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ABANDONED ARTS® PRESENTS:

# NPC ARSENAL No. 3: MERCENARY PIKEMAN

A HAND-CRAFTED NON-PLAYER CHARACTER FOR USE WITH THE PATHFINDER® ROLEPLAYING GAME

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## MERCENARY PIKEMAN; CR 8

*This lightly-armored soldier wears a mercenary tabard over chain shirt and a sturdy belt sporting several potions. His weapons and armor are expensive, especially the glaive-gusarme that he wields with obvious expertise.*

human fighter (polearm master) 9

XP 4,800; N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Perception +1

### DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 67 (9d10+18)

Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +4

### OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft.

Melee +1 glaive-gusarme +18/+13 (1d10+11/x3); or  
longspear +15 (1d8+9/x3)

Ranged javelin +14, 30 ft. (1d6+6/x2)

Reach 5 ft. (10 ft. with glaive-gusarme or longspear)

Special Attacks pole fighting

### STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

Base Attack +9; CMB +13; CMD 26 (35 vs. disarm and sunder)

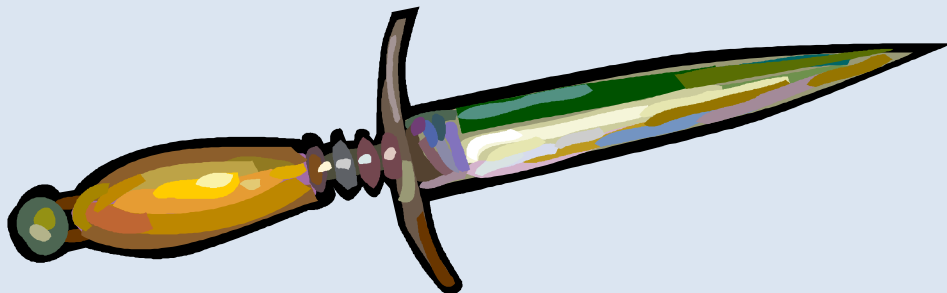
Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Fleet, Furious Focus<sup>P</sup>, Greater Weapon Focus (glaive-gusarme), Mobility, Power Attack, Pushing Assault<sup>P</sup>, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (glaive-gusarme), Weapon Specialization (glaive-gusarme)

Skills Intimidate +12, Profession (soldier) +13

Languages Common

SQ flexible flanker, polearm training, steadfast pike +2

Combat Gear +1 chain shirt, +1 glaive-gusarme, dagger, longspear, masterwork javelin (2), potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of invisibility, potion of protection from arrows (2), potion of see invisibility; Other Gear belt of giant strength +2



### SOURCEBOOK REFERENCES

<sup>P</sup>: see the *Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Advanced Player's Guide*™

## BUILD NOTES

This build is designed to use reach, superior mobility and the Pushing Assault feat to keep enemies out of reach while engaging them in melee. The polearm master fighter archetype grants a +2 bonus attack and damage rolls with readied attacks and attacks of opportunity made with polearms. Thanks to Pushing Assault and these readied-action bonuses, readied Vital Strikes (with Power Attack) are designed to serve as the mercenary pikeman's go-to attacks, readying the attacks to trigger when an opponent comes close enough to threaten.

The mercenary pikeman's favored class bonuses are dedicated to improving his Combat Maneuver Defense against disarm and sunder attempts (a human-specific fighter favored class bonus), as losing his weapon could easily disable his unique ability to defend himself.

Higher-level versions of this build should prioritize feats like Improved and Greater Vital Strike, Devastating Strike, and Greater Weapon Specialization in order to keep the pikeman's weapon damage relevant. Fleet can be taken repeatedly to further the pikeman's mobility, and Combat Patrol might prove uniquely useful to this build. The 13th level of the polearm master archetype grants the ability to make bull rush attempts with a polearm, which is made somewhat redundant with the use of Pushing Assault. For this reason, levels in another class (such as ranger) are recommended after level 12.

## TACTICAL NOTES

In order to minimize the number of attacks opponents can make against him, the mercenary pikeman should maintain at least enough distance between himself and his melee-focused opponents to force his enemies spend a move action just to engage him. If opponents prove to be too fast to keep at bay, the pikeman should opt for the increased damage from Power Attack, forgoing the use of the Pushing Assault feat.

Readied Pushing Assaults should keep enemies at arm's length, forcing opponents away as they attempt to threaten. Similarly, the pikeman should choose to bull rush opponents that provoke attacks of opportunity for passing through the pikeman's threatened space, making it all the more difficult for foes to engage or attack. After a bull rush from Pushing Assault, most opponents will be forced to choose between provoking an attack of opportunity and spending a second move action just to threaten the pikeman with their melee weapons, or to take another action altogether. Should an opponent succeed in engaging the pikeman, the mercenary's first priority on his next turn should be to move away from his enemy, forcing the opponent to struggle against another round of bull-rushing attacks of opportunity and readied attacks. While this strategy is much less effective against ranged combatants, this tactic will no doubt prove exceedingly frustrating for most other enemies. The mercenary pikeman is best paired with long-range allies like archers or spellcasters.

Vital Strike helps to keep the pikeman's damage output up in compensation for the Power Attack damage lost to the Pushing Assault feat while feats like Fleet, Dodge, and Mobility help to keep the mercenary safe. Combat Reflexes helps to improve the number of Pushing Assault attacks of opportunity that the pikeman can make. The glaive-gusarme is a brace weapon, meaning that the mercenary's readied attacks will also deal double damage against charging enemies.

The pikeman carries potions of *protection from arrows* to better defend against opponents using ranged weapons. The captain carries a *potion of cure moderate wounds* as well, and a *potion of invisibility* should he need to flee. The mercenary's fighting style suggests that this fighter is cautious; he shouldn't be too reluctant to drink up his potions if it looks like he's in for a challenge.

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