
The Weyrling Training Program

adapted by Joe Hill from materials by Anna Smith & Danielle Van Tuyl

Purposes of Training

Training at Kadanzer Weyr is ongoing and serves one purpose; maintaining fighting Wings to destroy Thread in the air. The training begins as classroom instruction for Candidates, continues as intensive training for weyrlings, and is part of everyday life for all adult riders. The importance and seriousness of training is set by the Weyrleader and stressed through his Wingleaders. Any member of the Weyr that disregards training or shirks their training responsibilities is subject to punishment.



Training Environment

Danger abounds in every facet of Weyr life. Adequately preparing people and dragons to face and overcome that danger is the underlying principle of training. Most training replicates real life situations to the maximum extent possible. Ground Drills, Flight Drills, Rope Drills, Wing Formation Flying are all things that pertain directly to fighting Thread, and they are conducted as close to real conditions as possible.

Classroom training is interactive, and usually kept to the minimum. Doing counts for more than knowing, when flying Threadfall. This premise is carried over into the training program. The program is tailored to practical application more than rote learning. There is a rather large amount of rote learning involved, and after 72 weeks of Weyrling training, this is usually accomplished from repetition during practical application.



Standard Terminology

Ground Drills: These are maneuvers you are used to seeing performed by military units, with one difference. The groups are arrayed in Wing formations and perform maneuvers similar to the Wings in flight. There is a bit of close order drill, in the beginning, to acquaint weyrlings with unit wide movement and how to stay together as a group. The Ground Drills are designed to cement the actual movements of the Wing in a young weyrling's mind. Repetitive nature makes these movements routine and second nature.

Rope Drills: Simulations of Thread Fall, using man-made items resembling Thread. These are realistic drills to prepare for the unpredictable nature of Thread Fall. The Ropes are treated with a dye to resemble the color of Thread.

Wing Drills: Close formation and broken formation flying drills. These are conducted at the discretion of the Wingleader, within the directions of the Weyrleader. These drills are nearly daily, around Thread Fall. Weyrlings begin Wing Drills in the later stages of Weyrling Training. Thread formations, hunting formations, rescue methods and in flight transfer are the staples of Wing Drills.

Flight Drills: These are not routine drills during a Pass. The Flight does not normally drill together on a routine basis in a Pass. But, Flight Drills will be held if significant problems arise during a Fall, or in preparation for Weyr Games or competitions. Flight Leaders generally determine the goal of each drill and work with the Wing Leaders to accomplish this goal. Weyrlings get some exposure to this late in training during actual Thread Fall and in the classroom from the various Flight Leaders.

Drill Grounds: The large, open training area in the middle of the Weyrling Complex. Weyrlings become intimately familiar with this area through the course of their training. Most Ground Drills, Rope Drills and physical training occur here. It is held in all weathers, in all conditions. Thread falls in the rain and cold, so training is held in whatever weather Pern provides. (Alternatively called the Parade Grounds).



General Training Outline

Most dragonriders go through three phases of training from their arrival at the Weyr until they die:

Candidate Training: Occurs before Impression. This is a varied amount of training, depending on the time the Candidate spends at the Weyr prior to Impression. Because the length of training is not set, only the most important topics to the Candidate are covered.

Weyrling Training: Consists of 72+ seven-day program of intensive and demanding training. The training begins with the basics and builds to include every aspect of a mature rider's life. This is the foundation that all riders require to adequately deal with life in the Weyr. Wingleaders, Flightleaders, Weyrleader, Weyrwoman, and ranking members of the Crafts within the Weyr are all included in the Weyrlingmaster's training program.

Advanced: All riders in the Weyr continually participate in training, nearly daily. This program is varied and tailored by each Wingleader, Flightleader and monitored by the Weyrleader. Consists mostly of Wing Drills, tailored by the Wingleader to address noted deficiencies and weaknesses.



Specific Information

Each phase of training discussed in detail, with general guidelines on when training topic is covered during Weyrling training:

Candidate Training

- Impression: What to expect, acceptable behavior on the Hatching Sands, visits to the hardening eggs, how to deal with actual Impression
- Dragonets: Feeding, cleaning and very basic care.
- Weyrlife: Etiquette, structure and morals of Weyr life.
- Improvement: Literacy and skills training, apprenticeships for promising Candidates.

Weyrling Training

This outline is a guide as to general timeline that topics are introduced to each Weyrling Class. The schedule is fluid and continually reviewed by the Weyrleader and Weyrlingmaster. No excess time is built into this schedule, so weyrlings are not given the option to fall behind. Training environment is regimented, harsh and uncompromising. Weyrlings that cannot maintain the pace are simply rolled back to the following class. Those that fail to improve consistently may be assigned to non-flight support duties within the Weyr, at the discretion of the Weyrleader. *[Note: Training after Sevenday 49 is subject to compression to meet the needs of fighting Wings. This is not desirable, but is a possibility if warranted.]*

A chart is included at the end of this section to provide a quick reference for where training topics normally fall within the training schedule.

Sevendays 1-4:

- Weyrling Rank Cords. Produced by weyrlings.
- Dragon Care. Dragon-rider bond, strengthening and dealing with dragon emotions. Feeding, cleaning, first aid, and introduction to training dragon schedule to human routine.

Sevendays 5-8:

- Classroom. Pernese history, Weyr history, and specifically Kadanzer history. Kadanzer Weyr territory geography in detail

- Dragon Care. Nutrition, health care and growth of dragons.
- Flight Training. Basics of close order drill and maneuver. Individual and group training. Ground Drills begin

Sevendays 9-12:

- Work Details. Weyrlings now available for work, as possible around training.
- Flight Training. Emphasis shifts to group formation in Ground Drills. Difficulty level increases.
- Classroom. Southern and Northern Continent geography. Testing held during this period.
- Thread. Grading of firestone ore. Dragon flame, production and sustaining.

Sevendays 13-16:

- Ground Drills. Formations used in flight as a group, application to flight stressed.
- Flight Training. Familiarization flights with Weyrleader and other senior riders. Mostly within the airspace over the Weyr itself. Dragonets begin non-mounted gliding and short flight. Training on equipment production, care and repair. Begin to make straps and gear for flight.

Sevendays 17-20:

- Dragon Care. Muscle development and toning for flight. Advanced care.
- Classroom. Basic weather prediction, air currents, conditions affecting flight. Threadfall Charts, reading, calculating, editing.
- Flight Training. Mounted flight begins at discretion of Weyrleader. Flight contained within Weyrling Complex airspace and limited severely in duration.

Sevendays 21-24:

- Classroom. Advanced Thread Fall Chart work, preparing from raw data.
- Flight Training. Gradual increase in duration and length. Designed to slowly build muscle and endurance.

Sevendays 25-28:

- Flight Training. Formation basics, strengthening exercises continue.
- Classroom. Basics of Threadfighting.
- Thread. Introduction to chewing firestone.
- Life Skills. Maturity issues, use of Weyr facilities. (Movement to private Weys occurs after.)
- Weyrlings with leadership abilities are selected for additional training and responsibility.

Sevendays 29-32:

- Flight Training. Application of principles of Ground Drills, in the air, terrain recognition.
- Classroom. Advanced Fall concepts, how they differ, tactics to overcome.
- Thread. Actual chewing and flame production.

- Between. Visualization exercises begin.

Sevendays 33-36:

- Flight Training. Terrain recognition, aerial drills intensify.
- Thread. Firestone selection and sustenance of flame. Live fire Rope Drills begin in small groups
- Classroom. Types and tactics of Threadfighting, in detail.
- Between. Benefits and dangers. Weyrlings accompany senior riders on several jumps between. First solo flight between.
- **Note:** Weyrling losses are sometimes heavy in this stage, due to first introduction of flame in group drills and first jumps between.

Sevendays 37-40:

- Flight Training. Formation training, including jumps between as a formation. Terrain recognition drills advance, including dragon to dragon transfer of landmarks for jumps between.
- Thread. Rope Drills with larger groups continue. Aerial firestone replenishment introduction. More difficult Thread condition simulations.
- Combat. Unarmed individual combat training.

Sevendays 41-44:

- Thread. Rope Drill intensity rises. Drills are longer and more challenging. Called without warning.
- Combat. Introduction to armed combat techniques.

Sevendays 45-48:

- Thread. Rope Drills intensify further. During this time, Weyrlings fly a Rope Drill as a Wing, with the entire Weyrling Wing.
- Classroom. Weyrlings receive training on readiness signs, dealing with Mating emotions, probable reactions. Greenriders receive gender-specific training on handling their dragon during a Mating Flight; riders of the male dragons receive training on the subject as well.
- Combat. Advanced combat techniques. Includes unannounced drills by senior riders with blunted weapons. Tournament held amongst the weyrlings.

Sevendays 49-52:

- Thread. Fly to Fall on replenishment duty. Usually in rear staging area, but all weyrlings fly ready to Fight, in event of change in Fall pattern. Rope Drills continue.
- Dragon Care. Immediate response to scores and proper care of scored dragons and riders. Includes visits to Infirmary to view results of scoring.

Sevendays 53-60:

- Thread. Weyrling Wing flies front line replenishment duty as an organized tactical Wing.

Used for sweeps, when not needed for replenishment. Fly ready to fight as they are closer to falling and fallen Thread. Rope Drills continue.

Sevendays 60-66:

- Thread. Fly Trailing Edge. Direct contact with Thread. (Injuries are common) Rope Drills continue.

Sevendays 67-71:

- Thread. Fly as auxiliary to Queen's Wing. Fly low cover, behind and below Queen's Wing. (Weyrlings become overeager and leave their assigned places, burns, scores and collisions occur frequently) Rope Drills continue.

Sevendays 72+:

- Thread. Rope Drills continue until graduation to a combat Wing.
- Graduation. Weyrlings are tested on all aspects of weyrling training. These tests are unannounced and comprehensive. Weyrlings that are not ready for graduation are held back with the next class. Wingleaders tap ready weyrlings for their Wings. Untapped weyrlings are placed in Queen's Wing, or assigned by the Weyrleader.
- **Note:** Weyrlings can request specific Wing assignment by contacting that Wing's Wingleader and the Weyrleader at least two months before graduation. It is the weyrling's responsibility to ensure the Weyrleader has been informed of the selection.

Weyrling Training Schedule -- Training Topics

Sevenday	Dragon Care	Classroom	Ground Drills/ Rope Drills	Flight Training	Thread Fighting	Life Skills	<i>Between</i>	Combat
1-4	Bond, Basics of Care							
5-8	Advanced Care	History, Geography	Basics, small unit					
9-12		Geography	Intro to formations		Firestone grades			
13-16			Flight formations	Equipment, gliding, non-mounted				
17-20	Flight development	Weather, Thread Charts	Flight formations	Mounted flight, limited				
21-24		Thread Charts	Flight formations	Longer duration, toning				
25-28		Basics of Thread fighting	Flight formations	Formation basics	Intro to chewing stone	Maturity issues, move to weyrs		
29-32		Advanced Fall concepts	Flight formations	Ground Drills to air formations	First flame		Visualizati on exercises	
33-36		Tactics for Thread Fall	Small groups	Terrain recognition	Live fire in Rope Drills		Accompan y <i>between</i> , solo <i>between</i>	
37-40			Formation, intensify	Formation drills, include <i>between</i>	Aerial replenish			Unarmed combat basics
41-44			Longer and harder	Flight Training	Rope Drills no warning			Armed Combat basics
45-48		Mating Flights	Wing wide Drill	Formation drills	Wing wide drill			Advanced, tournament
49-52	Score Care		Continue	Formation as Wing	Fly Fall, rear replenish duty			
53-60			Continue		Fly front replenish duty			
60-66			Continue		Fly Trailing Edge			
67-71			Continue		Queen's Aux, sweep duty			
72+ (Grad)			Continue					



Advanced Training

Various programs exist for advanced training, once a rider completes weyrling training. All riders participate in Wing training through Wing Drills. The most notable advanced trainings are the training given to goldriders and the training given to bronzeriders and selected brownriders.

Wing Training: Rope Drills, formation flight, in-air replenishment and rescue are the main focus of Wing Training. Wing Leaders set the schedule for their respective Wings and have their schedule approved through the Weyrleader.

Wingleader Training: Basics of formation leadership are taught to all bronzeriders and selected brownriders. Wing Leaders continue in-depth training with the bronzeriders and promising brownriders in their Wings. This is expected of Wing Leaders, and bronzeriders are expected to be ready to assume leadership of a Wing at any time, after they reach maturity.

Bronzerider Training: This is training held during Weyrling Training, during Sevendays 45-48. It involves specifics about Gold Mating Flights, and controlling their dragons during Mating Flights. Discussion of inhibiting their dragons from Green Mating Flights, to allow more successful flights for browns and blues is included. Proper management of their position as bronzeriders is the majority of the training. Training is conducted by the Weyrleader or one of the Flight Leaders.

Goldrider Training: All goldriders are required to complete the standard Weyrling Training. They are also given additional training to prepare them for their position as goldriders. Topics covered are:

- Weyr Management. Record keeping, the Weyr's filing system, required Records (clutch charts, inventories, etc), personnel assignment, child care system, dragoncare and maintenance of the Weyr's physical condition.
- Diplomacy. Weyr relationship with Hold and Craft, dealing with Lord Holders and Craftmasters, disputes between riders, arbitration and decisive action.
- Gold Dragon Care. Controlling a Mating Flight, care of egg-heavy queens, clutching, Hatching and relationships outside of Mating Flights.
- Timing. What it is, dangers involved, how it can happen, how to inhibit in other dragons.



Weyrling Bells

Weyrling Training is extremely regimented. An ingenious clock, crafted by one of Kadanzer's Weyrsmiths over two hundred Turns ago, triggers a heavy brass bell above the Barracks to ring out eight times a day. Weyrlings have training for approximately six hours a day; two hours a day are spent doing chores in the Weyr. (See the article "[The Weyrlings' Daily Schedule](#)" for more information)

First Bell	0600
Second Bell	0700
Third Bell	0800
Fourth Bell	1200
Fifth Bell	1400
Sixth Bell	1800
Seventh Bell	2000
Eighth Bell	2200



Sample Training Day for Weyrling Class

*Weyrling Class # 16 Sevenday 9 Day 1
Weyrlingsecond K'bort*

First Bell

- Rise
- Morning Inspection and Muster
- Feeding

Second Bell

- Oiling
- Morning exercise
- Weyrling Breakfast and bathing

Third Bell

- Classroom, Northern Continent Weyr Landmarks, Instructor: Wingleader R'ket

Fourth Bell

- Midday Break

Fifth Bell

- Drills, Beginning Wing Formation and Turn Spacing, Instructor: K'bort

Sixth Bell

- Dinner

Seventh Bell

- Evening Inspection
- K'nis, G'tin and D'rus punishment detail making Ropes for Rope Drill

Eighth Bell

- Lights Out