

Course Outline

ACM 201 – Advanced Marshalling Policy and Practice

October 15, 2025

General Class Description

The purpose of this class is to provide the student with advanced skills and practical knowledge expected of an authorizing marshal within the Kingdom of Trimaris. At the completion of this class, it is expected that students will be able to preside over and perform authorizations and appropriately execute the duties of a marshal in charge of heavy combat activities at an event under supervision.

Prerequisites

It is assumed that the student is familiar with armored combat in the SCA, and that the student has a working knowledge of basic tournament and melee marshalling. Students should have some practical experience in these areas; spectatorship is not sufficient. As well, students should be familiar with the SCA Conventions of Combat, the Society Marshal Handbook, and the Trimaris Marshal Addendum.

Course Materials

The student should have ready access to the following materials to successfully take this class:

- Course Syllabus
- Kingdom of Trimaris Marshal Addendum, current edition
- Society Marshal Handbook, current edition
- Marshal Key (optional)
- Tournament Forms (optional)
- Tournament Report (optional)
- Incident Report (optional)
- Injury Report (optional)
- Authorization Form (optional)
- Combat Waiver (optional)
- Minor Waiver (optional)

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this class, the student should:

General

- Understand responsibilities of the Marshal-in-charge at an SCA armored combat event
 - Chief Safety Officer
 - Authorizations
 - Tournament/Melee Director
 - Reporting
 - Marshal Disciplinarian
- Understand the general responsibilities of the marshallate
 - Answerable for every action taken
 - Responsible for the actions of designated subordinates
 - Experiments
 - Exceptional Situations

○

Authorizations

- Restrictions
 - Authorizations must take place at sanctioned SCA events, including established branch sponsored practices.
- Prerequisites to performing an authorization
 - Necessary personnel - [keep in mind that authorizations other than armored combat weapons will require marshals from that discipline. An Armored Combat Marshal cannot perform authorizations for Rapier unless he is an authorizing marshal for both. Also, marshals cannot authorize for styles that they themselves are not authorized in.](#)
 - An Authorizing Marshal
 - A member of the Chivalry who is an Authorizing Marshal
 - Authorizing Fighter [preferably an experienced fighter who can give feedback](#)
 - Authorization form – [we currently have a single authorization form for all disciplines](#)
 - Waiver(s) – [Youth and equestrian authorizations have additional waivers](#)
- Authorization Guidelines
 - Candidate must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the rules of the Society and kingdom that relate to martial activities:
- Authorization Procedures ([see Handout “Armored Combat Authorizations”](#))
 - Armor Inspection, as per established procedures
 - Theory Examination: Candidate should be asked a series of questions, demonstrating knowledge of:
 - Rules of the Lists of the SCA.
 - Equipment standards for the discipline. Armor, weapons, and/or other equipment relevant to the specific activity being tested.
 - The conventions, expected behavior, and responsibilities of the discipline
 - What to do during holds
 - Rules of engagement
 - Use of weapons and/or shield
 - Target areas
 - Acknowledgement of blows
 - Trimaris specific conventions and equipment requirements
 - Practical Test - participant must demonstrate the ability to participate according to these rules without endangering themselves, their opponents, or anyone else. This includes:
 - Demonstrating the ability to maintain their temper, control, calibration, and safety under stressful and difficult situations, as well as normal competition or activity conditions
 - Demonstrating appropriate technique (such as calibration of blows) and acceptable behavior on the field, range, or arena.
 - Listening to and responding to the direction of the marshals.
 - Sparring – First pass with Authorizing fighter being offensive
 - Candidate should demonstrate basic proficiency with a weapon.
 - The preponderance of blows thrown should be at a legal target.
 - The preponderance of blows should be of at least minimal lethal force.
 - Candidate should be safe towards their opponent.
 - Candidate should demonstrate basic defense
 - Candidate should be safe with themselves.
 - Candidate should not panic if pressed.

- Sparring – Second pass with Authorizing fighter being defensive
 - Candidate should demonstrate basic defense
 - Candidate should be able to distinguish good blows from not, including light and illegally targeted blows.
- Formal Combat
 - Authorizing participant will fight an opponent in one or more tournament-type bouts, acknowledging the effects of blows appropriately until one of them is defeated
 - Both the candidate and the authorizing fighter should take and call all blows.
 - At the conclusion of the bout, the candidate should demonstrate dying defensively.
- Evaluation
 - Look for the same things during the sparring portion
 - Can the candidate apply the conventions of combat
 - How does the candidate react to full speed blows
 - Whether the candidate react appropriately under pressure
 - Can the candidate maintain control and their temper
 - Authorization officials, in consultation with the authorizing fighter, should withdraw to the side to discuss the performance of the candidate, including any particular areas that should be brought to the candidate's attention.
- Decision
 - The authorizing marshals should inform the candidate of their decision.
 - The authorizing marshals should inform the candidate of any noted deficiencies that need to be addressed.
 - No authorization is complete until the paperwork has been signed or rejected.
 - Paperwork should be delivered to the Deputy Early Marshal for Authorization Paperwork listed on the Kingdom website.
 - It is the fighter's responsibility to turn in this paperwork and follow up if the card is not received in a timely manner.
 - Highly recommend to take a picture of the documents and email them
 - Paperwork should be readily available until participant has received their card
 - Failed authorizations should be included in the marshal's report so that the Earl Marshal can be informed of and track areas that regularly show deficiency.
- Re-Authorization Procedure
 - Regardless of how recently the fighter's authorization has lapsed, the authorizing marshal must test the fighter on their knowledge of the rules, particularly any rules that have changed within the last 4yrs.
 - If the authorizing marshal has not seen the participant fight recently enough to confirm that they still meet the required competencies, observe them during combat and confirm that they are still competent, or run through the practical test.
 - If a fighter has been sanctioned (e.g. had their authorization removed or suspended), the authorizing marshal must confirm that the issues relating to the sanction have been addressed.

Tournament Marshalling Procedures

- Sign-in - It is best to have additional personnel to help with this task. Don't forget sign-in sheets, pens, tourney forms, index cards, and a table and chair.
 - Check Authorization cards
 - Delegation of duties, including to non-marshals – such as heralds, scorekeepers, water bearers, etc.
 - Waivers – some events require additional waivers, like equestrian activities
- Armor/equipment Inspection
 - Only warranted or rostered marshals, or supervised student marshals, may perform inspections.
 - No inspections should be performed once the tournament has started.
- Pre-Tournament Announcements
 - Format of the tournament
 - Special Rules
- Tournament Marshalling
 - Recognition of the Crown of Trimaris, and other honoraries as appropriate.
 - Depending on time and format, the presiding marshal may elect to forgo this recognition in subsequent rounds – such as bear pits and speed tourneys
 - Intervene in bouts only when:
 - Asked to by a combatant.
 - A safety concern has been identified.
 - Repeated and major rules violations are occurring.
- Reporting Results
 - Report results to the Marshal-in-charge, and to the presiding nobility, or their designee, if present. Be prepared to put in a court card and appear in court to announce results if requested.
 - As appropriate, file any injury or incident reports originating from the tournament with the Marshal-in-charge.
 - The Marshal-in-charge is responsible for filing an event report within 10 days of the event. In the case of serious injury or grievous violations, a quick overview with pertinent information should be sent to the Earl Marshal as soon as possible, followed by the official report.

Melee Marshalling Procedures

- Inspect the Field
 - Verify its suitability for combat, including safety concerns, and boundaries. Have sufficient room or safety features for combat archery and siege weapons.
 - Choose a marshal's point from which to base operations.
- Marshalling Staff
 - Verify sufficient marshalling staff
 - 3 marshals for the first 20 combatants.
 - For 20 to 500 fighters, add 1 additional marshal per 15 combatants.
 - Above 500 combatants, additional senior marshals will be necessary, as determined by the presiding marshal.
 - Meet with the marshalling staff prior to inspections, noting the format, any special rules, and victory conditions.
 - Specialty marshals – Arrange for combat archery and siege marshals to be on hand as needed
- Combatant Inspections

- Pre-melee announcements
 - Boundaries
 - Victory Conditions
 - Holds (general, local, time impact) – also note when whistles, horns, or other means may be used to signal.
 - Allowed fields of fire for combat archery and siege weapons
- Conclusion
 - Announce the victor(s)
 - Report an injury or incident to the Marshal-in-charge

Event Reporting Procedures

- Incident Report
 - Disciplinary Actions
 - Noteworthy Situations
 - Ongoing safety, sportsmanship, or rules concerns
- Injury Report (form)
 - ALL injuries resulting from heavy combat activities
 - Other injuries, as appropriate
 - Make sure to record circumstances leading to injury if known
- Tournament Report (form)
 - Format
 - Participants (sign-in sheet)
 - Victor
- Event Report (form)
 - Tournaments
 - Injuries
 - Incidents
 - Authorizations, including failures
 - Waivers

Exceptional Situations

- Minor Combatants
 - Age Restriction – 16 for heavy weapons, 14 for rapier
 - Parent or legal guardian must be present
 - And must have “Minor’s Consent to Participate and Hold Harmless Agreement”
 - Only the Earl Marshal or a designated deputy may conduct a minor authorization
 - Marking – Yellow diamond between ½” and 1”, on the front hemisphere of the helmet for heavy, on the dominant weapon hand cuff for rapier
- Experimental Weapons
 - Identified by 6” of spiral red and green tape
 - Contact Earl Marshal to request participation
 - Anyone may refuse to fight with or against an experimental weapon, for any (or no) reason, at any time, without consequence
- Disciplinary Actions – always best to consult with the senior-most marshal present! Stress avoiding confrontation, passing up the chain of command, documentation, esp. witness statements and injury reports.
 - Removal from tournament
 - Suspension of authorization - will follow fighter after the event, as long as proper notification is made – documentation in writing is always best
 - Notification - In writing, within 10 business days
 - Combatant, as well as Earl Marshal
 - Review and Appeal- see Chain of Command
- Removing Sanction from an SCA Sanctioned Event or Practice
 - Only in extreme circumstances where the Seneschal may be unwilling or unable
 - Practices where marshal cannot keep control of the field or an unsafe condition occurs, such as weather.