



## Combat Rules for Europa Re-enactment Inc

These rules are based on the 1997 Conference rules and have been adapted to suit the rules for Europa Re-enactment combat.

Version 3.2.

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# 1 - Combat Safety Grades

The Europa combat grades are a safety system only. Their purpose is to avoid Europa members causing or receiving injury in various combat scenarios, especially where accepted rules may be different, more competitive or more intense. They do not reflect rank or superiority over other combatants or members, nor skill in combat but the proven ability to handle combat situations safely.

Combatants may move up or down grades depending on training and safety awareness.

Combatants move up grades when they are judged by the Training Marshal and Combat Committee to have reached the appropriate level of competence and safety in re-enactment combat based on their impressions over a period of time. Combatants are automatically dropped a grade after not training with Europa for 12 weeks.

## Ceorl

- Are members of Europa who are new to combat training or resuming training after an extended break and are not regarded as safely trained in using weapons.
- Must have the direct supervision a Thane to participate in combat or training.
- Must receive a briefing and instruction in safe use before beginning training with any weapon.
- Are not qualified to fight in interclub combat.

## Lithsman

- Are members of Europa who have been trained to be safe in combat and adhere to Europa's combat rules.
- Have learnt to fight safely and are able to control their weapons, show an awareness of risks in combat and act sensibly.
- May only fight with weapons they have received instruction and training in to the satisfaction of the Marshals, and must be briefed on safe use of new weapons.

## Thane

- Are very experienced Europa combatants who are qualified to train and instruct other combatants.
- Can be delegated to act as Europa's marshals at interclub events and are responsible for Europa's safety training. They also provide support, solve questions or problems with training or interclub combat.
- Are a point of contact for other clubs for issues with Europa combatants are and responsible for the safety of Europa's fighting.
- Thaners can be appointed to the combat sub-committee to assist running of training and manage the safety of Europa's combat.
- The Training Marshal is one of the Thaners appointed by the committee who is responsible for running training, ensuring combat safety and managing combatant grades. They have the final say in combat issues or interpretation of rules.

## **2 - Overview**

- a) These rules are applicable to all combat at all times, and must be adhered to by all combatants who are members of Europa.
- b) All combat must be organised and supervised either by the Training Marshal or a Thane. Combat may also occur between combatants of Lithsman grade and is bound by the same rules as organised combat.
- c) In any place where these rules are found to be either insufficient or indistinct, common sense should prevail.
- d) Safety is the first priority and primary concern during all combat.

## **3 - Structure**

- a) Combat will occur only within safe areas defined before the beginning of combat. This area will be defined as a "field of combat".
- b) If any non combatants or spectators enter the field of combat while combat is taking place a hold must be called and combat must immediately cease.
- c) All combat must be supervised by a designated marshal.
- d) The rules affecting scenario and target areas shall be explained to all combatants before the beginning of combat, or before a combatant joins the combat.
- e) All combatants must have public liability insurance and new recruits must have provided a signed indemnity form and if under 18 must also provide a signed parental permission.
- f) A well equipped medical kit must be present for all combat.
- g) It is recommended a person with medical training such as St John's First Aid be present for all combat.
- h) The location of the nearest hospital or medical centre should be known.

## **4 - Marshalling**

- a) The Training Marshal and the other Thaners are qualified marshals and hold position and responsibilities of marshals during combat.
- b) The Training Marshal or a designated Thane will fill the position of Head Marshal and run the combat.

d) A marshals powers are:

- To start and finish the combat.
- To stop the combat for reasons of safety, or to intervene to stop dangerous action taking place.
- To calm combatants or to request that they modify their behaviour.
- To require that dangerous combatants or equipment be removed from the field.

e) Marshals have the right to remove from the field any person, weapon or item of equipment they deem a hazard.

f) Only a marshal may declare another combatant 'dead'.

g) A marshal does not have the authority to order any combatant to fight any other, against either combatants will.

h) All combatants will follow the instructions of any marshal. The marshals shall have complete control of all organised combats.

i) All disputes in combat will be resolved by the marshal. Discussion on any decision will be left until after the combat.

j) Any combatant who refuses to obey a marshal with respect to the rules may be banned from the field for a period determined by the said marshal and may suffer disciplinary action under the club constitution.

k) The marshal's decision is final.

## **5 - Safety Requirements**

a) Only those judged safe to use a weapon by the Europa Training Marshal may employ that particular weapon in combat.

b) Weapons will be maintained by the individual combatants but must be available for inspection by the Training Marshall or a Thane before combat; all sharp edges, hooks, spikes, burs and rust must be removed.

c) No sharp or pointed weapons are permitted on the field of combat.

d) No weapon of any type, such as maces and flails, banned under state legislation may be used in any capacity in any combat unless a valid permit has been obtained and presented to the marshals for inspection.

e) Any bleeding combatant must leave the field of combat immediately and not return until the wound is covered and the bleeding stopped.

f) If any combatant sustains an injury that inhibits their ability to fight safely or poses a risk to themselves or others they are not to continue in combat.

g) At any point during combat, a combatant, marshal or any other person may call: "HOLD".

- All combat will cease immediately and the combatants shall pass on the Hold call and await instructions from the marshal.
- When a hold is called combatants not involved in any safety issues are not permitted to move their position to gain a tactical advantage.
- Combatants should keep aware for any person calling hold or any other similar call e.g.: screaming "stop".
- Combat can only recommence once the marshal has ascertained it is safe to carry on.

h) Hold should not be used in battle cries e.g.: "Hold the line!".

i) Any marshal combatant or any other person may also call: "LIST".

- 'List' is not an instruction to cease fighting but indicates the fight is nearing non combatants or the edge of the field of combat and the combatants should manoeuvre the fight away.
- If the fight gets dangerously close to any hazard a HOLD call should be used.

j) All combat must cease immediately if the fighting should stray outside the field of combat.

## **6 - Combat**

a) Combatants may not join a fight after the beginning of combat without first reporting to a marshal and seeking their permission.

b) No combatant will be admitted to the field of combat under the influence of alcohol and/or any other perception changing and/or performance enhancing drug or medication. Further, no alcohol or aforementioned drugs shall be taken prior to or during combat.

c) All combatants should have current tetanus and hepatitis immunisations.

d) No combatant is to take to the field bearing a grudge.

e) No person is required to give a reason for refusing to fight any other person. In this case the declining combatant is to leave the scenario till the end of the fight

f) Any combatant that receives a death blow shall immediately fall to the ground or leave the field of combat and shall not participate in further fighting for the duration of that combat.

g) Exit from the field of combat is to be regarded as a death and the combatant(s) are no longer in the fight or to continue fighting.

h) Falling over in the middle of combat is considered a death.

- i) Dead combatants are not to give advice or interfere in combat between remaining combatants.
- j) Dead combatants should not kneel in the middle of combat and should lie in such a way as to not be at risk from the ongoing combat.

## **7 - Armour Requirements**

- a) Minimum protection worn during combat is a helmet and a gauntlet on the weapon hand(s).
- b) All combatants must wear at least minimum armour whenever in the field of combat and combat is taking place.
- c) Any item of questionable protective standard may be tested by the marshal before it is used in combat.
- d) Helmets must meet the following requirements:
- Helmet must be of sturdy construction and in good condition.
  - Minimum thickness is 1.6mm(16g) mild steel or equivalent.
  - Must be well fitting and worn properly covering the crown of the head.
  - Must be retained by a chinstrap secured at all times during combat and remain in position on the wearers head during movement.
  - The inside of helmet must have padding or a suspension liner sufficient to absorb a blow and lining must cover around the brow band. Alternatively an arming cap may be worn.
- e) Loss of helmet due to poor design, breakage or deliberate removal counts as immediate death and a HOLD should be called.
- f) Gauntlets must meet the following requirements:
- A gauntlet is defined as a reinforced or armoured glove that covers the tips of fingers to the wrist including the thumb and protects the hands from blows.
  - Gauntlets must have mail, leather and/or padding or similar.
  - Later period plate gauntlets are acceptable for safety.
  - A simple leather glove or welding glove is not sufficient.
- g) Gauntlets must be worn on the weapon hand at all times during combat and on both hands if using a two handed weapon.
- h) Body armour and lower limb armour is recommended.
- i) Extra armour does not count against blows unless stated in the scenario rules.

j) Modern protective equipment such as a box, knee and elbow protection, neck protection and mouthguard are all highly recommended, but modern protective gear should be concealed under period clothing.

k) Minimum thickness for a shield boss is 2mm or a gauntlet must be worn underneath.

l) If a shield has a metal rim it must be kept free of burrs and notches as per metal edged weapons.

m) Points on a shield boss must be rounded to a minimum of 20mm.

## 8 - Weapon Requirements

a) All weapons with metal edges must meet the following requirements:

- Metal edges shall be blunted to a minimum width of 1.5mm.
- Metal points shall be rounded to a minimum of 20mm diameter (same size as an Australian 5 cent piece). Except where a safety tip may be used on a spear point.
- All weapons shall be free of burrs, notches, rust or dirt.
- No part of any weapon may be sharp, jagged, or have spikes or dangerous protrusions.

b) Weapon points are not to be placed in the dirt. If a weapon point is placed in the ground it must be cleaned before use in combat. If lacking a sheath points may be rested on shoes.

c) Once the wooden shaft of a weapon develops a split it can no longer be used in combat until the shaft is replaced.

d) Maximum length for the blade of a single handed sword is 965cm (38").

e) Axes:

- Maximum total length for a single handed axe is 76cm (30").
- Maximum length for a two-handed axe is 183cm (6ft).
- The Head must be firmly affixed to the shaft.
- All points must be rounded to 20mm.

f) Spears:

- The maximum total length for a two-handed spear is 270cm (9ft).
- The maximum total length for a single handed spear is 213cm (7ft).
- The minimum thickness for a spear shaft is 2.5cm (1").
- The spearhead must be firmly affixed to the shaft.
- The English style safety tip is acceptable.
- Two-handed spears must be used with the front hand over the shaft.

## 9 - Blows

- a) All Weapons must be fully under control at all times and wielded in such a way that upon striking your opponent you will not injure them.
- b) Combatants should only attempt strikes they are competent in and can achieve safely.
- c) A blow should only be delivered hard enough for a defender to feel and should not be hard enough to cause injury.
- d) Blows should not be delivered in such a way that the swing would continue beyond the target.
- e) An attacker should not strike harder at an armoured opponent than may be done so safely, and armoured combatants should be aware of blows upon the armour.
- f) Where the scenario rules state armour counts against blows the armour shall assume to protect the wearer as it would have in period.
- g) No person should strike or strike at another person when combat is not in progress.
- h) No person should strike at a combatant that has fallen or is falling.
- i) No dead or dying combatant may be struck with any weapon.
- j) Combatants should not overextend their weapon reach when attacking as this is neither well controlled or a legitimate strike.
- k) Combatants should be aware of both ends of their weapons, particularly with spears.
- l) An attacking combatant may declare their blow non lethal.
- m) Blows delivered dangerously or to off target areas are not to be regarded as a legitimate hit at the defending combatant's discretion.
- n) Blows must be delivered with the edge of a weapon to be deemed a legitimate blow.
- o) Pommel and butt strikes are allowed but do not have to be regarded as a death blow.
- p) No blows are to be aimed at or below the knees, at the groin, face, neck, spine, joints or hands, except where qualified below.
- q) Bone areas such as hips that are in target should be avoided but count as a legitimate blow.
- r) Blows from behind or to an opponent's back do not need to be full force and the spine and kidney areas avoided. Placing the weapon against the defender and declaring them dead should be sufficient.
- s) When strikes to the head are an allowable target blows to the head must be delivered vertically.



- t) A blow delivered to the crown of the head shall be deemed the only legal head blow. No stab or thrust may be delivered to this area. Spears and other stabbing weapons may not be used in this manner.
- u) Blows to the upper arm should not be delivered upward in a manner which they may travel up and endanger the face or neck.
- v) If forearms are an allowable target the attacker should be aware of the movement of the arm and proximity to dangerous areas when striking at the forearm.
- w) When striking at the lower limbs extra care should be taken to avoid vulnerable joints and blows should be delivered with less force.
- x) If hits to the shoulder are an allowable target all blows to the tops of the shoulder should be delivered vertically and avoid the collar bone, cap of the shoulder and neck. \*note the shoulders are not usually targeted in Europa's combat.
- y) All thrust should be horizontal or angled slightly downwards.
- z) No thrust may be delivered above the armpit level or below the knee.
- aa) No thrusts are allowed over the shield with spears or any other weapon that may be swung or knocked into the face or neck region.
- ab) Thrusts using the top point of an axe are acceptable if the axe has one.
- ac) Two hands must remain on two-handed weapons at all times during combat.
- ad) Hands must remain at least shoulder width apart on two-handed weapons.
- ae) Hands may not be moved closer together for extra reach with two-handed weapons (pool cueing).
- af) Spear points should be not raised above the armpit level at any time when engaged in combat. To do so the spearman must first move out of combat distance.
- ag) If lower legs are an allowable target a blow may be delivered to the calf with a spear by thrusting beyond the leg and then withdrawing the spear dragging the blade against the defender's leg. \*Note lower legs are not usually targeted in Europa's combat.
- ah) Single handed spears are governed by the same rules as two-handed spears.
- ai) Grappling is not permitted except simple grabs and binds of the weapon or weapon hand and where it can be done safely .
- aj) Throws are not permitted.
- ak) Hooking weapons or shields with axes is acceptable.

a) No hooking with axes is to be done over the shield or near the face area.

am) When an axe has been used for hooking or become hooked combatants should not use a 'tug-o-war' to try and disengage or retrieve their weapon, shield or limb.

## **10 - Missile weapon Rules**

a) The minimum age for a javelineer is 14yrs.

b) Helmet and gauntlets are not required for javelineers but is recommended.

c) When a combatant approaches within weapon reach of a javelineer it is to count as a death.

d) No blows are to be struck at unarmoured javelineers.

e) Javelineers may carry a shield to block other javelins.

f) Javelins must not be thrown within 3m of a target.

g) Javelineers must not deliberately aim at off target areas, such as hands and face.

h) Javelins are not to be picked up and reused after being thrown during combat. They may be collected at the end of the fight and must be checked by a marshal before use.

i) Any javelins with cracks in the shaft are not to be reused.

j) Construction of javelins:

- Minimum diameter of head should be 6cm.
- The head should be sufficiently padded with a pool noodle, felt, wool or similar.
- The end of the javelin shaft should be covered by a rubber stopper.
- The maximum diameter for a javelin shaft is 22mm.
- The maximum length for a javelin is 150cm.
- The use of modern materials in javelins should be disguised with period materials.

## **11 - Training**

a) Any pre-existing medical condition which could affect safety in combat must be declared to the training marshal and noted in membership information.

b) All combatants need to see the Head Marshal or a Thane for a safety and weapons check prior to training or interclub combat.

- c) Newly acquired weapons, armour or equipment should be presented to a marshal for a safety appraisal prior to use.
- d) Only the Training Marshal and Thanes are permitted to train or instruct other combatants.
- e) A marshal must be present for Europa training to occur.
- f) To train in a new weapon a combatant must approach the Training Marshal or a Thane and receive instruction in its use before combat.
- g) Combatants should remain aware of differences to any previous training or martial arts.
- h) Various restrictions may be imposed on the combatants or combat scenario for the purposes of training.
- i) Certain weapons such as two-handed axes and single handed spears are reserved for experienced combatants.
- j) Certain blows such as forearms and shoulder strikes should only be attempted by experienced combatants.
- k) In show fighting some of the above rules may not apply as agreed by the organisers and participants. Extra care is needed and it should be remembered that the main aim is display not competition.

## **12 - Interclub combat**

- a) Europa combatants must notify the Training Marshal before taking part in any interclub or non Europa combat.
- b) The marshals have the power to disallow any member from taking part in an interclub combat event or any other combat.
- b) When fighting at away events members must follow the rules as dictated by the events hosts.
- c) Combatants should be aware during interclub combat that rules differ between clubs and to expect differences in regards to blows, target areas and training.
- d) When fighting in a scenario that allows a strike Europa does not train to use Europa members shall not attempt any strikes without sufficient training. However they are still to accept the hits when received as the scenario rules require.
- e) Combatants should be aware that the equipment rules specified herein are not necessarily suitable for other combat systems, events or clubs. Likewise gear that meets other standards may not be suitable for Europa's combat.

## 13 - Glossary of terms

**Marshal:** any person designated to monitor safety in combat.

**Head Marshal:** The chief marshal who runs and organises the combat, this is usually the Training Marshal.

**Training Marshal:** Europa's head combatant who takes the responsibility of running trainings and manages safety in combat.

**Combat Committee:** The Training Marshal and assistants who run trainings and ensure the safety of Europa combat and combatants.

**Thane:** Old English word for an Anglo-Saxon warrior noble. Also spelt Thegn.

**Lithsman:** Old English word used in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle to refer to men of the fleet or army.

**Ceorl:** Old English word for a low ranking Anglo-Saxon Freeman. Also spelt Churl.

**Combat:** Refers to an active combat scenario.

**Combatant:** A member or person participating in a combat scenario and is bound by these rules.

**Attacker:** The combatant striking a blow.

**Defender:** The combatant receiving a blow.

**Death:** Refers to when any combatant has received a legitimate blow and is no longer to participate in that combat scenario.

**Sword:** A cut or thrust weapon with a long metal blade held by a hilt.

**Axe:** A cutting implement mounted on a wooden shaft.

**Spear:** A thrusting weapon with a metal head mounted on a long shaft.

**Safety tip:** A spear tip with a ball on the end to dissipate force.

**Javelin:** A thrown missile weapon padded for safety.

**Shield:** A board with a hand grip used to deflect blows.

**Gauntlet:** An armoured glove used to protect the hands.

**Helmet:** An armoured covering for the head to protect the wearer from injury during combat.