

Drakknar's Fighting with a Partner Class
SKBC 2006

I. Introduction Concepts

A. Mobility

1. Team mobility is determined by the slowest member.
2. The smaller team is generally more mobile.
3. You do not have to be more mobile than your opponents, but you have to be mobile enough that it is not a critical weakness.
4. Mobility lets you control the fight and results in good positioning.

B. Positioning

1. Positioning is important to maximize your advantages while minimizing your opponents.
2. The best result is a 2 or more vs. 1 fight.
3. Flanking puts you at the edge of the fight with all of your foes in your line of site and can result in easy kills from behind.
4. Controlling distance allows you to utilize advantages or reduce disadvantages from reach.
5. Give ground by going backwards or circling if you are being overwhelmed.
6. Do not give ground if that will expose your partner to an unexpected attack.

C. Reach

1. Reach is created by differences in weapon length as well as height/arm length.
2. Polearms, Spears, Madus, and Long Swords are all examples of Reach Weapons.
3. Reach Weapons allow "free" attacks that opponents without reach weapons must block while closing to Short Weapons range.
4. Reach Weapons are at a significant disadvantage once opponents are within close range.
5. It can be effective to pair a Reach Weapon Fighter with a Short weapon fighter.
6. Reach Weapons are also very useful for creating momentary 2 vs. 1 situations.
7. The normal counters to Reach Weapons are using Reach Weapons yourself or Flanking.

D. Make sure you have a plan

1. Decide on a general strategy before the fight starts.
2. Know which opponent is yours and how you will maneuver if they try and switch opponents.
3. Communicate by calling "Dead" or warning if an opponent is coming free.
4. Situations change, be flexible.
5. Get comfortable with your partner and trust that they are doing the right thing.

E. Question and Answer

II. 2 vs. 1

A. Movement

1. Slower partner should lead.
2. Hold 90 degree angle between you and your partner with opponent as the point the two lines meet.
3. As opponent maneuvers, team should swivel with closer partner moving back while farther one moves forward so distance between opponent and both partners remains equal.
4. Do not allow opponent to line you up so that one partner is screening the other.
5. If opponent is immobilized (legged) partners can increase angle to 180 degrees.

B. Efficiency

1. Should be able to win without taking wounds or wasting a lot of time.
2. Even the best fighters are unlikely to beat two competent opponents that fight together.
3. Time is important because in a fight of equal numbers, your 2 vs. 1 has created a potential 2 vs. 1 elsewhere for the opposing team.
4. If the outnumbered opponent tries to sacrifice himself to get a kill, his target should rotate back slightly and be defensive while the unattacked partner takes over the offense.

C. Question and Answer

- D. Activity – Student two man teams fight 3 rounds against an instructor. All use a single short sword each.. Instructors will solicit comments from students and provide feedback between rounds.

Creating 2 vs. 1 fights

A. Positioning

1. Screen one opponent with another, creating a “crossing the T” situation.
2. Leg and leave one opponent to gain 2 vs. 1 on the other.
3. Flank so that opponents are back to back allowing you to strike past your man and hit your partner’s.
4. Lure your opponent out of position by retreating and getting him to pursue into your partners threat range.
5. The opposite of this is to aggressively push your opponent so he gives ground and leaves his partner vulnerable to attacks from both you and your partner.

B. Momentary 2 vs. 1’s

1. Easiest way is to use Reach Weapon to strike opponent that your partner is fighting because the longer reach lets you threaten 2 or more opponents at once without a major reduction in defensive capability.
2. You can also strike your partner’s opponent with a Short Weapon, but since you must be closer, this significantly reduces your defense against all opponents.
3. Bait an opponent into striking at an apparently vulnerable elbow, shoulder or leg which will opening up his defense to your partner.
4. Sometimes, you do not even need to throw a blow, just by threatening an attack, you can divide an opponents attention and make him vulnerable.
5. Aggressively attack your partner’s opponent even though your man will probably kill you can be acceptable if it trades the death of a weaker fighter for a more skilled opponent.
6. These tactics are the bread and butter of effectiveness in packed ditch fields.

C. Question and Answer

- D. Activity – Student two man teams fight a Hold the Field style match where the winning team is the one that got a kill from a 2 vs. 1 situation while both teams still had both members alive. If neither team got a valid kill, then the new team stays to fight the next opponent. Instructors will solicit comments from students and provide feedback between rounds.

III. 2 vs. 2

A. General

1. Even Strength
2. Traditional Tourney event in many kingdoms.
3. In a straight up fight better fighters are generally going to win.
4. Mobility and positioning must be used to create advantages.
5. Since they are at even strength, momentary 2 vs. 1’s are ideal.
6. Creating inequitable matchups like a shield going against a pole or a pole vs. florentine are important.

B. Attached at the Hip

1. Team stays together and attempts to cover each other.
2. Generally reactive.
3. Most common tactic for teams with Pole’s because partner with Short Weapons can slow charges on the Pole, allowing additional “free shots” from range.
4. Tries to create momentary 2 vs. 1’s with reach or by ignoring their own opponent to take a shot at their partners.
5. Vulnerable to Splitting.
6. Common reaction to Splitting opponents is to roll both partners to one flank and try to get a quick kill before getting backstabbed.

C. Splitting

1. Team splits and each member flanks wide in “pincher” like movement.
2. Creates two 1 vs. 1 fights.
3. The Splitting team tries to create inequitable matchups by controlling positioning
4. This most likely is the best tactic vs. teams with Reach Weapons if your team only has Short weapons.
5. This can also be very effective if your side holds an advantage in fighting skill.
6. If one opponent is defeated, an immediate 2 vs. 1 with potential backshots is created.
7. Vulnerable to 2 vs. 1 fights while moving apart to flank if opponents react quickly enough.

D. Mobile Pairs

1. A balance between the two previous tactics, where partners stick together but they move aggressively and try and dictate position.
2. One partner is a Wing-leader who leads movement and generally presses the attack.
3. The other partner is a Wing-man who covers the Wing-leader's back, keeps an eye on the big picture, and tries to be opportunistic.
4. Can create 2 vs. 1 fights by "crossing the T" on partners sticking together or separating partners that have split.
5. Requires the most mobility and team coordination from both partners.
6. May be less effective against Reach Weapons since partners limit each other's mobility slightly and are not forcing the Pole guy to focus on one opponent.
7. Vulnerable to backstabs if flanking opponents are not killed fast enough.
8. The effectiveness of this tactic is largely based on the difference in mobility between the two teams.
9. This is a good tactic against a team with superior fighting skill because it uses hustle to create a random element

E. Question and Answer

- E. Activity – Each Student Pair fights another Student Pair for 5 rounds. Each pair must use a Pole for 1 or 2 of their rounds. During the 5 rounds, each pair must try each of the 3 discussed tactics at least once. . Instructors will solicit comments from students and provide feedback between rounds.

IV. 2 vs. 4 or more

A. General

1. Outnumbered, mobility becomes even more important.
2. Instead of trying to gain 2 vs. 1 advantages, you are hoping to get a 1 vs. 1.
3. Stringing your opponents out and "legging and leaving" them are ways to better the odds.
4. Use members of the other team to screen/block each other out.
5. Controlling distance is very important since closing with one opponent will often bring you into range with an unoccupied one.
6. Hold range so you are not vulnerable to leg shots unless you are planning to attack
7. If you are legged, you will be surrounded and killed.
8. If you stop moving, you will be mobbed and die.

B. Mobile Pairs II

1. Use your mobility advantage as the smaller team.
2. Most of the time, the 3rd and 4th person are not going to pursue at top speed, giving you a few seconds of even or better fighting.
3. Often the lead partner can turn a flank forcing the opponent on the end to turn with him which can leave a free side or back shot for his partner to take.

C. Split and cause chaos

1. Run around like wild Indians.
2. A single person is going to be more mobile than any team.
3. Engage only at a distance unless you are able to truly separate an opponent from the rest of his team.
4. Look for your opponents to get lazy and stop pursuit or get dramatically out of position and backstab opponents who are not focused on you.

D. Question and Answer

- F. Activity – Each pair of students fights 4 students for 3 rounds each. The pair must use each tactic once during the activity. Instructors will solicit comments from students and provide feedback between rounds. Then the Instructors demo each tactic in a 2 vs. 8 fight. Pairs that volunteer can then try the 2 vs. 8 fight.

V. Award Prizes and Wrap-Up

A. Award Prizes

1. Award prizes to team with most participation/enthusiasm.
2. Offer verbal encouragement individually tailored to other students based on their participation.

B. Wrap-Up

1. Final question and answer
2. Solicit feedback on improving class.