

The Kingdom of Lochac Target Archery Handbook

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Target archery is the non-combat use of any live missile fire and the arts and sciences related to it. This includes shooting at a mark, for distance or clout shooting with crossbows, bow and arrows and thrown weapons (such as axes, knives and javelins).

Target archery falls under the office of Kingdom Deputy Marshal for Light Combat. The rules for equipment, competition and safety are laid down within this handbook.

1. Marshals

1.1. Deputy Earl Marshal for Archery

The Deputy for Archery (DEMA) shall serve under the Earl Marshal and be responsible for:

- 1.1.1. Encouraging the development of combat standards and chivalry on the field in all actions in Lochac involving archery and other projectile weapons, in co-operation with the Marshallate.
- 1.1.2. The maintenance and enforcement of the Kingdom Standards for construction and use of projectile weapons and armour for plumed combatants.
- 1.1.3. Set, maintain and enforce safety standards.
- 1.1.4. Make regulations and information concerning target archery available.
- 1.1.5. Warrant the Captain of Archers for each group.
- 1.1.6. Report as required by the Crown and the Earl Marshal.
- 1.1.7. Report quarterly to the Society Archery Marshal.

1.2. Target Archery Marshals (TAM)

A Target Archery Marshal Shall:

- 1.2.1. Have familiarity with current SCA archery conventions and rules
- 1.2.2. Be able to set-up and safely run an archery shoot.
- 1.2.3. Be able to inspect equipment as required for safety and compliance with Kingdom and Society rules.
- 1.2.4. Be warranted as a Target Archery Marshal in Lochac. Any TAM can authorise another TAM.

2. Range Rules

- 2.1. No archery must take place without a warranted TAM present, hereafter referred to as the marshal.

- 2.2. One marshal can safely supervise 10-15 archers. When there are more archers, several marshals are required or the archers shall be divided into smaller groups.
- 2.3. Marshals may not shoot or be involved with any other activity while supervising a shoot unless there is another TAM present who can supervise the line.
- 2.4. The marshal-in-charge (MIC) of a shoot bears the overall responsibility and shall have the final decision in matters of equipment and safety.
- 2.5. Participants in Target archery must be in suitable physical and mental condition. This means not drunk, excessively tired or otherwise impaired in their judgment.
- 2.6. Minors may participate in archery with certain restrictions:
- 2.7. Minors 12 years and older may participate in bow activities without parental supervision. Minors under the age of 12 must have a parent or legal guardian on the archery line within arm's reach.
- 2.8. Minors 12 years and older may participate in thrown weapons activities as long as a parent or legal guardian is on the archery line within arm's reach. Minors under 12 may not participate in thrown weapons activities.
- 2.9. Adults supervising a minor at the archery line may not be involved in any other activity at the same time.

2.10. Safety Rules

- 2.10.1. Archers should always remember the potential danger of their weapons
- 2.10.2. The marshal's commands are to be followed explicitly by all archers while on the field. Repeated or intentional failure to follow directions will result in the archer being removed from the field for the day.
- 2.10.3. No arrows should be nocked or loaded when anyone is in front of the shooting line.
- 2.10.4. When an unsafe situation occurs, 'HOLD!' is called. All activities must cease immediately until the Marshal clears the range and gives the command to resume.
- 2.10.5. Holds can be called by any person including spectators.
- 2.10.6. When a hold is called:
 - a. Archers will point the bow to the ground, slowly release the tension on the string and remove the arrow from the bow.
 - b. Crossbowmen will lower their crossbow, tilt it to one side to allow the bolt to fall to the ground and then uncock the crossbow.

- c. Throwers will slowly lower the throwing arm towards the ground while holding their weapon.
- d. After a hold the archers shall wait for the Marshal's instructions. The Marshal shall resolve the dangerous situation and then give the command to resume.

2.11. General Conduct

- 2.11.1. There are no authorisations required for target archery. All gentles may participate as long as they follow the rules of the line and the instructions of the marshal.
- 2.11.2. No archer may distract another archer or a Marshal. No horseplay on the line!
- 2.11.3. Archers may draw bows or cock crossbows only while standing on the line, nowhere else. Missile weapons that are ready to fire must be kept pointed towards the targets or at the ground at all times.
- 2.11.4. No archer may nock an arrow, draw a bow, cock a crossbow, fire or throw any missile or step in front of the line without being instructed to do so by a Marshal.

2.12. Shooting

- 2.12.1. Throwers must turn around and check that there is nobody standing within 8 meters distance behind them before they commence throwing their missile.
- 2.12.2. For un-timed shoots, the archers are allowed any reasonable amount of time. Un-timed shoots are usually started with the command 'SHOOT AT WILL' or 'SHOOT AT YOUR LEISURE'
- 2.12.3. For timed shoots the following procedure shall be followed:
 - a. The marshal states the range and amount of time allowed for the shot and inquires whether the archers are ready.
 - b. Archers are allowed to start with one arrow nocked and drawn.
 - c. When the archers are ready, the Marshal calls 'Draw, aim, loose' or similar. The timed interval begins after the word loose.
 - d. A mid-way reminder may be given in seconds (e.g. 15 seconds).
 - e. Five seconds before the end of the interval, the marshal starts counting down the remaining seconds, ending with the command 'HOLD'. This marks the end of the timed interval.
- 2.12.4. In un-timed practice shoots, the Marshal may end the practice round when most of the archers are finished. The Marshal may announce this by the call 'LAST ARROW'.

- 2.12.5. If the targets get too full, the Marshal may end the round early.
- 2.12.6. Archers who are finished shooting shall step back from the line and put down their bow to indicate that they are done.

2.13. Scoring and Retrieving

- 2.13.1. When all archers have put down their bows, the marshal will give the command 'Clear to collect' or similar. Archers may then walk to the target, mark scores and retrieve their arrows.
- 2.13.2. If there are several neighboring lines, arrows may only be retrieved after shooting has stopped on all of the lines.
- 2.13.3. Archers should always watch out for arrows on the ground while walking to and from the targets. When pulling arrows, archers should take care not hurt someone who might be standing behind them.
- 2.13.4. Archers shall only remove their own arrows from the target. If there is an official scorer, arrows that missed the target face may be retrieved immediately, all others only after they have been scored.
- 2.13.5. If an archer must walk far behind the targets to retrieve an overshot arrow, he shall notify the Marshal that the range is not clear.

3. Range Layout

All missile weapons ranges consist of four parts: Behind the Line, the Line, the Range and the Safety Zone.

- 3.1. Typical Range Layout:
- 3.2. All spectators shall remain a minimum of 5 meters behind the shooting line and shall refrain from interfering with the archers or marshals. Nobody may stand directly behind a person throwing weapons.
- 3.3. The Line is generally perpendicular to the target area. It must be clearly marked and not a tripping hazard. Only active archers may approach the line, no spectators. Archers will straddle the line with one foot in front and one behind the line. For thrown weapons, the line is the forward limit for the thrower who stands completely behind the line.
- 3.4. The range and safety zone must be clearly marked off. This may be done by the use of ropes, poles, signs, tapes, etc.
- 3.5. At events where large numbers of archers are shooting, the MIC shall be easily identifiable.
- 3.6. The Range extends from the Line up to and including the targets. No one shall enter the Range while the line is open for archery.

- 3.7. If there are roads or paths within the safety zone or range, they shall be blocked off to traffic at both ends during shooting.
- 3.8. The Safety Zone lies to either side of the Range and behind the targets. It begins at both ends of the firing line and extends outward and forward at a 45 degree angle for the length of the Range, then continues on straight behind the targets. The Safety Zone must be free of persons, animals or obstructions that would obscure observation from the line.
- 3.9. The Safety Zone should extend at least 40 yards beyond the last target or half the distance from the line to the last target, whichever is greater. The distance of the safety zone behind the targets may be reduced if there is a hill, permanent backstop, archery netting, etc., that will stop stray arrows.
- 3.10. The layout given above is a minimum requirement and may have to be modified to fit the locality. The range shall be set up in such a way that stray or overshot arrows will not hit persons or damage property.

4. Equipment

4.1. Inspection

- 4.1.1. All bows and other equipment may be inspected for safety and conformity with these rules by a TAM.
- 4.1.2. Damaged or unsafe equipment shall not be permitted.
- 4.1.3. Modern equipment that violates these rules shall not be permitted.
- 4.1.4. Suggested inspection guidelines can be found in Appendix A.
- 4.1.5. While equipment may be inspected by a marshal, each archer has the ultimate responsibility for the proper care, inspection and safe use of his/her own weapons, and for knowing and following the SCA and Kingdom target archery rules.
 - a. An archer shall not knowingly use unsafe equipment.
 - b. If an archer is unsure of the safety of his/her equipment, he/she shall request the assistance of a Target Archery Marshal in inspecting the equipment.
 - c. The Target Archery Marshal assisting in the inspection shall make a reasonable attempt to locate any unsafe conditions or violations of Kingdom rules and inform the archer of what is found and how to correct it.
 - d. The inspection by the Target Archery Marshal may not find all equipment faults and is conducted as a service to all the archers on

the line. It does not remove the archers' primary responsibility for the safe condition of their own equipment.

- e. Any equipment observed by a Target Archery Marshal to be unsafe shall not be used until it is made safe and is re-inspected by a Target Archery Marshal.

4.2. Bows

- 4.2.1. Bows may be made of any material, provided they are judged safe to shoot by the TAM.
- 4.2.2. Bows of unusual materials or construction will be required to pass the inspection of the DEMA or designated deputy.
- 4.2.3. No compound bows are allowed in competition. There will be no exceptions to this prohibition.
- 4.2.4. Adjustable or fixed sights are not allowed.
- 4.2.5. If adjustable or fixed sights are attached, they shall either be removed or made inoperative.
- 4.2.6. Sighting and/or ranging marks on the limbs or riser are allowed, except in divisions or competitions that exclude their use.
- 4.2.7. There are no draw weight limits for target archery bows. Should a Marshal observe that an archer is using a bow too heavy or overdrawn for them to safely shoot then the Marshal will require the archer to stop using the bow.
- 4.2.8. No modern spring/flipper rests or plunger buttons are allowed. The use of simple rests is allowed, such as simple one-piece plastic or non-adjustable wire rests; feather, bristle, leather, etc. rests; built out shelves or rests. The use of the shelf in a cutout window is also allowed.
- 4.2.9. No stabilizers, clickers, or modern string release devices are allowed. Bows with cut-out risers (i.e., those that can be seen through from the side, often found in take-down bows with metal risers) must have the openings covered so as to present a solid surface and an appearance more in keeping with medieval archery equipment.

4.3. Strings

- 4.3.1. All strings shall be appropriate in length and strength for the bow type and weight. Linen, silk, artificial sinew, and any modern bowstring materials are acceptable, as long as strings are properly constructed.
- 4.3.2. Strings that have become knotted, or those that have been repaired by knotting strands together, shall not be used. This rule does not forbid those string designs that incorporate knots, such as a bowyer's knot, in their original design.

- 4.3.3. A nocking point may be attached to the string. It may be made of metal or tied on. A single nocking point is allowed.
- 4.3.4. The nocking point may consist of one or two locators, which may be of any type.
- 4.3.5. The locators may not extend above or below the arrow nock in such a way that they are used as sighting mechanisms.
- 4.3.6. Peep sights or kissers buttons mounted on the string are not allowed.

4.4. Arrows

- 4.4.1. All shafts shall be of wood or of bamboo-like materials.
- 4.4.2. Both self and footed shafts are permitted.
- 4.4.3. No broadheads or tips that cause excessive damage to the targets shall be used, except for special competitions using these heads with the permission of the MIC and the DEMA.
- 4.4.4. Fletched arrows and bolts shall have feathers or other pre-17th century material. Plastic vanes are not allowed.
- 4.4.5. Nocks for arrows, and caps, rings, or nocks for bolts may be of any material, provided they are securely attached.

4.5. Exceptions to prohibited equipment

- 4.5.1. The DEMA or designee may approve the use of prohibited equipment by class, such as the use of plastic vanes or non-wooden arrows for children's archery. Any such exceptions shall be reported in the DEMA's quarterly report to the SCA Archery Marshal.
- 4.5.2. The MIC of an event may allow the temporary use of prohibited equipment for an archer on an event-by-event basis, such as permitting a new archer to use aluminum arrows with plastic vanes.
- 4.5.3. The MIC shall make necessary allowances for handicapped archers, provided that range safety is not compromised by these allowances.

Appendices

Inspections

The basic rule for inspecting equipment is: If you are not sure that it is safe, don't pass it. There is a lot of energy stored in a braced bow and if the bow fails that energy is going somewhere, usually with very unpleasant results.

1. Damage to the bows

Have the archer string the bow before inspection. Bows should be free of cracks and gouges. Have the archer draw the bow and then slowly release the tension. (Never dry fire a bow!) Watch the back and sides of the bow for cracks that might show up under tension. Cracks are least serious in areas close to the handle of the bow and most dangerous in areas of high bending. Bows that show major cracks or that have cracks that go across the limbs should be rejected as they can break. Small cracks should be marked at the ends and watched. If they have grown after two or three test arrows, fail the bow. If they seem stable, pass the bow, but re-check it throughout the competition or practice.

Laminated bows sometimes have small cracks in the fiberglass running up and down the limbs. This condition is not serious unless the crack goes through both the wood and fiberglass.

2. Warping

Bows should not be excessively warped. Recurve bows have this problem, especially when strung by bending the bow around a leg. Sight down the string to see if the bow limbs are parallel. If a limb is excessively twisted from the perpendicular then the bow is unsafe. Have the archer draw the bow and then slowly release the tension twice and repeat the inspection. If the string is not in the grooves on the limbs, then the bow is warped.

If the warping is constant (and the string remains in the same position after each shot) the bow is usable. If the string keeps moving sideways with each shot, the bow must be failed.

3. Strings

Bowstrings must have no more than one frayed or broken strand. If several strands of the string are broken or otherwise damaged, fail the bow.

The string should be the proper length for the bow. Pass a bow with an improper string unless it is so short that using it will overstress the bow.

The serving on the string should be secure and not unraveling. If the string shows small hairs and looks fuzzy, it is dried out and needs some bow wax. Pass such bows but counsel the archer that the string will have a short life expectancy.

4. Arrows and bolts

The shaft should be free of cracks or deep gouges. Bend the arrow a little while rotating it between your fingers. This will cause any invisible cracks to open up.

The tips, nocks and fletches must be securely fastened. The nocks must not be cracked.

5. Thrown Weapons

Knives should have a sharp point, but dull edges. The handle/hilt must be securely fastened so that it won't fly loose on impact.

An ax blade must be sharp enough to stick in the target rather than bouncing off.

Spearheads should not exceed 40 cm in length and 1 kg in weight.

Check axes and spears for cracks and splinters in the handle. The head must be securely fastened.