



## QLHF Edged Weapons By-laws

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to set out the guidelines for the use of edged weapons in general training and events. The guidelines set down a minimum standard for the Membership to follow. Members are encouraged to exceed these guidelines as they see fit. These guidelines represent a mandatory set of base rules for QLHF interclub combat.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This by-law is to be read in conjunction with the QLHF Edged Weapon Bylaw.
- 1.2 While authenticity in appearance of group and individual uniform and equipment is important to properly educate others about military history, of paramount importance is safety.
- 1.3 Every QLHF member is responsible for adherence to the highest possibly safety standards and expectations and proactively remedy immediately any shortfalls or dangerous situations.
- 1.4 The term participants applies to reenactors, living historians and volunteers.

IMPORTANT NOTE: At all times, members are subject to relevant state and federal law. Where there is an inconsistency, the relevant law will be enforced.

### 2 MARSHALS

Please refer to the QLHF Marshal by-Law for information on marshals. All marshals must be accredited by QLHF or their association.

This By-Law must be read in conjunction with the Marshal by-law.

Throughout this document where the following terms are used the relevant person must also be an QLHF Accredited Marshal. Where marshal is used refer to QLHF Marshal:

- Senior Marshal at an event
- Group Marshal
- Assistant Marshals



### **3 INSURANCE**

- 3.1 It is the duty of group hosting the event to insure that all participants are suitably insured (public liability insurance) for the activity being conducted (Note: QLHF members are provided insurance coverage as part of being a member).
- 3.2 QLHF members are NOT considered insured if the member has membership fees outstanding
- 3.3 It is the duty of the group to inform the QLHF committee of events that they are attending, preferably via E-mail. All events attended must be recording in the group's records such as Facebook.
- 3.4 If in doubt about any activity, the group is to contact the QLHF committee for clarification regarding clauses within the insurance policy.

### **4 MEDICAL**

- 4.1 A comprehensive first aid kit is to be brought to the event:
- 4.2 A casualty evacuation plan should be prepared prior to the event and relevant medical facilities notified of the events existence and potential for injury.
- 4.3 Should an injury be serious or life threatening, all activity is to cease immediately and medical attention sort as a matter of urgency.

### **5 ALCOHOL, MEDICATION AND OTHER PERFORMANCE EFFECTING SUBSTANCES**

- 5.1 No participant shall train or enter combat while under the influence of alcohol or other performance affecting substances.
- 5.2 A participant found to be under the influence of alcohol or other performance affecting substance will be removed from the combat and suspended from further participation at group training or events pending the result of an investigation. The participant may then be referred to their group and QLHF committee for review and potential disciplinary action.
- 5.3 Should any participant has a pre-existing medical condition or require medication that may affect the performance or safety, it is the participant's obligation to inform a marshal prior to commencement of the event. The participant should provide sufficient information about the medication/condition to allow the marshals to make an informed decision.

### **6 MINIMUM AGE**

- 6.1 Minor Under 12 years:
  - May attend events or trainings providing the minor is supervised by a parent or guardian or has written permission from a parent or guardian and the group provides supervision.
  - The minor is not to participate in any combat training or combat activity.



- The minor may participate in noncombat activity, group training or performances at an event providing the minor is appropriately supervised.

#### 6.2 Minor Under 16 years:

- May attend events providing the minor is supervised by a parent in attendance or has written permission from a parent or guardian and the group provides supervision.
- The Minor may participate in combat training within the group or combat training while at an event. The Minor MAY NOT
- participate in a public Combat performance.

#### 6.3 Minor Under 18 years:

- May attend events providing the minor is supervised by a parent in attendance or has written permission from a parent or guardian and the group provides supervision.
- The minor may fully participate in all group activities as the group see fit.

## 7 INJURIES

- 7.1 Should a combatant or performer suffer an injury that results in bleeding, the combatant or performer should cease combat and remove themselves as soon as it's safe to do so and seek appropriate first aid / medical attention.
- 7.2 Should a combatant suffer an injury that may affect their safety or the safety of others in continuing combat, the combatant should cease combat and assess the injury. The combatant should only return to combat once it's safe to do so.
- 7.3 Should an injury be serious or life threatening, all combat and performance activity is to cease immediately and medical attention sort as a matter of urgency.
- 7.4 The QLHF committee reserves the right to investigate any injury with the view to instigating disciplinary action as it sees fit



## **8 COMBAT AUTHORISATION**

- 8.1 It is the primary responsibility of the group to insure that group combatants have the required skill and training for the combat undertaken.
- 8.2 Assessment of competence will focus on the individual's temperament, safety and understanding of the group's combat regulations.
- 8.3 It is the responsibility of the group marshal to assess, record and vouch for each individual's competence with regards to the safe use of weapons. A record of the levels of attainment and authorizations of combatants is to be maintained by the group marshal.
- 8.4 The QLHF Group Marshal or QLHF Committee can be requested to appoint a suitably competent person to assess a group combatant on the group's request. Should such a request be made, the assessment of the person is final.
- 8.5 While the QLHF committee will not generally be involved in the assessment of an individual, the committee may become involved if concern is expressed by other groups regarding the safety of an individual or group or if the committee becomes aware of serious or life threatening injury or repeated breaches of the by-laws.

## **9 CONDUCT OF COMBAT**

- 9.1 No individual has the obligation to engage in combat with any other person under any scenario or situation. No reason or explanation will be required by that individual. The QLHF committee may ask as to the reason for the refusal for future reference
- 9.2 No group has the obligation to engage in combat with any other group under any scenario or situation. Further a group has the right to request the exclusion of an individual of another group as condition of entry into combat. No reason or explanation will be required by the group. The QLHF committee may ask as to the reason for the refusal or condition for future reference.

## **10 WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT**

- 10.1 Be aware, weapons and equipment are subject to State and Federal laws which must be complied with at all times. Any serious and sustained infractions of weapons laws will result in disciplinary action taken against the group.
- 10.2 A number of weapons are regulated under State and Federal law. It is the individual's responsibility to be familiar with which weapons require a valid license. Individuals in possession of regulated weapons are required to hold a relevant weapons license which must be able to be produced on demand (preferably on the person or in the camp site). Failure to do so will result in a demand for the individual to cease using the weapon immediately and the weapon secured until a license can be produced. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action being taken against the individual and/or group.

## **11 GENERAL WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT**



- 11.1 The application of the general weapons rules will be governed by the marshals present, with the Senior marshal adjudicating on any intergroup dispute. The marshal's word will be final.
- 11.2 All weapons and armour must be rust and dirt free to minimise the chance of infection.
- 11.3 Weapons must be free from nicks and burrs that can cause cuts upon impact.
- 11.4 Weapons and equipment must not present a safety hazard to the user, other combatants or to the general public (This means any weapon that's showing obvious signs of metal fatigue or is at risk of snapping while in use will not be used.)
- 11.5 Edged weapons should not be sharp enough to cut the skin in a draw motion. The thickness of the edge of the weapon must be no thinner than the edge of an Australian ten cent piece (2mm) and no thicker than an Australian one-dollar coin or (3mm).
- 11.6 Points of thrusting weapons (which includes swords) should be approximately the same diameter of an Australian 5 cent piece (20mm) at its tip and be approximately the thickness of an Australian 20 cent piece (2.5mm).
- 11.7 Should a regulated weapon be in use (that is a weapon regulated under the weapons act and associated regulations), the Marshal has the right to ask that the license to be produced prior to combat commencing. Failure to produce the license will result in weapon not being used for the remainder of the training or event.
- 11.8 Due to the risk of infection, weapons should not be pushed into the ground or covered with mud. The attending Marshal has the right to demand the weapon is taken off the field until such time as the weapon has been cleaned.
- 11.9 Peasant tools such as sickles, scythes and general agricultural implements if used in combat shall adhere to all of the requirements of edged weapons.
- 11.10 The use of articulated weapons such as flails; morning stars and ball and chain are not to be used in combat use. The use of these weapons is limited to combatants specifically trained in their use. These weapons will be excluded from intergroup combat and mass combat scenarios except where two or more member groups marshals agree on an interclub combat scenario involving only combatants specifically trained in using and facing these weapons. IMPORTANT: At time of writing, articulated weapons are a regulated weapon. As such combatants using these weapons will be required to hold a valid weapons license.
- 11.11 Under no circumstances should a sharp or "live" blade of any sort be taken into combat (remember: a "theft" of a weapon in combat is not uncommon and you cannot be sure that your opponent is aware that a blade is live).

## 12 SPECIFIC WEAPONS AND ARMOUR PROVISIONS



## 12.1 Spears

- 12.1.1 The use of spears should have reference to the historical accuracy of its use. Combatants using spear are required to be trained in the use of spears and attained authorisation by the group's marshal.
- 12.1.2 Spears are not to be used in a "pool cueing fashion" in order to gain additional reach. The definition of "pool cueing" is the act of sliding the spear through a loose hand grip to the point that the combatants' hands are closer than shoulder width apart (a minimum of 45cm).
- 12.1.3 Spears are required to be angled downwards when thrusting to minimise the risk of thrusts skipping up to non-target areas.
- 12.1.4 The length and weight of the spear should be proportional to the user.
- 12.1.5 Two handed spears is defined as being a spear that is 6' 6" or longer.
- 12.1.6 Two handed spears are required to have both hands in contact with the spear at all times.
- 12.1.7 Two handed spears will not be used with one hand.

## 12.2 Mass Weapons

- 12.2.1 A mass weapon is a two handed weapon such as two handed axes, poll axes pole hammers, halberds, pikes, mauls and glaives (list is not exclusive).
- 12.2.2 Mass weapons are to be considered the potentially the most risky of all contact weapons currently in use, as such every care should be taken in their use.
- 12.2.3 Training in the use of mass combat weapons must be specific to each weapon (training in sword or spear is not considered sufficient in of themselves). Given the potential of serious injury, mass combat should not be the first weapon of a new combatant.
- 12.2.4 Given the nature of the weapon, it is suggested that any contact made with the body by the offensive edge or surface of the weapon is considered a "killing" blow, regardless of where contact is made or the force of the contact.

## 13 ARMOUR

- 13.1.1 Armour requirements set down are a minimum for combat where contact is expected.
- 13.1.2 The requirement set in this standard is the MIMIMUM in order to participate in combat and do not take into consideration the type or intensity of combat being undertaken.
- 13.1.3 Groups and combatants are required to assess the nature of the combat undertaken when considering the minimum given the reality of the combat they under take.
- 13.1.4 The QLHF committee reserves the right to question the group minimums in the event of serious injury.
  - Helm
  - Arming cap
  - Gambeson
  - Gauntlets



- Groin protection (Male and Female)
- Breast Protection (Female)

Note: The back of the head to the neck and temple must be protected.

13.1.5 Non-Contact Combat Minimum: There is no armour requirement when there is no expectation that contact will be made during the combat. This is only relevant when the combat entered into is "training" in nature and the intensity of the combat is expected to be low. This standard is not relevant for any main performances at public events.

### 13.2 Gambeson

13.2.1 The gambeson is a generic term used for the padded garment normally worn underneath armour.

13.2.2 When the gambeson is worn as the primary means of protection (i.e. without armour), the gambeson is required to be no less than 12mm thick and 8mm if worn under non-rigid armour. The gambeson must be of sufficient length to protect the groin, torso, the points of the shoulders and armpits.

### 13.3 Gauntlets

Hand protection should consist of a leather mitten or glove extending to the wrist with mail, leather or steel plate neatly and securely fastened to the back of the hand and thumb. Steel individually fingered gauntlets worn over a glove or a steel "clamshell" mitten secured to the hand also meet minimum safety requirements.

### 13.4 Groin Protection

Rigid groin protection is required to be worn by both males and females

### 13.5 Helmets

13.5.1 Helmets must be deep enough to protect the temple from a downwards or horizontal blow.

13.5.2 The helmet must be fastened in a manner to insure that the helm will not fall off or move in a manner that will block vision

13.5.3 Fastenings should be quick release in nature to allow quick removal by another person should first aid be required i.e. buckle and strap.

13.5.4 Helmets should have internal padding (such as an arming cap) or have suspension lining. The head should never be in direct contact with the metal surface of a helmet.

13.5.5 Additional neck protection such as an aventail, coif or gorget must be worn in conjunction with the helmet if it does not offer adequate protection to the back and side of the neck.

13.5.6 Helmets must be a minimum of 16 mm mild steel or demonstrate the same characteristics as 1.6mm mild steel if other metals or spring tempered steels are used.

Serious consideration should be given to wearing a gorget in addition to a coif or aventail.



### 13.6 Shields

- 13.6.1 As shields are additional to the minimum armour requirements and not a replacement thereof, there is no need to minimum construction specifications.
- 13.6.2 However, they are still required to be of serviceable condition relative the period being portrayed.
- 13.6.3 They should be free of splinters, burrs, sharp edges or points. Just like any other melee equipment.
- 13.6.4 Shields should not be fixed or attached in a manner to a combatant that makes them unable to be easily removed when needed.

### 14 BLOWS

- 14.1 Combatants are reminded that the enjoyment of entering into combat is largely a result of the mindset of the combatants. The context of the combat will determine the nature of a 'killing blow'. The senior marshal should indicate to all combatants the context of the combat prior to combat commencing. In all interclub combats, unless expressly determined otherwise by the senior marshal, an unimpeded blow to any legal target area will be considered a 'killing blow'. Combatants should acknowledge weapons contact with good grace and remember that personal egos need to be left off the field of combat.
- 14.2 All blows are to be delivered in a controlled manner.
- 14.3 The force of a blow will be sufficient for the blow to be felt without causing physical injury.
- 14.4 A blow is never to be delivered with full force
- 14.5 Once a "killing" blow as been received, the combatant should lay down and wait for the end of combat should it be safe to do so.
- 14.6 No Thrust (regardless of weapon) or horizontal blow is to be allowed above the armpit of the targeted person.
- 14.7 Any blow intending to land on the shoulder or head should be delivered vertically +/- 15 degrees to the top of the helm of the defender.

### 15 OFF-TARGET AREAS

- 15.1 Under no circumstances are there to be intentional: thrusts, blows, feint or any other "cut" made to the follow areas:
  - Face
  - Groin
  - Elbows
  - Neck
  - Kidneys
  - Knees
  - Spine
  - Hands
  - Feet





15.2 Any contact with off target areas will be referred to the group and Senior marshal. Should the blow be made with intent, the offender will be removed from the field immediately. The group will be responsible for further disciplinary action. The QLHF committee reserves the right to take further disciplinary action for repeat offenders and groups.

15.3 Should a blow strike the face or neck that requires medical attention or be adjudged to be deliberately delivered with excessive force so as to cause injury: The QLHF committee will ask the offender to show cause as to why they should not be expelled from the QLHF. Any decision will be dependent on the nature of the offence, the standing of the offender and any other mitigating circumstances.

N.B . A number of off target areas and banned attacks, such as attacks to face and head, can be varied in combats that are covered under specific rules i.e late Medieval Harness Fighting rules, provided that:

- all parties are in agreement
- all combatants are trained in these techniques
- that protective armour is worn that covers the expanded target areas and that such armour meets the minimum safety requirements as set out in the adopted rules ( i.e. rigid face armour, ocularium size etc)

## **16 SHIELD RAMMING AND CHARGING**

16.1 Combatants are reminded that when in combat, the equipment that they are wearing adds significant force and momentum to the charge. This increases the change of unintentional injury.

16.2 Charging should only be done at a maximum of a jogging pace

16.3 Charges will not be made against an unaware opponent or from behind.

END



<b>Contact Officer</b>	QLHF Marshal
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<b>Dates Updated</b>	16th August 2002 Marshals, Equipment, Spear Length/Usage, Competence, Blows  4th August 2013  1st February 2014 Review of Document by sub-committee of group marshals: Purpose, Minimum Age, Alcohol, Marshals, General weapons Rules, Banned Combat Weapons, Approval Authority  Updated May 2019 and adopted at QLHF Conference 2019  18 December 2021 Edged Weapons
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Queensland Living History Federation Committee
<b>Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Forms or Templates</b>	This by-law works in conjunction with all other QLHF by-laws, with particular reference to:  QLHF Marshal By-law
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