



BATTLEFIELD COMBAT
REGULATIONS
&
WARRIOR
SYSTEM

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BATTLEFIELD COMBAT REGULATIONS

1. Introduction

- a. The Regia battlefield is an amazing adrenaline filled experience for our combatants and a fantastic display for our audience. However, the battlefield is also a dangerous place and we all accept this and sign a piece of paper to the effect that we understand this. Whilst the risk of injury is low, the potential still exists.
- b. The Battlefield Combat Regulations document is an attempt to minimise the number of injuries, slight or otherwise, by instituting the best set of safety standards we can without losing the edge or appeal of combat. It is everybody's responsibility to ensure that the battlefield is as safe as it can be. The Military Training Officer is charged with overseeing the combat training of our members and maintaining a policy on the safe use of weapons on this battlefield.
- c. These rules should be considered mandatory for most of the membership most of the time, however, the Military Training Officer reserves the right to vary the rules under certain circumstances for the benefit of spectacle or training purposes (e.g. for training 'games', knight's combat or armoured-man tourneys). Any variations to standard Regia combat rules will be made explicit before the start of the engagement.

2. The Training Team

- a. The Training Team is run by the Military Training Officer. The Military Training Officer will appoint deputies, known as Training Officers. Any reference to the Training Team in this document refers to the Military Training Officer and the Training Officers. The Training Officers are deputised to act with the full authority of the Military Training Officer in the absence of the Military Training Officer.
- b. Each local group with combatants will have a Local Training Officer. The Local Training Officer is selected by their local group and is not part of the Training Team. Nevertheless, they have a vital role to play in the training regime. Local Training Officers are responsible for ensuring that their group combatants have read and understood the combat regulations and providing training at a local level. They must be satisfied that their group combatants have a sufficient level of competence to undertake a Battlefield Safe or Full Weapons Test.

3. Requirements to Take the Field

- a. New combatants are always very welcome on the Regia battlefield. While the battlefield can be a bit daunting at first, you will find us a friendly bunch and there will always be someone with the time to answer any queries you may have.
- b. Before taking part in any combat, you must have read and understood the Battlefield Combat Regulations and the Warrior System. If there are any elements you need

clarification on, the Military Training Officer will always be happy to discuss these with you.

- c. Before you attend any national event, whether a show or national training, you must have undertaken training with your local group in order to have gained a basic level of competence with the weapon you will be using and an understanding of the rules of combat. If it is not possible to train with your local group before a national event, for example if you are the only combatant in your group, then you should contact the Military Training Officer before the event in order to make other arrangements.
- d. You must understand sufficient English that the Training Team believe you can operate safely on the battlefield and understand instructions.
- e. Prior to the combat taking place, you must not have consumed any alcohol or have consumed any non-medically prescribed drug on the day. You must not have consumed any medically prescribed drug which may lessen your ability to operate safely on the battlefield.

4. Junior Combatants

- a. It should be noted that Junior Combatants (those aged 16 or 17) must follow the appropriate guidance as set out in the Code of Law. The Junior Combatants are identified by a shield painted entirely black and must carry this at all times during combat. When fighting a Junior Combatant you should avoid more physical combat techniques such as shield charges. No other combatant may carry a solely black painted shield.

5. Guest Combatants

- a. If a group within the society invites members of another society to an event and they wish to take part in combat then the sponsor group must first receive approval from the Military Training Officer, Master at Arms, Authenticity Officer and Membership Officer prior to the event.
- b. To take part in combat the Guest Combatants must:
 - i. Understand sufficient English that that the Training Team believe they can operate safely on the battlefield and understand instructions;
 - ii. Show that they understand the combat rules;
 - iii. Attend any training session which occurs prior to the battle display; and
 - iv. Have been passed as battlefield safe with the weapons they will use.

6. Non-combatants (civilians)

- a. Civilians will sometimes be involved as part of the battle display; their involvement can add a valued and dramatic aspect to the battlefield. Warriors must never engage civilians in competitive combat. Civilians must never interfere with the competitive

combat, if a warrior approaches you, identify yourself as a non-combatant and they will leave you alone.

- b. If you wish to engage in some 'play acting' then ask first. Civilians may only be involved in the display part of the battle if this has been pre-arranged. Children may only be involved with the express permission of the Training Team, must be supervised, and must not be on the battlefield while combat takes place.
- c. Civilians should attend the muster prior to the battle display so that they understand the plan for the battle and their involvement. They must ensure they do not carry any sharp items, such as a sharp knife, onto the battlefield.

7. Basic Combat Rules

- a. The safety of your opponent, yourself and those around you must always be your first priority. You must protect yourself at all times.
- b. Any combat system which utilises the following elements is hereby prohibited:
 - i. Strikes outside of the Legal Target Zone or striking with too great a degree of force;
 - ii. Threatens the head or any part of the body outside the Legal Target Zone;
 - iii. A system which relies on intimidation over skill;
 - iv. Intentionally or recklessly damages re-enactor weapons or shields; or
 - v. Striking a shield with a greater degree of force than it is permissible to strike a person with.
- c. You must follow any reasonable instruction from a Training Officer. While on the battlefield we operate under a pseudo-military hierarchy, you are expected to follow any reasonable commands issued by individuals who have been placed in charge of you.
- d. You must not use two weapons simultaneously. You may not carry a second weapon in your off hand. You can use a short-arm weapon while also carrying a banner, provided that the banner is not also used as a weapon.
- e. It is not permissible to fight in two ranks. You should not attempt to engage an opponent from behind, or around, another fighter.
- f. If you strike an opponent on the head, you will take this as a 'death'. If you injure an opponent, you must remain with them and ensure they receive treatment. You must speak with a Training Officer before taking part in any further combat if you are involved in an incident where an injury has occurred.
- g. If you receive an injury you must speak to a first aider and a Training Officer before you take part in any further combat. This is to ensure that you are okay to return to

the field and that a Training Officer is aware of the incident which caused the injury in order to take any appropriate action.

- h. If an injury occurs or a safety risk develops, every combatant is responsible for stopping the combat by shouting **STOP, STOP, STOP**. Anyone hearing this will immediately cease combat and repeat the phrase until all combat has ceased. The Training Officers will address the incident and restart the combat when it is safe to do so.
- i. It is never permissible to wear glasses during combat, even when attending a private session. This is an absolute rule for safety purposes. If you are unable to wear contact lenses and are concerned that your vision may present a safety risk on the battlefield, discuss this with the Military Training Officer prior to the event.

8. The Rules for Competitive Combat

- a. It is not possible to accurately recreate combat within the safety confines of re-enactment, instead we have created our own representative form founded on a principle of competitiveness. It is a semi-contact sport along the same principles as Fencing or some Eastern Martial Arts. This means that in order to score a 'hit' on someone you must physically contact them with a weapon. Of course, your opponent will be trying to do the same to you. As there are no judges (or electronic systems) to record these 'hits', then the warrior who receives a hit is expected to make the suitable reaction, i.e. fall over dead. This is what we term an 'Honour Based System'. These elements are explained further in the Hits, Legal Target Zone, Honour Based System, and Rules of Individual Weapons sections of this document

9. Hits

- a. A hit is defined as a clear strike of measured weight, delivered to any legal target area. The weight of the hit should be heavy enough to be felt, taking into account the recipient's clothing and any armour, though it should never be so hard as to cause injury or to cause a person of reasonable firmness undue pain. The aim is to simulate the best possible hit to the legal target area, rather than aiming for less convincing hits as a way to represent a strike to the hit areas which we prohibit.
- b. The hit can be delivered with the edge or flat metal part of the weapon. A strike which connects only with the shaft, socket, cross guard or pommel of a weapon is not a hit.
- c. A hit must be delivered directly to a legal target area. A strike which makes contact with an area outside a legal target area and then slides to make contact with a legal target area is not a hit. A strike which first makes contact with the recipient's shield is unlikely to count as a hit unless you are able to make sufficient contact with the recipient for the strike to be classed as a hit.

- d. Any valid strike to a legal target area will count as a hit and the recipient will lose a hit point. If an opponent strikes you from behind and takes the time to deliver a theatrical shot of lethal character, then this will count as all of your hits and must be taken as such.
- e. If you receive a hit from the front by an opponent that has been delivered so that it has the appearance of significant lethal intent, then you are strongly encouraged to count this as all of your hits. This is at the recipient's discretion. An example of such a shot would be a sword strike that slashed right across the torso or a spear strike inside a recipient's guard that is pushed home with simulated lethal character.
- f. However, a strike simulating lethal character from a daneaxe to a recipient's torso, excluding the shoulders, will count as all of your hits and must be taken as such. While we encourage this response to shots simulating significant lethal intent from all weapons, this is mandatory when the strike is to the torso and from a daneaxe. This is to replicate the particularly devastating nature of the damage delivered by a daneaxe.
- g. When a hit is struck, the person receiving the hit should make every effort to acknowledge the hit by a grunt or shout of feigned pain, or otherwise. Once a combatant has taken all of their hits – they are 'dead' – this means that they can take no further part in the competitive combat and may choose to either feign death or to flee the battlefield.

10. Legal Target Zone

- a. We define a number of areas on your body as a legal target zone, these are areas which are safe to strike and where, realistically, the impact of a period weapon would disable, maim or kill.
- b. A hit to one of these locations loses you a hit point. They are chest, stomach, back and sides of your torso, legs above the knee and arms above the elbow (referred to as t-shirt and shorts). When you have received your allotted hit points (see Appendix A: Warrior System) you are deemed to be 'dead' and must take no further part in the competitive combat.
- c. Any hits to the body areas outside the above mentioned are deemed illegal shots and should not be taken as a hit. All combatants should take care to avoid the following areas in all circumstances. They are the genitals, elbows and below, knees and below, head, neck, throat and solar plexus. Avoid stabbing blows to the spine or kidney. If you cannot land a blow safely to legal target area then **DO NOT TAKE THE SHOT.**
- d. You must not engage in competitive combat with an opponent who is kneeling or on the ground. Be aware of height differences when fighting in groups, for example, a hit to a tall opponent's shoulder may be unsafe if they are standing next to a shorter combatant. You should never duck or kneel during combat. If you fall over, you should

take this as a death and not attempt to regain your feet unless there are no opponents nearby and it is safe to do so.

11. Honour Based System

- a. In our combat system it is the recipient of a strike who decides whether the strike was a valid hit. The recipient will keep count of their hits and will 'die' when they have received all of their hits. The recipient will decide whether any single blow was a sufficient simulation of significant lethal intent to treat that blow as taking all of their hits.
- b. The person delivering the blow should never tell the recipient that a strike was a valid hit or enter into any debate with the recipient during the combat regarding the validity of a hit. After the combat has ended, you can politely ask a recipient why they did not believe a strike was a valid hit. All combatants are encouraged to take a constructive and mature approach to resolving any concerns in this manner in the first instant.
- c. This approach clearly requires a high degree of sportsmanship from the combatants. Our experience is that the vast majority of Regia combatants have the maturity to act with the level of honour required for this system to work. After all, it takes very little time at all to gain a reputation for poor sportsmanship, and a very long time to recover your reputation once tarnished.
- d. However, if you genuinely feel that a combatant is consistently abusing the system, then you, or your group leader/local training officer, should inform the Training Team as soon as possible. The combatant's behaviour can then be observed and scrutinised.

12. Rules for Individual Weapons

- a. Shields
 - i. You must not strike an opponent with your shield.
 - ii. You may strike your opponent's shield with your shield in order to create an opening for a strike; however, care must be taken to ensure the strike does not cause injury or undue pain.
 - iii. You may kick an opponent's shield in order to create an opening for a strike; however, you must take care to ensure that you do not kick your opponent's shield in such a way as to cause injury or undue pain. You may never kick an opponent.
 - iv. You may hook an opponent's shield with your shield, use shield binds, and control their weapon with your shield.
 - v. You must not hold your shield so high that it obscures your vision or covers part of your face during combat, unless this is necessary to block a shot.
 - vi. You must not use your shield to cover your opponent's face or obscure their vision.

- vii. Only those who obtained the rank of Warrior (see Warrior System) may use a lenticular shield.
- b. Spears
- i. The spear may strike with the point, slap with the flat of the blade or cut with the edge of the blade.
 - ii. A strike can be made with a two-handed spear by sliding the spear through the front hand in a 'snooker cue' motion. Both hands must remain on the spear at all times and you must remain in full control of the spear. 'Fishing' for a shot by over extending or bringing your hands too close together is not allowed.
 - iii. Your back hand must not cover the butt of the spear, as this may lead to a greater degree of force than you intended.
 - iv. The spear must always be held with the point of the spear level or lower than the hands. If the spear is pointing upwards, there is an increased risk that the spear may be deflected upwards in a dangerous manner.
 - v. You must not brace your spear against a shield; this creates an increased risk that the spear will slide off the shield in an uncontrolled manner.
 - vi. You may hook a shield with the wings on a winged spear; however, you must take care not to hook any part of your opponent's body.
- c. Swords / Langseaxes / Seaxes:
- i. These weapons may strike with the flat or edge of the blade or cut with edge of the blade.
 - ii. Particular care must be taken when delivering a hit with the point of the blade. Direct thrusts are prohibited. All thrusts must be delivered using 'broken wrist' technique, this can be demonstrated by the Training Team.
 - iii. A seax can only be used as a secondary weapon, to be drawn as a weapon of last resort. You must not take the field with this as your primary weapon.
 - iv. A strike which hits the shield and then bends to strike a recipient is, by its nature, a marginal hit. It is for the recipient to decide whether the shield has taken the force of the strike. You are reminded that you must not strike the shield with more force than it is permissible to strike a person with.
- d. Axes
- i. An axe may strike or cut with the edge of the blade, strike with the flat of the axe head or strike with the top of the axe.
 - ii. The axe must not be used to hook any part of your opponent's body. If this occurs, you must disengage immediately.
 - iii. The axe may be used to hook a shield open. Care should be taken not to hook the top quarter of the shield.
 - iv. An axe may be used to safely hook an opponent's weapon. If your axe becomes hooked with another axe, this must not become a wrestling match. You may attempt a quick pull with the axe to disarm an opponent. If this does not work, you must disengage.

- e. Maces
 - i. A mace may strike with the head of the mace or punch with the top of the mace.
 - ii. A mace is capable of delivering a high degree of force; particular care must be taken to ensure blows do not exceed the permissible amount of force.

13. Rules for show fighting

- a. Show fighting refers to any combat that is uncompetitive. During a battle there will usually be certain clashes which are designated as show clashes; these are designed to focus on the display element of combat. They are an excellent opportunity for you to focus on putting on the best simulation of a battle that we can achieve. As a general principle, all of the rules for competitive combat apply to show fighting, except that you should not aim to strike an opponent.
- b. The general rules for show fighting are as follows:
 - i. Do not aim to strike an opponent. If you receive a hit accidentally, then simulate an injury before returning to the fight. Remember, nothing looks worse for an audience than an unacknowledged hit.
 - ii. Take the opportunity to put on the best display possible. The more noise and energy you put into show fighting, the better it looks and the more fun it is for the participants.
 - iii. Do not use this as an opportunity to hit harder. You must not damage your opponent's equipment through any excessive use of force.
 - iv. Telegraph your blows as much as possible so your opponent knows what is coming and is able to react appropriately.

14. Training Regime

- a. Regia operates a training regime to ensure that everyone using a weapon on a battlefield has a sufficient level of skill to do so safely. Tests are utilised as an element of this training regime, to ensure that a combatant has mastered a weapon sufficiently to move on to learning a new weapon.
- b. Each combatant may undergo training with no more than one weapon at a time. They may only move on to the next weapon once they have passed a Full Weapons Test with their current weapon. If a combatant chooses to change the weapon they are training with before completing a Full Weapons Test, they will lose any stamps in that weapon and must begin the process from scratch with the new weapon.
- c. The only exception to this is a seax, which you may undergo training with alongside another weapon. A Battlefield Safe, six stamps and Full Weapons Test is still required for a seax, however, each of these elements can be done alongside training and testing on a different weapon.

15. Battlefield Safe

- a. When a combatant uses a weapon for the first time at a national event, they must undertake a Battlefield Safe test before taking part in any combat. It is their responsibility to inform the Training Team that they require a Battlefield Safe.
- b. The Battlefield Safe will usually be undertaken with at least one member of the Training Team. It will generally be comprised of a discussion with the combatant followed by a period of combat with the member of the Training Team.
- c. The Battlefield Safe will test that the combatant has a basic understanding of the rules of the battlefield. In particular, that they are aware of the legal target zone and the appropriate level of force to use on the battlefield.
- d. In addition to this, the Battlefield Safe will test that a combatant has a basic level of competence in the use of their weapon and shield, such that the Training Team is confident that the combatant can engage in combat safely. This is focused on ensuring you have sufficient competence to be safe, it is not a test of skill.
- e. If you pass the Battlefield Safe, you are free to take part in the combat. You will not usually need to undertake a second battlefield safe with this weapon again. If you do not pass the Battlefield Safe then you cannot take part in the combat until you have been able to rectify the issue and successfully pass a further Battlefield Safe.

16. Stamps

- a. Once you have passed a battlefield safe, it is important that you gain a sufficient level of experience with the weapon before you attempt the Full Weapons Test and move on to a new weapon. To help ensure this, you must gain six stamps with the weapon before you can attempt the Full Weapon's Test.
- b. You receive a stamp for each day of combat you undertake with a weapon at a national event. Most shows will involve a training session in the morning, followed by a battle in the afternoon. You must take part in the training session and the battle to gain a stamp. For national training events, you must undertake at least four hours of training during the course of a day to gain a stamp.
- c. Up to two (three for members of Scottish groups) of your six stamps may be gained at qualifying local events, whether these be local shows or local training. To qualify, the local event must include combatants from at least three groups, there must be at least two Training Officers present, and the Training Officers must feel that sufficient training has taken place to justify a stamp.
- d. The Military Training Officer may make any adjustment to the issuing of stamps that he/she believes is advisable, whether to increase the number of stamps available for participating in a certain event, or to deem that no stamps are appropriate.

- e. Stamps should be collected from a member of the Training Team at the event at which they are gained. There will usually be an announcement for stamps shortly after an event closes to the public.

17. Full Weapon's Test

- a. In order to undertake a Full Weapon's Test, a combatant must:
 - i. Have collected six stamps in the relevant weapon.
 - ii. Own all the clothing and equipment which they will use during the test, this must not be borrowed.
 - iii. Present themselves at the start of training and inform the Training Team that they wish to do a Full Weapon's Test.
- b. The combatant will be identified to all of those present. It will be explained that they are undertaking a Full Weapon's Test and all combatants will be asked to ensure that any concerns with their combat should be passed to the Training Team.
- c. While the active part of the test will take place at the end of combat for the day, all of the combat during the day will form part of the test. If there are any concerns with your combat at any point during the day, you may fail the test on that basis.
- d. At the end of the day at least two Training Officers will run the active test with the combatant, this test will assess the combatant against the following criteria:
 - i. **Safe use of the weapon** – the combatant must demonstrate good control of their weapon, they should use an appropriate level of force, and any hits should be safe and in the Legal Target Zone. Their combat must meet the rules for competitive combat and the individual weapon's rules set out in this document.
 - ii. **Awareness of general safety** – the combatant must have a strong understanding of the safety rules which apply to the battlefield. They must be aware of practices by others which break the combat rules and demonstrate that they will pick others up on any such issues. The Training Officers may act in an unsafe manner during the test to ensure the combatant will halt the combat and pick them up on the safety issue. Examples of this including picking up other combatants if they use their weapon to threaten an opponent's head, attempt to engage in combat while kneeling, or use a spear with the spear pointing upwards.
 - iii. **Competence** – the combatant must have gained a reasonable degree of competence in the weapon they are using. They must be able to demonstrate that they can use the weapon effectively, both at range and when closed down, during both individual combat and when fighting multiple opponents.
- e. If the combatant passes each of these three elements of the test, they will have achieved a Full Weapon's Pass in that weapon and will receive a stamp in their membership book to reflect this. They can now undertake a Battlefield Safe test in a new weapon.

- f. If the combatant fails under any element of the test, the Training Officers will fully explain the reason and offer guidance on how to address this. The Training Officers will recommend whether you should re-take the test at the next opportunity or if you require further training before attempting the Full Weapon's Test again.

18. Accelerated Weapon's Test

- a. It is recognised that some of the weapons we use are so similar that it is unnecessary to undergo the full training regime in a weapon once you have already passed a Full Weapon's Test in a similar weapon. Therefore, if you have a Full Weapon's Test in a designated weapon, you may instead undertake an Accelerated Weapon's Test in the similar weapon.
- b. An Accelerated Weapon's Test occurs over one day. You will take a battlefield safe in the morning, your combat will be observed throughout the day, and you will then complete a Full Weapon's Test at the end of training. There is no need to collect stamps. If you fail an Accelerated Weapon's Test, the Training Officers will either advise that you collect six stamps in the weapon before attempting to re-take the test, or may allow you to re-take an Accelerated Weapon's Test at the next opportunity if they feel this is appropriate.

19. Weapon Training Regime

Weapon	Starting Weapon	Prerequisites	Notes
Seax	Yes	None	May simultaneously train with another weapon
Single-handed spear	Yes	None	
Two-handed spear	Yes	None	
Winged spear	No	Two handed spear pass	May do as an accelerated Weapons Test with two handed spear pass
Long single-handed spear	No	Single-handed spear pass	
Sword	No	Militia rank	May do as an Accelerated Weapons Test with langseax pass
Langseax	No	Militia rank	May do as an Accelerated Weapons Test with sword pass
Hand Axe	No	Militia rank	
Dane Axe	No	Warrior rank	
Mace	No	Warrior rank	
Any other weapon	No	At MTO's discretion	The MAA should be consulted

- a. Members of other re-enactment society operating similar combat systems who join Regia may be allowed to commence with a different starting weapon to that set out in the Weapon Training Regime. This is solely at the discretion of the Military Training Officer and must be requested prior to the event. They will still need to undertake a Battlefield Safe, collect stamps and complete a Full Weapons Test in the weapon they are permitted to use.
- b. Anyone who has not trained at a local or national level for at least one full year, or who has not taken part in combat at a national event for at least two full years, will be required to undertake a fresh battlefield safe with every weapon they are passed in at the first national event they return to. If they pass this battlefield safe, all of their former passes and stamps will remain valid.

20. Disputes & Sanctions

- a. If you feel that any combatant is not following the combat rules, you are encouraged to discuss the issue first with the individual in a respectful manner.
- b. If you are not comfortable doing so, or if this has not resolved the issue, or if you believe the issue is sufficiently serious, you should bring the matter to the attention of the Training Team. You are encouraged to raise the issue with the Training Team promptly at the event when it has occurred; it is far harder to resolve an issue which is only raised after an event.
- c. The Training Team will address the issue with the individual involved. If they believe that the combat rules have not been followed, or that there is a safety issue of any nature, they may take any action they believe to be appropriate to resolve the issue. This includes but is not limited to having a discussion with the individual, requiring them to re-take a test, suspending the individual from the battlefield, or permanently banning the individual from the battlefield.
- d. Any sanction imposed by a Training Officer can be appealed to the Military Training Officer. However, the sanction will remain in place until the Military Training Officer has made their decision.

21. Equality, diversity and inclusion

- a. We recognise and are fully committed to that fact that while we may re-enact events of 1,000 years ago, this is a modern hobby which must be as open and inclusive to all our members as possible.
- b. Every role and activity on the battlefield is open to every member of Regia Anglorum regardless of gender or ethnicity. We value diversity in our membership and anyone with any concerns in this regard is encouraged to bring them to the Military Training Officer.

- c. We are committed to making the battlefield as inclusive as possible. If you have a disability which you believe may impact on our ability to safely participate on the battlefield, you must discuss this with the Military Training Officer prior to the event. The Military Training Officer will always attempt to make reasonable adjustments to our requirements in order to allow you to participate as fully as possible, provided that this does not compromise safety or Regia's core aim to recreate its period of choice as accurately as possible.

**Military Training Officer
2020**

Appendix A: The Warrior System

1. Introduction

- a. The Warrior System is there to give you an idea of how our battlefield works, and exactly what your role on the battlefield will be. Before discussing your role on the battlefield, it is worth reflecting on the purpose of our battles. We are all aware that a battle display can only ever faintly echo the realities of combat during our period, so what is the aim of the battle display?
- b. Our battlefield is both a competitive game for the combatants, and an entertaining and informative display for the public. These are not competing priorities; they are mutually supportive. Our display is always at its most gripping and convincing when the combatants are fully invested in the competitive fight.
- c. By understanding your role on the battlefield, you will not only be able to enjoy the competitive nature of our battlefield, you will also be able to fully invest in the display; to capture at least a small part of what it might have felt like to take the field a thousand years ago.
- d. The Warrior System is there to help you understand the role you are portraying by setting out a rank system, creating an honorary rank for Warlord, and by describing what a 'standard' battle might look like. The Warrior System is jointly owned by the Military Training Officer, the Master at Arms, and the Authenticity Officer. These are the officers elected by you to decide on issues affecting the battlefield display, and any dispute with the operation of the Warrior System will be jointly adjudicated by these three officers.

2. The Ranking System

- a. All combatants will have a field rank. This will reflect in general terms the type of combatant you should aim to portray on the field and will have a role in determining the status your kit should reflect, the weapons you use, the number of hits you take during the competitive fight, and the position of command you take.
- b. There are three field ranks:
 - i. Freeman
 - ii. Militia
 - iii. Warrior
- c. These are, by necessity, very general ranks. They do not capture the complicated and diverse reality of the various social structures in place during the early medieval period. The aim is to provide a simplistic rank structure which can apply to all combatants, regardless of the ethnicity represented. These ranks relate only to the battlefield and have no bearing on any rank system that may be employed at local group level.
- d. Everyone new to the field in Regia will start out as a Freeman. Once you believe you have met the requirements for promotion to the next rank, you may present yourself to the Military Training Officer, the Master at Arms, and the Authenticity Officer. If all three officers agree that you have met the respective requirements for promotion to the next rank, they will sign this off in your membership book and you will be entitled to portray that rank on the battlefield.
- e. If the officers do not believe you have met all the requirements, they will give you constructive advice on the changes which you need to make to allow you to achieve promotion to the next rank in the future. Please take this with good grace. An officer may choose to delegate their authority to decide on promotions to their deputies.
- f. Central to this concept is the idea that combatants should be portraying specific roles on the battlefield and their clothing and behaviour should be appropriate to that persona. For example, those dressed as a Freeman should not be barking orders, while those dressed as Warriors should be taking a greater role in commanding on the battlefield.
- g. It is important to understand that just because you have been signed off to portray a certain rank that does not mean that you will always have to portray that rank on the battlefield. For example, a combatant may be signed off as a Warrior, but choose to portray a lower ranked combatant, without mail or a helmet. The important thing is to ensure that the way you act on the battlefield reflects the rank suggested by your clothing and war gear.

3. Rank 1 – Freeman – 2 hits

- a. The right to bear arms during the Viking Age was limited to the higher ranks of society. Freeman may be the lowest rank on the Regia battlefield; nonetheless you are still portraying an individual of means. You would be drawn from the rank of freemen, farmers and the independent landed households. These individuals will usually have experienced a degree of training and would be equipped for battle.
- b. No one who steps foot on a battlefield would have been drawn from the lowest ranks of society. While these social ranks may have taken up arms in the last defence of hearth and home; this would be a rare occurrence and will not be an appropriate impression for most of our battlefield displays.

Requirements for Freeman:

- c. Training (Military Training Officer) – in order to take part in the battle display, new members must have passed a battlefield safe test and read and understood the Battlefield Combat Regulations.
- d. Wargear (Master At Arms) – you will own or have borrowed a spear and shield that meet the requirements set out in the Master at Arms' regulations.
- e. Kit and Authenticity (Authenticity Officer) – a tunic, belted and rucked to knee level. This can be owned by the member or loaned.

Role of the Freeman on the battlefield:

- f. Much of the battlefield will be comprised for Freeman. Not for you the weighty responsibility of command, you have but to take your place in the shieldwall and do you best to keep yourself alive, keep your friends alive, and to kill the foe.

Hits

- g. You can take up to two hits before you cease to play a role in the competitive combat. At this point, you may either die or flee the field.

4. Rank 2 – Militia – 2 Hits

- a. The rank of militia refers to the both high ranking freemen and low ranking nobility and, as such, encompasses a broader variety of social ranks within this impression. Wherever you find yourself on this scale, to hold this rank you would have been a man of substance, well equipped and having received training for combat. Although you are likely to have owned land, you would have primarily been a warrior who may have farmed when not serving, rather than a farmer who fought.

Requirements for Militia:

- b. Training (Military Training Officer) – a full weapon's pass in spear and shield, with or without a full pass in seax.
- c. Wargear (Master At Arms) – you must own a spear and a shield.
- d. Kit and Authenticity (Authenticity Officer) – a tunic, belted and rucked to knee level. Trousers or Hose – tight to the leg or with leg bindings. Shoes. At least one authentic name/character. You must own you own kit.

Role of the Militia on the battlefield:

- e. The Militia are experienced and trained combatants. You can start to play a more vocal role on the battlefield, assisting with section commanding and bearing weapons other than the spear and seax.

Hits

- f. You can take up to two hits before you cease to play a role in the competitive combat. At this point, you may either die or flee the field.

5. Rank 3 – Warrior – 3 Hits

- a. A warrior represents the highest social class on the battlefield. You would have held at least the rank of Thegn (Anglo-Saxons and Vikings) or Miles (Norman) and, as such, you would have been a noble whose position in society was linked to your responsibility to serve your lord or King in war. You would have been well equipped, trained, and motivated for warfare, forming the true backbone of any army and acting as a leader of men.

Requirements for Warrior:

- b. Training (Military Training Officer) – a full weapon's pass with shield and spear and with a sword, axe or langseax, and a battlefield safe with one further weapon.
- c. Wargear (Master At Arms) – you must own a shield, spear, helmet, mail and a short arm.
- d. Kit and Authenticity (Authenticity Officer) – soft kit as per the Militia, but with some ethnic, character or period specific items of kit for certain shows. Generic kit must be retained for shows where that is not appropriate. No item of kit classed as unacceptable during its phase out period. All kit to be made of good quality materials and exhibit good quality workmanship.

Role of the Warrior on the battlefield:

- e. Warriors will take the leadership role on the battlefield. The commanders, hearth troop and champions fighters will be Warriors.

Hits

- f. While wearing helmet and mail you can take up to three hits before you cease to play a role in the competitive combat. At this point, you may either die or flee the field. Without mail or a helmet, you act as Militia rank and take up to two hits.

6. The Hearth Troop

“Then Byrhtnoth began to array men there ... when he had fairly arrayed his troops, he dismounted among them where it most pleased him, where he knew his hearth-band most loyal.”

- a. Where appropriate, our battle displays may include a hearth troop for each appointed commander. Those who make up the hearth troop should do their best to personify a member of the hearth troop, to act as they might have acted, rather than looking always for the greatest competitive advantage.
- b. The hearth troop was the personal retinue of their lord and can be viewed as the closest equivalent to the modern perception of professional warriors. They will be some of the best equipped warriors in the army, and the most cohesive unit. Believed to have eaten with the lord, slept in his hall, and shared his fortune, the ties binding a lord and his hearth troop should not be underestimated.
- c. Rules for the hearth troop:
 - i. Each commander may appoint a hearth troop, comprised of those who have attained the rank of Warrior, and have the kit to portray the role.
 - ii. The hearth troop shall fight as a unit with their commander and may not leave his side.
 - iii. If their commander falls, the hearth troops shall recall their vows and may not retreat. They will advance or die over the body of their lord.

Role on the battlefield:

“He held a firm resolve while with his hands he could yet hold his shield and broad sword he fulfilled his vow when he had to fight beside his lord.”

- d. They are not a bodyguard unit looking only to protect their commander. In a warrior culture the commander was expected to take part in the battle, to share the dangers of combat. The hearth troop were oath bound to fight with their lord, they should not separate, but always fight as a unit remaining with their commander. The hardest fighting will naturally develop around these well-equipped and experienced units.

Death of the commander

- e. There was an expectation that when their lord fell and the battle was lost, the hearth troop would not flee as other troops. Instead they would advance forward and do their best to avenge their fallen lord. Members of the hearth troop should not retreat when their commander dies, they should either go forward or die beside their lord.

“I give me word that from this place I do not mean to flee one foot’s space; rather will I go forward to avenge my friendly lord in the fight.” – Battle of Maldon

7. Warlords

- a. The rank of Warlord may be accorded by the Military Training Officer to any combatant whose military prowess, equipment, and conduct stand as an example to the Society.
- b. Warlord in an honorary rank awarded to those combatants who are felt to exemplify the best of what we do on the battlefield. It is a way to give recognition to those who go above and beyond the high standards we routinely expect of any Regia combatant.
- c. A Warlord receives no advantage in competitive combat, nor do they have any automatic right of command or authority on the battlefield. A Warlord can be recognised by a white silk scarf. The rank of Warlord shall be held as long as a member remains in good standing within the Society, unless rescinded.

How a Warlord is chosen

- d. The Military Training Officer may accord to the rank of Warlord to any combatant member of the Society. They shall do so by consensus with the Master at Arms, the Authenticity Officer, and any existing holders of the rank.
- e. Any member of the Society may nominate a combatant for the rank of warlord by speaking with the Military Training Officer, Authenticity Officer, or Master at Arms. The nomination will then be discussed and a decision will be made following the above process.
- f. Person Specification:
 - i. **Equipment:** A Warlord's kit must be exemplary. There is zero tolerance for badly made or maintained items and their kit should be almost exclusively from the 'Recommended' section of the Authenticity regulations. This does not mean that the kit must be high status, simply that whatever level of combatant portrayed must be portrayed to a very high level of authenticity.
 - ii. **Conduct:** A Warlord must be above reproach in their conduct on the battlefield. They will play to the spirit rather than to the letter of the rules. A Warlord will be graceful and dignified in both victory and defeat. They will be welcoming to new members and always willing to help on the battlefield. A warlord will be modest and humble.
 - iii. **Combat:** A Warlord should excel at some aspect of our battlefield activities. This will often relate to competitive combat, but can also be show fighting, commanding, or something completely different.

8. A Standard Battle

- a. The battlefield displays are varied according to the requirements of each show and clarified at the muster prior to each display. However, there is a standard battle format which is commonly utilised. There is a mix of display and competitive combat and each combatant is encouraged to use every effort to make the display as exciting, educational, and informative as possible for the public.
- b. First Clash – Display Only
 - i. The two armies take the field. After a parlay and exchange of missiles, the two sides will close for a display clash.
- c. Second Clash – Display Only
 - i. There may be a second display clash. This will be similar to the first clash, and often may include show tactics such as a boar snout.
- d. Third Clash – Probing Fight
 - i. The first competitive clash. The two armies will form into a tight shield wall, only the commander will remain behind the lines. The two armies will advance and engage while remaining in a tight shield wall.
 - ii. This is a chance to probe the opponent, without flanking or breakthroughs. The commanders will pull their armies back after an agreed length of time, or if one side begins to gain a distinct advantage.
 - iii. If a combatant takes their full hits, then they die at this point. If they take some of their hits, this will carry over to the next clash.
- e. Fourth Clash – Competitive Fight
 - i. This is the final battle. It will be fully competitive, with commanders able to deploy all of their combatants and any tactics they see fit. The hearth troop will fight with their commander.

Champions Fight

- f. There may be a Champions Fight included in the script. Each commander will have nominated a Champion to engage in single combat before the watching armies. Champions should have attained Warrior rank and will agree the format for the Champions Fight prior to the battle. This can either be a scripted and choreographed show fight, or a competitive free fight. However, it must prioritise an impressive display over the competitive result.

9. Code of Conduct

- a. All combatants are expected to abide by the following code of conduct: Fight safely at all times, if you cannot land a blow safely, do not take the shot. Protect yourself at all times.
- b. Fight with honour and sportsmanship – where there is any doubt, be generous and act within the spirit of the Code, if not the letter.
- c. Always take the time to apologise if you have put in a bad hit. Never apologise audibly in front of the public during a display.
- d. Never argue in front of the public. Never stop combat to verbally dispute a hit – if you need to discuss the shot, it was probably not worth taking.
- e. Never forget – it is only a game.

10. Conclusion

- a. This concludes the Warrior System. The intent behind this document is not to impose a draconian set of rules, but to provide a framework within which we can all re-enact our period better and enjoy doing so.
- b. The battlefield belongs to every one of us, for our mutual enjoyment. None of us want to spend out day having petty arguments over a hit.
- c. Do not abuse the hits system; be generous and sportsmanlike both in giving and receiving your hit and help to make our combat displays better for everybody, combatants and public alike.

Military Training Officer
Master at Arms
Authenticity Officer