

Chronique

The Journal of Chivalry

Articles, Essays, Reviews

Issue #16
The Pas d'Armes Revisited

Chronique
The Journal of Chivalry
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Great thanks to all the above contributors and to everyone who
helped Chronique #16 into being!

THANK YOU!

INTRODUCTION

The last time we did an issue on the pas d'armes was nearly five years ago...since that time many others besides the *Company of Saint George* have experimented with the format--mostly with success. At that time there was one company--ours--but shortly thereafter there were two more, the *Companies of Saint Michael* and of the *Star*. Now there are more than ten; and probably more than we are unaware of.

Many people wrote in over the years for a copy of issue #4, hoping for information that would help them run their own pas d'armes. But there is so much that we have learned since then, I decided to do another issue on the subject. But even this is insufficient--and so was born the follow on book to the original *BOOK OF THE TOURNAMENT*. As of now it has already been written, but is awaiting illustration. Look for *PAS D'ARMES & ROUND TABLES: RE-ENACTING MEDIEVAL FEATS OF ARMS* next August. But if you need more information in the meantime, check the website at <http://www.chronique.com> or write to me personally. I will send out a limited number of review copies for those who are especially enthusiastic.

But there is something of that book and more in the pages that follow. First, I offer a summary of the book's major tenets in "Five Years Later--What we in the *Company of Saint George* have learned about the Pas d'Armes." Next you will find the text for the first pas d'armes declaration--the announcement--that outlines the rules for the first pas d'armes, held in November 1992. I offer a few words on the single thing that has helped the most--the use of arming squires and sergeants at arms to assist combatants in readying themselves in between challenges; find this in "Staffing the Pas d'Armes: Arming Squires to the Rescue!"

We close each pas d'armes with a feast, where the Companions recount the deeds done that day by those who impressed them--how to maintain the magical atmosphere of the tourney during the evening's festivities is the subject of the next article, "Conducting the Feast."

The next article is my favorite--"Fighting over the Barrier." There is nothing quite like poleaxes over the barrier, though I do in secret love nearly every weapons form. In this piece I offer a few words concerning the history of barrier combats and techniques which are useful. This one is extremely well illustrated with photographs!

Michael Truffa, writing from Alaska, next offer his experiences with challenges in "Offering the Challenge." This has been an element that scares many who are new to the pas d'armes, but it need not be eloquent or loquacious--simple sincerity is key to making the challenge effective.

There follows an authentic account of a 15th century pas d'armes from the words of Enguerrand de Monstrelet, the French chronicler who took up where Froissart left off in the year 1399.

Next you will find a couple of pieces relating to the *Company of Saint George*--an article on renown "Errants and the Company of Saint George" and our Charter.

Lastly, find the second article on technique--this time on staff drills that will help the combatant with balance, focus, and initiative.

All of this is offered with some humility, for even as I strive to record these things for the benefits of others, there are other people who are as passionate about these ideals as I am. What I hope that this journal, the *Company of Saint George*, the website and the tourney book do is to raise the awareness of combatants that there is more to tournament fighting than the shallow victory so many combatants cherish. Victory on the field is to be sought, certainly; Prowess is the identifying quality in a knight.

But knightly renown is not built solely upon prowess, but upon character; and strength of character, of spirit, Ramn Lull tells us is far stronger than strength of the body. Courage, loyalty, largesse, humility, faith, fidelity, courtesy, the duties of defense for the lord and for those incapable of defending themselves--these things make a knight's renown. Roland is now known as a knightly icon merely for his prowess, but for his loyalty and courage. Likewise, the Black Prince personally served his French captive--King Jean--at a banquet the very evening of Poitiers in 1356. These are the things that build renown, noble qualities atop prowess. If we as combatants can learn this, strengthening our spirits against the vainglorious of shallow victory, then we can acquire renown aplenty both in our victories and in our defeats. In this way, I believe, we can build upon the ideals that our ancestors were part of. And in the process, because we have chosen tournament fighting as the road through which much of our growth will take place, we can have an excellent time in the process!

--Brian R. Price, Editor

FORUM

Wow! And I do mean *wow*! To all those who responded with passion and grace to the questions of chivalry, I offer you a warm thanks. There is little question in my mind that these FORUM responses are the first things to which our readers turn when each issue finally reaches them, and thus it is your words rather than mine that have made this journal a success.

In this issue, as always, I tried to include a balance of responses, some unique in their expressions and others representative of other replies for which we have too little space to include. You will find some respondents included only once, while others were articulate and spirited enough to find inclusion over and over. My thanks to all!

Unusually, I didn't have enough time to include many of my own responses to the questions or to some of the responses. There are two reasons for this—first, since much of this issue is my own work, I have stolen enough of your time for my opinions as it is. Secondly, there were so many responses—more than 300 pages of single-paced full-sized sheets—that more seemed unnecessary.

Here are a few thoughts on some of the questions:

Q 2: Sincerity is the key element that enables the reaffirmation in the ideals that is the *raison d'etre* for the *pas d'armes*. None of the knightly virtues, qualities or duties are necessarily superior to the others, but nor should they be absent from any who calls himself knight.

Q 4: I prefer blows thrown in my fights for the simple reason that it encourages crisper, cleaner fighting. There is no solid evidence, that I've found, favoring either in the period sources.

Q 5: It is my hope that the *pas d'armes* does impact combatants attitudes in prize lists, wars, and even in their lives. For me, it is only through this that our activity really serves chivalry, for it has always been the intent of chivalry to ennoble those who aspire to the ideals.

Q 8: I view the definition of 'victory' in a different way. The victor is the one who has earned positive renown in the eyes of their peers and in the eyes of the gallery. Many can win; so can all lose.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy the cornucopia of responses! --Editor

Question #1: If you have fought in or seen a pas d'armes, did it impress or annoy you—and why?

“As a companion of the *Compagnie du Soleil d'Or*, I have fought in a Pas and assisted in hosting one. I attended the King Rene tourney hosted by the Tenans of Noble Folly a couple of years ago, and the entire event was my conception of what an SCA event should be like. The pomp and ceremony, down to the very decorations of the site, was what I expected to see when attending my first event. I'm sure that any new member or non-member seeing the display would have been blown away by the spectacle. Although the concept of counted blows was unfamiliar to me at the time, and therefore uncomfortable at first, I learned to adapt. The most important aspect to me was the fact that high virtue and great deeds were what was expected of the combatants, and the attendees rose to the level of those expectations.”

--Scott Tepe

AKA SCA Aldred of Ascalon, Middle Kingdom

“I had the good fortune to not just witness a pas d'armes, but to be one of the company that was given the honor of 'bearing witness' to the day. We were given a number of small gifts that we gave to fighters who impressed us particularly on that day. It was a pleasure to do so, to honor in a personal way the acts of honor and chivalry we witnessed that day. The gifts were not publicly presented and so really were quite a personal statement from those of us who were witnesses.

“What impressed me? The chivalry displayed by all participants. The knight who we had to talk into taking his gift, as he felt that it should go to someone unbelted. We insisted that it was our right to give it to someone whose behavior impressed us and his had. The fighters that died valiantly, and fought bravely. The ones that gave up the use of uninjured limbs, to not have advantage over their opponents. The fair speech of those fighters, saying their reasons for fighting that day....”

--Robyn Hodgkin

Mistress Kiriell du Papillon, West Kingdom--Australia

“I fought in my first Pas at GWWI, this past Presidents' Day weekend. I was immensely lucky, because I had no idea that, at the time I set up my encampment, the Pas was to be next door. I enjoyed the spectacle and pageantry of the Pas immensely. The statements of the defenders, though, could have been a bit less lengthy. Though not a problem here, with a larger Pas, it could get tedious, if the defenders were not equally skilled in appropriate language; perhaps the tournament companies might wish to initiate in-house competitions among their members for inspired eloquence.

“I was, at balance, immensely impressed with both the format and the operation of the Pas. This is the sort of event I joined the SCA for! Once I got the hang of things, the scenario subsumed me, and I had more fun than I've had in ages!”

--Jim Fox-Davies

Lord Jared Blaydeaux, Kingdom of Caid

“I was very impressed by the pas that I saw at the GWW. The lists were in front of a 15th c. camp. Most fighters came to fight in their nicest gear and many were in 15th c dress. It was a bit hard for non-fighters to follow what was going on. I had fought for years, so it was not too bad for me. If I didn't know more about what was going on, it would have looked like a slug-fest due to the counted blows.”

--Julie Adams

"I was witness to the Pas during 3YC, and was thoroughly impressed. The pageantry and individual honor, ideas that brought me into the SCA, were not only very evident, but paramount to the fighting itself. This was not an exercise in pummeling an opponent into submission: this was an opportunity to showcase the ideals for which we say we strive. The Pas at 3YC brought back to me some of the 'magic' that I'd felt had been missing lately. It impressed me so much that I helped push for a Pas in our area, and so far two distinct companies have been formed in the Lions Gate area. I helped herald a Pas at our annual Clinton War, in which there were four defenders and seven challengers. The participants and the spectators all had a fantastic time, and the following is growing."

--D. Mark Hood

Lord William MacAndrew of Balnagowan, Kingdom of An-Tir

"The few I have seen were quite impressive. They seemed to display more of what I started fighting for."

--Jim Molyneaux

Lord Aubrey Gawen

"There are several things that impress me about Pas. The primary things are pageantry and courtesy. They add the 'color' to the fighting that was the main attractor to the SCA for me. In pageantry I not only mean the use of heraldry and colorful pennons and clothing; but also the quality and historical accuracy of the armor and other portions of a fighters kit. Pageantry is attracting to the eye there courtesy is attracting to the heart. It feels good to be in a situation where there is not a win-at-all-costs attitude. Where, while you and your opponent are adversaries, you are also cooperating in the creation of a feeling of goodwill towards each other so that you both can enjoy the day. I guess this is a form of sportsmanship."

--Robert Gleason

Lord Parlan MacGillivray, West Kingdom, CSG

"Having fought in several of the Pas in the West when they were first being experimented with, I found them a delightful forum for a fairly new fighter to 'try their wings.' I was so used to dying in second round of tournaments and being pike fodder at was that the change to a Pas setting was very comforting. I was allowed to exhibit the skills I had and even dead. I could go on to fight more and more. I could bring honor to my Knight and my consort publicly and espouse their virtues to all without just relying on my skills to do so. I enjoyed the pageantry and the comradery of all the fighters."

--Mari Bloomster

Kontessa Mari Greensleeves, West Kingdom

"I have fought in one pas d'armes, conducted by the *Company of St. Michael of the Balance*, held at Pennsic XXII. I was impressed by several things --the rules for combat varied according to the challenge issued; the combatants (tenans et venans) cared about their appearance; the combat was conducted in an orderly and entertaining manner, for both combatants and spectators.

"Although it was a simple pas d'armes, it was creative and interesting. There was no prize as such, but there was an obligation upon the defeated combatant that, for me, allowed honor for both combatants, rather than just the victor."

--Lyle H. Gray

--East Kingdom

"I fought in one held in Western Seas by the Canton of Bards' Keep. It was based on the first one done by the *Company of St. George* and indeed we had Sir Derek as a visiting participant. The event did not annoy me in the least. On the contrary, I found

it to be most impressive both for the atmosphere and its resultant effect and for the spectator friendly aspects of it.”

--Jon Overstreet

Lord Talon the Black, East Kingdom

“Yes, I fought in the pas d’armes at the Great Western War; I was highly impressed. The challenges that were eloquently spoken, the rituals of the pas, the conduct and attitudes displayed by the fighters and the gallery, the pageantry of the whole affair all helped to transport me, for an all-too-brief hour, to a time and place that seemed magical and special. Such moments are what I joined the SCA to find, and I am gladdened to have experienced one so wonderful after all these years; I hope I am invited to do it again.”

--Michael Huston / Salt Lake City

Michael the Lucky of Lancaster, KSCA, Pel,

“The three pas d’armes I’ve fought in have all impressed me. The idea that we, as fellow fighters, can hold a tournament to do honor to ourselves, each other, the gallery, and whom or what we fight for is very inspiring. We can certainly do all those things in a non-pas d’armes tournament, even a prize tourney. But to have the tournament set up as a noncompetitive environment designed to focus on chivalric and honorable behavior, instead of a title or a prize, was a brand new idea for me. I have seen pas d’armes held at major events that haven’t impressed me as much. I think having a pas d’armes at another event does not allow the participants to be as focused on the it. Having the populous wander in & out, periodic heraldic announcements and other distractions makes it difficult to achieve the ‘pas d’armes atmosphere.’ I have found myself profoundly affected by the attitude of the combatants and the fighting environment of a pas d’armes-only event. By taking the time to attend a pas d’armes held by itself, you’ve made a conscious decision to participate in its environment. If you attend a pas d’armes that being held at another event, you may have other thoughts on your mind about the rest of the event that will distract you from focusing on it & its intent. Of course, we should all enter all pas d’armes focused & committed to the ‘pas d’armes ideal,’ but that’s not always practically.”

--Nils Hedglin

Arthur Lacey, West Kingdom

“I have both seen and fought in pas d’armes. I enjoyed fighting within one only a little more than I did watching from without the barriers. It impressed me greatly. It did not annoy me, but rather made me feel a little uncomfortable, as my persona is late 12th /early 13th century, and the pas format was not something I would have participated in. That slight discomfort was turned to motivation, however. I have been working on earlier period formats for *behourds* and *hastiludia* so that combatants of my era may enjoy the ‘tournaments’ of their time period as well. Thank you for the inspiration!”

--Bob Charron

Conn MacNiell, Duke, Middle Kingdom

“I have fought in several pas d’armes, but the first was overwhelmingly impressive. The pageantry, everyone trying to out do all others in honor and chivalry, the emotion displayed in challenges, the single list with everyone attentive to the fighting, the rain, and of course the feast that followed, all made a day that captured what I’d always hoped the SCA would be.”

--Deborah White

**Lady Rhiannon o Hafan Gath, squire to Duke John ap Gwyndaf of Holdingford
Kingdom of Caid, Company of Saint George**

"I have seen a few pas d'armes. Each very much impressed me. The efforts that the participants go to recreate the 'style and flair' does much in suspending belief and actually transporting you through time and place. It is a pity that we can't recreate such grand spectacles more often."

--John Patrick Kowal

Aleksandr Vasilevych Lev of Volynia

"In the last pas d'armes that I fought in, our local list mistress commented to me that it was the first time she had attended a tournament and had fun watching the event. Being a member of the gallery she could either play games or help our Baroness to choose fighters who should receive small prizes for any deeds worthy of recognition."

--Huett, Darren

Sir Hugh the Little, West Kingdom, Australia

"I have fought in several pas d'armes, and have been singularly impressed with each. While the setting has helped create this impression, with the lists and banners, heralds and ladies, the greatest factor has been the attitude of the combatants, which seems to me to have been one of sheer pleasure of being able to share the field with honorable opponents in a display of prowess."

--Nicholas Cioran

Nicholae Cioran

"Yes. I have. Personally, I loved it. The best things seem to happen at small Pas d'Armes - it's probably just easier to create the right mood (which is very important). Also, 'small' generally also means 'intimate', and a close setting that really lets you see and hear everything (and doesn't give you too many faces and names to remember) makes it much easier to enjoy each challenge and combat. A very important part of the enjoyment has to do with expectation. I have been in larger Pas d'Armes that included people that expected it to be something other than it was - the usual complaint was 'too much standing around, not enough fighting', which to me suggests that the combatant did not come expecting to watch but to fight. Watching and listening are fairly significant parts of a Pas d'Armes of any size, so anyone who comes and *doesn't* expect this is bound to be disappointed."

--Christopher Ebert

Lord Gwydion Gwerion, West Kingdom

"I was impressed! The pageantry, the care everyone took with their appearance and the boasts of the heralds took it a step above the normal tournament. I feel that the best feature of Pas in general is that they are put on for the enjoyment of both the tourniers and the spectators. I see too many events with a long, boring tourney grinding on all day in the corner--and virtually no spectators except marshals, combatants and the occasional list-keeper. To paraphrase most people I have spoken to on the subject of Pas: they feature the kind of fighting and the level of pomp and chivalry they hoped to see when they joined our society."

--Gael Scot

"I have attended several pas d'armes, and I have enjoyed watching them immensely. This is for several reasons: The pas d'armes I have been lucky enough to attend have had many active, audible, and personable heralds. The challenges they thought up and delivered, together with the combatants' clothing and banners, made everything around the combats entertaining and interesting. And these trappings also inspired the combatants to do more than simply fight well. The combats were accessible. As a lady, I find it hard to get anywhere near the lists at most SCA events I attend, and even harder to stay there for any length of time. The combats were interesting and inspiring. After

15 years in the SCA. I have long ago grown bored with elimination lists and seeing combatants scooting about on their knees. Counted blows combats are easy to understand and lack the silly spectacle presented by presumably armless and legless opponents. But more than that, the pas d'armes seems to bring out the best in combatants, displaying their prowess and chivalry. Even combats scored the traditional SCA way (losing legs, etc.) seem to be better fought.

"In short, I think a pas d'armes is much more devoted to the ideal of chivalry, and is a much better spectacle. In the SCA we call our get-togethers 'events,' but a typical SCA tourney isn't much of an 'event.' A bunch of guys in grubby armor, bashing at each other in a gym or on a muddy field is *not* a tournament, although I'm certain that it's a lot of fun for them. A tournament (whatever the style) is meant to be watched, and the participants are supposed to be judged on how they fight and act, not just on whether they win or lose."

--Gail Finke

Myfanwy, Baroness Flaming Gryphon, Middle Kingdom

"I spend most of my time fighting as an early-period 'leatherboy' (lamelar), but I have fought in three different Pas. The first, at Pennsic three years ago, impressed me quite a bit, though I regretted fighting in it afterwards because my gear was inappropriate to the theme. I set about getting a set of 15th c. plate for myself, though, and fought the second time at the field hosted by the newly formed *Company of St. Gabriel* at Calontir's Lilies War. My third Pas was just this past weekend, hosted by the Noble Baron and Baronne of Three Rivers, Fernando and Lyriel. The effort they and their Barony went to was amazing, with incredibly painted display shields, and Torses in the colors of each Tenant. I have not felt that sense of wonder for our game in years."

--CJ Roberts

Sir Dongal Ericksson, Calontir

"I was very impressed- the level of honor and chivalry that were shown by all participants were the best that I have ever seen. The format of pas allowed all of us to view each fight and enjoy the day of combat. There was no stress of winning or losing, just glory and honor to be won. I do not know if this atmosphere has also occurred at the larger Pas held at large events, as it has not been my honor to have been at one."

--James Earley

Duke James Greyhelm, Knight, OL, Kingdom of An-Tir

Question #2: Courtesy, sincerity, and pageantry are all showcased in a pas d'armes. Are these virtues secondary to prowess in a medieval knight? How about in our own knights?

"I'm not sure that there are any *secondary* virtues!" --gongyu@ix.netcom.com

"I think that prowess was the *sine qua non* of the medieval tourneyers. Without that, one's participation was meaningless. However, the entire point of a passage of arms was to show that courtesy, sincerity and pageantry could be combined with prowess. In the modern day, prowess is not a necessity to the ordinary lives of our knights. But it is necessary if they are to convince themselves and others of their chivalric virtue. Since the consequences of defeat are not so great, modern knights can work on prowess and courtesy simultaneously. In fact, they are practically required to. Those who achieve prowess without making progress to the other goal do not impress their followers."

--Finnvarr de Taahe, Duke Middle Kingdom

"The relative value of the various chivalric virtues depends on the environment that the knight is in. On one hand, a knight's behavior is generally more important than his ability to overcome his foes, but on the other hand, few of the knights of antiquity became renowned without achieving some great feats of arms. The ability to overcome his adversaries was the medieval knight's reason for being. The 'courtesies' existed to tame and harness his destructive capabilities. In time of war, a monarch needed his knights to exhibit prowess. In peace, he needed knights who were assets in other ways.

"Today's knight is seldom faced with situations where prowess is more vital than the other virtues. Our tournaments and wars are fought for fun. Few people enjoy seeing tournaments where the victors are visibly lacking in some of the knightly virtues, no matter how skillfully they have fought. Thus, in the context of the Current Middle Ages, the other virtues take precedence...." --James F. MacKenzie, Jr.

Lord Wulfhere Forloren, Kingdom of Atenveldt

"Perhaps in the medieval knight - if one does not win one's combats, one may lose the Kingdom to the enemy. Prowess is a very potent virtue indeed, and reflecting that, my own combat skills are very much tied up in my own sense of self and ability. However, the way I hope to play at *re-enacting* the medieval world is to act as though I were living out the romances, the 'knights in shining armour' stories we all grew up with. If I only act out prowess, then all I leave at the end of the day are bruises. If I actually honor my opponent, if I (and my Company) act courteously and have put on a 'good' show, sincerely, then we leave the field enriched. Personally, skill with words and the ability to lead by show and splendor is how I try to give back to my re-enactment, but I still have a long way to go. There are, however, wonderful exemplars to be found here in Lochac. My own knight, Sir Cornelius, has just been made a member of the Order of the Laurel for his armoring, and, he & I hope, for his ability to put on a good show."

--Peter Martin

Lord Cormac the Traveller, Editor: *Facets of Knighthood*

"The virtues of courtesy, sincerity and pageantry are by no means secondary to prowess in a medieval knight, nor should they be in an SCA knight. This is, however, not the case. In my Kingdom (I cannot speak of other Kingdoms) we have seen too often a King creating a knight simply because he is a 'hot stick.' Should the hot stick be a squire, his knight is asked his opinion, and the answer invariably is 'Cool! Yeah!' It is a feather in the cap of any knight to have his squire knighted. A year or two later this new knight proceeds to win the crown, spots a new hot stick on the field, and makes him a knight. The process is repeated. The previously mentioned virtues are all but ignored when compared to the knight's fighting prowess."

Lord William MacAndrew of Balnagowanmka

"Those virtues should never be secondary to fighting prowess. Any big stick jock can be a fighter, and if he hits hard enough and often enough, he will be made a knight. But swinging a stick does not make someone virtuous."

--Jim Molyneaux

Lord Aubrey Gawen

"Yes. Any worth person can display courtesy, sincerity and pageantry. A knight wraps those attributes around martial prowess. It is the contrast between prowess and gentleness that makes a knight such a powerful image, both in our vision of the middle ages and in our society."

Count Valens of Flatrock, Calontir

"In many period pas such virtues seemed to be expected or desired in combatants. I think that prowess, meaning the ability to fight well, is paramount in both period and SCA knights. But, I think SCA knights should also have some elements of courtesy, sincerity, and pageantry within them."

--Michael Surbrook

"The virtues that should be found in a medieval knight are many, and include courtesy, sincerity, pageantry, *and* prowess. Medieval texts emphasized these virtues, and the value of prowess is that it allows its possessor to achieve acclaim through his own resources, that all may notice not only this virtue of prowess, but all other virtues that he holds as well. A knight who holds only prowess dear, to the exclusion of other virtues, will find himself one day bested by many on the field: with no other fine qualities to hold him in the people's esteem, he will fade away as if he never were. All too often this is the case even now in the SCA, when the young are taught to esteem only the fight, and often, only the winner as well. It seems there are many who could live forever in the words of the people who are, instead, merely as a shooting star, held in awe then quickly forgotten."

--Robin Pyle

"The answer is, 'It depends.' It depends on the knight, and it depends on whether you are speaking of the *ideal* or the *reality* of the medieval knight. Courtesy and sincerity are not secondary to prowess in the ideal of a medieval knight -- they are of *at least* equal footing, and I would expect them to be higher because they are important to the conduct of the knight in all things, not just in combat. Our own knights should be based on the *ideal* of chivalry, and therefore these virtues should be strived for by our knights."

--Lyle H. Gray

"When a medieval knight fought in a tournament, prowess was primary, and rightly so. His reputation, his health, and often the very tools of his career depended on being the best fighter on the field. Off the tourney field, on a somewhat different field of combat, courtesy, sincerity, pageantry and other gentler virtues could (and did) take a leading role for the medieval knight: the right virtue/skill/tool at the appropriate time and place. Since our own knights will (hopefully) never be putting their health or equipment on the line in our combats, the line between conduct on and off the field is hair-thin. The reputation, good or bad, of our knights should be gained as much by their courtesy, sincerity and appearance/pageantry as by how well they do on the field of combat. Regrettably, at least where I reside, such is not the case. Most of the time, when choosing those who should receive the martial accolade, the gentler virtues run second to a fighter's ability to consistently emerge the victor in combat."

Sir Michael the Lucky of Lancaster

"I do not believe that other virtues were secondary to prowess in the Medieval knight. I believe the virtues were equals which all had varying theatres of expression. The medieval knight lived as a knight off the field as well as on it. Courtesy and sincerity were required in the court, and pageantry was expected in processions, ceremonies and when arming for war. I believe the pas bridges the gap more firmly between court and field life, bringing all the best aspects of chivalry into display.

"Our own knights, since our Society is *always* re-creating tournament combat of some kind, and never war, is called upon to display them all. Yet, when I think of the knights I most admire in the Society it is not their prowess that makes them memorable to me. It is their *character*. Therefore I would put to you that prowess, while

being necessary to the SCA knight, is the lesser siege of the virtues needed to gain renown. Courtesy, sincerity, good counsel and humility count even more greatly toward knightly renown in the SCA." **Sir Conn MacNiell, Duke, Middle Kingdom**

Question #3. Some have complained that the fighting in a pas d'armes is often 'scaled back,' and as such, is not reflective of medieval tournaments. Which parts of this statement do you agree with?

"When I have fought in a Pas d'Armes, the fighting wasn't 'scaled back' at all. On the contrary, much of the fighting has been cleaner and even more honorable than other events. If we expect, notice, and reward virtuous behavior, we are more likely to get it. However, sometimes certain types of combat, such as fighting at the barrier or counted blows, is unfamiliar to the combatant, which may make the fighting seem less fluid and graceful."

--*Scott Tepe*

Alfred of Ascalon, Middle Kingdom

"I do not think that I would use the phrase 'scaled back' to describe the fighting in a Pas. I've looked at the videos from GWW several times, and the fighting is just as intense and serious as any on the larger battlefield. A better term, I believe, would be 'focused.' The fighting in a Pas is a selection of skills from the repertoire of the combatant. Since we have record of a number of medieval tournaments which did much the same thing, focusing on one aspect of combat or another, I do not see how the allegation of 'not reflective' can be supported."

Jared Blaydeaux

"I don't feel that pas d'armes combat should be 'scaled back' compared to the fighting in other modern tournaments. If this seems to happen, it is perhaps because the combatants are trying to balance prowess and courtesy on a new or unfamiliar standard. Many people probably feel that a higher standard of courtesy is appropriate, and while feeling their way in that direction, may become a bit distracted. However, this is not the pas d'armes ideal. More experienced participants should figure out the appropriate balance of prowess and courtesy and have less trouble with distraction. I also feel that the implied contrast with medieval tournaments is probably more apparent than real. Perhaps medieval tournaments were rougher than ours. But were they as rough as medieval battles? I doubt it."

Sir Finnvarr de Taahe

"Not at all! I think the Pas is the *most* mediaeval feeling of any tournament I have observed or participated in!"

--*Joanne Burrows*

Tanikh bint Farida al Bakim, Kingdom of An-Tir

"I think they should last all day long! The pageantry and displays make it as interesting for the spectators as it is for the fighters."

Lord Aubrey Gawen

"Fighters often adopt a style of fighting that may be more conservative, this may be more a result of fighting under the close observation that is encouraged as part of these tournaments. The importance attached to clean and honorable behavior on the field can put a lot of pressure on fighters to not make a mistake that would be easily overlooked in another type of tournament."

Count Valens of Flatrock

"To be reflective of medieval tournaments, as you know, we would have to beat each other into submission. I would not be interested in participating in that sort of scenario. SCA fighting is 'scaled back' in reference to medieval tournaments. I believe that our pas d'arms are not 'scaled back', rather most of the rules seek to bring out depth in our fighting abilities. Sometimes these rules get confusing, as we are not used to modifying our fighting style to a sometimes drastic degree." **Ritter Tristan**

"If by 'scaled back' these gentles mean that the combat is more courteous, then I agree. I also count this a very good thing. While I believe that a 'cheerful ferocity' can be maintained on the field, pas d'armes are one way of reminding us through example what we should always be putting forward on the field. We should always be concerned with our opponents' happiness and physical well-being, and with the opinion of the gallery and our consorts. This format highlights these aspects of our combat for us, so that we may view them more clearly." **Sir Conn MacNiell, Duke**

"I prefer a different perspective. I prefer not to think of Pas fighting as being scaled back; but rather in other tournaments the level of chivalry and courtesy is being scaled back. I do believe that it may affect the intensity of a bout in so much as a fighter may not do some moves that may gain them advantage. The fighter should ask himself if that is not appropriate on the Pas list, should it be appropriate anywhere?

"Some may see the 'stakes' as being higher at a Crown or Coronet vs. a Pas. In either case what the fighter is putting on the line is their reputation or renown. Does it make sense to risk it more in one venue than another? I think not."

Lord Parlan MacGillivray, West Kingdom, Company of Saint George

"Our whole form is 'scaled back' - we do not use techniques that are mentioned in some period manuals simply because they are 'too dangerous' -so I am not certain what the 'complaint' is. I know some who are at their best in wars, and never really get into the spirit of the (SCA) tourney (or perhaps, the tourney doesn't bring out their fighting spirit). So, too, might someone feel driven to do their best in a Tourney, but not in a Pas. All of this is OK No-one has to feel obliged to be inspired by all forms of combat - and no-one should feel too disappointed if they're not. Variety is a good thing." **Lord Gwydion Gwerion, West Kingdom**

"I find that I fight more deliberately and with more 'snap' at a Pas. I think that perhaps I am just having more fun." **Sir Berach de Winterborne**

"I think they have to scale back so that the people participating can go back to their jobs and families, unlike the original fighters." **--Steve Muentner**

"I do not know what you mean by 'scaled back.' Is this a reflection of the notion that certain people do not fight as 'energetically' unless there is a prize to be won? This is a hobby, and as such is supposed to be fun. If you do not fight for the enjoyment of the clash of arms, but only for the petty political clout or trinkets you may win, I do not wish to enter the lists with you." **--Keith Larson**

William Campion, Middle Kingdom

Question #4: When fighting a pas fight of counted blows, which form do you prefer—number of blows thrown or taken?

"I think I actually like 'Blows Thrown' better -- it requires the combatants to be more selective, and better target their shots."
Jared Blaydeaux

"I find counting blows taken to be much more interesting than counting blows thrown. The idea of a fight in which no one landed a good blow, quite possible in a scenario where thrown blows are counted, is entirely uninteresting to me."

Sir Finnvarr de Taahe, Duke, Middle Kingdom

"Blows taken, certainly. There are opponents whom I can only defeat with an unexpected combination of blows (Earl Dafydd ap Gwystl, for a recent example). If you tell me I can only throw five blows the whole bout, that defeats a great deal of my training."

--*Lance A. Harrop*

Leifr Johansson

"I have never fought in such a tourney but have seen a few counted blow tourneys. The number of blows taken type has been far more entertaining to watch. While the later has sometimes generated into a staring match or a contest of 'one shots.'"

Aleksandr Vasilevych Lev of Volynia

"Thrown, it makes the fight much more cagey and hopeful; not just a raw combination is used, but single blows, executed in the desperate hope that they are skillful enough to get through the defense."

Lord Cormac the Traveller

"Blows taken. Blows thrown is too abstracted and artificial for my tastes. Blows taken give the combatants time to take the measure of one another and makes for a more interesting match-up of skill."

--*Michael Reeseman*

Viscount Myles Blackheath, KSCA

"I find that blows thrown can easily turn into a gunfight. I'm not quick enough to be a gunfighter so I prefer blows taken. Also, in larger Pas, blows taken makes for more fighting for each of the venans. It makes it more entertaining for them and for the gallery."

Lord Parlan MacGillivray, CSG

"When fighting with numbered blows, I prefer to count blows taken instead of blows swung. I feel there is too much posturing and 'gunfighting' in blows delivered. Part of the skill in fighting is setting up your opponent and taking advantage of their openings through timing. If you count only blows thrown, the set up can make the count very confusing or there is no set-up."

Countess Mari Greensleeves

"I prefer the format of blows thrown for two reasons. First, it is tough enough to be concentrating on all the other variables in a bout without having to overcome the urge not to fall over after a good blow has been struck. Secondly, it makes for a cleaner looking bout. In the blows taken format it can look too much like people aren't taking shots."

--*Darren Huett*

"While I believe that blows thrown is a more demanding test of the prowess of the combatants, generally I find blows taken more visually appealing to watch and more enjoyable to participate in. Bouts where the rule is blows thrown are more static and defensive, and more a purely intellectual experience rather than blows taken, which includes a more wild, visceral element."
Nicholae Cioran

"I prefer to count the blows taken. I am referring to fights where each combatant can receive three 'telling' blows, without acting out the wounds. After each blow is acknowledged, the marshal calls the count and the fight continues. The spectators can better see what is going on, since the blows are counted loudly; the combat lasts awhile, so the combatants can better display their skills; and there are no ridiculous 'battles of the crippled.'
Sir Berach de Winterborne

"I prefer the number of blows thrown. This in my opinion would tend to eliminate the competitive race to see who hits who the most. Both combatants are allowed similar quantities of blows, and it's the shots thrown that are important, not who hit the most."
--gawain@mail.metro.net

Question #5: Do you think the concept of the pas d'armes has any effect on the attitudes of combatants in prize lists?

"I think the combination of courtesy and fun renews many fighters' respect for their opponents. In a pas d'armes, there is an elevated sense of partnership between the contestants, a realization that we are all in the event together and its chivalric goals cannot be reached without common effort. Granted, this is true of all tournaments to some degree, and we should never lose track of this partnership. We lose track nonetheless. The greater structure and formality of a pas d'armes reminds of this basic truth."
Duke Finnvarr de Taahe, Knight

"Occasionally fighting in a pas d'armes can have an effect on how perceptive a fighter is about what is going on and can be a great way to get focused on what is really important on the field."
--Mike Jackson

"If you are talking about affecting their attitudes when not fighting in a pas d'armes, I would say that most fighters are not affected."
Ritter Tristan

"Yes, but only for those that are very involved in the Pas' format. These are the individuals who would seek to display the virtues embodied in the Pas' format no matter where they fought."
--John Gahrman

"Over time I believe it does. It reminds us of *all* our responsibilities on the field, and to maintain a courteous and gentle bearing in the lists. After viewing a number of such tournaments, most people come to realize that the greater prize is won by the person who behaved with impeccable grace. Winning the tournament itself can be done either fair or foul, and victory alone, in the absence of grace, counts for nothing. The pas emphasizes this."
Duke Conn MacNiell, knight

"I know that for myself I took a completely new look at tournament fighting altogether. I feel that the spirit of the game is in how you play not if you win. I have been to the finals of crown lists before and have had the opportunity to win but I always remember my first pas whenever I go deep into a tourney and I always do what is right. Sure I could do what it took to win a crown, as many do, but that in itself would ruin my reign."
--Bret Mills

"I think that the participants in pas d'armes may take the 'pas d'armes mentality' to other tournaments. I hope they do, since in my mind, honor & chivalry are much more important than winning a prize."
Arthur Lacey, West Kingdom

"I've heard of at least one fighter who hasn't fought in a pas due to a lack of something to win."
--Tourdion@aol

"Not in Atlantia, not yet. There is little overlap between the set of people who live for prize lists and those that enjoy passages at arms. However, I think that the experience of the pas d'armes has had some general social impact, at least in this area."
--David Kuijt
Company of Saint Mark

Question #6: Should a 'winner' be chosen in a pas d'armes? If so, how should this be done?

"Absolutely! As I said before, when you expect, notice, and reward great behavior, you are more likely to get it. In response to this question I'd like to pose another one. Why are the behaviors and virtues that are glorified by the Pas d'Armes, and are opposed to be part of what the SCA values most, not always practiced during other events? I'm not pointing any fingers or trying to step on toes, but when I attended my first Pas after 10 years in the SCA, my response was 'Where the heck was something like this in the last decade?'"
Aldred of Ascalon

"Yes, there should be a winner or winners chosen. Renown is a worthy goal, and one that inspires virtuous deeds. How should the winner be chosen? By people who truly love prowess and courtesy, and are willing to work hard at being judges for the day. If the renown is simply a matter of popularity, decided by lightminded observers, then the pas d'armes ends in farce, and the occasion and its moral quality is damaged."
Duke Finnvarr de Taahe, Knight

"I am uncertain that a 'winner' as such should be determined. I did not witness the end of the Pas in 3YC, and so do not know how it ended. At our Clinton Pas, the ladies of the gallery were called on to determine who they thought was the most chivalric combatant on the field, which they, and the combatants, thought was a fitting end to the day."
Lord William MacAndrew of Balnagowan

"If a winner were to be chosen at all, which I don't think is really at all necessary, it should be by acclamation of the ladies in showing favor to that fighter who shows the best of ALL the knightly virtues."
--Joanne Burrows

"I'm all for recognizing excellence in the things that the pas is being held to showcase. I prefer a gallery to judge these categories. One method I used for a rather large

tourney (174 fighters of whom 39 were Chivalry) used was giving all the knights in attendance a single gold link (Princes got 3, the King got 5) to give to the unbelted fighter that most impressed them. The knights then rallied to the King and held the lists against all comers in a day of melees and single combats. Toward the end of the day when all the tokens were distributed, the fighters who had received links were brought with much acclaim before the crowd and a gallery of Noble Ladies to be judged in several categories (Prowess, Noble Bearing, Chivalry, Panache, etc.) during the course of a series of melees against their equal number in knights. The Ladies were to choose 5 Champions of the Day who were seated together in a place of honor at feast and given engraved drinking horns at court.

"Two things I'd like to point out: First, the prizes for the Champions were ~~very~~ nice, but an afterthought to the idea of the pseudo-pas d'armes (it was far too large for a true pas) and were included at the insistence of the hosting group. Second, the Chivalry participated in what was a rather grueling day of challenges without any chance of reward save the honor of being given an extra link by the King (usually for stamina!) with which to recognize yet another unbelt. I was proud to be a knight that day!"

Viscount Myles Blackheath, KSCA

"Yes. It should be based on both skill and a willingness of the fighter to enter into the spirit of the event. The winner should be someone to be admired for both ability and grace on the field."

Count Valens of Flatrock

"I do not believe a 'winner' should be chosen, but rather several individuals who have shown themselves exemplary in some aspect: courtesy, valor, splendid harness or prowess. I believe that these 'exemplars' should be chosen by a gallery of noble ladies. Appointed to the service of this gallery should be a number of worthy knights to act as counselors at the gallery's request."

Sir Conn MacNiell, Duke

"A winner? No. But I do think that recognition of the person who best exemplifies courtesy and chivalry should be made. This is best done by members of the gallery with any requested input from the fighters."

Lord Parlan MacGillivray, CSG

"A winner huh? I feel that any lucky that day to be on the field winners themselves for being fortunate enough to be part of such an event. But, if one winner were to be chosen it would obviously have to be one of outstanding chivalry and courtesy as well as prowess on the field."

--Bret Mills

"I think where possible, there should be more than one winner declared for a pas d'armes, and that winner should be declared by judgment, either by a select group of judges, or by the other fighters, or by the gallery (either the consorts or all spectators in general). Although it is *easier* to choose a victor based on how many bouts are won."

--Lyle H. Gray

"Most definitely not! Or at least, not a 'winner' in the traditional sense. The whole point of the pas d'armes tournament, as I understand them, is for combat for honor's sake, not to decide a winner. The participating parties have agreed to enter the tournament to honor themselves, their opponent, & most importantly, whom or what they are fighting for that day. But choosing a winner would imply that the winner was able to act more honorably than the rest of the combatants & it would just turn the tournament into a different form of a prize tourney. I understand that each

combatant will act at different levels of honorability due to their level of commitment to the 'pas d'armes ideal,' their inspiration, etc., but creating an award system based on honor (even if it's just for the title of 'winner') seems to go directly against the chivalry to the pas d'armes strive. Of course, the order of the first few fights of a pas d'armes round goes to those who have made the most eloquent challenges, & at the Summer Pas D'Armes, the Companions of St. George handed out tokens to people that had shown themselves to be honorable. These actions could be considered a form of winning" (1st place in the eloquent challenge competition goes to ...). I'm sure these 'awards' are given more as recognition of an exceptional job & not to recognize the best. If there were no actions that had shown themselves to be exceptionally honorable at the Summer Pas, the Companions probably wouldn't have given the tokens out. We all need to receive recognition & validation from our peers, that's one of the ways we know we're doing the right thing. But that recognition can be done in a noncompetitive way so that everyone has a chance of receiving it & not just the one who has performed the best."

Arthur Lacey, West Kingdom

Question #7: The concept of largesse is sometimes linked to fighting. How could a combatant demonstrate generosity in a list field and should this be done?

"Generosity is often demonstrated on the field of battle by the better fighters. Witness the taking of a leg after taking an opponent's leg (tournament), the granting of single combat in a war situation, the changing of weapon styles to your opponent's choice, even when it means taking up a style you are not as versed in. These happen nearly every event, and should be (and to some extent, are) praised. And more important to the novice fighters than the aforementioned courtesies, is when an experienced fighter comes out, cleans your clock with some shot or other, then bothers to stop (battle situation or not, I have seen both cases) and tell you how it was done, and in some cases, worked with the fighter, right there, or after the battle/tournament, on the proper defense for such an attack. These are the acts of generosity and courtesy that make this a fun sport, and allow the rest of us a chance in the future."

--Gary Bryers

"I think the fighters should bring gifts to present to their favorite opponent. It certainly does not hurt to go up to someone afterwards and tell them that they were your best fight of the day."

Leifr Johansson

"Well, I would suspect that such deeds are recognitions of the 'greatness the moment.' Some great deed is performed, you as a witness are impressed. With as much style as possible you offer some gift to commemorate the deed. I think that it is a great thing to do. I would suggest that the timing should be as soon after the 'deed' but after the bout has been decided."

Aleksandr Vasilevych Lev of Volynia

"By the giving and receiving of points of honor. By clear and honest expression of intent, and thus honoring all present. By holding events and tourneys and supplying ideas, goods or services, or simply ambience. By provision of prizes for the combatant/s who win. And yes, it is good. Even a poor man such as myself can give something back to the experience when largesse can be shown in not just monetary terms. I

can honor my friends and acquaintances by planning a good event or supplying simple food and water for them. Not all largesse has to be something from the wallet. It can be from the heart, the tongue, or in simple actions that let the opponent know what you are trying to do and say.”

Lord Cormac the Traveller

“A fine way for a knight to show generosity and respect is to go to the person the knight is fighting for and compliment them on the knights prowess and honor.”

Midair MacCormaic

“The combatant should grant largesse of gifts to those who impress them.”

--John Schmidt

Sir John Theophilus, West Kingdom

“Largesse is a good thing and should be encouraged when deeds are done that deserve great recognition. However, I do not think that it should be thought of as required of the combatants. To require it, even out of peer pressure to do so, makes the act less genuine.”

Lord Parlan MacGillivray, CSG

“I believe that the largesse that is most praiseworthy and available to all combatants regardless of their annual rents and incomes, is largesse of service. I admire much more the oath to do some deed of service rather than the gift of some expensive item. This largesse does not shame those who have been impoverished in honest service in foreign wars who no longer have the coin with which to purchase fine armor or a blade. It is a largesse universal, available to all, and a true test of the sincerity of this virtue. Therefore, after being vanquished in a pas, to offer your service in arms or in the camp of your victorious opponent's consort is perhaps the surest form, and the most felicitous.”

Duke Conn MacNiell, knight

“Largesse is generally thought to be the domain of the nobility, and using a medieval model of the tournament, it must be assumed that the combatants are nobility, even if of the lower ranks. Therefore, a combatant should consider largesse part of the *noblesse oblige*, the noble obligation, his duty to his people, his Crown, and the Church, for the high estate in which he finds himself. Largesse is often considered only in financial terms, but there is what I call a ‘largesse of spirit’ that sets certain men apart. This type of largesse is the type most often seen in the Society today, in the form of kind words to a combatant and his consort, in the giving of flowers or other small gifts to the opponent's consort, to the setting out of a pleasant table with fruit and other things to be shared with those in the list that day. It sometimes is the public acknowledgment, through one's actions, of the other combatants as worthy opponents and consorts, as individuals worthy of respect and esteem. To highlight the good deeds and qualities of others is a great and noble thing. It is also the giving of one's time and effort to assist others when there is no gallery to praise the deed. The most difficult gifts are the ones we give of ourselves and from the heart, and therefor are the most valuable. I believe it is Chrétien de Troyes who wrote in *Cliges*:

“What man has so many other good qualities--that largesse would not increase his fame? Largesse alone makes one a worthy man, not high birth, courtesy, wisdom, gentility, riches, strength, chivalry, boldness, power, beauty or any other gift. But just as the rose, when it buds fresh and new, is more beautiful than any other flower, so largesse, whenever it appears, surpasses all other virtues and

causes the good qualities it finds in a worthy man who comports himself well to be increased five-hundred fold."

--Robin Pyle

"I believe that largesse should be demonstrated during tournaments. One way that I have seen combatants demonstrate largesse is to bring prizes of their own. These can be hand made tokens or they might be rich prizes (such as semiprecious stones, medieval coins or a hand of expensive cloth). They then give these gifts away to those who best them on the field. This is also a very authentic method for giving prizes based on prowess. The combatant who impresses the judges (by display of all the knightly virtues, including prowess) takes home the 'prize,' but the most *preux* combatant goes home with the best 'take' in semiprecious stones, cool coins and expensive cloth, to incorporate into their own and their consort's array.

"For those who do not have money, there are many services that can be given to allow anyone to carry out largesse. To offer a man at arms or a servant for an event is a great way for someone with limited funds to demonstrate largesse. This can be an especially nice demonstration if the giver is a person of rank who is willing to play 'servant for a day' --taking off coronets and white belt and dressing as appropriate to a servant of the recipient. This display of humility--willingness to act as appropriate to one's station (be it knight or servant) is also a commendable display of virtue. "While our organization stresses the other knightly virtues as well as prowess we do not have as clear a definition, nor as great an expectation in these areas. What we expect is only that a knight (or someone who wishes to demonstrate these virtues) does not display their opposite--not that they excel at displaying the virtue itself. By encouraging, and demonstrating excellence at other virtues, we 'raise the bar' on what can be expected in those areas."

--Lisa Lieder

Lady Sabina de Almeria, Middle Kingdom

"By buffeting his opponent in an attempt to disarm rather than to injure. Insisting on fair conditions among both participants at all times. Sparing a foe when down. It should be allowed at tournaments, but should be a matter of individual decision."

--David Jack Rosenberg

"It's been my experience that many fighters do demonstrate largesse in a list. For instance, a fighter may loan a weapon, shield, piece of armor, etc. when another has broken (or forgotten) his own. Furthermore, one combatant may allow another some slack instead of insisting on strict enforcement of the rules (such as allowing an opponent to change from a two handed to single handed weapon when wounded in the arm)."

--Albert Decker

Question #8: Do you think that victory is different in a pas and a prize tournament?

"The pas d'armes is focused on the entire play of the virtues of the different combatants. As long as all participating are intent on this focus, then victory is a very social event, from which all benefit. This focus can easily be lost sight of in an ordinary tournament, and if it is the goal of a common victory cannot be achieved."

Duke Finnvarr de Taah, knight, Middle Kingdom

"All victories are personal. Have I done better today than I have done before? Have I defeated today people I could not defeat before?"

Leifr Johansson

"Yes. I do. but only in a subtle way. As the editor says often enough, the spotlight is on you in all forms of combat. In the tourney, you can win (in the short term) by doubtful blow-taking, and the spotlight makes sure that all watching notice your behavior in the pas or round table format.. the combats exist specifically *for* the spotlight to pick things up. The judges, the ladies present, the royalty, are specially watching the combat to pick a winner based on virtue and behavior, so you can no longer win with doubtful tactics. The glory is in the winning, but the honor, as it is said, is in the losing, so you may stand more chance of winning if you take that killing blow with honesty!"

Lord Cormac the Traveller

"Good grief yes. In a prize tourney, the fighters are fighting often for the thing gained at the end, whether it be a brass goblet or a silver crown. The rounds are often seen as something to 'get through' rather than an experience to enjoy. The fighters who enter a Pas usually do not enter to be proven as the best fighter on the field, but to show off and have some fun. Pagentry is rarely too serious, and it's great fun to put on banners and strut around."

Lord William MacAndrew of Balnagowanmka

"Must be. I've never won a prize tournament, but I got a fish in a Pas once!"

--John Schmidt

"...The most memorable prize I have ever received was a small token ribbon I was given by one of the ladies of the gallery for my display of Chivalry on the field."

Lord Aubrey Gawen

"Yes, I have won in both formats and value the honor of 'winning' in the Pas more than any other. It has little to do with the prize but rather the honor of knowing that I had achieved the ideal that I aspire to even if for a brief moment."

--John Gahrman

"Yes. The winner of a prize tourney has displayed prowess - The winner of a pas has impressed the judges."

--Jan Frelin, Stockholm, Sweden

Hartmann Rogge, Shire of Holmrike, Nordmark, Drachenwald

"For many yes there is a difference, for myself I hope victory will always mean that I have given my best effort and energy and brought honor to myself, my consort, and my knight."

Lady Rhiannon o Hafan Gath

"The importance of victory in a pas would depend on the individual bout i.e. if a novice fighter beats a knight, as well as the way in which the bout was fought e.g. good calibration, good manners, etc. Victory in a prize tourney is tends to be of prime importance, with chivalry and courtesy an added bonus. I have many untidy or questionable bouts in a coronet tourney, but none so far in a pas." *--Darren Huett*

"I do believe the victory is different. I was able to participate in the pas at 30 year, and though there was no 'prize,' I felt that all the combatants were winners. I enjoyed the combat, and was not concerned about winning, but rather how i held myself."

Sir Gawain Velimere, West Kingdom

"No, Victory is the same, all the more sweet, however, when there is no expectation of reward."

--David Jack Rosenberg

Question #9: If a combatant is struck repeatedly with blows that are individually too light, should they accept defeat or not?

"If the blows were so light that none of them could hope to do damage to a reasonably armored opponent, even with a real weapon, then they should not be accepted. However, a series of only marginally light blows that repeatedly get through the opponent's defense probably should be accepted." **Duke Finnvarr de Taahe**

"It really depends on the situation on the field. I would suggest that if this was occurring to myself I would ask for a hold and parley with my opponent and the marshals. I tend to believe that combat on the field is a dialogue. The opponents and the marshals all need to be of the same understanding as to what are acceptable blows. This may mean adjusting ones blow acceptance to a safe agreed upon median."

Aleksandr Vasilevych Lev of Volynia

"That would depend on the mood and feel of the tournament. If they are trying to recreate a battle, then no. Why? If you were wearing chain mail, and were hit lightly, the chain would not be damaged. If however, you are attempting to assess your skill against someone else, whether you were hit lightly is (mostly) irrelevant. Did your opponent outsmart you? If yes, he (or she) has proven that their strategy overcame your defense. In a true test of strategy, actual contact is not even necessary. Of course, this only applies to intentional blows, not accidental slaps or incidental contact."

Ritter Tristan

"Yes, They are obviously unable to present a defense against the blow."

--John Gahrman

"If we go back to the earlier question about virtues and make the assumption that those virtues are of primary regard, then yes, defeat should be accepted. I would do so in any event."

Lord Talon the Black

"This is the question that actually convinced me to answer this poll. Yes. In fact, if a fighter hits me repeatedly in the same spot with light blows, I will take the fall. If he's good enough to target me that accurately, and I'm poor enough to allow it, I deserve to die. Besides, under SCA armor standards, that riveted chain hauberk is eventually going to give way under repeated light blows."

Lord Madoc Arundel

"No, but they should talk to their opponent during and after the fight."

Lady Rhiannon o Hafan Gath

"The question is not how hard you were hit, but were you beaten. As well as judging whether a shot was clean and unimpeded, I also try to ask myself whether the shot landed because of a fault in my technique e.g. if it is clear that there was no hope of putting my shield in front of the sword that hit me because I'd lost track of where it was, of course I'd take it."

--Darren Huett

"I have accepted defeat in a similar case. My opponent could obviously evade my defences, and sometimes it is better to err on the side of generosity. I would make a

point to speak with them afterwards about their lack of force--it may just be an old, mushy sword-- they do need to know that their lack of force on otherwise skillful blows creates a difficult choice for all their opponents!"

Sir Berach de Winterborne

"Good technique but light, or slop? I would the first, but not the second, on the grounds that, after all, I'm not defending myself properly if someone can hit me repeatedly."

Sir Dongal Ericksson

Question #10: Fighting in a tournament, you are struck by a very small opponent who cannot strike you any harder, yet you think the blow was still too light. What would you do?

"By definition (as demonstrated from the past), the very essence of chivalry is showing the world that you already have so much, that there is literally nothing you cannot afford to give away, in great measure or small. Thus, when facing a smaller, less gifted opponent who is physically unable to match your superior calibration levels, it is only right that you yield to a good, well-landed, though otherwise light, blow, in order to A) show yourself to be above the need for an easy victory, and B) encourage the other fellow, through your own generosity, to move to bigger and better efforts."

--Gary Bryers

"This is an interesting question because I could be on the other side of this problem. I am a 5'2" female, yet I have knocked people out and put some nasty bruises on people. I was trained to put a lot of body in my swing which allows me to hit pretty hard. Yet there are people out there who have judged me by my size and assumed that I 'must' hit light...and therefore could not kill them, sometimes even while putting some mean dents in their armor. Interestingly I have seen the same thing happen when a knight or long time fighter fights someone deemed of 'lesser skill.' This kind of self-delusionment is a sure path to dishonor.

"I believe that the first thing a person should do is to evaluate their own mindset and be sure that they are not making assumptions about the power or prowess of the other fighter. Another is to focus on the technique to see if the blows are being swung properly (i.e. not throwing wristy or tippy tappy blows). I don't believe that you should automatically take light blows from small people, on the other hand, a smaller person should not be expected to blow someone's helm off. I have seen many women fighters stagnate in their abilities because no one ever really encouraged them to use proper technique. I believe it is as much of a disservice to your opponent to take blows that are thrown with poor technique and too light, as to expect them to hit like a two ton bomb.

"While I hit well within the mid-range power normally, I cannot 'crank up' to nuclear power like some of the larger fighters I know. If the calibration is set too high, there is a chance I could not keep cranking up to meet it. One reason that I have often favored the short sword is that there is no power argument to a solid face thrust. It also puts me in extremely close where a large fighter can get entangled in his own weapons and shield and often will overthrow (where the blow hits me or my shield near the hilt with little power.) Basically, each fighter must adjust his or her style to what is best suited to them, both physically and mentally."

--Julie Adams

"I would use it as an opportunity to teach my opponent how to strike harder, if they desired it."
Midair MacCormaic

"Strike them a good blow. Fighting in a tournament, my exhaustion (due mainly to my large size and weight) does not allow me to strike a blow hard enough for my opponent to take. As a fighter, a martial artist, and a trainer of fighters, I have not yet met a fighter who could not strike a hard blow, were they using proper form. If necessary, they should strike into the eyes to show their skill."

Sir John Theophilus, West Kingdom

"Gladly accept defeat. I like the idea that we have a sport where individuals who at the moment may not have the athletic ability or strength to generate as hard a blow as me can still play. If I can encourage them by rewarding skill, rather than brute strength I am delighted."

Count Valens of Flatrock

"If the blow that landed had good form, and overcame by ability to defend against it, I would take it. I treat every opponent this way. I have no urge to foster the idea that we need to be beating each other up, and am full aware the power that is possible with good form. However, if their form is poor, and no more power would be possible, even by a stronger person, I would not accept the blow. I would also notify them of that, and offer to work with them on their techniques."

Ritter Tristan

"I would take the blow, and then commit myself to teaching them proper technique. If a 100 lb. person is hitting me as hard as they can, it is, without a doubt, a blow that I should take. If I did not feel it is good, I believe the problem is mine, not theirs. If my blow calibration is so high that a 100 lb. person cannot hit me hard enough, then it is time to re-evaluate my blow acknowledgment. I have erred if I hold to this calibration. It will bring me no honor."

Duke Conn MacNiell, knight, Middle Kingdom

"When fighting in a tournament (as opposed to a pas) there seems to me to be a need to count blows reasonably. In most cases if the blow is insufficient I will not accept it. This because there is no honorable way to allow an opponent to strike a blow and believe that it would be accepted in combat. There are a couple of moments when I would accept such a blow. First, if the blow was struck cleanly (either through my error or superior technique) in which case I tend to accept it as "death by embarrassment". Second, when I believe that my continuing would serve no purpose (for example if I am simply not fighting well enough to justify continuing). In the either case I will always make my opponent aware that they need to work on the force of their blows."

Master Korwyn Ariannad, Kingdom of Atenveldt

"Dependent upon circumstances, I might do one or more of the following: I might ask to recalibrate against the small opponent. If the combatant in question is someone already known to me, I will presume that we would have already dealt with the matter before the start of the lists for the tournament in question. If an opponent is someone I have not previously met, I would certainly expect to have seen them when the pairings were announced and, in the case of a smaller / weaker combatant would hope to have

had brief words either with the gentle in question OR someone who has faced him or her previously. I might inquire of my opponent (and possibly the marshalls, or even the chief noble currently observing the field) as to the circumstances of the blow.

"I would absolutely consider the accuracy and speed of the blow in question. (Note that I generally fight under the *personal* decision to accept blows as penetrating that others might consider insufficient, as one component of my persona-play. For example, I consider the area of and slightly beneath my armpit as non-armored, and will accept any reasonable blow landing in that zone. This is in keeping with my vision of my persona and the armor he would have utilized for the bulk of his career as a combatant. I would consider the number of blows previously attempted, their degree of accuracy and force. AND the type of weapon in use. Assuming proper control, etc.. I would generally expect to make some allowance for appropriately-scaled weapons. I expect that I would also be sorely tempted to use a tiny opponent's inappropriate weapons choices against him or her.

--Mike C. Baker

**Amr ibn Majid al-Bakri al-Amra
Barony of the Steppes, Kingdom of Ansteorra**

"I have in fact been struck light blows by smaller opponents who I felt could not strike me any harder. I did take the blow. The blows themselves were clean and sharp and did defeat my active defences. As such I felt that I had been defeated. I do not feel that I must be bruised to take a blow. I may also be influenced by many of the older members of my group who were around when the SCA was started in the area. They tell stories of 'the old days' when you didn't bludgeon your opponent as much as you out finessed him. I have noted a steady increase in blow calibration over the 10 years (on and off) that I've been fighting. I feel this is a result of 2 things:

"One: an increase in the quality and quantity of armour worn by fighters. Getting hit in my new stuff doesn't hurt near the way it did in my old armour. So I must be extra careful not to shrug off blows.

"Two: it's just so darn difficult to admit that that new guy with the athletic aptitude that I never had can whip my butt in no time flat after a few quick lessons. Could it be that as we grow older our hides get thicker to protect our frail and ageing egos?"

William Campion



QUESTIONS

1: *During the Hundred Years War, knights frequently burnt the villages, churches, and crops. How could a knight justify such acts?*

2: *Should a knight pay a ransom to a recreant knight?*

3: *There is often written in medieval chronicles references to the 'laws of war', yet no such laws have been discovered. Do you think they existed, and if they did, did they mean anything?*

4: *What should be done if a knight breaks the laws of war? What if a squire does the same? A man at arms?*

5: *What is 'chivalry' in the context of a real medieval war?*

5: *In war, a knight on the losing side calls for single combat--should it be granted by his opponents?*

7: *The medieval laws of war seem to be traditional rather than written. Do we have anything similar in the SCA or in your own recreation group? How do they work?*

8: *What is the finest expression of chivalry--courtesy or prowess--you have witnessed in War?*

9: *Should archery be practiced in recreated medieval wars? If so, how is the best done? If not, why not?*

10: *Does the chivalric code apply to those who are not Knights or who have early period personas?*

11: *What do you think an SCA war simulates? Where is it strongest? Weakest?*

CALENDAR

Earl Brion's Pennsic Pas d'Armes

Pennsic War	August 1996
Brian Price	415.961.2187

See the pages following for the declaration--a Chivalry Roundtable will follow the Pas later in the evening. This tourney will be held in the lists alongside the main battlefield on Friday, August 22.

Company of Saint George Fall Pas d'Armes

Although the final date has not yet been set, the Company of Saint George will hold a pas d'armes in late October or early November of 1997. Earl Brion celebrates his tenth year knighting at this pas, so it is our sincere hope that you will come and offer challenge. Several surprises are planned, so come join in the festivities!



FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF CHRONIQUE

- #17--War & Chivalry
- #18--Fighting Garments
- #19--Romantic images of Chivalry
- #20--The Crusades
- #21--Siege Warfare & The Chevauchee

Unto all mon of chivalry, whorher they be Princes, Dukos, Earlos, Viscounts, Barons, Knights, Squiros or simply mon of high ropute, doos Dion Thourbird, Earlo and Knight, send most humble greetings on behalf of the Right Noble Company of Saint George

Be it known that on the 22nd day of August, that being the Friday closest to the Feast of Saint Alexander, that the Companions of Saint George, assisted in their company by the Grand Company of the Peacocks and the newest tournament company, the Company of the Swan, does hereby declare our intention to seek glory and renown for both ourselves and our challengers in the lists on the grounds known as Pennsic. After this most noble encounter, in the evening, will follow a Round Table where matters of chivalry will be discussed far into the evening.

Item: The invocation for this pas d'armes will be held promptly at two in the afternoon, a brief ceremony and introductions preceding the fighting. Because gentles of great courtliness and prowess beyond counting will gather on the Pennsic fields, we have determined to structure this pas d'armes the "grand" style, that is to say that combatants and members of theillery are free to come and go at their leisure, though we hope to provide enough exercise for all who might attend through our enhanced numbers.

Item: In the tradition of the pas d'armes which the Company has striven through the years to encourage, several forms of fighting will be available, though it is our intention to encourage knightly virtue in all forms, neglecting neither prowess nor courtesy. We ask our noble challengers to bear only this in mind, to bring themselves and their raiment such that they do honor not only to the history of our ancestors but to the ideals for which they strove, and for which we have dedicated ourselves, however imperfectly.

Item: Combat will take place in several passes, each pass featuring a different form of knightly exercise in arms. Each challenger may participate in as many passes as there is time, but we would remind our zealous bretheren to lend consideration to those whose opportunities to fight have been lessened through circumstance.

Item: At approximately twenty minutes after two, following the reading of the rules and the introductions, there will be a grand mêlée in the field, single

broadwords only. Each combatant may be struck three times before retiring from the lists; we encourage the use of 'first blood' encounters.

Item: Following the grand mêlée, our challenger may array themselves against us for single challenges, to be fought with sword and shield, counting blows in the manner of St. George—that is to say the number of blows thrown to the number of five.

Item: Following these single encounters, there will follow a battle of Conroi, that is to say four companions at a time will meet a similar number of challengers in the field. The tenans—that is to say the defenders—will remain in the field, relieved only by other tenans—seeking only the renown that comes through a well fought bout. Each of these encounters will be to two blows received per combatant only.

Item: At four in the afternoon, combats over the barrier will commence, using poleaxes, counted blows in the manner of Saint Michael to the number of three. The defenders at this time present themselves once more for single challenges.

Item: There follows a surprise.

Item: Finally, at Twenty minutes to five, there will be a final grand mêlée fought over or around the barrier, using single swords, until the combatants tire or we reach five minutes of the hour. Then a final accounting of the day will be made in brief, invitations being extended for those to attend the Round Table discussion of chivalry topics we hope to run long into the night. Heralds will be sent with writs throughout the camp to insure that the specific items of the bans are made known to all who might attend; these writs should be available at the Main Gate and also on the pas field, attached to the lists in a rain-proof box. It is the sincere hope that the Company of Saint George might, in some small measure, provide enjoyment for those who would honor us with their presence this day. It is not important whether our opponents are great or small in stature or renown; what is important to us is that sincerity in the love of chivalry rule the day, it being believed by us that it this spark of life holds great value no matter where it is found, and it is our quest to seek as many such lights as we might find upon the fields called Pennsic.

Buon Thorndird ap Rhys, Earl, Chancellor

FIVE YEARS LATER

What the Company
has Learned
about the Pas
d'Armes



It has been just a little over five years since the *Company of Saint George* began using the pas d'armes as its primary tool for communicating what we believe to be true about tournaments of chivalry. Since that first October day, there have been more than a hundred such pas, each one different in flavor but similar in spirit; and it is this spirit, this celebration of the knightly ideal, that is the pas d'armes.

What is the pas d'armes? Basically it is a challenge tournament where one or more defenders—the *venans*—determine to hold a place in service to the ideals. The challengers—the *tenans*—answer the declaration or 'bans' and come to fight, to enjoy the company, to earn renown. The spectators—who we call the 'gallery', are more important in the pas: they may participate at various levels; I have seen them be spectators, judges, the ones to whom requests for leave to fight are made.

A pas is not about war or the darker side of reality: it is not an early tournament. It is a place where combatants gather to enjoy the company of others, celebrate the ideals to which they aspire, entertain the gallery (and thus bring them into the celebration as well), and

hone their skills against opponents of prowess and renown. As such the fighting at a pas should be more focused than a 'prize' tournament, although there is something of a rough kinship between the tone set in the better pas d'armes and the later rounds of a modern prize list.

A pas d'armes is different from a prize list, but it also shares many parallels. Indeed many people have commented that they would count it a good thing if prize lists were fought as cleanly as pas tend to be, yet that is not to say that they are any more hard-fought. Prowess, as the most visible knightly virtue, is important to earn renown in any fighting milieu. But the other knightly virtues—largesse, courage, loyalty, courtesy, humility, fidelity, faith, 'franchise'—and the duties of defense for the lord and for the weak and to justice, are more important elements of knightly renown. And the pas d'armes is successful at encouraging the participants to demonstrate their 'prowess' both in arms and in character. It is our hope that through the experience of the pas d'armes combatants might come to realize that in any chivalric martial encounter—anyplace a knight or nobleman might fight—that renown is the chief thing that is to be won. It is a rare thing these days for us to be defending life and property, so there should be no conflict whatsoever between

the great debate concerning ideals versus reality. Reality is what you make it, especially in the 'magical' lists of the tournament of chivalry.

The pas d'armes provides a place where combatants of all skills may participate regardless of their experience. I have seen combatants—on their very first day of competitive fighting—earn high accolades from combatants and the gallery alike. Likewise I have seen highly ranked nobles fail to capture the imagination of anyone. What is required to succeed in the pas d'armes is strength of character—and the tournament makes this very obvious. These same mechanisms are at work in a prize list—but most combatants aren't as aware of them because the 'prize' tends to distract them from the importance and endurance of renown.

To run a successful pas d'armes, focus is the pre-eminent quality. Nothing is more important—lose it and you have a practice. If the control is too tight, the pas takes on an air of artificiality, the life can be choked out of it. Focus must be held to the field, yet freedom must exist so that combatants may seize the opportunity to seize the moments as they arise—to conduct what I call 'knightly gestures', instances of chivalry that go beyond the expected and reaffirm everyone's belief that the ideal *does* exist. Such gestures are generally spontaneous, spur-of-the-moment affairs: a squire may present his opponent's lady with a token, a combatant might show up incognito, the introductions might have particular grace.

HERALDS can make a pas d'armes, especially if the combatants themselves are reticent to speak. But in the years I have been attending pas, observing and participating, the strongest ones were the ones where the combatants themselves spoke their own hearts. The heralds in this case were most helpful in keeping the pace of action rolling, in providing the pag-

eantry and infrastructure that enables the gestures we want to encourage. The heralds who speak the invocation and other ceremonies can focus the day as no one else can—so good heralds should be sought.

THE JOSO of the pas must also lend a strong vision and presence to the day to maintain this focus, to act with a well prepared plan and be flexible enough to seize the moments as they arise. There are two main mistakes to avoid—not enough planning, so the affair looks ill considered, or overtightly strangled, so in spontaneity is allowed. In both cases the pas will fall flat.

THE FIELD itself should help this focus. We have found that the list enclosure—a wooden fence—very helpful. The *Company of Saint Mark* and the *Tenans of Noble Folly* were the first companies to build such things, and it was immediately apparent that their value was priceless, although they are difficult to transport. We have provided a large gallery for the ladies that borders on one edge, with plans for two more at the ends of the field, one for the venans and another for the tenans. It is important, on the whole, to keep the two in their respective camps. Too many miscellaneous pavilions around the field lends to a cliquishness that is not conducive to focus. We intend to place benches in the main gallery to allow for even more gentles.

PHYSICS of the fighting is perhaps the most important thing for both spectators and combatants. Too much waiting will dull the focus, too much fighting without ceremony will slay it equally well. In the early pas there were a few isolated complaints concerning the quantity of fighting, though we have a new format that addresses this effectively. Essentially we intersperse grand mêlée with single challenges to insure that all get enough fighting. Some of the grand mêlées are timed affairs to really provide enough.

Through the years it has also become apparent that there are three different categories of pas d'armes, depending upon the different circumstances in which they were held. The first is the original one, what we have come to call the 'company' pas d'armes. This one is ideal for small numbers of defenders—say three to twelve—and up to twenty or twenty five challengers. It is not important to even the sides—in fact it is better to have the defenders outnumbered, because otherwise some folks will not be challenged.

ERRANTS PAS The next type is the very small, intimate format held by between one and five people. Little work needs to be done in advance, although preparation is always good. Essentially in this 'errants' pas d'armes, a herald goes about crying the camp for those who would meet the defenders, a place is selected, with perhaps a pavilion and refreshment offered. Pastoral sites work well for this. Combatants arrive as they may, fighting usually with a series of weapons—counted blows with axe, greatsword, and sword and shield, for example.

GRAND PAS The last type is the 'grand' pas d'armes, to be held when the number of combatants is expected to be high. Here the individual challenges and the transaction time necessary to get combatants ready for their next fights threatens the focus. What we have elected to do is instead of offering all forms of combat every 'pass', each pass features a particular weapon. The tenants may still challenge a defender of their choice, or a defender may be selected by the company to meet the challenge.

Combatants may choose a variety of different combat forms for the pas d'armes. In our first pas, we selected 'counted blows', regular SCA style encounters, group encounters, and fights over the bar-

rier. It became immediately apparent that there were two ways to do 'counted' blows, blows taken and received. I made a spot decision to go with blows thrown for the first pas, which we have come to call the "Saint George" method. The Company of Saint Michael, who held the first pas d'armes at Pennsic, chose the latter, and in their honor we call 'blows received' the "Saint Michael" style. In our CSG pas d'armes we generally have removed the group combats shield and replaced it with a Saint Michael shield—you can now challenge whichever way you want to.

You might choose to offer a prize for the combatants—some do; we in the *Company of Saint George* do not, but we sometimes bestow bronze tokens on those whose deeds have inspired us in hopes that they will continue their striving towards the ideal. I have also seen ribbons or some other token passed to the ladies of the gallery and the combatants, the tokens bestowed to combatants based on the individual perceptions. Lastly, do not underestimate the value of the compliment—or a gift given brought by you and bestowed upon someone who has earned your respect.

The most important thing you can do at the pas d'armes is to encourage sincerity. The heartfelt passions expressed by combatants as they introduce themselves and offer challenges inspires us all.



SAINT CRISPEN'S DAY
PAS D'ARMES

Sponsored by The Company of Saint George
November 7, 1992

Item: All combatants shall bear themselves with good grace, to advance the cause of chivalry rather than the base spirit of victory.

Item: Each combatant shall comport themselves bearing mutual responsibility for themselves and for their opponent. The safety of your opponent is your responsibility.

Item: All combatants shall hold themselves in their respective quarters, ready for combat.

Item: As the name of the challenger is read by the King of Arms, they should advance to Charlemagne's Tree of Shields and smartly sound one to indicate the type of challenge they desire. This done, they should advance to the Companion they would challenge and offer persuasive words to both the Companion and to the Gallery.

Item: The shield purpur shall indicate single combat, one against the other, with a companion of the attacker's choice. Weapons may be of a matched type or of different types, according to the wishes of the challenger.

Item: The shield argent shall indicate single combats at the barrier.

Item: Combats over the barrier will not allow strikes below the waist, and there will be no strikes with excessive force.

Item: The Companions have provide matched warhammers for those who wish to use them in the barrier fights. It was a common practice in the days of our ancestors for tenants to offer arms and armour to those challengers who required them.

Item: The shield azure is for single combats bearing 'counted blows,' tallied by the Knight of Honor and by each combatant, in the number of blows thrown to one, three five, or seven.

Item: Fights with counted blows were common during the times of our ancestors, so we encourage the attackers to try them today.

Item: The shield sable will indicate group encounters, equal numbers, with the attacker serving as Captain for his side and the chosen Companion as Captain for the other. Each captain may choose his own knights.

Item: In the group combats, there will be no striking from behind and only single-handed swords are allowed. "Killing" from behind is expressly forbidden as this is a cowardly act hardly appropriate for knights such as yourselves.

Item: There shall be no thrusts to the face, as this was not generally practiced in tournaments.

Finally: There is to be no single victory this day-the prizes of chivalry will be offered by the Companions and by the Ladies who shall watch our activities and offer their opinions as to which combatants advanced the cause of chivalry this day.

-Finis-

ARMING SQUIRES & SERGEANTS AT ARMES



You don't fight, you're not a consort, you don't take pictures or write chronicles—in short, you're not a consort, herald, or combatant: what is there to do at a pas d'armes or tournament?

Given that our nobility doesn't have the resource base of our medieval predecessors, there is generally a lack of available assistance around the list. Anyone who wishes to be close to the fighting, to help the event run smoothly, and to provide something of a more authentic feel might enjoy participating as an arming 'page', 'squire' or as an auxiliary herald.

The *arming squire* or *sergeant-at-arms* generally assists the upcoming combatants with their equipment, ensuring that they have everything they need to take to the field immediately upon the completion of the previous fight. The auxiliary herald works with the King of Arms or the Knight of Honor to see that the combatants are aware of when they fight and where. Both roles are critical to the smooth running of a pas d'armes, because much of the time in between fights can be saved if these offices are done well. They can add so much to the enjoyment of day for both the gallery and the combatants that I've decided to write about the opportunities in detail.



Features of a good pas d'Armes



The Company of Saint George

(Morgan Athery, Brion of Bellatrix, Robert Woodsende, Michael St. Sever, Colin de Bray, Brion Thornbird)

A piece of the troop, left to right

Front: Combats at the barriers, with poleaxes, seem to draw the most gasps from the combatants and gallery alike.

Below: Grand Melees are a common feature between 'passes', designed to give more fighting and late excitement for the gallery.



Occasionally someone will seize the initiative and succeed both in demonstrating prowess as we understand it and in capturing the essence of what romantic chivalry strove to encourage.



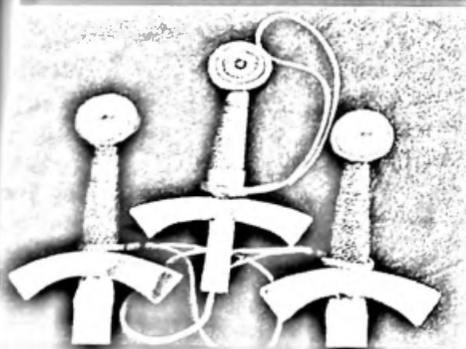
At the SCA's Thirty Year Celebration, the Company of Saint George hosted a Grand Pas d'Armes. To this pas came the CHEVALIER SAUVAGE, a knight in disguise who refused to reveal his name until met in the field. Viscount Sir Colin of the Company accepted the challenge, and proceeded to engage in a glorious demonstration of prowess.

True to his word, the bemasked knight then revealed himself as Duke Visivald, from the East Kingdom. He offered to his opponent the collar by which he had been led in, explaining that should he ever be needed, Sir Colin had but to send it and the Duke would come in all his glory.



Inspired by the power of the pas, many gentles go to great lengths in preparation.

The gentle pictured at right attended his first pas as an arming squire, vowing to attend the next as a combatant. He succeeded!



Beautiful surroundings go a long way to creating the special focus that makes a pas d'armes a success. While it is true that this beauty is found in the loving workmanship that make up many of the artifacts to be found around a pas list, what is truly important and lasting is the effect the pas itself—the reaffirmation in the strength of the ideals that holds the real treasure for combatant and spectator alike.



The Arming Squire

Medieval nobles, whether they were 'errant', traveling about on the tourney circuit or attending a tournament for attached to some other festivity (such as a wedding), always carried a retinue in tow. Knights generally held one or more arming squires, and together with other household servants these squires cared for the knights equipment, saw that the appropriate elements of arms, armour and raiment were present, and did the small last-minute errands required to keep the knight in the field or in the lists.

Since our squires are usually fighting, the Company of Saint George has begun to add two arming squires to our tournament retinue so that both our combatants and our opponents are ready to take to the field when called. It is a matter of courtesy—of largesse—we feel, to be able to offer such assistance to our companions in arms. And so courtesy is the first concern of an arming squire—they must attend to the requirements of the combatants as if they were guests in our home, which they are if they have taken the time to travel to the place of our challenge and offer their words and their swords for our pleasure.

Sergeants-at-Arms

In several 15th century manuscripts on judicial duels and tournaments a plaisance, mention is made of sergeants-at-arms who

are to be liveried according to the sponsoring nobleman, armed in a particular way, watching over the field that no rules are broken.

For our own encounters, where the pas d'armes takes place between 1350 and 1450, sergeants should be armed in a gambeson or shirt of the appropriate color, a livery houpende or other surcoat, matching hose, black shoes, a hat or light bascinet (or possibly a sallet) and poleaxes or spears. Alternatively these could be exchanged for long pennants, but the weapon should be one that simultaneously contributes to the staging of the field, to the pageantry, yet remains useful to the sergeant should be zealousness of the combatants threaten to spill the action a bit too close to the gallery for comfort.

Since we have used both terms to represent the same office, they will be referred to throughout this text interchangeably.

Quantity & Duties

In our pas d'armes two arming squires has been useful, one assigned to the 'tenans' (us, the defenders) and one assigned to the 'venans' (challengers). If we had more resources, we'd also add one assigned to the field, just in case, who would also bring any token we are offering forward to the companion as they finish their fight.

The arming squires should report either to the Knight of Honor (preferred) or to the King of Armes (possible) or to the Captain of the various teams (could work). I think this is really the purview of the Knight of Honor, since they are responsible for the courtesy and making judgments in order to support the desired tone of the even. Arming squires are their agents in this, under this model.

The squire should already know — or strive to learn — how armour is usually worn and how to fix the normal problems a combatant might have; putting on mitten gauntlets when the gloves are folded over, handling a shield — things of that sort.

The arming squire should ideally bear the livery of the sponsoring tournament company. In our case, we have some field houpelandes that live in our chest of regalia (quickly becoming a trailer) emblazoned with the Company badge. We would like to have matching 'lyrapipe' type hats, but these are as of this date incomplete. Their appearance on the field should do no dishonor to the reputation — the renown — of the company they represent, so they should appear as authentically clad as possible. Footwear is a common area where improvement can be made

Next, they should bear with them elements needed for basic field repair of weapons and armour, pri-

marily tape and leather thong, and should be familiar with the weapons the Tenans have to share with their challengers.

Arming squires should arrive early, before the start of the tournament, to assist our Steward (the St. George officer responsible for the tourney) in setting the lists, the galleries, the tree of shields, banners and pennants. They should then greet combatants as they arrive, checking to ensure that all of their equipment is in fighting order and is ready to use. They should introduce themselves and offer assistance, remembering that there are many combatants who might be in need of assistance. They should also check the 'loaner' gauntlets and the Company weapons (matched poleaxes, spears, etc.) to make sure that these are ready to go.

During the convocation, they should flank the King of Arms to provide color, and they should expect a final introduction at this point.

As the King of Arms prepares the list of combatants, the squires should make any last minute repairs needed to the equipment, standing ready to hear the challenges. As soon as the first three challenges are read, they should retire to their side in order to assist the combatants in preparing. When all of the challenges have been delivered, they must work in a flurry to insure that the first three combatants are pre-

pared. The third arming squire should post themselves next to the Tree of Shields, and having memorized the meanings of each color, hold themselves ready to offer tactful cues to the challengers as they strive to make their challenges smooth.

As the pace begins to quicken, the arming squires should see that the next fight that is to take place is ready—these combatants should be waiting on the side of the field, helmeted and armed, so that little time is wasted in between the fights. They should then go to the next combatants down the list who are yet unarmed, and help them to arm.

When helping a combatant to arm, the best technique is to introduce yourself if you haven't already, and then offer quiet assistance while the combatants seek to put on their helmet, shield, sword, mittens or any other bit of armour. Do not interfere if it is clear they don't want assistance. In this case it is best simply to step back a pace and wait to see if anything new arises that might require help. When the combatant is armed, go back to the challenge herald (or lists officer) and get the next fight, being careful to note the opponent, weapons, and form of challenge. This continues until the 'pass' or

'round' ends, at which point the squires should take a few minutes to refresh and rest themselves.

During the Grand Mêlées, the Arming Squires should take up the white batons and assist marshaling the field.

The third Squire, assigned to the field, should hand out tokens to the Companions as they complete their fights, and then assist them to remove their equipment from the field, unless their own squires are already assisting in this way.

Following the pas, the squires should once again flank the King of Arms, and then assist the combatants to pack their gear and haul it wherever it needs to go. There will be many warm words of thanks here; I believe that some gift is appropriate from the tourney company to the squire for their gift of service—indeed should I ever manage to meet such a squire in my errant travels to other pas, I would hope that I am gracious enough to offer them a gift myself for the great ease their service brings! Without the arming squires, you can certainly have a pas; however, the tourneys run smoother with them and the enjoyment for everyone is increased many times. ❖



CONCERNING THE FEAST

An excerpt
from the upcoming book

Pas d'Armes & Round Tables
Re-enacting Medieval
Feats of Armes

Brian R. Price
AKA SCA

Brion Thornbird ap Rhys
Earl & Knight, OL

West Kingdom



I cannot speak much to what food should be served at a feast, save that it should be edible and, optimally, medieval. What I can speak about are the things that should accompany a good feast, things that enhance the day's knightly exercise, setting the memory of the feats firmly in the minds of all who were present.

ENTERTAINMENT

All medieval accounts generally grant that the evening after a feat of armes should be accompanied with dancing and revelry; musicians and players, storytellers, jugglers and others can be employed both to keep the members of the gallery and the tired combatants occupied while those in charge of serving food make their preparations.

If dancing is to take place, we have had the most fortune arranging it so that it is done in between the pas and the feast. Everyone is too tired and drained after the feasting is done to have energy for dance. When hosting a multiple-day festival of arms, the Tenans of Noble Folly have put forward dancing after the first day's helmschau, a fine tradition that seems to work well.

For the other entertainments, the host should use care to arrange them so that they atmosphere of the feast, which should continue the 'magical' atmosphere of the day, does not shatter the delicate tone. Songs, stories and performances should be in keeping with the theme and intent of the day. Songs of chivalrous deeds, modern and historical, are especially appropriate. Stories, sometimes read from historical passages or romances, are extremely helpful. These elements can take place in between the removes of food to

maintain momentum and discourage excessive small talk that in turn creates small knots of gentles.

RECOUNTING DEEDS

One of our more successful traditions, taken from the *Order of the Star's* 14th century example, is to recount the deeds of our fellow combatants. We in the *Company of Saint George* tell of things we have seen during the day that impressed us, many of the companions rising in turn to praise one of the gentles who challenged us during the day. Sometimes a companion will offer something else; a poem, story, or song appropriate to the evening. The feasts that accompany our pas are quasi-solemn events, part of the magic as we continue to celebrate knight-hood into the evening. Anyone else who wishes to speak is so encouraged; often many sincere sentiments are put forward, sparking the magic we strive for. We in the Company also have small etched bronze tokens, or rings, that we sometimes offer to gentles we believe to have acted with exceptional chivalry; these are often given out accompanying the praises. One other thing that we do also is to have the newest Companion read the Charter of the Company. This document, reproduced on page 59, has the effect of causing introspection and consideration, perfect for what we generally do next.

QUESTIONS OF CHIVALRY

Following the reading of the charter, a companion will generally offer, for everyone's consideration and discussion, a question pertaining to chivalric conduct. These questions, partly inspired by Geoffry de Charny's *Demands Pour La Joute, Le Tournois et Le Guerre*, stimulate a public discussion that is often both entertaining and inspirational. Such a question might be: "What is the most important virtue to the knight?" or "When does a knight's duty to protect his liege lord end?" These things make for very lively debate.

CEREMONIES

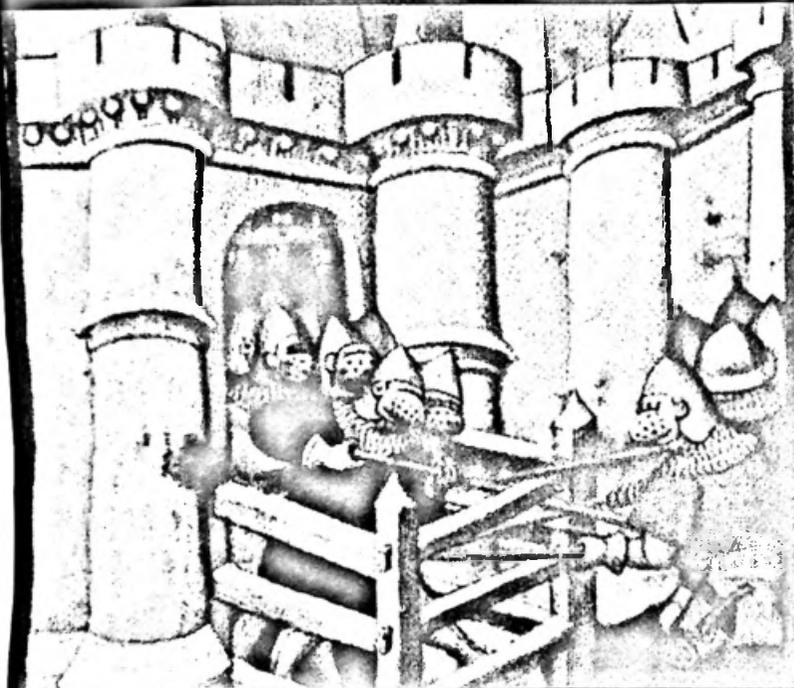
In our own pas d'armes, we generally conduct the ceremony where we make new companions either after the praises or after the questions, preceded by a short talk about what the company means and what it seeks to accomplish. This ceremony is solemn but moving.

PRESENTING PRIZES / TOKENS

Lastly, prizes can be presented by the ladies, if such is intended; make a production of it, especially if it is a surprise!



FIGHTING OVER THE BARRIER



ONE OF THE MOST DELIGHTFUL
TOURNAMENT FORMS!



Since the 14th century, knights have fought over barriers in combats à plaisance. During the late 15th and 16th centuries, the enjoyment of barrier fighting had secured it a central place in the later pas d'armes and festivals characterizing. By that time, special armour had been created to defend every conceivable vulnerability in the Royal patrons who fought on such illustrious fields as the cloth of gold.

The earliest reference I can find for barrier fighting are the encounters fought in the break of a siege during the Hundred Years War. There are several written references, but the most descriptive is the illumination

found in the British Library Mss. Harley 4431 f150 (left). Here we can see the knights engaged in a siege fighting a plaisance over a barrier erected over a sally port. This development probably came about because of abuses of the earlier tradition of knights meeting one another in jousts even though they were on opposite sides of a siege.



Another Mss. reference. this time we see the barrier while vicious fighting takes place over the walls. (British Library Cotton Nero E II pt. 2f. 166)

There are even records of knights tourneying and then returning to their formal roles as besieger and besieged. On at least one occasion during the 13th century, the knights sallied out to tourney with their opponents, more of the sieging

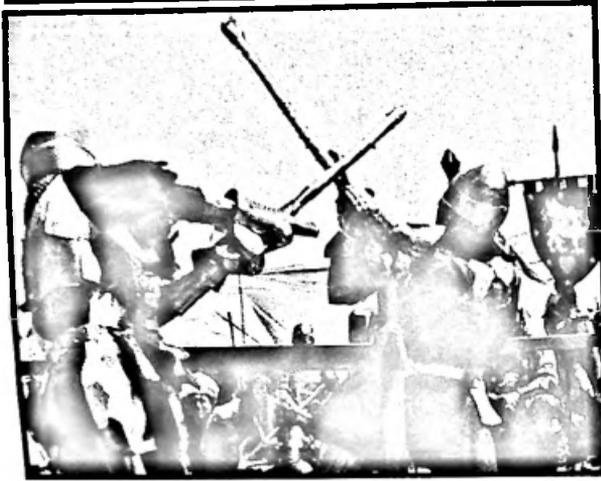
knights took advantage of the situation and rode in and took the castle. So it might have been something like this that started the long, and extremely pleasurable history of fighting over the barrier.

In the 14th century manuscript, we can see that all the knights are similarly armed and armoured. All have the hundsikul bascinets, flowing surcoats, and spears of more or less uniform length. All wear surcoats, and have transitional style arm and leg defenses. In this illustration (there is one other but I couldn't locate it in time for this issue) there are no wounds; the knights are playing with one another as teams.

Role of the Barrier in the Pas d'Armes
 Recall that the pas d'armes is in part a celebration of knighthood and chivalry that takes place upon the stage within the lists. Fights over the barrier, though mostly a phenomenon later than most references to the pas, (but not all!), serves several functions.



Manfred von Halstern engages Josselyn Ferch Rhys at a Company of Saint Michael Pas d'armes at the Pennsic War.



Without doubt fights at the barriers have been some of the most acclaimed of all pas d'armes I have had the pleasure to attend. notice the very strong focal point between the combatants--its easy for the gallery to follow. Good fights at the barriers are not static, but are dynamic and hard fought.

First, the barrier serves to focus attention and anchor the combatants in a place for the convenience of the gallery and the other combatants. Second, it offers a physical barrier between the two combatants so that the temptation to grapple and roll about are not easy to accomplish, thus keeping a measure of cleanliness in the fights. Third, it is an unusual style as SCA fights tend to go, and brings interest to the gallery. It also brings interest because the poleaxes, greatswords and other unusual weapons make for an entertaining, flashy presentation, encouraging the combatants to use weapons they might otherwise neglect. And lastly, its a great deal of fun.

I have seen pas d'armes conducted where all fights are done over the barrier, but in my mind these are not as entertaining and effective as those where the barrier fights comprise only some of the fights. Variety is required to

satisfy both combatants and gallery. I have seen an entire 'pass' or 'round' conducted over the barrier, grand mêlées and single combats, and the barrier offered as a choice alongside or combined with counted blows, traditional scoring techniques, or other forms.

Appropriate Weapons

Virtually all knightly weapons—the mace, axe, dagger, all varieties of sword, poleaxe, and spears can be used effectively over the barrier. Combats using a shield tend to be rather tedious, but I have seen it done effectively. Without question, however, the poleaxe is by far and away the most popular form, followed shortly by spear. In the pas d'armes we have hosted in the *Company of Saint George* and at Pennsic Wars, the knight challenged to a fight over the barrier is generally very pleased with the opportunity to demonstrate or expand his prowess in the encounter.

Usual Rules

In most cases, the rules of engagement over a barrier are *à plaisance*, so there are usually no thrusts to the face, and often no thrusts at all (except with spears). This is most decidedly not always the case, but you should expect it and clarify in advance which rules are in play.

The barrier should be secured to the ground.



Also, blows to the hip or below are often termed 'foul' or 'illegal' and thus not counted. Avoid striking your opponent if this is the rule; if you do strike him thus you must make some gesture to recover your newly lost renown.

Armour for fighting with the Poleaxe

Excellent gauntlets are desired; but they armourers who create such pieces are few and far between, so in most instances you must find yourself a pair that are as safe as

possible, a pair that sort of look period but that have a good chance of defending your hands against missed blows. Remember that no pair of gauntlets is as good as a mediocre basket at defending your hand, so the important thing in pole work is not to block with the hand. The gauntlet is there to provide a last ditch defense should you err and impose it between you and the hard shaft of your opponent's weapon.

On the subject of armour, shoulder defenses are highly recommended. Many poleaxe blows skim along the side of the helmet, nicely directed into your shoulder. These blows, if they land with force, should always be considered a kill—and you may be able to use that arm later in the day if you are wearing spaulders or a similar defense.

A Period Source for Poleaxe fighting

Without question the finest fighting manual available for poleaxe fighting is the *Jeu de la Hache*, the Game of the Axe, written in the 15th century. This manuscript has been ably studied and presented by Professor Sydney Anglo, but it is difficult to find. It is my be-



At the larger events, the pas must be structured differently to allow for the flood of combatants who may attend. This one was the first Pennsic Pas held by the Company of Saint Michael.



Keeping centered and focused are important ingredients to prowess at the barrier.

lief that this manuscript details maneuvers frequently used in judicial duels rather than in tournaments and pas d'armes, but the techniques shown demonstrate a wide range of maneuvers useful to the re-enactor who wishes to improve their skill with the weapon.

Fighting Technique

I will discuss here the techniques used when fighting with my most favorite weapon for these feats of armes – the poleaxe, ignoring the others for considerations of space. I do enjoy the other forms, but an entire *Chronique* on this topic is probably out of the question!

In grasping the poleaxe, you must first look to your stance. Your body should be centered over your feet, your back perpendicular to the ground, your hips loose and ready to pivot. Your feet should be perhaps shoulder width apart; either leg can lead toward the target, though I tend to prefer leading with the overhand foot. (I'll describe that a bit later).

Your grip on the weapon should not be deathly tight, but nor should it be over loose. Either case will bring you disaster, from stiffness and immobility on one hand to defenselessness on the other.

When you take your stance with the poleaxe, you may either point it at your opponent, often used when thrusting is allowed, or raise it so that the point is up. Be sure that your balance is well set and that your weight in on the inside of the foot, else you might well throw your weight too far when starting a blow.

Blows with the poleaxe or spear are in face thrown much in the same way as a sword blow is, from the hips. Balance and focus are paramount to good, crisp form, as with all weapons.

With the point raised, the lower hand works as a pivot and the upper hand directs the blow. The force of the blow comes from the body dynamic, not from the arms; they merely direct the poleaxe to the target. With two hands spaced

shoulder width apart on the shaft, great precision is possible.

Most of the blows thrown in a barrier fight with poleaxes are thrown vertically, because the barrier removes the hips as a target and because your opponent's defense generally leaves strikes from the top straight down open more than any other blow. If hip blows are disallowed, take great care in slashing for the body; it is very easy for a blow to strike the hip and a foul will thus be committed, to your discredit and embarrassment.

To defend against similar blows thrown by your opponent, it is important to parry with the whole body. When you move, twist your hips completely so that kinetic potential remains in your body. The hips should act as a spring, coiled and ready to strike both when you are on guard and when you have completed a parry. This is done to allow an immediate riposte — almost always a good idea when fighting with a single weapon. Do not allow your oppo-

nent to seize the initiative or the fight will likely go his way. Sometimes blows can be deflected, and this provides a prime opportunity for a counterstrike — but you must act quickly.

Should thrusting be allowed, you will find that this is a very efficient method. Aim the point directly at your opponent, ready and prepared to strike, being careful to avoid illegal targets such as the face. When dealing with SCA poleaxes, you will find that it is possible to block an opponent's thrust simply by catching it with your own weapon. A better maneuver is to deflect the thrust such that it passes you by, allowing you the chance to strike with a good chance at success because it will take your opponent several 'beats' to recover.

There are two other techniques that you will commonly see in a fight at the barrier in a pas d'armes. The first of these two involves trapping the opponent's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 64

You don't see 'flourentine' in the pas very much, but it does show that virtually any weapon's form will work at the barrier.



OFFERING A CHALLENGE

Michael Truffa

aka sca-Alfonso d'Strada

First, I would like to make clear that I don't consider myself a master of the challenge, not even close. But there is simply not much written about challenging, and so I thought that what little I could write about it would be interesting and helpful. I hope you find it both!

--Alfonso d'Strada



While many fighters are familiar with issuing challenges, many more are not. Typical SCA tourneys have fixed match-ups or bouts selected by the list officer and therefore they rarely require you to challenge an opponent (although there's no rule against being stylish and exchanging challenges with your preselected opponent anyway). In contrast, tourneys in a more period style most often do involve delivering some type of challenge to each opponent. Challenges are central to the pageantry of the tourney, are an opportunity to display courtly skills, and start the tourney off well, with a focus on honor and comaraderie.

Issuing a decent challenge is not really very hard, it can be as simple and short as you are comfortable with, or as ornate and flowery as one can manage. A Challenge in general may be broken into four parts, which are: You, your Opponent, the Combat, and the Reason. You can't have a challenge without the first three. You can make a challenge without the fourth, a specific reason, but the reason is usually the part that gets the most attention. Each of the four parts can be long or short to match your needs, and they don't have to be in any particular order.

The Four Parts

YOU: In shortest form, it should include not only your name, but any titles (Lord, Master, Sir, Baron, etc.) appropriate for the tourney field. In some kingdoms it is customary to use only titles gained by combat, but in many kingdoms the distinction is not made and you should use your primary titles. In longer form, you can include things like: where you live, what offices you hold, descriptions of what you've done or places where you've been. Usually, you add descriptions to support your reasons you plan to use. No fancy reasons, no need for fancy descriptions.

YOUR OPPONENT: The way you name your opponent should match the way you named yourself. If you were short and to the point with your name, you can be short and to the point with your opponent's name. As a matter of courtesy, you should try to make sure you know and use their appropriate titles; it can be modest to omit yours, but it's usually a bit rude to omit theirs. Just like with your name, you sometimes add descriptions to this section to match the reasons you are going to give later in the challenge.

THE CHOICE: This is usually an easy part; once you know the weapons form and combat conventions that you want, you just say what they are. Examples are: 'to single combat with the weapons of choice', 'to combat with single sword to a count of three blows', 'to duel with spear until either is first bloodied', etc. For many events, especially period-style tourneys, the range of acceptable combat styles and conventions has already been decided and you only need to pick from among those choices.

THE REASON: This is the part that can get really fancy, but it doesn't have to be. For the most part Reasons can be divided into three groups, easy reasons, reasons of honor and reasons of arms. Easy reasons are ones that you really don't have to think up (bonus pts: Aristotle would refer to these as non-artistic reasons). If you're fighting to see who will be Lord Defender, then saying 'to combat for the right to stand as Lord Defender' is pretty darn easy. Likewise, if you're challenging someone because you're the Baroness' Champion, 'for the honor of Her Excellency' is pretty easy too. And fighting for 'the joy of honorable combat' is no great reach either since we all pretty much know that. But just because they're easy doesn't mean they're not useful; they can be the bread and butter of a long day with lots of challenges to be made. Still, when you'd like to hear a few murmurs and ahhs from the gallery, you'll want to add in a bit more.

Reasons of honor often mean combat to honor a particular person or group: your Lady or Lord, your Baroness, your Barony or Kingdom, etc. Something along the lines of 'to noble combat that I might honor my Lady and by doing so honor all Ladies' is not only period but is a good idea. Reasons of honor can also involve drawing attention to a particular virtue such as charity, camaraderie or courtesy. In

fact you can easily fight 'in honor' of a given virtue: 'to combat in the spirit of friendship'. Looking into and thinking about the classic chivalric virtues is an excellent way to both develop good challenges and develop personal virtues. Certainly, the easiest way to find reasons of honor is to think about why you're fighting and why you would be proud to fight.

Reasons of arms include combat meant to test one's skill, strength, or endurance such as 'to five landed blows with the great-axe that we might prove our strength and hardiness'. These reasons can easily be made to sound a bit more Barbaric than Chivalric which can be an advantage depending on the tourney or your persona. Reasons of arms can also involve learning new skills. Many fighters new to period tourneys have done well to challenge their likewise new friends 'to combat at these 'barriers' that we might increase our knowledge and skill'.

Speaking of reasons, it may also be appropriate to state what things are not your reasons. You may want, and should well be able, to make clear that you are not motivated by pride, greed or malice. In period, denying these motives was not uncommon for written challenges, which certainly make sense when the knights of neighboring, but not always friendly, regions might meet. Likewise, as you've traveled from region to region, you've no doubt noticed that a little modesty and caution can go a long way when you're a stranger.

Some Other Points to Consider

It doesn't need to be different each time. An occasional nifty challenge will do you credit, but any one fighting a dozen or more fights in an afternoon will be hard pressed to give a truly different challenge each time,

and then, next week, another twelve completely new ones! Making every challenge different is not a realistic goal, and you don't need to hold yourself to it. It doesn't need to be original. It is a very period practice to emulate or adapt a challenge you have heard or read about. The modern focus on originality is, in large measure, just that: modern. Period attitudes tended to look to ancient authority and tradition much more than we do and period romances are an excellent source of material. While it's wrong to claim that you made up a particularly nice challenge that you actually found in a book or heard while traveling, it's entirely period to modify it for your own use.

Challenge *by insult*, while common, is not the best choice for most events. Referring to your opponent's body odor, ugliness, or fondness for farm animals are all examples of challenge by insult. They can be a real hoot at the right time and place, but they are too often overused. There is a thin line between being a hoot and being tasteless. After a few rounds of challenges by insult, that line is usually crossed despite everyone's initially good intentions. Most of our tourneys are meant to recreate honorable combat among nobles and friends. Finding honorable reasons to fight is harder than making an insult (that's why they're called 'cheap shots'), but it is a credit to the challenger and reflects well on the Society.

Just like anything else, making Challenges becomes easier with practice. No one was ready to win a tourney the day they first tried on armor, and very few are ready to spout challenges off the top of their head the first few times they enter a challenge tourney. If you're not big on giving challenges, you don't need to spend a lot of time on them, but just as a well-rounded fighter should be moderately proficient with a range of weapons, they should also be able to comfortably deliver a challenge now and then.



A 15th century Pas d'Armes

ENGEURRAND DE MONSTRELET

C. 1443

During the duke of Burgundy's residence in that duchy, several gentlemen of his household, with his permission and for his amusement, had it proclaimed through out Burgundy, and in other countries, that if there were any men of name desirous of gaining honor and renown by deeds of arms, there were gentlemen, whose names shall be presently declared, who offered to receive and furnish them with arms suitable for the enterprise. The challenges shall likewise be mentioned that were dispersed through diverse countries for this purpose by Sir Pierre de Bauffremont, lord of Chargny, who was the chief of the enterprise.

In honor of our Lord, and of his most glorious mother, of my lady Sainte Anne, and of my lord St. George, I, Pierre de Bauffremont, lord Chargny, of Monliet and of Montfort, knight, counselor and chamberlain, to the most high, most puissant and most excellent prince the duke of Burgundy, make known to all princes, barons, knights and esquires, *sans reproche*, with the exception of those in the kingdom of France and of the countries in alliance, or subjects of my said sovereign lord, that for the augmentation and extension of the most noble profession and exercise in arms, my will and intention is that in conjunction with twelve knights, esquires and gentlemen, of four quarterings, whose names follow—Thibault lord of Rougemont and Mussy, Sir William de Bresremont lord of Sees and of Sonnignon, William de Brene lord of Mombis and of Gilly, John lord of Valengon, John lord of Rap and and Tirecourt, William de Champdivers lord of Chevigny, John de Chiron lord Rancheineres, Antony de Vaudray, lord of Aille, William de Vaudray lord of Callaon, James de Challant lord of Ainville, sir Amey lord of Espirey, and John de Chavigny—to guard and defend a pas d'armes, situated on the great road leading from Dijon towards Exonne, at the end of the causeway from the said town

of Dijon, at a great tree called Hermit's Tree, in the form and in the manner following.

"In the first place, two shields (one sable besprinkled with tears of gold and the other violet having tears of sable) shall be suspended on the tree of the Hermit, and all those who shall, by a king of arms or *pursuivant*, touch the first shield, shall be bound to perform twelve courses on horseback with me, or with one of my aforesaid knights or esquires, with blunted lances.

Item: If either of the champions, at any point during their twelve courses, be unhorsed by a direct blow with the lance on his armour, such person, thus unhorsed, shall present to his adversary a diamond of whatever value he pleases.

Item: The champions may arm themselves according to their pleasure, double or single, but without any wicked intentions, having the rest similar to the usual custom in war.

Item: Each person shall make provision of lances—but the rondelle, which shall lie in the hands, shall be only four fingers broad, and no more.¹

Item: The lances shall be of similar length, from the point to the rest.

Item: For the accomplishment of these feats of arms on horseback, I will supply all who may come without lances, precisely like to my own and to those of my companions.

Item: These deeds of arms on horseback shall be formed *à la taille*, which shall be six feet high.²

Those princes, barons, knights and esquires, of the rank aforementioned, who shall rather take their pleasure in performing feats of arms on foot, shall touch the violet shield, and shall perform fifteen courses with battle-axes or swords, as may be most agreeable to them.

Item: If, during any of these courses, any champion shall touch the ground with his hand or knees, he shall be bound to present his adversary a ruby of whatever value he pleases.

Item: Each champion shall be armed with the accustomed armour for combating in the lists.

Item: Should any person be unprovided with battle-axe or sword, I

will furnish him with the same, similar to my own or to those of my companions. These axes and swords are not to have anything extraordinary in their make, but such as are usual in these kinds of combats.

Item: He that shall have engaged himself to fight with me, or any of us, and shall throw the other to the ground, the person thrown shall surrender himself a prisoner withersoever the conqueror shall order him.

Item: The person thus made prisoner shall pay for his immediate ransom, to whomsoever the conqueror shall direct, any sum above five hundred crowns.

Item: Foreigners need not ask for particulars from me, or from my companions, for they will find persons ready to deliver such at the usual hours and places.

Item: No stranger will be permitted to enter the lists with me or with any one of my companions, for more than one course at arms, namely, once on horseback and once on foot—and no one can require more of any of us during the present undertaking.

Item: The aforesaid feats of arms, on horseback and on foot, shall be performed on the following days; those on horseback on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays—those on foot, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays.

Item: The pass d'armes shall commence on the first day of July, in the year 1443, and shall last forty days, exclusive of feast-days and Sundays, and the feasts commanded to be kept by the Court of Rome.

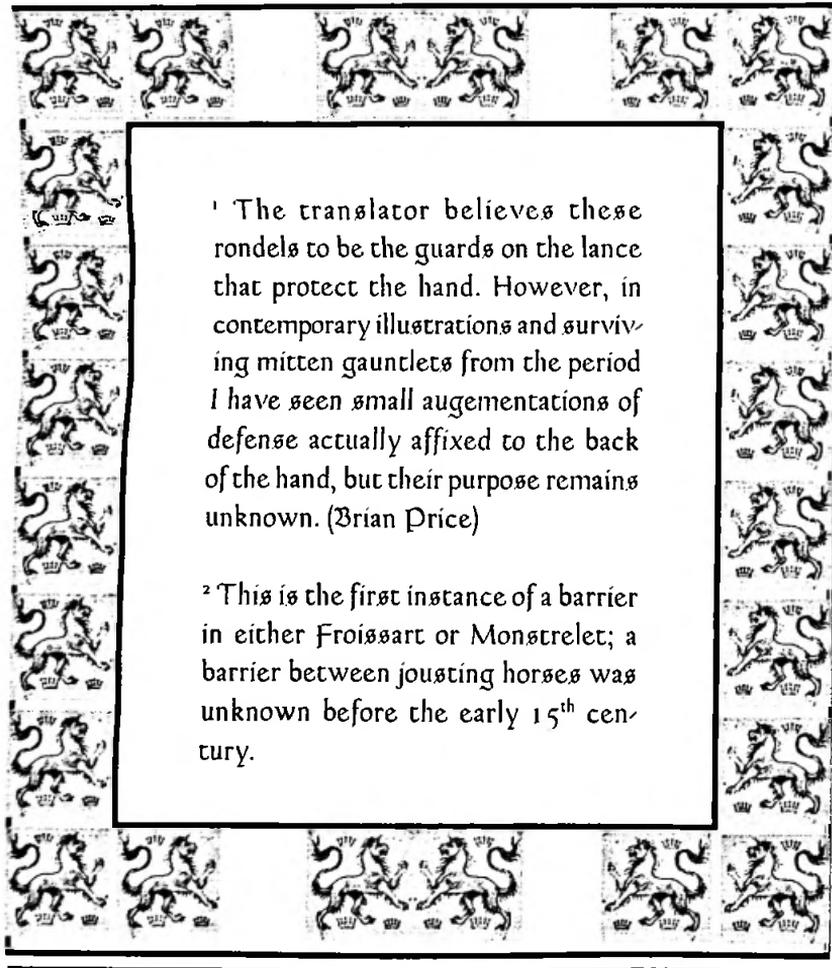
Item: No prince, baron, knight or esquire shall pass within a quarter of a league of the spot assigned for these combats without entering the lists and taking part, or otherwise leaving as pledges his sword and spurs, according to his pleasure.

Item: For the accomplishment of these feats of arms according to the articles specified, I have most humbly supplicated and entreated my aforesaid sovereign lord, that he would grant me this license and permission to perform them, which he has most benignantly assented to. He has likewise most graciously appointed, as judge of the lists, that puissant prince and my most redoubted lord the count of Nevers and of Rethel, and, in his absence, the lord marshal count of Fribourg and of Neuschâtel.

In order that my intention of performing these feats of arms in the manner before specified may be more fully declared, I have affixed my seal to these presents, and signed them with my own hand, this 8th day of March, in the year 1442.

Item: I beseech all princes, barons, knights and esquires not to construe this my intention as proceeding from any presumption on my part; for my sole motive is to exalt the noble profession of arms, and to extend the exercise of it—and also to make acquaintance by arms with such renowned and valiant princes and nobles as may be pleased to honor me with their company.

Item: All noble foreigners shall have sure and loyal passports from my aforesaid sovereign lord, or in his absence, from the marshal.



¹ The translator believes these rondels to be the guards on the lance that protect the hand. However, in contemporary illustrations and surviving mitten gauntlets from the period I have seen small augmentations of defense actually affixed to the back of the hand, but their purpose remains unknown. (Brian Price)

² This is the first instance of a barrier in either Froissart or Monstrelet; a barrier between jousting horses was unknown before the early 15th century.

ERRANTS

&

RENOWN

in the
The Company of Saint George

Brian Price
Chancellor, CSG

On several occasions noble gentlemen have brought the questions: "What is it that errants of the company and other gentles need to acquire to admit them to the company? What do we expect of errants? What is this renown, and isn't it too fuzzy to make a qualification for membership? How are errants taken into the Company?"

The Company of Saint George was conceived of as a vanguard of sorts, bringing a specific vision to the larger SCA culture, an example of how we think these tournaments should be and how we believe tournament combatants should behave. We believe that virtuous conduct is important, that authenticity is more important than the mainstream SCA holds it, and that we must demonstrate these beliefs through our

own examples and through the improvement of these examples.

Initially, we created the office of Errant to allow any interested person to help us in these goals. The errant was never really a well-developed concept; the Company was very young at that time and this effort at broadening our base of support and those who we would watch and coach failed, undeniably. We tried individual coaching, general attachment to the company, but nothing worked. The term errant implied a course of study and devotion which he did not have and to which we were unable to dedicate ourselves given the constraints of time and location. The noble gentles and ladies who stepped forward to be errants spoke with passionate eloquence, reinforcing our beliefs in our own goals. But for more than three years they received little attention.

I spent many hours thinking about how he might address the errant "issues." There was active debate within the company concerning whether we should even have errants, and if so, what we should do with them. In September, 1995, we held a great Convocation at which many issues were discussed. We reorganized ourselves to continue our travels on a slightly different road, intending to take a more active and visible approach vis a vis the SCA at large. We invited errants and companions alike, as well as some interested but uncommitted people.

The meeting went well, and the errants themselves persuaded us to keep the office, but to FIX IT!

Speaking with one of our brighter errants, I hit upon what I thought was perhaps the most important issue—renown. It is what we expect companions to have, and errants to strive for. With this in mind, Michael St. Sever, another founder of the Company, suggested the name "errant" in passing. It stuck, and the whole concept of the "errant" and of the required "renown" was cemented together. I believe this will solve many problems, ranging from perceptions and expectations to missions.

As it says in the Great Charter of the Company, to become a companion you must adhere to the maintenances of the charter (and the ordinances), that you will be known to the Company for these things. What this means in practice is that you, as an errant or other person interested in the Company, must seek the renown such that you will bring fame to yourself for emulating the things the charter says we cherish.

WHAT IS RENOWN?

And what is renown? Renown is honor earned and attached to your reputation by chivalrous activity. Essentially you must become well known for the knightly virtues—prowess, courtesy, courage, loyalty, largesse, franchise, humility, justice, faith, forthrightness and the duty of defense. In particular the ones

that the Company values highly—courtesy, franchise, faith and humility. We believe that these are harder to achieve than are prowess, loyalty, or even courage; although you must have all of them in some measure. We expect Companions to be especially strong in the particulars; franchise—to look and actually be a knight rather than acting the role; courtesy—and sincerity in the delivery of courtesy on and off the field; faith—in chivalry, in knighthood, in your fellow Companions and in the belief that there is more going on in the tournament than a simple exchange of blows; and humility—the ability to balance confidence and pride with respect and wisdom—and above all the avoidance of the poison of vainglory. In a philosophical sense, this is renown as the Company intends it.

Practically, renown is being famous for looking and acting like a knight at all times. Revering authenticity and being known as a champion of chivalrous conduct over the 'sporting' mentality that has taken hold of large segments of the SCA membership. You must be the person that people seek out to fight, time and time again, because you are fun to fight. This is a key; it is the barometer by which we measure ourselves and our members. And it holds, no matter how refined the skills. We expect our Companions to be known for clean fighting, for unquestioned blow calibration (this requires a measure of humility and respect in giving the maximum benefit of

the doubt to your opponent, assuming that they are a knight (small k) until they prove otherwise). It is a good deal to ask, and we recognize that we are hardly perfect. But the other Companions have made the judgement to accept the others on the basis of this judgement, and we are subject to their scrutiny and ultimately to expulsion should we fail to meet these expectations to the minimal level. To have earned a reputation, the renown, for the same is what we ask of our errants.

WHY THE NAME ERRANTS?

We think the name errants is evocative of the Knight Errant. In romantic literature, young Knights Errant would go off into the world, selecting quests of their own devising, those imposed on them by others, or just wandering to win glory and fame in the cause of a lady or simply to win knightly renown. We charge our errants to follow the examples of Parsifal, of Eric, of Tristan, of Lancelot. We want our errants to do the same thing--to go off into the world seeking their knightly fortunes.

They can do this in any way they wish, with as much or as little guidance as they request. Our Chancellor is an officer especially devoted to assisting the errants and companions in their quests and their education, both about history and about the SCA world in which we practice our chivalry. We charge the errants, under their

own power, to go out and earn that reputation that will liken them to the other Companions. Or, we invite them to remain as errants for an extended period, associating themselves with the Company but maintaining a more distant relationship. Errants will be invited to speak of their travels, their accomplishments and observations, at Company feasts and convocations. Not as testimonials, but rather as chivalric enrichment for themselves and for this company, gathered as we are to celebrate and encourage high medieval chivalry.

The Chancellor of the Company will maintain a library of source material from which the errants are free to choose. They might take part in discussions with the Ecole de Chevalerie, where we will read works important to students of chivalry. Or, they might simply gain a list of works to discover on their own. Or, they might request a series of challenges from the company, to be arranged by the chancellor. Or, they might have nothing to do with the office of Chancellor and strike out completely on their own.

WHAT SHOULD AN ERRANT DO?

An errant should seek to do two things: to seek the renown discussed above, and to make themselves known to the company. We hope that they will attach themselves to one of our Company officers, so that the work of the company might become known to them and that

ances that be in accordance with his conviction that neither shame nor stain shall befall the company. And that he shall accept such guidance and counsel in regards to the above as seems meet unto the same.

Also that every companion shall endeavor to better himself in his use of arms and in all pursuits that belong to a gentleman.

Also that any who may become a companion may be in some way known to the company that his merits and advantages and be known to all.

Also that the companions shall gather no less than once per year for a special feast, with their consorts, to address the company and to administer to the same, and to share agreement together, by custom being the feasts of St. Crispen and St. George.

And also that companions be known by a red garter worn below the left knee, bearing the motto, "Honestas Supra Omnia" (Honor above all), and by a black cloak bearing a badge of the same garter worn upon the left breast.

ay God serve us in our endeavor. Done this Feast of Epiphany in the year Nineteen Hundred and Ninety of our salvation at Urbis Angellorum. 



Sir Brion Thornbird ap Rhys
With help from Sir Conn and Sir Valerius

Recently I had the pleasure of trading notes with two noteworthy knights of great renown from the Middle Kingdom, Sir Valerius Paencalvus and Sir Conn Mac Neil. We found, much to our surprise and delight, that we had developed startlingly similar drills to teach the same concepts. Here is a little of what we found...

STAFF DRILLS

Each drill teaches a great deal about balance, focus, initiative, and 'grace' or 'flow' in fighting.

The first of these drills involves only a single 42-48" staff. I recommend a polished oak rod 1 1/4" in diameter, but the common pine closet poles will work, as will virtually any other 'stick' of a similar length. It can be longer or shorter; the longer the more difficult for the balance, but the better the effect.

Both combatants take hold of the staff, standing opposite one another, hands alternating so that no one has the 'outside' advantage. The combatants should take their normal fighting stance.



My original staff drill designed to develop balance and to lower my student's center of balance.

The contest is not so much a matter of brute force, but is rather a matter of re-directing an opponent's force against them and of maintaining your own fighting platform as steadily as possible. This will lend more flexibility and speed when you fight.

First, one person begins with the 'initiative'. They attempt to make the most graceful movements possible, maintaining their balance as perfectly as possible, trying to keep their center of gravity low. To do this, keep the rear end tucked under the hips and the upper body straight. Do not lean forward or backward. Keep the weight to the insides of the feet, and maintain a relaxed disposition. If you are tense then your balance is flawed, your reaction time slowed, and your energy drain increased.

Each person will take turns with the initiative, moving their opponent about however they wish. The opponent tries to maintain balance, moving elegantly from place to place responding smoothly to the movements of the one with the initiative. After a while, consciously transfer the initiative to the other party, so that both gain the experience both of working reactively on balance and feeling the difference between holding the initiative and feeling when the opponent has it.

This drill works best of a teacher watches over the combatants, warning them when they are too tense or when they are using too much force. Force is not the way to 'win'; the opponent should be maneuvered into a position where they are off balance rather than pushed into it. Maneuver works far better than force in any case.

Line or Box Variants

Using the same drill and set up, you can place the combatants within a defined box (6-8' is good) or on a line. The object then is to move the oppo-

nent off the 'base' without using force, but rather using maneuver.

Sir Valerius' Palm Drills

Using the same size staff, two opponents each take the staff in either hand, balancing it between them only by tension between them. The idea is to experiment; to move the staff around as you would move a sword, stepping and standing still at your pleasure, trying to get your opponent to make an inelegant move that causes them to drop the staff. I found this drill invigorating; it seems to reinforce the efficient moves that make for good swordsmanship, while reinforcing balance. By moving the hands around and experimenting, you really get a good feel for what good blows feel like.

Soon after bringing this one home, we devised two variants. The first uses two staffs, each one balanced palm to palm. Both combatants try to maneuver the other to lose their balance or drop their other staff; providing they can do it with grace. But the real joy is not to 'defeat' your partner, but rather to experience the joy that a very fluid series of movements can bring.

Sir Conn's Two-Staff Drill

Sir Conn, also known for his fluid, effective movements, contributed this one. Rather than holding the staff using only the palms, he actually has his students grasp onto the staffs. This works more on balance and less on. This greatly emphasizes balance; I highly recommend it. It was from this drill that I took the inspiration for the two-handed version of Valerius' palm drill.



At left, each combatant holds the staff between them using only pressure and friction. They move around one another, striving to maneuver their opponent into losing either their balance or the staff.

Use staff drills to develop a low center and the balance that will build a strong fighting platform.

Below, the students use two hands and two staffs. This is the exercise developed by Sir Conn--although he generally closes the hand around each staff. Both techniques work well to foster balance and focus.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 45

weapon between your own weapon and the barrier itself. Frequently when a strike misses because the barrier interdicts it or because it glances from your own weapon, you have perhaps one half beat to pin their weapon to the barrier. Often this case results in a wrestling match to see whose poleaxe can be first brought to bear. This sometimes brings about the second unusual tactic, the grabbing of your opponent's haft—the handle—with a gauntleted hand. This is, according to SCA rules, perfectly legal. You must use caution, and courtesy, when attempting this maneuver. Remember that the pas d'armes is a place where all of the knightly virtues should be showcased and developed—prowess, courtesy, humility, loyalty, fidelity, largesse, and faith. All of this can be done while you smash your opponent with this most fine weapon—but smash him using courtesy and largesse! ❖

ERRANTS IN THE COMPANY OF SAINT GEORGE

continued from page 58

long enough to make progress. By application we mean a simple statement to the Company, delivered in speech or in writing. If delivered in speech, it should be done at a Company event. This could be a monthly Officer's Court, or more grandly, at one of our feasts. The Officers will discuss pending applications at the next court, and make the results known by the next Court.

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