

The Star



Fall 2004 Coronation
November 5-7, 2004

The Star

THE NEWSLETTER FOR AMTGARD,
THE CELESTIAL KINGDOM

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HOW TO SUBMIT ITEMS TO THE STAR

Any items that might be entertaining and/or informative to the Amtgard populace at large are always needed for the Star. Articles, artwork, advertisements, maps, poetry, how-tos, reviews, etc. are only a small sample of the kinds of items that are published in the Star. All submissions are, however, subject to proofreading and editing prior to publication.

Please submit all items to annelisel3@yahoo.com or in person to any member of the editorial staff.

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To those who gather here for the Coronation of the new Monarch of the Celestial Kingdom...

The Protectorate:

Lord Protector, Squire Colonel MacLeod Darkjester
Regent, Squire Bromhir Ethindale-Tannon
Prime Minister, Squire Selene Falconbridge
Champion, Squire Randalf Falconbridge

The Incoming Court:

Lord Protector, Squire Bromhir Ethindale-Tannon
Regent, Lady Dame Ween Bloodblade
Champion, Squire Bacl Silverflame

The Board of Directors:

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Member: Frank Almonte (Colonel MacLeod Darkjester)
Member: Michelle Lurker (Dame Ween Bloodblade)
Member: Mark Pickett (Sir Arion Reinquist)

The Incoming Board of Directors (1 Year Term):

Shawn Cavitt (Randalf Falconbridge)
Brad Woodruff (Sir Wolfbane)



Welcome to the Celestial Kingdom!

The Celestial Kingdom is a part of the [Amalgam](#) live action role-playing game, consisting of over a dozen individual provinces located in Central and South Texas. Amalgam is a non-profit educational corporation dedicated to the study and recreation of the medieval era and fantasy genres. Amalgam is also a live action role playing (LARP) game that endeavors to recreate individual and group combat from the periods mentioned above.

Tour the Kingdom

Find out [what we are](#), read about our [history](#), explore our [provinces](#), meet our [officers](#), get acquainted with our [households](#), and [companies](#), view our [gallery](#).

News & Events

Peruse the latest kingdom [announcements](#), note our [upcoming events](#) schedule, and check out our [calendar](#).

Connections

Contact our [officers](#), get in touch with our [households](#) and [companies](#), connect to our [forum](#), join our [Yahoo group](#), read the newsletter we call [The Star](#), venture elsewhere with our [links](#), and touch base with our [webboons](#).

Resources

Discover [how to](#) create what you need, study our [rules](#) and [advisers](#), search our record of membership at [O.R.K.](#), examine our [Corpus](#), note our [Skins](#), [past log](#) of members, and scan our [B.O.D. meeting minutes](#).

CELESTIAL KINGDOM ONLINE FORUMS			
Amalgam in Central Texas			
FAQ Search Memberlist Usergroups Register Profile Log in to check your private messages Log in			
The time now is Sat 30, 2004 12:34 pm			
Forum		Topics	Posts
Discussions			
4	Forum Announcements Forum Code of Conduct, general announcements, FAQ's, et cetera. Moderators: Caldico , Sassaparilla	20	123
4	Amalgam Discussions For discussing Amalgam topics Moderators: Caldico , Sassaparilla	167	2443
4	Non-Amalgam Discussions This is for discussing non-amalgam topics of any sort. Moderators: Caldico , Sassaparilla	57	332
4	Provinces - Bifrost For issues related to Bifrost, in Kerrville TX Moderator: Caldico	6	9
4	Provinces - Dragon's Haven For issues related to Dragon's Haven, Harrier Heights TX Moderator: Caldico	8	36
4	Provinces - Griffin's Keep For issues related to Griffin's Keep, Victoria TX Moderators: Caldico , Chasak.B.Sass	11	50
4	Provinces - Midas For issues related to Midas, Gilson TX Moderator: Caldico	18	97
4	Provinces - Murky Waters For issues related to Murky Waters, Lampasas TX Moderators: Caldico , Sassaparilla	44	723



MONARCH

Viscount Lt. Squire Colonel MacLeod Darkjester

Thank you all for giving me the unique opportunity of being your monarch for an entire year. I would like to give special thanks to all the people that stepped up and helped me run this kingdom all year long. Without your help I would not have made it through both reigns. I have a whole new respect for people who decide to wear the big brass crown. I now know that it takes many people to run this kingdom. I was very lucky to have great people step up and help me run this kingdom not once, but twice. I hope this kingdom learned the most important lesson I tried to teach. And that lesson is having fun. Remember all, this is a game we play. And as a game we all should have fun in our own way. In closing I would like to thank a special person in my life. She has supported me from the beginning, and was always there for me when I needed a shoulder. Scarlet. Thank you. Without you I would not have succeeded.

Thank you all. Stay safe and keep having fun out there.

Viscount Lt. Squire Colonel MacLeod Darkjester

AKA one tired Lord Protector/Dark Overlord/Monarch



MONARCH - ELECT

High Ringgiver, Master Bromhir Ethindale-Tannon

Well here we are again with the “thank you’s.” =)

First off, I would like to thank all of the people that voted for me to be King and my running mate Dame Ween. And I would like to thank Sir Esuom, for stepping up and making me work for position instead of me just walking in without earning it. You have all helped me reach a goal I have had since I joined the main-stream of Amtgard from the small Barony of Keinplatz in '94.

This reign, we the monarchy have A LOT of things that we have to get done. One being that we are not clarifying anything else on 6th edition rules of play due to a vote, by the Circle of Monarchs, that is to take place in December for the new 6.5 or “7th” Amtgard Rules of Play and setting it as the new rules. This will put the entirety of Amtgard on the proverbial “same page,” though this is not the final print and more like the platform for reform. So in saying all of this, every field in the CK will be receiving at this event 2 copies of the 6.5 Rules of Play. You as the individual fields will play-test these rules, and find any and all grey spots so we can discuss them at the All-Thing that will be held at Midreign.

The second item brought before us is the Kingdom Corpora. We need to finally put this to rest so we have an established document that can be used and not be contradicted by other parts in the Corpora.

The third item is finding a new and hopefully final home for CK events. We have bounced around way to much from this camp to that camp, from overpriced sites to sites that could accommodate for the size of our event. We are looking into sites around Canyon Lake area so it is central for everyone in the kingdom.

And last but not least, the fourth item. I, myself, will be promoting both inner and inter kingdom relationships this reign. I am traveling to the kingdoms of Golden Plains, Emerald Hills and the Wetlands to promote Spring War, continue to build our relationships, and show support for other kingdom coronations, midreigns and inter-kingdom events. This will hopefully bring these neighbors to our events and in turn bring a greater sense of camaraderie between these kingdoms. I will also be promoting all inter-kingdom events whether I attend them or not. As for the inner-kingdom issues, I will keep the roleplay going strong. I feel that because of the current roleplay growth in this reign, we as a kingdom did come together more as one. I would like to see it grow even more so.

So in closing,
Thanks for your support.

Monarch Elect
The High Ringgiver,
Master Bromhir Ethindale-Tannon
Squire to Arch Duke Sir Father Thomas von Drakken
Warrior of the Brotherhood of the Red Hand

Tentative Celestial Kingdom Calendar

Weaponsmaster
January 16th, 2005

Midreign
January 28th-30th, 2005



REGENT - ELECT

Lady Dame Ween Bloodblade

Celestial Kingdom Populace,

I just wanted to give you a few words from my thoughts, being as I am stepping up as the kingdom's Regent. First of all I would like to thank everyone who voted for me and not checked in the blank spot on the ballot. That was extremely kind of you and every voter is loved and appreciated. I would also like to say thank you for voting in my running mate Bromhir. It is always refreshing to see new blood come under the crown. Not that Bromhir's a newbie, but he is new to the whole Monarch gig. I think I speak for both of us when I say that it is an honor to be picked to serve you this term. And, I do mean that quite literally. I think the staff on the Monarchy has got all their marbles in a bag and that this reign will prove to be not only fun, but also productive. After all, that is what the Monarchy is here for, to serve Amtgard, our kingdom, and the dream. I am sure you want a list of everything we are planning to do during this reign or at least a generalized outline.

Well, my goals line up with the rest of the Monarchy when I say that we would like to see the game in our kingdom become fun! We are all here to have fun of course, or at least most of us are. Role-play, different battle games, an exciting quest and smoothly run events I think will help with the level of enjoyment. Also promote more garb wearing. I know people get tired of hearing it, but garb adds to this game. I truly hope to see garb on the majority, not the minority when we do our rounds of visiting this reign. Speaking of visiting, getting out to see our fellow Amtgardians, traveling to other kingdoms and other parks with in our own kingdom. Nothing brings fun like a raid on some one else. Among other things would be: Finding a better more permanent park for us to hold our events at, testing the new 6.5 rules, deciding on a sound Corpora, cleaning up the way records are handled on the local level (thus it will filter up to the Kingdom level), keeping the populace informed on upcoming events and news, and most importantly holding a kick arse Spring War.

I would also like to keep the Stitch and Bitch's up and going, classes for different types of Arts and Sciences, as well as the Bardic Guild meetings regular. I would like to ask the fellow Serpent Knights of our kingdom to help by stepping up and getting with me, try to hold more classes for those who are interested. And, even if you aren't a Knight of the Serpent and you have something you would like to put together, please, please, pretty please get with me. I would like to start holding smooth A&S tournaments as well as fun and different classes at the kingdom level events. And, as always, the duty of recognizing achievements in the Arts and Sciences falls upon the Regent. So if you know of anyone who is deserving of an award, please offer up recommendations to me. Feel free to email me your concerns, questions, or any information concerning classes or recommendations. My email is ween@thewaygate.com. Again thank you for allowing me to serve you during this reign and I hope to make it one of the best reigns the populace has seen in a long time.

In service to the dream,
Lady Dame Ween Bloodblade



CHAMPION

Squire Randalf Falconbridge

So ends my first reign as a kingdom level officer. I have to say that it wasn't what I expected at all. By and large I had an uneventful reign as champion, at least in the classical sense. As I said before it seems for the most part that reason has broken out here in the CK and I for one am glad of it. So instead of screaming matches over weapon legality and stopping fistfights, I spent most of my tenure running games, playing war o'crat, and reeving.

All in all, I had a much better time than I would have thought possible. I also learned a fair amount about running events or at least my own small little corner of them. I discovered in the process that running anything in this organization is hard work and is taken almost entirely for granted. One would think that given my experiences in other organizations that this particular revelation would not come as a surprise but somehow it did anyway.

At the end of the day, the well-being of the kingdom is looked after by a fairly small collection of individuals. I think everyone who has spent any time in-country has an idea of whom I am speaking. These stalwarts are the people who insure that your events get run, that your records are kept, that you have fests to eat, a game to play on a regular basis. It is my observation that they receive surprisingly little thanks for their trouble.

Well, I would like to thank them, not only for their work, but for allowing me to share their efforts for a while. You see they didn't have to allow me this opportunity. Many of things I have done this reign have not been the historic domain of the champion. Add to that the fact that I have spent most of my career kicking around ditch fields and avoiding anything that looked remotely like group service and you have a pretty compelling reason to say no.

I for one am glad they took a chance and let me write my own ticket this reign. Looking back, it seems to me that allowing new people a chance at the helm has overall been a good thing for the CK. After all, anyone who is willing to put up with the negative elements of a kingdom level office probably has the stones to do it again in the future. Which is good, the kingdom needs the help. We can't always have the same 10 people making things happen.

Speaking of new hands, my successor is Bael Silverflame. Bael might be new to the CK but he has been playing since '95 out in Falling Fire (Florida). Bael has a good command of the rules but for obvious reasons lacks knowledge of how we do things in the CK. I trust that everyone will do what they can to ease his transition and teach him our traditions. I just can't abide him thinking like a Floridian any longer than necessary. It hurts my soul. In any event, it is probably time to wrap things up.

I'll be posting the results of the "Summer of Discontent" campaign on the forums sometime next week. Dodgeball has been delayed until mid-reign with a full blown costume-based tournament to be held at Spring War. I will be working with Bael in transitioning "SoD" into a new RP campaign. I am sure he will have more information for you a month or so into his reign. Until then, stay frosty, don't trust Brennon to guard your flank and remember...CK rules!

Yours in service,

Randalf Falconbridge



INCOMING CHAMPION

Squire Bael Silverflame

Greetings to the Celestial Kingdom,

I wish to take some time to introduce myself and to go over my goals while in the office of Champion of the CK. My Amtgard persona name is Squire Bael Silverflame and I am out of Tori-Mar. My mundane name is Ryan Christian and I originally started Amtgard officially Oct. 22nd 1995 as a co-founder for Falling Fire which is in Tampa, FL under the kingdom of Neverwinter. I am honored to be squired to Sir Arthon of the Golden City. I am a member of the Household's Ministers of Grace and House Lionesse and a prospect to the company "The Brotherhood".

I have many tasks that I have set forth for myself to accomplish over the next 6 months and carry on even after my term as Champion. First let me state that I have been going thru most of the 6.5.3 Rules that have been proposed and look forward to working with each of the local park champions to setup battle games for each of those parks using the new rules to test them out and provide feedback to the rules committee as well as our monarch for the upcoming monarchy meeting in which they will vote on the new rule set. Some rules to take into account and be aware of that are in the 6.5.3 rules that will affect many of us. I would like many of you to test these out and send me feedback so we can get it to the rules committee. Again these rules are not in effect now it is the proposed change with the upcoming 6.5.3 rules that has been put forth to all monarch's, but I want to make you aware incase your equipment does not stay legal under these rules.

Strike Legal surface on a weapon must be at least 2.5 inches in diameter.

Padded Surface must be at least 1 inch of padding.

2/3 of a weapon must be **strike legal** to slash/bludgeon.

Spears and **Madus** are stab only.

Dagger - up to 18" in length and 2/3 of the weapon must be **Strike Legal**.

Short - 18-36" in length and 2/3 of the weapon must be **Strike Legal**.

Long - 36-48" in length and 2/3 of the weapon must be **Strike Legal**.

Reach - 48-60" in length and 2/3 of the weapon must be **Strike Legal**.

Great weapon - Must be 5' or greater in length and have a

Strike Legal diameter of at least 4" it is then considered a great weapon and thus is considered a red weapon when wielded 2 handed. A berserk barbarian wielding a **great weapon** two handed will do a total of 4 points of damage to armor but still requires 3 hits to a shield.

Polcarms must have at least 1 foot of **strike legal** surface and must have at least 1/3 of **padded surface** (1 inch thick) on the remaining shaft.

Red - Red weapons do 2 points of damage and 3 hits destroy a shield. When a berserk barbarian uses it the weapon does 3 points of damage and still needs to hit a shield 3 times.

1/2 Second SIM instead of SIM and/or AC. This is not much off in timing as we play currently in the CK.

If your weapon isn't causing anybody to be injured, it's incredibly unlikely it's going to be thrown off the field for being 1/4" under the limit. Basically there is a 1/4" wiggle room on weapons both a 1/4" over and under the 2.5" as well as the 4" diameter on weapons.

Those are some of the possible major impact rules that could come forth if the 6.5.3 rules are passed. So as much feedback as you can provide the better the CK can make it's voice heard.

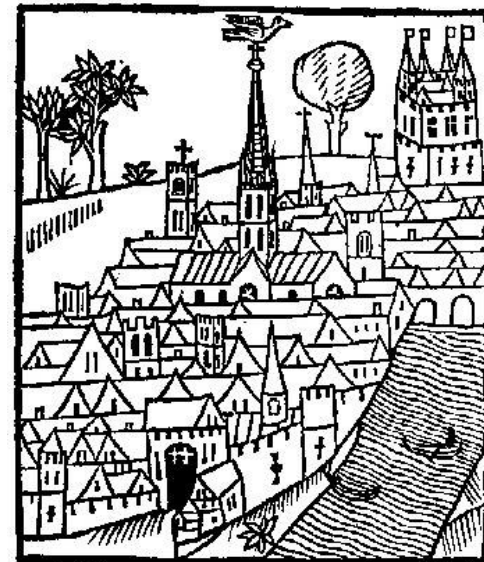
Next I want to improve the state of reeveing within the kingdom as a whole. I want to bring in and have our Sword Knights and Warlords do more of the reeveing as well as have them teach and train future reeves what to look for while reeveing. To add to this, I plan to work with and get hammered out and put into the capora a structure on running tournaments for all future tournaments to be run, this includes things like a defined weapon styles and sizes for events like Weaponsmaster/Quals. This will in turn help provide better tournaments in the long run for all to participate in.

I plan to help define the role of Champion with certain duties that they should do during their term. I look forward to working with each war-o-crat that comes forth within the CK for the next 6 months to assist in the activities that they will have planned out to help them make them run as smooth as possible. I am currently working with the incoming crown to setup a smoother and more systematic way of handing off each position within the CK. I plan to visit most every park within the CK in conjunction with the rest of the crown as well as hit most major IK events with others from the CK.

Above all else one of my major ideas and tasks I have is to help instill and keep the fun and purity of Amtgard alive with each and every park within the CK. I look forward to working with and meeting everyone within this kingdom.

In your service,

Bael Silverflame
BaelSilverflame@gmail.com





PRIME MINISTER

Squire Selene Falconbridge

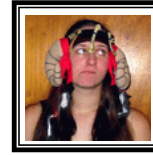
As Prime Minister, I'm constantly being asked about Online Record Keeping (ORK). Most folks want to know how to get their records updated, and few industrious souls have compiled their own records to send to me. My answer to them is simple: your local Prime Minister must verify any changes I make to ORK. Unfortunately, I realize that poses a major problem for some of our members.

Local park officers are the primary officer contact for our members. They are also an essential intermediary for kingdom officers to reach and help individuals. Local PMs in particular are responsible for the maintenance and ongoing compilation of their members' records.

It concerns me greatly when members tell me their PM doesn't regularly attend their park, and doesn't respond to email or return their calls. I understand their frustration in this, since I'm frustrated that my hands are tied as well. I tell these members to take matters into their own hands: volunteer to help their PM update the records, and choose carefully when the next park election is held.

Your kingdom officers are taking action as well. We are discussing ways to make these records easier to track and upload to ORK. I plan to spend the rest of my tenure as Prime Minister working to solve this problem, so I promise you'll hear more about this in the future!

Yours in service,
Squire Selene Falconbridge
Prime Minister of the Celestial Kingdom



GUILDMASTER OF MONSTERS

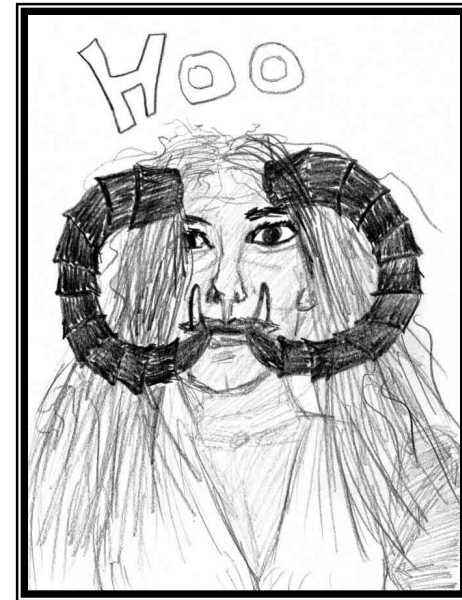
Baronet Squire Scarlet Ethindale Tannon Stormblade

Thank you once again for this last service as GM of monsters for this Fun, yet strangely Quiet term. I've had alot of fun trying to help make it easier and fun to "become" a monster. I still encourage you all to go out and have fun as monsters. Particularly since this event is following the Halloween holiday.

During this reign Dame Ween and Dar lent me an old copy of the "CK Monster Manual" I am going to attempt to render into a text document and submit to the webpage. Hopefully this helps resurrect some of the various Beasties that had previously been thought extinct...

Happy Grunts

-Scarlet and her Alter-Ego Hoo Troll



Serpent Knights Arts & Sciences Tournament Results

Scarlet - Overall Winner

Passive Construct 1	Anime doll-black	4.43
Court Garb 1	Bobbin laced chamise	4.27
Court Garb 2	Red choli	4.13
Bardic 2	Bonnie Portmore	4.10
Court Accessory 1	Gem staff	3.93
Passive Construct 2	Anime doll-white	3.93
Fighting Garb 1	Dryad wig	3.90
Bardic 3	All Souls' Night	3.90
Bardic 1	Golden Earrings	3.80
Court Accessory 2	Red laced shawl	3.70

Average of best 8: 4.07

Clalibus - Second Place & Best in Show (Boromir Court Garb)

Armor 1	Chain mail	4.60
Fighting Accessory 2	Warlord favor	4.30
Fighting Accessory 1	Latin company name	4.13
Fighting Garb 3	GCA torch tabard	4.03
Court Garb 4	Boromir	3.93
3-D 2	Fairy stomper	3.87
Shield 2	Plywood shield	3.60
Court Accessory 4	Court belt	3.60
Court Garb 5	Butter battle book	3.33
Fighting Garb 4	GCA top and shorts	3.20
Weapon 3	Cossak sabre	2.50

Average of best 8: 4.01

Tove Melynn - Third Place

Fighting Garb 2	Black and gray shirt/tunic	4.07
Court Garb 3	Green and gold dress	4.07
Shield 1	Purple flower shield	3.83
3-D 1	Castle	3.17
Weapon 1	Long smiley face	2.50
Weapon 2	Short purple flower	2.50

Average of best 6: 3.36

Wanderer

Court Garb 6	Imperial blue surcoat	3.80
Armor 2	Brigandine	3.38

Average: 3.59

Lynae

Court Accessory 3	Court belt	3.77
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Celestial Kingdom Board of Directors Meeting, August 8th, 2004

Members present: Mistie Brown, President

Doug Bedingfield, Membership Officer

Scott Gleason, Treasurer

Clark Johnson, Secretary (Prime Minister)

Frank Almonte, Member (Monarch)

Michelle Lurker, Member

Guests present:

Jaymee Baxley

John Brandon

Julie Graham

Kenneth Keys

Members absent: Mark Pickett, Member

The August 8th, 2004, meeting of the Celestial Kingdom Board of Directors was held at Palmetto State Park at 10:49am. The president, Mistie Brown, called the meeting to order. The roll was taken: there were six members present and one absent, with four guests, and a quorum was established.

The floor was opened for old business. The first order of business was a reminder that checks have yet to be ordered for the Guaranty Bank account; Julie Graham said she would make the necessary inquiries and order the checks.

The next item of old business was a discussion on the insurance policy options available to the Celestial Kingdom for future events. It was determined that Mistie Brown would contact the representative of the insurance policy which was used for Spring War XI and attempt to acquire information about the policy for future use.

The secretary, Clark Johnson, informed the B.O.D. that the summary pages for the Celestial Kingdom financial ledger have been retyped in a clear, easily reproduced format for archival and distribution purposes. Currently, only those summaries from 2001 through 2004 have been retyped; others from prior to 2001 are forthcoming.

The floor was then opened for new business. The first item of business was the removal of B.O.D. member Clark Johnson, whose term expired August 7th, 2004, during the Celestial Kingdom Midreign. The president announced the removal of outgoing B.O.D. member Clark Johnson and expressed her thanks for his service during the past six months. Clark Johnson then volunteered to continue his duties as B.O.D. secretary until the end of the meeting, to which there was no objection. The next item of business was the installation of new B.O.D. member Julie Graham, the newly elected Celestial Kingdom Prime Minister, whose term began on August 7th, 2004, at the Celestial Kingdom Midreign. The president announced the installation of the new B.O.D. member and that she would be serving on the B.O.D. until her term as Prime Minister expires.

The next item of business was the election of the new B.O.D. secretary. Julie Graham was nominated and seconded, and a vote was taken; there were five affirmative votes and no negative, and Julie Graham was elected.

The next item of business was a discussion on the need for a new site for Spring War XII. It was determined that the new site should be able to accommodate at least 800 people comfortably, with at least 20 acres of non-wooded land available for camping and general use, facilities for food preparation, active plumbing, and controlled access site entry. Members were encouraged to look for potential sites, and to present these options at the next B.O.D. meeting.

Frank Almonte announced that the Kingdom of the Wetlands has rescheduled its next Midreign by moving it back one month so as not to conflict with the Celestial Kingdom Midreign, and he recommended that we also plan our own major events with regard to the major events of our neighboring kingdoms.

Michelle Lurker noted that she would not be available for B.O.D. activities and meetings during the next few months due to military reserve obligations. She indicated that she would be back well before her term as B.O.D. member expires.

The president then informed the B.O.D. that the province of Murky Waters in Lampasas has been receiving numerous complaints from mundanes using the park where they practice; these complaints have primarily been about excess noise, disturbing the peace, and disregard for non-Amtgarders in the vicinity. The complaints are scheduled to be addressed by the Lampasas City Council at their next meeting, and it was recommended that a responsible individual be present for the meeting and to offer testimony on the behalf of the Murky Waters populace. John Brandon offered to act as that representative, as an experienced adult and as the current Baron of Murky Waters. In addition, it was noted that, contingent upon the outcome of the City Council meeting, the province of Murky Waters may be required to move to another physical location to practice, and that they are prepared to do so if the necessity arises.

The president then informed the B.O.D. about a recent confrontation between two individuals, Wil Carmona (a.k.a. Dirk Thunderblade) and Patric Davidson (a.k.a. Durin SeaEagle) that occurred at a Celestial Kingdom province and escalated into an implied verbal threat. The B.O.D. discussed the incident, and agreed that it would stay informed about successive developments.

The last order of business was a reminder to the B.O.D. and to the Celestial Kingdom Prime Minister that the B.O.D. terms of Scott Gleason and Mark Pickett would expire at the November 2004 Celestial Kingdom Coronation, and that elections for those positions would be held in the weeks before the autumn Kingdom Qualls event.

The time for the next B.O.D. meeting was tentatively scheduled for the Sunday morning of the November 2004 Celestial Kingdom Coronation, with exact details to be announced as the date approaches. The meeting was adjourned at 11:47am.

Respectfully submitted,
Clark Johnson
Secretary, Board of Directors of the Celestial Kingdom

Fall 2004 Celestial Kingdom Qualls Results

Weapons Tourney Results:

1 st Place:	Clalibus
2 nd Place:	Drakknar
3 rd Place:	Bael



Overall Arts & Sciences Results:

1 st Place:	Diego
2 nd Place:	Ween
3 rd Place:	Esuom

A&S Category Winners:

Court Garb	Ween - Crimson/Black Bodice 4.46
Court Accessory	Esuom - Court Spear 4.24
Fighting Garb	Tove McLynn - Black & Green Tunic 4.00
Fighting Accessory	Diego - Wolfbane's Knight's Belt 4.36
Jewelry	Diego - Ring of Power 4.08
Armor Construction	Diego - Articulated Legs, Optional Feet 4.66
Shield Construction	Diego - Paladin Shield With Torch 4.62
Weapon Construction	Diego - Big Axe 4.20
Passive Construction	Ween - Lady Pumpkin 3.78
Active Construction	Diego - Onager 4.56
2-D Art	Diego - Star Submission Compendium 4.34
3-D Art	Tove McLynn - Castle 3.88
Writing-Fiction	Caraforth - Sword of the Poerlinne 4.14
Writing-Nonfiction	Bael - Motivational-Success Writeup 3.40
Bardic	Caith - Instrumental (Untitled) 4.62
Cooking	Ween - Pizza Twist 4.30

An Amtgard Guide for the Competitive Newbie

By Squire Randalf Falconbridge, Champion of the Celestial Kingdom

Foreword:

This article is very much an opinion piece. It is also fairly Texas-centric. I am the first to admit the last time I played in an Inter-Kingdom game there were only five kingdoms, so I cannot tell you what it is like in RW or Never Winter. Furthermore, discussing Amtgard combat is like teaching the English language - there are a great many rules and each one tends to have an exception. Seeing that my purpose is to educate newer members I have elected to concentrate on generalities, as they will have all the time in the world to learn the corollaries on their own. As to my credentials, I have nine Orders of the Warrior to my credit, a War Master title, and a host of lesser tournament wins. I have also spent the last ten years training with some of the best Warlords and Sword Knights in the organization, and while I have yet to join their ranks I have learned a great deal by walking the same path.

Introduction:

The most common statement I hear from new players is the proclamation that they would like to be a Sword Knight and or a Warlord. It goes without saying that the vast majority of these people get frustrated, fade away or lose interest well before they get anywhere near achieving their goal. Amongst stick jocks this scenario is something of a joke. Generally the staff-wielding newbie follows the statement by describing his persona in some way and then runs off into the woods for libations. This article is not written for that sort of person. The key word here is “competitive.” It is intended for that very small percent of new members who are serious in their desire to achieve excellence on the battlefield. That being said, it is of limited utility to casual fighters, role-players, and magic junkies. Those sorts of players should feel free to read on, I just don’t expect that it will be nearly so valuable to you. Assuming for a minute that you mean what you say, what happens now? Well, as with all things, personal excellence starts with a choice.

Taking the Red Pill:

Great fighters are not born, they are made, and the first step is deciding that you are willing to pay the price. What price, you ask? Well, you can expect to spend years perfecting your craft. Depending on your natural talent and fitness level, it can take anywhere between three and five years to really hit your stride. After you gain the skills, you will spend several more years earning and defending your reputation by slugging it out on the Inter-Kingdom ditch fields. Depending on how often you travel you will probably spend a few more years attempting to learn how to cope

with other styles of play. After all, it is hard to be one of the elite when you have never encountered “atomic clock” or had to deal with a phalanx of howitzers.

These estimates assume you will be playing two to three times a week, and fighting almost the entire time you are at the field. They also assume that you will be fighting against people with real talent. You can only learn so much fighting individuals with less skill than you presently possess and, while it is possible to improve on your own, things go much faster when you have a teacher or serious competition. Guy is fond of describing his time competing against Wolfram and Auromax as a rocket race to the moon for a reason.

Needless to say, fighting more or less often will increase or decrease the estimate proportionately. Personally I saw the most progress when I was fighting four to five times a week!

There is also the human cost to consider. If you are not in good shape, fail to wear protective equipment, or insist on running on your knees every time you get legged, you will be injured. You will also face a good deal of frustration. New players are frequently upset that they do not learn fast enough. More established fighters are upset because they feel they should be winning more often. Remember, to improve you have to fight people who are more skilled, and that means you spend a lot of time losing. Try to take it in stride and avoid the race mentality. That the person beating you nine times out of ten most certainly went through the same process. They just happened to start a few years before you did.

As your skill improves you will find that people change their attitude toward you, and not always in a positive way. This is especially true in the formative years of your career as a stick jock. During this time period the average up-and-comer’s skill level is considerably larger than his or her reputation. Casual fighters who have not shown the same degree of dedication will begin to lose to you on a regular basis and all too often they resent you for beating them. Ego can be a terrible thing, and most people are far too ready to make excuses as to why they lost than they are to dedicating time to improve themselves. The good news is that once you have earned a reputation as a superior fighter this tends to happen less frequently.

In addition to jealousy from below, you also have to deal with a certain degree of hostility from above. To your fellow stick jocks and betters you are a threat. After all, reputations are made by besting the high-end fighters that come before you, much like the gunfighters of the Old West. As I said earlier, no one likes to lose and they will not make it easy for you to supplant them. The opposition will make every effort to drive you into the ground, and rain all sorts of smack and abuse upon you in an attempt to break your spirit or establish dominance. Conversely, up-and-comers do not like being treated poorly and take great glee in returning the abuse, thus perpetuating the cycle. The “gunfighter syndrome” amuses me to no end.

Only in Amtgard could a system like this truly prosper. Mutual respect is a large part of most martial traditions, but is institutionally absent from ours. I cannot begin to imagine what it would be like to learn martial arts from a sensei that insisted on screaming, "I just beat the whole dojo" every time they ended a sparring session. Or trying to teach a student who refused to admit that their instructor had something to offer. Yet this sort of thing is entirely par for the course in Amtgard. To be accepted by the elite, you must first prove yourself their equal. Part of that process is beating them on the field but the other part is embracing their culture. I would therefore recommend listening to a lot of Sports Radio, and talking a great deal of smack.

The road walked by great fighters is long, dark and lit only at odd intervals by other great fighters and more often than not they are going to be your enemies. Even so, they are the only true luxury you have. They at least understand you, and in time after you have bloodied one another often enough you are likely to become the best of friends. But until that day comes to pass, you should not expect any quarter whatsoever. Personally I don't look down on anyone who has the sense to avoid the whole mess and play for the sheer joy of it. Just once, I would like to hear a new member say something like, "I sure do love this organization, and I want to work for its betterment, and maybe one day I can be Flame Knight." I think the shock might kill me, and I most definitely not going to hold my breath waiting for it to happen.

But I digress. The point I want to convey is that this is a time-consuming and difficult process. It is not simply a matter of telling everyone you meet about your ambitions until the Monarch decides to knight you. Very few people manage to become Sword Knights and/or Warlords and those that do tend to share two traits: They all love to fight, and they all have the drive to see exactly how good they can be. At the end of the day, no one goes through all of this just to earn an award. I believe that Spynthrift once said, "I didn't start out to be a sword knight. I started out to be a great fighter and in the process I became a sword knight." I could not agree more, so without further ado let's talk about how to start down that path.

Free Your Mind:

Equipment is important, but before I break down the various styles and types of technology I want to spend a few minutes discussing mind states. The greatest hindrances to learning are past experience and personal preference. This is the reason why it is easier for children to learn new languages than it is for adults. One would think that the same would be true of new players in Amtgard. After all, they have never played, so how can they have any prejudices? Well, while they may have never

picked up an ultralight before, they most certainly have read books, seen movies, played games, or even taken Martial Arts, all of which serves to form the basis of their opinion on which styles and techniques they think are best.

I cannot count the times I have seen a newbie fighting with a style or weapon that is simply not effective given our rules. Even older players fall prey to this mindset, decrying the evils of ultralight weapons, foam shields, polearms, or archery. All of these things are legitimate parts of the game, but to some people they will always be "cheap." "Real players don't use <insert item or technique they don't like here>." Well, they could not be more wrong. All of these examples are perfectly valid ways to play. The people who fall into this mind state are not playing Amtgard. Instead they are playing their own game where their opponents should not take their legs, use long, light weapons, or backstab, all because of their personal preference.

Established fighters cannot afford to blind themselves to the possibilities, and the best only stay that way because they are capable of adapting to new styles and kinds of equipment. Conversely new players need to unburden themselves of these preconceptions so that they can decrease their learning time. Everyone has their idiosyncrasies; the key is not allowing them to impact your performance. This is especially true where equipment is concerned. In fact, equipment is the one element of the game that players have complete control over. Serious fighters should take great care to avoid these sorts of prejudices when choosing their fighting style and tech level. For example, fighters who lack a great deal of upper body strength would benefit from using lighter weapons, while slower fighters would benefit from using larger shields.

The Tools of the Trade:

Don't let anyone fool you - equipment matters. I don't care if Clalibus is able to kill half the free world with the same sword he was using eight years ago. You're not Clalibus and for that matter neither am I. Those of us who are not as athletic or lack the freakish ability of Corbin to kill people with just about anything have to worry about riding the tech curve. Fortunately for us, weapons are probably as light as they are going to get for the foreseeable future. For most of us it is really a question of deciding whether or not to use new tech or ultralight weapons and equipment. Can't tell a howitzer from a ducksword? Well, read on to learn all about the three generally recognized tech levels.

Old Tech: This is the gear used by people back in the early 80's all the way up until the early to mid 90's. We are talking everything from thick wall PVC and couch foam, all the way up to tent pegs and vlar. Somewhere along the way they also used camp pad, solid fiberglass rods, and bamboo. Shields were made of wood or trashcan

lids, and were smaller on average than they are now. Old tech weapons are heavy, slow, and hit with a lot of force. Given their mass, the people who made good use of them had to have a lot of upper body strength. Sword Knights were generally stronger than average, examples of KoS members who qualified with old tech include Nevron, M'deth, Tholden, and Theo Blackflame.

New Tech: Equipment of this make became popular in the early to mid 90's but that varies from kingdom to kingdom. New tech swords generally have 505 or 404-diameter kitespar core. The blades are generally made with some variety of MC, either 1900S or 2000. Fun noodle also became popular in this time, specifically in the Iron Mountains, but was generally reinforced and or strapped down to make the weapon heavier or more durable. Shields were generally made from snow sleds and tended be larger to better compensate for the faster weapons. Would-be Sword Knights still profit from being stronger than their opponents but not nearly to the degree required with Old Tech weapons. KoS members who favor New Tech weapons and equipment include Arthon, Drakknar, Clalibus, Guy, and Ziggy.

Ultralights: Presently ultralights are the pinnacle of weapon technology. These weapons are generally made with the lighter forms of golf club shafts and fun noodle. They use a limited amount of tape, and pantyhose as opposed to a cloth cover. Weapons of this sort are made to be as light as possible. Given their construction, weapons of this type have a marked tendency to break down quickly, and constantly have to be repaired or remade. They also tend to be very long and even a 45" sword can be used effectively with only one hand. Shields have changed as well and on average are well into the medium range (27" to 30"). Also, many people prefer all foam shields that do not require separate padding. KoS members who favor weapons of this sort include Spynthrift, Lief, Sparhawk, and Brennon.

Not everyone uses the same tech level and their use as well as implementation dates vary from kingdom to kingdom. For the longest time the EH refused to use new tech weapons. Now it is just the opposite, the EH, IM and WL favor ultralights while many people in the CK stalwartly continue to use New Tech weapons. Likewise I have heard it said that many of our friends in the Burning Lands still favor old tech but that might just be slander on the part of the people Bolt regularly bludgeons like so many baby seals. Ultimately the choice of which tech level to use depends on the individual and the environment, although I would discourage anyone who wants to seriously compete from actually using Old Tech.

Tech Readout 2004:

Now that we have covered the types of equipment and materials that are available, we need to discuss the kinds of weapons that can be made out of them. Everyone has

a favored style, but not all of those styles are equally effective. More experienced fighters can offset some of the disadvantages inherent to specific styles with skill but newer players do not have the same luxury. As I mentioned earlier, frustration is a major problem for young stick jocks. The fact of the matter is that people tend to enjoy the game more when they are winning, or barring that at least doing well. It therefore stands to reason that new players should use the most competitive styles available and avoid ones that will hinder their performance. This section of the guide is written for new members who have no idea what works well on the Amtgard battlefield.

Sword and Shield: It is my opinion that sword and shield is the most effective style for new players. It gives them a passive defense against just about anything and insures that they do not generally take the full brunt of polearms, spears, archery, or multiple opponents. In short having a shield tends to keep the average fighter alive longer than just about any other combination in the game. It also has the added benefit of being comparatively quick to learn. Even better it is one of the three styles you can expect to see in just about any tournament. All in all, it is hard to wrong with sword and shield. Even so it is not a popular style amongst new players and those that do pick it up tend to go with a small round shield. Class considerations aside, small round shields are a death sentence given the length and speed of ultralight weapons. I cannot recommend in good faith using anything less than a 27-30" round shield or the equivalent kite or heater.

Florentine: More newbies start out fighting Florentine than any other style, and I believe RA Salvatore is to blame for it. The trend is probably helped by the fact that legal swords are far easier for new members to make than other types of weapons. Regardless of the cause Florentine is a very difficult style to learn, the principle reason being that most people lack any degree of coordination with their off hand. As you can imagine this is a bit of a hindrance when fighting with two weapons. The learning curve is also negatively affected by the style's dependence on mobility. Florentine fighters have to know when to press and when to retreat, and the average newbie seems to have a hard time learning how maneuver to their advantage. I should also mention that given the lack of a passive defense Florentinists tend to soak up a lot of free shots and projectiles. This is especially true at range and against multiple opponents. Even so, once you get past the learning curve, Florentine is a competitive style and a mainstay event in most tournaments.

Single Sword: Let me start off by saying that as much as I like this style it cannot in any way, shape or form be construed as competitive. Single sword fighters are at a great disadvantage against anyone with multiple weapons, a shield, or a longer sword. Seeing that you can fully expect to encounter all of those things on the battlefield, you should always take another weapon with you whenever possible. In only two circumstances can I recommend fighting single sword: when you have lost your

primary weapon, and if you are in a tournament or ditch where everyone else is using the same thing. Using single sword in any other situation is just asking to be killed. Now that being said, single sword events are found in almost every tournament and it certainly behooves you to practice against other single swordsmen.

Quarterstaff: Astute readers will remember this style's inclusion as a joke in the introduction. The reason for this is that staves are not remotely effective in Amtgard. No, really, do yourself a favor and leave the staff at home. Better yet, break it down to its component elements and make something useful, like a javelin.

Great Sword: Great swords suffer from the same basic problem as the staff - that is to say that they are far more effective in reality than they are in our game. Personally I have little use for them, and find that both old and new tech great swords to be of limited utility at best. They are an especially bad choice for new players who have yet to learn how to compensate for the limitations of their weapons. The only effective great swords I have seen are the ultralights made famous by Auromax and Cedric. It is probably important to note that the two of them tend to use theirs as down swords in a fashion similar to a madu. It is my recommendation that, this particular use aside, traditional two-handed great swords should be avoided.

Spear / Polearm: These weapons are ideal in a line fight, or in situations where the enemy cannot readily maneuver. The basic premise is that the weapons are so long you can engage multiple opponents at once, and in the process kill people who are not paying attention. They are of limited use in smaller battles, or in situations with a fluid line, and they can be very difficult to wield when engaged in one-on-one combat. It is my experience that polearms are all-or-nothing weapons. That is to say, they either do very well, or very poorly. They also attract a great deal of attention, so be prepared to have every shieldman in Christendom charging down your throat. Some fighters like Arg and Bolt have made a career out of using short polearms, but I cannot in good faith recommend them as a primary weapon for new players.

EH / IM Madu: Classically, a madu is a short spear joined with some form of shield, although the term now applies to any short spear or polearm designed to be used one-handed. Generally, madus are used to stab with and are held in the off hand. There are three basic styles of madu: IM, EH, and top spike or center grip. This particular entry focuses on the two most common, and assumes that top spike madus are a bit esoteric for your average new fighter. The classic or IM style madus generally sport a small or medium shield in addition to a short spear. They are normally used to take legs as the shield generally interferes with throwing shots higher than mid waist. EH madus, on the other hand, are generally longer and do not employ a shield. They are excellent distance weapons, and are capable of many shots and combinations denied to their IM brethren. Overall, madus are very competitive

weapons, and combine many of the best traits of both Sword and Shield and Florentine. Their only real drawback is that most tournaments do not feature madu as a separate event, which leaves dedicated madu fighters with only open as a common category. Famous fighters who favor the madu include Wolfram (IM), Sparhawk (EH), and Corbin (Top Spike).

Anything involving a flail: There was a time when flails were amongst the most effective weapons in the game. Given their construction, they were frequently far lighter than the average sword, and when properly employed had the ability to blow right past shields. Many fighters who lacked upper body strength or were unable to throw wrap shots compensated for their difficulties by using a flail. In fact, they became so common and effective that the CK passed a rules clarification limiting their length to no greater than 36" equally split between the haft and the chain. Even so the flail continued to be very effective right up to the point where ultralight weapons became commonplace. Simply put, someone employing a longer or faster weapon will make mincemeat of a flail user well before they get into range. Given the present state of the game flails are best used as back up weapons or in limited formats like juggling.

Anything involving a dagger: This section includes sword and dagger, single dagger, and double dagger. Daggers are only truly useful if you intend to play a magic user in a battle game and need to save on spell points. In another occasion they are simply too short to bear serious consideration. In fact, unless the dagger fighter has magic to back them up, about the best they can hope for is a simultaneous kill. Some people are under the mistaken belief that fighting sword and dagger will somehow make them a better Florentine fighter. This is simply not true. The way to become a better Florentine fighter is to fight more Florentine! All in all, daggers should be saved for playing quick in juggling or magic users in battle games.

Conclusions:

As you can see, it takes a good deal more than a simple proclamation to make someone a great fighter. Some of those things we have covered in this document, and others are a bit more ethereal than casual discussion allows. For those of you who are serious about becoming a better fighter, I have a few parting words of advice. First of all, pick a competitive style and spend time making it your own. Some of us go through our entire careers without picking up a different combination of weapons. There is no shame in that, and a good deal of folly in changing out styles every few weeks. Second, don't work when you don't have too. It can be hard enough to win against superior opponents. This is doubly true if you insist on using weapons or equipment that does not suit your playing style. Be especially wary of falling into the battle game trap - choosing equipment based on class abilities rather than effectiveness. Reputations are made on ditch fields and in

tournaments, they are not made in battle games or in war. Your peers do not care how good of a scout you are. They only know that your small round shield does not cover you properly and that you are an easy kill. Third, find a sparring partner and work with them on a regular basis. As I mentioned earlier, it is easier to learn if you have someone to help you along the way. Fourth, pay attention to how other people fight. Try to remember the shots they like to throw. This information might come in handy the next time you have to fight them. Also pay attention to shots that kill you on a regular basis. Obviously if you are dying to them you need a better defense against them! Fifth, keep your chin up. It can take a long time to get where you want to be, but as long as you continue to improve you will get there.



Dues Paid List for the Celestial Kingdom

Updated as of 11/01/04

Province	Persona Name	Mundane Name	Paid Thru
Avalon's Gates	Athena	Amanda Herring	4/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Bishop	T Herring	4/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Caith	Tristan Walker	4/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Ceraforth	Matthew Tassey	4/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Circadia	Joyce Taylor	4/25/2005
Avalon's Gates	Durga	Ashley Cady	4/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Giacomo	Scott Geifer	1/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Kaderian	William Winnie	10/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Loralie	Veronica Schmidt	4/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Mom	Betty Winnie	10/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Quillmaster	PJ Winnie	10/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Rand	Shawn Cavitt	4/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Selene	Julie Graham	4/17/2005
Avalon's Gates	Wanderer	Wallace Cady	4/25/2005
Avalon's Gates	Yonnah	Jean Smith	10/31/2006
Bifost	Brother Stephon	Steve Widener	3/1/2005
Dragons Haven	Oriana	Marie White	4/30/2007
Freeholder	Megaera	Meg Benton	4/17/2005
Freeholder	Spearweasel	Andrew Benton	4/17/2005
Freeholder	Stella	Stella Dunn	10/31/2014
Freeholder	Tholden	Ray Dunn	10/31/2014
Griffons Keep	Chango	Randolph Spearing	10/7/2005
Griffons Keep	Diamond	April Heath	10/31/2006
Griffons Keep	Qalor	Chas Heath	10/31/2006
Mystic Springs	Ethan	Clark Johnson	8/29/2005
Talonfield	Aylia	Terri Peters	1/1/2020
Talonfield	Thun	Jason Peters	1/1/2020
Tori Mar	Bael	Ryan Christian	1/18/2005
Tori Mar	Belkev	Kevin Lash	3/17/05
Tori Mar	Calidor	Matt Turner	1/18/2005
Tori Mar	Clalibus	Benjamin Pomerantz	4/30/2009
Tori Mar	Diego	Carlos de la Garza	10/17/2005
Tori Mar	Durin	Patrick Davison	12/31/2014
Tori Mar	Kercie (Woody)	John Eric Carter	2/7/2005
Tori Mar	Linden	Kristin Siegrist	10/31/2007
Tori Mar	Nightshade	Elizabeth Adams	10/31/2005

Notes



Province	Persona Name	Mundane Name	Paid Thru
Tori Mar	Rufus	Todd Barr	12/31/2014
Tori Mar	Styx	Ryan Anderson	4/17/2005
Tori Mar	Tiberius	Gary Augensten	10/31/2005
Tori Mar	Vigus	Jay Stretton	4/17/2005
Traitor's Gate	Angry White Man	Mike Pond	4/17/2005
Traitor's Gate	Bromhir	Doug Bedingfield	<i>REGENT</i>
Traitor's Gate	Colonel	Frank Almonte	<i>MONARCH</i>
Traitor's Gate	Emerald	Jaymee Baxley	3/28/2005
Traitor's Gate	Father Thomas	Tom Larrison	3/28/2005
Traitor's Gate	Imag	James Googins	4/17/2005
Traitor's Gate	Mandigor	Ron Bartoa	4/17/2005
Traitor's Gate	Manny Six Fingers	Dame Lackoff	4/17/2005
Traitor's Gate	Mistress Wynd	Sharron Larrison	3/28/2005
Traitor's Gate	Scarecrow	Chris McDaniel	12/18/2004
Traitor's Gate	Son of Midnight	Joey Smith	10/17/2005
Traitor's Gate	Thee	Thetis Turner	4/17/2005
Traitor's Gate	Weasel	Justin Garner	1/18/2005
Traitor's Gate	Xenith	Eryka Baxley	3/28/2005
Traitor's Gate	Zircon	Scott Gleeson	4/17/2005

