

# Summary

At Pennsic this year, the Board of Directors invited well thought out and detailed proposals for alternative approaches to crown tournaments. As sovereigns of the East Kingdom, we are submitting such a proposal with the approval of our heirs and within a month of them winning our crown tournament.

An alternative approach to crown tournaments will open important leadership roles to more people, generate excitement, and respond to a strong desire for opportunities among the East's populace. Any change, however, should acknowledge our institutional history so the alternative approach is easily understood and accepted. In addition, this approach would benefit from a large pool of competitors with the experience to conduct a successful reign as they navigate this new territory.

The East Kingdom has officially competed in rapier since 1985. Data from kingdom officers show a pool of rapier competitors almost comparable in size to our armored combatants and with significant experience in leadership roles in the kingdom. Rapier can be substituted for armored combat with no changes in the one-on-one tournament format used for the East's crown tournaments.

Therefore we are requesting a variance for our heirs to conduct a crown tournament in the East Kingdom in Spring 2024 using rapier combat.

## Why Change?

Tradition is important to many SCA members. However, the SCA has successfully changed its rules and activities throughout its history for many reasons including safety, increased knowledge of historical activities, and expanding interests of its members. We have adapted and can adapt.

A single combat tournament using armored (rattan) fighting to determine monarchs is an SCA tradition. It has advantages. Ruling as a result of a one-on-one tournament is a romantic concept. The results of a tournament are reasonably objective. The disadvantage is that this format and weapons choice limits the most visible and arguably powerful positions in the SCA to what has become a small subset of its participants, especially in the East Kingdom.

If we change the weapon choice for crown tournament to rapier for one of the East's two crown tournaments each year, then we broaden the potential pool of candidates; we indicate that the organization is listening to the concerns of the populace, who want alternative routes to the crown; and we do it using a method that creates change within the understood structure of how crown tournaments are currently conducted.

The proposed experiment is an incremental change within the traditional structures of the SCA, but a change nonetheless. We are aware that it does not open the path to the thrones to every person in the East. However, this proposal is a carefully thought out change that can be successfully enacted now. The East is ready to try an alternative approach and we should move forward with what is possible at this point in time.

## Why Rapier?

The obvious reason as to why to use Rapier in a crown tournament is that the only change required is the weapons used. Otherwise, the tournament format will be the same. Regulations related to the tournament remain the same.

The other reason for Rapier is the size and experience of the East's rapier community. Participation in rapier in the East goes back to at least the early 1980s, although it became an official activity in 1985 when the first set of rules were accepted and the first Kingdom Marshal of Fence appointed. The activity grew rapidly and is still thriving.

Currently the East has 332 authorized rapier fighters. This is 71% of the 465 authorized armored fighters. The most recent King's and Queen's Rapier Championships had 66 entrants. By contrast, there were 37 entrants in the most recent King's and Queen's Armored Championships and 44 entrants to our recent Crown Tournament with 37 actually competing. Based on this data, we believe that a significant number of competitors will enter a rapier crown tournament.

We are equally confident that those entering will either have or have access to the knowledge of the kingdom and its operations to conduct a successful reign. Rapier fighters in the East are composed of many current or former kingdom officers, territorial baron/esses, and monarchs. The peerages bestowed in the East to the members of the Order of the Golden Rapier (our fencing Order of High Merit) are 31 Pelicans, 19 Laurels, 8 Chivalry, 5 Counties, and 3 Duchies.

Rapier in the East has a long history, a large number of participants, and participants who are integral to the running of the kingdom. It is well suited to this experiment.

## How would this work?

To use rapier instead of armored combat in a crown tournament, the change will be a one-to-one substitution of rapier for armored (rattan) combat. East Kingdom crown tournaments are conducted traditionally as follows:

- The first part is round robin pools from which the top 2-4 combatants (depending on the number of pools) progressing to the next stage.
- Those top sixteen combatants compete in a double elimination tourney.

- The top two combatants from the Winner's bracket advance to the semifinals with a 1-0 record and compete against the top two combatants from the Wounded bracket. The combatants from the Winners bracket start with an 0-1 record. One combatant from the Winner's bracket and one from the Wounded bracket face each other. The first combatant to achieve two wins in each pair progresses.
- The finals are fought between those two combatants, with the winner being the first to reach 3 out of 5 or 5 out of 7 bouts. Weapon choices vary depending on the monarchs.

We propose that no changes be made to that format except that rapier weapons be used instead of armored combat weapons. No other changes to East Kingdom Law and Policy, including requirements for entrants, will be made.

Please see Appendix B for pertinent sections from East Kingdom Law and Policy. Appendix C lists the time, location and staff for the East Kingdom's Spring Crown Tournament

## Conclusion

We appreciate the Board's request for proposals for alternative approaches to crown tournaments and your willingness to consider options. As monarchs and longtime residents of the East, we believe the plan we have proposed is well suited to the East and would strengthen our Kingdom. Our heirs have expressed their own support for their plan with a letter you will find below in Appendix A. Ourselves, Their Highnesses, and ultimately the people of the East look forward to hearing your response. If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact us.

# Appendix A

From their Majesties of the East:

Unto the Board of Directors, Ombudsman, and President and Senior Officers of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. do Matthias and Feilinn, Sovereign and Consort of the East Kingdom, send greetings.

We write to you today to request a variance to Corpora to allow the East Kingdom to run an experiment in which rapier combat instead of rattan combat determines the next Heir-Sovereign and Heir-Consort in our Crown Tournament. We have created a detailed plan that includes the background behind this request, how such a change would be implemented, and relevant sections of East Kingdom Law and Policy. While we have laid out our reasoning in the proposal, we would reiterate this point - the more people who feel empowered and represented in the SCA, the stronger the Society is. There is no more visible role than the Royalty.

This is not a proposal we put forth lightly. We are committed to working with both the rattan and rapier communities throughout all phases of implementation of this variance. We can envision that the East may want to eventually work toward a rotating schedule of rattan and rapier combat for the summer and winter reigns respectively. At this point in time, however, we are only asking for a variance to try this carefully considered experiment.

We were hearted at the most recent Pennsic Board of Directors Meet and Greet when the Board stated they would entertain a well put together proposal for an alternate crown tournament. This proposal is a result of that statement. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and your willingness to move the Society forward. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns that we can address. We look forward to your timely response.

In Service,  
Matthias and Feilinn  
King and Queen of the East

From their Highnesses of the East:

Unto the Board of Directors of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. are greetings sent from Tindal and Emerson, Princes of the East Kingdom on this tenth day of December, Anno Societatis 58, (2023CE).

Their Majesties of the East Kingdom, Matthias and Feillin, have spoken with Us and shared Their intent to seek a variance of the format of the next Crown Tournament from the Board of Directors. This would allow for the Crown Tournament to be fought using rapier combat in place

of heavy weapon combat. We have reviewed the Laws of the East Kingdom, and see nothing that would prevent this type of tournament to be used, as it does not specify the type of combat. We urge the Board to make a timely decision so the variance doesn't introduce a complication in the timing of the letters of intent for Our Crown Tournament. Under current Kingdom Law, those letters would be due to Us 30 days prior to the Tournament, which is set for May 4, 2024. This requirement may be waived on a case by case basis. If the variance is not received in sufficient time, Our populace would be learning of this significant change with less than a few weeks to prepare for this change. Combatants, be they heavy or rapier, prepare for months in advance of the Crown Tournament.

For clarity, We do endorse the proposal to allow for a rapier combat tournament. And We will be conducting a discussion with Our Kingdom's peers and populace to ensure there is widespread cultural acceptance for the planned alternative format. We feel it would be in the best interest of the Kingdom to know the status of the variance so that we aren't introducing false hope for a situation beyond our control. This change will be a culture shift that needs public support of the variance, and We would see that change include sufficient time to plan and inform Our populace, the group hosting of the tournament, and the wider SCA community. Logistical timing aside, We would fully support the opportunity to conduct a Crown Tournament of the East Kingdom using this proposed format.

We remain in Service  
Tindal and Emerson,  
Prince and Prince Consort East Kingdom

# Appendix B

Pertinent information from EK Law and Policy

From Section II of East Kingdom Law:

## A. Definition and Rank

The Crown is the Office of Sovereign and Consort. The Sovereign and Consort have equal status, precedence, and power. They may use any title(s) allowed by the Governing Documents of the SCA, Inc. and the College of Heralds

## B. Duties and Powers

1. The Crown must know and uphold East Kingdom Law and the Governing Documents of the SCA, Inc.
2. The Crown will chair the Curia Regis.
3. The Crown must attend Their Coronation, the Crown Tournament to determine Their Heirs, and the Coronation of Their Heirs.
4. No Sovereign or Consort may hold any other office or court appointment at any time during Their Reign, with the exception of Territorial Baron or Baroness. Any such office or appointment, with accompanying files, must be turned over to a deputy or successor before Coronation.
5. The Crown and Heirs of the East Kingdom shall use Their officially-provided online account for all business of Their office.
6. Within one month following the Coronation of their successors, the former Crown must return all regalia used during their reign to the Kingdom Chamberlain. The Chamberlain must verify within one month of the return that all regalia were returned and in good condition, and so affirm to the Kingdom Chancellor of the Exchequer to release the regalia deposit in accordance with East Kingdom Financial Policy.
7. The Crown may oversee treaties between the East and other Kingdoms according to the following procedures.
  - a. The Crown and Heirs of the East Kingdom must all specifically agree, in writing, to the wording of a proposed treaty.
  - b. The Crown and Heirs must then consult with no fewer than six Royal Peers of Ducal or County rank who reside in the East Kingdom regarding the wording of the proposed treaty. A list of the Royal Peers consulted will be kept on file with the Kingdom Seneschal.
  - c. If, after consulting with the Royal Peers, the Crown chooses to alter the wording of the proposed treaty, the process will begin again.
  - d. To be enacted, a treaty must be signed by the Sovereign and Consort of the East Kingdom. The treaty may also be signed by any other parties as deemed necessary or appropriate by the Crown of the East Kingdom or by the Crown or Law of the Kingdom with which the treaty is established.
  - e. Once signed by the parties listed above, a copy of the treaty will be kept on file by the Kingdom Seneschal.
  - f. Treaties may only be amended or revoked by following the same procedures outlined above.
8. The Crown will invest the victor and consort of Their Crown Tournament as both Heirs of the East Kingdom and Protectors of The Crown Principality of Tir Mara.
  - a. This designation is ceremonial in nature, and does not confer any ability to warrant subordinate officers, proclaim banishments, or bestow armigerous awards, without specific Crown approval for specific recipients.
  - b. The Heirs may use any title allowed by the Governing Documents of the SCA, Inc. and the College of Heralds to indicate this ceremonial designation, including "Prince and Princess of Tir Mara" as has been the custom.

- c. The Crown will retain Their status as Protectors of Tir Mara during the time between Their Coronation and the Crown Tournament to choose Their successors.

## C. Crown Tournament

1. Eligibility
  - a. Each competitor in a Royal List must be fighting for a prospective consort. A gentle may only be a member of one entrant couple, though both gentles of the same combatant couple may enter the tournament, each to fight for the other.
  - b. All entrant couples must submit a Letter of Intent (LoI) to the Heirs and Kingdom Seneschal no later than thirty days prior to Crown Tournament. This requirement may be waived, on a case-by-case basis, by the Heirs (or by the Crown, if after Coronation).
    - i. The LoI may be submitted via the online survey link provided by the Kingdom Seneschal (preferred method), or by email.
    - ii. The LoI must include the Society name, legal name, postal address, residence address (if different from postal address), years of residency in the East Kingdom, telephone number, membership number, and membership expiration date for both entrants; and authorization expiration date(s) for all entrants intending to compete in the Crown Tournament.
    - iii. In the LoI:
      1. at least one member of each entrant couple must affirm that they do not have knowledge of any basis why they would not be able to cross the United States/Canadian international border ("border") for the duration of their reign; or
      2. if any of the events designated as mandatory to validate a reign per Section II.B.3. will require travel across the border during the reign for which the Crown Tournament is being held, both members of each entrant couple must affirm that they do not have knowledge of any basis why they would not be able to cross the border for the duration of their reign.
  - c. No gentle will enter a Crown Tournament without intending an honorable attempt to compete for the Crown. Consorts are required to be present at Crown Tournament, unless waived by the Crown.
  - d. All entrants and consorts must be acceptable to The Crown.
  - e. All entrants and consorts must be of legal age of majority for all East Kingdom territories.
  - f. All entrants and consorts must be members of the SCA with access to *Pikestaff* at their residence, and be able to provide proof that their membership is valid through at least thirty days after the date of Crown Tournament. So long as the entrants meet the minimum membership requirements to enter Crown Tournament as set forth in the Governing Documents of the SCA, Inc., the Crown may waive this requirement that entrants have SCA memberships which are valid through at least thirty days after the date of Crown Tournament, on a case-by-case basis.
  - g. Residency Requirements
    - i. All entrants and consorts must be subjects of the East Kingdom.
    - ii. All entrants and consorts must be residents of the Kingdom, must have resided within the borders of the East Kingdom for at least one year immediately prior to the Crown Tournament, and must be able to demonstrate reasonable levels of participation in diverse activities in the Kingdom during that period.
    - iii. The Crown may waive the residency requirements for subjects of the East Kingdom, on a case-by-case basis, provided that the entrant or consort in question has been a subject of the East Kingdom for at least one year immediately prior to the Crown Tournament.
  - h. Exceptions to Eligibility
    - i. No Royal of the East Kingdom or of any of its Principalities may enter any Crown or Coronet Tournament.
    - ii. The Kingdom Seneschal and the Kingdom Minister of the Lists may only enter the last regularly-scheduled Crown Tournament held during their terms in office,

provided a deputy acceptable to the Crown or Their designated representative has been appointed to assume the respective officer's duties.

- iii. Kingdom Greater Officers may only enter a Crown Tournament provided a deputy acceptable to the Crown or Their designated representative has been appointed to assume the duties of their office.

## 2. Withdrawal and Removal

- a. Any entrant may withdraw from a Crown Tournament at any point in time by notifying the Kingdom Minister of the Lists. In this situation, both members of the entrant couple will be eliminated from the Crown Tournament, save that in the case of a combatant couple fighting each for the other one entrant may withdraw but the other entrant may continue, with the express permission of the withdrawing entrant.
- b. Any entrant may be removed from a Crown Tournament at any time by the Kingdom Marshal of Armored Combat, the Earl Marshal, or the Crown for marshallate infractions or any infractions of the Rules of the List. In this situation, both entrant and consort will be eliminated from the Crown Tournament.
- c. If a Crown Tournament is deemed to be invalid and must be re-fought, the Crown may disqualify any entrants They deem responsible for the invalidation of the originally scheduled Crown Tournament.

## From Section VIII, subsection A of East Kingdom Law:

### 6. Crown Tournaments

- a. The preferred date for Spring Crown Tournament is the first Saturday in May, with the last Saturday in April serving as an alternate date.
  - i. Bid packages may be submitted up to twenty-four months in advance, but must be received by January 1st of the event year.
  - ii. A bid may be chosen at any time from the then-available bids, but must be chosen by February 15th of the event year.
- b. The preferred date for Fall Crown Tournament is the third Saturday in October, with the first Saturday in November serving as an alternate date.
  - i. Bid packages may be submitted up to twenty-four months in advance, but must be received by July 1st of the event year.
  - ii. A bid may be chosen at any time from the then-available bids, but must be chosen by August 15th of the event year.
- c. Crown Tournament will be held alternately in the regions of the East Kingdom according to the following schedule:
  - Even (modern) years: spring/Tir Mara, fall/North
  - Odd (modern) years: spring/South, fall/Central
  - i. Priority shall be given to bids from any branch, group, or individual within the scheduled region which has not sponsored a Crown Tournament within the previous four years.
  - ii. If no acceptable bid within the scheduled region has been received by the deadline, the Heirs and the Kingdom Seneschal may choose the branch, group, or individual They feel is best able to sponsor/host Crown Tournament. In such a case, the rotation among regions will continue as if the Crown Tournament had been held in the proper region.



# Appendix C

The next Spring Tournament of the East Kingdom will be held from May 3 at 5 p.m. to May 5, 2024 at 1 p.m. at Camp Medley 168 Gunter Hill Rd, Upper Gagetown NB E5M 1N7 (Shire of Lyndhaven).

Event Steward is Lady Constance the Curious, aka Michelle Corbett (647) 546-4592 SCA# [155485@members.eastkingdom.org](mailto:155485@members.eastkingdom.org).

Deputy Event Steward is Lord Evandrus of Hallstatt, aka Paul Smart (519) 982-2479 SCA# [253897@members.eastkingdom.org](mailto:253897@members.eastkingdom.org).

Per the event details located on the East Kingdom website and on the Pikestaff (East Kingdom newsletter):

Saturday will feature the heavy lists in the center field or the main hall, depending on the weather. We can offer space for up to twelve lists to be run simultaneously on the main field. In the event of inclement weather, we have space for four lists indoors. Also, the site is equipped with six indoor showers and toilets for the fighters after their bouts. At the pleasure of their Majesties, we have room for court either in the main feast hall or in the open-air amphitheatre.

The site boasts six double cabins, with sixteen single bunk beds per side, and an attached modern washroom between. The cabins are unheated, but there are plugs for space heaters and CPAP machines. There is also generous space to camp in tents should attendees wish to do so. No open fires are permitted on the grounds.

The event site is accessible per the East Kingdom Accessibility Porter's Checklist.

A feast will be offered Saturday night at the conclusion of the tournament. There will also be a day board. Both are limited to 75 people.