

Ending an Argument in Medieval Times

By Nancy Mann

Chosen "champions" struggled, settled scores
(I hope prevented at least one war).

On an open field, fought with might and main –
Gladiators, combatants mutant
Who fought all year – but not during Lent.

Knights offered inspection of all lances and swords –
If OK, stalwarts gestured the judges toward...

King or duke, or at someone else's behest
Gave the order to start
(Afterwards, there would be a fest).

As few as two champions
Or six men, atop steeds
Reflecting the sunlight on armor of each side
Jostled and performed this deed.

They lowered lances, charged to pierce armor
Or thick leather hide –
Fears of mortal wounds tossed aside...
Hoofs pounding, hell-bent –
Radiator red faces 'neath visors –
They were from Satan sent...

Both sides shouted war cries
Scarfed ladies wept and sighed many sighs...
Hundreds made up the crowd –
Yelling, loud enough to make their mothers proud.

Brawling men-at-arms
Violent, with blood-thirst –
Well-paid, trained to render harm.
Courageous? Some not – they were the worst...
One thing for certain –
There was a lot of dust!

Prizes went to the best man at banquet meal –
Delicacies offered – swan with orange peel...
What was the upshot
As fighting ended?

When the sun was still hot?

Well, less people were killed –
With that I'm thrilled...
Many crawled away to live another day...

Sound the trumpets! Blow the horn!
Lesser nobles and peasants partied –
Roasted an ox or a medium-sized bull;
Wine poured-bets were paid, settled in full...
As mentioned, blow the horn!
A few months later...
Several children were born!