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Travel Briefs



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Joust for You

Armor and shield gleam in the sunlight as two mounted combatants, clad in heavy armor, face one another across the arena floor. In an instant, they lower their sharp lances and spur their horses forward in a ritual that has been played out on the field of honor for over 500 years. But this is not medieval England where the Knights of the Round Table jousted for the hand of a fair lady. No, this is - Sonora, California?

Sonora hopes to spark interest in the ancient sport of jousting by hosting the first International Jousting Tournament. The event will bring the best competitors from across the USA and Canada to fight in the heavy armor jousting division on 13th and 14th of September, at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds, Sonora, California.

"This will be an exciting weekend for the entire family and must not be missed," says Patrick Karnahan, Sonora Jousting Championships and Renaissance Faire Organizer. "Jousting is an extreme, dangerous sport. This will not be a choreographed event. Visitors will witness the fast-moving spectacle of brave knights doing battle during three contests each day."



Confirmed riders so far include John Angel, 2002 Florida State Champion, Cliff Bassett, West Coast Heavy Armor Champion, Gary Young, 2002 Utah State Champion, Lloyd Clark, 2002 Wisconsin State Champion, James Pioetter, 2002 NY State Champion, James Merrieles, Reserve Champion of the World Championship Jousting Association (WCJA) and Shane Adams, Grand Champion of WCJA and current All American Heavy Armor Champion From Toronto Canada.

The Tournament is part of the Sonora Celtic fare that will recreate the ambiance of a real renaissance pageant. Jousting competitors and their horses will be dressed in appropriate costumes and regalia. Patrons will enter the world of 1560s Scotland, an era when political and romantic intrigue are one and the same. The joust will honor Queen Mary's return to her native land from France.

According to the organizers, "From the opening procession featuring ambassadors from England, the Germanic States, Spain and Italy to the grand finale, the faire's cast of professional actors will entertain guests with dances, military pageantry, falconry, and feasts. In addition to lance-to-lance combat, the event will also feature knights engaged in hand -to-hand combat and an archery competition. Shops within the village will display authentic handmade items. Delectable renaissance foods and beverages complete the event's atmosphere."

The grounds will be open from 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. - 6:00 pm on Sunday, September 13 - 14. Pre-sale tickets are available now at www.sonoracelticfaire.com/info.html/. For more information, visit www.sonoracelticfaire.com/ or call 408-506-6499.



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