

Crown List, Fall 1988

by Dyfn ap Meurig y pencerdd

What follows are a contemporary account from the Fall Crown List of 1988, won by Richard of Raefen. I was a college student in Tifton at the time, and had only been in the SCA about a year. Forgive any bad grammar or poor sentence construction -- this was several decades ago!

[I arrived at the Rutledge site at Hard Labor Creek on Friday evening. It was nippy when I tried sleeping in my car, so I rolled out my sleeping bag in front of the fireplace at the main hall]

The current king, John the Mad Celt, looked very regal this morning. Dressed in black, he was impressive-looking, for all that he was...un-tall (When he became king, the word "short" was outlawed. By the way, as he does not like the stuff, His Majesty banned the serving of oatmeal at events).

The list was very exciting. Get the picture: a roped-off square, perhaps 30 or 40 yards on a side, surrounded by pavilions. At the beginning was the processional, where the contestants – some 25 – and their ladies crossed the field and presented themselves to the king. The contestants from Bryn Madoc were Sir Richard of Raefen and none other than our Baron, Master Sir Aedward of Glastonburh. Cruel fate had the two fight each other and Sir Richard won. Luckily, this was double elimination, so he got the chance to keep going. Master Aedward did very well, and counted much coup with his acts of chivalry. Several times, he hit his opponent's legs, making them fall on their knees. The first time Aeddie dropped to his knees to erase his advantage, shouts of approval came from the pavillions. The second time he forced an opponent down, the folks in the Madoc pavillion yelled for him to keep his advantage, for the opponent was very dangerous. After a few moments' hesitation, he fell to his knees, eliciting shouts of approval as well as cries of dismay. He won anyway. The third time he did this, it was quick; first blow dropped his opponent. Without slowing, Aeddie dropped and swung, catching the guy in the head. Aeddie fell his second and final time in the semi-finals. He lost his own leg. As he dropped, someone yelled, "You got him where you want him now, Aeddie!". The battle was drawn out as Aeddie tired. Finally, after much struggle, he fell.

Sir Richard fared better. He remained unbeaten throughout the list. His victories raised our spirits. Slogans were yelled: "B-L-O-O-D -L-U-S-T- *BLOODLUST!*" "Blood makes the grass grow!" Early on, we chanted, "Aeddie, Aeddie, he's our man! If he can't do it..." and hesitated, until a guy named Scott supplied "–Richard can!"

One of Sir Richard's battles lasted less than ten seconds. One lightning fast blow was thrown, and Richard fell. The King missed the blow, so someone with a video camera played for him in slow motion.

As the number of contestants dwindled, fights became a flurry of blows. At one point, when a fighter had been drawn to fight two fights in a row, a 5-minute break was called. There was a baseball practice using a ball and a pole arm. The King himself used a basket-hilt sword (he threatened to use the Eliminator 9000 – a duct-taped baseball bat with quillions).

Soon, it was down to two people, one of which was Sir Richard. He seemed less aggressive or something. They "clinched" a lot. Richard lost the first bout (this was a two-out-of-three duel) In the next battle, I saw the opponent's sword connect, and after a moment Sir Richard fell. The dozen or so marshals, including the King himself, discussed the matter (apparently, Richard and his foe struck simultaneously). Finally, it was declared a double-kill. As the next fight began, several of us chanted "Richard, Richard," but were quickly shushed. The tension was thick enough to cut with a knife. Cheers went up when the foe fell. In the final bout, "For the crown and Meridies," no one made a sound. All that was heard were the booming echoes of sword-on-shield. The battle was quickly over – leaving Sir Richard victorious. His family rushed to him, followed soon after by the people of Bryn Madoc. We carried him to the king and started to make a victory circle, but he pleaded to be taken to his opponent. We obliged; the fellow shoot his hands while he was still in the air. The king named Sir Richard as his heir, giving him a royal ring ("lose the crown, lose the throne, lose your car, but you'd better not lose the ring!") We were ecstatic....

Around six o'clock, came the court on a hill. John and Rondallynn, Rex and Regina, sat in their thrones between two empty thrones on their left, and the visiting monarch and consort of Atlanta on their right. Behind them stood advisors, men-at-arms, and ladies in waiting. Directly beside the King stood the court herald...

...First order was the ceremonial oath of fealty to His Highness, the Crown Prince of Meridies...

...Next was an unusual proposal. One of Sir Richard's retainers proposed marriage to a young woman, before the crown and before the populace assembled. Somebody not in our barony got his AoA unexpectedly, and the poet laureate was named. Aeddie was called before the thrones; he in turn asked that the people of Bryn Madoc come before the throne. We all went up there and knelt. Aeddie presented the King and Queen two amethysts, symbolizing the purple of the Barony. he also read a poem about the people of Prince Madoc, on beautifully calligraphed parchment. Upon finishing the poem, he gave it as a present to – the King? That's what we all expected, but no! – to Mistress Domenica Farnese. She was *completely* surprised, and I could tell that she was overwhelmed almost to the point of tears. Aeddie said it was in appreciation for the vicarage, etc...

... [illegible] Dunstable (who drives a stepvan painted like a stone castle) was awarded the Order of the Guiding Light... Sazaki won the Queen's Yeoman archer contest, and spent the remainder of the court behind the thrones. A large tankard was presented to the winner of last year's Red Tower, who happened to be His Royal Highness, Sir Richard. And dutifully, the crowd went "ooo, ahhh, ooo". Finally, a Lady Grendal, in a ceremony of much recitation and candle lighting, became a Peer – a Laurel.

Eventually, we had supper...First course was roast chicken and something. Next came fried pork, apple cobbler, and cabbage. Last came meat pie, fruited cream cheese, and broccoli. All in all, I think Dreamstone's feast was a little better. At various parts of the meal, some sort of fairly ribald Shakespeare was acted out before the royal table. Actually, only a little sounded Shakespearean. But anyhow. A guy from Atlantia, Duke Olaf, said that if we would raise \$100 for Atlantia, he would belly dance. The feasters did, so he did, along with some guy who couldn't shake it well. Dressed in shorts

and shoes, Duke Olaf shook his copious belly to medieval music, to the applause of the crowd. Several women stuffed money in his shorts.

After the hall was cleared out, they had "Not Necessarily the Medieval News," which was funny, although hard to hear. During a commercial break, Aeddie gave a spiel for "Crazy Aeddie's Rattan Ranch," featuring an elastic sword for bypassing shields, and the Eliminator 9000. One of the newscasters got an OOO, the "Order of the Ordered Order."

Then there was dancing in the hall....

[There was bardic in the hall until 5 AM. But I didn't bard back then, so I took my bedroll to the staff cabin, with Dylan, Mariona, Jessica, Arnor, and Aedward. In the morning, I interviewed Domenica for a college class.]

Addendum: I have been informed that when victorious Sir Richard was being carried around the field, someone said to him, "Sir Richard, you've just won Crown List! What are you going to do next?" To which he responded without missing a beat, "I'm going to Disney World!".....