

New Handbook – Armored Combat Rattan

https://society-rules.fullmesh.co.nz/index.php/Main_Page

Summary of Changes (Overall):

- Original rules count (2023 handbook): 1059
 - Majority of the 2025 changes were updated wording, reformatting, and reorganizing (not functional changes).
 - 25 rules removed (~2%) due to being redundant, left-over from prior edits/changes, safety, or improved technology.
 - 59 functional rule changes (~6%).
 - Several new sections were added to provide context, capture current processes and existing conventions (not previously written down), and guidance for new people.
- **No major changes to game play** (*fighting conventions, target areas, use of weapons*)
 - Current and established rules of engagement were added. These were not included in prior handbooks. This should make it easier for new people to understand SCA combat rules.
 - Gathered into one place the rules on when you are allowed to strike someone. Several rules were scattered throughout the old handbook. Added some that were not written down previously.
 - Removed prohibition on using your weapon while carrying a pavise not in your hand.
 - Closed the loophole people were using to get around restraints required on hafted single-handed weapons.
 - **Minor game play change** - destroying siege engines is changed. This is to prevent damage from strikes, and safety concerns (accidental trigger).
 - Old rule - laying a weapon on it and declaring it destroyed
 - New Rule - Closing within 5ft of the engine and declaring it destroyed.
- **Minor changes to equipment**
 - Removed 4" rule on shields
 - Updated definition of "laminated weapons" to enable construction of a wider variety of period weapons for safe use
 - Increase required starting thickness of steel used for particular construction methods of helms (doming, spinning, excessive grinding)
 - Added blind rivets to the types that cannot be used
 - Added recommendations for increased protection on the aventail, vambraces, and rib area
 - Added a defined thickness for "heavy leather"
 - Defined "punch weapon"

- Enabled more historically based weapons to be constructed and used
- Arrows – must label with Branch name in addition to Kingdom
- Added the international method for measuring bow poundage
- **Most of the functional changes were to administration, management, oversight functions**
 - Authorizations expire, with a max of 4 years (removes “infinite” authorizations)
 - New authorizations have a 2-person integrity rule
 - A sample authorization process is included as a default if a kingdom does not want to create one of their own. (Creating this process was required in prior handbooks.)
 - Establishes a method for authorizations of activities new to a kingdom. Allows KEMs to utilize marshals and expertise from other kingdoms (this was not allowed before).
 - General guidelines on armor and weapons checks added to the authorization process, and now include combat archery.
 - Waivers are stored by the kingdom (not the marshallate)
 - Managing misconduct – guidelines provided to marshals with escalating levels of options. Added details to the processes and reporting required.
 - Minors – expanded and clarified the list of people who are allowed to authorize minors.
 - Updated the Rules of the List in the Handbook (*BoD approved Nov 2024*)
 - Marshals – Codified roles and responsibilities, reporting, and updated the chain of command.
 - Added recommendations on marshal-to-fighter ratios and other best practices.
 - “Designated Areas” was added. (Note - this section is much more needed and involved for TA, TW, EQ. It’s included as a separate section for consistency between handbooks).
 - A section on Accessibility was added, with examples of approaches for ideas, education and reference.
 - A section on Safety Resources was added (concussions, heat, air quality).
 - Injury procedures – created one common process for all martial activities, and added a standard report
 - Created 3 categories of experimental programs, to provide more flexibility in developing new weapons and activities.
 - Updates to Handbooks are now done automatically for the kingdoms, thanks to the online format and wiki-format engine. The old method had significant delays in updates (sometimes more than a decade). This policy includes timelines and processes to accommodate international affiliates.
 - Change log for current and past handbooks included.