

## Toward Worthy Modern Chivalric Deeds of Arms:

# THE DEKOVEN CONCORD

## A Governing Covenant for Conducting Chivalric Deeds of Arms

### GOAL

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

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### CONVENTIONS

#### Display the Reconstructed Arts

We expect that combatants will

- have experience in executing the art which they study.
- have experience in wearing and fighting in armor.
- strive to stay within the parameters of the art which they study.
- give and receive fair and proper strikes.
- understand that a deed of arms is an opportunity to display skill and honor, not a venue to display brute power or ruthlessness.

#### Evocative Environment

We expect the deed will

- take place in a formal manner within a discrete field.
- take place with suitable display of heraldry/affiliation.
- take place surrounded with a modicum of pageantry.
- be controlled and monitored by a chief marshal & assistants as needed/desired by the combatants and the host.

#### The Chief Marshal's Role

The chief marshal shall serve as referee, starting and ending bouts and counting well struck blows. As necessary, assistant marshals shall aid the chief marshal in his duties, including the judgement of well struck blows given where the chief marshal does not have a good line of sight. All marshal(s) shall act to insure the safety of spectators, assistants, and combatants.

#### The Herald's Role

The herald's job will be to introduce and conclude the deed of arms, introduce combatants as they take the field, and to announce the victor once the chief marshal declares the bout concluded.

- shall include such assistants as to ensure the safety of combatants and spectators.
- include a herald if spectators are present.
- marshals, heralds, and any other assistants will wear suitable clothing to convey a medieval appearance.
- be performed as paired matches fought to a set number of well struck blows, weapons in use to be mutually agreed upon by the combatants.

## Appropriate Equipment

We expect that

- weapons will be styled after historical models.
- weapons will be of steel (where appropriate) with rebated edges and blunted points.
- combatants will wear a complete suite of armor suitable to a person of rank.
- combatants will have armor of historical styling that belongs together chronologically.
- combatants will have armor that fits well and is well maintained.
- according to the announced form of a particular deed, armor will serve as “safety equipment,” in which case all blows with all weapons shall be deemed fair blows, or armor shall be as “worn,” in which case fair blows shall be counted as the Weapon Efficacy guidelines lay out.

## Sportive Context

We expect that

- combatants compete, and continue to compete, at the pleasure of the host. All understand that invitations to one deed do not constitute anything more than invitation to that deed.
- combatants will accept the authority of the marshals & other presiding persons without complaint.
- combatants will follow all rules formulated for a given deed of arms.
- combatants will strike blows with appropriate control of force, sufficient to cause displacement of the target area or

## Weapon Efficacy

The conventions for fair blows against armor are:

**Daggers** strike fair blows with the point, ineffective against plate.

**Spears** strike fair blows with the point, ineffective against plate.

**Swords** strike fair blows with the point, ineffective against plate.

**Swords** strike fair blows with the edge, ineffective against plate and mail.

**Poleaxes** strike fair blows with the head and foot points, ineffective against plate.

**Poleaxes** strike fair blows with the hammer/blade & back spike.

**Portions of weapons that are blunt** in real weapons do not strike fair blows against armor but may be used to set up follow on strikes/techniques.

result in notable force or a visible bend in the weapon against a braced target.

- no combatant will be compelled to fight with or against any weapon (or opponent) that he/she deems to pose an unacceptable risk.
- any combatant may, without reproof, request a limitation of targets/blows struck due to lack of or inadequate armor or due to concern for a pre-existing physical condition.
- the interaction of weapons and armor may be specifically defined for each deed, if the host wishes to deviate from the Weapon Efficacy definitions. If so, the changes shall be made known to all participants in advance of the day of the deed.
- bouts shall be completed when the agreed number of blows have been struck or another conclusion, appropriate to a medieval deed, shall be achieved.
- at the conclusion of the fighting, the combatants shall meet in conclave to determine who among them best displayed fidelity to the goals and ideals of the deed of arms, said person to be named First Among Equals that day.
- the conclave of combatants will also name individuals whose performance, in accord to the goals and ideals, was also worthy of note.

## The Host

We expect that a host

- will provide a suitable venue with an enclosed space for the combat.
- may elected to modify certain elements of the conventions to suit a particular purpose, such as restricting the time frame of preferred elements for a period specific event or modifying the allowed techniques or victory conditions for deliberate effect.
- will issue invitations to those chosen to compete, preferably in advance of the date of the deed.
- will consult on the list of candidates for invitation with any groups associated with the deed, such as the assembled defenders or a sponsoring group.

## Appropriate Bout Conclusions

The agreed upon number of fair blows have been struck.

One combatant is driven from the field.

One combatant is disarmed of his last weapon.

One combatant is thrown to the ground with the other in clear control of the situation.

One combatant achieves a secure bind upon the other.

## Chivalric Virtues

We expect that

- all participants will hold themselves to the ideals of a chivalric person.
- all participants will behave with courtesy and respect to all, participants and spectators alike.
- a pair of combatants may, by mutual agreement and for their exchange only, choose to add additional limits to either the style of blows or the targets or to both.
- combatants will accept, without complaint, all blows as called upon them by the marshals.
- combatants will acknowledge good blows unrecognized by marshals.
- combatants will deny any blows called upon their opponent which were not consistent with a fair and proper strike.
- combatants shall watch the bouts of their companions in the deed that they may be properly informed when choosing the First Among Equals for the day.
- that there shall be no prizes of significant monetary worth, save those to be given to a proper charitable organization as designated by the First Among Equals, or by the hosting entity in the case of a fund raising endeavor.

## ARMOR

The preferred armor under these conventions is that worn by persons of rank during the height of chivalric deeds in armor while armored combat was also a viable option on the battlefield, a period when plate harness predominated. In other words, from the latter part of the fourteenth century when near complete harnesses of plate were common to the end of the fifteenth century when armored fighting began to be less relevant to the battlefield.

Thus, we expect that

- a combatant's armor will be styled to a single, historical period drawing on references no more than 10 years to either side of the chosen date.
- a combatant's armor should suit a year between 1370 and 1490.

- a combatant's principal protection will be of steel plate and cover the greater portions of his/her head, torso, and limbs.
- steel gauntlets will be worn.
- solid throat protection will be worn, either of period form or of modern form concealed beneath the rest. Solid protection should be worn, regardless of its historical suitability for the armor style chosen.
- helmets will have full face protection.
- a mail shirt, covering any such areas of the torso (the armpit is specifically included here) not covered by plate, will be worn. Suitable separate items such as voiders and separate skirts are acceptable.
- mail will be made with riveted rings.

### Acceptable Armor

- In order to be more inclusive of combatants, we accept that
- the time frame for suitable harnesses may be extended to as early as 1350 and as late as 1550 with the permission of the host and/or any sponsoring group.
  - combatants may elect to wear a less protective armor, such as shinbalds instead of closed greaves, breastplates without backplates, a mail shirt or skirt covering the hips, or choosing to forego mail protection at the bend of the elbow or knee, and accept the risks, both real and within the sportive context, of such lesser protection.
  - modern materials may be used to stand in for period materials (i.e. plate) if suitably hidden beneath period styled clothing. Persons using such equipment should understand that, by abandoning the burden of real armor, they are setting themselves at an advantage against those who accept the burden and may thusly find themselves unacceptable to a particular hosts.
  - mail may be welded or, in extremis, butted.
  - perforated plates (such as fencing mask mesh) may be used to cover an "open" face or to fill eyeslots, although such will not be considered "armor" and any weapon that touches an area so protected will be counted as having struck a fair blow.

This guideline document was drafted by Bob Charrette and amended by Sean Hayes, Greg Mele, and Christian Tobler.

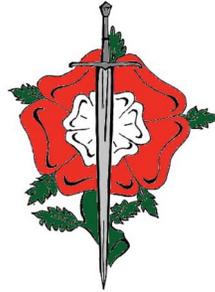
# Signatories



Greg Mele,  
Guildmaster and Dean,  
Chicago Swordplay  
Guild and Rocky Moun-  
tain Swordplay Guild



Bob Charrette,  
Principle Instructor,  
Forteza Historical  
Swordwork Guild



Sean Hayes,  
Principal Instructor  
and Curriculum Direc-  
tor, Northwest Fencing  
Academy



Christian Tobler,  
Principal Instructor,  
Seelohaar Fechtschule



Jason Smith,  
Principal Instructor and  
Curriculum Director,  
Les Maîtres D'armes



Devon Boorman,  
Principal Instructor,  
Academy Duello

Scott Wilson,  
Principal Instructor,  
Southern Academy of  
Swordsmanship