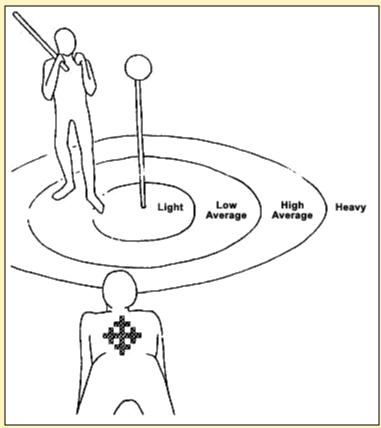# A Blow Calibration Exercise

by Pieter van Doorn

Erect a narrow pole between 46" and 58" tall and draw three circles on the ground around the base of the pole. Use the table below to determine the appropriate radius for each circle. Balance a bowling ball on top of the pole, then strike it with a level blow and observe the point where it first strikes the ground. According to a survey of over 600 fighters from throughout the Known World*, 80% of all fighters would agree that a "good" killing blow should deliver the ball to a point somewhere between the inner and outer circles. The center circle corresponds to an "average" killing blow. "Light", "low average", "high average" and "heavy" blows are indicated by the other areas shown in the diagram. This exercise is designed especially for new fighters who do not have experienced trainers to teach them how to calibrate their blows. Veterans may wish to use this exercise as a way of comparing their blows to the Known World standard.

NOTE: The blow must land squarely on the center of the ball, and the ball must be driven straight off the pole. If the blow glances off the ball or drives the ball either upwards or downwards, the results will not be accurate. A trainer can assist the novice fighter by checking for level blows and observing the point where the ball lands.

* A Survey of Blow Calibration Standards in the Combat of the Society for Creative Anachronism by Pieter van Doorn (m.k.a. Vance VanDoren, PhD), Barony of Rivenstar, Middle Kingdom, August 15, AS XXV (1990).

Ball Weight	Pole Height (inches)					How to use this table
	46	49	52	55	58	
8 lbs	37	38	39	40	41	The top value in each set of three gives the radius of the inner circle appropriate for the ball weight on the left and the pole height above.
	56	58	60	62	63	
	76	79	81	83	85	
10 lbs	30	30	31	32	33	The middle value in each set of three gives the radius of the center circle appropriate for the ball weight on the left and the pole height above
	45	47	48	49	51	
	61	63	65	67	68	
12 lbs	25	25	26	27	28	The bottom value in each set of three gives the radius of the outer circle appropriate for the ball weight on the left and the pole height above.
	38	39	40	41	42	
	51	52	54	55	57	
14 lbs	21	22	22	23	24	Thus, for a 14 pound ball and a 58 inch pole, the inner circle should have a radius of 24
	32	33	34	35	36	

	43	45	46	48	49

inches, the center circle should have a radius of 36 inches,

	18	19	20	20	21
16 lbs	28	29	30	31	32
	38	39	40	42	43

For a 16 pound ball, the three circles should have radii of 21 inches, 32 inches, and 43 inches, respectively.

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