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Gathering of the Clans

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Gathering of the Clans

FURMAN PLAYS HOST TO SCOTTISH GAMES AND HIGHLAND FESTIVAL.

Fans of parades, bagpipe music, sheep-herding, caber tossing and large men in kilts found plenty to their liking at Furman on Saturday, June 10, when the university hosted the Greater Greenville Scottish Games and Highland Festival.

Despite the heat and unrelenting sun, an enthusiastic crowd estimated at 15,000 turned out for the daylong pageantry and competitions. The rugby pitch near Cherrydale was the primary staging area for most of the showcase activities, while the infield at the Irwin W. Belk Complex for Track and Field was the site for the athletic events.

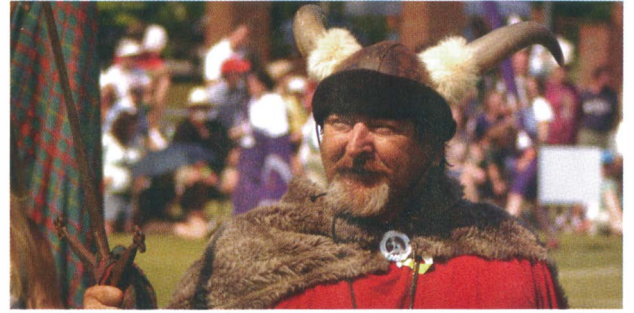
The Games served as the venue for a major competition among 25 pipe bands, as well as for the Southeastern Regional Amateur Scottish Athletic Championship. Throw in such other staples as Highland dancing, Border Collie demonstrations, weaving and sword-making demonstrations, historical displays, food (meat bridies and pasties, anyone?) and children's events, and you had a spectacularly successful experience for all in attendance, including Mark Sanford '83, governor of South Carolina.

Festival officials indicated that participants came from across the nation, Canada and Scotland, and that close to 75 clans were represented.

The festivities actually began on Friday night with a parade of the participants through downtown Greenville, a city whose history has quite a Scottish flair. And amid the pomp and ceremony that accompanied the Saturday events, one spectator was moved to shout, "Makes you want to grab a saber and slay an Englishman."

A wee bit extreme that might be, but the comment was typical of the enthusiasm that welcomed the event to the city and to Furman.







***Clockwise from opposite top:** The march of the clans featured a wide variety of appropriately bedecked representatives; a Border Collie made final calculations in preparation for its moment in the sheep-herding demonstration; athletes competed in seven contests, ranging from throws of 28- and 56-pound weights to a caber toss, in which competitors flipped a large log end-over-end; pipe bands used the occasion to show their precise steps and formations.*

Photos by Charlie Register

