

Colossal chess contest holds tradition

BY KARL ANDERSON
Staff Reporter

Sunday was a day of playing in the sun for members of the Barony of MagMor in the Kingdom of Calontir.

Individuals from Scholar's Keep, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln student group, held a live chess competition Sunday afternoon on the grass inside the stadium loop, 14th and Vine streets. The group is dedicated to the study of the arts and sciences of the Middle Ages.

The Barony of MagMor, which is Celtic for "Great Plains," is the name of the local chapter of Scholar's Keep, an international organization that comprises 15 regions, or kingdoms, worldwide. Each kingdom includes several baronies, which each must have at least 40 members in order to be called a barony.

Members created a giant chessboard on the grass using twine and pegs, and each side made moves according to instructions issued by its king. Each member wore a different felt piece decorated with a particular chess character to distinguish which piece the individual repre-

Involvement

sented. In addition to the chess display, members wore costumes designed to reflect the Middle Ages.

The Scholar's Keep organization was started at the University of California at Berkley. Its mission was to educate and teach people about the Middle Ages.

The organization focuses on the period between A.D. 500, which roughly corresponds with the fall of Rome, and A.D. 1600, which is about when the bullet came into existence, making the knight obsolete.

Members often travel to different kingdoms and take part in events ranging from renaissance festivals to staged combat.

One such event, known as the Battle of Pennsic, takes place in Pennsylvania during August and revolves around the fictional taking of the city of Pittsburgh by means of combat.

Michele Schuler, past president of the UNL's Scholar's Keep, said preparation for the battle includes two kingdoms involved in combat.

The two kingdoms, the Middle and the East, recruit other kingdoms from around the country to come and fight with them to claim the city of Pittsburgh.

The battle typically lasts about three weeks. The MagMor Baron is normally recruited and takes part in the event, usually fighting for the Middle Kingdom. Each barony contains several groups that are devoted to different areas of medieval study. Members can indulge their hobbies by taking part in activities such as blacksmithing, cooking, dancing, designing costumes, learning about music and even brewing beer.

Instruction in combat is also available and members must be authorized in combat before they are allowed to participate in activities such as the Battle of Pennsic.

Members learn about combat techniques, armor that must be worn and other specifics of combat.

According to Schuler, the costumes that the members wear are either made by the individuals or are bought at various festivals and events that are held by the organization. Although members are not required to wear costumes during local events, they must wear them during national events.

Joshua Woodward, president of the local Scholar's Keep, said the MagMor Barony has been in existence for more than 10 years. It encompasses not only the university but also Lincoln, and its membership includes more than 100 people, including between 20 and 30 students. There are six baronies within the Kingdom of Calontir.

Each year, the MagMor Barony

takes part in the Lilies War. The battle, which takes place just outside of Kansas City, Mo., in June, involves several kingdoms that come together and take part in combat. The reasons for combat change from year to year and the battle is usually a week-long event, Schuler said.

The MagMor Barony also has several events planned for this year. A masquerade ball will be held near the end of October, and the barony will hold a Christmas party on Dec. 14. In January, the Kingdom Calontir will conduct war maneuvers in Cook Pavilion.

The organization is open to all students and is actively looking for new members. The group conducts fighter practice every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. in the basement of the Military and Naval Sciences Building.

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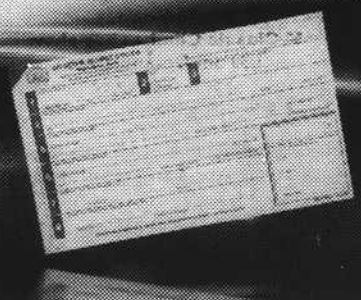
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