view the bouts while staying out of the way of those working to keep the deed moving efficiently.

An **identifying flag or banner** to display. Each combatant should also have the necessary means for that flag or banner to stand upright. So-called "portable holes," while not medieval, are unobtrusive and easily to emplace and thus are acceptable for supporting flags and banners.

A **non-modern, preferably historical reproduction style, drinking vessel** for receiving water.

A "**squire**" to help with arming, disarming, handling water and refreshments, supplying required weapons and such other duties as necessary to keep the deed efficiently moving.

RECOMMENDED FOR THE DEED

A **table for display of helms**.

An **arms rack**, while not medieval, is extremely useful for the efficient and tidy running of a deed.

The presider should try to arrange the presence of **additional squires** to aid in keeping things moving.

The presider should choose one from among all squires present to be "**captain of the squires**" to coordinate their efforts.

Tabards for heralds.

Tabards or tunics for assistants if they lack other suitable clothing of a medieval style.

THE MARSHALS

The **chief marshal shall serve as referee**, starting and ending bouts and counting well struck blows, calling each out as a fair blow.

The **chief marshal should check to confirm** that all combatants are wearing appropriate armor and using appropriate weapons.

As necessary, **assistant marshals** shall aid the chief marshal in his duties, including the judgment of well struck blows given where the chief marshal does not have a good line of sight.

If sufficient personal are available, one assistant should be assigned to each combatant to watch for blows against that combatant.

All marshals shall act to insure the safety of spectators, assistants, and combatants.

A **marshal shall have a staff or pole arm** for use in guiding and separating fighters and, if necessary, intercepting stray blows.

Keeping things on schedule is the job of a chief marshal, working with the presider.

Scheduling should allow all combatants sufficient time to arm in order that all may be present, in harness, for the opening of the deed.

THE HERALD

The **herald's job** will be to:

Introduce the deed of arms, stating its goals and purpose.

Introduce combatants as they take the field, announcing any restrictions or special considerations for their bout.

Announce the victor of a bout once the chief marshal declares the bout concluded.

Conclude the deed of arms, announcing the First Among Equals, if one is chosen.

REGARDING APPROPRIATE EQUIPMENT

We expect that

- Safety trumps authenticity.
 - Combatants are expected to wear modern elements of protection to provide a safety margin where historical kit does not. Such elements should be concealed or as inconspicuous as possible.
- Combatants will wear a complete, historically styled suite of armor suitable to a person of rank.
 - Whereas we envision our deed of arms to be in emulation of those historical ones that would be fought by gentlemen (and, modernly, gentlewomen) in a time when showing one's wealth was important, combatants should wear full armor that covers all points of the body.
- Combatants will each have their armor composed of elements that belong together chronologically.
 - A combatant's armor should suit a year between 1370 and 1490.
 - A combatant's armor should be styled to a single, historical period, drawing on references no more than 10 years to either side of the chosen date.
- Combatants will have armor that fits well and is well maintained.
 - Armor should fit its wearer so as to function properly and safely.
 - Rusty steel is not well-maintained and does not fit the ideal of suitable display.
- The regulations for a particular deed's armor will be announced in advance.
 - Armor may be treated as "worn," in which case fair blows shall be counted according to the Weapon Efficacy guidelines laid out herein.
 - As an alternative, armor may be treated as "safety equipment," in which case all blows with all weapons shall be deemed fair blows.
- Weapons will be styled after historical models. Thus, within the bounds of safety, all weapons should resemble historical weapons in materials and appearance.
- Use of any weapon is at the discretion of the chief marshal.
- Use of particular weapons in combination with particular armors is at the discretion of the chief marshal.
 - This is intended to prevent someone from using a weapon that may be unsafe against lighter armors.

Glosses on Appropriate Equipment

APPROPRIATE COMPLETE ARMOR

Preferred armor for these deeds of arms should be **from the period when plate harness predominated**, which is to say from the latter part of the fourteenth century, when near complete harnesses of plate were common, to the end of the fifteenth century, when armored fighting began to be less relevant to the battlefield.

We do not see these events as a “war situation,” where a fighter might make different kit decisions because war is not single combat nor are these events brawls between foot soldiers where any mishmash of armor might show up. Thus, **a near complete harness of plate is expected**. However, see also Squires List.

Preferred by far is **armor with a historical basis** as found in survivals or in art that depicts a clear representation. However, this provision does not intend to allow armors that would overly compromise participant safety. Any attempt to represent such an armor may require additional elements or modern reinforcements before being used.

VARIOUS ARMORS IN USE

Using “armor as worn” means that different weapons will have different abilities to deal “fair blows” against various armor types.

This approach requires more experience on the part of marshals and they should be appropriately trained for their role.

Using “armor as safety equipment” essentially results in an unarmored fight conducted while wearing armor. We feel this does not represent armored combat as depicted in existing *fechtbücher* and treatises and thus should be chosen only for specific purposes to represent specific forms of tournament combat.

There may be chronological mismatches between combatants’ armor in a bout. We expect all to acknowledge that this can result in differential targeting opportunities and accept that challenge.

WEAPONS CHOICES

The **weapons in use** for deeds of arms are traditionally the **spear, poleax, sword, and dagger**.

At the discretion of the host/presider, the allowed weapons may vary.

Any such deviations should be announced to prospective combatants before the deed.

Historically, some deeds restricted the weapons in use. A host/presider wishing to emulate such a deed may do so. Any such restrictions should be announced to prospective combatants before the deed.

“SQUIRES LIST”

A host/provider may wish to offer a **“Squires List” for less experienced and/or less well-equipped participants** wherein the armor requirements are relaxed or even mandated at a lesser level. Historically, squires were expected to have lighter, less protective equipment, such as mail being the primary protection for the body.

A Squires List offers a better opportunity to portray “unarmored” combat, if that is a desired goal.

In a Squires List, fighters shall have:

Steel helmets and gauntlets.

Hard protection for the knees and elbows of hardened leather at a minimum. If this protection is modern equipment, it should be concealed beneath period appropriate clothing.

Athletic cup (males) and rigid chest protection (females) are required for safety.

Protection for the torso and arms is strongly recommended. A padded garment is the minimum.

Torso protection (a breastplate, coat-of-plates, brigandine or placket) is strongly recommended. If such is modern, it should be concealed.

Hardened vambraces are highly recommended.

REGARDING ARMOR

We expect that

- A combatant's principal protection will be of steel plate and cover the greater portions of his/her head, torso, and limbs. This is the sort of armor worn by persons of rank during the height of chivalric deeds in armor while armored combat was also a viable option on the battlefield. See also *Appropriate Equipment: Squires List*.
- Not all combatants are interested in wearing armor from the same time period. Such individual choice in historical inspiration for armor styling will lead to differences in target coverage and protection.
- That "armor as worn," whatever armor a combatant actually wears, will be judged to fall into one of three generalized categories: Unprotected, Light Armor and Heavy Armor. These categories define how weapons can strike fair blows. See *Weapon Efficacy*. Layered armor upon a given point is not "additive" and shall count as the most protective category covering that point.
 - Since it is not possible to determine the actual effectiveness of real blows with real weapons against real armor without using real equipment in real circumstances, there can be great disagreement about the effects of weapons. Thus, we acknowledge that some presiders may choose to introduce "incapacitating blows" as a category of fair bows.
 - Incapacitating blows only come into play if the deed is using the "One combatant is rendered incapable" bout conclusion where the default "incapacitating blow" is that any strike to an Unprotected target. However, a presider may wish to limit the effects of incapacity to certain anatomical targets where the damage done, were real weapons involved and safety equipment not present, would be a more likely fight-ender. For example, a thrust to an Unprotected face is a likely fight-ender.
- In order to be more inclusive of combatants, certain changes to the Concord's provisions may be made at the discretion of the host and presider. See *Appropriate Equipment: Squires List*.
 - We accept that the time frame for suitable harnesses may be extended to as early as 1350, before which the dynamic of armored combat is very different, and as late as 1550, which would extend the time range into a period when arranged deeds of arms were more sportive than combative. Doing this will likely increase the challenge of mismatched target zones for paired combatants arising from harnesses with different levels of coverage and/or protection.
 - The time frame may likewise be restricted to a narrower span for a more historical overall presentation.
 - Combatants may elect to wear a less protective armor, such as shinbalds instead of closed greaves. While this is not "full armor," the practice is well documented. Combatants are expected to make such choices based on historical precedent rather than improved sportive performance.
 - Combatants may elect to use modern materials to stand in for period materials (i.e. a plastic breastplate). If such choices are acceptable to the host/presider, they must be suitably hidden beneath period styled clothing. Persons using such equipment should understand that, by abandoning the burden of real armor, they are setting themselves at an advantage against those who accept that burden. This will affect any deliberations on the worthiness of the said combatant's performance.

- Footwear with a minimal tread will be worn and will not have a blatantly modern appearance from a spectator’s viewing distance.
 - Non-historical footwear should be black and generally unobtrusive or hidden beneath sabatons or mail coverings.
 - Hiking shoes and similar items with pronounced tread are forbidden as they can “lock” a foot into the ground and cause serious injury if the leg is then subjected to force.
 - Combatants may elect to not wear sabatons. While this is not “full armor,” the practice is well documented.

ARMOR CATEGORIES

Unprotected: This is anything (including required modern equipment that protects gaps in a combatant’s armor) that does not fall into the other armor categories, and includes soft leather and lightly padded and unpadded cloth. It also specifically includes perforated steel plate (such as used in a “Tindall hat” fencing mask). Any blow struck against an Unprotected target is a fair blow.

Light Armor: This is mail (which, being the default exemplar, is often used as a shorthand term for the category), properly hardened leather, properly constructed padded garments and other armors. Unless otherwise specified, Light Armor is proof against cuts but vulnerable to thrusts.

Heavy Armor: This is steel or iron plate, whether hardened or not. Armor of small plates, properly overlapped, can also count as Heavy. Unless otherwise specified, Heavy Armor is proof against all blows.

WEAPON EFFICACY

The conventions for fair blows against armor are:

Daggers strike fair blows with the point against Unprotected and Light Armor, and are ineffective against Heavy Armor.

Spears strike fair blows with the point against Unprotected and Light Armor, and are ineffective against Heavy Armor.

Swords strike fair blows with the point against Unprotected and Light Armor, and are ineffective against Heavy Armor.

Swords strike fair blows with the edge against Unprotected but the edge is ineffective against Light and Heavy Armor.

Poleaxes strike fair blows with their head and foot points against Unprotected and Light Armor, and are ineffective against Heavy Armor.

Poleaxes strike fair blows with the hammer/blade and with the back spike against Unprotected, Light and Heavy Armor.

Portions of weapons that are blunt in real weapons do not strike fair blows against Light or Heavy Armor, but may be used to set up follow on strikes/techniques.

REGARDING SPORTIVE CONTEXT

We expect that

- Combatants will follow all rules formulated for a given deed of arms.
- Combatants compete, and continue to compete, at the pleasure of the host, the presider and/or the chief marshal.
- Combatants will accept the authority of the marshals and other presiding persons without complaint.
 - Combatants should accept all calls by the marshals while on the field. We do not expect combatants to talk back to the marshals save to request the recall of a judgement against their opponent.
- The interaction of weapons and armor will follow the Weapon Efficacy conventions herein. If the host wishes to deviate from the Weapon Efficacy definitions, changes must be explicitly detailed and said changes shall be made known to all participants in advance of the day of the deed.
- Bouts shall be completed when an appropriate conclusion is achieved using the list of historically based conclusions to encounters in deeds of arms provided herein.
- More force, or better structure, is needed against armored targets and less against unprotected targets.
 - We fully expect that combatants will strike blows with appropriate control of force.
 - Because different weapons have different performance characteristics, we expect that combatants will moderate their force to suit the application.
 - Because not all combatants are created equal, we expect that their application of force against different opponents and in different circumstances may vary in appearance and effect.
 - Striking against targets, especially faces, protected by equipment classed as Unprotected need not be made with the force used against an armored target. So, for example, a sliding spear thrust can score against an Unprotected target while it would lack the structure to penetrate an armored target.
 - Striking against truly unprotected targets must be done with controlled application of force or be considered ruthless or brutal.
- Judgement will be used on the part of the marshals in recognizing what is sufficient for a "fair blow."
- No combatant will be compelled to fight with or against any weapon (or opponent) that said combatant deems to pose an unacceptable risk.
- Any combatant may, without reproof, request a limitation of targets/blows struck due to lack of or inadequate armor or due to concern for a pre-existing physical condition.
- There is more to a deed of arms than winning the most bouts. Thus, at the conclusion of the fighting, combatants shall meet in conclave to determine who among them best displayed fidelity to the goals and ideals of the deed of arms, said person to be named First Among Equals that day.
- All understand that invitations to one particular deed do not constitute anything more than invitation to that particular deed.

Glosses on Appropriate Equipment

COMPETING AT THE HOST'S PLEASURE

Competing **“at the host’s pleasure”** means that **the guys in charge can throw a person out** of the deed. We expect they will do so when someone violates the letter or spirit of the Concord or the rules.

APPROPRIATE CONCLUSIONS

The Concord allows for **hosts and presiders to make choices in how a deed will be performed.**

Therefore, they may restrict some choices. This environment means that the rules may be different from deed to deed, and we expect that all participants will ensure that they understand any changes from the base expectations.

Participants should be informed before the deed concerning what modifications are in play at a deed they are attending and that they will follow the rules for the day.

A widely held interpretation of the conventions is to call a stop to re-set a bout if the combatants are resorting to wrestling for an extended period of time. The exact time period allowed is debated.

Allowing a combatant to drop his last weapon in attempt to achieve a bout conclusion in the brief duration allowed for wrestling is an option. However, if no significant conclusion is reached in the time allowed, the disarmed combatant should count as disarmed and thus lose the bout.

SUFFICIENT “FAIR BLOWS”

One standard of judgement is to see displacement of the target area.

Another standard is to observe a visible bend in the weapon, either because the attacker is solidly structured or because the target has advanced into or braced against the strike.

FIGHTING WITH OR AGAINST A WEAPON

If the issue is a weapon, the combatant may simply **express the wish to “not fight with that.”** Reasons need not be given. The combatants should choose a different weapon.

If the opponent is the issue, the declining combatant may simply **express a wish to “not have this fight.”** Reasons need not be given. Other pairings should be found for the combatants.

If a significant number of the combatants do not wish to fight with or against a particular weapon, the chief marshal should withdraw it from use.

If a significant number of the combatants do not wish to fight against a particular combatant, the chief marshal should consider requesting the combatant in question to withdraw for the day.

FIRST AMONG EQUALS

The size of the conclave can vary. If so, it’s form should be announced before the deed begins.

The preferred form, as favored by the Companions of the Seven Swords, is a “private conclave” wherein the tenants conduct the conclave themselves to ensure that their goals and standards are the basis of any decisions.

Groups electing private conclave are **encouraged to accept input from the other participating fighters** as to what they were impressed by on the day.

The alternative form is to open the conclave to the whole of the participants.

We do expect that the conclave will also **name any individuals whose performance, in accord to the goals and ideals of the Concord, was also worthy of note.** For example, the Companions of the Seven Swords use awards for Prowess (notable martial performance), Panoply (notable physical presentation), and Diligence (notable work in making the deed run well).

HISTORICALLY BASED BOUT CONCLUSIONS

It is recommended that all of the historically based bout conclusions be in play for a deed of arms. However, we recognize that site conditions may require one or more to be disallowed. Similarly, attempts to emulate a particular form of deed might require the elimination or modification of one or more conclusion options.

The agreed upon number of fair blows have been struck.

- A "fair blow" is one which would score against the armor, or lack thereof, against which it is targeted.
- The number of blows to be counted varied historically. Five blows, in total, is a good number for well-paced bouts.

One combatant is driven from the field.

- If both combatants fall from the list at the same time, the bout is halted momentarily and the combatants returned to a standing position in the middle of the lists before combat resumes.
- If a combatant willfully leaves the lists, said combatant is effectively calling for quarter and yields the bout to the opponent.

One combatant is disarmed of their last weapon.

One combatant is thrown to the ground with the other in clear control of the situation, such as by remaining standing.

- Once a combatant is on the ground, a follow-up blow by the opponent is neither necessary or desired.
- If both are carried to the ground and one combatant does not immediately establish a position of dominance, the bout is halted momentarily and the combatants returned to a standing position in the middle of the lists before combat resumes.
- Slipping or tripping is not considered a bout conclusion.

One combatant achieves a secure bind upon the other.

- Combatants and marshals are expected to recognize when a hold is achieved. Holds that are destructive of bones or soft tissue should not be taken to completion.

One Combatant is rendered unable to continue.

- This may come from injury, but it may also be declared if the chief marshal or the marshal in charge of the bout decides it is unsafe for a combatant to continue.

Combatants reach exhaustion.

- The marshal, upon observing this, is expected to call a halt to the bout.
- Exhaustion can be predefined by applying a time limit to a bout. This can be useful a deed intended to have a more sportive context or must take place within a specified time limit.

One combatant calls for quarter and yields the bout to their opponent.

- The marshal is expected to alert to such calls and declare an immediate cessation of the bout.

REGARDING THE GOVERNANCE OF THE HOST

We expect that

- A host is the person or organization running an event or providing the venue.
- The host will provide a suitably enclosed space for the combat and sufficient surrounding space for the participants to conduct the deed.
- A host may elect to modify certain elements of the conventions.
- A host will designate a presider for the deed.
 - If the host is an individual, the host may function as the presider.
- The presider will consult on the list of candidate combatants with any groups associated with the deed (such as a group designated to stand as the tenants) as well as with the host, to determine who is suitable. The presider may allow a sponsored group to select candidates for inclusion.
- The presider will issue the Invitation for the deed well in advance of the date of the deed, a fortnight (14 days) is traditional but a bit short for modern traveling and event organizing schedules. This may take the form of private invitations to pre-selected combatants, a public call for combatants, or some combination of the two.

Glosses on an the Governance of the Host

MODIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE CONVENTIONS

Foremost among such modifications are those which serve to suit a particular ambiance, such as by restricting the time frame, and thus of allowed armor elements, in order to represent a period-specific event or by modifying the allowed techniques or bout conclusions to deliberately mimic a particular historical event. Changes may also be made to serve a particular educational end.

A deed commemorating a particular historical event should restrict the time frame for allowable armor to the time frame of the historical event.

A particular deed might restrict weapon choice. For example, a restriction to spear, sword and dagger is well documented.

A particular deed may be done so as to “fight over the barriers” and thus need to include a barrier across which the combatants must fight.

We expect the host’s choices in any restrictions or changes made for a deed may also need to reflect requirements based on legal restraints and/or restrictions due to the venue.

THE INVITATION

Invitations can be “open” and include any event attendees who wish to participate. Participating attendees will, of course, need appropriate equipment.

Invitations may be “closed” at the discretion of the host/presider. Closed invitational events should have their participants determined well before the event date.

REGARDING CHIVALRIC VIRTUES

We expect that

- All participants will hold themselves to the ideals of a chivalric person.
- Combatants will accept, without complaint, all blows as called upon them by the marshals.
- Each combatant will respect the honor of the marshals and all other combatants regarding the recognition of fair and proper blows.
- A pair of combatants may, by mutual agreement and for their exchange only, choose to add additional limits to either the style of blows or to the targets or to both. Any such change must be communicated to the bout officials *before* the bout begins.
- Combatants shall watch the bouts of their companions in the deed that they may be properly informed when choosing the First Among Equals for the day.
- That there shall be no prizes of significant monetary worth, save those intended to be given to a proper charitable organization, either to one set beforehand by the host of the deed as in the case of a fund raising endeavor or to one to be designated by the combatant chosen as First Among Equals as a privilege of having been deemed most worthy in the deed.

Glosses on an Chivalric Virtues

Regarding Chivalric Ideals

Don't be a jerk.

All participants should behave with courtesy and respect to all, participants and spectators alike.

Play nice and be polite, especially to spectators who are part of the general public and anyone officially associated with the host.

Regarding Called Blows

Do not argue over a call. Fight on.

Polite discussion after the bout will not reverse any results but may improve subsequent judging.

Each combatant should **acknowledge good blows** unrecognized by marshals.

Each combatant should **call out a good blow** if said combatant feels it, whether the marshals call it or not.

Each combatant should **deny any blows called upon their opponent** which were **not consistent with a fair and proper strike**. Upon hearing the marshal call such a blow in a combatant's favor, said combatant should deny the marshal's call. This is an **exception** to accepting whatever the marshal calls.

Regarding Prizes

The **restriction on prizes** exists because we do not wish to encourage greed to rule the day.

ARMOR SPECIFICATIONS

Helmets will be worn and will have full face protection.

Helmets should have minimal skull and side thickness 16 gauge steel. Mass is an important protective feature of helmets.

The use of "open-faced" helmets is allowed with the addition pierced steel plates to cover any open areas of a helmet. Such pierced plate is considered as Unprotected as far as armor goes.

Any opening in the visor must not allow a 1/4" x 1/2" bar to enter unimpeded in such a way that the wearer's face can be touched. Any other gaps in the helmet must not allow a 1/2" square bar unimpeded access to the wearer. Wider eye slots and other openings must be protected by pierced steel plate as a safety measure.

Pierced steel plate used as face protection, if of an historically appropriate style and size, will count as plate. Other types of pierced steel visors shall count as Light Armor.

A **mail shirt** will be worn that covers the armpit and any such areas of the torso not covered by plate. Besides being part of the definition of a person of rank's suitable armor, this mail is intended to provide a safety margin for the vulnerable and often targeted armpits.

Suitable separate items, such as voiders and separate skirts, that work with the combatant's plate armor are acceptable.

Combatants may choose to forego mail protection at the bend of the elbow or knee and accept the risks, both real and within the sportive context, of such lesser protection.

Mail will be made with riveted rings or alternating riveted and solid rings.

Mail sleeves must be secured at the "cuff" to prevent accidental entry of a thrust, and the shirt must be belted or otherwise secured at the waist.

A combatant's mail may, with permission of the host/presider, be welded or, in extremis, butted.

Steel gauntlets will be worn that protect the hand, fingers and wrist with a minimum of 18 gauge unhardened steel.

Solid neck protection for the cervical area, clavicles, and larynx will be worn, regardless of its historical suitability for the armor style chosen.

The preferred form of protection is a historical piece such as a plate gorget or bevor.

Neck protection may be of impact resistant modern materials. If so, it should be if concealed.

A mail pisane (standard) with a concealed trauma plate for the throat is acceptable.

A mail aventail alone is insufficient to protect the front of the throat (larynx).

Cloth or padded aventails without reinforcement are not suitable.

Other plate should be a minimum of 18 gauge unhardened steel.

MODERN REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

Groin protection (an athletic cup or "box") for men.

Solid chest protection for women. A modern plastic fencing plastron worn under the arming coat or gambeson is acceptable.

WEAPONS SPECIFICATIONS

Weapon Composition

Sword and **dagger blades** should be blunted steel.

Spear points should be steel.

Dagger, sword and **spear points** should be:

Either ball tipped, "nail" tipped, or covered with a blunting cap.

Have a minimum functional size of 3/8" by 5/8" whether it relies on an integral tip or a blunting cap.

Poleax heads should not be steel, but a flexible material.

Shafts of spears and poleaxes should be of hardwood.

Butt spikes on spears and poleaxes should be rubber blunts.

Examples of Suitable Weapons

DAGGERS

Darkwood's most recent armored combat daggers

SWORDS

Albion Liechtenauer

Darkwood armored combat swords

AXES

Purpleheart/Revival.us poleaxes

SPEARS

Darkwood armored combat spearheads

SIGNATORIES

The undersigned agree to the Dekoven Concord's statement of purpose and agree to abide by the expectations expressed in it and in the "expectations" expressed in this document. Changes to these core elements require the approval of all signatories. Specifications for armor and weapons are more likely to require more frequent revision and signatories acknowledge that changes may be made by a group of informed individuals who have received majority approval of the signatories to do so.