



Houston Area Model United Nations Crisis Committee

War for the English Throne

The Kingdom of England
Triple Joint Crisis Committee
Houston Area Model United Nations 46
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Hello Delegates,

Welcome to the 46th Houston Area Model United Nations Conference! The war for the English Throne, which took place in 1066 was the culmination of conflicts, which occurred after the Vikings came into contact with continental Europe and England. Here each one of you will have a chance to participate in events that took place just before the swords were crossed. The three main participants will be the Kingdom of Norway, the Kingdom of England, and The Duchy of Normandy, along with some of their respective allies.

The Kingdom of Norway is Directed by,

Omama Ahmed, who is a current freshman at Lonestar college with plans to transfer to New York university. She is intending to study public health and has been a delegate in her high school Model UN in the past three years. She has always loved the program and was thrilled when given the opportunity to be a part of the crisis committees. She's very excited to be working with two great Crisis directors for her first year and cannot wait to see how the conference goes.

The Duchy of Normandy is directed by,

Joel Varghese who is a sophomore currently attending Texas A&M University at College Station, studying Industrial Engineering. He has been a part of Model UN, since his sophomore year at high school and he plans on pursuing this passion until he graduates college. His interest in Model U.N stems from his passion in History, Politics and International affairs. Medieval history has always excited him, and he never ignored a chance to study it. Therefore, he is thrilled to be writing this background guide and he hopes that all of you will enjoy this crisis as much as he enjoyed writing this.

The Kingdom of England is directed by,

Adan Leal who is a Junior at UT Austin. I am studying Finance and have been involved in MUN ever since my freshman year in high school, so that makes it, what, 7 years? Well, I guess it has been some time and I am pretty old. I am excited to finally direct one of my favorite periods in history, with one of my favorite ideas of a triple joint crisis committee. I am ecstatic to have been paired with my fellow directors and am ready to see what you guys have in store for us. I am sure we will all have a great time and will learn from each other. See you guys at the conference!

England

Background

Following the Viking invasions led by Sweyn Forkbeard and his son, Cnut, the House of Cerdic fled England and went into exile in Normandy. There they were hosted by the dukes of Normandy, as the wife of king Æthelred the Unready was Emma of Normandy, the daughter of Richard I of Normandy. With the death of Æthelred, the throne of England passed on to Edward, who had no way to enforce his claim, turned to his cousin Duke Robert I, who led an Invasion of England, which failed. After this Edward continued to stay in the Norman court and Robert's successor, William hosted him graciously. After the death of this half-brother Harthacnut, Edward was invited by the Anglo-Saxon nobles to rule England, however there were severe restrictions on his power. Along with this his power was often matched and even exceeded by other Anglo-Saxon nobles, especially from that of the House of Godwin. Due to the need to balance the House of Godwin, Edward turned to his former host, bringing in Norman courtiers, soldiers, and clerics and appointing them to positions of power, particularly in the Church. This led to the establishment of a powerful Norman interest in English politics, as Edward drew heavily on his former hosts for support. Childless and embroiled in conflict with the formidable Godwin, Earl of Wessex and his sons, Edward encouraged Duke William of Normandy's ambitions for the English throne.



Duke William knew that a promise by Edward was not enough to secure his succession to the English throne. Therefore, he had the most powerful Earl in England, Harold Godwinson, swear to him that he will help Richard succeed to the English throne. However, when King Edward died at the beginning of 1066, this promise by King Edward and Earl Harold was not honored and Harold Godwinson, the richest and most powerful of the English aristocrats, was elected king by the Witenagemot of England and crowned by the Archbishop of York, Stigand, the non-canonically elected Archbishop of Canterbury.

To add on to this insult, the King of Norway Harald Hardrada also claimed the throne of England for himself. His claim to the throne is based on an earlier agreement between his predecessor, Magnus the Good, and the earlier English king, Harthacnut, whereby if either died without an heir, the other would inherit both England and Norway. Now the King of Norway is preparing a fleet to invade England. Along with Duke Richard and King Harold, Tostig Godwinson, Harold Godwinson's brother, also laid claim to the throne. But his claim can be

treated as a claim of a usurper. He has a minor army that is assembled in Scotland and is waiting for the opportune moment to invade England.

King Harold of England has gathered all of you, his liegemen, here at Westminster to find an answer to this predicament. He wants your council before he takes any action.

Harold as King

Edward the Confessor, the previous King of England, died in a coma, childless, leaving no clear heir. However, prior to his death, Edward spent many years in Normandy for his exile before his return to England. This prompted his actions of inviting many Normans to positions of importance within the governance of England. Harold succeeded his father as both the influential and powerful Earl of Wessex and a key figure in resisting the increased Norman influence in England. During his reign as Earl, Harold also led campaigns against Welsh forces ending with the death of the Welsh king and success in the war. In addition, Harold moved to save the kingdom from civil war stemming from the doubling of taxes by his brother Tostig. Harold took a side against Tostig, replacing him as Earl of Northumbria. This aided Harold's reputation with the Northern Earls but drove Tostig into marrying into an alliance with King Harald of Norway.



The traditions of the Kingdom of England are noteworthy in how succession was handled during the Anglo-Saxon period. Rather than succession through inheritance like many other kingdoms during these times, the English Throne was decided through a vote by the Witenagemot, a council of the most notable people in the Kingdom. Usually succession is rather simple for the Witons, members of the Witenagemot, simply handing the succession off to the heir of the previous ruler.

However, in the case of Edward the Confessor, succession was no longer a simple task. Edward was childless and very ill at the time of his death and left little in the way of guidance as to who he believed should lead next. Edward only pointed towards a figure that looked similar to Harold on a tapestry while murmuring “protect the kingdom” during his fleeting moments of consciousness from his coma. Following this news, the Witenagemot convened and rallied around Harold to lead the Anglo-Saxons. However, the Normans were quick to point out an oath Harold made to Duke William of Normandy during a shipwrecked journey Harold had for unknown reasons to Normandy. The Normans cried this oath broken due to Harold's acceptance

of the crown, and point to an earlier agreement made before Edward the Confessor ascended to the throne that William would be given the throne, claiming this was the reason for Harold's travels to Normandy, and was solidified during Edward's exile in Normandy since William is in fact a distant relative to Edward. Furthermore, Harald pushed his claim to the throne, stemming from Harthacnut who ruled over Norway, Denmark and England. Harald also looked to his new ally of Tostig to aid his pursuit of the English throne.

Now the Witenagemot are left with the task of advising their newly selected King Harold of England in this perilous time. At odds with two great powers who look for nothing less than the full occupation and conquest of England who just recently started to enjoy her freedom from foreign interests. What will the Witons suggest doing in this greatest of predicaments?

English Character List (Witenagemot)

Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury

Archbishop Stigand is the religious royal advisor to the King and has been. Serving the king before Harold, the king before Edward, and the king before Harthacnut, Cnut. Stigand's long service in his position has led him to a very wealthy position rivaling that of the Godwinsons. He would support a Norwegian interest to the throne- if he had to- but most importantly looks to maintain his position of high importance.

Ealdred, Archbishop of York

Archbishop Ealdred was a loyal servant to Edward. He is a capable military leader and capable abbot turned Archbishop. He worked to return Edgard the Exile back to England from Hungary to return an heir for the childless King Edward the Confessor. However, even with the mission he conducted, Ealdred was still the first to adamantly support Harold's succession to the throne. Ealdred seeks to maintain the church's influence in English affairs and the continuation of Harold's reign.

Edwin, Earl of Mercia

Earl Edwin of Mercia is a notable noble in the English Kingdom. His brother, Earl Morcar was recently ascended as Earl of Northumbria following the deposition of Tostig Godwinson, which came as a surprise to the two brothers as Harold took the side against his own family members. Edwin seeks to maintain the rule of Harold who helped his family and fended off a potential revenge plot by Tostig against either his younger brother Morcar or Harold himself.
Morcar, Earl of Northumbria

Earl Morcar of Northumbria

Earl Morcar of Northumbria is a notable noble in the English Kingdom. Following the aid of Earl Edwin, Earl Morcar was elected to the position of Earl of Northumbria following the result of a war caused by Tostig's increase in taxation. Harold legalized the ascension of Earldom of Morcar. Morcar seeks the continuation of Harold's reign and to defend himself against potential retribution from Tostig Godwinson, who is the deposed Earl of Northumbria who feels betrayed by Harold Godwinson.

Gyrth, Earl of East Anglia

Earl Gyrth of East Anglia is a notable noble of the English Kingdom and a member of house Godwinson, Harold's brother. Earl Gyrth is a strong military commander and capable knight in battle is not afraid to fight head on against encroaching danger. Gyrth seeks to protect his brother's position and thwart off invasions to England as the kingdom has long been the subject to foreign rulers.

Leofwine, Earl of Kent

Earl Leofwine of Kent is a notable noble of the English Kingdom and a member of House Godwinson, younger brother to Harold. Earl Leofwine has won many tournaments before and is a bright strategist in military affairs. Leofwine looks to find military advantages to exploit in favor of the English in the face of invasions and protect his family against opposing forces through his impressive fighting skills.

Cadoc, Earl of Cornwall

Earl Cadoc of Cornwall is a notable noble of the English Kingdom, and one of the few surviving members of the Cornish Royal line. He has the unwavering support of his Cornish subjects and works his best to provide for their interests and protection. Resultantly, he is not the most avid supporter of English actions. Cadoc seeks to preserve Cornish interests and seek the best position for his subjects regardless of the ruler above him.

Waltheof, Earl of Northampton

Earl Waltheof of Northampton is a notable noble of the English Kingdom. He was to succeed the previous ruler of Northumbria, but was far too young, leading to Tostig Godwinson being selected. Waltheof lived a monastic life but was eventually granted the Earldom of Northampton by Harold. Waltheof seeks to both maintain the rulership of Harold, but also return his family's possessions to their name, namely Northumbria.

Wulfstan, Princebishop of Worcester

Princebishop Wulfstan of Worcester was a notable clergyman of the English Kingdom. Wulfstan was originally the treasurer of Worcester, but through political means the previous Bishop, Earldred was forced to abandon the title, seeing Wulfstan take the title. Wulfstan is a friend to Harold, which was another reason for the ascension of Wulfstan to his current position. Wulfstan seeks to remain holy and devout to the faith in his advising to the King and seeks to maintain the position and power of the church in English affairs.

Eadric the Wild, Earl of Shropshire

Earl Eadric of Shropshire is a notable noble in the English Kingdom. He is widely renowned in the kingdom for his skills of riding and fast travel in the forests of England. He is very skilled in scouting and knows the lands of England very well and is 'wild' in his tactics of fighting. Eadric seeks to increase his prestige and renown of his feats and use his skills to help the efforts against hostile forces.

Godwin, de facto Crown Prince of England

Crown Prince Godwin of England is the eldest son of King Harold. Having the normal upbringing of noblemen, he has been trained to fight and negotiate like all noblemen should be able to. After consistent and insistent pressuring on his father, he has been allowed to lead troops into combat even being at an age considered too young to do so. Godwin seeks to make a name for himself and make his father and family proud, even if other nobles resent his early rise to leadership.

Fulbert, Spymaster of England

Spymaster Fulbert has been in service of Harold for many years and is a trusted figure in the English court. He has had no troubles in the past performing rather unfavorable tasks in the service of the Godwinson family. Fulbert seeks to maintain his position and influence in the coming chaos of conflict at all costs, whilst still keeping a projection of loyalty to his current employer.

Rodney, Marshal of the Realm

Marshal Rodney has won the last three tournaments of the realm and caught the attention of many noblemen and women, particularly King Harold. Because of Rodney's unprecedented achievements, Harold hired Rodney as the Marshal of the Realm due to his tactical genius and prowess in combat. Rodney seeks to maintain control of the various lordly forces of the realm and continue to make a name for himself in the world of Anglo-Saxon nobility.

Fremund, Steward of England

Steward Fremund has maintained Westminster for nearly his whole adult life. His knowledge of financing and tax levying is unsurpassed in the realm. However, his advice to previous kings as to tax policies has led to rebellions in the past. Fremund seeks to leverage his influence to be able to fund the upcoming conflicts as well as maintain the position of power Westminster has over all other castles in the realm.

Map of England



Map of Normandy

