

Melee Drill Day

THL Gareth's class

Discussion

- what do people know about melee
- what are the most common mistakes beginners make
- adrenaline, fear, surprise, aggression
- COMMUNICATION, line commander, communication with other members, i.e. I'm dead, close ranks, watch the flank... ect...
- calibration
- proper use of death from behind
- rules vs. curtesy
- Special melee stipulations, RBG's, obstacles
- Review a hold... Practice it through out the day...
- HAVE FUN

Working together & fighting more then one opponent (2 on 1)

Split the group into small groups of 3. Trying to vary the age and experience of the groups as these same groups will be working together for most of the day.

Each person will take turns as the lone combatant, learning to watch for openings, to play their opponents off one and other. This will help to gauge there response. So that they are in better control of their blade, their temperament and their calibration.

Learning to relax and not freak out against a number of opponents is very important and something we will all face in melee at one time or another.

The small team of 2 should learn to communicate, trust and work out strategies together. They need to think as a team and not just 2 single combatants chasing down the same goal. Take turns one distracting/occupying the opponent's blade while the other tries to take advantage of the holes.

Some people are better suited as the bait others as the sniper. Both should try each and understand how to best work together. I have to stress that it's important to communicate and work together. Some of the best melee teams I have seen communicate, they all understand each others strengths and weaknesses and they do their best to compensate for each other.

After each person has worked as a single and partnered with each of the other members we come back together and we talk about what was learned, problems, questions, concerns and of course epiphanies.

Working together (3 on 3)

Communication is again the key. Working together talking and trying new strategies learned from your time in the 2 on 1. With 3 people new problems are discovered. A person's place in the line is now more important. Roles become more specialized and trust needs to be formed. It is important to stress that when you are killed that you in a loud clear voice "I am dead" so that your opponent knows you are dead and you are not

hit repetitively as you raise the hilt of your sword and leave the field. Its good for safety but it is also very important to your line mates. If they have come to trust that you are there to guard there side, if you die quietly it leaves them at the disadvantage.

With 3 people fighting shoulder to shoulder you will find at first you will tie each other up if you do not have a firm set of roles in place or a strong leader guiding the line.

Spacing is important, to close and you hinder each other, to far and you leave each other open to attack.

Practice attacking on the angle or indirectly. Most kills in melee are not made by the person directly in front of you but from there line mate next to them. Practice attacking the person adjacent to you. Or try and keep your opponent and that of your line mates distracted so that they can kill your mirror.

Learning to move together and retaining your line is also very important. If a line buckles it breaks. The inside person takes shorter steps as the outside person take longer ones trying to wheel around the center person. Trying to keep the same spacing as you turn is not difficult just has to be practiced. You should be able to do it in any direction to follow any threat.

Other items to note:

Being legged, as in our kingdom we do not allow a legged person to move there are 2 key things to remember...

If it isn't from your line, Leg them and leave them. They can't follow you, but always remember they are there. They can still leg or kill you even if they can't follow you.

If a member of your line gets legged position them in front of your line and use them as extra protection and distraction. Protect them and have them protect you as long as it's keeping you in the game.

Working together (5 on 5)

Communication is again the key. You are now in a 5 man melee. This number is used for more melee tourneys. You will find that you need a person watching and leading. Your line needs to trust you, and to trust your judgment. A great deal of the time you do not have to like or respect the person leading you. But if they are clear and know how to take care of the line people will follow you. You have to be clear of voice, hesitation is bad. Even if it turns out to be a disaster always speak clear and calmly. If you are afraid it passes onto the line. Take care of each other. Watch your line, check your distance, and make your observations known.

Keep everyone apprised of your well being and anything you see that's a threat to you and the line.

Remember just because you have 5 people in a line doesn't make you an effective melee team.

The day so far

Gather together again bring up points of complaint, discussion, clarification, frustration, and of course any new insights. Remember all of these people are your friends. Have fun play safe.

Clear up any disputes, work through any questions (act them out in armor, in the list) People learn faster by seeing and having things worked through. Take the time to work through it with the group watching. Who knows some one might not have had the nerve to say “but I don’t understand”.

Time permitting - Warlord

Pulling it all together. A warlord tourney is the best way to get all areas of melee covered. After working through each section from single person all the way to a line of 1-20 depending on attendance it really show cases what people learnt from the day.

It’s also very fun.