

**AN TIR**

**BOOK**

**OF**

**BOFFER**

## **January, A.S.XXXVI Edition**

Introduction

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Kingdom Deputy for Whalebone & Boffer

This January A.S. XXXVI revision of the An Tir Kingdom Book of Boffer is the result of an evolution in the way Boffer contests are conducted in An Tir and ongoing efforts to standardize Youth Combat throughout the Known World. The fundamental philosophy of “what we do” and “why we do it” has grown to become a vehicle to foster the skills and principles of Chivalry. These skills and values set apart The Knightly Martial Arts from all other activities and sports. The NEW RULES allow children to develop the martial skills, character and judgment that will make their passage into the ranks of An Tir’s Warriors a natural outcome.

The growth in times past of children into members of the War Band, from fighter to King, began at an early age with mock weapons and battles. Warriors saw to the martial training of the young; taking them into service as Page, Man-at-Arms, and Squire, culminating in their elevation to Knighthood. We have the opportunity to do the same for the young in the S.C.A. We have Knights of the highest caliber who our young look to as Role Models of Martial Prowess and Chivalry. The Goal of the New Rules is to engender an environment where Knights choose children as Pages and bring them into the World of Chivalry. It is with this goal in mind that the following revision is undertaken.

Respect and heartfelt thanks are due all those who in the past have worked selflessly to promote the growth and development of Boffer in An Tir. Inspiration for this Edition belongs to Their Royal Majesties’ Wilam and Siobhan. Originally this project was launched by Their Majesties Davin and Groa. They were the inspiration and support for the evolution of Boffer into their new form. The continued Support and Approval of Their Majesties King Skepti and Queen Asa, Earl Marshal Sir Aethelred Cloudbreaker, and the enthusiastic backing of the Members of the Order of Chivalry. Counsel in all things Chivalric is due Viscount Sir Donnan the Truehearted. He has inspired me in countless ways, taught me volumes regarding combat, revitalized my spirit and stands as model of Knightly Virtue to me. I owe an inestimable debt to Viscountess Callista Balgaire for Her inspiration, patience, guidance, and support during the last three years. Many and great have been her efforts on behalf of the children of An Tir, she is the fount from which this effort flows.

Yours in Service to An Tir,  
Sir Lohtgar Gallobchar

**“Whalebone and Boffer contests teach respect for yourself and others. Whalebone and boffer teaches sportsmanship, discipline, and self control, but above all...it teaches CHIVALRY”**

-Baron Olaf Bjarnarson, *First Edition Book of Whalebone and Boffer*

*A note on new words:* The Term **WHALEBONE** is hereby dropped from usage. All youth combat shall hereafter be referred to as BOFFER. Divisions are made between age groups and weapons types. Junior Boffer divisions are for ages 4 through 12, Senior Boffer for ages 12 through 18. The weapons do not differ in construction. Boffer uses PVC blades covered with foam. Armor standards for both are identical and given in detail below.

## **Marshallate Structure**

Grades of Marshals

**A-Kingdom Deputy Boffer Marshal** (21+ years old)

- Certification by Kingdom Earl Marshal.
- Report to Kingdom Earl Marshal.
- Certification/Approval of all levels of Boffer Marshallate.

**B - Senior Boffer Marshal** (18+ years old)

- Certification by Kingdom Deputy Boffer Marshal
- Report to Kingdom Deputy Boffer Marshal
- Authorize Junior Boffer Marshals.
- Inspect equipment prior to the opening of the lists.
- Conduct Boffer training.
- Assist or authorize contestants.
- Settle disputes over contests.
- Possess a current copy of An Tir Book of Boffer.
- Conduct Boffer tournaments.
- Know Rules of Boffer Tournaments and Lists
- Senior Boffer Marshal shall take an active part in training new Boffer Marshals, and shall be appealed to when there is a question about required equipment or a new weapon (before it is appealed to the Boffer Marshal in charge or their representative for the tournament). Senior Boffer Marshals are highly encouraged to compete in Boffer/ Heavy fighting to learn as much as possible about SCA combat.

**B – Junior Boffer Marshal** (15+ years old)

- Assist in the training of Boffer Marshals and contestants.
- Assist in equipment inspection.
- Assist as Boffer Field Marshal.
- Assist a Senior Boffer Marshal in conducting tournaments.

### **C – Apprentice Boffer Marshal. (12+ years old)**

- Apprentice Marshal is anyone who has exhibited an interest in being a Marshal and has been approved by a Certified Marshal. All Marshals must start at this level to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to advance.

\*All grades of Boffer Marshal below Kingdom Deputy of Boffer must be certified every two years; a valid Senior Boffer Marshal does such certification. Kingdom Deputy Marshal Boffer shall certify Senior Boffer Marshals. Lists of Certification are to be held by Kingdom Deputy Boffer Marshal.

## **Duties of a Boffer Marshal**

- A- Marshals are responsible to see that the risk of someone being hurt is minimized through observance of the Rules of the List, proper use and care of the equipment and facilities used during a Boffer tournament or training session.
- Marshals shall be knowledgeable concerning the Rules of the Lists of An Tir , Kingdom Standards and conventions of combat.
- A violation of the Rules of the List, equipment regulations or disputes should be handled at the Lowest possible level.
- In the occasion of an impasse or the inability to resolve a dispute shall an issue be passed up the chain to a Senior Marshal and lastly to the Kingdom Deputy Boffer Marshal.
- In all instances of a dispute a written report of the facts and actions taken to resolve the issue will be filed with the appropriate Senior Marshal, who shall forward a copy to the Kingdom Deputy Boffer Marshal.
- Marshals shall act upon their own initiative and judgment. Marshals shall act in an impartial manner at all times. Marshals may excuse themselves from issues wherein they feel their ability to act/judge impartially may be compromised.
- Prior to the beginning of a tournament the Marshal shall have a meeting to review the Rules of the List in order to insure the combatants are familiar with and will abide by them.
- If a combatant repeatedly appears to disregard blows or act in an unchivalric manner, the Marshal shall stop the combat. The

Marshall shall demonstrate the blows/blows that appear to be at issue *to both parties!* This shall be done in such a way to illustrate a proper killing blow with sufficient force to allow the combatants to learn how to gauge properly and/or how to avoid an unchivalric act. This will be done with the express purpose of teaching the proper actions only, stressing the need to preserve the honor of both parties involved in the combat.

- Marshals shall protect and promote the **HONOR** and **CHILVARY** of all combatants. They shall not by word or deed remove the responsibility for calling blows from the combatants. **THE STRUCK MAN SHALL CALL THE BLOW.**
- Marshals shall be prepared to stop combat at any point under the following circumstances:
  - a)Infraction to the Rules of the Lists.
  - b)Danger to either combatant or the spectators.
  - c)One of the combatants calls for a “Hold”.
  - d)One of the non-combatants on the field calls for a “Hold”.
- Marshals shall act in a crowd control capacity at such times as an injury occurs on the field. In the normal course of a bout, only fighters and Marshals shall be allowed inside the eric.
- The Marshal is responsible to see the eric is free from debris, equipment, rocks, etc.
- Marshals shall carry onto the field of combat a Marshaling pole that is spirally marked yellow and black at each end for 1.5 feet(45mm). The spiral mark is to indicate to the Fighter that the pole belongs to the Marshal. The length of the pole should allow the Marshall to comfortable direct the combatant without exposing the Marshal to being struck by the combatant’s weapon. No Marshal shall carry any pole on the field that has sharp or jagged edges (i.e. walking staffs, tree limbs, etc.).
- Marshals shall insure no one wears any real weapon (live steel) onto the field while participating in combat or present during combat.
- **FAIR WITNESS.** The Boffer Marshal shall act as a witness only, not a judge and jury. Marshals may offer opinion of blow only if

asked, and shall reply in a manner that directs the judgment call back to the combatants. **THE STRUCK MAN SHALL CALL THE BLOW.**

- Marshall may stop fight to clarify legal blows/gauging shots as previously described, or to prevent injury in the case of an uncontrolled fighter.
- **SHOWMANSHIP.** Marshals shall begin a bout by calling the fighters to the ring, proper introductions by the Herald (Marshall if no Herald present) and appropriate salutes (Crown of An Tir, Inspiration, Worthy Opponent). After checking the readiness of the combatants, the Marshall will call "Lay On!"
- **KEEP AN EYE ON THE AUDIENCE.** Combat is spectator oriented, none more so than someone's child in combat for the first time!! The Marshals part is to keep things moving and safe. Avoid blocking the view of the spectators at all times possible, keep holds and discussions during a bout to an absolute minimum. **The Marshal shall not call out encouragements or comments of any kind during the regular course of the bout.**

## **Equipment inspection**

- The primary consideration is safety. The Boffer Marshall must approve the weapon and/or equipment of the Fighter. If there is a question, do not approve it, look for a substitute weapon or piece of equipment. In the case of a dispute, refer the matter to the Senior Marshal, Kingdom Deputy, as appropriate. As previously stated, handle at the lowest level possible. Until a Senior Boffer Marshal had approved a weapon or piece of equipment, it is not allowed.
- New or repaired Boffer Weapons inspection, things to check for:
  - Attached PVC fittings are secure (glued & taped on).
  - Proper capping on the ends of the blade, guards and pommels.
  - Proper padding on all striking surfaces.
  - Continuation of padding off the ends, butts and thrusting tips.
  - Has PVC been fiber-taped? Is the PVC schedule 40? **High Pressure Schedule 40 is BANNED**, only "normal Schedule 40 is allowed
  - Weight of weapon. Changing or unusual balance may mean interior weights or fluid filling in PVC.
- Should the Marshal have a concern regarding a weapon or method of construction (primarily Sr. Boffer), **ASK** the Fighter if you may slice open the weapon for inspection. Make as small a slice as

possible and repair it when completed. Should the fighter refuse inspection of the weapon, the weapon and fighter is banned from participation until the Kingdom Deputy of Boffer has conducted a full review. The Marshal concerned shall submit a written report the day of the event.

## **Armor Requirements: Junior & Senior Boffer**

The requirement for Junior & Senior Boffer shall be the same as An Tir Book of Combat requirements for Heavy Combat, differing only in that equipment need not be constructed of carbon steel. Combatants are highly encouraged to construct armor to recreate any period/persona within SCA time frame (circa 500A.D to 1550 A.D.).

- Fighters are assumed to be wearing chain mail Hauberk (chain to mid thigh and sleeves to just above the elbow). Helm is considered to be an open faced Bascinet.
- Groin protection Male & Female: rigid athletic cup. Females are required to have rigid chest protection, males rigid sternum.
- Rigid knee & elbow protection, street hockey style or equivalent.
- Hand. Must be covered with leather glove. Karate-style foam gloves or better suggested. Cup hilt or Quillions on sword not considered adequate protection.. Suggested: Hockey gloves, demi-gauntlets.
- Neck. Gorget required 2-3 inch leather collar w/padding, cervical collar, and blue foam collar). Suggested: same quality as heavy fighter.
- Shin . Not required. Suggested: Soccer shin pads.
- Feet. Same as heavy fighter, heavy leather shoes, no open toed sandals or bare feet .
- Body Armor: Padded Gambeson, Rigid Sternum, And Rigid Kidney Protection. The same specifications as An Tir Book of Combat for a Heavy Fighter.
- Helmet.. Hockey/street hockey style, add fauld of plates to protect side and back of neck. Leather or chain drape for front of helm. No opening in grill allowing a 1 ¼” weapon to enter. Suggested: heavy quality helm, carbon steel. Bicycle helmets not allowed.

Fighters are expected to meet qualifications for heavy combat armor per the An Tir Book of Combat. The purpose of Boffer combat is to train fighters in the SCA style of medieval sword/weapon combat in a safe, progressive manner. Fighters are eligible to enter heavy combat at age 16 with parental permission, 18 without. Developing and fighting in heavy legal armor will make the combat transition from boffer to heavy a

seamless one. Fighters at this stage are encouraged to seek out and develop relationships with heavy fighters and Knights, to model their armor after the Knight who inspires or sponsors them. The Order of Chivalry will hopefully scout Boffer Fighters to train, take on as Pages or men-at-arms, hopefully developing into a Squire-Knight relationship. Boffer fighters will be the next generations of An Tir's War band. The closer they can associate with and learn from today's Chivalry, the stronger An Tir's future will be.

## **WEAPON CONSTRUCTION**

- **New Shield or Weapon Designs**

- Must be submitted to The Kingdom Deputy of Boffer for approval before they may be produced beyond the prototype stage, or used in practice or competition.

- **Boffer:** To be constructed from schedule 40, 3/4-inch PVC pipe & appropriate rounded fittings, plugs not allowed. **HIGH PRESSURE SCHEDULE 40 IS BANNED.** Fittings to be glued and all portions to be covered with strapping tape to protect against shattering. Length-wise strapping only, spiral wrapping NOT allowed..

- Weapon section/blade: Covered with close cell pipe insulation or equivalent close cell foam not less than 3/8-inch. Foam to be securely attached with strapping tape. Tape not to compress the body of foam. Blade to be covered with duct tape, edge/thrusting tip of contrasting colored duct tape. Tape shall not compress foam. **Suggested: covering of blade with cloth sleeve**
- Thrusting tips: Additional 2 inches of compressible foam, attached with strapping tape to body of foam. End/butts of weapons are not to be used for thrusting.
- Hand protection: May be included in construction of weapon, either of foam or rigid plastic, may not be of metal. Cross guards & Quillions to be capped as padded as above.
- Steel, rattan, fiberglass, wood are not allowed in any portion or construction of Boffer weapons.
- Maximum length of weapon: Height of Fighter, maximum of 6 feet. Length must be weapon appropriate. Handle limited to 8 inches or 25% of total length, whichever is greater.
- PVC Portion of weapon to remain hollow. Filling PVC portions with liquid or solids is prohibited and will result in Fighter's Authorization being revoked! Appeal to Kingdom Deputy Boffer Marshal only!

- Broken Weapons are illegal and may not be used. A Certified Senior Boffer Marshall must inspect repaired weapons before being used again.
- Design of weapon. Weapons are to be Boffer versions of Period weapons. Suggested they coincide with persona type.
- MASS WEAPONS (Mace, Axe, etc). Shall have a striking head made up of open cell foam. They are to be joined to the haft by duct tape in such a way as not to compress the foam. Striking heads are to be colored differently than the haft. **Suggested: “Pool Noodles”**
- Flails are banned by Society Marshal and the Kingdom of An Tir and therefore banned in Boffer. Fantasy weapons are STRONGLY discouraged

## SHIELD CONSTRUCTION

Both Junior and Senior Boffer shall be allowed to use shields. They will conform to the dimension requirements in the AN Tir Book of Combat:

- **Heaters.** Limited to “elbow to elbow, chin to crotch” of the Fighter.
- **Rounds.** Limited to “elbow to elbow” of the fighter.
- **Boffer Shield:** Must be constructed of foam a minimum of 1inch thick, may be more. Care shall be given to insure no rough edges are present to catch or damage Boffer weapons or fighters. Handles and shield baskets may be of any flexible material (cloth, leather, etc). They may not be of metal or rigid materials. **Suggested: 2 layers of 1-inch foam cut to shape and joined with duct tape.**
- **Alternate Shield Designs: Must be submitted to Kingdom Deputy of Boffer for approval before use on the field.**

## AUTHORIZATION

### Minor Authorization

- The parents or guardians of the minor should witness contests, discuss the minor’s participation in SCA Combat with a Certified Senior Boffer Marshall. They must complete the “**Minor’s Consent to Participate and Hold Harmless**” form. This is the same form that should have been completed upon entry to the event if the minor is not a (blue card) member of the SCA, Inc. If the minor is a (blue card) member of the SCA, Inc. the appropriate forms were completed as part of the membership application. Event as used in the context of this document includes, without limitation, Boffer practices and demos *sponsored* by the SCA, Inc.

- At any event in which the minor is involved in Boffer related activities they must either have a parent or guardian present or must be in possession of a properly completed **“Medical Authorization for Minors”**. It is Highly recommended that the contestant give the Marshalle/Lists at the event have a copy of this form as well.
- Some areas (i.e. Canada) may require additional forms/waivers. Contact the local Marshal or Seneschal for the area in which the event will take place.
- Forms needed;
  - Either SCA, Inc membership OR the **“Minor’s Consent Form”**.
  - If the parent/guardian of the minor is not on site, a **“Medical Authorization for Minors Form”**.
  - Any additional waivers/forms that a local area requires.

## **FIGHTER AUTHORIZATION**

### **The Fighter Must**

- Be familiar with the rules of the list.
- Be safe to themselves and their opponents.
- Demonstrate competence with their armor and weapons.
- Be calibrated by a Senior Boffer Marshal; show they can reasonable gauge a killing blow.
- Demonstrate the various blows, proper striking with the edge and thrusting tips of their weapon of choice to be authorized with said weapon.
- Pass an oral examination demonstrating their knowledge of Boffer.
- Have the required waiver(s) on their person at all times.
- Be at least twelve (12) years of age to compete in Senior Boffer . Individuals 18 and over may not compete unless approved (see Tournament rules).
- Be at least four (4) years of age to compete in Junior Boffer activities and competition. Individuals the age of twelve (12) years or older may not compete.
- Recognize the possibility of injury to them.
- Maintain control over his or her temper at all times.
- Respect and obey the word of the Boffer Marshals.
- Adhere to the appropriate equipment and Boffer standards of An Tir.

- Advancement from Junior Boffer to Senior Boffer requires an additional Certification by a Senior Boffer Marshal.

## **RULES OF BOFFER COMBAT**

**Four Phrases.** There are four phrases that a contestant must learn and obey:

- **HOLD** – means STOP immediately; fighters should drop to one knee and place their weapon on the ground. The word “**HOLD**” is called if one of the fighters and/or Marshals sees anything out of place. This should only be done for good cause, e.g. equipment failure or a small child or object enters the eric. Never as a tactic.
- **CENTER** - used as a call by the Boffer Marshal to tell the Fighters they are getting too close to the edge of the eric. The Fighters continue, working their way back to the center.
- **ON GUARD** – used by the Boffer Marshal. Means “get ready to resume the battle”.
- **LAY ON** – called by Marshal and means, “start the battle”.

### **Tournament Divisions:**

- Tournament divisions shall normally be divided into age categories that enhance fun.
- Junior Boffer: 4-6 yrs, 7-9yrs, 10-12yrs
- Senior Boffer: 12-14yrs, 14-16, and 16-18. These groups overlap to allow for flexibility.
- The MIC of the tournament **MAY** adjust the age groups to accommodate the numbers and ages of fighters in a given event. Groups may be combined or further divided as deemed necessary by the Boffer MIC, provided all fighters consent.
- Boffer Fighter may move up to an older division if they desire and have parental/guardian permission to do so.
- Junior Boffer fighters who advance to Senior **MAY NOT** go back to Junior Boffer competition.
- Senior Boffer fighters **MAY NOT** compete in Junior Boffer.
- Senior Boffer tournaments **MAY NOT** allow fighter over 18 to be involved in the event.

**Illegal Blows:** The following blows are **NOT COUNTED** as a death or removal of a limb.

- The wrist and hand (two inches above wrist is valid).
- The knee and below (two inches above the knee is valid).

**Legal Blows:** The following blows have the listed effects.

- **A blow to the Arm** results in the loss of use/removal of that arm. If the fighter wishes to continue, they must discontinue the use of the lost arm, placing it behind their body (so it does not serve as a shield). Fighters must place the hand of the injured arm in a protective basket hilt or other adequate protection.
- **A blow to the Leg** results in loss of use/removal of that leg. The fighter may then either:
  - Go to their knees. This is the standard practice.
  - Post the injured limb. Posting: the struck leg remains in the same spot, much like pivoting in basketball. Hopping is not acceptable as it renders the contestant off-balance and unsafe.
- **Any Blow to the Body/Torso** (Front, side or back) is an automatic death.
- **A Second Blow to a Taken Arm** counts as a torso shot and is therefore a death (the arm is not considered to be there).
- **A Blow with a Mass Weapon to the Hip or Point of Shoulder** is considered a killing blow and not merely loss of limb. Mass Weapon here means Great Sword, Axe, Mace or War Hammer.
- **A Blow to the Side or Back of the Helm** is considered to ***“cave in the Helm and whatever lies beneath”***.
- **A Blow to the Face** is considered to remove it from the fighter, resulting in a near instant death.... and not a nice one at that!
- **A Blow to the Neck** (Side, front or back) is considered to remove the head from the shoulders..usually resulting in death!
- **A blow to the GROIN** results in (I believe we need add nothing here!) death!!

In all instances the struck fighter shall gauge the effectiveness of the blow, whether or not it was delivered with sufficient force to simulate an actual blow with an actual weapon. In no instance shall a Boffer Marshal offer any opinion in these matters, other than to direct the decision back upon the Fighters. Boffer is to DEVELOP CHIVALRY; it won't always

spring forth full-grown. Patience, tolerance and respect will be shown at all times to the Fighters. Allow issues of Chivalry to be addressed by the Chivalry. Boffer Marshals are there to promote and guide.

## **Winning the BATTLE**

- The Contest is over when the other Fighter yields, or is dead!
- Disqualification is death!

The purpose of this handbook is to provide safe, progressive guidelines for Boffer tournaments, training and development of outstanding fighters. Above all, we are striving to improve the quality of Youth Combat in the SCA. Boffer is an exciting and fun event to sponsor and be involved in. Imagine the day when we have enough Boffer Warriors to hold a WAR!!!! With the help those who have come before and those who will be inspired to get involved in the future...the pitter patter of little tiny feet can have a whole new meaning!!

Please feel free to communicate your comments and suggestions to me directly. Your input is needed to keep the momentum going. I can be reached at: [Loehtgar@comcast.net](mailto:Loehtgar@comcast.net). My mailing address is; Sir Loehtgar Gallobchar, 8814 181<sup>st</sup> St E, Puyallup, WA 98375.