

DON'T PANIC!

THE POCKET FIELD
HERALD

*“Ok, now we need a herald. You (pointing at you),
you’re loud. You can be the herald.”*

from the East Kingdom Herald’s Handbook

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special thanks to
HL Natasha Orionova Zateeva, Lowenmahne Herald
&
HL Rusudan, List mistress extraordinaire

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Being a Herald in the SCA is a unique and wonderful occupation. The populace depends on you to keep them informed whether you are doing the morning Town Cry, introducing a fighter on the field of honour or calling a recipient into Court to receive an award. For your part, it's the best seat in the house. You get to watch each fight up close, watch the face of a newly made Lord or Lady as they kneel at the feet of their Sovereigns, and receive the thanks of the populace for the information you bring them each day.

What you need:

Comfortable supportive shoes, water, a hat or other head protection and weather appropriate clothing, a pen (or two), a chair, snacks (try to avoid dairy) and a good voice, warmed up and ready to go

General Notes:

When you are not heralding, stay off the field. You may mingle with the populace, or sit in the heralds' pavilion. In the pavilion, stay to the back if you're not up - the field heads will be consulting with the Herald in Charge (HiC) and the lists folks.

If you are wearing regalia, working, or sitting in the pavilion remember that you are the "voice of the crown". Your personal opinions should be kept to yourself at these times. Others may interpret a chance remark, or a half heard comment as the words of the Crown. Do not embarrass yourself, and above all do not embarrass Their Majesties.

Know and use the correct title and style of address for all nobility. The populace will look to you for direction.

Field Heraldry Notes:

Pace yourself, don't do back to back rounds early in the tournament. Do odd number rounds or even number rounds, in a big list do every third round. The early rounds have more matches than the late rounds. Help tends to show up early, and then leave early. It's ok to do the last 3 or 4 back to back. You want to be sure to still have a voice when the all important final round arrives.

Know your combatants: As they take their positions on the field, ask how to pronounce their name and titles/affiliations. Remember, they can't see well so stand directly in front of them and speak clearly, but not so loudly that the populace can hear you. Write down a phonetic spelling of the name on their list card. That way the next herald doesn't have to ask again. Remember that Squire and Sergeant are job descriptions, not titles; they go after the name, e.g. John, Squire to Sir Robert, Sergeant to the Baroness of Madrone. Traditionally, only fighting titles are used on the field. So Lord and Lady are not used, but "Don" for members of the White Scarf would be, even though it's a different discipline, and the Honorable Lord/Lady if the award was a Hasta Leonis.

Armor: Pay particular attention to the name of whoever has the most distinctive armor, you'll need it to call the victor.

Who's in charge? One person will be HiC for the event. They may have deputies for Field, Court and Town Crier Heraldry. During the tournament, each field may have a field head, and each field head may have several heralds under them. If you have signed up for a round be sure to be there on time.

Observe the chain of command when you are heralding a big tourney. The field head will sometimes call the first round so everyone knows the format; they may also call the pairings for each round. Then they will observe, coach, step in when needed, and herald the last rounds. It is the privilege of the HiC or the Head Field herald to call the last round.

You are a vital part of the tournament, do your best to look good, use a period cup for your water, transfer your throat lozenges to a cloth bag and ditch the plastic wrapper. If you need to sit, choose a period chair or at the very least cover an obviously modern one.

Lists:

You and the list people must work as a team. They decide who fights who, when, and on which field. Your job is to inform the fighters and the populace of those arrangements. Do crowd control at the list table between rounds, so they can get the pairings made and the list shields up (if they are being used). Keep any side conversations away from the Lists table, they are often concentrating on the field and keeping track of the results.

If you have a list page, help take care of them. Keep them out of the sun, make sure they get water, and thank them! They save you from running so you get a break to sit down and rest between rounds.

The list card will have a space for the fighters name and titles & a numbered line for each round, and a number representing their opponent -sometimes with a W(in) L(oss) and B(ye) to circle, or perhaps a space to write that in. (your field head should know which option will be used) Be sure not to mark the card until the marshals have indicated the victor. Either hand the card to your list page, take it to the list table, or hold all the cards for a round until the end and then get them to lists. Don't dawdle getting the cards back to the lists folks, they can't set up the next round until they have them all back.

Tournament Style:

If the tournament style is a "round robin", it may be elected to have all the fighters make their salutes at once before the tournament begins. In this case the herald will not call the salutes, just the pairings.

There will be times when the combatants will only be announced at the beginning of the round, and before semi-finals and/or finals, with the combatants choosing their own pairings and entering the open field. This is a less formal tourney format and is used to expedite the running of the tourney. Larger tourneys (50+) will often use an expedited first tier (e.g. double elimination, no announcements) with a second tier round robin (all fighters introduced at the beginning, individual pairings may or may not be announced) and then a formal third tier with full heralding for the semi-finals and finals.

The patterning and level of heralding will all be discussed and coordinated between the person in charge of the Tourney, the MiC, the HiC and the List master/mistress before the beginning of the tourney.

Marshals:

Always introduce yourself to the marshals on your field. When you're new- tell them, they will help you. Be sure to wait for them to indicate the victor. If the signal isn't clear ask them.

They are there for the safety of all involved; the fighters, you & the populace. Stay well back from the ropes so they don't have to worry about you. If they give a command, follow it.

And watch out for their staffs!

Opening the tournament:

The Herald in Charge, or the senior field head will usually begin with the announcement that the tournament, using the full name, is about to begin and these are the pairings for the first round. Then the pairings are read for each field.

"My lords & ladies pray attend: in the 1st round of the AnTir Crown Tournament, here are the pairings on the Gules field."

"Sir John of Doe will face James the Smith"

"Sir Robert of Rye will meet Thomas the Miller"

When all the pairings have been read, the herald for the first round will enter the field, taking a position close to the exit but not blocking the entrance of the fighters. It is not necessary for the herald to be in center field! Call the first fighters to the field and have the second stand ready, again in order.

"Sir John of Doe and James the Smith, take the field. Sir Robert of Rye and Thomas the Miller, arm and stand ready."

The first field will begin with the salutes, when complete the second field will call the fighters, etc.

The Patter:

The tournament introduction: to the populace; heard by all

“In the first round of the An Tir Crown Tournament upon the Gules field,”

Introduce the fighters (who never “fight”, they meet, do battle, combat, vie, face, but never “fight”).

“here do meet in honorable combat Sir John of Doe (pause for cheers) and James the Smith, Squire to Sir Robert of Rye” (pause for cheers)

The marshals will point to each fighter as you name them. Note that the higher ranking fighter is named first. The list folks will give you the cards in the correct order, but be prepared in case the cards get shuffled.

The first salute: those on the field; the fighters, marshals and yourself

“My Lords (& Ladies) salute the Crown of An Tir”

if They are actually at the event, the salute is given to Them personally, or to the Thrones if they are not present on the field. If Their Majesties are not present then the salute is given to Their Representatives, the local Baron and Baroness, or if no representative of Their Majesties is present then the salute will be in the general direction of Their physical presence.

All those upon the field will reverence the Crown.

The second salute: for the combatants only

“You may salute the one who inspires you this day.”

The second salute is to the fighters’ inspiration. Give them enough time to complete this salute. For some it is a simple acknowledgement with the sword, for others far more.

Do not rush them; wait until both of the fighters have settled facing each other.

The final salute: fighter to fighter

“Salute your worthy and honorable opponent”.

Use words like worthy, honorable, renowned, don’t use “noble” unless you know both fighters have a least an Award of Arms. This is typically quick; however the fighters may have words for each other. Again, don’t rush them, but don’t dawdle either.

Exiting the field: to those on the field

"On your honour, and at the marshals' command, you may begin."

Don't use the words "lay on", those are reserved for the marshals. Then back off the field, never taking your eyes off the fighters.

Continue to watch the fight until the marshals indicate the winner, only then should you step on to the field and proclaim the victor.

"Victory upon the Gules field to Sir John of Doe".

Give the fighters a moment to speak to each other and clear the field, then call the next pairing and have the second stand ready.

When the round has been completed, let the populace know.

"So ends the 1st round on the Gules field of the An Tir Crown Tournament."

Practice will make nearly perfect, so practice!
and most important-

HAVE FUN!!!