

Field Marshal 201

Lesson Goal

This class is intended as a primer on how to be the marshal-in-charge of a moderate-to-large-sized event. It assumes that the individuals taking the class are (or will become) well-grounded in their disciplines; specific questions about rules in different disciplines should be directed to marshals in those areas.

Please send comments to the [Deputy Earl Marshal for Training](#).

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this lesson, the student shall be able to:

1. Summarize how to plan the fighting part of an event. *[Armored Combat Marshal's Handbook (Oct 23) – XIII Guidelines for Marshaling on the Field para XIII.a]*
2. Describe the steps in setting up an event. *[Armored Combat Marshal's Handbook (Oct 23) – XIII Guidelines for Marshaling on the Field para XIII.a]*
3. Describe how to run/manage the combat activities at an event. *[Armored Combat Marshal's Handbook (Oct 23) – XIII Guidelines for Marshaling on the Field para XIII.a, XVIII Procedures for Grievances and Sanctions para XVIII.a & b]*
4. Summarize what needs to occur after the combat activities are complete. *[Armored Combat Marshal's Handbook (Oct 23) – XVII Marshal Responsibilities, Chain of Command, and Reporting para XVII.a]*

Instructor Information

This lesson will cover the guidelines for organizing all aspects of combat at an event in the SCA. This lesson describes what to do before, during, and after the event

Carefully review this lesson plan and the accompanying PowerPoint presentation before presenting the lesson.

Methodology

This lesson uses lecture and discussion. The level of learning is application.

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Section I: Planning the Event**Objective 1 — Summarize how to plan the fighting part of an event.****A. Communicate with the principles**

1. Autocrat / Event Steward.
 - a. What types of activities he or she would like to see?
 - b. Time constraints such as courts, and lunch break?
 - c. Will there be prizes for the tournaments/contests? If so, who is to provide them?
2. Dignitaries.

B. Scout the site

1. Keep in mind that the site itself may restrict the activities you can offer.
 - a. For example: Is there enough room for horses (and if you don't know the requirements, you need to bring an equestrian marshal with you to the site)? Does it allow live steel for thrown weapons?
2. View the site with an eye toward what it will be like under possible adverse weather conditions (blazing sun, heavy rain, light snow).
3. Watch for hazards that can affect how you will be able to lay out list fields and the like. Take special note of holes in the ground, uneven terrain, poison ivy, and hornet nests.

C. Recruit your discipline marshals and staff

1. Make sure your discipline marshals understand the wishes of the autocrat and dignitaries.
2. Appraise your discipline marshals of the general site layout and any relevant considerations.

3. Make sure you have enough marshals for any melee scenario you are running.
4. That means an absolute minimum of one marshal per single combat (preferably two or three); enough marshals for group combat (melees and war battles) to both surround the fighting (to keep an eye on the boundaries) and keep most of the fights under general surveillance (for detached armor, broken weapons, etc.).

D. Communicate with the field staff

1. Make sure you chat with the event MOL or ensure the relevant discipline marshals do so.
 - a. Why? Veteran MOLs can be a huge asset in helping a tournament run smoothly, even with inexperienced marshals. Veteran marshals can help a novice MOL keep a tournament straight. The point is, that the complexity of the tournament or shoot or whatever needs to be a good match for the experience of your field staff.
 - b. Know what time the MOL is planning on arriving. You can't start authorizations without one.
2. Will support staff be present? (heralds, water bearers, chiurgeons)

E. Design your scenarios

1. Take into account a variety of factors.
 - a. Wishes of the principals.
 - b. Weather.
 - c. Available time (include time for authorizations).
 - d. Likely participants.
2. Keep in mind, that no one likes standing around.
3. Have a backup plan.

F. Publicize

1. Well-attended events are much more fun than poorly-attended ones.
2. As MIC your primary job is to make the event as safe as possible and make sure Kingdom and Society rules are followed. Your second most important job, though, is to work to make the event as much fun as possible for everyone. That means helping to generate excitement for an event is partly your responsibility.

Section II: Setting up the Event

Objective 2 — Describe the steps in setting up an event.

A. Make sure you have enough help

1. Ask your marshals and MiTs to arrive early.
2. Check in with your discipline marshals as early as possible. Make sure they have enough help to conduct the activities they have planned.
3. Keep in mind that complex set-ups such as large list fields, archery shoots, or equestrian arenas are best erected the day before. You really will not have time on the morning of an event.

B. Safety zones

1. Talk with your discipline marshals, and make sure you understand the requirements.
2. Have on hand some means of delineating those safety zones. Those markers should have a period appearance.
3. Remember that rapier and heavy fighters can be in safety zones only if fully armored as they would be if fighting.
4. If you have marshals from different disciplines taking the class, this is a good time to ask them to speak up and describe the basic space and safety zone requirements of their areas of expertise.

Section III: Running/Managing the Event

Objective 3 – Describe how to run/manage the combat activities at an event.

A. What to bring to the event

1. Your gear: watch, writing utensils, full set of the rules, safety goggles.
2. Spare marshal staves and tabards.
3. Spare safety goggles if there will be combat archery.
4. Loaner equipment.
5. Basic repair/maintenance equipment.

B. Be nice to your field staff

C. Inspections

1. Can be the most contentious part of the day.
 - a. "This is what I always have worn" or "I've always used this bow" is not good enough.
 - b. Emphasize that the rules are there for safety.
 - c. Be reasonable, but be firm. Rules are rules, they are not optional.
 - d. Also make sure that your marshals understand that there are no "house rules" or "local conventions". They must enforce the rules as written.

D. Start on time

1. Manage Authorizations.
 - e. Coordinate with MOL, marshals, & ushers throughout the process.

- f. Upon completion (at court), recognize all successful authorizations. Anyone joining our game should be celebrated.

- 2. Coordinate with dignitaries.

E. Managing participants

- 1. Your demeanor sets the tone.
 - a. Polite, calm, self-assured.
 - b. As a marshal you are the voice of reason on the field.
- 2. You have to know the rules.
 - a. And one of those rules is that you have a copy of the rules available at the site.
- 3. Be clear to the participants.
 - a. Clarity is especially important when dealing with fighters. Fatigue, and overheating dim the wits very quickly.
 - b. Ensuring everyone knows the conventions for the day's shoots/combats/whatever, and knows the schedule will reduce the likelihood of problems later.
- 4. Keep tempers in check.
 - a. Especially important in melee.
 - b. Take breaks, talk to the fighters, and remind them that they are all friends.
- 5. Remember that rank does not confer the ability to circumvent the rules.
 - a. This can be the trickiest part of marshaling an event.
 - b. As when dealing with any individual, be polite. Explain the rule. Explain your decision. In the final analysis, however, you must enforce the rules for everyone.

F. MIC has the final word on any disputes in any martial discipline on site

1. The MIC's decision may be overruled only by the Crown, Kingdom Earl Marshal, or relevant discipline Deputy Marshal if they happen to be on site.
2. For this reason, many MICs, particularly of large events, elect not to be a discipline marshal.
3. As MIC you should overrule one of your discipline marshals only if you have a good reason.
4. Disputes that reach the MIC level for arbitration should be included in your event report.

G. Managing spectators

1. Keep an eye on the safety zones.
2. Support staff has a way of encroaching into combat areas.

Section IV: Event Reporting**Objective 4 — Summarize what needs to occur after the combat activities are complete.**

1. Check in with your discipline marshals.
 - a. Did they have any problems?
 - i. Safety issues (broken blades broken armor, stray arrows, injuries).
 - ii. Equipment failure (armor, weapon or other), including details like owner, manufacture, wear level, etc.
 - iii. Injury (any event that requires the fighter to leave the field).
 - iv. Conflict issues (disrespect for, or arguments with, any fighter, marshal, or support staff).
 - v. Rules confusion (misunderstanding of or disregard for any rule).
 - vi. Names of your marshals, your MiTs, your MoL(s), your authorization attempts, problem folks, good folks, etc.
 - b. Remind them to file their event reports within 7 days. Ask for a copy.
 - c. Make sure they have help for cleanup.
2. During court, publicly thank your field staff (MOLs, water bearers, chiurgeons).
3. File your event report within 7 days.
 - a. If there are any injuries, the report must be filed within 24 hours.
 - b. This is not optional—the report must be filed within that time.
 - c. Besides, you'll forget what happened if you don't do it then, anyway.

4. Thank-you notes are a nice touch.
 - a. This may be more relevant for a discipline marshal, but if a group makes an effort to bring a large number of people to your event, send them a thank-you note. Even an electronic one is fine. It's a nice thing to do and those groups will remember the gesture; they'll be more likely to return the following year.
5. It's a good habit to take pictures and attach them to event reports.

Section V: Final Notes

1. Become familiar with the Earl Marshal website and the warrant site.
2. If you are running a practice, familiarize yourself with the waiver reporting requirements.
3. Be sure to go to the warrant page and use "request a new warrant" to tell KEM you took this class.
4. Print the rules, and keep them with you at every event you marshal.
5. Print a copy of your MiT form, which can be found in the paperwork section of the Earl Marshal website.
6. To stay current, sign up for the Atlantian Marshal's mailing list and unofficial Facebook group, and read the ACORN
7. As marshals, we teach new fighters the rules of the list for which we marshal.