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Kingdom of Meridies Handbook for Live Weapons

Bow - Knife - Axe - Spear

Second Edition

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DATE DATE DATE

Adapted from the First Edition produced by THLord Ender of Inderwick.

Disclaimer: This Handbook is a publication of the Office of the Earl Marshal of the Kingdom of Meridies. It is not an official publication of the Society for Creative Anachronism and does not delineate SCA policy. If any portion of this document conflicts with the most recently published version of the SCA rules for archery or live weapons, then the SCA rules take precedence.

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#### Introduction

If there is only one bit of knowledge that live weapons participants, marshals and spectators take from this Handbook, I hope that it is this:

**Live weapons are REAL weapons! They are DANGEROUS and if proper safety precautions are not taken, they can INJURE or KILL someone!**

I know that may strike some as alarmist, but it truly is the single most important thing to bear in mind at activities that include sharp flying things like knives, axes, spears and arrows.

The good news is that it's fairly simple to make these activities safe, and with the sufficient application of common sense and dutiful attention to what's going on around you, live weapons can become a valuable part of any SCA event.

And that's where the second important fact comes in: Live weapons are also FUN, and with a little training just about anyone, from young children to the most ancient..., um, *experienced* SCAdian, can give it a go. I encourage everyone who already does archery and thrown weapons to share their knowledge with others and help make these activities an everyday part of your local group's events.

In Service to Crown and Kingdom,  
Ld. Peregrine Fairchylde  
Deputy Earl Marshal for Live Weapons  
MONTH A.S. YEAR

## Chapter 1

### Duties of the Live Weapons Marshal

The job of a live weapons marshal in the Kingdom of Meridies can be summed up pretty simply: "It is the marshal's duty to ensure that all live weapons activities are safe, fair and enjoyable for the populace."

No, really. One sentence. That's it.

Of course, the *application* of that job description calls for a little elaboration.

Live weapons activities in Meridies are under the purview of the Deputy Earl Marshal for Live Weapons, who reports to the Earl Marshal of Meridies. Now, Deputy Earl Marshal for Live Weapons is quite the mouthful and not something you want to have to repeat over and over, but fortunately it can be shortened to the acronym DEMLW, pronounced "DEM-loo." Coincidentally, that is also a medieval Welsh word used to denote the local champion in archery and thrown weapons, which roughly translates as "benevolent dictator of flying sharp things,"<sup>1</sup> making it a convenient shorthand for the office.

Warrants for live weapons marshals are issued only by the DEMLW or an authorization deputy appointed by the DEMLW.

At the discretion of the DEMLW, a marshal can be appointed an authorization deputy; that person may then warrant marshals, subject to approval by the DEM. Authorization deputies must report to the DEMLW all marshals they have warranted, including their SCA and mundane name, local group, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address (if available). The DEMLW can reject the warrant of any marshal created by an authorization deputy.

A live weapons marshal (LWM<sup>2</sup>) in Meridies supervises archery and thrown weapons alike. It is their responsibility to be familiar with how to safely run a

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<sup>1</sup> This is not true.

<sup>2</sup> Pronounced "loom." Or not.

range for any live weapon. An LWM does not necessarily have to be proficient in all types of live weapons; however, it would behoove LWMs to give all types of live weapons a try, so they can better understand them and be of more help to participants in live weapons events.

### Marshals in Training

Anyone who is interested in becoming an LWM needs to contact the DEMLOW or a warranting deputy about becoming a marshal in training, or MIT. There are a few requirements to hold the office. First, you must be a paid member of the SCA to be an LWM. Secondly, you must have some experience in either archery or some kind of thrown weapon. This doesn't mean you have to be any good, but you should have a grasp of the basics and understand the rules of the line.

How much experience? Ideally, the prospective MIT should have been doing archery or thrown weapons in the SCA for at least six months. Someone with less SCA experience but who has been practicing the activity at other venues may be made an MIT at the discretion of the DEMLOW or warranting deputy. What's important here is a clear understanding of safety issues and the necessary personal responsibility.

The training structure for an MIT in Meridies is fairly, well, unstructured. It can be completed at a single event, if the candidate is well-versed in the rules and shows good common sense. The training of an MIT should be undertaken by a marshal who has held their warrant for at least one year, and such training needs to be overseen and approved by a warranting deputy. If there is not a warranting deputy in the local group, then the training marshal should provide a written report of the MIT's progress and a recommendation on whether they should be warranted to the closest warranting deputy or the DEMLOW.

The first step is for the MIT to read and commit to memory, word for word, this entire manual.<sup>3</sup>

The second step is to work a range. There are four aspects that the MIT should experience: Setting up a safe range, inspecting equipment, running the line, and closing down the range at the end of an event. This work should be done, if possible, at both an archery and a thrown weapons range.

The third step is to run a live weapons activity under the supervision of a warranted marshal. This doesn't have to be all the live weapons for a single event, but it could be a Royal Round, an IKAC, a thrown weapons competition or running

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<sup>3</sup> Or simply learn the essentials of safety and running a range, and be able to explain them to the training marshal. After all, this ain't the Midrealm.\*

\* Hi, Nigel.

the line of either archery or thrown weapons at an event. The MIT should plan their activity, get approval from the marshal-in-charge for the event, run it under the supervision of a warranted marshal and complete all necessary paperwork.

The final step before warranting is to make a \$20 donation to the Meridian Marshals' Widows and Orphans Benevolent Fund, administered by the DEMLW. Cash only, in small bills, if you please.<sup>4</sup>

Newly warranted marshals are expected to work under more experienced marshals at every opportunity for at least their first six months as an LWM.

### Responsibilities and Discipline

An LWM must be present at any official Meridian function where live weapons are going to be used. All participants in live weapons must either show a signed blue SCA membership card or sign a nonmember waiver before participating in live weapons; if this was not done to get into the event, it must be done at the range. Cards or waivers are also required for live weapons practices.

It is the responsibility of ALL warranted marshals to ensure that live weapons activities are being run safely. If a marshal sees a live weapons activity that is not being handled safely, they are AUTHORIZED and REQUIRED to intervene, stop the unsafe activity, and report it to the marshal-in-charge or, if there is no marshal-in-charge, to the autocrat and/or seneschal of the hosting group. Once the problem is corrected, the live weapons activity may resume; however, if there was no warranted marshal-in-charge, then live weapons activities cannot resume until an LWM is available to take them over.

A detailed report of the incident must be provided to the DEMLW for Live Weapons as soon as possible after the event.

If it can be proved to the satisfaction of the DEMLW that, beyond a reasonable doubt, an LWM has knowingly allowed unsafe live weapons activities to happen under his or her supervision, that marshal's warrant will be suspended or revoked at the discretion of the DEMLW. Suspension will last 90 days, after which the warrant can be restored or revoked at the DEMLW's discretion, depending on the severity of the transgression.

If a warrant is revoked, it shall be 180 days before that person can be considered for another LWM warrant. Only the DEMLW can issue a warrant to someone who has had theirs revoked.

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<sup>4</sup> Please note that as of this printing, the Kingdom Seneschal was still, er, "reviewing" this requirement with the DEMLW, and it will be waived until some little misunderstandings can be ironed out.

The DEMLW's decision in these matters can be appealed to the Earl Marshal of Meridies. Authorization deputies may not suspend, revoke or restore warrants.

A word on out-of-kingdom LWMs: If a warranted archery or thrown weapons marshal attends an event in Meridies, that person may, after providing written proof of their warrant, be allowed to assist in marshaling live weapons activities. However, there must be a marshal-in-charge who holds a Meridian warrant. The marshal-in-charge and/or the DEMLW may decide whether or not to allow out-of-kingdom LWMs, either individually or as a class, to assist at a given event. An exception will be made for interkingdom events (such as Gulf Wars and Border Raids), at which warranted out-of-kingdom marshals from the co-hosting realms will always be allowed to assist, under supervision of the Meridian marshal-in-charge; however, the marshal-in-charge or DEMLW may still exclude individual out-of-kingdom marshals on a case-by-case basis if they have reasonable cause.

## Chapter 2 Equipment

Consistent with the goal of the Society, an effort should be made by live weapons participants for equipment to have a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century appearance. However, the use of modern equipment is permitted provided it meets the equipment standards below. Also, in order to encourage newcomers who aren't sure yet if they want to invest in a hand-forged knife or a dozen wooden arrows with goose feather fletching, exceptions will be made for those who are just getting started in live weapons in Meridies, which for the purpose of this manual means six or fewer months of participation in live weapons.

Bows may be made of any material. Bows of unusual materials or construction must be approved by the DEMLW or the marshal-in-charge before being used. NO compound bows are allowed, no exceptions; medieval archers didn't need training wheels, and neither do we. Bows may not have sights of any kind, other than marks on the limb or riser; these latter may be excluded in specific competitions. No modern spring/ flipper rests, plunger buttons, stabilizers, clickers or modern string releases are allowed.

Crossbows may be of any material. Crossbows of unusual materials or construction must be approved by the DEMLW or the marshal-in-charge. NO compound, break-cocking or non-period, center-shot, trackless crossbows, no exceptions. Prods of most materials are allowed, provided they are judged safe. Simple rear sights are allowed; front sights are not.

If a bow or crossbow has openings that can be seen through from the side (such as a steel riser or stock with cutouts), these should be covered somehow to help achieve a period look.

Arrows (and quarrels) should ideally be made of wood with feather, parchment or other period fletching; however, beginning archers may use arrows of any material until they can obtain wooden arrows. Children (up to age 14) may always use arrows of any material, except in individual competitions that require specific equipment, such as a period IKAC.

Bowstrings and crossbow strings may be made of modern materials.

Knives, axes and spears should be of a size and weight suitable for the user to throw them easily and safely, and the handle should be firmly attached. All thrown weapons should be free of burrs or splinters that could injure the hurler.

Knives must be single-pointed. No knives with multiple points are permitted.

Axes may have single or double blades. However, if a double bladed axe is used, one blade must be clearly marked as the scoring edge to the marshal's satisfaction.

Spears may only have a point on one end. No double-ended spears or javelins are permitted; no atlatls or throwing sticks are permitted. Additionally, spears must weigh at least 1 pound, 12 ounces (800 grams) and be at least 55 inches (1.4 meters) in length.

### Chapter 3 Inspections

It is the responsibility of the participant in live weapons activities to ensure that his or her equipment is safe to use. However, the LWM does have the right to inspect, at any time, any piece of equipment brought to the range for use. Equipment that is deemed unsafe will be disallowed by the LWM.

It is the competitors' responsibility to make sure the equipment they have is properly cared for; that bows are not too heavy a draw weight for them to effectively use, that arrows are usable, that the edges and points of thrown weapons are sharp enough to stick in the target, and that handles are sound.

If there is a mantra when it comes to live weapons inspections, it is this: If you are unsure about a weapon, seek a second opinion from another marshal. When in doubt, FAIL the weapon.

The marshal-in-charge may decide if an equipment inspection will be a requirement to participate in live weapons at a given event, or they may make spot checks of equipment. However, LWMs are strongly encouraged to take the latter course only at local events where they are familiar with the archers and their

equipment already. At larger events, inspections should be required, and equipment (other than arrows or quarrels) clearly marked with a sticker, initialed by the inspecting marshal, to identify it as having passed.

Marshals might need a way to keep track of weapons that have been failed, either by recording the owner's name and a description of the weapon in a notebook to be left at the range, or some kind of visual mark, such as a sticker or tape of a particular color, that can be removed by the marshal once the repair is made.

For the inspecting marshal, here are some things to look for.

### Participants

- This is the single most important part of a marshal's inspection duty. Make sure the person who has come to the range meets basic competency standards for the activity in question. They should be able to demonstrate knowledge of their weapons and proper use thereof; if they are a novice, they should either have someone more experienced along as an instructor, or seek instruction from marshals at the range.

An archer or hurler should be able to focus on the activity and follow the marshal's instructions. Participants who, in the marshal's judgment, are intoxicated or otherwise chemically impaired, or who are too angry/agitated/distracted to participate safely, should be barred from participation. There are NO exceptions to this rule, because this can affect the safety of others at the range, and safety is paramount. If the participant objects, send them up the chain of command: The marshal-in-charge, a warranting deputy, the DEMLOW, the Earl Marshal.

- Also advise the participant of any clothing or accoutrements that could pose a problem or hazard: Floppy garb or baggy sleeves, dangling jewelry, long hair worn loose, obtrusive cloak pins, tripping-length hemlines, and the like. Advise the participant on what they might need to do to ensure a safe and enjoyable activity.

- Participants with physical disabilities are allowed certain leeway in live weapons participation, as noted in the Society rules; for example, someone may cock their crossbow for them, string their bow, hand them arrows, retrieve their various missiles. If someone makes a reasonable request for assistance, the marshal should do his or her best to fulfill it. In the case of competitions, such assistance should only be what is necessary for the participant to take part, not enough to give them an advantage. Also, accessibility should be kept in mind when a range is set up.

### Handbows

- With the bow unstrung, inspect it for cracks; if the archer arrives with the bow strung, it is not necessary for them to unstring it, but request that they bring the bow in unstrung next time. In laminated bows (such as most modern recurves), look along the side of the limbs and the tips for separation between the laminations or layers. Sight down the limbs to see if they are warped. Ask if they have shot that particular bow before; if they have not, ask if they have shot at all before. This is just to ascertain if they will be in need of any instruction or assistance at the line.

- For wooden bows, look for cracks and splintering along the limbs and handle. With fiberglass bows, look for glass fibers pulling away from the bow. Some styles of bow, including many varieties of horse bow (such as Turkish or Mongolian), traditionally have fabric or leather covering on the limbs. If faced with one of these, running fingers carefully along all surfaces may help determine if there is serious damage beneath the covering. The next step will be even more important when inspecting this style of bow.

- Have the archer string the bow. If they do not know how to string their own bow, or cannot string it because it is too stout for them, the LWM should advise them that they might look into using a different bow; however, if they have shot that particular bow before, that shouldn't be an issue.. Marshals may not string a bow for an archer (except in the case of physical disability), but the loan of a bow-stringer to help fend off use of the dreaded, limb-warping, step-through method is justified (and earns karma points).

Now inspect the strung bow again for cracks and warping. Then, standing off to the side, have the archer draw the bow, hold it at full draw for a few seconds, then gradually relax the bow without actually releasing the string. Make sure that before you have the archer do this, you tell them “Do NOT to release the string, under any circumstances.” This is dry-firing and can destroy a bow.

While it is drawn, look for signs of warping or inappropriate bending in the limbs, and see if the archer is straining to hold the bowstring at full draw. If the bow is obviously too heavy, or if it's being overdrawn (in general, string angle at the nocking point is greater than 90 degrees, but that varies with each bow), for the archer to shoot safely, the LWM will disallow use of the bow.

- Check the brace height of the strung bow. If it's too low, a Flemish string can be twisted (if it only needs a little adjustment) to shorten it, but not a modern string. If a few twists don't do it for the Flemish string, or if the string is a modern one, it should be replaced with a shorter one. If the brace height is too high, then the string should be replaced with a longer one, because the bow limbs will be under too much stress. For a very general, approximate measure of proper brace height, use the fistmele: The archer's closed fist is rested on the belly side of the strung bow at the arrow shelf, and the thumb is extended. The string should be very near the tip of the thumb.



### Bowstrings

- Inspect the servings (areas where the string is wrapped with thread, usually at the nocking point and the loops at each end). Look for signs of loosening or unwinding. A slightly frayed serving is not necessarily reason to disqualify a bowstring, but inform the archer it should be repaired or replaced at the earliest opportunity.

- Check to see if the string has been waxed recently; separation of strands or a dry look may indicate lax waxing. If it needs it, find some wax for the archer.

- While it is the archer's choice to nock above or below a nocking point, or between two closely set points, marshals are not to allow strings with multiple points that would allow an arrow to be nocked at a different location for different ranges, or which can be used as aiming sights, or which serve as kisser buttons; arrows should be nocked at the same point on the string each time.

- Certain types of bowstrings, such as Flemish twists, usually do not have servings on the loops. However, they do need to be waxed, so make sure the archer has wax, or find some they can use. Also make sure they do not have loose strands showing, which could indicate a break within one of the twists. Note that loose ends often show just below the loops on a Flemish string, where the end has been braided over; these are not cause to fail a string unless they show signs of unraveling entirely.

- Any string with a knot along its length (other than a bowstring knot used to secure the string to the bow) will AUTOMATICALLY be failed; knots dramatically lower the breaking point of a string. The archery may NOT untie the knot and use the bowstring. It should be discarded and a new string acquired.

On a lightweight child's bow (up to 15 lbs.), metal clips may be used to secure the nocking loops. However, no adult may use a bowstring with such metal clips.

### Crossbows

- Much of what applies to handbow inspection also applies with crossbows, which (as of this writing) are still rare in Meridies. Visually inspect the stock of the crossbow for cracks or other signs of damage. Make sure it is not warped. Make sure the rails are adequately greased.

- Check to see if the prod is secure in the stock; if it is loose and can be slid side-to-side by hand, fail the weapon unless it can be safely remedied. If it is a laminated prod, look for cracks or separation, as with a laminated bow.

- Make sure that moving parts, such as triggers, cocking mechanisms and rolling nuts, are in good working order.

- Make sure the string and the servings are in good condition.

### Arrows and Quarrels

- Examine at least two randomly chosen arrows; if the archer has several different types of arrows, inspect some from each type. Sight down the arrows to see if they are warped.
- Check to see that the fletching is in good shape; a few missing veins in a feather or slight damage isn't reason to disqualify an arrow, but inform the archer it can affect accuracy. Make sure the points and nocks are secure. If a quarrel is fitted with butt caps, make sure they are securely attached.
- Make sure the arrows or quarrels adhere to the material standards for the type of shoot being held.

### Knives

- Look for signs of cracking in the metal or handle material. Minor cracks in the handle are not cause to fail a knife. Make sure knives are not bent or too dull to reliably stick in the target face. If the hurler intends to hold the blade while throwing, make sure the edge is not too sharp for them to safely do so.

### Axes

• Inspect wooden handles to make sure they are not split or cracked. If the handle is wrapped in tape, find out why; duct tape is NOT an acceptable repair for anything other than keeping a splinter down or covering a minor crack. Cracks that run lengthwise along the handle are less worrisome than those running across the handle. If a handle is completely covered in anything other than air and cannot be visually inspected, and the hurler can't or won't remove the material for inspection, FAIL it.

- If double-bitted axes (two heads) are allowed in the throw, make sure the axe isn't too heavy; it will eat up a target quickly and make for a shorter day for everyone. If the axe is light enough, have the participant mark one head as the scoring head; all strikes with the other head score no points.
- Make sure the metal head shows no cracks or other signs of damage, and that it is not bent. Make sure it is not too dull to reliably stick in the target face.
- Make sure that all axe heads are firmly attached to the handles and cannot slip off. For period handles, this means that the head cannot slip off the end of the handle opposite of the grip. The heads may slip down the handles and come off the grip end; to secure them, tap the head end on a hard surface to seat the handle. During a throw, the rotation of the axe will keep the head from sliding down the handle end.

### Spears

- Make sure the shafts are not cracked or split. As with axes, duct tape is NOT an acceptable repair for anything other than minor splinters or cracks; likewise, cracks that run lengthwise along the handle are less worrisome than those running across the handle, provided they are not too long. Handles that cannot be inspected because they are covered will be FAILED.
- Make sure the spear point is firmly attached to the handle, and that it is not too dull to reliably stick in the target face.
- Make sure there is nothing at the tail end of the handle that will act as a vane or fletching. If there is and it cannot be removed, FAIL the weapon.

## Chapter 4

### Range Safety

Whether considering a site for an archery or thrown weapons range, the requirements are much the same. It must have adequate space, both downrange and to the sides, for safety zones. The marshal and participants must be able to see clearly from the line to the targets and beyond. There must be no human or vehicle activity going on anywhere that an arrow, knife, axe or spear can come into contact with it.

Beyond that, everything else is a bonus: Shade, a water supply, electricity, perfectly flat ground, a hillside for a backstop. If you have access to any of these at your range, it will make it that much more appealing to participants.

Live weapon ranges should be readily identifiable at all times. They should be marked by signs, rope, flag lines, caution tape or some other readily noticeable method. The entry point should be clearly marked.

From the point at which the participants stand to shoot or throw — “the line,” for future reference — the range should ideally extend beyond the farthest target by at least 40 yards OR half the distance to the farthest target, whichever is greater. In other words, if your farthest target is 40 yards, the back of the range should be at least 80 yards from the line. Anyone who thinks that’s too far doesn’t have a clear idea of just how far an arrow or spear can fly or slide after it misses the target.

The safety zone to the sides of the targets should extend out from the line at a 30 to 45 degree angle all the way to the furthest target, then straight to the back of the range. Anyone who thinks that’s too wide has never seen just how far off the mark a warped arrow or poorly thrown axe can fly or slide.

The closest a target should be to the line is 15 feet for thrown weapons or 10 yards for archery. The closest that spectators should be allowed to the line is 10

feet behind the competitors. This is particularly important for spear throwing; when a spear hits the target in just the right way, it can rebound and fly POINT FIRST almost all the way back to the line. It's an impressive sight, and one known to cause ulcers in surgeons and make the Society's lawyers swoon.

For certain types of specialty shoots, such as clout and flight shoots, the safety zones are different. These shoots require huge tracts of land to be effectively run, and are not going to be found at most local events. Guidelines for establishing safe ranges for these can be found in the SCA target archery rules.

The target backstops can be made of a variety of materials. For thrown weapons, the best option is pine or another soft wood (try to find wood that has not been pressure treated), including the flat faces of stumps or cross sections of logs.

One possible design for a lumber target is as follows:

Cut four-by-four inch posts into 40-inch lengths. Make six of these, and lay them side-by-side. Then take two-by-fours and, using four-inch lag screws, make a "Z-brace" on the posts: One two-by-four across the top, one across the bottom, and one diagonally between them. Put at least one screw into every post through these braces! Then take additional two-by-fours, about six feet long, and screw them flat, one onto each side of the backstop, for legs. Take two more and attach them by one end with a single lag screw near the top of those legs, and slant them out toward the back until the target is steady and the top is a little more than five-and-a-half feet off the ground; then add a second screw to secure them in place. Paint, glue or tape the scoring face onto the front of the four-by-fours.

For spears, soft targets such as foam, straw bales or objects stuffed with cotton or polyfil can be used; these are generally not suitable for knives or axes.

Backstops for archery must be of a material arrows can easily penetrate; solid wood is NOT an acceptable material. Bales of straw, foam and cardboard are all commonly used, as are stuffed objects. There must be a way to affix or paint a target face on the backstop. The standard archery target used in the SCA is the FITA 60-centimeter, five-color "Olympic face." These are available from many archery supply houses; some are made from paper reinforced with artificial fibers and these seem to stand up to a lot more use than a plain paper target. Of course, they cost a little more, too.

### Distances and Details

For any Meridian archery or thrown weapons activity that is to be scored for a tournament, kingdom ranking, IKAC, war point or the like, the distances on the range MUST be measured, not estimated (and pacing it off counts as estimating). When a live weapons activity is being held just for show or for fun, this is not necessary.

No live weapons activity may take place unless an LWM is present.

Once the range is set up and the targets positioned, the LWM must be sure all participants are familiar with the commands of the line.

As with many SCA activities, the most important command at the LWM's disposal is "HOLD!" Make sure everyone who comes to the range, both participants and spectators, understands exactly what it means: If a HOLD is called at any point, all persons at the line should IMMEDIATELY take arrows off the string, lower their weapons, and step back from the line. Archers with crossbows that are cocked and loaded should be given the option by the LWM of either firing their quarrel into the ground a few feet in front of themselves; or removing the quarrel by hand, then placing the bow in cocking position and grasping the string with both hands while someone else gently squeezes the tickler, or trigger.

The marshal will instruct the participants when to approach and straddle the line, and no arrow may be nocked, or weapon raised for throwing, unless that person is on the line. The LWM will call "Clear downrange!" loud enough for anyone skulking around behind targets to hear. If there is no one downrange, the marshal will announce "The range is clear" and instruct participants to approach the line. If there are any special instructions to be given — the nature of the competition, how many shots or throws are allowed, etc. — they are given now. The LWM will ask if everyone is ready, then proclaim "Fire at will" or "Proceed" or another appropriate command.

If it is a timed shoot, the LWM should give participants a countdown (usually five seconds) before calling "Loose!" The remaining time can be called off at intervals, if desired. A five-second countdown is also usually called out before "Hold!" Note that in Meridies, as soon as "Hold!" is called, time is up; arrows shot during or after the announcement of "Hold!" are late. This is not the same in all kingdoms, so please make sure out-of-kingdom participants understand this.

Once an archer or hurler is finished, they should step back from the line to indicate this; at the LWM's discretion, another person may fill in their spot at the line. When everyone is done, the LWM will order "Bows down" or "Weapons down," and declare in a loud voice "The range is closed." Then they will instruct the participants to approach the targets and retrieve arrows or weapons. An LWM should accompany the participants and be the last person to return to the line. When retrieving arrows, archers should be instructed to watch their step so as not to break someone else's arrows (often called "deadwood"). Missed arrows or thrown weapons that cannot be found in a reasonable amount of time should be left for later; LWMs marshals should conduct a thorough search after the end of live weapons activities and try to recover all lost projectiles.

On the range, the Live Weapons Marshal's word is law, and the marshal-in-charge is the final arbiter of all disputes or questions. Participants or spectators

who do not abide by the rules of the range can be expelled by an LWM. Appeals of an LWM's decisions can be made to the DEMLW for Live Weapons. The DEMLW's decisions can be appealed to the Earl Marshal.

### Contingencies

There will be times when something intrudes upon your range, something you have no control over, whatsoever. While the following list is not meant to be exhaustive, it should give marshals an idea of how to approach these types of situations.

**Royalty:** When the Crown, Heirs, or the like arrive at your range to shoot, they should naturally be accorded every courtesy, and that includes interrupting the current activity to allow them to shoot or throw. That said, it will be rare that such a drastic step will need to be taken. However, because royals almost always have many pressing engagements during an event, the marshal-in-charge should make every effort to get them to the line quickly and allow them to have their fun before they must trudge back to the salt mines... er, attend Another Delightful Meeting. If the Crown or their representatives wish to conduct business at the range — hold a brief court, or meet with certain archers — they should be accommodated. Assign one specific marshal to the royals for the duration of their visit (the marshal-in-charge, if possible) so they can provide the needed information or assistance as soon as it is needed.

**Weather:** Yes, it's very period to shoot in the rain (c.f. Agincourt). However, inclement weather can also put a damper (ha ha) on the fun, so in general the marshal-in-charge should temporarily close the range if rain starts. If in the midst of a scored shoot, make sure to note where each archer or hurler was and what ends remained. Archers or hurlers who wish to continue shooting through mist or light rain may do so if the marshal-in-charge permits.

However, if there is lightning, all live weapons activity must cease immediately. The range must remain closed until 30 minutes have passed since the last visible lightning. And that's any lightning, regardless of far away or anemic-looking. If it is still raining sufficiently hard after that point, the marshal-in-charge may opt to keep the range closed until they decide it's cleared up enough to shoot.

Hail, sleet and snow can also impact live weapons activities. Hail and sleet will close a range, while light snow may not pose a problem. Again, the marshal-in-charge will make the call.

**Media:** At certain large events or demos with public access, it is possible that members of the media will show up. This is A Good Thing, because live weapons make for good visual images both in print and on television, and that helps promote the image of the SCA as a fun activity.

If there is a designated media liaison at your event, make sure they know to have any media who come to your range contact the marshal-in-charge before they do anything else. Members of the media must first be advised of safety issues and told they must abide by those rules while on the range. A marshal (the marshal-in-charge, if possible) should be assigned to the media for the duration of their visit, explaining what's happening, making sure they get their questions answered, and helping get names of people they interview or photograph.

Always ask if you can have a copy of the article or news footage; policies will differ from one media outlet to another, but your chatelaine will love you forever if you can obtain it.

Please note that, as of this writing, the DEMLW is the managing editor of a newspaper and will be happy to advise marshals on dealing with the media.

**Mundanes:** For all practical purposes, treat them like the media: Explain the safety rules, tell them what's going on and keep them out of trouble. If loaner equipment is on hand and it's not inconvenient or unsafe, the marshal-in-charge may elect to let some of them take a few shots or throws, always under the direct supervision of a warranted marshal. However, make sure they SIGN A WAIVER FIRST. Otherwise, the DEMLW will turn you over to the Society's lawyers and offer his condolences to your survivors.

## Chapter 5 Competitions

And now, the fun part!

There are a number of standard shoots and throws used in the SCA, but they are really only limited by the imagination, the size of the range, and safety requirements. The following examples are provided as merely a base from which LWMs can build, and have been gleaned from practical experience, the archery and live weapons handbooks of other Kingdoms, and sheer depravi... umm, inspiration. Feel free to develop your own shoots and throws and share them with others!

Fans of thrown weapons will note that most of these competitions are designed for archers (but see also No. 3). Do not be dismayed! With a little imagination, many of them can be modified for thrown weapons!

**1. Royal Round:** This is the standard SCA shoot. It consists of three untimed ends of six arrows each, one at 20 yards, one at 30 yards and one at 40 yards, plus a 30-second timed end, with unlimited arrows, at 20 yards. The standard 60-centimeter, five-ring target face is used, with scoring from 1 to 5 points per arrow, from the outside ring in. It is a familiar shoot for most archers and marshals and is very easy to set up and run. Royal Round scores are the basis

for archer rankings in Meridies and many other kingdoms; see Appendix 1 for more details.

**2. The Interkingdom Archery Competition (IKAC):** This shoot was developed to provide a benchmark for comparison of archery skills amongst the Kingdoms. It consists of two six-arrow untimed ends at 20, 30 and 40 yards, and two 30-second timed ends at 20, 30 and 40 yards. There are open and period divisions for both bows and crossbows. Results are published in the kingdom newsletter, and the top archers at the end of each season (which runs Feb. 1 through Dec. 1) receive medallions. See Appendix 3 for the full description. Meridies has, in the past, been conspicuously absent from the IKAC listings, so any LWM who offered an IKAC would be helping to uphold the honor of Meridies among the Known World's archers. Hint, hint.

**3. Thrown Weapons Interkingdom Challenge (TWIC):** A thrown weapons competition modeled after the IKAC and meant to likewise provide a benchmark for comparison among the Known World's knife, axe and spear hurlers. Developed in the Kingdom of Ansteorra. See Appendix 4 for the full description.

**4. Braid Throw:** Attach a length of rope, cord or twisted paper (like you get from craft stores) to a thrown weapons backstop; the object is to stick or, even better, cut it. Especially good for axes, but challenging for knives and spears.

**5. Roving Range:** Instead of a static target range, create a trail through a wooded area and locate shooting/throwing stations with targets at random, unmarked distances. Give participants one shot or throw at each target (which can, themselves, run the gamut from standard to bizarre). Wicked twist: At one station, have a marshal exchange the competitor's weapon for a loaded combat bow/crossbow or boffer axe, then have an armored fighter charge them! Points if they peg the fighter before they get within five or 10 feet.

**6. Heraldry Shoot:** No, not shooting heralds. Draw shields on poster board and place the heraldic fields on some, the ordinaries on others. Place the targets at the closest range and have competitors make a single file line. As each competitor reaches the front of the line, the marshal calls out a field or ordinary and counts down from five; the competitor must pick out the right one and fire/throw before the marshal reaches zero. (Offering a heraldry class earlier in the day might be a good idea.)

**7. Clout Shoot:** A long-distance shoot simulating firing over a castle wall. Make a circular or square target 30 feet across (hay bales work well) and place a marker in the center that's 3 feet across. Place the line 75 yards or farther from the center of the clout target. Archers must fire at a high trajectory. Score points for arrows inside the bales, with bonus for arrows hitting the center marker.



**8. Flight Shoot:** For those marshals with the luxury of major acreage. This is, plain and simple, a distance contest. See whose bow or crossbow can launch a missile the farthest. Competitors must be prepared to do lots of walking, and possibly lose a fair number of arrows. This also works well, with a much shorter range, for spears.

**9. Wand Shoot/Throw:** Place some kind of “wand” — a stick, bamboo pole, strip of duct tape — on the target and have competitors try to hit it. Works for all live weapons.

**10. Up and Down:** Using a target with graduated scoring (for example: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1), give each participant a set number of shots or throws each round. The first round, they add up their score. The second round, they subtract from it. Missing the target entirely will be scored as a blow-through, three points. The goal is to get back to exactly zero without going under by the end of the last round. Can be run for any even number of rounds. Optionally: Set a TOTAL number of shots or throws over a set number of rounds (say 15 throws over five rounds), scored alternately up and down. The participants can use as many shots as they want each round provided (A) they take at least one each round and (B) they use all of the allotted shots by the last round. The goal is still to be the closest to zero without going under.

**11. Called Shots:** The marshal picks a color and calls it; the archer scores a point if they hit it, loses a point if they miss it. Can be used with almost any target that has some kind of differentiation.

**12. Balloons:** Self-explanatory. Great for thrown weapons. If someone knows how to make balloon animals, these are outstanding kids’ targets.

**13. William Tell:** Either use a drawing of a head with an apple on top of it, or an actual mannequin head with a real apple. Points for hitting the apple, penalty for hitting the head.

**14. Safari Hunt:** For bows and spears. Gather a variety of stuffed animals, put them out at random distances, and go a-huntin’!

**15. Robin Hood:** A marshal puts an arrow (one they’re not particularly attached to) into the target. All archers get one shot, the closest wins. Splitting the arrow gets extra points.

**16. Tic-Tac-Toe:** Draw the grid on the target face and have two archers take turns until someone wins or it’s a draw. Can work with thrown weapons but you have to retrieve each throw and mark the space.

**17. Advancing/Retreating Warrior:** A standard Pennsic War shoot. Set up targets (a warrior silhouette if you can) at 10-yard intervals starting at 20 yards (5-foot intervals starting at 15 feet for thrown weapons). Competitors have five seconds to shoot or 10 to throw at each target, starting with the furthest (for

advancing) or closest (for retreating) warrior. Score for each hit. On a silhouette, hits on the warrior's shield or weapon don't count.

**18. Castle Window:** Another Pennsic standard. At the 20-yard (or 15-foot) range, make a target that is 8 inches wide and 3 feet tall. This represents a castle window. Six attempts, every one that hits inside scores a point.

**19. Friend or Foe:** Make a target that depicts a kneeling warrior with his back to you, and a standing warrior behind him facing you. The kneeling warrior is an ally, the standing one an enemy. The object is to strike the enemy warrior without hurting your friend. Hits on his shield or weapon don't count.

**20. Popinjay:** Put a stuffed bird on top of a 20-foot pole. Using blunt-tipped flu-flu arrows, each archer gets three shots to try and knock it off or be eliminated. Start at 3 feet from the base and move back 3 feet each round until one archer remains.

## Chapter 6 Glossary of Terms

Live weapons people talk funny. Here's what they mean.

**Archer:** Someone who shoots a bow or crossbow.

**Archery:** Shooting a bow or crossbow.

**Axe:** A stick with a blade that sticks out sideways from one end.

**Backstop:** Something upon which the target is mounted, or behind the target, to stop the missile.

**Bale:** Bundled hay or straw used as an archery backstop.

**Bowyer:** Someone who makes bows.

**Clout shoot:** A long-distance shoot, usually 100 yards or so, at a large target.

**Crossbow:** A bow that is attached to the end of a wooden stock, and whose string is released by a trigger mechanism. What crossbowyers (but nobody else) call a "bow."

**Crossbowyer:** Someone who shoots a crossbow.

**DEMLW:** Deputy Earl Marshal for Live Weapons. Reports to the Earl Marshal of Meridies.

**Draw weight:** The strength it takes to pull a bowstring, measured in pounds (for handbows) or foot-pounds (for crossbows).

**Dry firing:** The act of drawing a handbow, or cocking a crossbow, and firing it without an arrow or quarrel. NEVER do this, and NEVER allow it on a range. It is a great way to make a bow explode, possibly injuring the archer or a bystander. Or a marshal.

**Edge:** The cutting blade of a knife, axe or spear.

**End:** The portion of a shoot or throw defined by shooting or throwing one set of missiles at the target. As in, “A Royal Round is composed of three ends of six arrows each, plus a 30-second timed end.” Also called a round.

**Fletcher:** Someone who makes arrows.

**Fletching:** Feathers, parchment or other material at the end of an arrow or quarrel, used to stabilize it during flight.

**Flight shoot:** Distance shooting for the purpose of determining who can launch an arrow or quarrel the farthest.

**Handbow:** Any bow that is grasped in one hand while its string is pulled with the other. What everyone (except crossbowyers) thinks of when you say “bow.”<sup>5</sup>

**Hold:** Universal SCA term for “Stop!” Also used at the end of a timed round.

**Hurler:** Someone who participates in thrown weapons. If you can come up with a better name, I’m listening.

**IKAC:** Interkingdom Archery Competition. A standardized shoot with two ends of six arrows at 20, 30 and 40 yards, plus two 30-second timed ends at 20, 30 and 40 yards.

**Knife:** A sharp piece of metal.

**Live weapons:** For the purposes of this manual, archery and thrown weapons. Can also be used to describe real hand-to-hand combat weapons (also called “live steel”).

**Loose:** Command commonly used at the start of a timed round.

**LWM:** Live Weapons Marshal, warranted by the DEMLW to oversee archery and thrown weapons activities.

**MARS:** Meridian Archer Ranking System.

**Missile:** An arrow, quarrel, axe, knife or spear.

**MIT:** Marshal in Training, working toward becoming an LWM.

**Must:** A imperative verb that indicates a complete lack of choice in the matter. Such as in this manual where it says an LWM “must do such-and-such.” That doesn’t mean “if the marshal feels like it” or “if the marshal wants to” or “if the marshal doesn’t think the DEMLW is looking.” It means “unless the marshal wants his warrant revoked” (see “revoked”).

**Nock:** A multi-purpose word. On an arrow, the nock is the slot where the string goes. On a bowstring, the nocking point is where the arrow goes (usually identified by a metal clip or piece of string). On a bow, the nocking points are where the loops on the ends of the bowstring fit on the ends of the limbs.

**Point:** The business end of an arrow, quarrel, spear or knife.

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<sup>5</sup> The DEMLW actually likes crossbowyers and counts several among his friends. Really.

**Revoked:** A disciplinary action taken by the DEMWL where a warrant is taken away from an LWM. The former marshal cannot be considered for a new warrant for 180 days.

**Round:** See “end.”

**Royal Round:** The standard SCA archery competition, consisting of an end of six arrows at 20, 30 and 40 yards, plus a 30-second timed end at 20 yards.

**Saunders mat:** A round, flat mat made of woven grasses used as an archery backstop.

**Shoot:** The act of firing an arrow or quarrel. Also, the generic term for an archery activity, such as an IKAC.

**Spear:** A sharp piece of metal on the end of a long stick.

**Speed end:** A misnomer (see “timed end”).

**Spine:** The stiffness of an arrow or quarrel, measured in pounds. For best performance, the spine weight of the arrow or quarrel should match the draw weight of the bow.

**Suspended:** A disciplinary action taken by the DEMWL against an LWM that makes them ineligible to work as a marshal for 90 days.

**Throw:** The act of hurling a weapon toward a target. Also, the generic term for a thrown weapons activity, such as a braid throw.

**Thrown weapons:** Hurling an axe, knife and spear.

**Tickler:** The trigger on a crossbow. Why they can’t just call it a trigger, I have no idea. Crossbowyers are generally of foreign stock and have strange ways.

**Timed end:** Any live weapons activity that has a set time limit, often 30 seconds, during which archers may shoot or throw as many missiles as they want. Please note I didn’t say “as many as they can.” It is always better, especially when you’re just starting out, to be slow and accurate rather than fast and searching the weeds for your misses.

**Wand Shoot:** Using some kind of narrow object like a wooden pole, piece of bamboo or strip of duct tape as the target.

**Warrant:** Authorization, issued by the DEMWL, that allows a paid member of the SCA to perform as a Live Weapons Marshal.

## Appendix 1

### Meridian Archery Ranking System

A Meridian archer's rank will be based on the average of his or her best three Royal Round scores from the preceding year. Scores may be submitted from any event within the Kingdom where a Royal Round was offered; demos and regularly scheduled archery practices of a local group where a Royal Round is shot; and out-of-Kingdom events where Royal Rounds are offered. In each case, the score must be verified by a warranted Live Weapons Marshal; before shooting at an out-of-Kingdom event, the Meridian archer must, out of courtesy, obtain consent from a warranted marshal of that Kingdom to verify the score for the archer.

For the purposes of this ranking system, a Royal Round score may be extrapolated from an IKAC, as well. The archer must take this score from the first end shot at each distance during the IKAC (20, 30 and 40 untimed and 20 timed).

The archer's rank will be symbolized by a tassel, to be worn on the belt or from some piece of the archer's tackle. To determine rank, consult the following table:

| <u>Avg. Score*</u> | <u>Archer Rank</u> | <u>Tassel Color</u> |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 0-24               | Archer             | White               |
| 25-44              | Bowman             | Black               |
| 45-64              | Marksman           | Blue                |
| 65-84              | Woodsman           | Red                 |
| 85-104             | Yeoman             | Gold                |
| 105+               | Toxophilite        | Gold and Green      |

\* Fractions are rounded down to the nearest whole number — i.e., 24.99 still counts as 24, etc.

Scores for submission must include the following information: Name (SCA and mundane) of the archer; archer's home group; location, name and date of event; scores for each round (20/30/40 yards and timed round) and total score; name (SCA and mundane) of warranted marshal and the marshal's signature. They must be submitted to the DEMLOW or the scorekeeping deputy within two weeks of the event (by date of postmark), and either the marshal or the archer may submit the score.

The archer must inform the marshal before beginning the Royal Round that he or she intends to shoot for score, and make sure a score sheet of some sort is available.

An archer may only submit one Royal Round from any given event; however, if an event allows an archer to shoot more than one Royal Round per day, an archer may submit the best Royal Round score. If Royal Rounds are offered on more than one day (such as at a war), one score may be submitted from each day of shooting.

Rankings will be published by the DEMLW or the scorekeeping deputy in *Popular Chivalry* and *The Ambassador* on a quarterly basis. The scores will also be posted to the Kingdom web site on a page linked from the DEMLW listing.

An archer's rank, once obtained by submitting three Royal Round scores, is not permanent; if their score changes, their rank changes accordingly. Archers who do not submit three Royal Round scores in a year's time will be dropped from the rankings.

An exception to this rule is those archers who attain the rank of Toxophilite. Once this lofty plateau is reached, the archer may keep that rank in perpetuity out of deference to their obvious dedication and skill. The title of Toxophilite is a homage to "Toxophilus," the archery manual written in 1544 by Roger Ascham, archery instructor and tutor to King Edward VI and Queen Elizabeth I of England. One can still find Toxophilite Societies — archery clubs — who adapted his book title, as well, a reflection of their desire to seek a mastery of the bow and arrow that Ascham wrote about.

Archers who move into Meridies from another Kingdom with its own ranking system will be afforded the courtesy of the appropriate Meridian rank based upon their most recent average; however, a new average will be calculated as soon as they have submitted three Royal Round scores as a Meridian.

Tassels should be 12 inches long and made of yarn. The knot must be of the same color as the tassel itself, or alternating bands of black/white/black to reflect the archer's Meridian heritage. It is solely the archer's responsibility to obtain the proper tassel.

For reference, the Meridian point system is the same as those used in Ansteorra and Caid, and is similar to those used by the Middle Kingdom and the Outlands.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Order of the Weaponsmaster, Meridies**

In the interest of promoting proficiency in live weapons in the Kingdom of Meridies, there has been established an Order of Weaponsmaster, Meridies. The members of the order compete in the weapons categories of axe, knife, spear, and archery.

There exists within each weapons category four levels of skill or competency. These levels are Second Class, First Class, Expert, and Master. To become a member of the Order, one must earn the qualification of at least Second Class in each weapon category, or must qualify at the Master's level in any two weapon forms. At such time as these minimal requirements have been met, the Secretary of the Order shall direct a letter to the Crown indicating the achievement of this benchmark, with the recommendation that the Crown elevate the candidate to the Order of Weaponsmasters, Meridies.

All targets for the competitions shall be scored on the standard combat silhouettes (see drawing). Axe, knife, and spear targets shall be constructed with a wooden target face; archery targets may be constructed of paper, and archery butts may be constructed of standard backings.

Scoring strikes with an axe, knife or spear shall be judged as follows: the weapons must strike and stick with either edge or point within the silhouette and remain in the target for the length of time necessary for the individual to walk to the target and retrieve the weapon. Hits on the line may be counted as long as the edge or point of the weapon penetrates the line into the area of the silhouette. Scoring with archery follows the same guidelines, except that any arrow which cuts the line delineating the silhouette shall be counted as good.

Classification qualifications shall be as follows:

- Second Class: Axe, knife and spear: 6 strikes out of 6 throws at a distance of 15 feet (4.5 meters). Archery: 6 strikes out of 6 arrows at a distance of 20 yards (18.3 meters).

- First Class: Axe, knife and spear: 5 strikes out of 6 throws at a distance of 25 feet (7.6 m). Archery: 5 strikes out of 6 arrows at a distance of 40 yards (36.6 m).

- Expert: Axe, knife and spear: 4 strikes out of 6 throws at a distance of 35 feet (10.7 m). Archery: 4 strikes out of 6 arrows at a distance of 60 yards (54.9m).

- Master: Axe, knife and spear: 3 strikes out of 6 throws at a distance of 45 feet (13.7 m). Archery: 3 strikes out of 6 arrows at a distance of 80 yards (73.2 m).

The above qualification and competition distances are allowable only for single-pointed knives, single-bitted axes (no top/butt spikes), recurve or simple bows (no compounds, stabilizers, or sights). Spears must weigh 1 lb., 12 oz. (800

grams) or more, and be at least 55 inches (1.4 meters) in length. It must be thrown by hand; throwing sticks/atlatls are not allowed.

Qualifiers/competitors may throw at a given distance from any point at or behind the specified line.

Qualification must be attested to by a qualified witness, said witness being qualified by virtue of holding a qualified classification level at least one level below the witnessed qualification session. Example: a first class qualification session in axe may be witnessed by a holder of a second class axe classification (higher classifications can always witness the qualification of lesser levels). All qualification paperwork should be sent to the Secretary of the order. Please contact AEdward of Glastonburh (Gilbert Head) via e-mail at [eghead@arches.uga.edu](mailto:eghead@arches.uga.edu) to obtain mailing information or consult the Regnum in *Popular Chivalry*.



## **Appendix 3**

### **Interkingdom Archery Competition (IKAC)**

The IKAC consists of five Divisions: Open Handbow, Open Crossbow, Period Handbow, Period Crossbow and Children's Division. The starting date is February 1 and the ending date is December 1.

Prizes will be given in each Division to the top three archers of the winning Kingdom. It is further hoped that each Kingdom will encourage the efforts of their archers by awarding further recognition. The final scores as well as the monthly will be sent to the Kingdom newsletters.

#### **The Rounds**

The IKAC consists of twelve rounds: two static (or "untimed") rounds at 40, two timed (or "speed") rounds at 40, two static rounds at 30, two timed rounds at 30, two static rounds at 20 and two timed rounds at 20. For the Children's Division, the distances are 10, 15 and 20 yards respectively. Everything else is the same. The static rounds will consist of six arrows each. There is no limit on the number of arrows that can be shot in the timed round. Once again: this means that each archer will shoot at each distance four times, two static and two timed. Note: The distances must be measured out, not paced.

#### **Time Limits**

There is no time limit for the static rounds. Each timed (or "speed") round is to be shot in two ends of 30 seconds and as many arrows as can be loosed in that time.

The archers may begin drawn and aimed, to release upon command. The use of a tape recorder with a recording of the 30 second countdown is permitted for timing the ends. In shooting a speed end, you **MUST** draw your own arrows, **NO ONE** may hand them to you. If an arrow is in flight at the end of 30 seconds it will be counted.

#### **Equipment**

Equipment must conform to the rules specified for SCA Target Archery. Please refer to these rules when shooting the IKAC. The official SCA archery rules can be found on the SCA web page at [www.sca.org](http://www.sca.org), then click on the "Combat and Chivalry" link. Note: additional restrictions exist for shooting in the Period and Period Crossbow Divisions. Please see the appropriate section of this document.

#### **General Rules**

Archers may compete in all Divisions. Archers may shoot both recurve and longbow in the Open Division and enter the Period Division separately. If you shoot a period style bow, you must shoot separately in Open and Period to enter a score for both Divisions. Crossbows, both modern and period, may shoot only in

the crossbow Divisions. Children's Division rules are slightly different. See the Children's Division paragraph below.

The competition may be shot at any official Kingdom or local event (regular practice sessions which are periodically announced in the appropriate newsletter count as official events—otherwise, official events are all those announced in the appropriate Kingdom or local newsletter). Events that fall outside of the normal IKAC season may be granted official scoring if requested to the Keeper well in advance in writing.

Archers may shoot for official score at as many competitions as they can attend, and may shoot for official score, in each Division, once each day of a multi-day event. Archers may shoot more than once in a particular Division per day, but only their top complete round of that day will be officially counted. Shooting need not be continuous (it may stop between ends as conditions require), but must be completed the same day to be counted. However, you may not pick and choose the best scores from multiple ends to put together your IKAC score.

In setting up and shooting the IKAC, all necessary precautions should be taken to insure the safety of all archers and bystanders. A warranted Marshal must be present at each IKAC shoot (an archer who is a Marshal may submit scores for himself/herself). The name of the Marshal must be submitted along with the score in order for the score to count.

#### Handicapped Archers

Upon the judgment of the archer in charge allowance may be made for various disabilities. For example, visually impaired archers may have someone tell them where their arrows strike the target. Archers in wheelchairs may shoot while seated. Archers unable to cock their crossbows may have someone cock it for them, etc.

#### Scoring

The open Division target is a 60 cm, five color face.

For the Open and Crossbow Divisions scoring is: Gold=5, Red=4, Blue=3, Black=2, White=1. Lines count as the higher score. Arrows passing through, falling out, or bouncing off the target face count as three points.

Scoring is on the honor system: you may count and record your own score.

The winning Kingdom will be determined by averaging the highest scores of the three top-scoring archers for each Kingdom. In the case of a tie, the Kingdom with the narrowest point spread will be declared the winner.

Scores must be postmarked within thirty days of being shot to be counted as official. Scores may be submitted after this date by asking for approval from the Keeper. The final scores must be received in writing by the Keeper no later than December 31<sup>st</sup>. The results of each competition should be sent as soon as possible

after they are shot, so they may be tabulated and each month's scores sent out to the Kingdom newsletters.

The submitted results must include: Name of event, date, place, Marshal-in-Charge's name, archers' SCA name, archer's mundane name, archer's group, archer's Kingdom, scores by end, round and total, type of bow e.g. recurve, longbow or crossbow (crossbows should be listed as either modern or period style), and Division. When the Division (Open, Period or Crossbow) is not included the score cannot be counted. Information must be typed or printed clearly. You should send copies of the scores to the Keeper and to your Kingdom archery Officer and save a copy for your files. Scores may be sent by e-mail. You are highly encouraged to use one of the forms and spreadsheets available on the IKAC web site. The spreadsheet available on the IKAC website has automated data entry fields to help you avoid mistakes.

Note 1: The Keeper needs to have the breakdown in score for each round. Scores that do not include this information may be rejected.

Note 2: After the Keeper receives the scores, they will be posted on the web site, generally within a week's time. The Keeper will receive several thousand scores during a season, and on occasion mistakes do occur. Occasionally, e-mails are not delivered, and marshals forget to submit scores. It is your responsibility to make sure that your scores are posted correctly. Because people check each other's scores, and make decisions on whether to shoot based on the posted scores, starting this year the Keeper will enforce a one-month rule on corrections. The Keeper will accept corrections to the scores for only one month after they have been received or shot. This means the Keeper will not accept a notice in December that a score in May is missing. Take an interest, and check the IKAC web site to make sure your score is posted. Please notify the Keeper as soon as possible of any problems.

Note 3: As of this year (2003) I no longer need to know if you are using handbook "sights" (ie simple limb markings) or not. Only a handful of people were using the, they did not seem to have any effect on the scores, and were causing much confusion.

## Divisions

**Open Handbow:** In the Open Handbow Division, recurves and longbows, both period and modern, may compete by the standard IKAC rules. There is no poundage limit. The rounds and general rules are the same for all Divisions.

**Open Crossbow:** Both modern and period style crossbows may compete in the Open Crossbow Division. Crossbows may compete only in the crossbow Divisions.

No compound crossbows. Sights are allowed as specified in the SCA rules. Crossbow and bolt must conform to the SCA archery rules. There is no minimum or maximum weight for the prod. Any type of lock mechanism is allowed. The

crossbow may be shot from any position. But the crossbow may be held only by the hands, not on sandbags, etc. Slings are not allowed for shooting, but may be used to carry the crossbow.

There is no limit to the number of bolts that may be shot in the speed ends. The target and scoring are the same as in the Open Division.

Period Handbow: The main intent of the Period Division is to encourage the use and construction of gear with a more period appearance in our SCA archery. Period style longbows or recurves may still be shot in the Open Division as well.

#### Period Division Equipment

Arrows: Wood shafts of any wood, cane or bamboo are allowed. Fletching must be of feathers. Except for crossbows, which may use other materials used in period for bolts, such as parchment, etc. Crossbows may use either period style bolts or cut down wood arrow shafts. Points may be of any style except for broadheads.

Nocks must be self, reinforced or built up (no plastic nocks). Reinforcing or build up materials may include: horn, bone, ivory, leather, hardwood or other natural materials used in period. Crossbow bolts may use metal for reinforcement.

Bows: Period style recurves and longbows of any material are allowed. Modern style recurves or longbows with full or partial center cut risers are not allowed. There is no weight limit, maximum or minimum. Crossbows will shoot only in the crossbow Divisions.

Period style bows are defined as: Any style of bow that can be documented as used in pre 1600 archery, from Stone age bows to English longbows. Construction materials should be mainly those that were used in period for the making of that style of bow. Modern materials such as synthetic glues, finishes, fibers (strings) or artificial sinew are allowed as long as their use does not give an unfair advantage in performance over period materials. Fiberglass may be used as a substitute for horn and or sinew in the construction of period style recurve bows such as Arab, Turkish, Mongol, etc., but no modern features such as full or partial center cut handles are allowed. The bow must have the appearance of a period laminate bow. Composite longbows (of different woods or backed with sinew or rawhide, etc.) are allowed. When in keeping with the style of bow, grips may be made narrower than bow limbs. Bows do not have to conform to the persona of the archer.

Bow Kits: Bows made from kits where the archer does the final tillering and finishing count as having made the entire bow. Laminate bows where the archer does the final assembling and tillering count. Crossbows where the archer does the final assembly and tuning count.

**Release Aids:** Archers may use any period style release appropriate for their bow, but are not required to do so. For example, an archer may use a glove or tab instead of a thumb ring while shooting an Eastern style bow.

**Strings:** Modern string materials are allowed, as well as period materials.

**Arrow Rests:** Non-period arrow rests are not allowed. Built in full or partial windows are not allowed.

**Nocking Points:** Non-period nocking points are not allowed.

**Sights:** Placement of sighting marks on bow limbs is not allowed.

**Target:** The five color 60 cm. target may be used for the period Division.

The standard five color 60 cm. IKAC target may be used, except that the scoring is different. The scoring is: White through blue = 2 points, red and outer gold = 4 points, inner gold = 8 points. Scores for the Royal Round, Open and Period Divisions may be shot and recorded on the five color face.

**Period Face:** The period Division target is a 60 cm. three color face.

Those archers wishing to shoot a more period looking target are encouraged to make and use the period face. The target is based on the one from the Luttrell Psalter. The target represents a two ring target with a center peg. The peg was used to hold the target to the butt. Splitting the peg or pin was the best shot, so those arrows hitting dead center score highest. The colors are from the inner ring or peg to outer ring: Or, Vert, and Argent. It is scored: Argent=2, Vert=4 and Or=8. Four points are given for a pass through or bounce off.

The target face is equal in size to the current five ring, 60 cm. target now in use for the IKAC. The target may be made by hand by using a compass. The diameters of the rings are 6 cm., 24 cm. and 60 cm. The black line between the rings may be no wider than 2 mm. Yellow may be substituted for the gold and white for the silver. The vert should be a dark green. The back side of a 60 cm., five color target may be used by carefully tracing the rings.

**General Rules :**The general rules are the same as for the Open Handbow Division.

**Period Crossbow Division:** Only period style crossbows may compete in this Division. Crossbows may compete only in the crossbow Divisions.

To be counted as a period style crossbow all the following conditions must be met: 1) The stock must be made of wood. 2) It may not have a rifle style butt. 3) It may not have a modern style lock (period forms of self-resetting mechanisms are fine, however) or a trigger. 4) It may not have sights.

The prod may be of any material and there is no minimum or maximum weight for the prod. The locking and release mechanism may be of any material. The string may be of any material.

Bolts may be of any wood and are to be fletched with feathers, parchment or other period materials. There may be from two to four fletchings. Nocks shall be self or reinforced (no plastic nocks).

The crossbow may be shot from any position. But the crossbow may be held only by the hands, not on a sandbag, etc. Slings are not allowed for shooting, but may be used to carry the crossbow.

The target and scoring are the same as in the Period Division. There is no limit to the number arrows in the speed ends.

Children's Division: The children's Division is new this year. It is open to all children up to 13 years of age. However, children that shoot with adult-sized bows or crossbows should be shooting in the Adult Divisions. Children that shoot in the adult Division may not shoot in the Children's Division. Participants in the Children's Division may shoot with either bows or crossbows. The age of the Child should be specified when sending in a score report. The target used in the Children's Division is the same as the Open Handbow or Crossbow target. The rules are the same as in the Open Division, except that the distances are 10 yards, 15 yards and 20 yards (instead of 20,30 and 40). Note that because only a few children participate, the top three overall get medals, regardless of Kingdom. However, I would like to give something to each child that participates. If you have any ideas on what would be good rewards for children, please contact me.

For more information, contact the Keeper of the IKAC: Lorenzo il Confuso, c/o Andre Detommaso, 19108 Valley Overlook Court, Knoxville, MD 21758. Phone (301) 834-8242 till 9:30 p.m. EST. E-mail: [ikac@detommaso.org](mailto:ikac@detommaso.org).

## **Appendix 4**

### **Thrown Weapons Interkingdom Challenge (TWIC)**

#### **I. Introduction**

The Thrown Weapons Interkingdom Challenge was founded as a means for thrown weapons participants in the SCA to have a set of standardized rules, using standardized targets, with a standardized course of throw (a round), at standardized minimum distances, so the throwers in any kingdom anywhere can directly compare their abilities to the abilities of throwers in other kingdoms, without the necessity of traveling to the same place at the same time. The TWIC is not a recognized SCA entity nor activity, but is a privately owned and run competition for inclusion at SCA events. All SCA rules and regulations, both Society level or local level, shall be observed, however.

#### **II. Persons**

The TWIC is open to all competitors, of all ages, from all the Kingdoms of the SCA. Paid membership in the SCA is not required to compete, nor to have your scores listed, nor to qualify for prizes or other recognition.

#### **III. Places**

Only scores from rounds thrown at official events may be submitted for the TWIC. "Official events" are those activities that are defined as "Society Events" in the governing documents of the SCA. This definition, for purposes of TWIC, also includes announced practices held under the auspices of a local SCA branch.

#### **IV. Targets**

The Standard TWIC target face shall be a multi-color concentric circle target. This target face can be made of paper, cardboard, or other similar material, or can simply be painted on the target backing. Individual colors to be used are not specified, but should contrast with each other. The smallest circle shall be 3" in diameter, and shall count as five points. The next largest circle shall be 8" in diameter, and shall count as three points. The outer circle shall be 14" in diameter, and shall count as one point. The backing for the target face is left up to the local person running the competition, or local Kingdom rules or conventions, but it is recommended that for knife and axe throwing, an end grain "round" of wood be used, preferably of a soft wood such as pine or fir. Use of hardwood, plywood, or side grain-type target backing is discouraged, as it is more difficult to get a knife or axe to stick into this type backing, thereby putting the competitors throwing at it under some disadvantage. In the event that a suitable end grain round or equivalent cannot be found with a diameter of 14" or greater, the outer circle may be smaller than the specified 14". But be aware, it will still be counted and scored the same as if it was full size, which will put those competitors throwing at it under some disadvantage also. For spear throwing, two or preferably three hay bales, one on

top of the other, is recommended. The use of wooden target backings of any type for spears is highly discouraged, as it tends to damage most spears, and it is more difficult to get a spear to stick into this type target, which will put those competitors throwing at it under some disadvantage also. Other backing materials (such as multiple layers of carpet, or foam or insulation boards) may also be used for knife, axe, or spear targets, if that is all that is available, and if such use is allowed in the particular Kingdom where the throw is taking place.

The center of the target face for all throwing should be between three and a half and five feet off the ground. Any weapon cutting a dividing line between two colored circles shall be scored as having hit the higher of the two areas. Weapons hitting outside the outer circle, or missing the backing altogether shall count as zero. All weapons must stick into the target, and must remain in the target until pulled for score, except that spears which pass totally through the target may be judged by the rangemaster to have scored in the ring where he believes it struck. Spears do not have to remain freestanding in the target to count, as long as the point is still obviously in the target. The person throwing may request his weapons be scored and pulled after each throw, if he so desires.

#### V. Weapons

A. Knives to be thrown may be single or double-edged, or be simply pointed with no edge (spikes), but these may only have one pointed end. These rules do not set any maximum or minimum sizes on throwing knives, but any throwing knife used must not be prohibited for thrown weapons use in the Kingdom where it is being used.

B. Axes to be thrown may have single or double-edged heads, and while they may have top or butt spikes, these top or butt spikes can not be used for scoring. An axe with a cutting edge head and a back spike opposite the cutting edge will count as though the back spike was a second cutting edge. These rules do not set any maximum or minimum sizes on throwing axes, but any throwing axe used must not be prohibited for thrown weapons use in the Kingdom where it is being used, and must be thrown using only one hand.

C. Spears to be thrown generally should not be barbed, as barbed spears tend to damage targets, but with the permission of the person running the range and/or providing the target or backing, they may be barbed. Spears are limited to a single sticking point for purposes of scoring. These rules do not set any maximum or minimum sizes on throwing spears, but any throwing spear used must not be prohibited for thrown weapons use in the Kingdom where it is being used.

D. Other or specialty weapons. At this time, no standards for other or specialty weapons have been established for TWIC. Feel free to throw them, as allowed by local kingdom rules, and as allowed by the person running the range, and feel free to score them according to TWIC basic standards for distances and



scoring. Feel free to submit these scores to the Keeper of the TWIC, but if you do, please indicate the exact weapon(s) used, the distances thrown, and anything else pertinent to tabulating these scores. In fact, we encourage such throwing for possible inclusion in future challenges. These scores will not be counted, at this time, but might help us to establish future standards and challenges using these other weapons. The Keeper of the TWIC will report such scores in the same way that all other scores are reported, but with a disclaimer that such scores are not official. All other and specialty weapons used must not be prohibited for thrown weapons use in the Kingdom where it is being used.

## VI. Distances

These distances are MINIMUM distances for each weapon. Throwers may throw at greater distances than the minimum distance for a course of throw, but may not throw at any less than the minimum distance for that course of throw. Some Kingdoms may have minimum throwing distances established by rules that are of greater distances than some of the TWIC minimum distances stated. When throwing in such a Kingdom, no throws can be done at less than the Kingdom minimum distance for that weapon, even if it entails throwing one, two, or all three courses of a throw at this greater distance. The scoring will remain the same as if the throw was done from the TWIC minimum distances listed, however. All distances must be measured, not paced off, and are taken from the face of the target to the foul line. Anyone stepping on or over the foul line during or immediately after throwing will have that throw disqualified, and be given a zero point score for that throw only.

A. Knives are to be thrown from beyond these minimum distances: 10 feet, 15 feet, 20 feet.

B. Axes are to be thrown from beyond these minimum distances: 12 feet, 18 feet, 24 feet.

C. Spears are to be thrown from beyond these minimum distances: 15 feet, 20 feet, 25 feet.

## VII. Courses of Throw

The standard course of throw ( a round) shall consist of five throws at each of the three distances for each weapon type (knife, axe, or spear) used, for a total of fifteen throws per round per weapon. The same weapon does not have to be thrown at the various distances, allowing the competitor to change his weapon from one weapon to another weapon of that type at any time he chooses during the course of a round. It is not required to throw each weapon type, if the competitor does not wish to do so. The three weapons types are separate competitions, with separate scoring and rankings.

## VIII. Scores

The thrower may throw any number of TWIC rounds per weapon type, but only one scoring round per weapon type may be submitted per event or per day, if an event has throws held on more than one day of that single event. At least two people must be present to witness the round, but only one need be an authorized marshal. The marshal running the TWIC throw may also throw a TWIC round.

## IX. Reports

All scores shall be reported to the Keeper of the TWIC by either e-mail or surface mail within 30 days of being thrown. Reports should be sent by surface mail to: Michael A. Eve, 2701 Old Alvin Rd. #406, Pearland, TX 77581. Postmark date will determine the date of the report for surface mail.

Reports should be sent by e-mail to: [evian@ev1.net](mailto:evian@ev1.net) with "TWIC Report" in the subject line. Date received by the Keeper's e-mail server shall determine the date of the report for e-mail.

All reports must be in the hands of the Keeper of the TWIC no later than midnight, January 1, of the year following the close of the season, regardless of the date of the report. The report must contain all the information required by the Official TWIC Scorecard, but the use of the actual scorecard itself is optional.

## X. Rankings

A. An individual thrower's ranking in any weapon category shall be the average of the three highest scoring rounds submitted. A thrower shall be considered unranked in a weapon category until the third scoring round is submitted and an average is calculated. Individual rankings will be listed for Knife, Axe, Spear, and Combined. Combined rankings will consist of the total of the averages for all three weapon types for an individual.

B. Kingdoms will be ranked by averaging the average scores of the top three individual competitors in each weapon type rankings in that particular Kingdom, and the combined scores of the top three individual competitors in the combined rankings in that particular Kingdom. A Kingdom shall be considered unranked in a weapon category until the third scoring round is submitted and an average calculated for three individuals from that Kingdom for that weapon. A Kingdom shall be considered unranked in the Combined until three competitors from that Kingdom have submitted Combined totals.

## XI. Seasons

The TWIC season will begin on the first day of December of a given year, and run through the first day of December of the following year.

## X. Prizes

Prizes shall be awarded at the end of the first year's season to the following:

A. The top ranked individual competitor in each weapon type (knife, axe, and spear) shall receive a scroll recognizing that competitor's accomplishment. Other prizes may be added, at the discretion of the Keeper of the TWIC.

B. The three top ranked competitors in each weapon type (knife, axe, and spear), and the combined rankings in each of the three top Kingdoms shall receive a scroll recognizing that competitor's accomplishment. Other prizes may be added, at the discretion of the Keeper of the TWIC.

C. The top ranked individual competitor in the combined rankings shall receive a scroll recognizing that competitor's accomplishment. In addition, the top ranked individual competitor in the combined rankings shall receive a spear made by the Keeper of the TWIC. Other prizes may be added, at the discretion of the Keeper of the TWIC.

D. Others may also give prizes according to whatever criteria the donor may choose to use (such as giving a prize to the top competitor in YOUR kingdom). Such other prizes are not part of the TWIC, nor are they under the control of the Keeper of the TWIC.

Prizes for subsequent seasons will be announced before the start of that season. Donations of prizes are always welcome. As, or if, other prizes are donated to the TWIC, announcements will be made on the TWIC web site, at <http://users.ev1.net/~theweb/twicannounce.htm>.

For additional information or for comments contact the Keeper of the TWIC, THLord Evian Blackthorn, at [evian@ev1.net](mailto:evian@ev1.net).