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Learning from the past
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Warrior School Equipment construction 01

Palaeoquest supplies equipment for Warrior School – however you may wish to make your own for personal practice. Your own weapons etc. will be more familiar to you and work better.

Please refer to illustration sheet for general forms. Sizes below are related to the size of the person using the equipment. Personal preference may lead to sizes being slightly varied but major deviations from the dimensions indicated may lead to the weapons etc. being less effective.

Please refer to assegai and shield construction illustration.

Assegai (A)
The Assegai is a superb combat weapon being used as a cross between a quarterstaff (or long spear) and a sword. It is generally used in combination with a strike shield. The assegai is a multi-purpose weapon the point, blade, shaft and butt are all striking surfaces. Assegais are also used for blocking as much as the shield. The assegai is *held in the middle* not at the end like a club or sword.

Material: Hardwood, Ash is especially useful for spears

Dimensions:

Total length, from the ground to your axilla (armpit). Longer is less effective.
Blade: Length ~ 33% total length of weapon & ~ twice as wide as shaft – oval in section
Shaft: Oval in section (this enables a better grip than round and sensory feedback on the angle of the weapon head) ~26x33 mm
Butt: Slightly wider than the shaft by 2-4mm.

Practice Assegai: (B&C)
Note: For weapons to be used in Warrior School practice sessions and other Palaeoquest events, construction should be robust and all parts secure. Any weapon becoming damaged due to poor construction or wear cannot be used. The foam padding will do less damage if it is not overly covered with plastic tape – which makes it harder (we don't use anything that actually hurts too much).

Never use practice weapons in combat without a helmet.

Any sports helmet that protects head *and face* will do. Open-faced helmets should not be used.

Dimensions: as in (A)
Use bamboo or other light, strong and flexible material (Remember to remove any sharp bits on stem and round the cut ends and then cover ends with tape). 3 thin, strong, canes taped together work well.

The entire shaft is then covered with foam to a minimum depth of 10mm (foam pipe-lagging for 15mm pipes from DIY shops or plumbers' merchants or 10mm kip-mat from outdoor suppliers)
Duck tape is used on the outside to strengthen striking edges and hold the lagging in place.
Pay good attention to the butt and point, (see diagram (C)). The end of the cane is overlapped by pipe lagging to 20mm – this space is filled with foam and the butt constructed to double thickness. Be generous with strong tape here. Use this design for the ends of quarter-staffs too.
The blade is made of by adding another piece of lagging wrapped around the end and taped C1, C2, C3.

All weapons will need maintenance as they go through hard use. Always have some foam and spare tape handy. Weapons made well should last a year but rarely longer. It is worth retiring them as damage can occur inside that remains invisible but still reduces the safety level.