

The Company of the Swan presents

A Midsummer Behourdium
And
Deed of Arms

20 June 2003 at the Drachenwald Ten Year
Celebration

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What's all this?

Most of you have probably seen pictures out of "The Book of Tournaments" by René d'Anjou. They occur in at least 80% of the coffee-table books of the middle ages I've seen, illustrating lavishly an ideal picture of a 15th century club tournament, or behourd. Now, as most books, this one also contains text, this one is actually a very down-to-earth manual on how such a tournament might reasonably be organised.

René's book has inspired several Tournaments in modern times, among them the Drachenwaldian Behourdiums according to René held in July AS33 between Earl Morgan and Duke Elffin, and the one in May AS37 with Sir Gilliam and Sir Hartmann - among the organisers of the first Drachenwald behourdium - as the challengers.

We in the Company of the Swan - a group of friends who would love to see more colourful, spectacular and medieval deeds of arms in Drachenwald - would like to continue this tradition with a great tournament celebrating the tenth anniversary of our Kingdom. As this is such a historic occasion, historic challengers seemed appropriate.

Therefore, His Majesty Matthew, being the twentieth King of Drachenwald, has challenged Duke Elffin, the first King of Drachenwald, to behourd, to take place at Burgau castle on the 20th of June. Our event focuses on having a more period tourney, and also a damned good fight. The first part of the tourney is a long grand mêlée, that will be fought between Matthew's and Elffin's teams. All comers will be divided into the two teams by the judges. After that, individual and group challenges will be fought in several themed arenas. Of course, this will be an excellent time for heraldry, pageant, and other such things that make any event more atmospheric. 15th century dress and equipment is certainly encouraged, but we stress that all comers are welcome. As this our version is concerned with 15th century fighting on foot, typical 15th century weapons like two-handed swords, poll-axes, bucklers, and the like are especially welcome.

For more details on the special rules, and how you - whether you plan to be a fighter or a spectator - can help make this tourney more spectacular and memorable, read on.

The Call to Tourney

The following was first read at the coronation of their Majesties Matthew and Alienor in Campofiamme.

"Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye!

Let all princes, lords, barons, knights, squires and men-at-arms of the marches of Nordmark, Knights Crossing, Aarnimetsä, Styringheim, Vielburgen first of shires, Harpelstane and Flintheath, Isengau and Blauwasser and Turmstadt, and Holmrike and Attemark, Polderslot and Meadowmarsh, and also Adamstor, and all others of whatever marches that are in this kingdom and all other Christian and Noble kingdoms, who are not banished or enemies of the king our lord, may God save, know that at the Drachenwald Ten Year celebrations, and on Midsummer's Eve being Friday the twentieth of June, at Schloß Burgau in fair Drei Eichen in Drachenwald, there will be a very great festival of arms and a very noble tourney with maces of one measure and rebated swords, appropriate armor, with crests, coats of arms covered with the arms of the noble tourneyers, as is the ancient custom;

Of which tourney the captains are the very noble and powerful princes and my very redoubted lords His Royal Majesty Matthew Blackleaf appellant and His Grace Duke Elffin O'Mona defendant, being the first and twentieth Kings of Drachenwald.

And to make this better known, all princes, lords, barons, knights, squires and men-at-arms of the above marches, and others from whatsoever nations they are, not banished or enemies of the king, our lord, who wish to tourney to acquire honour, may carry little shields, so that everyone may know who are the tourneyers. And anyone can have them who wants. The little shields are marked with the signs of the two princely captains, appellant and defendant.

And if anyone cannot get one of the little shields, or if he has no servant who can make one, he can wear instead a toe or garlic as a badge. And this is in honour of the folk of Campofiamme, where this tourney was first cried.

And at the tourney there will be noble and rich prizes given by ladies and damsels.

Moreover, I announce to all of you princes, lords, barons, knights, squires and men-at-arms who intend to participate in the tourney that you must come to the inns the day before the day of the tourney, and display your arms at the windows and your crests to the judges, on pain of not being allowed to participate; and this I tell you on behalf of my lords the judges, so please excuse me."

What will happen?

The original manual describes a tournament that spans over many days. We have tried to compress the activities a bit since this event will be run over one evening and one day of the Ten Year event. The precise schedule will be announced at the event, but here is an outline of what will happen.

Helmschau

(starts Thursday evening)

"Very high and powerful princes, dukes, counts, barons, lords, knights and squires at arms: I notify you on behalf of my lords the judges that each of you must bring your helm, with the crest which you intend to wear at the tourney, and your banner, at the ninth hour after the noon, to the inn of the judges, so that the judges, at ten o'clock, may set them up for the ladies to come and see and give their opinions to the judges."

All fighters that intend to participate in the behourd must bring his/her helm to the place decided by the judges. The fighters should also bring their banners and display shields. This is the time when the judges divide the two teams.

Knight of Honour

"Very noble and redoubted knight (or very noble and gentle squire), as it has always been the custom of ladies and damsels to have compassion, those who have come to see the tourney that will be held tomorrow, fearing that some gentleman who has done ill out of simplicity may be chastised too heavily by the demands of justice, and not wishing to see anyone beaten very hard, regardless of who he is, unless they can help him, the ladies have asked the judges to assign to them a famous, wise, and notable knight or squire who, more than all others, deserves the honor of carrying on their behalf this veil on the end of a lance tomorrow at the tourney. And if someone is too severely beaten, the knight or squire will touch his crest with the veil, and all those beating him must stop and not dare touch him: because from that hour forward, the ladies have taken him under their protection and safeguard. You have been chosen above all others at this tourney to be their knight (or squire) of honor, and undertake this chage, and they ask and require you to do as they wish, and so do the judges."

Then the ladies should give him the veil, asking him to do this; and after, the knight (or squire) kisses them, and then answers them as follows:

I humbly thank my ladies and damsels for the honor it has pleased them to do to me: and although they could easily have found others who could do this better, and who merit this honor more than I, nevertheless I obey the ladies freely and will do my loyal duty, asking always that they forgive my mistakes." [1\)](#)

The knight (or squire) of honour will have the function of a marshal in the lists. If he should lower the cloth over a fighter, that fighter is under the protection of the ladies and may not be struck until the cloth is again removed.

Swearing of the Fighters

After the armour and weapons have been inspected, there will be a short ceremony where the fighters must swear to follow the rules of the tourney and observe the orders of the judges. The tourneyers will then depart the field and gather with their respective captains.

Entering the Lists

First the knight (or squire) of honour will enter the lists. When he has taken his place, the appellant, King Matthew, and those fighting under his banner shall approach and ask the judges to prepare a place in the list for him and his men. When all are in place the defendant, Duke Elffin, and those fighting under his banner approaches the same way.

"...and they should go a pace with trumpets sounding and minstrels singing, as soon as someone opens the passage into the lists, by which they should enter: and when it is open, they should enter within, and their servants should make a great cry, and the tourneyers should lift their arms high over their heads, making threatening motions with their swords or maces" [1\)](#)

The Tournament I – The Grand Melee

The fighting begins once the ropes have been cut on the order of the judges, and will last until the judges call the retreat. Please see the special rules in this booklet. Tourneyers are welcome to take dignified breaks during the fighting, and may wish to have a follower ready with a hat and goblet of water so that they can drink at their ease and watch the fighting for a while before rejoining the fray.

Luncheon

After the grand melee, there will be a break for lunch. The tourneyers are invited to make a dignified picnic near the list field with their consorts and followers. It is recommended that all tourneyers remain in armour, perhaps just doffing their helm in favour of an elegant chapeau, so that all may see that they are eager to continue the fight. During this time, the tourney field will be re-arranged in several arenas.

The Tournament II – Challenges

After luncheon, there will be several challenge arenas available, each with a theme or specific weapon. The tourneyers are invited to progress from arena to arena and try their skills in each. They are free to challenge whoever they wish, individually or as groups according to the theme of the arena. These challenges will continue until the judges call a halt, or the combatants are too tired to continue.

The Tournament III – Grand Melee at the Barrier

Time permitting, the final round will be another, shorter grand melee, this time over the barrier. This round gives special opportunities for acts of courage, such as the fighter who swears not to remove his hand from the barrier.

Prize Ceremony

According to René's book there should be three prizes given:

"...for him who strikes the best blow with a lance that day."

"...for him who breaks the most lances"

"...for him who stays the longest in the lists without losing his helm."

We have summarised this with the one who most impresses the judges with their courage, prowess and chivalry. In addition, the judges may present prizes for other noteworthy actions, such as the best challenge.

"First, the trumpeters of the judges should go before, playing, then all the heralds and pursuivants like a fleet of ships; and after them the king of arms alone, and after him the knight of honor carrying the shaft of a lance in his hand, about five feet long or thereabouts. After the knight of honor should come the lady who carries the prize covered with the veil that was carried before the knight of honor, and on her right and left should come the judges, knights and squires, who should support her under the arms; and to the right and the left of the knights should be the two damsels on the arms of the two judges who are squires. The two damsels should hold the two ends of the veil, and in this way they should go three times around the hall, and then stop before the one to whom they wish to give the prize."

There will be a prize presented by the Company of the Swan for the tourneyer whose equipment (and entourage, if appropriate) most contribute to the fifteenth century atmosphere of the tourney.

All gentles watching the tourney, but especially the Ladies, are invited to give tokens and speak gentle words to tourneyers who have impressed them. This can take place at any time outside the fighting areas.

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¹ 1) René of Anjou, King René's tournament book: *Traictie de la forme et devis d'ung tournoy*. Translated by Elizabeth Bennett and illustrated by Will McLean. 2nd ed. rev., 1997.
<<http://www.voicenet.com/~ebennett/renebook.htm>> (11 April 1997).

Special rules and equipment

There are many rules according to King René's manual but they need some modification in order to work for SCA combat.

Combat Rules

1. No thrusting will be allowed.
2. 'Kill from behind' and 'Kill on the ground' will not be used.
3. In some parts of the tourney, blows will only be allowed from the waist up.
4. Apart from the rules above, ordinary SCA group combat rules apply.
5. When a fighter has received a good blow (to any legal target area) the fighter should acknowledge the blow by saying 'Well struck milord' or something similar. The fighter shall then exit the list where he/she entered, drink some water if the fighter so wishes, and then return to the combat when he/she so desires.
6. There will be a person in the list holding a piece of cloth on a stick. This person is the knight (or squire) of honour and his job is similar to that of a marshal. If he should lower the cloth over a fighter, that fighter is under the protection of the ladies and may not be struck until the cloth is again removed (local hold).
7. The knight (or squire) of honour may not be struck.
8. The tourney will continue until the judges signal the end of the tourney.

We will try and keep the number of holds to a minimum (preferably none at all) by means of the knight (or squire) of honour. In order to have as few breaks in the fighting as possible, we invite the tourneyers to take dignified breaks whenever they feel weary.

Equipment

- All fighting equipment must be SCA legal.
- If your weapon is fitted with a thrusting tip, this may be left on but please remember not to use it.
- The following forms are especially welcome – single sword (for the especially valiant), sword and buckler, two-handed sword, short pole weapons (poll axe, tourney axe, *bec de corbin* etc.)
- No weapon may be longer than the distance from the ground to the joint of the fighter's shoulder. (Very tall fighters might want to reduce this for fairness).
- Fighters who prefer to use shields are encouraged to use bucklers or small shields.
- Fighters are encouraged to use only one weapon (perhaps supplemented with a shield) at a time.
- Spiral-taped swords – especially in the user's colours – are encouraged.
- We very much encourage fighters to wear a helm crest if this is within their means. The Company will provide colourful feathers for those who cannot bring a crest.
- We welcome every attempt to create a fifteenth century image (see later in this book) but fighters whose equipment is from other eras is very welcome.

Number of followers

The number of followers allowed into the lists depend on rank and are as follows. Male titles are given, but the Lady of equivalent rank is also meant:

- Captain – five followers
- Other King, Duke or Prince – four followers
- Count or Earl – three followers
- Peer, Baron or Viscount – two followers
- Squire or Lord/Lady – one follower

Of course a fighter may bring as many servants or man-at-arms as he wishes, providing that they do not enter the lists.

Any fighters (or companies of fighters) which are not already affiliated to the appellant or defendant will fight on the side decided by the judges.

Miscellaneous Rules

In order to try and create a medieval atmosphere, we ask the audience to be most discreet about photography.

For the same reason, we specifically request members of the audience not to bring modern seating or picnic equipment to the tourney area unless it is completely disguised.

How to create the feeling of a 15th Century Tournament

This section 'Help to create the feeling of a fifteenth century tournament' is based a lot on the text 'How a Man Shall Prepare Himself for the Tournament' by Will McLean. The authors permission to use this text has been granted for a previous version of this booklet. The original text can be found on the web at <http://mqh.cit.cornell.edu/~mqh/st-mikes/tourney.html>

Here are some suggestions that may be useful if you want to contribute to create a feeling of a fifteenth century tournament.

Your Array

First, examine your harness. Is it of one consistent period? Can you find a picture of a medieval Knight that looks like you do? Are there glaring anachronisms? Few harnesses conceal enough of blue jeans to hide their essential nature. Dark sweat pants, with socks in a matching color, are better and hose are better still. Two-tone Nikes don't look very medieval. All black sneakers are better, and medieval shoes or sabattons are better still.

The right covering can conceal a multitude of sins. Essentially, you have two approaches. Before 1350, the armor was less challenging, but the surcoats were usually sleeveless, so they covered less of it. When sleeves were worn, they were rarely longer than elbow length. After 1350, the armor was more sophisticated, but garments called jupons or coat-armors, often with long sleeves, sometimes covered much of it. From 1400 on uncovered plate armor became increasingly popular. The later a period you choose, the more dependent you become on a good armorer.

The fighter's tabard

According to King René's manual, the fighters should wear a short tabard displaying the fighter's device. The tabards shown in the manual are of the same type as the Burgundian heralds tabards, see picture below. The device should be shown both on the front and the back of the tabard, as well on both sleeves. The tabard should reach to mid-thigh when worn over the armour. Remember to make the tabard ca. 5-6 cm longer at the back.

Crests

To appear without a crest would have been unthinkable in many C15 tournaments, and we encourage you to wear one. How else will the demoiselles follow your valour in the melee? There was an excellent article on crest construction in TI #108. A leather cap, moulded to the shape of the top of the helmet, can be laced by through four pairs of holes to the helmet, and removed when convenient. This provides an good foundation for the crest.

It is difficult to mount a crest and mantling on the pointed skull of an ordinary bascinet. There is no evidence that medieval gentleman ever did so. When they wanted to adorn a bascinet, the normal approach was to mount a gilded ball (called a pomme) at the apex, with several feathers springing from the top of that.

For those who are unable through circumstance to bring a crest, the Company will have a supply of colourful feathers available.

Your Retinue

From the 14th century on, great persons often equipped their followers in livery, that is distinctive clothing, either of distinctive colours of fabric, or distinguished by badges, or both. The colours might be the same as the lord's arms, or they might not, and the colours of clothing delivered to the lords followers might vary from year to year depending on the whim of the lord, the availability of fabric, and so on. Liveries were often parti-coloured, and sometimes tri-coloured. The colours were not restricted to the pure colours of heraldry. Other options included light green, tawny (orange-brown), russet (rusty red-brown) and murrey (purple-red, or mulberry colour). Liveries might consist of complete suites of clothing, sleeveless jackets, or sometimes simply hoods.

Badges might be made from metal, applied, or embroidered. Popular locations included upon the sleeve or hat, the middle of the chest and back, or upon what would now be the lapel, usually on the wearer's left side.

A noble that really wanted to show off at a tournament would put his retinue not simply into matching clothes, but into elaborate costumes. Besides the examples mentioned earlier, Claude de Vauldrey came to one 15th c. Burgundian tournament with a retinue of wildmen and wildwomen. Another had costumed moors in his train.

This does present some opportunities for people with personas that aren't your standard late-middle ages West-European types. A Celt might come as "The King of Lyonesse" with a retinue in fringed cloaks, carrying Irish javelins. A Berber from the Maghreb might be followed by turbaned moors with nakers and kettledrums. (A real 15th century Burgundian doing this would of course try to find an elephant or pair of camels to add to the procession. Camels and elephants are also available for hire in modern Europe...)

The ideal thing would be to really push it over the edge, so that instead of just being a Scadian with knotwork on your shield, you look like a Burgundian that decided it would be impressive to outfit his entire following in Arthurian fancy dress.

The greater nobles would often bring several men-at-arms as part of their following, to fight beside them in the tourney.

For this tourney however, we have limited the number of followers (see Special Rules).

The Banner

The banner was about two to three feet square, or if rectangular, about two to three feet deep, and with a width about two thirds of the depth. The earlier banners tended to be rectangular rather than square. Sometimes the banner was fringed with the livery colours. The arms were displayed on the whole surface of the banner, with the dexter side always in the hoist.

Don't assume that your choices are embroidery or nothing. Medieval banners were often painted.

If you are making a banner for this tournament we suggest that you make it rectangular, two by three feet (60 cm by 90 cm) since this seems to be consistent with what is shown in King René's tournament book.

Banners were not the gonfannons so often seen in the Society (that is, a flag hanging from a horizontal crossbar attached to a central pole), but like modern flags, except for their proportion.

If you want a crossbar, here one way to have one. Drill a hole through your pole perpendicular to its length, as close to the end as you can and just large enough to accept a dowel by press fit. Make your banner with a casing for the pole, and a narrower casing for the dowel. Leave the dowel casing open at both ends, and make the dowel casing open into the pole casing. You can now use your banner with or without the support dowel. Or, with a longer dowel, you can hang the banner flat against the wall without the pole.

Carrying Your Helmet

The ideal way to carry your helmet is on a short pole. This is convenient, elevates your crest so people can see it better, and keeps oil off your hands and sweat off the helmet. King Rene recommends a length of lance-shaft as long as your arm. Lengths of broken lance shaft must have filled the same ecological niche then that pieces of broken rattan too short to turn into a decent sword do today. After a day's jousting they must have been knee deep in the stuff.

A Personal Herald

To uphold your dignity properly, to make your challenges and announce your entry, a personal herald is a fine thing. A personal herald should wear a tabard or coat-armour with your device on it. There are many who would covet such a position as an escape from interminably droning: Salute-the-Crowns-of-Drachenwald-and-the-Lady-who's-favour-you-wear... Even more would take the job if you paid them. Seriously, field heralds live for this kind of stuff, and the right one can be a great help with your challenges. Besides, it's so hard to be heard from inside your helmet.

Your Cry

Proper 14th and 15th century had a war cry or motto that they and their retinue could shout in battle or during a tournament. Their fans could shout it from the sidelines too (Seriously. It's all in King Rene's book) A cry could be based on a name ("a Chandos! a Chandos!"), a place ("Guienne!") a patron saint

("Notre Dame!") or a combination of these elements ("Montjoie et St. Denis!"). We will assume that if your cry contains the name of a saint you are not calling on supernatural aid to assure victory (which the Society frowns on) but asking the saint's aid to fight fairly and honorably (and who could object to that?)

A Display Shield

A small wooden shield will be useful during the Helmschau. Make the shield out of plywood, hardboard or particleboard, and paint your device on it. The last two look like gessoed wood if you paint both front and back, and give a good smooth surface for painting.

The size of the shield should be that of an A4 sized paper that you cut down to a shield shape. (The top edge of the shield should be as wide as the paper). These shields are of the same type that were used for the Pas d'Armes at the Double Wars in 1997 and the behourdiums in 1999 and 2002.

René d'Anjou

King of Naples and Jerusalem, Duke of Anjou, Bar, and Lorraine, Count of Piedmont, Provence and Barcelona etc.

René is without doubt one of the outstanding characters of the 15th century. He took part in Joan of Arc's campaigns against the English when he was quite young, and then spent years trying to make his real position in society match that of all his illustrious titles. He did never manage to realise the claims to Naples and Jerusalem however, although he became known to the posterity as Roi René.

To the student of the Middle Ages, he is mostly known for his lavishly illustrated manuscripts, and as a patron of the arts. Most noted is certainly Livre de Tournois, from which this event was inspired, but also for Le Cueur d'Amours Espris, a typical allegory in the fashion of his day.

The tourney of the Later Middle Ages

It's often said that the tourney of the later middle ages was decadent and exaggerated, far removed from the training for warfare it was supposed to be. And certainly the great pas d'armes that is the most famous examples of 15th century tournaments provide a picture of a very elaborate and synthetic event.

"Let us take as an example of the late medieval joust the pas d'armes of the Fontaine des Pleurs, staged at Chalon-sur-Saône in 1450, which happens to be particularly well recorded. ... On the island of St Laurent on the Saône by Chalon a pavilion was to be set up, with an image of Or Lady above it. Before it was to be found a damsel, in a robe stained with tears, her hair flowing about her shoulders, tending a unicorn from whose neck hung three shields, these too tear-bestrewn (the lady and the unicorn, it is clear, were both models, not real). Here on the first day of each month a herald would be found in attendance. The unicorn's shields were of three colours, white, violet and black: Lalaing's [the defendant of the pas, Jacques de Lalaing] challengers had to touch the white shield if they wished to fight with the axe, the violet if they wished to fight with the sword, and the black for twenty-five courses with the lance. As soon as a challenger had touched a shield, his name was enrolled by the herald, who also verified that he was a gentleman of at least four lines; and a time seven days ahead was assigned for the encounter. To him among the challengers who should bear himself best with the axe was assigned as a prize an axe of gold, and a golden sword and a golden lance for the champions with the other weapons. He who was brought to the ground with the axe was to be bound to wear a bracelet of gold for a year, or until he could find the lady with key to unlock it." [Keen]

A number of similar events took place throughout the 15th century, and this example wasn't even the most elaborate event of those. But one must bear in mind that these still wasn't even the majority of tourneys, the most were simple challenges without most of the trappings outlined above. And *melée* formats were still popular, especially in Germany. Also, most of the tournament heroes were also accomplished warriors, such as Boucicaut, Bayart, Earl Richard Beauchamp and others. Men such as the Gascon routier Poton de Xaintrailles also took part in events like pas d'armes Emprise de Dragon, arranged by René d'Anjou. Maurice Keen (in *Chivalry*) holds that the connection between actual warfare and tournaments was stronger than is most often believed.

What René d'Anjou set out to do when he wrote his tourney manual was in part to revive the custom of *melée* tournaments. He says specifically that the book is inspired by tourneys such as those usually performed in Germany.

Event Information

The Drachenwald Ten Year Celebration will take place from the 19th to the 22nd of June 2003 at Schloss Burgau near Düren in northwest Germany. For more information see www.drachenwald.sca.org or the Dragon's Tale.

Disclaimer

This booklet is not an official SCA publication.

Thanks

This booklet is a modified version of a more handsome publication produced for the first Drachenwaldian behourd in AS33. My thanks to Sir Gilliam, Sir Hartmann and all others involved in that event for their permission to build on their work, including this booklet. Any errors in this version of the book are my own. - Aethstan

The Company of the Swan

The Company of the Swan and Cross, often known as the Company of the Swan, is a groups of friends from all over Drachenwald who are dedicated to promoting more spectacular, colourful and medieval tournaments in our Kingdom.

If you would like to work with us in organising tourneys, or if you would like our help in setting up your own tourney company, please speak to any of us or contact our Captain, Aethstan (Adam Lawrence +49 9131 201191 or adamstjohn@aol.com).