

General Combat 101 (15 people per class max)
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SKBC 2006

This class is going to cover a little bit of everything. It will quickly go over the major weapon combo's and discuss their relative strengths and weakness vs. each other. The class will also feature footwork, controlling distance, teamwork, battlefield awareness, and increasing aggression. Finally, it will show how to successfully gang up on superior fighters.

This is an excellent class for students that want to improve their Ditch Battle/Battle Game effectiveness. This class is for 101 students.

I. Major Weapon Combo's

A. Two Swords aka Florentine

1. Excellent Offense, Good for active defense.
2. Demonstrate stance.
3. Opponents must account for 2 attacks.
4. Offers lefty shot advantage, Developing left-hand dominance is important..
5. Vulnerability to thrusts, especially poles.
6. Advantage against Shields
7. Left Side stab, Block/strike from left, Opposite side Hi/Lo

B. Sword and Shield

1. Excellent Defense, Average to Poor Offense.
2. Demonstrate stance.
3. Free Block from shield.
4. Shield inhibits you almost as much as your opponent.
5. Lefties get less defense but some free shots on open side.
6. Very reliant on fakes to open up opponents defense.
7. Vulnerable to two weapon fighters, flails.
8. Advantage against poles, long weapons.
9. Stab!!!, Hip wrap, Shoulder wrap, Crossover.

C. Single Sword

1. Poor Defense, Poor Offense.
2. Demonstrate stance.
3. No simultaneous Offense and Defense.
4. Rely on controlling distance and block/strike.
5. Long sword can allow you to attack from outside of short weapon users range, reducing need for defense.
6. Very reliant on fakes to open up opponents defense.
7. Vulnerable to shields and probably everything else.
8. Advantage against none.
9. Stab!!!, Block/Strike, Shoulder wrap.

D. Sword and Madu

1. Good Defense, Good Offense.
2. Demonstrate stance.
3. Reach of Madu gives free shots against opponents at a distance.
4. Reach forces opponents to close quickly leaving them vulnerable to sword strike.
5. Use Madu to block out planes.
6. Left handed Madu is a bad idea.
7. Fake one weapon to open up shot for the other
8. Top spikes make second close attack option.
9. Give ground to hold range.
10. Vulnerable to Polearms, Large Shields.
11. Advantage against Two Swords.
12. Madu Leg Stab!!!, Fake toward shoulder with sword and stab with Madu, Fake stab with Madu and hit shoulder with sword.

- E. Polearm
 1. Poor Defense other than Range, Excellent Offense.
 2. Demonstrate stance.
 3. Free attacks against multiple opponents due to Reach.
 4. Best with allies to provide protection against charging opponents.
 5. Give ground to hold range.
 6. Legg opponents to slow charges and break up lines.
 7. A legged (immobile) opponent is dead unless mobile allies come to help.
 8. Stab forcefully to go through weapon blocks.
 9. Vulnerable to shields and flanking.
 10. Advantage against Two Swords and Madu.
 11. Stab!!!, Leg sweep, Fake leg and strike shoulder
- F. Activity – Students divide by weapon combination and get one fight against each competing style. Instructors will solicit comments from students and provide feedback between rounds.
- G. Question and Answer

II. Controlling Distance and Reach

- A. Students Know your striking range.
 1. Estimate your opponent's range (Danger Zone).
 2. Keep your weight on your toes and move forward and backward without crossing your legs.
 3. Keep point of the sword directed at opponent. Force opponent to fight through the length of your sword to get to you.
 4. Keep out of opponent's range by moving back or circling.
 5. Close to your effective range as quickly as possible by unexpectedly shifting to forward movement.
- B. 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.
- C. Thrusting
 1. Shortest distance between two points
 2. Less windup and travel time makes shot harder to block.
 3. Thrusts give greatest effective reach.
 4. Shot speed is good with no late directional changes.
- D. Arm Seeking
 1. Arm seeking can be a part of reach.
 2. An opponent's sword arm is generally the closest part of their body.
 3. Attacking the sword arm often provides the least opening for a counter-attack.
 4. Use wrap shot to avoid hand blocks on arm hits.
 5. Always follow up a successful arm hit with a second hit to the dead arm or sword held in the dead arm.
- E. Activity – Students divide into pairs with one short and one longer weapon per pair. Students fight with a focus on controlling distance. The long weapon user tries to hold open the distance to get “free shots”, while the short weapon user tries to stay out of range and then quickly close into short range. Simo's count as wins for the short weapon user. Every 5 fights, they should switch weapons. Instructors will observe and provide feedback.
- F. Question and Answer

III. Ganging up on opponents

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. 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.

C. Tactics

1. Attack when target is attacking your ally.
2. Leg target to reduce mobility.
3. Exploit any reach advantage by holding open range.
4. Force target to sword block to disrupt their attacks while allies try for kill shot.
5. Strike Hi/Low on opposite sides of target.
6. Coordinated rush.
7. Do not get legged or strung out!

D. Activity – Students fight a Hold the Field style match where one “Hero” starts out fighting two opponents. If the “Hero” wins, an additional opponent is added. If the “Hero” is killed, then the student that got the killing blow is the next “Hero” even if they also died from a simo. Instructors will solicit comments from students and provide feedback between rounds.

E. Question and Answer.

IV. General Combat Tips and WrapUp

A. General Combat Tips

1. If you can't be good, be aggressive.
2. Take every opponent seriously and feel confident you can beat every opponent.
3. A longer sword gives reach without losing much speed.
4. Communicate with your allies, “Dead” and “Legged” calls are vital.
5. Do not get so focused in who you are fighting that you do not pay attention to what is going on around you.
6. Look for opportunities to “sneak attack” opponents near you that are focused on your allies.
7. Flank early, flank often. Flanking helps field awareness by keeping all opponents in front of you.
8. Take out insurance if possible. This means keep swinging till you are certain your opponent is dead.

B. Award Prizes and Wrap Up

1. Award prizes to student with most participation/enthusiasm.
2. Offer verbal encouragement individually tailored to other students based on their participation.
3. Final question and answer
4. Solicit feedback on improving class.