

The Great Bridge Battle of Maldon

Sunday afternoon, Maldon. A collection of loonies, most wearing gambesons rather than mail, trooped down to the dam to engage in deadly combat. The bridge was strong, but could it stand up to the combined weight of those engaged in ritual slaughter? The water was waist-deep, promising excitement and drama.

As if by telepathy, both sides discarded the usual rules of a bridge battle, and sent warriors wading through the murky waters to attack those on the bridge. Many brave crazies rushed into the fray, to have the living shit beaten out of them by warriors equally brave but more skilled (or luckier). Many fell to a watery grave, but got bored with being dead and reincarnated to fight again. In vain did onlookers (Roley, anyway) complain that the bridge was supposed to be across a chasm with jagged rocks below. The warriors still waded into battle.

It was good to see the high degree of sportsmanship and fair play, and comforting to note that nobody blew his stack on being speared from behind, or refused to be dead, or chased his killer all over the field to the boos of the crowd. Yes, only true sportsmen were involved in this conflict.

Then came the moment the whole crowd had been waiting for - the loonies' shield charge. Two young mental defectives, having taken a 600 metre running start, rushed to the centre of the bridge and collided shield to shield. At the moment of impact the helmet of one of the twerps, which was not strapped on because, in the words of a mate "it fits like a condom", rocketed into the air, did a double somersault and landed in the water. They picked themselves up, took another run-up, and did it again.

After the group fights came individual contests. I managed one triumph. Up against one of the only two combatants who still hadn't gone into the drink, I first took out his legs with my spear, and when (apparently unable to feel this) he kept coming, I took him into the water with me. As we both recovered, I retrieved my spear from the water and finished him off to the applause of the multitudes

(which I modestly accepted).

Overall, the bridge battle was extremely enjoyable, at least for the maniacs who took part. By the time it was fought, all the serious fighting and point-scoring had already taken place, and no-one cared who won. We were just there to enjoy ourselves and get wet, which everyone did but Rob, who retired undefeated (and relatively dry).

Perhaps one day, centuries from now, archaeologists will find my sandal, fossilised under the mud of the dam. Maybe it'll start a whole new archaeological theory. Or maybe not. I'm just waiting for the video to come out. (I want to see who belted me in the side and have a few quiet words with him.)

Egfror



ARE WE HAVING FUN YET?