



The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.

War of the Lilies XXII

For Immediate Release
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Weekend Warriors in Shining Armor

For well over a century, people all over the western hemisphere have sought out masters of eastern traditions such as karate and judo for physical fitness and discipline. Additionally, tai chi is studied by all walks of life for mental health and agility into advanced ages. But what of the western martial arts?

Yes, that's right, Western Martial Arts- Any child can tell you of the famous Knights of the Round Table, and most will learn of the exploits of King Richard and the great crusaders. However, the formal training that led to the glory of these armored heroes remains largely ignored in the modern day.

Enter the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), an international organization devoted to bringing the Middle Ages and Renaissance to life through research and re-enactment, and employing their knowledge of history to enrich their lives and the lives of others. With over 100,000 participants worldwide, the SCA is one of largest living history societies in the world.

Drawn together by their common interest and enthusiasm for medieval history and the intricate workings of daily life in the millennium between the 6th and 16th centuries, members of the SCA find immense joy in centuries-old traditions- both of peace and of war.

Members of this dedicated living history organization, both men and women, revive the chivalric battles of yore, replicating sport tournaments fought for training and enjoyment throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. These contests can range from one-on-one trials to epic field battles with more than 500 fighters on a side.

They create and wear armor made as authentically as possible to emulate the mail, boiled leather, and plate steel used between the 10th and 15th centuries, and wield swords, spears, and axes made of rattan to simulate the balance and handling of the original weapons, without the lethal qualities.

Historically, the training of knights and squires also took place with non-lethal weapons, most often sword-shaped clubs of wood. In the 14th and 15th centuries, this practice combat developed into a sport unto itself, and these "club tourneys" or "Kolbenturnier" became a popular spectacle, with home and visiting teams who would compete in daylong contests, with one man emerging as victor at the end of the day. Afterwards, com-

bative teams joined each other in festive revelry.

Before being allowed to participate in this grand tradition, modern-day SCA combatants go through a rigorous training regimen and safety authorization process. Their equipment is inspected before the start of every event, and they must maintain their skills through regular attendance at combat practices.

SCA armored contests, like eastern martial arts, are unchoreographed. Yet with the strong emphasis placed on safety, it enjoys a lower injury rate than almost any modern sport, including high-school football.

For more information on this event, go to <http://calontir.sca.org/lilieswar>

For further information, including where to find your local SCA chapter, how to join, and events happening in your area, please see www.sca.org.