



Are you prepared for combat?

BY ALLISON STALBERG
STAFF WRITER

Do not be surprised if you are walking around campus on a weekend and you see people dueling. That is just Amtgard.

"It's an opportunity to affectionately beat each other with foam weapons," said junior and Amtgard player Suzanne Farmer.

Every Sunday from 1 p.m. - 2 p.m., students gather around the quad on campus under the large canopy of trees and battle each other with weapons made from PVC pipe, pool noodles and duct tape.

"I saw big spears and thought 'I like this,'" said junior Ian St. Amour. "I've been doing it since."

Like St. Amour, many other students got involved by seeing the battles and joining in.

"In my freshman year I was out and saw them battling under the big tree," said junior Ryan Siebens. "I went up to them and said 'Hey, what's going on?' They said 'Amtgard.' They handed me a weapon and I did battle for a little bit."

Guilford College's Amtgard has a large and creative variety of weapons, from bastard swords to boat oars. Many of the weapons have been made by Isaac Cook, who acts as

Amtgard's blacksmith.

"I've spent a lot of time building these weapons," said Cook. "So they are important to me in various ways."

"I've got to say the one I like the most is about 4-5 feet long. About 3 feet is blade, and the rest of it is a handle. I have used that consistently since I first started playing Amtgard. I have maintained and modified it over time to make it more fitting with the current setup of the rules we keep."

The rules of Amtgard are fairly simple. If an arm or leg is hit, that person can no longer use that limb. If two arms, two legs or an arm and a leg are hit, you lose.

A hit in the torso, means an instant loss. No crotch or head shots are allowed. The players also make sure not to hit too hard, as someone could get hurt, or a weapon could break.

The game is not limited to just one-on-one matches, though.

"We sometimes do group matches, especially when up against a skilled individual or if they are wielding a particularly insane weapon that is harder to deal with on a one-on-one basis" said Cook.

"For a brief period we actually did a defense situation back when the (stick) palace was still standing on the Guilford lawn. We



Students gather on the quad to play Amtgard with weapons made of PVC pipe and pool noodles.

would have a group of people defend it from the inside, and we'd have a group of invaders try to take over it."

Amtgard is not limited to students. Even some Guilford teachers have dabbled in combat, like Chair and Associate Professor of Mathematics Ben Marlin.

"There were a number of great battles that involved 'generals' with strategies, planning and lack thereof," said Marlin.

"In the time since I stopped, I developed a shoulder injury. Not as bad as an arrow to the knee, if that reference isn't too obscure, but it means my adventuring ... er ... Amtgard days are behind me."

Amtgard is an institution on campus with former players and recent alumni like Sylvia Steere nostalgic for their battling days.

"I dual-wielded short swords that were

given to me by a good friend," said Steere.

"Their cores were made out of broken golf clubs, and they were covered in foam and pantyhose to make a smooth appearance. They're super light, easy to wield and I am comfortable enough as an almost 30-year-old adult to say that they were awesome. I still have them."

So, if you see these warriors out in the quad with their weapons drawn do not be afraid to join in.

"It's a really fun event," said senior Patrick Withrow.

"It helps people get to know others. I encourage anyone who sees us Amtgarding out there and thinks 'hey, that looks interesting' to join us. We're very open, very inclusive and we'll go easy on you on your first day."

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SPORTS EVENTS

October

VOLLEYBALL

Oct. 25 @ 1 p.m.
v. Washington & Lee
Ragan Brown Fieldhouse

CROSS COUNTRY

Oct. 27-28
v. O'Briant-Jensen Memorial
@Sedgefield C.C./Pete Dye Course

VOLLEYBALL

Oct. 29 @ 6:30 p.m.
v. Roanoke
Ragan Brown Fieldhouse

MEN'S RUGBY

Oct. 25 @ 11:30 a.m.
v. Gaston RFC & Clayton RFC
Haworth Field