

# Lyst Heraldry 101

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Lyst Heraldry is perhaps the second most marketable skill in the kingdom. It is part of the fundamental makeup of most chivalric tournaments.

## The basic components of a SCA lyst

The field	The water Bearers
The Marshal/s	The Combatants
The lyst Mistress/lyst Master	The Herald
The audience	

## The functioning of the SCA lyst

With some variation, mostly owing to different local traditions and logistical requirements, the order of events at an ansteorran tournament usually follow the same pattern.

1. Fighters get inspected and show proof of authorizations
2. Fighters sign in with lyst Mistress
3. Lyst Mistresses pair the fighters
4. All Pairings for the first round are called for each field and Fighters instructed for the round.
5. Fighters are told when the round will begin

The sequence starts

1. First pair called to the field
2. Second pair told to arm themselves
3. Third pair told to make ready
4. Current pair are told to conduct their salutes.
5. The fights take place, wins and losses are recorded.

*Wash...rinse... repeat.*

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Each person has a job-smaller lysts will see multi-tasking

1. Marshals maintain safety
2. lyst Mistress/Master tracks wins and losses
3. The audience cheers on the fighters
4. The Herald announces the victor of the bout (should be done)
5. The Herald calls the next pairings (usually the next three pairings)
6. Water barrers keep people hydrated

The speed of the tournament will hinge directly both on the speed of the fighting and how fast the herald calls the next pair our.

### **The Function of the herald**

The SCA Herald is actually one of the FEW documentably period elements on the SCA lyst field. As a lyst herald, YOU are one of the links to the past.

The herald is the Master of Ceremonies. While he does not actually make very many decisions, his voice will be the one people hear as the source of information for the duration of the Tourney.

The herald upholds and preserves the medieval ambiance of the event through their words, attire and action.

The Herald is the coordinator that most people will go to with questions about the current sequence of events.

### **The specific duties of a herald:**

- Make sure the marshals are aware/acknowledge that you are coming onto the field.

**The call to arms:** The Herald announces the pairings for the rounds

*A good heralds take this chance to make sure they are saying the names right, and to assure that they are using the correct titles and attributes for each person.*

### **The herald Calls the Rounds as they progress**

*"[Fighter 1] and [Fighter 2] please take the field."*

*"[Fighter 3] and [Fighter 4] Arm yourselves."*

*"[Fighter 5] and [Fighter 6] Please make ready."*

Get real used to these words, you'll be saying them a whole lot.

**Note:** different kingdoms have use different verbiage, and some will switch the last two line of this sequence.

The Herald also handles the Salutes of the fighters once they are on the field

**"Please salute the [insert noble title here]"**

- Depending on who's Tournament you're heralding, the titles can vary.
- The most common is "Please salute the crown in the presence of their excellencies"
- If the crown is their, "Please salute the crown."

Other circumstances can come up, usually the marshals or the lyst mistress will know the appropriate term for the situation.

**When in doubt ALWAYS ask!**

Once again, the basic salutes:

“Please salute the one who’s favor you do bear.”

“Please salute your most honorable and worthy opponent.”

Turn the field over to the marshals.

Once the salutes are called, **GET OFF THE FIELD!**

Successive rounds may have the salutes abbreviated to “Salute who you will” in order to speed things up if there are time constraints, or a large number of fighters.

Heralds should, but are not always required to call the victors of the rounds.

As to who turns the winning and losing cards into who and where... that is usually unique to the specific group, or established by the lyst Mistress. Make sure you confirm this procedure with the lyst Mistress.

- All activity on a lyst field is planned ahead of time.
- You should need to do as little on-the-fly script work as humanly possible.

**Always, always, always**, talk to the lyst Mistress/lyst Master with questions, and if they don’t explain something to you in a way you understand, ask them to try again.

**This isn’t Rocket science, so if you don’t understand, the chances are really good that the answer wasn’t very clear.**

### **Working with the lyst Mistress**

For a given pairing, the individuals should be announced in order of precedence. If Duke John is paired against Lord Thomas, make sure the cards are organized as such. Assist the lyst Mistress with precedence ranks if she asks for help.

Ask the lyst Mistress to include phonetic spellings of peoples’ names on the cards for the pairings. If you have doubt as to the pronunciation of a fighter’s name, and you have time before the start of the lyst, ask the fighter to confirm it.

### **Working with the Marshals**

Try to make sure that you and the marshals acknowledge each other when “control of the field” is being passed back and forth. Remember, the marshals are there for your safety too.

If you are unsure who won the bout, ask the marshal or the fighters.

## Tools and Considerations

### Notecards:

- The notecard or 3x5 index card is the backbone of most tournament setups. Get used to handling them, reading them and writing on them without a table.
- Make sure you don't need gloves during cold weather, or if you do, that you can still manipulate individual cards.
- You usually won't need any of your own, but having an extra unopened bundle of them can make you very popular with frantic lyst mistresses.

**Cups/Mugs/Drinking appliances:** You will be using your voice. If you don't have a cup that is specifically yours, or that you are comfortable carrying around, make sure you have some arrangement with someone to keep you hydrated and keep your throat wet. *Water Bearers are your friends!*

**The sun:** Most lyst fields are not shaded, so make sure you are ready for the sun.

Sun tan lotion

A shaded headpiece

A strategically located shadow.

**DO NOT overestimate the how much sun it will take to ruin your day. Some tournaments can run hours long, and you can come out of those looking like a rare pork roast.**

You're more likely to get sunburned on a slightly overcast day! It's easy to forget about the sun when it's not bright and shiny.

### Comfortable Shoes

Odds are good that you'll be standing for the entire lyst, so make sure to wear shoes with good support and comfort.

If you have a little stool you can set up near the lyst field, that's good too. Just make sure it's not in anyone's way.

**A Pen:** the lyst mistresses/lyst Masters should have everything you need to lyst herald. It is their job and most groups have fairly well stocked kits specifically for that task.

*So, of course... You are probably going to need a pen sometime.*

Just see if you can keep a Bic Ballpoint handy. Have a bunch if you are the lyst herald coordinator. Your heralds may need to be supplied for each field.

### Salutes and calls

**“[Fighter 1] and [Fighter 2] please take the field.”**

**“[Fighter 3] and [Fighter 4] Arm yourselves.”**

**“[Fighter 5] and [Fighter 6] Please make ready.”**

**“Please salute the crown in the presence of their excellencies”**

**“Please salute the one who’s favor you do bear.”**

**“Please salute your most honorable and worthy opponent.”**

These are the bread and butter words for the lyst herald, learn them to memory, and you will be 75% ready to herald almost any Ansteorrian tournament.

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