

RBL-704

TOURNAMENT TROUBLES



AN EARTHDAWN ADVENTURE BY
CARSTEN DAMM

FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHT

Before science, before history, an era of magic existed in our world's dim past. Magic flowed freely, touching every aspect of the lives of men and women of the Name-giver races. It was an age of heroes, an age of fantastical deeds and mythical stories.

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Earthdawn is a roleplaying game set in a world of high adventure, high magic, and terrible danger. The **Shards** series is a collection of adventures and encounters for the **Earthdawn** game, intended as an inexpensive resource for **Earthdawn** gamemasters.

This volume contains the adventure **Tournament Troubles**, designed for Journeyman characters of any Discipline. In this adventure, the characters are hired as champions to take part in the annual tournament that decides Travar's political fate in the coming year. The group soon realizes that their actions in the tournament have greater consequences than they would have imagined... Requires use of the **Player's and Gamemaster's Compendiums**.



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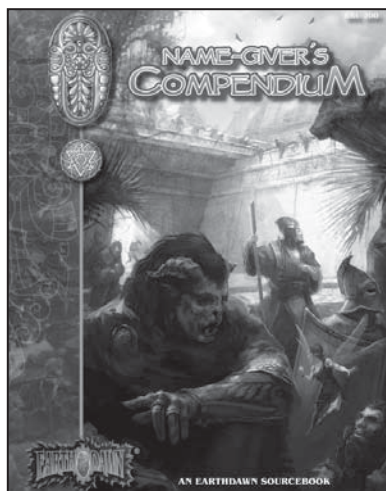
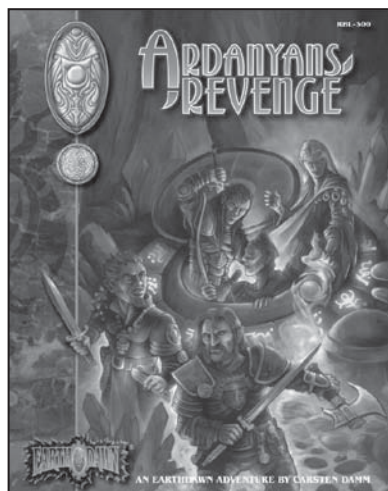


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TOURNAMENT TROUBLES

And the winner is...

• **Jellik Martok, Tournament Barker** •



Tournament Troubles is an **Earthdawn** adventure for three to five Journeyman (Circle 5–8) adepts of any Discipline. The characters are hired as champions to take part in the annual tournament that decides Travar's political fate in the coming year. The group become involved in a major intrigue concerning their employer and his former companions, and soon realize that their actions in the tournament will have greater consequences than they could ever imagine...

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Tournament Troubles is presented as a series of events. Each is described for the gamemaster, who should use the information given to run the event. There is little text to be read aloud to the players, meaning the gamemaster will need to describe many of the scenes to the characters as he sees fit. Where possible, the text describes the terrain and areas the characters encounter, but much of the detail is left to the gamemaster to devise. Running the Foundation requires some preparation, as outlined on p. 24, **Customizing the Tournament**.

One or more player characters should have achieved a **Legendary Status** of at least Level 2 (see **Legendary Status** on p. 430 of the **Player's Compendium**), or have otherwise gathered some renown in Travar (this would be the case if the characters have played through the adventure **Terror in the Skies** (see p. 80 of the **Adventure Compendium**)).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Before the Therans returned to Barsaive, three merchants from Travar shared trade agreements with three t'skrang *aropagoi*—namely House K'tenshin, House Ishkarat, and House Syrtis—to export goods to the faraway reaches of the mighty Serpent River. Their business flourished, but when the Therans landed their behemoth, these contracts became useless due to the blockade near Lake

Ban (see **The Theran Behemoth** on p. 31 of the **Player's Compendium**). The merchants—Galmear, Kôl, and Brelnar, by Name—lost a lot of money and soon broke up in dispute.

The political situation in Barsaive changed considerably in the aftermath of Triumph's arrival, and the fortress' presence has influenced the trade in Travar. As a city-state, Travar is independent from the rest of Barsaive, and its wealth and location make the city of interest to the major powers in the province. Seizing the city would be devastating to the flow of goods and money, but having a say in the composition of Travar's magistrate is something to be desired for the major forces vying for control in Barsaive: the Kingdom of Throal, the Denairastas clan of Iopos, and the Theran Empire.

As citizens of Travar, each of the three merchants possess the right to run for the position of magistrate during the Founding (see p. 30 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information). Not surprisingly, two of them have received interesting offers from their new trading partners: through his contacts in House Ishkarat, Galmear is funded by the Denairastas of Iopos; House K'tenshin funds Brelnar on behalf of its Theran allies. Kôl has recently found out that powerful forces stand behind his former companions. He fears that Travar's existing alliance to Throal could be threatened if either of his opponents succeeds in the Founding, which would lay the groundwork for a political alliance with Thera or Iopos—who would certainly make good use of a puppet Travarian magistrate...

PLOT SYNOPSIS

The adventure assumes that the characters have arrived in Travar already, probably because they want to enjoy the festivities of the annual tournament known as the Founding. A wealthy elven merchant Named Galmear, who wants them to act as his champions, hires them. Galmear, whose secret patrons are the Denairastas, seems late with his decision to become a candidate, as preparations for the tournament started months ago. The elf doesn't seem to

ON THE MAGISTRATE

Lord Alderac Windspear is a pragmatic human who has won his seat in the Magistrate last year. Like Niss Reeves (see below), Windspear is an adept, a Swordmaster, who has combined his adventuring contacts with his fortune to gain his office. He is a natural mediator and shrewd negotiator. His title is not Travarian; his family claims descent from the nobles of Landis. A surprisingly mellow ork, **Xoros Honeyed-tongue** made his fortune producing arms. Controlling a large number of smithies, Xoros holds the charter for the largest fire cannon industry in the province. He won his seat in the Magistrate two years ago, and many of his more powerful clients have since left for Cara Fahd. While his position is safe for now, he is worried about next year's Founding.

Niss Reeves (commonly known as "Sparkling

Niss") is an extravagant troll Weaponsmith who has become one of the most successful jewelers in Barsaive. Despite a public loathing for the Therans, Niss knows better than most how much their trade and magic have benefited Travar. For more information on Niss Reeves, see **Nations of Barsaive, Volume One**, p. 256. Niss has won his magistrate position for four consecutive terms, a remarkable total of twelve years. She originally intended not to run any champions in this year's Founding, sponsoring the dwarf merchant Tovak Byranicus instead—a close friend sharing Niss' close ties to the Dwarf Kingdom. Due to Byranicus' unfortunate and accidental death, however, the troll has changed his mind and taken over Tovak's group of champions to enter the Founding once again.

care about the opposition, however, and is confident that the group is capable of winning.

The Body of Five, a group of magicians responsible for devising the difficult and subtle tests that make up the Founding, keep the plans for this year's tournament in its stronghold—well away from the public and the contestants—and defended by a number of magical traps and other devices. No one can predict from year to year what skills and abilities will be needed to succeed. Several groups taking part in the Founding find it tempting to try and take a look at the plans before the tournament starts. When the characters find out that their rivals might succeed in doing so, the stakes in the upcoming contests are raised.

As the characters prepare for the tournament and gather information about their rivals, Kôl, who has recently found out why his former partners suddenly want to become magistrate and where their money comes from, contacts them. Kôl witnessed how the assassin Bigosh pushed his master Tovak Byranicus from his balcony (see **On the Magistrate**, above, for more information), an incident he almost paid for with his life. While the assassin took great care to make it look like an accident, Kôl is the only one who knows the truth. Bigosh is still looking for Kôl, so the characters are his last chance; he contacts them during the tournament and asks for their help. What the characters do about Kôl's plea is left up to them, but their actions might have a stronger impact on the future of Travar than they initially thought.

The Founding forms the last part of this adventure, where the group is faced with a series of contests. Will they break their oath and betray their loyalty to Galmear? Will they persuade their opponents into betraying their patrons, or even sabotage their equipment to make them lose? Will they ignore Kôl's request and try to win the tournament?

BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

The spectacular tournament known as the Founding involves magic, wild beasts, puzzles, and traps; it is a huge affair lasting more than two weeks. While the tournament is still a few days away, preparations for the contest have begun months ago, and the festivities have already started; the streets of Travar are filled with people and visitors. A few days before the tournament's official beginning, most of the candidates and their champions travel the taverns and inns of the city to win fans and gather support. The taverns and inns are overcrowded and full of music, legends, and the occasional free ale.

MEETING GALMEAR

Whether the characters are in Travar to witness the Founding or because of other business is unimportant for this story, as long as they haven't contracted themselves as champions to another contestant already. On one evening, probably while partying away in one of Travar's taverns, the group is approached by a slender elf with short black hair and clothed like a merchant. The man introduces himself as Galmear, and he seems to have heard about the group's past exploits. He is interested in the group's services and would love to talk to the characters in private. If the characters agree, he invites them for dinner at the Gilded Lizard, a luxurious tavern near the riverside. During the meal, Galmear makes his offer:

"My friends, I want to request your services. I have decided to apply for the position of magistrate in this city; my time has come to get a hand in the politics of Travar. You seem to be capable of solving problems of all kinds, and I am impressed by your past deeds. Of course, my decision comes a bit late, but you can still register to enter the Found-

ing as my champions—if you want to. Don't be fooled by all those other champions that have trained for several months now; it is tradition that the details of the contest will not be revealed until the contest begins, so they have a tendency to train for every possible contingency. Tell me, what good is month-long training if you don't know what challenge the Body of Five has dreamed up this year? I count on your abilities to improve to win this tournament in my Name.

Anyway, I'd be very grateful if you took my offer and promise to support me as a candidate. There are enough funds in my coffers to supply you with the best equipment and I would be grateful to pay you for your generous services. I want you to win, of course, so I will do all I can to see that you remain in good shape.

What do you think? Do you want to witness the tournament from within the arena or do you want to try your luck in first finding and then paying a horrendous price for a ticket?"



GALMEAR, ELVEN MERCHANT

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10
Toughness (8): 4/D6
Willpower (11): 5/D8

Strength (10): 5/D8
Perception (13): 6/D10
Charisma (13): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7

Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 1

Death Rating: 28
Wound Threshold: 7
Unconsciousness Rating: 19

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 5/D8

Combat Movement: 28 **Full Movement:** 56

Skills

Artisan:

Robe Embroidery (2): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Blood Magic Oaths (4): 10/D10+D6
Serpent River Trade Routes (5): 11/D10+D8
Travar Politics (2): 8/2D6
T'skrang Politics (2): 8/2D6

General:

Conversation (5): 11/D10+D8
Evaluate (5): 11/D10+D8
Haggle (5): 11/D10+D8
Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6
Read and Write Language (2): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), *Sperethiel*
Speak Language (8): 14/D20+D4
—Dwarf (Throalic), Human, Obsidiman, *Or'zet*, *Sperethiel*, Troll, T'skrang, Windling
Trading (5): 11/D10+D8

Equipment

Leather (Phys 3)

Dagger (Damage 7/D12;
Range 9–15–18)
Short Sword (Damage 9/D8+D6;
w/scabbard)

Embroidered Robes
Embroidery Tools
Quiet Pouch
Wealthy Traveler's Garb

Loot

5 gold pieces, 50 silver pieces,
50 copper pieces

Legend Points

100 Legend Points

Notes

Galmear possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

The Oath

If the characters agree to the elf's basic terms, he continues:

"One thing I have to ask of you is a pledge of loyalty, traditionally sealed with blood. You can't promise to win the contest of course, but you can at least promise that you will do your best to achieve victory."

If the players are reluctant to swear the promise, Galmear says:

"Look, we've just met each other. I do believe in your abilities and I am confident that you're good folk. Based on what I've heard, I offer you my wealth and my hospitality, so I can't see why you shouldn't be willing to seal the deal with blood? Consider that my blood is part of the promise as well."

Galmear is willing to negotiate the content of the blood oath, but insists on sealing it. The oath must include that the character(s) will remain loyal to Galmear and that they will try to achieve victory in the Founding. Here is Galmear's initial suggestion:

"I, [Character Name and Discipline], *promise to enter the Founding as champion. I pledge my loyalty to Galmear and shall try to win the tournament by any means necessary.*"

In addition to the above, each character can specify a talent which he will use to fulfill that promise, gaining a bonus while using it in return, as outlined on p. 261 of the **Player's Compendium**. Galmear swears the following oath in return:

"I, Galmear, elven merchant of Travar, *promise to enter the Founding as contestant. I pledge my loyalty to my champions and will provide them with proper training, lodging, and equipment.*"

The elf doesn't specify any talents or skills, so he won't get any bonuses. His promise to pay for everything should suffice in this case, however.

Once the characters have pledged their loyalty, Galmear hands them a number of copper pieces—one per character. These pennies (as he calls them) allow the characters to meet Bel-Tok, a man who is supposed to supply them with everything they need. Bel-Tok is a regular in the Broken Cutlass tavern.

Refusing Galmear's Offer

The group can refuse Galmear's offer, but that may very well end their lives. If so, Galmear leaves and then has the characters at the mercy of his trusted assassin, Bigosh.

BIGOSH THE SNIPER, ELVEN ARCHER

Attributes

Dexterity (20): 8/2D6

Toughness (12): 5/D8

Willpower (17): 7/D12

Strength (16): 7/D12

Perception (19): 8/2D6

Charisma (15): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 14

Spell Defense: 12

Social Defense: 10

Initiative: 8/2D6

Physical Armor: 7

Mystic Armor: 6

Death Rating: 34 (94)

Wound Threshold: 9

Unconsciousness Rating: 26 (76)

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 7/D12*

* Bigosh knows the Wound Balance talent

Combat Movement: 43

Full Movement: 86

Karma Points: 25

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents (Knacks)

Avoid Blow (10): 18/D20+D12

Bank Shot^D (9): 17/D20+D10 (Backbiter)

Call Arrow^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Direction Arrow^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Durability (6/5) (10): 10

Eagle Eye^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Flame Arrow^D (9): 16/D20+D8 (Spirit Flame)

Karma Ritual (9): 9

Melee Weapons (9): 17/D20+D10

Missile Weapons^D (10): 18/D20+D12 (Placed Shot)

Mystic Aim^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Silent Walk (9): 17/D20+D10

Sprint (9): 17/D20+D10

Stopping Aim^D (9): 15/D20+D6

Thread Weaving (Arrow Weaving)^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Throwing Weapons^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Trace Missile^D (9): 17/D20+D10

True Shot (9): 17/D20+D10

Wound Balance (9): 16/D20+D8

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.
Italicized talents require Karma.

Skills

Artisan:

Craftsman; Tailor (5): 13/D12+D10

Knowledge:

Alchemy and Potions (5): 13/D12+D10

Camouflage (5): 13/D12+D10

Iopos History (5): 13/D12+D10

Travar History (2): 10/D10+D6

General:

Alchemy (5): 13/D12+D10

Conceal Weapon (4): 12/2D10

Hunting (2): 10/D10+D6

Physician (5): 13/D12+D10

Read and Write Language (3): 11/D10+D8

—Dwarf (Throalic), Human, *Sperethiel*

Resist Taunt (5): 12/2D10

Speak Language (4): 12/2D10

—Dwarf (Throalic), Human, *Sperethiel*, T'skrang

Streetwise (5): 13/D12+D10

Surprise Strike (5): 12/2D10

Tracking (5): 13/D12+D10

Wilderness Survival (2): 10/D10+D6

Equipment

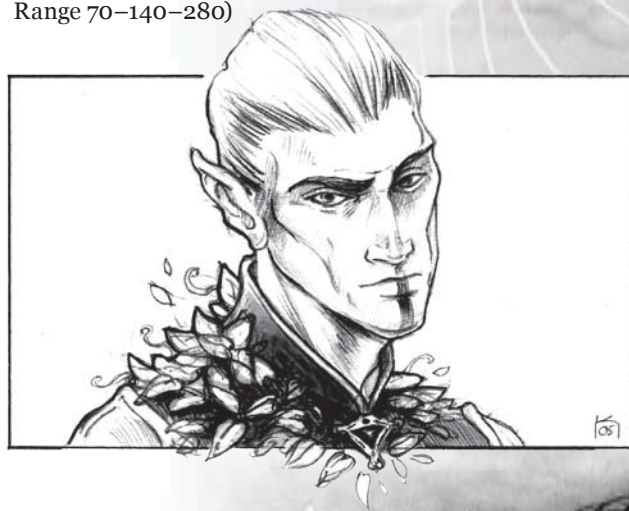
Thread Leather (Rank 4; Phys 5; Myst 3)

Broadsword (Forged +3; Damage 15/D20+D6; Poisoned with shadowmant venom [SD 8; Damage 9/D8+D6]; w/scabbard)

2 × Daggers (Forged +1; Damage 10/D10+D6; Poisoned with black brine [SD 6; Debilitation 9/D8+D6]; Range 9–15–18)

2 × Hawk Hatchets (Damage 11/D10+D8; Range 24–40–48)

Thread Longbow (Rank 3; Damage 14/D20+D4; Range 70–140–280)



Quiver (w/40 longbow arrows; Poisoned with black brine [SD 6; Debilitation 9/D8+D6])

Thread Boots (Rank 4; PhysDef +3; Climbing rank +1; Climbing (1): 9/D8+D6)

Thread Cloak (Rank 4; Phys 2; SocDef +2; SpellDef +1)

Adventurer's Kit

3 × Booster Potions

3 × Vials of Black Brine Poison (SD 6; Debilitation 9/D8+D6)

Climbing Tools

2 × Craftsman Tools

Healing Kit (3 uses)

3 × Kelia's Antidotes; Black Brine

Kelia's Antidote

Kelix's Poultice

Quiet Pouch

Physician Kit (3 uses)

Vial of Shadowmant Venom (SD 8; Damage 9/D8+D6)

Trail Ration (1 week)

Traveler's Garb

Alchemy Kit (at Galmear's shop)

Loot

55 gold pieces

Legend Points

2,025 Legend Points

Notes

Bigosh possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Fourth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-only Tests

Fifth Circle: Karma on Perception-only Tests

Sixth Circle: +1 Physical Defense

Seventh Circle: Karma on missile weapons Damage Tests

Eighth Circle: +1 Spell Defense

Ninth Circle: Karma on Recovery Tests; +1 Recovery Test/day

Commentary

Bigosh is usually dressed in inconspicuous colors, which are dependent on his current surroundings. As a master assassin, he has achieved Ninth Circle in his Discipline, and has fallen to the sniper's way (see p. 74 of the **Player's Compendium**). Bigosh has accumulated 9 Temptation Points as a sniper. He is loyal to Iopos and has been sent to take care of Galmear's dirty laundry. The assassin will watch the characters' every step, and will report to Galmear frequently. Bigosh also has an eye out for Kôl, and will kill him if he gets a chance; the human escaped him once, but he certainly won't do so again ...

Investigating Galmear

If the characters decide to investigate the background of their employer, they find out about the business relationship he had with the human merchants Kôl and Brelmar, who turn out to be candidates in this year's Founding as well. If asked, everyone the characters meet doubts Galmear has dirty laundry. He and his colleagues dealt with the t'skrang

aropagoi of the Serpent River (although no one is sure which House), and their reputations seem to be solid.

If the characters seek further information on Kôl, they find out that he worked for a dwarf merchant Named Tovak Byranicus before he vanished. Tovak fell to his death from his balcony a couple of days ago, and some people suspect Kôl might have murdered him since he hasn't been seen since the murder—although no one could fathom why. The characters also learn that the investigators of Travar's city guard are looking for Kôl (of course, the official investigators might raise an eyebrow about the group's inquiries).

Collecting further information on Brelmar may attract the attention of the Theran agents working to protect him. As with Galmear, everyone the characters meet will mention his good reputation, although someone might remember that Brelmar also worked as ambassador for House K'tenshin before they allied with the Therans. If the characters find out about the connection, the Theran agents may get wind of this and intervene—by poisoning the informant the characters spoke to and attacking the characters in a dark alley. The following statistics represent human non-adept Theran agents.

THERAN AGENTS

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10

Toughness (15): 6/D10

Willpower (11): 5/D8

Strength (16): 7/D12

Perception (14): 6/D10

Charisma (14): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8

Spell Defense: 8

Social Defense: 8

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Armor: 5

Mystic Armor: 1

Death Rating: 38

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 30

Recovery Tests: 3

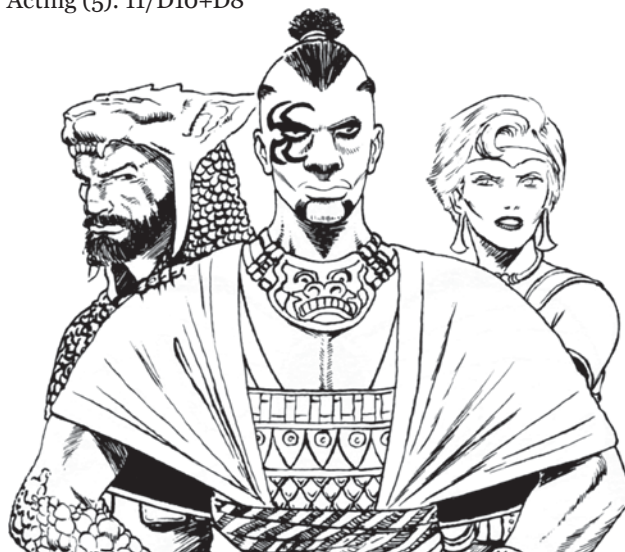
Knockdown: 7/D12

Combat Movement: 28 **Full Movement:** 56

Skills

Artisan:

Acting (5): 11/D10+D8



Knowledge:

Theran Politics (2): 8/2D6
 Travar Politics (3): 9/D8+D6
 T'skrang Politics (2): 8/2D6

General:

Avoid Blow (3): 9/D8+D6
 Conceal Weapon (5): 11/D10+D8
 Lip Reading (5): 11/D10+D8
 Melee Weapons (5): 11/D10+D8
 Missile Weapons (5): 11/D10+D8
 Read and Write Language (2): 8/2D6
 —Dwarf (Throalic), Theran
 Riposte (3): 9/D8+D6
 Silent Walk (5): 11/D10+D8
 Speak Language (3): 9/D8+D6
 —Dwarf (Throalic), Human, Theran
 Surprise Strike (2): 9/D8+D6
 Streetwise (3): 9/D8+D6
 Throwing Weapons (2): 8/2D6

Equipment

Buckler (Phys 1; Shatter 17)
 Padded Leather (Phys 4)

Broadsword (Damage 12/2D10; w/scabbard)
 2 × Daggers (Damage 9/D8+D6; Poisoned with keesra
 [SD7; Sleep 10/D10+D6]; Range 9–15–18)
 Medium Crossbow (Damage 12/2D10; Range 70–140–280)
 Quiver (w/15 medium crossbow bolts)

Adventurer's Kit
 Belt Pouch
 2 × Flasks of Oil
 Hooded Lantern
 2 × Vials of Keesra Poison (SD 7; Sleep 10/D10+D6)
 2 × Kelia's Antidotes
 Kelix's Poultice
 Trail Rations (1 week)
 Traveler's Garb

Loot

D8 silver pieces

Legend Points

230 Legend Points

KEY TO SUCCESS

Bel-Tok can indeed be found at the Broken Cutlass, or rather in front of it. The Broken Cutlass is a seedy place in an even seedier part of Travar, frequented by ex-Sky Raiders; more than a few who still engage in piracy. Although the inn is a place with some history, the clientele is pretty rough. Bel-Tok was recently thrown out of the place, and now is squatting on the other side of the street. The old ork looks and smells like a bum, and appears to be completely drunk; he's definitely not a pretty sight. This changes as soon as one of the characters produces one of the pennies given to him by Galmear. Bel-Tok's drunkenness seems to

be gone in an instant and he grabs the coin offered to him, asking the characters to follow him into a nearby alley. Bel-Tok is an ork Fifth Circle Thief.

BEL-TOK THE TOOTHLESS, ORK THIEF**Attributes**

Dexterity (13): 6/D10 **Strength** (15): 6/D10
Toughness (14): 6/D10 **Perception** (17): 7/D12
Willpower (8): 4/D6 **Charisma** (7): 4/D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7 **Initiative:** 6/D10
Spell Defense: 9 **Physical Armor:** 5
Social Defense: 5 **Mystic Armor:** 3
Death Rating: 35 (65)* **Recovery Tests:** 3
Wound Threshold: 10 **Knockdown:** 6/D10
Unconsciousness Rating: 27 (52)*

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 28 **Full Movement:** 56
Karma Points: 20 **Karma Step:** 5/D8

Talents (Knacks)

Avoid Blow^D (5): 11/D10+D8
 Climbing (5): 11/D10+D8
 Detect Trap (5): 12/2D10
 Disarm Trap^D (5): 11/D10+D8
 Durability (6/5) (5): 5
 Fence^D (5): 9/D8+D6 (Covet Item)
 Karma Ritual (5): 5
 Lock Picking^D (5): 11/D10+D8
 Lock Sense^D (5): 12/2D10
 Melee Weapons (6): 12/2D10
 Picking Pockets^D (5): 11/D10+D8 (Offguard)
 Silent Walk^D (6): 12/2D10 (Shadow Hide)
 Surprise Strike^D (5): 11/D10+D8
 Thread Weaving (Thief Weaving)^D (4): 11/D10+D8
 (Thread Masking)
 Trap Initiative^D (5): 11/D10+D8

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills**Artisan:**

Acting (3): 7/D12

Knowledge:

Information Gathering (3): 10/D10+D6
 Rare Currency (3): 10/D10+D6
 Travar History (5): 12/2D10

General:

Conceal Weapon (2): 8/2D6
 Evaluate (3): 10/D10+D6
 Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6
 —Dwarf (Throalic)
 Speak Language (2): 9/D8+D6
 —Dwarf (Throalic), Or'zet
 Streetwise (3): 10/D10+D6
 Trading (3): 7/D12

Equipment

Thread Leather (Rank 4; Phys 5; Myst 3)

Short Sword (Forged +2; Damage 12/2D10; w/scabbard)
2 × Daggers (Damage 8/2D6; Range 9–15–18)

Climbing Kit
Healing Potion
Hooded Mask
Quiet Fingers
Quiet Pouch
Peasant's Garb

Loot

10 Bel-Tok Pennies, 90 silver pieces

Legend Points

325 Legend Points

Notes

Bel-Tok possesses the ork racial abilities of Low-Light Vision and *Gahad*.

Fourth Circle: Thieves' Tongue (1 Damage Point)

Fifth Circle: Karma on Perception-only Tests

Commentary

Bel-Tok knows Travar like the secret pockets of his dirty robe, and he hears many things. While the old ork appears to be blunt, stinking, and simple at first glance, he is keen-witted and very perceptive. His hood conceals his face, which bears a large scar from an old Blood Wound, and a toothless mouth. Bel-Tok seems to be an oath-breaker, but he refuses to talk about what happened. Asking him about the scar triggers his *gahad*.

The old ork collects copper coins dubbed Bel-Tok pennies. These coins are of Throalic origin, minted in 1474 TH. A coin like this gets Bel-Tok talking; the old ork is willing to do almost anything for it. However, he doesn't like people inquiring about or (even worse) teasing him with these coins. Whenever this happens, Bel-Tok's *gahad* is triggered.

When the characters first meet Bel-Tok, he has an Unfriendly attitude towards them (see p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on **Gamemaster Character Attitudes**). If they give him one or more Bel-Tok pennies, his attitude improves to Neutral.

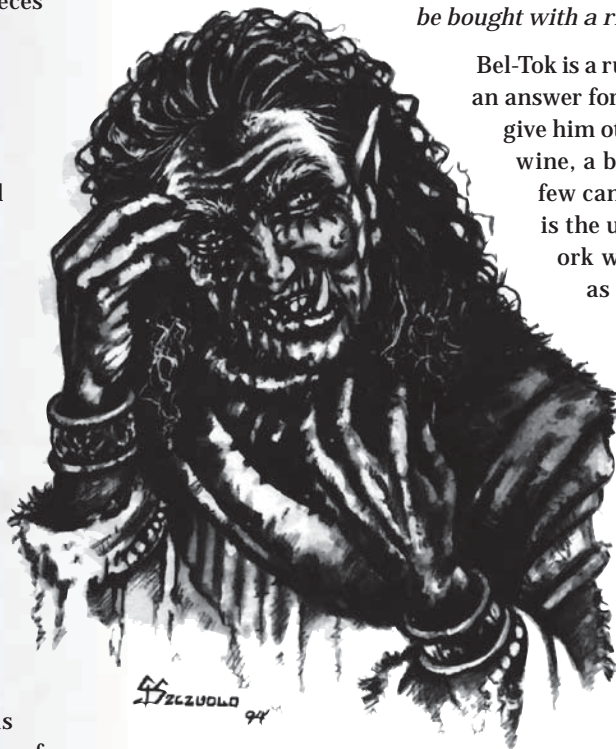
TALKING TO BEL-TOK

The old ork asks the characters what they need. He seems to be able to arrange any equipment the group needs,

with the notable exception of forged weapons and magical treasures. The characters can also get housing at an inn of their own choosing; all they have to do is tell Bel-Tok where they stay and he arranges for their bills to be paid.

If a character asks for information, Bel-Tok replies:

"You seek answers, eh? Many people do that in Travar, let me tell ya—especially during the Founding. Every git wants to know what the other groups are up to. Some even want to know what those blasted spellslingers of the Body o' Five have cooked up in their tower this year. Fortunately, these people come asking me. Unfortunately for you, answers like these are a commodity that cannot be bought with a rich merchant's money."



Bel-Tok is a rumormonger, but he never gives an answer for money. The characters have to give him other things in return: a bottle of wine, a blanket to keep him warm, or a few candles for light. The gamemaster is the ultimate arbiter on what the old ork will be happy with, but as long as the characters barter stuff in exchange for information, they should be able to get the following answers with little trouble:

On Galmear

"Trust me, Galmear is the best that can happen to this city. He's wise and has proven his worth in the past. I think we can only benefit from his decisions. I can't imagine him being involved in any crime or a conspiracy of any kind, to be honest. That'd fit his former partner though—that ruthless bastard Named Brelmar. He's power-hungry and cold as ice, but still considered an honest man by most people."

On Tovak's Death

"These things happen. I'm not convinced it was murder although I heard rumors that one of his employees was involved and has vanished since then. Poor human wretch Named Kôl, he lost his business when the dreaded Therans came back in their flying fortresses. He lost almost everything, and I heard he foul-mouthed Galmear a while back. Probably because he thought the elf was responsible for his loss. It's pure envy that drove him, for all I know. But murder? On a dwarf with close ties to the Ambassador of Throal? Yeah, right..."

On the Founding

"This tournament drives the city crazy for two weeks. The show is spectacular and different every



year. There are usually more than ten dozen champions taking part for their masters. There are two festivals: the first one introduces the competitors and their champions at the beginning of the tournament, and the second festival celebrates the winners at the end. The two weeks in between are different every time, but there's usually a series of contests, each lasting for a couple of days. There's also some downtime for the champions, when they can heal and rest. No rest for the crowd, however, as they want to be entertained with all kinds of attractions all day and night. There're more Troubadours about than you can count at this time of the year. Be wary of Thieves as well, some come all the way from Kratas only to pick yer pockets... Tickets for the arena are very expensive, by the way. I could arrange for some, but I doubt you'll need 'em."

On the Opposition

"Most of the contestants hire a group of champions, just to be on the safe side. Some even enter as their own champions, but those poor lads almost never win. Heavy coins buy big Names, and you'll see some of the living legends taking part in this year's Founding. Believe me—many of those adepts are worth their money."

As mentioned in **Customizing the Tournament** (see p. 24), the gamemaster should come up with a list of contestants taking part in the tournament, and a list of the most prominent champions. The players should realize that

the tournament (whatever challenges it may provide) is not going to be a walk in the park. In fact, they should realize that their chance of losing the contest is pretty good. The following warning will help with that, and also contains a hint for the group:

"You should be wary, though, as not all of 'em fight with fair means. I'm not talking about bloodshed (although that happens), but there are people asking for a peek at the Body o' Five's plans. Did I tell them where to find the plans? Perhaps I did, perhaps I didn't."

If the players want to know who asked Bel-Tok about the plans, he'll refuse to answer; not even a Bel-Tok penny causes him to state Names. He does, however, offer the same answer he gave to the 'others' if the characters want to know. Of course, he wants a Bel-Tok-penny in return. Bel-Tok is also willing to share the following information if the characters managed to increase his Attitude to Loyal (i.e. if they made Bel-Tok believe in their worth):

"There are more rumors about these magicians than facts, you know? That's perhaps because their building is a small fortress and they don't talk about what they're doing in there. People know that the Body o' Five do the plans for the Founding, but they don't know how. There are more than five magicians, though. There's one master magician for each Discipline, plus the Guild Master. Each of them has a number of students and apprentices, but it's not known how many there are in total."

"The tower of the Body o' Five is where they hide the plans. It's an impenetrable fortress, with no direct way in or out. Magic wards and spirits of all kinds 're guarding the place, too. I do know how the spellslingers get in, though: they use a portal from their Guild Master's home. That one is easy to reach and rather simple to pass. I've seen it myself: pretty easy way in; if you can get past the molgrim gurding the house. I think the spellslinger is pretty sure that no one knows about the existence of the portal. He has every right to be. But then, he has no idea that someone like me could see through his petty deception."

Bel-Tok asks for another penny before sharing his secret:

"The main ward to the room containing the plans is 'chmain'ya go mal Pash'. I'm not sure what language that is but I'm sure it's got something to do with someone's mother. You'll need to be careful though—stealing the plans isn't a good idea. People will notice. But having a glance would work. You just need to be good at memorizing stuff, eh? Harr harr harr!"

The old ork gives the characters a description of where to find the guild house and the tavern. A description of the tower is provided in **The Body of Five** on p. 14, and the villa is described below.

TR?UBLES?TING

Some characters might be put off by the fact that attempting to get hold of the plans would be cheating and is probably illegal and definitely not heroic. If the characters refuse to enter the stronghold of the Body of Five outright, then don't force them. In that case, the gamemaster needs to juggle the following events a little and play parts of **Enemy Mine** first (see p. 21). Brelnar's champions will have acquired the plans in any case, and will investigate the group regardless of the characters' actions, suspecting that the group might have done the same thing (Brelnar's group may brag about this in front of the characters). As long as the group doesn't find proof they could show someone to disqualify Brelnar's champions, the player characters should be able to find out they have seen the plans and therefore have an edge.

Also, Kôl will approach the group as soon as he gets the chance when Galmear isn't present. Kôl will relate his story (see **Enemy Mine** on p. 21) and tell them about his former partners' secret contacts. Kôl will suggest getting the plans if possible, since that information is the only way the group can prevent the other teams from winning. Of course, the group does not necessarily have to meet Brelnar's champions *in flagrante* if the story takes this turn (see **Déjà Vu**, p. 16).

THE VILLA

As mentioned by Bel-Tok, the only point of entrance for the characters is the portal located within the tower. The other end of the portal is located in the villa of Guild Master Oman Odestrus, which is much easier to enter than the tower itself. All the characters have to do is break into Oman's villa and enter the portal.

OMAN ODESTRUS' VILLA

The villa of the Guild Master is located in the wealthiest part of Travar, surrounded by a high wall. Refer to the map on p. 11 for a general layout of the building. The portal can be found in the spire, which serves as the Guild Master's private study (see below). The exact layout of the buildings is left for the gamemaster to devise.

Garden

A wall five yards high, with glass shards on top, surrounds the garden of the villa. The massive hardwood gate carries the Body of Five sigil. The garden also has a shed holding three trained molgrim (see p. 12). These creatures watch over the premises, and are trained to warn of any intruders (as well as attack them). The Molgrim are usually held in a pen when Oman Odestrus has visitors.

Slaves' House

The slaves' house does not hold anything of interest to the characters, but is home to half a dozen people that may alert the city guard and the Guild Master. The house holds a small kitchen, a common room, a workshop, and two sleeping rooms. The slaves are human non-adepts.

HUMAN SLAVES

Attributes

Dexterity (11): 5/D8
Toughness (11): 5/D8
Willpower (11): 5/D8

Strength (11): 5/D8
Perception (13): 6/D10
Charisma (13): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7

Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 1

Death Rating: 32
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 24

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 5/D8

Combat Movement: 22 **Full Movement:** 44

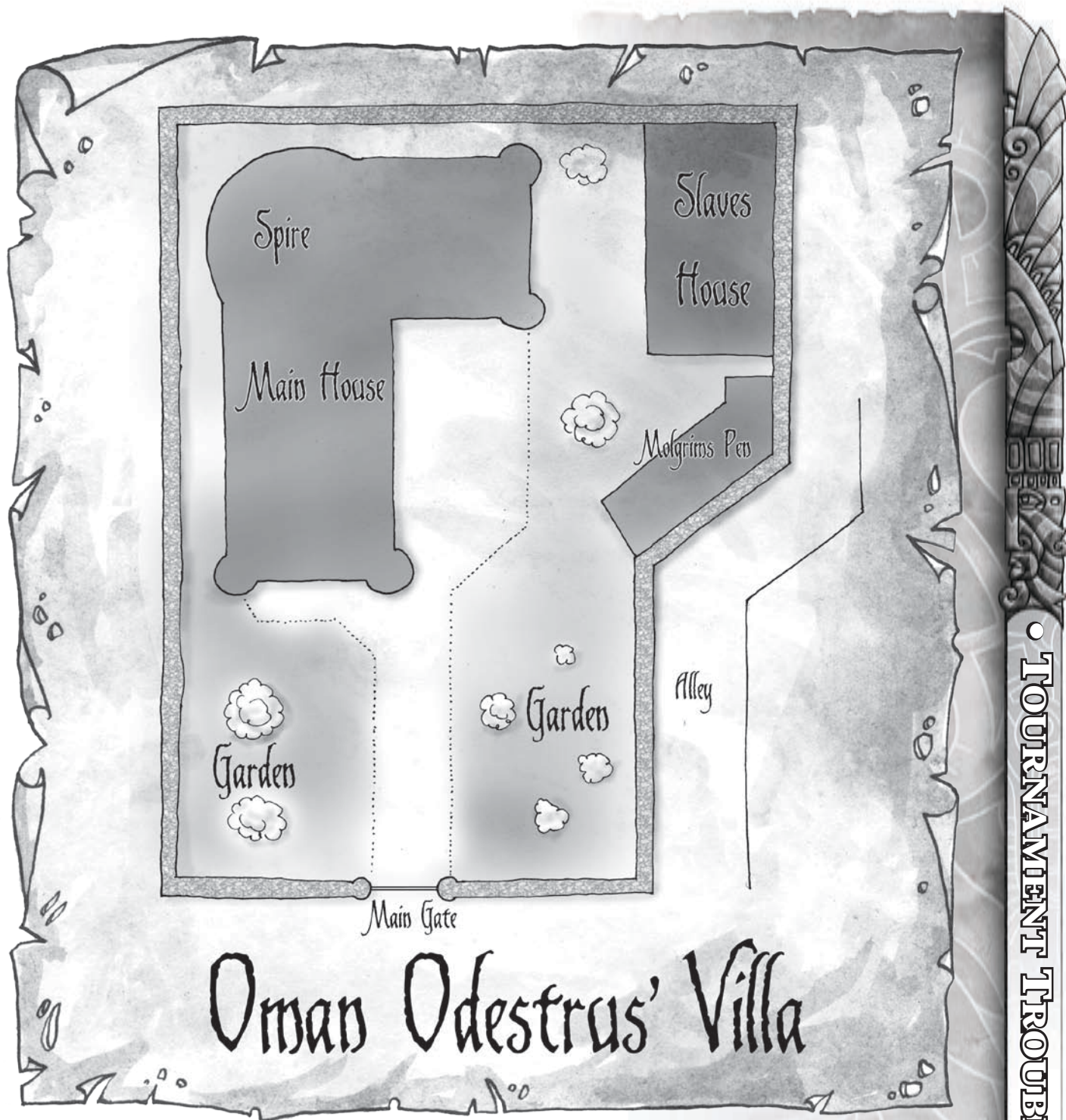
Skills

Artisan:

Craftsman; Gardening (1): 6/D10

Knowledge:

Botany (1): 7/D12
 Cleaning (1): 7/D12
 Cooking (1): 7/D12
 Creature Lore (1): 7/D12



Oman Odestrus' Villa

General:

Animal Bond (1): 7/D12
 Animal Handling (1): 6/D10
 Read and Write Language (1): 7/D12
 —Dwarf (Throalic)
 Search (1): 7/D12
 Speak Language (2): 8/2D6
 —Dwarf (Throalic), Human

Equipment

Craftsman Tools
 Peasant's Garb

Loot

None

Legend Points

40 Legend Points

Commentary

These slaves were brought in from the markets outside Travar's walls. Unlike other households in Travar, Oman Odestrus pays the high taxes on slavery rather than freeing his slaves and employing them as servants.

Main House

Oman's villa is grand in almost every respect. A large entrance hall leads to a ballroom, a large kitchen, several guest rooms, Oman's private rooms, and a stone garden at the center of the villa. The spire is reachable from the stone garden, where a long stair leads up to the spire's entrance door. The entrance door is locked, and requires a magical key to open. The Lock Picking Difficulty Number is 15, in case a Thief character wants to push his luck and open the door without looking for the key first (it can be found in Oman's private rooms).

Spire

The spire is a small tower holding the Guild Master's private laboratory, his library, and a study at the top. The study also contains the portal connecting directly into the guild house (see the **Portal Platform**, on p. 14).

GETTING INTO THE GUILD HOUSE

The characters must enter and exit the portal unnoticed, so they have to employ stealth or diversionary tactics. A fight would be fatal, as would be a servant spotting them from a distance. It's virtually impossible to foresee how the characters will make their move, but the gamemaster should reward clever ideas. Oman doesn't employ any magical traps or locks except for the lock barring the spire's entrance door.

TAME MOLGRIM (3)

DEX: 9	STR: 10	TOU: 9
PER: 4	WIL: 6	CHA: 6
Initiative: 9	Physical Defense: 12	
Number of Actions: 2	Spell Defense: 9	
Attack (5): 14	Social Defense: 10	
Damage:	Physical Armor: 8	
Bite (4): 14	Mystic Armor: 4	
2 × Claws (2): 12		
Death Rating: 48 (78)	Recovery Tests: 4	
Wound Threshold: 14	Knockdown: 10	
Unconsciousness Rating: 41 (66)		
Combat Movement: 64	Full Movement: 128	
Powers: Climbing ^S (5): 14, Durability (5), Great Leap ^S (5): 14		
Legend Points: 355		
Equipment: None		
Loot: None		

Commentary

Molgrim are hideous creatures, combining bits and pieces of many different creatures into a truly sickening whole. Moderately sized, these carnivores are about as tall as a large bear, but much broader, with a deep and powerful chest. Its back slopes like a toad's, and it has frog-like hind legs with which it can make prodigious leaps. Its forelegs, though smaller, are as strong as a human's arms, and the



three fingers on its broad hands are tipped with claws as long and broad as a human's forefinger. Even though it looks like a large and ugly frog, the molgrim is not an amphibian. Its hide is not moist like a frog's, but dry and tough like imperfectly cured leather. Short, thick, oily fur grows from its mottled skin, light-colored on the back and darker on the belly. These molgrims are gray around the spine, black underneath. Each creature's head is too large for its body, and the shape of its skull is unusual. Most of the head looks bear-like, but the molgrim has a large beak in place of a snout. Wickedly hooked and sharp as a dragon's claws, this beak is perfect for tearing flesh.

See p. 324 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information and rules on this creature.

OMAN ODESTRUS, TWELFTH CIRCLE HUMAN WIZARD

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10	Strength (11): 5/D8
Toughness (11): 5/D8	Perception (19): 8/2D6
Willpower (19): 8/2D6	Charisma (16): 7/D12

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 12	Initiative: 6/D10
Spell Defense: 17	Physical Armor: 7
Social Defense: 11	Mystic Armor: 7

Death Rating: 30 (78)*	Recovery Tests: 2
Wound Threshold: 8	Knockdown: 5/D8
Unconsciousness Rating: 22 (58)*	

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 28	Full Movement: 56
Karma Points: 40	Karma Step: 5/D8

Talents (Knacks)

Arcane Mutterings ^D (12): 19/D20+2D6
Armored Matrix (12): 12
Armored Matrix (12): 12

Armored Matrix (12): 12
 Astral Sight^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6 (Diagnose)
 Book Memory^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6 (Remember Conversation)
 Book Recall^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Casting Pattern^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Durability (4/3) (12): 12
 Enhanced Matrix (12): 12
 Enhanced Matrix (12): 12
 Evidence Analysis^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Hold Thread^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Karma Ritual (12): 12
 Life Check (12): 17/D20+D10
Lip Reading (12): 19/D20+2D6
 Lifesight^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Matrix Strike^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Range Pattern^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Read and Write Language^D (8): 16/D20+D8
 —Human, Obsidiman, *Or'zet*, *Sperethiel*, Theran, Troll, T'skrang, Windling
 Read and Write Magic^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Resist Taunt (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Speak Language^D (9): 17/D20+D10
 —Cathan, Obsidiman, *Or'zet*, Scavian, *Sperethiel*, Theran, Troll, T'skrang, Windling
 Spellcasting^D (13): 23/D20+2D10* (Anchored Spell)
 Spell Matrix (12): 12
 Spell Matrix (12): 12
 Spell Matrix (12): 12
 Thread Weaving (Wizardry)^D (13): 21/D20+D10+D6
 Willforce (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Wound Transfer^D (12): 20/D20+D8+D6
 Versatility (4): 4
 Animal Bond^V (5): 12/2D10



Animal Training^V (5): 12/2D10
 Dominate Beast^V (7): 15/D20+D6
Item History^V (4): 12/2D10

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.
^V Indicates a talent learned through Versatility.
Italicized talents require Karma.
 * Talent modified by +2 Spellcasting bonus from Thread Wand.

Skills

Artisan:

Robe Embroidery (7): 14/D20+D4

Knowledge:

Alchemy and Potions (7): 15/D20+D6
 Botany (7): 15/D20+D6
 Court Dancing (7): 15/D20+D6
 Creature Lore (7): 15/D20+D6
 Travar History (7): 15/D20+D6

General:

Alchemy (7): 15/D20+D6
 Conversation (7): 14/D20+D4
 Physician (7): 15/D20+D6
 Read and Write Language (1): 9/D8+D6
 —Dwarf (Throalic)
 Research (7): 15/D20+D6
 Speak Language (2): 10/D10+D6
 —Dwarf (Throalic), Human
 Streetwise (7): 15/D20+D6

Equipment

Thread Wyvern Skin Robe (Muddy-brown in color;
 Rank 4; Phys 7; Myst 4)

Quarterstaff (Damage 7/D12)

Thread Bracers (Rank 4; PhysDef +2; SpellDef +2)

Thread Vial (Rank 4; One minor Healing Potion per day;
 +7 Recovery Test or heals 1 Wound)

Thread Wand (Rank 4; SpellDef +2; Spellcasting Tests +2;
 spell Effect Tests +1)

Arcane Tomes

2 × Booster Potions

Embroidered Robe

Embroidery Tools

Healing Kit (3 uses)

Kelix's Poultice

Quiet Pouch

Physician Kit (3 uses)

Salve of Closure

Scrolls

Wealthy Traveler's Garb

Writing Kit

Grimoire

Alchemy Lab (in spire)

Spells

Alter Form, And His Money, Aura Strike, Bedazzling
 Display of Logical Analysis, Block Magic, Clean,
 Counterspell^M, Crushing Will, Dispel Magic^E, Divine
 Aura, False Aura, Hold Pattern, Inventory, Juggler's Touch,
 Leaps and Bounds^M, Lightning Cloud, Mental Library,
 Mind Dagger^M, Notice Not, Observe Event, Safe

Opening^A, Sanctuary, Seal^E, Shatter Lock, Silent Converse, Sleep^A, Tell Tale, Triangulate, Trust^A, Wake-Up Call, Wall Walker, Wizard's Cloak

^M Denotes a spell currently attuned to a Spell Matrix.
^E Denotes a spell currently attuned to an Enhanced Matrix.
^A Denotes a spell currently attuned to an Armored Matrix.

Loot

240 gold pieces

Legend Points

32,385 Legend Points

Notes

Oman possesses the human racial ability of Versatility.

Fourth Circle: Karma on Perception-only Tests

Fifth Circle: Karma on Willpower-only Tests

Sixth Circle: +1 Spell Defense

Seventh Circle: Karma on spell Effect Tests

Eighth Circle: +1 Social Defense

Ninth Circle: Karma on Recovery Tests; +1 Physical Defense

Tenth Circle: Matrix Split (2 Damage Points)

Eleventh Circle: +1 Social and Spell Defense

Twelfth Circle: +1 Physical and Spell Defense

THE BODY OF FIVE

The guild house of the Body of Five is located close to the center of Travar. It is a high tower bearing the flags of the city and a large light crystal that aids airships in their navigation. While the tower seems to have windows from the outside, they are faked. The stronghold of this guild is impenetrable: apart from a small office, there are no doors or windows leading into the complex. Even the office doesn't have any doors leading further into the building.

THE GUILD HOUSE

The following sections give a description of the guild house, and offer suggestions for how the characters can stage their break-in.

Ground Floor

This pentagonal room houses the office of the guild, and serves all public requests. The room itself is cold, and permeates an aura of might. There are no tapestries or carpets, only naked marble and reliefs made from stone. Small orbs of pure light hover in the room's center. Whenever someone enters the room, one of the orbs hovers to that person and takes position over the person's head for as long as he stays.

The room is dominated by a heavy wooden desk, which looks like an altar of sorts. Rupert Rostan, a human Wizard who manages the Body of Five's public relations, mans the desk. There is usually a small line of people waiting during the day, as the guild is very popular in Travar and many Name-givers have requests for its services. Rostan is usually pretty straightforward, noting the requests if necessary and filing them away. There are no audiences with the guild

during the festivities. The characters won't get very far if they talk to Rostan, as he is a pretty busy man. He will note their inquiries but will not be able to get back to them until after the tournament.

Laboratories

Every member of the Body of Five has his own laboratory in the guild house, each of them filled with magical curiosities, grimoires, and other gimmicks needed to study the lore of magic. Each laboratory is guarded by an earth spirit (see below for game statistics). The labs aren't of much interest for the story contained in this adventure, but can be fleshed out by the gamemaster if necessary. Needless to say, the characters need to overcome each guardian in order to enter a laboratory. It is likely that the spirit in each room warns its master or the guards at the first possible chance.

GUARDIAN SPIRITS (5)

DEX: 7 **STR:** 10 **TOU:** 11
PER: 8 **WIL:** 10 **CHA:** 8

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense:** 9
Number of Actions: 2 **Spell Defense:** 18
Attack (5): 12 **Social Defense:** 15
Damage: **Physical Armor:** 15
Unarmed: 15 **Mystic Armor:** 6

Death Rating: 56 (91) **Recovery Tests:** 5
Wound Threshold: 16 **Knockdown:** 15
Unconsciousness Rating: 49 (79)

Combat Movement: 30 **Full Movement:** 60

Karma Points: 10 **Karma Step:** 8

Powers:

Aid Summoner (5): 5 Astral Sight (5): 13
Detect True Element (5): 5 Detect Weapon (5): 13
Durability (5): 5 Engulf (5): 15
Find (5): 13 Manifest (5): 5
Manipulate Element (5): 15 Share Knowledge (5): 5
Spear (5): 15 Spellcasting (5): 13

Spells: Earth Blend, Earth Darts, Earth Spear, Earth Staff, Grounding, Shattering Stone, Stone Cage

Legend Points: 940

Equipment: None

Loot: None

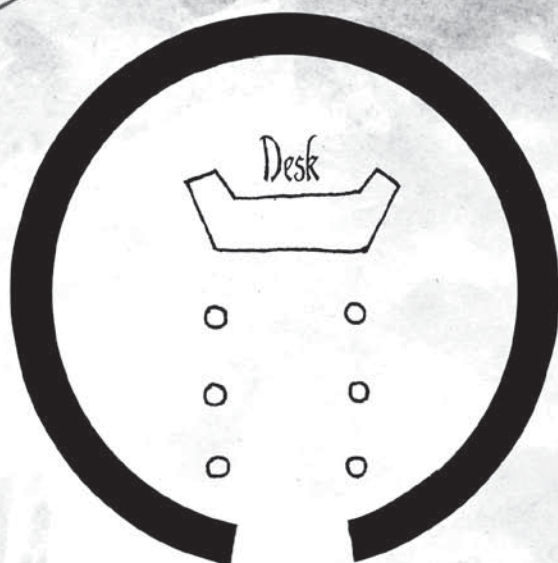
Commentary

The guardian spirits are Strength 5 Earth Elementals. See p. 370 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information and rules on these entities.

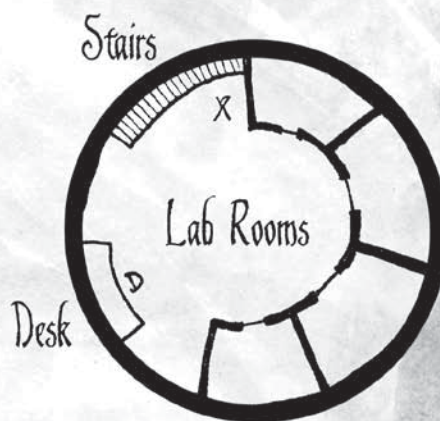
Portal Platform

The top floor of the guild house hosts a platform with a permanent portal to the Guild Master's villa (see **Spire**, p. 12). The platform is made of marble and has a pentagon etched into the stone. The room is brimming with magic, but is otherwise kept plain and nondescript.

The Tower

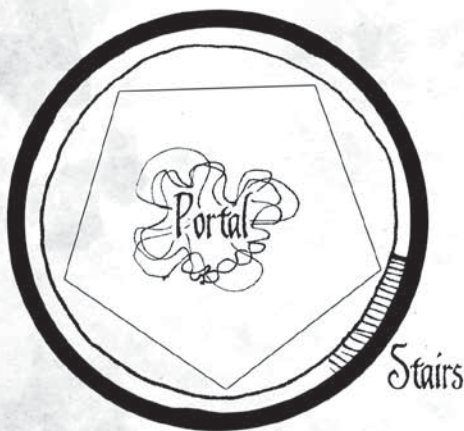


Ground Floor

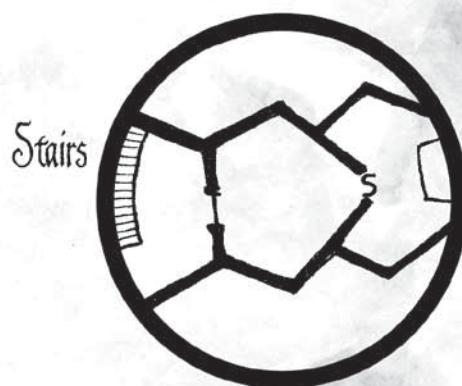


Laboratories

x=Guardian Spirit



Portal Platform



Artifact Room

s=Secret Door

A staircase located on the outer edge of the platform leads down to the other levels of the tower.

Artifact Room

This room holds a range of magical curiosities as well as the plans for this year's Founding. The door is secured by a magical trap (see below) and guarded by an Earth Elemental. This room holds many curiosities, some protected by magical wards. For example, there are large jars containing organs of past champions and candidates, some even appear to be alive. There is a large crystal head resembling that of a troll, which starts glowing if anyone nears it. Then

there is a large tome chained to a table, wrapped in a dark cloth. The gamemaster should tempt the players to have a look at these mysterious items, but should not explain how they work. For example, the book may contain Horror lore, but a player character reading it might not be able to avert his eyes from it once he reads past the first few sentences. Doing so could require a Willpower (7) Test or intervention by another character. Who knows? The books might have caused the character to learn a Horror power, which grows stronger over time. There's a secret door in the artifact room leading to a small chamber. The door is protected by a magical ward trap (see below).

MAGICAL WARD TRAP

Detection Difficulty: 17

Disarm Difficulty: 18

Spell Defense: 12

Trap Initiative: 27/D20+D10+2D8

Trigger Condition: The gamemaster makes a Step 17/D20+D10 Spellcasting Test for the ward against any character passing it within 3 yards. If the Test succeeds, the trap triggers a Ricochet Attack spell on the character (see p. 311 of the **Player's Compendium** for more information).

Trap Effect: Damage Step 28/D20+2D10+D8. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

The Plans

Several large pieces of parchment lie openly on a table, scattered around a miniature model of the arena. The parchments are labeled **Qualification Pit**, **Cart Race**, and **Duel of Power**. Find these as **Handouts** at the end of this adventure. Note that we provided these with almost illegible writing to make the reading and understanding of the handouts somewhat more challenging for the players.

The chamber also contains all notes and plans for past Foundings, along with lists and histories of all past champions and candidates. However, the characters are not the only ones in the tower, and the opposition is already there. Go to **Déjà Vu**, below.

DÉJÀ VU

The chamber holding the plans is already occupied. However, not by guards or guarding spirits, but by another group of champions—Brelnar's champions! This can develop into a very tense situation, depending on each group's initial reactions. A fight is likely to cause unwanted attention for both groups. Also, the plans can't be stolen, only copied.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING

The following characters form Brelnar's champions. They are hidden by a Nobody Here spell, but appear with weapons drawn as soon as the characters have entered the room. Led by the t'skrang Zczanna'Vil, the group does not attack unless the heroes attack first. If that happens, Zczanna'Vil tries to end the fight as quickly as possible, which probably results in a truce. She says the following:

"Alright, looks like we're not the only ones interested in the tournament's secrets. Fighting over the plans would be an incredibly dumb move, and would mean everyone's certain disqualification. I call for a truce so that everyone can leave unseen. Our weapons will meet soon enough—and I'll be damned if they won't draw blood."

Zczanna'Vil and her group leave shortly after the characters arrive, leaving the characters behind to look at the plans.

ZCZANNA'VIL, SEVENTH CIRCLE T'SKRANG TAILDANCER

Attributes

Dexterity (15): 6/D10

Toughness (15): 6/D10

Willpower (13): 6/D10

Strength (14): 6/D10

Perception (16): 7/D12

Charisma (19): 8/2D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 10

Spell Defense: 11

Social Defense: 12

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Armor: 6

Mystic Armor: 4

Death Rating: 35 (84)*

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 27 (69)*

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 6/D10**

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.
** Zczanna'Vil knows the Wound Balance talent.

Combat Movement: 30

Full Movement: 60

Karma Points: 25

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents (Knacks)

Acrobatic Strike (7): 13/D12+D10

Air Dance (7): 13/D12+D10

Avoid Blow (7): 13/D12+D10

Durability (7/6) (7): 7

Engaging Dance^D (7): 15/D20+D6

Karma Ritual (7): 7

Life Check (7): 13/D12+D10

Lizard Leap (7): 13/D12+D10

Maneuver^D (7): 13/D12+D10 (Setup)

Melee Weapons^D (8): 14/D20+D4

Second Weapon^D (7): 13/D12+D10

Swift Kick (7): 13/D12+D10

Swimming^D (7): 13/D12+D10 (Dive)

Tail Dance^D (7): 13/D12+D10

Taunt (7): 15/D20+D6

Throwing Weapons (7): 13/D12+D10

Thread Weaving (Tail Weaving)^D (7): 14/D20+D4

Unarmed Combat^D (8): 14/D20+D4 (Tail Sweep)

Wound Balance^D (7): 13/D12+D10

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.
Italicized talents require Karma.

Skills

Artisan:

Acting (4): 12/2D10

Mapmaking (3): 10/D10+D6

Knowledge:

Iontos River History (4): 11/D10+D8

Theran Politics (3): 10/D10+D6

Vivane Province Geography (3): 10/D10+D6

General:

Conversation (3): 11/D10+D8

Etiquette (3): 11/D10+D8

Heartening Laugh (4): 12/2D10

Navigation (3): 10/D10+D6

Read and Write Language (2): 9/D8+D6

—Dwarf (Throalic), Theran

Speak Language (3): 10/D10+D6



—Dwarf (Throalic), Theran, T'skrang
Tactics (3): 10/D10+D6
Wilderness Survival (4): 11/D10+D8

Equipment

Buckler (Phys 1; Shatter 17)
Thread Leather (Rank 4; Phys 5; Myst 3)

Ch'tard Blade (Forged +2; Tail Damage 12/2D10)
2 × Daggers (Damage 8/2D6; Range 9–15–18)
2 × Dancing Blades (Damage 10/D10+D6; Range 12–20–24)

Thread Bracers (Rank 4; PhysDef +2; SpellDef +2)
Thread Brooch (Rank 3; SocDef +2; Charisma-only Tests +1)
Cropdiver Charm (Implanted; 2 Damage Points; see the **New Goods and Services** chapter on p. 289 of **Nations of Barsaive, Volume One**)

Adventurer's Kit
3 × Booster Potions
2 × Healing Potions
Last Chance Salve
Navigation Charts (in map/scroll case)
Painting Tools
Trail Rations (1 week)
Wealthy Traveler's Garb
Writing Kit

Loot

210 silver pieces

Legend Points

1,810 Legend Points

Notes

Zczanna'Vil possesses the t'skrang racial ability of Tail Attack (Damage 6/D10).

Fourth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-only Tests

Fifth Circle: Regrow Tail (1 Damage Point)

Sixth Circle: Karma on Strength-only Tests
Seventh Circle: Karma on tail Damage Tests

Commentary

Born and raised on the Iontos River, Zczanna'Vil left her home early and became a restless adventurer. Her travels led her deep into Vivane province and Theran territory. Her skin is a deep green, which appears almost black in dim light. Brelnar chose her as leader for this group because of her good relations with the Theran Empire. Not many people in Travar have heard of her deeds and exploits.

GROLBAN, SIXTH CIRCLE ORK WARRIOR

Attributes

Dexterity (15): 6/D10
Toughness (17): 7/D12
Willpower (8): 4/D6

Strength (19): 8/2D6
Perception (11): 5/D8
Charisma (7): 4/D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 7

Initiative: 3/D4
Physical Armor: 7
Mystic Armor: 4

Death Rating: 40 (94)
Wound Threshold: 11
Unconsciousness Rating: 32 (74)

Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 8/2D6

Combat Movement: 32

Full Movement: 64

Karma Points: 30

Karma Step: 5/D8

Talents (Knacks)

Acrobatic Strike (6): 12/2D10
Air Dance* (6): 9/D8+D6
Avoid Blow^D (6): 12/2D10
Down Strike^D (6): 14/D20+D4
Durability (9/7) (6): 6
Gliding Stride (6): 12/2D10
Karma Ritual (6): 6
Life Check^D (6): 13/D12+D10
Melee Weapons^D (7): 13/D12+D10
Missile Weapons (6): 12/2D10
Swift Kick^D (6): 12/2D10
Throwing Weapons (6): 12/2D10
Tiger Spring (6): 6
Thread Weaving (War Weaving)^D (5): 10/D10+D6
Unarmed Combat^D (7): 13/D12+D10 (Head Butt)
Wood Skin^D (6): 13/D12+D10

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.
* Talent modified by −3 Initiative penalty.

Skills

Artisan:

Tattooing (3): 7/D12

Knowledge:

Ork Racial Lore (1): 6/D10
Theran Military Organization (1): 6/D10

General:

Read and Write Language (2): 7/D12

—Dwarf (Throalic), Theran
 Speak Language (3): 8/2D6
 —Dwarf (Throalic), *Or'zet*, Theran
 Tactics (1): 6/D10
 Wilderness Survival (1): 6/D10

Equipment

Crystal Ringlet (Phys 4; Myst 4; Init 2)
 Footman's Shield (Phys 3; Init 1; ST 19)
 Flail (Forged +2; Damage 15/D20+D6)
 2 × Daggers (Damage 10/D10+D6; Range 9–15–18)
 2 × Spears (Damage 12/2D10; Range 18–30–36)
 Medium Crossbow (Damage 13/D12+D10;
 Range 70–140–280)
 Quiver (w/15 medium crossbow bolts)
 Thread Amulet (Rank 4; SocDef +2; SpellDef +2)
 Adventurer's Kit
 Craftsman Tools
 Tattooing Tools
 Trail Rations (1 week)
 Traveler's Garb

Loot

185 silver pieces

Legend Points

900 Legend Points

Notes

Grolban possesses the ork racial abilities of Low-Light Vision and *Gahad*.

Fourth Circle: Karma on Willpower-only Tests

Fifth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-only Tests

Sixth Circle: Karma on Strength-only Tests

Commentary

Grolban follows Zczanna'Vil. She has freed him from slavery and Grolban pledged his loyalty to her ever since. The ork otherwise has a mercenary mindset and cares only for himself; politics and other people don't matter to him



unless money convinces him another way. Several scars adorn his shaven head and muscled arms as testament to the many battles he has fought in his life. Grolban's *gahad* is triggered whenever someone insults or hurts Zczanna'Vil. Although he dislikes slavery, his *gahad* is never triggered when this topic comes up.

KLIANNA, SIXTH CIRCLE HUMAN THIEF, THIRD CIRCLE ILLUSIONIST

Attributes

Dexterity (15): 6/D10 **Strength** (10): 5/D8
Toughness (12): 5/D8 **Perception** (16): 7/D12
Willpower (14): 6/D10 **Charisma** (13): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 11 **Initiative:** 5/D8
Spell Defense: 9 **Physical Armor:** 8
Social Defense: 7 **Mystic Armor:** 3

Death Rating: 33 (68)* **Recovery Tests:** 2
Wound Threshold: 9 **Knockdown:** 5/D8
Unconsciousness Rating: 25 (53)*

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 30 **Full Movement:** 60

Karma Points: 36 **Karma Step:** 5/D8

Illusionist Talents

Dead Fall^D (3): 9/D8+D6
 Read and Write Language (3): 10/D10+D6
 —Human, *Sperethiel*, Theran
 Read and Write Magic^D (3): 10/D10+D6
 Spellcasting^D (3): 10/D10+D6
 Spell Matrix (3): 3
 Spell Matrix (3): 3
 Spell Matrix (3): 3
 Speak Language (3): 10/D10+D6
 —*Or'zet*, *Sperethiel*, Theran
 Thread Weaving (Illusionism)^D (3): 10/D10+D6

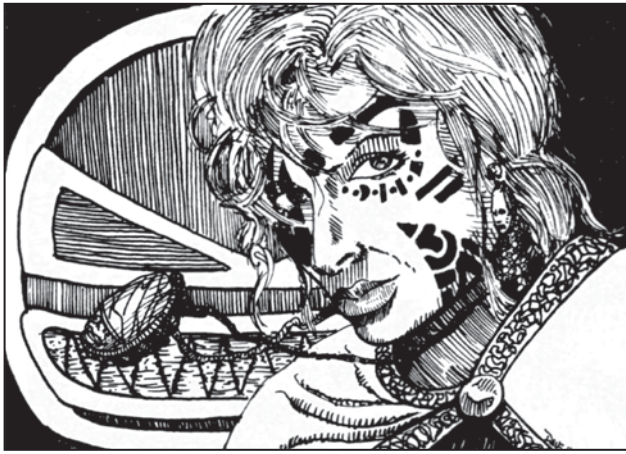
Thief Talents (Knacks)

Avoid Blow^D (6): 12/2D10
 Climbing* (7): 13/D12+D10
 Detect Trap^D (6): 13/D12+D10
 Disarm Trap^D (6): 12/2D10
 Disguise Self (7): 13/D12+D10
 Durability (5/4) (7): 7
 Fast Hand^D (6): 12/2D10
 Fence^D (6): 12/2D10
 Karma Ritual (7): 7
 Lock Picking^D (6): 12/2D10
 Lock Sense^D (6): 13/D12+D10
 Melee Weapons (7): 13/D12+D10
 Picking Pockets^D (6): 12/2D10 (Offguard)
 Silent Walk^D (7): 13/D12+D10 (Shadow Hide)
 Surprise Strike^D (6): 11/D10+D8
 Thread Weaving (Thief Weaving)^D (4): 11/D10+D8
 Trap Initiative^D (6): 12/2D10

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Italicized talents require Karma.

* Talent modified by +1 Climbing rank from Thread Boots



Skills

Artisan:

Acting (3): 9/D8+D6

Robe Embroidery (3): 9/D8+D6

Knowledge:

Kratas Gangs (3): 10/D10+D6

General:

Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6

—Dwarf (Throalic)

Speak Language (2): 9/D8+D6

—Dwarf (Throalic), Human

Streetwise (3): 10/D10+D6

Wilderness Survival (3): 10/D10+D6

Equipment

Buckler (Phys 1; ST 17)

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1;
w/Cloaksense Brooch)

Padded Leather (Phys 4)

2 × Daggers (Damage 7/D12; Range 9–15–18)

Short Sword (Forged +2; Damage 11/D10+D8; w/scabbard)

Thread Boots (Rank 4; PhysDef +3; Climbing rank +1)

Adventurer's Kit

2 × Booster Potions

Climbing Kit

Embroidered Robe

Embroidery Tools

Grimoire (Encrypted; Sensing Difficulty 10)

Quiet Fingers

Quiet Pouch

Trail Rations (1 week)

Traveler's Garb

Spells

Best Face, Cat's Eyes^M, Displace Image^M, Encrypt, Fun
With Doors, Light, Nobody Here^M, Pauper's Purse, Rope
Guide, You Got Me

^M Denotes a spell currently attuned to a Spell Matrix.

Loot

280 silver pieces

Legend Points

600 Legend Points

Notes

Klianna possesses the human racial ability of Versatility.

Fourth Circle: Thieves' Tongue (1 Damage Point)

Fifth Circle: Karma on Perception-only Tests

Sixth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-only Tests

Commentary

At the age of 16, Klianna fled her home of Kratas and left her former gang behind. The young girl has seen a lot of the world and is prepared for anything—she knows to take nothing at face value. She has no remorse for those that aren't in control of their own lives, which makes it easy for her to work with the Therans.

ERGOL, SEVENTH CIRCLE ELF ARCHER

Attributes

Dexterity (18): 7/D12

Toughness (14): 6/D10

Willpower (14): 6/D10

Strength (12): 5/D8

Perception (15): 6/D10

Charisma (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 11

Spell Defense: 10

Social Defense: 9

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Armor: 8

Mystic Armor: 6

Death Rating: 36 (78)

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 28 (63)

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 5/D8*

* Ergol knows the Wound Balance talent.

Combat Movement: 38

Full Movement: 76

Karma Points: 25

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents

Avoid Blow (8): 15/D20+D6

Bank Shot^D (7): 14/D20+D4

Call Arrow^D (7): 13/D12+D10

Direction Arrow^D (7): 13/D12+D10

Durability (6/5) (7): 7

Flame Arrow^D (7): 13/D12+D10

Karma Ritual (7): 7

Melee Weapons (7): 14/D20+D4

Missile Weapons^D (8): 15/D20+D6

Mystic Aim^D (7): 13/D12+D10

Speak Language (4): 10/D10+D6

—Dwarf (Throalic), Human, *Or'zet*, T'skrang

Sprint (7): 14/D20+D4

Stopping Aim^D (7): 12/2D10

Thread Weaving (Arrow Weaving)^D (7): 13/D12+D10

Throwing Weapons^D (7): 14/D20+D4

True Shot (7): 14/D20+D4

Wound Balance (7): 12/2D10

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.
Italicized talents require Karma.

Skills

Artisan:

Wood Carving (4): 9/D8+D6

**Knowledge:**

Botany (4): 10/D10+D6
 Creature Lore (4): 10/D10+D6
 Theran Military Organization (3): 9/D8+D6
 Vasgothia History (4): 10/D10+D6

General:

Climbing (4): 11/D10+D8
 Hunting (4): 11/D10+D8
 Read and Write Language (2): 8/2D6
 —Dwarf (Throalic), Theran
 Speak Language (3): 9/D8+D6
 —*Sperethiel*, Theran, Vasgothian
 Wilderness Survival (4): 10/D10+D6

Equipment

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1;
 w/Cloaksense Brooch)
 Thread Padded Leather (Rank 4; Phys 5; Myst 3)
 2 × Daggers (Damage 7/D12; Range 9–15–18)
 2 × Spears (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 18–30–36)
 Elven Warbow (Damage 10/D10+D6; Range 80–160–320)
 Quiver (w/40 warbow arrows)
 Thread Amulet (Rank 4; SocDef +2; SpellDef +2)
 Adventurer's Kit
 3 × Booster Potions
 Carving Tools
 Climbing Tools
 Craftsman Tools
 Trail Rations (1 week)
 Traveler's Garb

Loot

210 silver pieces

Legend Points

760 Legend Points

Notes

Ergol possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Fourth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-only Tests

Fifth Circle: Karma on Perception-only Tests

Sixth Circle: +1 Physical Defense

Seventh Circle: Karma on missile weapons Damage Tests

Commentary

A former member of the Theran army, Ergol has left the jungles of Vasgothia for a life of adventure. His travels have led him to Barsaive, where he joined Zczanna'Vil and her band. However, his Theran background is a secret he and the group almost never talk about—as it would mean trouble in most of Barsaive.

HASTUR BRYLNAR, SIXTH CIRCLE HUMAN ELEMENTALIST

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10

Toughness (14): 6/D10

Willpower (16): 7/D12

Strength (10): 5/D8

Perception (16): 7/D12

Charisma (10): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8

Spell Defense: 9

Social Defense: 8

Initiative: 5/D8

Physical Armor: 7

Mystic Armor: 3

Death Rating: 35 (63)*

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 27 (48)*

Recovery Tests: 2

Knockdown: 5/D8

* These values have been adjusted for blood magic.

Combat Movement: 28

Full Movement: 56

Karma Points: 30

Karma Step: 5/D8

Talents

Air Speaking^D (6): 13/D12+D10

Astral Sight (6): 13/D12+D10

Cold Purify^D (6): 13/D12+D10

Durability (4/3) (7): 7

Elemental Hold^D (6): 13/D12+D10

Elemental Tongues^D (4): 11/D10+D8

Fire Heal^D (6): 13/D12+D10

Karma Ritual (6): 6

Read and Write Language (4): 11/D10+D8

—Human, *Or'zet*, *Sperethiel*, Theran

Read and Write Magic^D (6): 13/D12+D10

Spellcasting^D (7): 14/D20+D4

Spell Matrix (6): 6

Spell Matrix (6): 6

Spell Matrix (6): 6

Spell Matrix (6): 6

Summon (Elemental Spirits)^D (6): 13/D12+D10

Thread Weaving (Elementalism)^D (6): 13/D12+D10

Willforce (6): 13/D12+D10

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills**Artisan:**

Craftsman; Woodworker (3): 9/D8+D6

Robe Embroidery (3): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Cara Fahd History (3): 10/D10+D6

Creature Lore (3): 10/D10+D6

Landis History (3): 10/D10+D6

General:

Climbing (3): 9/D8+D6

Hunting (3): 9/D8+D6

Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6

—Dwarf (Throalic)

Speak Language (2): 9/D8+D6

—Dwarf (Throalic), Human

Swimming (3): 8/2D6

Wilderness Survival (3): 10/D10+D6

Equipment

Espagra-Scale Cloak (Phys 3; Myst 1; Init 0/1;
w/Cloaksense Brooch)

Padded Leather (Phys 4)

Dagger (Damage 7/D12; Range 9–15–18)

Spear (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 18–30–36)

Short Bow (Damage 8/2D6; Range 30–60–120)

Quiver (w/15 short bow arrows)

Thread Brooch (Rank 3; SocDef +2; Charisma-only Tests +1)

Adventurer's Kit

3 × Booster Potions

Climbing Kit

Craftsman Tools

Embroidered Robe

Embroidery Tools

Grimoire

Trail Rations (1 week)

Traveler's Garb

Spells

Crunch Climb, Detect Elementalism Magic, Dispel

Elementalism Magic, Earth Blend^M, Earth Darts,

Fireball^M, Fire Spear, Flame Strike^M, Flame Weapon,

Fuel Flame, Gills, Hunter's Sense, Nutritious Earth, Plant

Talk, Purify Earth, Purify Water, Repair, Ricochet
Attack^M, Rust, Small Slayer, Thrive

^M Denotes a spell currently attuned to a Spell Matrix.

Loot

130 silver pieces

Legend Points

1,295 Legend Points

Notes

Hastur possesses the human racial ability of Versatility.

Fourth Circle: Karma on Perception-only Tests

Fifth Circle: Karma on Willpower-only Tests

Sixth Circle: Fire and Ice (1 Damage Point)

Commentary

Bryl, his friends call him, was born in the forests of ancient Landis. He spent most of his life living in ruins and helping his community rebuild their former kingdom's glory. When Krathis Gron re-formed the ork nation of Cara Fahd, the dark-haired human took to the road, determined to find a way of defiling the newborn nation.

BETRAYAL

If the gamemaster feels that the adventure has proceeded too smoothly until now, he can have Zczanna'Vil cause the characters trouble right away. While she stays true to her word, the heroes need a while to memorize or copy the plans, which gives Zczanna'Vil and her group enough time to leave the guild house. Once they are in safety, Zczanna'Vil attempts to raise the alarm, ordering Hastur Brylnar to summon an elemental spirit to cause mayhem in Oman's Villa—alerting everyone on the premises. The characters need some luck to get out of the spire unseen!

TROUBLESHOOTING

The guardian spirits inside the guild house might inform their masters of the intruders. If that happens, members of the Body of Five appear on the Portal Platform (see p. 14) a couple of minutes later, ready to deal with the characters. The portal is the only way to enter and exit the guild house, so a fight is almost inevitable. Use the game statistics for magician characters on pp. 244–264 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**. If the characters escape, but were clever enough to conceal themselves, nothing happens.

If the intruders' target is obvious (e.g. the door to the plan room is left open, or a confrontation with the magicians of the Body of Five happens in the Artifact Room), the Body of Five alters their plans slightly before the Founding starts. They do not go public, however, as they don't want to lose face in front of the magistrate. If the Body of Five manages to capture one or more characters alive, they hand them over to the city guard. The characters in question are disqualified and likely to spend a considerable time in Travar's jail (subject to the gamemaster's discretion).



ENEMY MINE

In this encounter, the group is approached by Kôl, and told the truth about his former business partners Galmear and Brelmar. The characters have to find a way to deal with their situation as they realize that their role in the Founding has consequences that reach further than they might have expected.

THE THIRD MAN

When the characters are in the common room of their inn, read the following aloud:

You have just sat down and ordered your meal when a wiry human approaches your table. It appears that the man was sat near the fire before, although you barely noticed him. His eyes are watchful, as if he is looking for pursuers. Without asking your approval, he sits down and starts talking in a hushed voice: "Please, you must help me! I have heard that you are in the service of Galmear, serving as his champions in the upcoming Founding contest, yes?"

Because of the characters' investigations, they might already suspect that the Name of this character is Kôl. As a result, they might try to get rid of him or threaten to turn him over to the city guard. However, Kôl remains persistent. If the characters turn on him he leaves, and Bigosh makes his move. To keep the story on track, the gamemaster should ensure that the characters either witness Bigosh killing Kôl or receive a letter from Kôl containing the following words:

"I have witnessed foul murder, my friends. I was there when Tovak Byranicus was pushed from his balcony. No one knew I was there, but I saw the assassin and I know who he is and who pays him. Unfortunately, the assassin is after me now and I don't think I can shake him off for too long. To add insult to injury, I'm also suspected to be the murderer! I can't approach the city officials, so you are my only hope.

Galmear and his assassin stand in the pay of the Denairastas Clan of Iopos, and there is no doubt that they want to gain a foothold in Travar by ensuring Galmear's position as magistrate. With the Throalic contestant out of the way, they have free reign. And what's worse, I have heard that Brelmar, another contestant and ex-colleague of mine, has strengthened his ties to the Therans. Can you believe that, after what they did to us? Trust me on this; my life isn't worth a copper anymore, so all I can try to do is counter the betrayal my former colleagues and friends are going to inflict upon this city."

If the characters let Kôl talk, he tells them the above. If they ask him any other question, he continues:

"Well, I'm glad you asked—" With an audible THUD, Kôl slumps forward on the table. You can

spot a crossbow bolt sticking out of his back, dripping with poison. The other patrons stare at the lifeless body, jaws dropped. A woman screams.

Bigosh has finally found Kôl and shot him through one of the windows. With a little luck, the characters might be able to spot the assassin and chase him down. The above text assumes that the characters stay at the inn's common room. If that's not the case, adjust the text accordingly. Of course, if the characters are more cautious, Bigosh might have a hard time performing the kill.

If captured, Bigosh would rather die than spill the beans about his employer. He's a clever and resourceful human being—the gamemaster will probably have a lot of fun using him. Find his game statistics on p. 5.

INVESTIGATING BRELMAR AND HIS CHAMPIONS

After their unexpected meeting with Brelmar's champions in the vaults of the Body of Five, the characters might want to dig up all the information they can find about Zczanna'Vil and her group. They may learn the general background of the various characters in Zczanna'Vil's group as outlined in their descriptions (see pp. 16–21), provided they ask the right people (Bel-Tok the Toothless, for example).

The group also learns that Zczanna'Vil's employer is Named Brelmar (if they don't know that already). Investigating Brelmar's background reveals that he was a former partner of Galmear and Kôl, such investigations by the characters attract the attention of a group of Theran agents (see p. 6 for game statistics). The Therans do anything to prevent the characters from digging any deeper, and they try to cover up Brelmar's connection to the Theran Empire. The characters should not be able to find any proof to support their claims in any case.

SEEKING SOLUTIONS

All this information changes the group's role in the Founding. The characters have sworn loyalty to a master they probably don't want to serve anymore. They need to find a way out of this without taking the shame of breaking a blood oath, or obtaining a bad reputation for retreating from the contest and bad-mouthing their employer without having proof of their accusations. There are several ways to solve this, and the gamemaster should encourage his group to find a solution and accept the consequences of their actions.

One thing the characters are very likely to agree on is that they need to sabotage Zczanna'Vil and her group to prevent them from winning. Talking to Zczanna'Vil won't help; she is determined to win, and her group is as well. The harder question, though, is how the group will ensure that they do not win the contest themselves. Will they aid another, unsuspecting group (such as the one hired by Niss Reeves)? Will they try to get disqualified? Remember, if they have taken the oath, they have most likely sworn to give their very best in order to win; not doing so turns them into oath breakers. While the group might willingly accept the

blood wound and scar that marks them as such, the loss of reputation could be devastating. It is customary for champions to swear loyalty to a contestant, to ensure they don't serve another contestant's interests. As a result, breaking this oath during the contest basically means that they have willfully betrayed their contestant. No one in Travar would ever talk to such scoundrels; much less hire them for paid work!

The gamemaster should make sure that the players understand the consequences, and then sit back to enjoy the discussions between the characters. However, if it seems that the characters get hung up on their ideals too much, carefully remind them that they are a team sitting in the same boat. They haven't asked to be in this situation, but they should try to get out of it together.

IN THE ARENA

This encounter describes the general events of the Founding, but leaves enough freedom to the gamemaster to adjust the length and scope of the tournament to suit his needs.

RUNNING THE TOURNAMENT

The tournament consists of several events taking place over the course of two weeks. This doesn't mean that the champions are constantly challenged, however. A single contest takes most of a day, and there is only a handful of contests overall. However, that does not prevent the rest of the city from celebrating during the time in-between the events. The champions should have several opportunities to meet with the crowd and sufficient time to recover between the challenges. Of course, this time might be needed to ward off attacks by Bigosh, the Theran agents, or even other champions trying to soften them up.

In the current year, failing a challenge means exclusion from the Founding—only the best will meet in the final contest. The events and challenges are as follows:

The Opening Celebration

At the beginning of the Founding, there is a large celebration introducing the contestants and their champions.

During the opening celebration, Travar's arena is overcrowded; it appears as if everyone in the city is trying to get a seat in the arena for this event. The candidates and their champions enter the arena one after another and are officially introduced under the constant cheering of the fans. The characters will be a part of this procession when they enter the arena following Galmear.

The opening celebration lasts an entire day, and includes the performances of famous Troubadours and other artists. For this Founding, there are several dozen candidates and over a hundred champions—each of whom is welcomed by the current magistrate and the Body of Five. The whole celebration should be played out as a descriptive scene because the players can't do much; so gamemasters should spice this scene up as much as possible. For example, the gamemaster could have the other players cheer while he introduces each of them in a voice imitating a modern-day sports commentator. Because most of the champions are adepts, the commentator could also state which Disciplines each champion belongs to. However, the Discipline Names aren't always accurate—so a Warrior might be called a Gladiator and a Thief might get away as an 'Acrobat.'

The Qualification Pit

During the first days of the tournament, each group of champions must pass a test of courage, dexterity, and wits. All they need to do is cross the arena from one end to the other. Only one champion per team needs to reach the other side—if that happens, the entire team advances to the next round. The entire run of the qualification pit lasts a couple of days, and is continuously interrupted by performances of every kind.

On each side of the arena is a stage that is elevated five yards above the ground. Between the stages are pillars, each five yards high. The ground of the arena, dubbed 'the pit', is lined with spikes and populated with animals (snakes, spiders, and other vermin). There are three pathways from each stage to the others, two leading over the pillars and one through the pit. The space between the pillars varies; one path has them lined up close together so that a character crossing them has to make little jumps, while the other path is spaced wider apart, so that a character crossing those must make longer jumps to get from one pillar to the next. Upon reaching each pillar, the champion must solve



CUSTOMIZING THE TOURNAMENT

Generally, we advise the gamemaster to think ahead concerning how the Founding should look like, and to what extent the players are to get challenged. Gamemasters should feel free to add to or change events presented in this adventure with challenges of his own design. In addition, the challenges below can be adjusted to a variety of situations; for example, the Cart Race and the Duel of Power can both be run in a 'deathmatch' style to eliminate large numbers of champions. This allows the gamemaster to pit his group of players against various other groups in the Cart Race before starting the Duel of Power (ran in a similar fashion). Alternatively, the gamemaster might have only a handful of groups coming out of

the Qualification Pit, and then run only one Cart Race, with only those groups who placed first and second in the race entering the Duel of Power.

Another option is to introduce gamemaster characters that the group already knows from previous adventures as champions; maybe someone they fear or otherwise know about (former tutors, other adventurers, and especially recurring villains work best). The gamemaster should come up with a list of contestants taking part in the Founding, and a list of the most prominent champions. This will help the players realize that the challenges of the tournament won't be easy and that their chance to lose the contest is pretty good.

a riddle. If he moves on without answering, he'll be treated as if the answer was wrong. There are two kinds of riddles—hard ones and easy ones—with the hard one being asked on the path with the long jumps, and the easy ones being asked on the path with the short jumps. See the **Riddles** section below for examples.

Jumping from pillar to pillar requires either three Dexterity (7) Tests for the path with the hard questions, or six Dexterity (5) Tests for the path with the easy questions. Failing one of these tests results in Step 12/2D10 Falling Damage. Characters in the pit must walk to the other side or try climbing up one of the pillars. Climbing a pillar requires a single Climbing (9) Test.

Of course, the pit itself is also a way to get a character hurt or even killed. A number of poisonous creatures take care of that (see p. 344 and p. 346 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for appropriate game statistics).

For a layout of the arena, see the **Handouts** section on p. 29. Note that the layout given there isn't drawn to scale, it just provides an overview on how things are set up.

Riddles

The following riddles are asked whenever a character jumps on a pillar. Note that, while there is only one answer given below, the jury will also accept valid alternative answers. For example, what can you never eat for breakfast could be either lunch or dinner and so on. Also, the answers to the hard riddles presented below are a little jokey—which is intentional. Or would you risk answering with a joke in a contest situation like this? In any case, the gamemaster should feel free to modify the list to suit his needs, but he should make sure that the answers are made available with the plans (see **The Plans** on p. 16).

Any time a character provides a wrong answer, he is faced with an attack. This attack can be of any kind (a bowman shooting at him or a spirit summoned out of thin air, for example), and is supposed to make the remaining journey somewhat more interesting. For the purpose of

these attacks, make a Step 12/2D10 Attack Test and a Step 10/D8+D6 Damage Test.

Easy Riddles

- **Question:** What often falls but never gets hurt? **Answer:** Rain.
- **Question:** What is it that no man ever saw, which never was but always will be? **Answer:** Tomorrow.
- **Question:** What can you never eat for breakfast? **Answer:** Dinner.
- **Question:** The more of them you take, the more of them you leave behind. What are they? **Answer:** Footsteps.
- **Question:** The more you take away the larger it becomes. What is it? **Answer:** A hole.
- **Question:** My thunder comes before my lightning. My lightning comes before my rain. My rain dries and burns all it touches. What am I? **Answer:** A volcano.

Hard Riddles

- **Question:** If you had three apples and four oranges in one hand and four apples and three oranges in the other hand, what would you have? **Answer:** Very large hands.
- **Question:** If it took eight humans a day to build a wall, how long would it take a troll to build it? **Answer:** No time at all: the humans did all the work.
- **Question:** If you throw a red stone into the blue Aras Sea what will it become? **Answer:** Wet.

The Cart Race

The second contest is a cart race in the arena. Up to five groups (each manning a single cart) are up against each other during a single race. Only the winning cart advances to the next round (which might be another cart race, depending on how the gamemaster wants to organize the Founding).

Running the Cart Race

Each race consists of seven laps in the arena. Each lap features a number of obstacles to overcome, with increasing difficulty. While the entire cart race is intended to be run in regular combat rounds, it follows some special rules to take into account that the characters are riding a cart. One of the characters has to steer the cart; he can't take part in combat, as steering requires his full concentration. However, the cart driver can make several maneuvers (as explained below).

The cart driver must declare his maneuver during the Declaration phase of the combat round (see p. 395 of the **Player's Compendium**). While he makes an Initiative Test as normal, all cart maneuvers take place *before* the other characters act and remain in effect for the remainder of the combat round. Thus, all cart maneuvers are resolved before the regular combat round starts. Note that attacking the gramlains pulling the carts is forbidden; doing so results in disqualification from the contest!

For a layout of the arena, see the **Handouts** section on p. 30. Note that the layout given there isn't drawn to scale, it just shows an overview on how things are set up.

Taking the Lead

Each round, the cart drivers must each make an Obstacle Test to circumvent the obstacles that appear on the course each round (see **Obstacles**, below), using a step number equal to the driver's Strength step plus the cart's

Maneuverability step. The Difficulty Number for this Test is determined by the current lap (given below). The highest result takes the lead in that round—which is the place the characters need to be in order to win after seven laps. All other carts are considered pursuers. Cart drivers failing the Obstacle Test damage their carts because they have not managed to avoid the obstacle—as a result, the game statistics of their carts change unfavorably. The effects of each obstacle are given in **Obstacles**, below.

Characters that have seen the plans have an edge (see **The Plans** on p. 16), because they know what to expect. Because of this, they gain a +2 bonus to their Obstacle Tests.

Maneuvers

Each round, a cart driver can make one of the following maneuvers:

Board: A successful Boarding maneuver positions the cart alongside another, so the groups on each cart can fight one another directly. The cart driver makes a Driving Test against the other cart's Maneuverability step. If successful, this maneuver allows the attacking group to engage the enemy group in hand-to-hand combat in the following round. This maneuver can only be attempted against pursuing carts (see **Taking the Lead**, above)!

Ram: A cart driver who wishes to ram another cart makes a Driving Test against the target's Maneuverability step. If



the test succeeds, the attacker has struck the enemy cart, and makes a Damage Test using his cart's Ramming step. This damage is reduced by the target's Armor as normal. This maneuver can only be attempted against pursuing carts (see **Taking the Lead**, above)!

Maintaining the Lead: By clever maneuvering, a cart driver can lead his pursuers into an unfavorable position. A cart driver that is in the lead may perform this maneuver to gain a +3 bonus to his Speed Test in the next round (see **Taking the Lead**, above).

Obstacles

Underneath the floor of the arena, various obstacles wait for the drivers, ready to pop up into their way as they race towards the finish line. At the beginning of each round, the obstacles change, and along with them the Difficulty Number for the Obstacle Test. The effects given here are suffered by any cart whose driver fails to make his Obstacle Test for the specified round.

First Round: Rubble; Difficulty Number 3. Loose branches, cobblestones, and similar rubble make the race a bumpy ride. Any character forced to make a Knockdown Test this round incurs a -2 penalty!

Second Round: Rocks and rubble; Difficulty Number 4. In addition to the rubble from the first lap, fist-sized rocks on the ground damage the cart's wheels. A failed Obstacle Test incurs Step 8/2D6 damage to the cart.

Third Round: Rocks, rubble, and mud; Difficulty Number 5. In addition to the rocks and rubble from earlier rounds, parts of the track get muddy. A leading cart that gets caught in the mud loses its lead position. A pursuing cart getting caught in the mud incurs a -2 penalty to the Obstacle Test for the next round.

Fourth Round: In this round, the previous obstacles are removed from the track. While there is no Difficulty Number to beat this round, the driver with the highest test result takes the lead.

Fifth Round: Pits; Difficulty Number 4. Several pits open across the track. A cart driver unable to avoid the pits incurs Step 12/2D10 Damage to his cart and either loses the lead position or—if he is in a pursuing cart—incurs a -2 penalty to the Obstacle Test for the next round.

Sixth Round: Roadblocks; Difficulty Number 4. The pits close again, only to be replaced by massive slabs of sandstone. A cart driver unable to avoid those pits incurs Step X+2 Damage to his cart and either loses the lead position or—if he is in a pursuing cart—incurs a -2 penalty to the Obstacle Test for the next round.

Seventh Round: In this round, the previous obstacles are removed from the track. While there is no Difficulty Number to beat this round, the driver with the highest test result takes the lead—and consequently, wins the race.

Cart Game Statistics

Each cart is drawn by two granlains (see p. 308 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). All carts start with the

RACE CART

Maneuverability: 5

Hull:

Armor: 7

Ramming: 11

Damage:

Destroyed: 40

Derelict: 32

Critical: 11

same game statistics at the beginning of each race.

Maneuverability: A cart's Maneuverability reflects how quickly it can change course, flank opponents, and break off from an attack. A cart's Maneuverability step is used when making Driving Tests for the maneuvers listed above, and is also the Difficulty Number for certain tests made against the cart.

Armor: The Armor rating reduces the damage of all attacks made against that cart—including those of other champions!

Ramming: The Ramming rating represents the Damage step of the cart's ramming attack against an opposing cart.

Damage: A cart has three Health Ratings, just like a player character. A cart's Destroyed and Derelict ratings are the equivalents of a character's Death and Unconsciousness Ratings, while a cart's Critical Threshold is equivalent to a character's Wound Threshold. Specifically, a cart's Critical Threshold is the amount of damage the cart can take from a single attack, after applying armor, before it suffers a Critical Hit. Each Critical Hit reduces the cart's Maneuverability, Armor, and Ramming ratings by -1. When a cart accumulates damage equal to its Derelict Rating, it can no longer move. When it accumulates damage equal to its Destroyed Rating, it crashes. The gamemaster should describe crashes as spectacular events, and apply damage to any characters still remaining on the cart appropriately.

The Duel of Power

In the last contest of the Founding, the finalist groups face each other in the arena. They take part in the Duel of Power, which is best described as a magically enhanced gladiatorial battle. However, the goal of the battle is not to kill the other champions, but rather to collect points by performing a spectacular fight while using various enchanted items scattered across the battleground. There are two referees at the arena's edge counting points for each group. Whenever a point is scored, they ring a little bell and announce the new totals (see **Counting Scores**, below).

The Arena

Refer to the map on p. 31 for the layout of the arena and the locations of the enchanted items (see below for descriptions). Note that the layout given there isn't drawn to scale, it just gives an overview on how things are set up. Each group starts at one of the marked entrances. All champions are expected to bring their own weapons and armor.

The Enchanted Items

Each of the following enchanted items can be activated by uttering a simple phrase that is carved into its surface. There are other (secret) phrases as well, which can be guessed. Of course, these are known only to those characters who saw the plans (see **The Plans** on p. 16). All of these items have been crafted by the Body of Five, and are not available for sale (neither are the formulas to create them).

Cloak of Fire: This cloak is enchanted with an Inflammation Self spell (see the **Player's Compendium** on p. 308). The effect can be activated with the word *gev'kenal* (which is carved on the inside of the cloak) for three combat rounds. If the secret phrase *gev'royam* is spoken, the wielder can turn the flame shroud into a blast, inflicting Damage Step of 15/D20+D6 on everyone within 5 yards and ending the effect. Physical Armor protects against this damage. The word *gev'balyan* deactivates the item and prevents it from being activated for three combat rounds.

Firesword: This broadsword is enchanted with a Flameweapon spell (see the **Player's Compendium** on p. 296). The flame effect can be activated for three combat rounds when the word *chela'hashh* is spoken (this word is carved into the blade). If the secret phrase *chela'foshumm* is spoken, the sword starts burning more brightly and the enchantment's Flame Die increases to Step 6/D10 for the remainder of the effect's duration! The word *chela'mishnet* deactivates the item and prevents it from being activated for three combat rounds.

Glove of the Mighty: This glove is enchanted with a Great Weapon spell (see the **Player's Compendium** on p. 331). The effect can be activated when holding a weapon with the glove and speaking the word *kiron'oy* (which is stitched into the glove's palm). Any opponent facing the enlarged weapon is considered Harried for the duration of the effect (which lasts a maximum of three combat rounds). If the secret phrase *kiran'iz* is spoken, the target is considered Overwhelmed (see **Situation Modifiers** on p. 408 of the **Player's Compendium**). The word *kiran'avar* deactivates the item and prevents it from being activated for three combat rounds.

Leaping Legwarmers: These legwarmers are enchanted with a Leaps and Bounds spell (see the **Player's Compendium** on p. 378). The leaping effect can be activated for three combat rounds with the word *hurya'vonn* (which is written underneath the soles), using an Effect Step of 15/D20+D6. If the secret phrase *hurya'galun* is spoken, the wearer gains the ability to fly for three combat rounds, as if he were under the effect of a Solo Flight spell (see p. 384 of the **Player's Compendium**). While flying, the wearer's Full Movement rate is 110 yards, and his Combat Movement rate is 55 yards, per round. The word *hurya'meak* deactivates the item (which may result in falling damage to the wearer) and prevents it from being activated for three combat rounds.

Rod of Invulnerability: This rod is enchanted with a Damage Shift spell (see the **Player's Compendium** on p. 362). The effect can be activated for three combat rounds with the word *olya'hushh* (which is carved on the underside of the rod), using a Spellcasting step of 12/2D10. If the secret phrase *olya'bashh* is spoken, all of the character's current Damage is transferred to the target, after which the effect ends. Using the secret phrase or speaking the word *olya'giyt* prevents the rod from being activated for three combat rounds.

Counting Scores

The referees count points for both groups. Each effect generated with the enchanted items gains 3 points, activating a special power gains 5 points. Knocking down an opponent (by whatever means) gains 1 point. In addition, the champions can gain up to three points for other spectacular performances. Awarding these points is completely at the discretion of the referees, but they base their judgment on how excited the spectators get (the louder they cheer in excitement, the more points will be rewarded). Unless a death is particularly pleasing to the crowd, killing an opponent loses 2 points; the Founding is not an excuse for executing personal vendettas.

Running the Duel

Treat the duel as if it were regular combat. Activating (or deactivating) one of the items is a Standard Action (see





the **Player's Compendium** on p. 396). If the characters are up against Zczanna'Vil and her group, use the game statistics given on p. 16 to p. 21, otherwise feel free to mix and match gamemaster characters using the **Adept Statistics** from the **Gamemaster's Compendium** (p. 236 to p. 265) and **Name-giver's Compendium** (p. 305 to p. 332).

The gamemaster is encouraged to play the atmosphere in the arena up to the hilt—there are masses of cheering fans watching the event, and they constantly shout out their excitement or disgust at any particular action. In those duels where the characters are merely spectators (which depends on how the gamemaster has set up the contest, see **Customizing the Tournament** on p. 24), decide what the outcome is and describe what happens in the arena. As always, ham it up!

The Inauguration

Depending on the outcome of the contests, the new magistrate is taken into office at the end of the Founding. This traditionally happens on the final day of the tournament upon a grand stage of the arena, accompanied by the usual celebrations. It is the final event of the Founding, after which Travar returns to business as usual.

Of course, who the new magistrate is depends on the group's actions and decisions during the tournament. Whatever the outcome is, it should give the gamemaster enough material for follow-up adventures set in and around Travar.

AFTERMATH

This section discusses what happens after the Founding and gives several suggestions as to what might happen in the future. The big question is: who will be the new magistrate? Is it Galmear, Brelnar, or someone else entirely? No matter what, the following suggestions are entirely optional, depending on how important the politics of Travar are in your **Earthdawn** campaign:

If **Galmear** becomes magistrate, Travar might improve its relationship with Iopos over the course of the next year. This relationship alone is not be enough to ally the two cities or pit Travar against Throal or Thera, but the groundwork will have been made. Gamemasters who want to explore this area in their campaigns can base future adventures

on events that affect this relationship. For example, Iopan agents may try to stage an event leading to increased taxes levied on goods exported from Travar to Throal's Grand Bazaar, thereby raising the ire of the Travarian magistrate, forcing him to tighten Travar's relationship with Iopos (which may lower the taxes as a result).

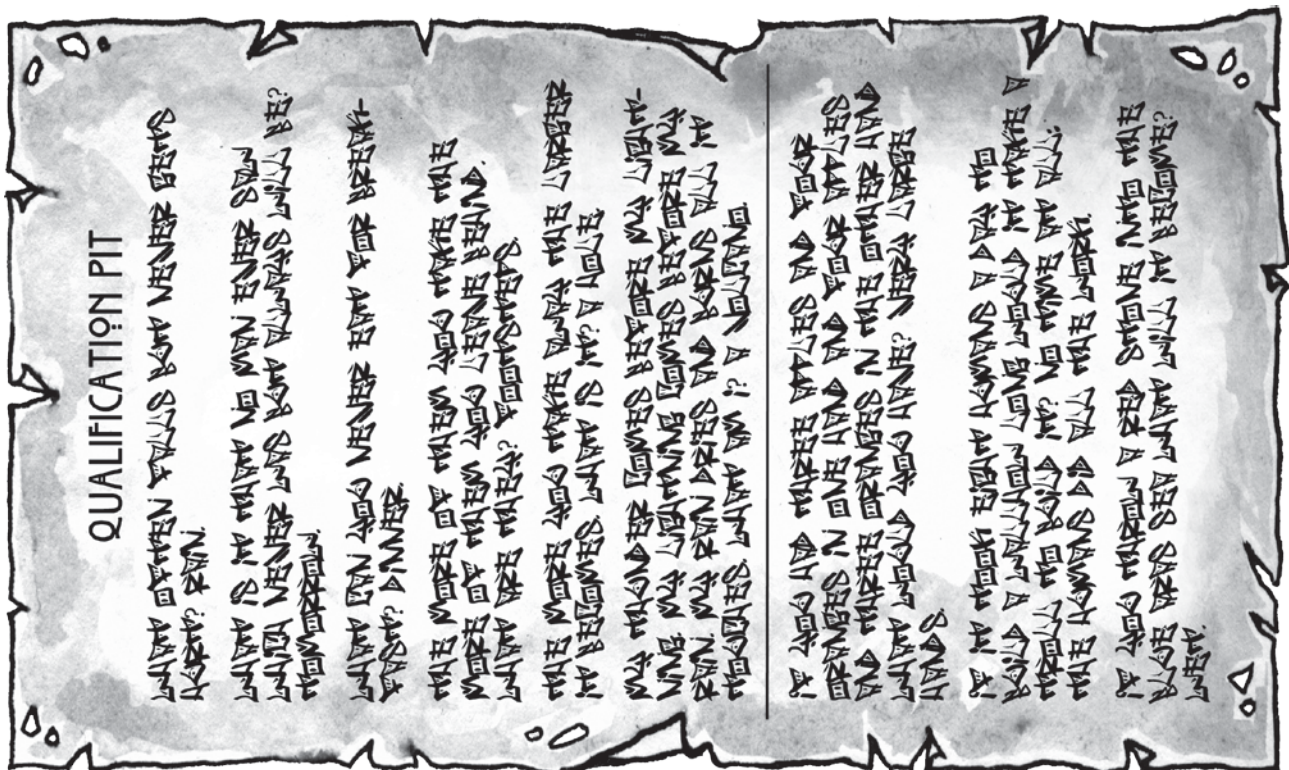
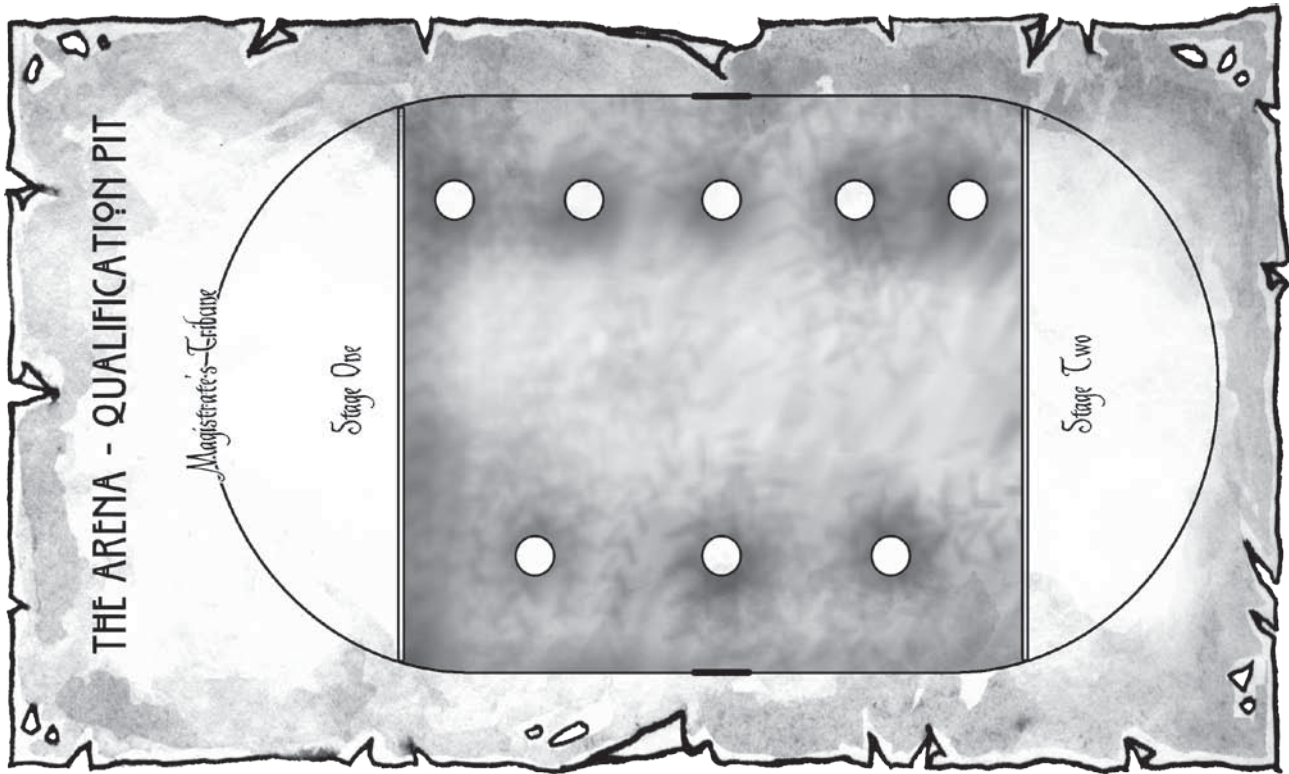
Should **Brelnar** become magistrate, he is likely to influence Travar's stance against the Therans. As a result, Travar may become truly neutral in the simmering conflict between Throal and Thera, and even have an open ear for Thera's ambassadors talking on behalf of Triumph or Vivane. As with the option presented above, this stance alone is not be enough to ally Travar with Thera or pit it against Throal, but the seed is there. Gamemasters who want to explore this area in their campaigns can base future adventures on events that affect this stance. In any case, the Dwarf Kingdom tries to improve its relationship with Travar by any means possible.

In case **someone else** becomes magistrate (like Niss Reeves, for example), things are likely to remain where they were before the adventure on the political stage. Of course, the gamemaster is the final arbiter on what happens next, and who knows what secret agenda the new magistrate might have?

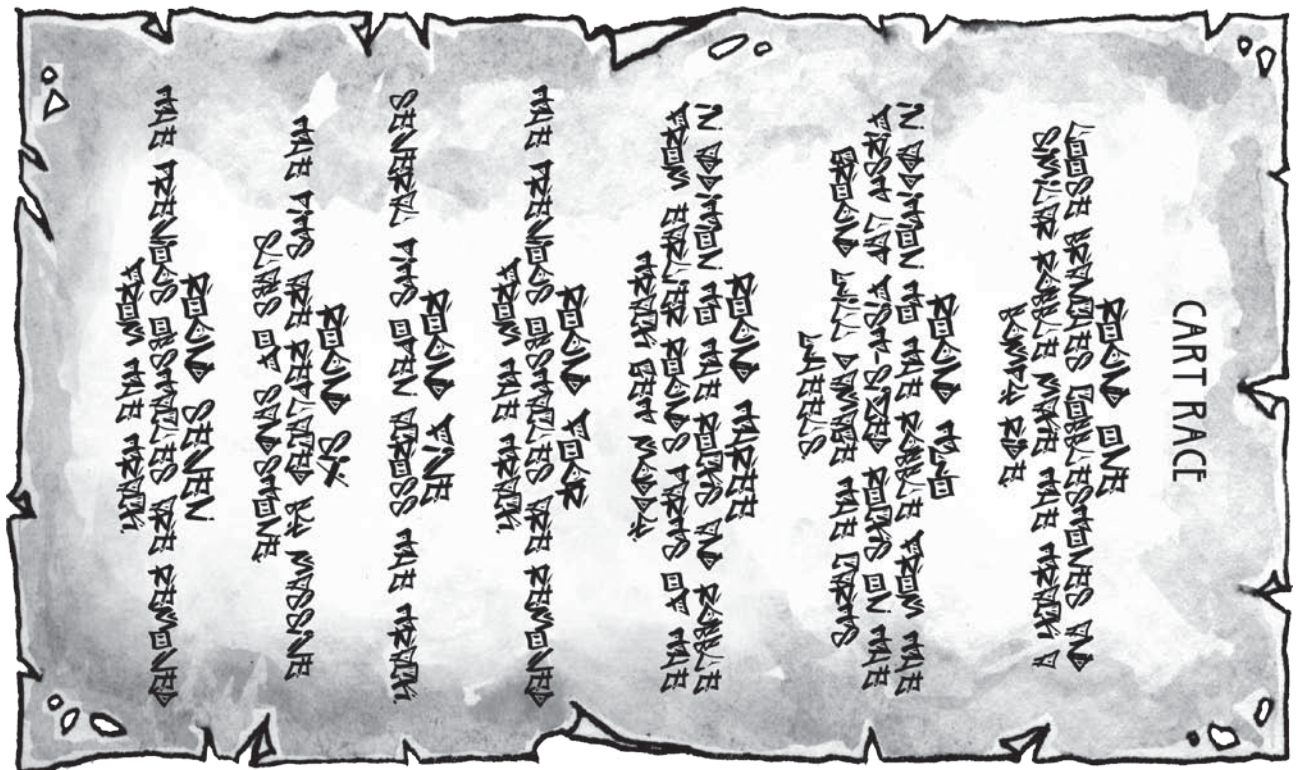
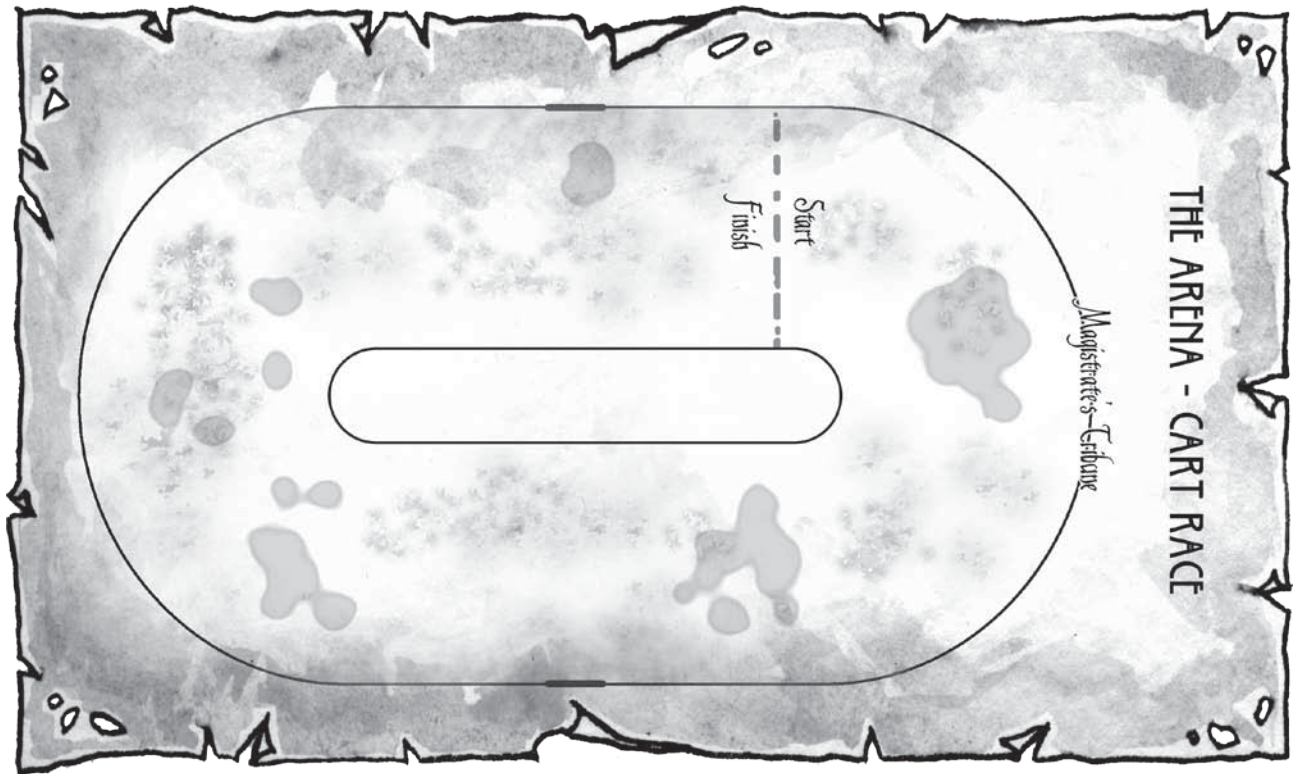
AWARDING LEGEND POINTS

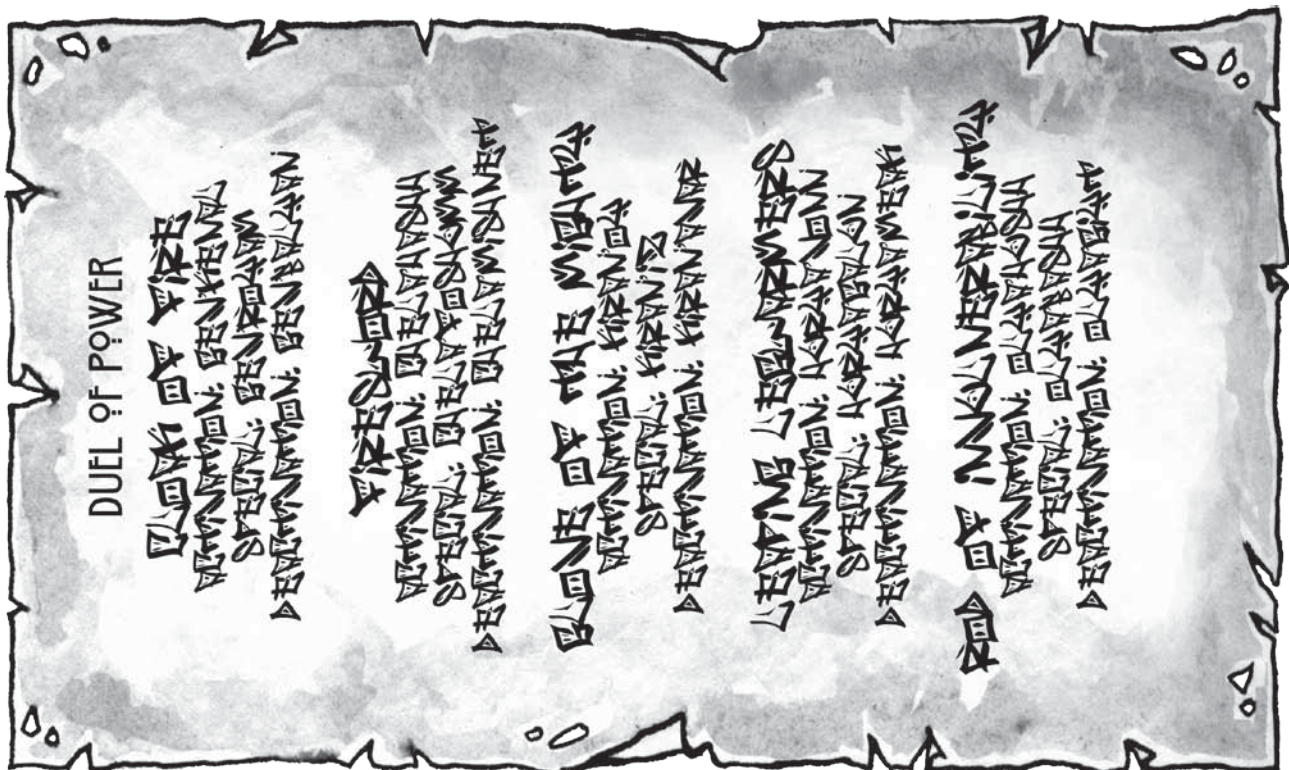
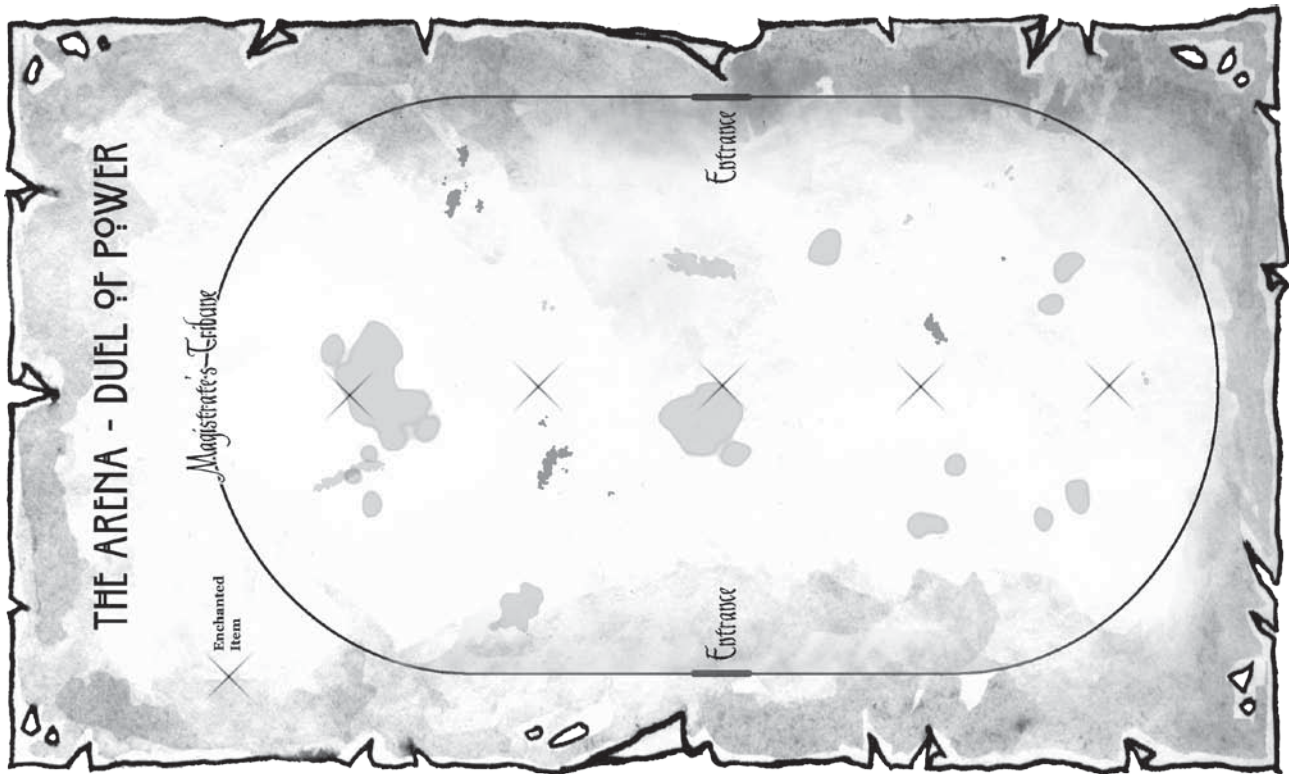
As suggested in the Gamemastering chapter on p. 94 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**, an adventure like **Tournament Troubles** awards a number of Legend Awards to the player characters. A single Legend Award should award a number of Legend Points as determined by the character's Circle. For example, a Sixth Circle character receives from 900 to 2,700 Legend Points per Legend Award, and a total of two to five Legend Awards per game session. In the final game session that concludes the adventure, the characters may gain two extra Legend Awards for completing the overall adventure goal. The creatures and gamemaster characters presented in this adventure have listings for Legend Points. These are the points characters earn for defeating them.

The adventure goal for **Tournament Troubles** is to take part in the Founding as a champion, learning the secret agendas of Galmear and Brelnar, and act upon that information as a consequence.



Player Handouts: Cart Race





EARTHDAWN SHARDS: SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The **Shards** series is a collection of adventures and encounters for the **Earthdawn** game. Intended as an inexpensive adventure resource for **Earthdawn** gamemasters, they are also a springboard for aspiring writers. The **Shards** series is published and available for purchase online from *OneBookshelf.com*—it is possible that a collection might see print at a later stage. Please read the following guidelines carefully before submitting your idea for a Shard. Submissions that do not conform to the guidelines may not be accepted.

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Short adventures and encounters (including appropriate setting descriptions) for **Earthdawn**, written to be used with the rules contained in the **Earthdawn Player's** and **Gamemaster's Compendiums**. A Shard can also contain new creatures and gamemaster characters. The tone and style of the text should fit the **Earthdawn** setting (refer to previously published adventures to get an idea of what we are talking about here).

As mentioned above, the **Shards** series also serves as a hunting ground to find potential new writers we can send outlines to and ask to participate in bigger projects, so succeeding here may result in future agreements.

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Additional Guidelines

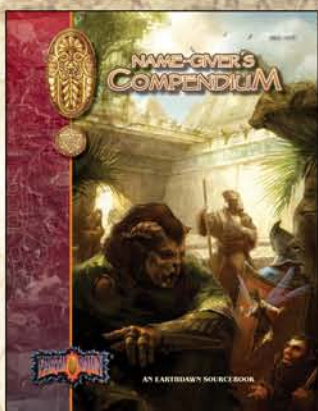
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EARTHDAWN



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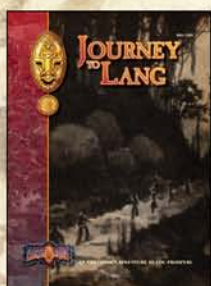
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