

TATTERED BANNERS

BANDIT LORDS AND MERCENARY CAPTAINS

BY UMBERTO PIGNATELLI



BEASTS & BARBARIANS
Golden Edition

UMBERTO PIGNATELLI

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A Sword and Sorcery Savage Worlds sourcebook for Beasts & Barbarians

Some of them are dirty, their weapons rusty, their bellies rumbling with hunger, but more deadly than snakes. Others are splendid in their shimmering bronze armor, their swords impressive, and are looking for glory and a reign for themselves.

They are mercenaries and bandits, the scum and outcasts of the civilized lands, come to pillage the rich cities of the Dominions and to trample ancient thrones under their dusty sandaled feet...

Do you dare to be one of them?

BEASTS BARBARIANS

A Sword and Sorcery Savage Worlds setting

BY UMBERTO PIGNATELLI

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DEDICATED TO JEFF SCIFERT. JEFF – THANK YOU!

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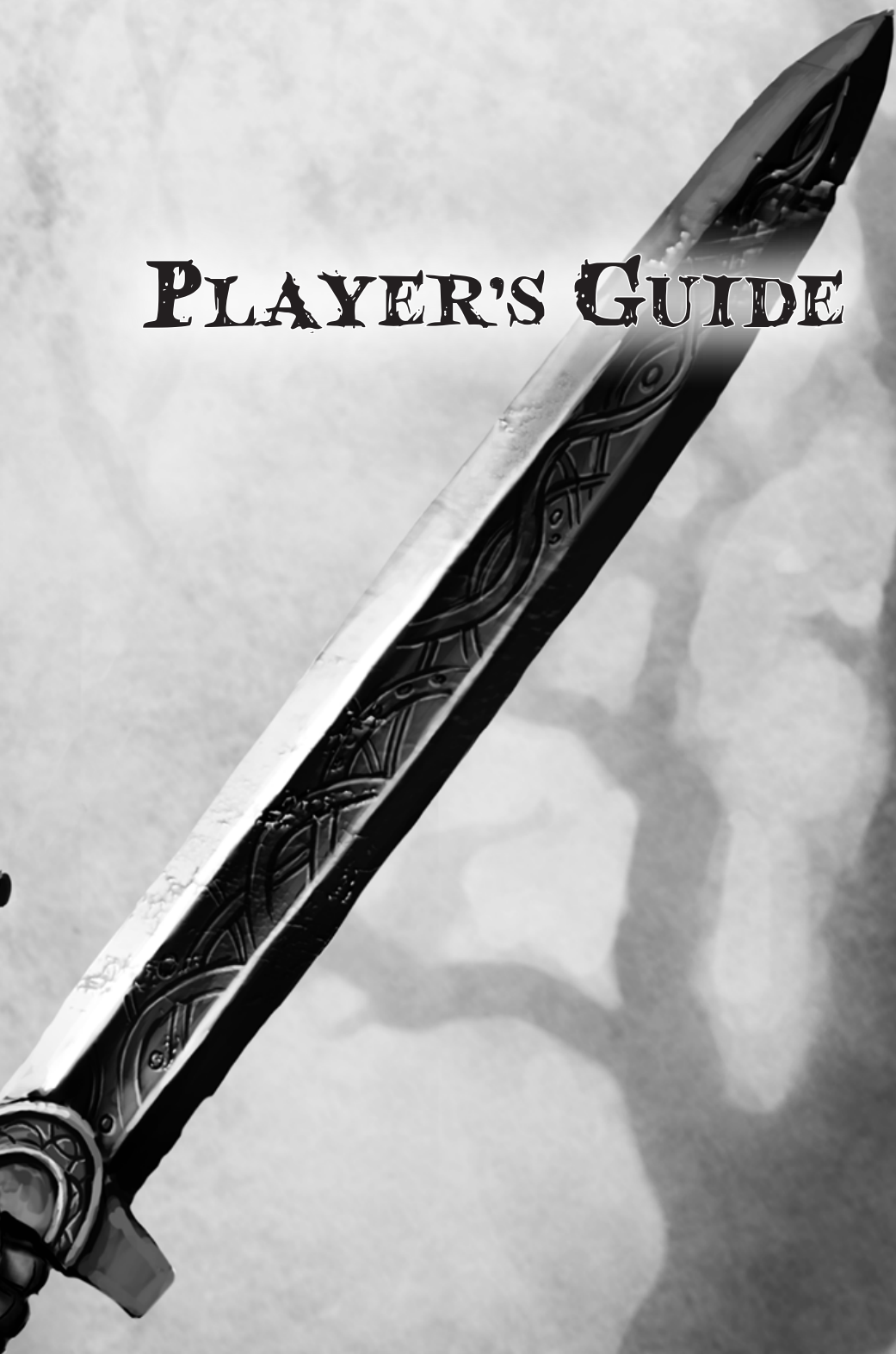
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PLAYER'S GUIDE



Shangor moved silently among the elephant grass, as silently and deadily as a panther. He looked back. Only a little rustle of the plants behind him revealed the presence of his comrades, the black-skinned Scarlet Lions, and he grunted his approval.

Tangur, Shangor's first lieutenant and best friend, approached the mighty barbarian, stealthy as a shadow.

"The warriors are ready, Thunderfist," whispered the tribesman, his visage fearsome under the buffalo blood war paint. "We are ready to strike at your command".

Shangor nodded. He well remembered the day the Scarlet Lions found him, buried neck-deep in the sand, doomed to die under the merciless sun of the savannah. The Lions had freed him and offered him a place in their band, but not before he had proven his worth, fighting barehanded against one of them.

Despite being exhausted and dehydrated, the Northlander had managed to kill his opponent, a giant of a man, with a lucky blow to the head. The giant was Runla, former chief of the Lions. That afternoon Shangor gained both a nickname and leadership of a group of savage savannah murderers, ready to follow the strongest of the pack.

Several moons had passed since that day, and they were bloody ones: today the Scarlet Lions were no longer a small group of outcast warriors, content with simply robbing even the poorest traveler passing through the Savannah to fill their bellies. They were a strong, organized band who fought only the real enemy: the Caldeian slave hunters who raided the savannah virtually unhindered.

"We spied them, Thunderfist. They are more numerous and more cautious than the last time. They are starting to fear us," continued Tangur. "And they are led by the man with the crow-feathered helm."

Sorakan the Crow! Shangor's grip on the axe's handle contracted spasmodically. Finally, after all these months he was going to face the man who had condemned him to die under the sun. And this time he had a sharp blade in his hand!

"Tell the men to attack on my order only," he rumbled, barely controlling his anger. "Tonight we'll butcher these dogs and take great spoils."

Far away in the evening, a hyena howled.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to the Dominions! This supplement focuses on one of the staples of Sword and Sorcery, mercenary companies and bandit bands. These assorted groups of fighters, scoundrels and rebels have more than once held in their blood-stained hands the history of the Dominions, and their dust-covered banners have shaped today's kingdoms.

The involvement of the heroes with these organizations can be on multiple levels: they can be worthy and interesting opponents, patrons and friends, or even more interestingly, the characters can be members themselves, becoming powerful captains and feared bandit lords.

Does the idea of a rugged war Band at your command appeal to you? Then read on, but beware, powerful men always have powerful enemies...

THE BOOK OF LORE

MERCENARY HISTORIES

Tracing the history of mercenary companies is almost impossible: they were (and they are) too numerous and too diverse for a complete narrative. In the paragraphs below, some hints are given about the most famous companies in the history of the Dominions.

FIGHTING FOR SKULLS

Men in the Dominions fought for money before the fall of the Dread Star, but the first recognized report of a mercenary force dates back to the first Tricornian-Faberterran War, in 1528 AF.

Brother Clarius, Smith-Priest of Hulian and armorer of the Seventh Phalanx wrote these words in his diary:

"When the fog rose up, we saw the army of Tricornia awaiting us, fraught with spears as a porcupine with its quills, protected under large greenish shields, which are only poor copies of ours, forged with iron in the holy fires of Hulian.

These soldiers were inferior to us both in strength and in number, and we saw

their slave-collared necks tremble before the might of the Phalanx.

Then, from the east, we heard the horns' blowing, and then, like an impetuous sea, the barbarians stormed out! They were painted in red and blue, and many of them had frothing mouths like rabid beasts. But the most terrifying things were the long necklaces made of human skulls which hung from their brutish necks..."

In effect the Tricornians were the first recorded race to employ mercenary troops in their war against the Iron Confederation, in the years before the Empire. Priest Prince Karimas the Sly hired an entire clan of Northlander warriors to supply the backbone and shock troops his slave army lacked. These Northlanders, which in those times were still mixed with the Cairnlords, belonged to a particular caste of warriors known as the Skullhunters, which believed that robbing a man of his head would increase the personal strength and vigor of a man.

For this reason Karimas, who won all the battles where the Skullhunters were present, never had to pay them: the barbarians were content to decapitate their fallen enemies and collect their skulls, a form of compensation that Karimas was happy to accept and which earned him his nickname.

THE SYRANTHIAN BLOOD WRIT

In truth the real history of mercenary companies officially begins just a couple of years later. In 1530 AF, Danaios, a Syranthian noble dispossessed of his lands by the Iron Confederation, escaped south of the border with some fellow nobles who had many reasons to hate the Faberterran conquerors.

That assorted group of rebels sought the protection of the mightiest enemy of Faberterra in that era, the Autarch of Kyros.

Ganymedes I was more than glad to accept these men under his protection, and used them to create a small elite fighting unit, the Syranthian Riders, which quickly became the pride of the Kyrosian army and a constant threat to the Iron Confederation troops patrolling the Syranthian borders.

Then the Second Faberterran-Kyrosian War started, with half of Kyros siding with Karistos, a minor brother of the Autarch and pretender to the throne, supported by the Iron Confederacy.

Nevertheless, Ganymedes' forces, supported by elephants, were winning and Karistos and the Iron Confederacy seemed doomed to suffer another beating.

Then, the unexpected happened: during the decisive Battle of the Flooded Hills, the Syranthian Riders, led by Danaios, betrayed Ganymedes' army and attacked it from behind with flaming torches, driving the mighty elephants into a panic.

As was revealed afterwards, Masterarkos Domestan, the future first Emperor, had bribed Danaios to help with the promise

of restoring to him and his men the lands taken from the Empire.

According to legend, the writ restoring the lands was written and signed with the blood of Ganymedes, hence the saying that you can trust a mercenary or a demon only if he seals a contract with blood.

Nevertheless, Danaios and his men didn't enjoy their lands for long. By order of the Imperial Council, the Syranthian Riders joined a daring attempt to recapture Ascaia, the Amazons' Island, which ended in the total annihilation of the mercenary company. Needless to say, the lands restored to the Syranthian Riders reverted back to the Empire after the demise of their owners.

THE AMAZON COMPANIES

In the years after the consolidation of the Empire, the presence of Ascaia and the Amazons became a more or less accepted reality. Gradually, the rigid isolationism which followed the first years of the Rebellion relaxed; meanwhile, the Amazon's reputation as fierce warriors increased.

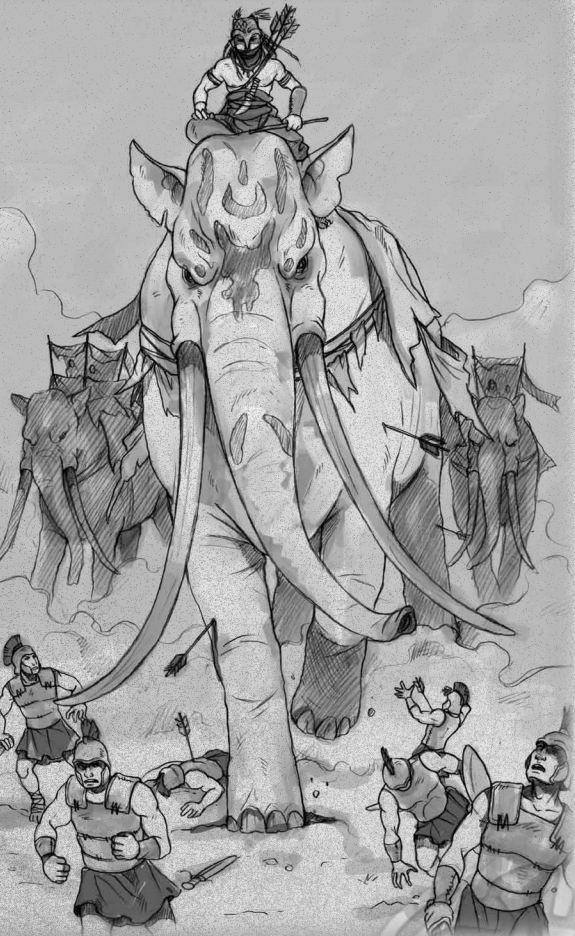
In 1640 AF the Sister Queens, Alexandra and Prassilde, allowed a group of Amazon warriors to fight side by side with the Empire's Phalanxes to root out the dreaded Pirates of the Elephant River, whose presence made river navigation in the Borderlands hazardous. So great were their exploits that the Governor of Felantium hired them with a twelve-year contract to patrol the river with their Hawk Ships and the first Amazon mercenary company, the River Huntresses, was founded.

The Sister Queens contracted payment in the most valuable resource for their realm:

male slaves, to be used for breeding purposes.

It was a pact which satisfied both parties, thereby emptying the Imperial dungeons of criminals while simultaneously giving an alternative to kidnapping and male raiding to the warrior women. The pact lasted until the decline of the Empire and the later creation of the Borderlands, when the Count of Felantium cancelled it.

Even today the Amazon mercenary companies, although rare and costly, are famed as the most faithful soldiers money can hire.



THE INDEPENDENT CITIES AND THE FREE COMPANIES

In more recent times, mercenary companies have blossomed in the fertile ground of the Independent Cities. Very few of these city states had ever had a regular army and they were content to hire sellswords, likely resulting in the great instability of this area of the world.

In fact, a mercenary captain hired by an independent city has often decided to snatch the opportunity offered, taking control of the city with his own troops. This was the case of the celebrated Hruss Horn Beard, a former Borderlands raider who, in 2420, was hired with his men by the Queen of Teyerana to protect the city from the incursions of the Caldeian corsairs; he subsequently forced the queen to marry him and ruled over the city for twelve years before drinking a cup of poisoned wine.

Also legendary are the figures of Valerios the Turncoat and his impressive Steel Legion (also known as the Windbags). Valerios, a renegade officer of the Imperial Phalanxes who fled to avoid the executioner's axe in the summer of 2489, was hired by the city of Karalda to fight against their hated neighbors, Vantoria. Gifted with charming manners and the soul of a slave trader, he changed sides in the conflict four times in three years, never fighting a single battle and pillaging and destroying both cities, which now are only designated as crumbling ruins on a map. With the enormous wealth earned, he bought a pardon from the Empire and ended his days pampered by slave girls in a sumptuous villa near Faberterra. Even today, many wonder what happened to the enormous piles of riches he brought home

HEROES' JOURNAL: MERCENARIES' CODE OF (DIS)HONOR

Mercenaries follow a specific code of conduct, a sort of unwritten set of rules, some of which are summarized below. Parts of them are public and deemed as honorable; these are the ones they usually brag to lure potential customers. Others, marked with a (D), are kept very private and, although usually deemed dishonorable, represent the moral reality of hired swords. Players creating a mercenary hero can take inspiration from them when defining their character (choosing 3–4 from this list is enough to detail the Code of Honor Hindrance). In the same manner, the Game Master can either pick selectively from them or roll randomly using a d20 to add some flavor to mercenary bands of his own creation. In the case of random rolls, be aware that some points are in conflict with each other and if rolled, the result should be rerolled.

- 1 *Contracts must be always be fulfilled.*
- 2 *Never take a contract from a previous opponent.*
- 3 *Always for sale, even in the heat of a battle (D).*
- 4 *No sense in fighting against the odds (D).*
- 5 *Fight to the last man.*
- 6 *Survival is the most important thing (D).*
- 7 *Don't accept any money until a contract is completed.*
- 8 *Never betray a customer.*
- 9 *Always insist on payment in advance.*
- 10 *Death is better than surrendering.*
- 11 *In the mercenary company every man is equal and his past is forgotten.*
- 12 *Give no quarter, ask no quarter!*
- 13 *Looting, raping and slave hunting are the most important part of the contract (D).*
- 14 *Never fight on the same side as a certain country/race/religion/group.*
- 15 *Do anything to save a comrade.*
- 16 *When the battle becomes hard, it is time to leave (D).*
- 17 *We fight not only for money, but for atonement.*
- 18 *Only rightful causes.*
- 19 *Grab the money and flee! (D)*
- 20 *Win with honor, win with deceit, but win (D).*

from his pillaging, because after his death they could not be found.

Despite these poor examples of trustworthy mercenaries, the Independent Cities are bustling with mercenary bands, known locally by the romantic name of Free Companies. These bands usually accept men regardless of race or past deeds among their ranks, as long as they know the right way to hold a sword.

BANDITS' TALES

If mercenaries are common during the history of the Dominions, the same is not true for bandits: during the height of the Imperial peace (2060-2300 AF) it is said that a virgin carrying a bag of gold could walk alone from one end of the Empire to the other without any fear for her virtue or her possessions.

But in those times the Imperial Roads were constantly tended and guarded by the Phalanxes, communications were fast and, in general, the populace was less prone to violence and robbery.

Today the situation is very different.

ISOLATION AND BANDITRY

One of the main factors causing the proliferation of banditry in the Dominions is isolation: cities today are surrounded by vast areas of wilderness, which in the past were well-tended farmlands dotted with rich villages that were connected by secure roads to rest of the world. Small towns and hamlets now look with suspicion on strangers, and even the Imperial soldiers (or the militia of the local lord) are seen

as simple robbers who take taxes without providing anything in exchange.

It is no surprise then that in many rural areas locals tend to hide, protect and generally tolerate bandits, so long as they concentrate their rapacious instincts on foreigners and representatives of authority. These types of outlaws are considered friends of the locals and, in certain cases, even champions of the poorest classes.

But this is only one of the faces of banditry: other robbers are simply rabid dogs who murder, steal and pillage without any sense of friendship or loyalty. These are the most dangerous ones.

THE WOLF LORD

Bandits are usually leaded by a charismatic figure: the strongest, meanest, biggest beast of the pack, and the danger posed by the band is directly proportional to the cunning and tactical skill of their leader. So it is no surprise that many bandit lords, especially the ones who fight on the side of the locals, become a sort of folk hero, even if they retain an aura of fear and danger.

The Wolf Lord is probably the most famous of the bandit folk heroes. His identity unknown and appearing as a hulking, half-naked figure covered in a wolfskin cloak and wearing an impressive horned helm, the Wolf Lord has his den somewhere in the Northlands. At the sound of his grim horn, dozens of men dressed in wolf pelts and, incredible as it seems, wolves jump out from the forest to assault caravans, Imperial soldiers, and, in certain cases, even the forts of the Borderlands. He is ferocious and bloodthirsty, very rarely takes prisoners, but directs his

rage only against the Empire and its representatives.

The Wolf Lord persona has existed since first appearing in 2200 AF during the height of the Empire, when he assaulted a heavily protected caravan bringing the taxes of the Northlander tribes to Faberterra. He has been captured and executed at least three times, and his Band has been wiped out on many occasions. Somehow he always returns and even today, in the Borderlands, he leaves a trail of bodies and blood.

It is likely someone takes on his identity periodically and uses his legend to gather men, but this doesn't explain the great resemblance the various Wolf Lords share among them, or their uncanny ability to tame wolves. There are stories that the Wolf Lord is in truth a shape-changer, the son of a famous tribal chief of the past, an immortal being whose only goal is to take revenge on the Imperials for murdering his wife hundreds of year ago.

While the veracity of the presence of an immortal Wolf Lord is unable to be determined, what is not in doubt is that for any Imperial, ending up in the claws of the Wolf Lord means enduring a long, painful death.

important Faberterranean family. His father, despite leaving all the family riches to his older brother, bought Justaios the rank of commander in the Imperial Phalanxes, to secure his younger son an opportunity to make a name for himself.

Justaios made the most of this opportunity. An elegant, educated man, he also showed great tactical and military acumen and, with his habit of always leading from the front rank, he earned the respect of his soldiers and the consideration of his superiors. So, when the riotous mountain tribes of the Iron Mountains became a problem, Faberterra sent him and his men to subjugate them and to secure the mountain passes, considered vital for the commerce between the Empire and Jali-zar.



JUSTAIOS' REBELLION

Not all bandits are poor desperate farmers turning to robbery out of hunger and desperation. Justaios is the second son of an

Justaios fought the mountaineers for three long, dangerous years in a war of attrition that seemed to bear no fruit; the rebels knew the terrain too well and the war quickly became an endless series of ambushes, chases in the mountains and dirty fights among the narrow valleys. One night after a particularly brutal ambush, Justaios suddenly understood he could not win this war and that he had been sent on this mission to die; the generals of the Empire wanted him dead because they feared his popularity at home. Returning to camp that night, Justaios spoke with Joggra'Lek'Gran, a mountaineer war chief he had captured in the ambush, and forged a pact.

A week later, Justaios' Phalanx, battered and wounded, arrived at the Fist, the massive fortress of Iron Guard Pass, the largest and strongest stronghold in the Empire. The defenders, suspecting no treason, allowed them to enter. The battle was quick but bloody. In less than an hour, Justaios' men captured the fortress and then the mountain clans, hidden nearby, arrived to help them defeat the last of the opposition.

Seven months have passed from that day, and now Justaios, who married the daughter of Joggra'Lek'Gran, controls all of the northern Iron Mountains. No merchant dares to cross the mountains unless he gives a share of his goods to Justaios' "toll-men". Refusing is not an option, and a rebellious merchant can easily find himself robbed and killed.

In addition, when merchant traffic is sparse, the former Phalanx soldiers and the mountaineers raid the hills on both sides of the mountains, pillaging what they want and then quickly taking shelter under the walls of the Fist.

Justaios was declared a rebel by the Emperor, but so far no army has been sent to capture him. The Imperial generals are aware that digging him out of his nest would require more manpower and resources than the Empire can currently afford.

If Justaios fears retribution from anyone, it is from the Merchant Houses of Jalizar, whose caravans are continuously robbed by the bandit lord and who have the funding to hire their own mercenary army...

THE ZAKHARITES

Zakharius Swift-Hands was one of the best thieves of Jalizar. A Whitemouse, an independent working outside the Thieves Guild, he ended his career in the dreaded Justice Tower. While he awaited judgment from the Magistrate, he swore to himself that, in the event he was allowed to live, he would change his life.

Luckily for him, since the crime for which he was jailed was only a verbal offense against a noble, he merely had all his teeth smashed with an iron mace.

So, Zakharius the Toothless wandered far from Jalizar, eventually ending in Ekul. There he learned of the Jademen philosophy, becoming first a Chela, a disciple of a monk, and finally a monk himself. He meditated frequently, especially on the concept of wealth and its negative influence on a man's advancement on the Path of Enlightenment. He reached the conclusion that any possession above self-sustainment is only a burden and a distraction, weighing down the individual and diverting him from his philosophical progression.

Promoting such a worthy and interesting concept, Zakharius started attracting a number of followers, in great part young monks, but also humble common people. But Zakharius decided that proselytizing about his philosophy wasn't enough: people needed to be *freed* from riches, to fly high on the wings of the spirit. And so he and his followers enthusiastically started their crusade against the wealthy, robbing rich people of all their belongings.

Utilizing his old thieving skills and the incredible capabilities of his disciples, in a few months the Zakharites had robbed a myriad of rich merchants and haughty nobles, gaining the silent support of the general population.

The Zakharites are pacifists and don't usually kill, but nevertheless they have no remorse in using non-lethal force, treachery and lies to free a man of his personal burdens of trinkets and gold. Today, six years have passed since the first Zakharite "liberations" and they don't seem to be nearing an end; no rich lady is secure in the safety of her jewels and no Valk lord can trust the safety of his herd of horses if the pious bandits are nearby.

Although they can seem odd and harmless to strangers, the Zakharites are a serious problem. The Valk, when they discover one, simply tie him behind a horse and drag him to his death.

Even King Eku himself complained to the senior hierarchy of the monks about the problems caused by these riotous children, but despite all efforts no solution was found. The Zakharites grow increasingly more numerous and more organized every day and their leader has not been seen in public in quite some time. Some suspect that Zakharius is long dead and

that a much darker and sinister force is currently leading the monk bandits.

Another mystery about the Zakharites is what happened to the enormous wealth they have stolen over the years. Not a single coin was spent or ever seen again. Someone think that the loot was destroyed so as to not be a temptation, but there are whispers of a secret hideout, concealed in a place beyond suspicion, where all the riches stolen by the Zakharites are held.

ORGANIZATION

This chapter gives a more detailed insight into the organization of mercenary companies and bandit bands; some details are also applicable to the regular armies of the Dominions.

STRUCTURE AND CHAIN OF COMMAND

Mercenary companies and bandit bands are organized in a pyramidal structure. At the top there is a single leader, usually the strongest or most charismatic member or the band. Below him there are a limited number of officers. Unlike regular armies, where the officers tend to be quite numerous, among mercenaries and bandits they are far less so. The few there are tend to be very capable; indeed, they must be strong commanders to maintain control over such single-minded, individualistic cutthroats. The nature of command itself in bands and companies is very different from regular armies; mercenary and bandit leaders tend to lead from the front rank, sharing the same risks, if not greater ones, as their underlings. A leader hiding in the rear ranks quickly loses the respect of his troops, often ending his career with a dagger in the back.

COMPOSITION AND RECRUITMENT

Companies and bands, especially smaller ones, tend to be specialized in a single role; for example, they are all spearmen, archers or cavalymen. In this manner mercenaries can maximize their utility on the battlefield and this specialization enhances their ability to command higher wages. Larger companies tend to be broader in scope, often with two complementary specializations; for example, light cavalry with archers for support. Only very large companies are organized like regular armies, including all three divisions: infantry, missile troops and cavalry.

Another important factor in defining companies and bands is recruitment. Despite conventional wisdom, bands and companies are rather picky. Many bands, especially smaller ones, are formed only by members of the same race, clan or, as happens for Amazons, gender. Practically this holds true for reasons of trust: mercenaries often are strangers in a strange land and outlaw bandits must be very careful to avoid spies among their numbers; thus these groups tend to trust only people similar to themselves.

Larger bands and companies are usually more open, and have fewer restrictions on recruitment.

EQUIPMENT

No general description can be given which encompasses all bands and companies: equipment is extremely variable, depending on the composition of the individual unit. What is common among all mercenary units is the fact that equipment is often considered a personal responsibility and usually isn't provided. This is the reason why bandits and mercenaries tend to be quite poorly equipped and inhomogeneous in their weaponry compared to their regular counterparts.

But, in case of very rich companies, the opposite is true, and very successful mercenaries and bandits can be armed with high-quality gear.

Also, larger and more established companies tend to be more standardized, arming fresh recruits and dock-



ing their initial wages or shares of loot to repay these costs.

SUBSISTENCE AND PAYMENT

Don't let be fooled, despite their boasts of fighting for freedom or just causes, bandits and sell-swords fight for a single reason: loot.

Mercenaries are hired through a personal deal between their captain and the patron, and usually the payment includes three things: food and lodging, wages and the promise of loot. Mercenaries can sometimes accept to be hired for very little money, if the prospective loot is very good; the patron, however, should be aware that, if the loot cannot be found or is too risky to acquire, the mercenaries may choose to exert their predatory instincts on the possessions of the patron.

For bandits, the situation is a little different and more complex: they live mainly off acquiring loot, although in some cases

certain bands may derive minimal revenue from extorting levy on lands they control in exchange for protection, similar to legitimate lords. In certain cases, especially for rebel or outlaw bands, bandits receive free food, lodging and protection from locals, but they are expected to fight for their protection and occasionally share part of the loot with their supporters.

Looting is a very delicate matter for both mercenaries and bandits. There are usually strict rules which govern the gathering and organization of loot so that an equitable distribution is made. Being caught embezzling loot from the communal haul is an offense usually paid for with one's life.

In rare cases, commanders may declare a day of "free loot" when the rule above isn't enforced, and anybody can keep for himself what he finds. It usually has a prodigious effect on morale, but it is also very dangerous because a band can lose a great number of men in the fights which inevitably erupts over possession of loot.

BAND CREATION

This chapter deals with how to create, manage and use mercenary companies and bandit bands during the game, in a Fast, Furious and Fun way. For simplicity, from this point on both types of groups are referred to as "Bands".

The same rules are generic enough to allow you, with slight modifications, to create regular armies, ships' crews and so on.

CREATING A BAND

There are basically two ways for player characters to be involved in a Band. The first way is by narrative: the Game Master creates an adventure where the party, for a reason or another, joins a Band and eventually achieves important positions or even leadership.

The second way is a method based on *Savage Worlds* game mechanics: one of the characters takes the Edge detailed below. Note that including a Band in a campaign can drastically change the focus of the game, so the Edge can be taken only with the approval of the Game Master.

BAND COMMANDER (LEADERSHIP EDGE)

Requirements: Legendary, Command, Smarts d6+

The character has managed to create a Band around him and is mechanically detailed as follows. A starting Band is usually of Small Size (200 Battle Value), has Average Discipline and no starting Personalities. A Band also has one Band Edge and can take up to two Minor and one Major Band Hindrances.

BAND STATS

Bands during the game are detailed by a number of numerical and descriptive stats, as detailed in the table below. The table is read in this manner: a Very Small Band, for example, has a starting Battle Value of 200, has 0/4 Personalities and needs one Support Token.

NAME

A Band's Name is one of the defining traits of a Band and maybe the most important; some Bands are named after their leader, for instance Girtos' Crows, while others have self-imposed nicknames or titles earned for their deeds, such as the Grim Company or the Defenders of Kenaton. Whatever the origin of a name, it is intended to impress potential patrons and frighten enemies.

COMMANDER

Bands, except in rare cases, are led by a single individual. You can assign him arbi-

trary stats or use the Brigand Lord NPC profile from *Beasts and Barbarians Golden Edition*, maybe with some tweaks. Usually it isn't important to have a fully stated Commander; his Knowledge (Battle) and Spirit Traits must be defined, because during Mass Battles the Commander is the one who rolls.

Usually a Commander has one or more lieutenants under him who can take his place in case of demise or incapacitation. They are some of the Personalities of the Band (see below).

SIZE

This stat represents in an abstract way the relative Size of a Band. There are five levels of Size: Very Small, Small, Medium, Large, and Very Large. The Size of the Band also influences the maintenance cost in Support Tokens. Band Size goes up automatically when the Battle Value reaches the minimum threshold to qualify for the next Size; for example, if a Small Band with 580 Battle Value somehow manages to reach 620 Battle Value it automatically becomes of Medium Size.

IN AND OUT OF A BAND (PLAYER'S PERSPECTIVE)

Bands can be fun to play with, but in certain cases they become too cumbersome for the heroes (or the players) to manage, severely hindering their freedom. It's a common Sword and Sorcery trope that a Commander can always leave his command behind and hit the road again. His men will soon find another leader.

While this can be appealing, players who invested in the Band Commander Edge could feel themselves robbed of an Advance. As compensation, any character voluntarily dropping the leadership of a Band can swap the Band Commander Edge with another Edge for which they meet the requirements for free. In the future he can also try to regain his lost position, but usually it isn't an easy task...

BAND STATS TABLE

SIZE	BATTLE VALUE	PERSONALITIES	SUPPORT TOKENS
Very Small	200	0/4	1
Small	400	1/4	2
Medium	600	2/5	3
Large	800	2/5	4
Very Large	1000+	3/6	5
For every 200 Battle Value		+1/+0.5	+1

BATTLE VALUE

This number represents the combat capacity, in absolute terms, of the Band. For details describing the use of this new stat, see the Additional Mass Battle Rules chapter.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline represents the general attitude, willingness to fight and organization of a Band. A Band with a high Discipline is a well-oiled mechanism which works well in battle, while one with low Discipline is a riotous bunch just waiting for a chance to disband or to rebel against their chief. There are five levels of Discipline, each of them influencing the Battle Benny Pool (see the Additional Mass Battle Rules chapter). Discipline can go up or down depending on Support and various other circumstances.

BAND DISCIPLINE TABLE

DISCIPLINE	EFFECTS
Very Low	Battle Benny Pool reduced by two
Low	Battle Benny Pool reduced by one
Average	No modifier (starting value)
High	Battle Benny Pool increased by one
Very High	Battle Benny Pool increased by two

SUPPORT

Larger Bands require more food, wine, women and other luxuries to be happy and fight well. This number represents how much loot, represented by abstract Support Tokens, the Band needs to be ef-

ficient. See page 46 for detailed Support rules.

PERSONALITIES

A Band is composed of a leader, a number of non-descript grunts and some key figures called Personalities. These NPCs are the most notable ones of the Band and they can offer chances for role play, interaction and so on. In addition, the exact type of Personality (see page 23) can give the Band some extra advantages both in Mass Battles and outside them.

The number before the slash represents the starting number of Personalities a Band of a certain size usually has, while the second number is the maximum allowed. If a Band goes up in size during the game, only the maximum number of Personalities goes up and new open positions must be filled during the game.

EDGES AND HINDRANCES

Similar to characters, Bands have both Hindrances and Edges. A Band normally starts with a single Band Edge. A Band may take up to two Band Minor Hindrances (1 point each) and up to one Band Major Hindrance (2 points). Edges may be purchased with these points exactly as per the character creation rules in the *Savage Worlds* core rules.

HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

Some hints on the history of the Band, a narrative description and so on can be useful to identify it and to expand its background.

BANNER OR BATTLE CRY

The banner or battle cry of the Band, if it has one.

FORCE COMPOSITION (OPTIONAL)

The actual numbers of men, mounts, siege engines and so on comprising the army. This is purely optional and can be easily calculated from the Battle Value using the **Actual Size of Armies** sidebar on page 42.

PERSONALITIES

Personalities are special characters (usually NPCs) filling an important role in a Band. Usually they don't need full stats; the rules below detail their skill in the Band's structure and during Mass Battles. If necessary some personality can be added rolling by on the **Allies Personality Table** in the *Savage Worlds* core rules.

Player characters can become Personalities if they meet the requirements, perhaps even becoming the Commander. It should not be a simple task achieving these positions, but rather a rewarding and compelling process of role play. Usually the candidate must pass a test of some type, so that the other Band members recognize his worth (this can lead to some interesting side adventures), or pass substantial time among the soldiers (in gaming terms: gaining a new Advance while in the Band).

Another factor to consider is that Personalities and Commanders occupy exclusive positions within the Band; if all the openings are occupied, a removal of some type must be carried out. It can be peaceful, but Bands are a violent bunch and often a duel or other confrontation of some sort is involved; the winner must always guard his back against any grudge held by the loser.



ARMORER

Requirements: Repair d8+

An armorer is responsible for maintaining the weapons and armor of the Band and, if necessary and furnished with the proper tools, to forge new ones. If there is at least one Armorer for every two Size steps of the Band, the Band has +1 to Battle rolls for having fully functioning equipment.

ARTILLERIST

Requirements: Knowledge (Demolition) d8+, Repair d4+, Smarts d6+

An artillerist is trained in using the siege engines typical of the Dominions. He knows how to maintain, repair and use

them to their best advantage. He is a useful Personality only if the Band has the Artillery or Improved Artillery Edge.

During a siege, an artillerist can try to destroy the defender's fortifications by making a Knowledge (Demolition) (-2) roll. On a success, the Fortification modifier (see page 45) of the defender drops by one point. The roll is made without penalty if the Band has the Improved Artillery Edge.

Artillerists are also very useful during open field battles because they can command their engines with terrible precision, spreading death among the enemy's ranks. Once per battle, the Artillerist can make a Knowledge (Demolition) roll; for each success and raise, his Commander adds +1 to his next Battle roll. This ability can be used twice per battle if the Band has the Improved Artillery Edge.

CHAMPION

Requirements: Fighting d8+, Intimidation d8+, at least two Combat Edges

Champions are particularly strong and capable warriors who, by their presence and brutish impact, can change the tide of a battle if unleashed at the right moment. A Commander can use each Champion once per battle. Planning is important to maximize their efficacy, so a Commander deciding to use a Champion before making a Battle roll receives +2 to his roll; if he decides to use him after rolling, he adds only +1.

ENGINEER

Requirements: Knowledge (Demolition) d6+, Smarts d6+

An Engineer is an architect or stonemason with expertise in building (and de-

stroying) fortifications. He is only useful if the Band has the Sappers Band Edge and, in a limited way, he is also useful in conjunction with an Artillerist. In case of a single character occupying both of these Personality slots, an Artillerist/Engineer can stack his bonuses.

Sappers led by an Engineer receive +2 to their Smarts and Vigor rolls to build or destroy a fortification, and can always use the Engineer's Knowledge (Demolition) skill in place of their Smarts when building a new impromptu fortification.

An Engineer adds +2 to Knowledge (Demolition) rolls by an Artillerist to destroy fortifications.

HEALER

Requirements: Healer, Healing d8+

Healers are of no use during the heat of battle, but are invaluable in the aftermath. Healers make a cooperative Healing (-2) roll after the battle; for each success and raise, a Battle Token is automatically recovered in addition to the normal Aftermath rules in the *Savage Worlds* core rules.

LIEUTENANT

Requirements: Knowledge (Battle) d4+, Smarts d6+, at least one Leadership Edge

As second in command, the Lieutenant is the man responsible for ensuring that the Commander's orders are obeyed. Some of them are trusty, faithful fellows, while others are opportunists who await only the right occasion to backstab their superior and seize power. A Band can have any number of Lieutenants, but a chain of command must be decided (so who is the first Lieutenant, who is the second and so on). Lieutenants can substitute for the

Commander in the case of his demise (following the chain of command) and during battle they may make cooperative Battle rolls to help the Commander.

If you are using the Individual Loot rules, Lieutenants receive three shares.

LOTUSMASTER

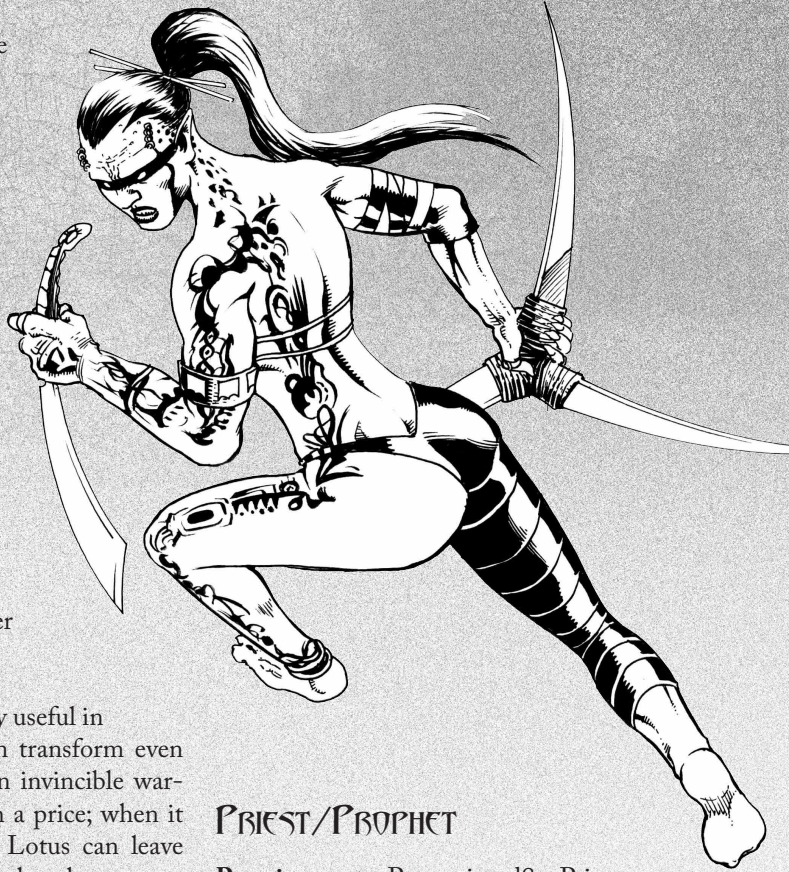
Requirements: Lotusmastery d8+, Smarts d6+, at least one Power Edge

Lotusmasters can be very useful in a battle. Their drugs can transform even the weakest man into an invincible warrior, but this comes with a price; when it ends, the power of the Lotus can leave the soldiers so exhausted that they cannot fight.

If he has enough time before a battle (at least one hour) and he makes a successful Lotusmastery (-2) roll, a Lotusmaster can spend 10 Power Points to drug the soldiers of the Band with his amazing potions. On a success, the Band immediately acquires one Battle Token due to the enhancing effects of the drugs, two with a raise.

However, the first time the Commander rolls a 1 on the Battle die, regardless of the Wild Die, it means that the drugs' effect abruptly ends and the army immediately loses two Battle Tokens.

Extra tokens are lost at the end of the battle and must not be counted for the purposes of calculating casualties.



PRIEST/PROPHET

Requirements: Persuasion d8+, Priest

Bands sometimes host men of faith which, for one reason or the other, have abandoned a more stable life to join the ranks of the Band. Commanders are usually glad to have one of these figures among their men; they instill in the troops the idea of having the gods on their side, boosting their morale. Usually Priests are inoffensive, but it is wise to keep them on tight leash; some of them are fanatics, while others are plotters and schemers who want to use the Band to further their own agenda. Before a battle, a Priest can hold a sermon to encourage the troops and makes a Persuasion (-2) roll. On a success, the Priest grants +1 to Morale rolls, +2 with a raise. The bonus lasts for the rest of the battle or until the priest is killed. Multiple Priests can work together, making a cooperative roll.

QUARTERMASTER

Requirements: Streetwise d8+, Smarts d6+

Fighters are important, but even the strongest warrior is weak as a sheep when his belly is empty and his armor is reduced to rusty pieces. The Quartermaster is responsible for keeping the Band fed, outfitted and stocked. He supervises the finances and checks the rations. Many of them are shameless thieves, but Commanders usually turn a blind eye to their theft if they do their job well. At the end of the month, if a Band has fewer Support Tokens than the minimum required for its size, the Quartermaster can make a Streetwise roll; for each success and raise, he adds a Support Token to the Band, up to the minimum required to avoid Discipline loss (extra Support Tokens cannot be used to increase Discipline above the minimum). In game terms, the Quartermaster doesn't actually conjure loot from thin air, but instead manages to forage, finding useful resources in unsuspected places.

If this ability is used for more than one month in a row, the roll suffers a cumulative -2 for each subsequent month. The penalty wears off after a single month in which the ability isn't used.

RECRUITER

Requirements: Charisma 0+, Persuasion d8+, Streetwise d6+

These smooth-tongued individuals are totally worthless in battle, but they are worth every Moon they receive in the months and weeks before and after. A Recruiter incessantly roams many miles away from the Band looking for new potential recruits. When he finds suitable recruits, he persuades, forces, kidnaps or somehow coerces them into joining the Band.

If a Recruiter is in the Band, a Commander either receives +2 to his Persuasion recruitment rolls (see page 47) *or* he can choose to use the Recruiter's Persuasion skill die instead of his own for the same roll.

SCOUT

Requirements: Notice d6+, Survival d8+, Woodsman

Scouts are expert rangers and woodsmen. They usually are deployed in advance of the main force and are tasked with checking the terrain to discover ambushes and find the best fighting positions. They are of invaluable help during ambushes (see page 62) and a Commander can always roll using his Scout's skills instead of resorting to group rolls when trying to set or to discover an ambush.

In addition, at the beginning of the battle, if the Band has time to take up positions (GM discretion), the Scout is allowed a Survival (-2) roll. On a success, he finds good terrain and foes have -1 on any Knowledge (Battle) rolls during Mass Battles due to the slight terrain advantage.

Outside combat the Scout is also useful because he can help with foraging; if there is at least one Scout for every two Size steps of the Band, they are allowed a cooperative Survival (-4) roll. On a success, they reduce the Support Token requirement of the Band by one, minimum of one.

If you are using the Strategic Movement System, a Scout can negate the movement penalty of a Band in difficult terrain with a Survival (-2) roll. A Scout may never allow a Band to move in forbidden terrain (e.g., cavalry in mountains).

SORCERER

Requirements: Sorcery d8+, at least two Power Edges

Sorcerers and warlocks are a fearful addition to a Band, but the nature of their powers is so dangerous that, if some error occurs in their rituals, things can become ugly for the whole army. A sorcerer can spend 5 Power Points and makes a Sorcery (-2) roll before the start of each mass battle round to scare the opposing army in some way. On a success, the opposing general must immediately make a Morale roll, with a -2 penalty if the warlock scored a raise.

If the Sorcery roll is a 1, apart from the warlock suffering the effects of the Sorcery Critical Failures Table, his Commander must make an immediate Morale roll at -2.

Fear isn't long-lasting on the battlefield, however. If a Band scores a raise on the Morale roll against the terrifying magic of the Sorcerer, it is immune from the effects for the rest of the battle.

SPECIALIST LEADER

Requirements: Knowledge (Battle) d4+, one of the following skills at d8+: Fighting, Knowledge (Demolition), Riding, Shooting, or Throwing, Specialist Troop Band Edge.

A Specialist Leader is an officer very skilled in leading a particular type of troops in battle. For example he can be the Master of Slingers, the Cavalry Captain, the Heavy Infantry Commander or the First Javelin Thrower. To be effective, a Specialist Leader must have the corresponding Specialist Troop in the Band (granted by the Specialist Troop Band Edge); for example, a Band with a Cavalry Captain

must have Specialist Troops (Cavalry), an Archer Commander must have Specialist Troops (Archers) and so on.

A Specialist Leader allows using the corresponding Specialist Troop twice per battle (see the Specialist Troop Band Edge).

SPY

Requirements: Persuasion d6+, Stealth d8+, Streetwise d6+, Smarts d6+, Thief

A Spy is a master of infiltrating the opponent's forces. Excellent spies can even manage to discover enemy plans or lure them into ambushes. Before the battle, a Spy is allowed a Stealth (-2) roll. On a success, he receives some hints regarding the battle plans of the opposition; in the



OCCUPYING MULTIPLE PERSONALITY SLOTS

If they meet the requirements, player characters can occupy up to two Personality slots; alternatively, if they are Commanders, they can also be a Personality. The advantage of this choice allows increased flexibility for the Band. However, it can also be a liability: if the single multiple-slot individual is killed, the Band effectively loses two Personalities. In addition, during each battle round, only one Personality option may be chosen; thus, a character must either choose which single Personality they wish to utilize for that round or if they choose to function as a Commander, if that option is available to them. Thus, a Commander who wants to act as a Personality must delegate command to someone else (usually a Lieutenant) in that battle round.



PERSONALITIES AND CHARACTERS IN MASS BATTLES

Player characters can fill any Personality slot, so they can also be used as Champions, Specialist Commanders or Sorcerers. In any round when they are "used" by the Commander, they cannot act normally as per the Characters in Mass Battle rule in the Savage Worlds core rules; instead, they make a Vigor (-2) roll. On a failure, they are Fatigued for the rest of the battle; on a critical failure, they receive a Wound.

first round of battle, any Battle Plan bonus the enemies have is reduced to zero. On a raise, the Spy's side also gains a +2 Battle Plan modifier thanks to the information found.

The Spy's job is a dangerous one, and in the dire event she rolls a 1 on her Stealth die, regardless of the Wild Die, she is discovered and suffers 2d6 damage. If a critical failure is rolled, the Spy is captured, with consequences left to the GM.

Note: The Spy mechanic described above is quick-and-dirty and suited for NPCs. PC Spies should actually play the scouting mission as an interesting side adventure. The outcome of the mission can reduce the Battle Plan modifier of the enemy to zero or, in the case of extreme success, give a Battle Plan bonus to the Spy's side ranging from +1 to +4.

STANDARD BEARER/MUSICIAN

Requirements: Charisma 1+, Persuasion d6+, Spirit d6+

Some Bands have horn blowers, others have standard bearers or even mummors who taunt and make jests about opponents. The mere presence of these individuals is comforting to the soldiers. A Band with a Standard Bearer gains +1 to Morale rolls and, if the Commander rolls a 1 on the Spirit roll to check for Morale, he can reroll it for free, Wild Die included, exactly as if he used a Benny. As a drawback, losing the Standard Bearer during a battle is a strong blow to the troops' spirit and the Band suffers -2 to all Morale rolls until the end of the confrontation.

BAND EDGES AND HINDRANCES

Like characters, Bands have both Hindrances and Edges. A Band normally starts with a single Band Edge, but an additional one can be taken (see **Edges and Hindrances** under the **Creating a Band** section on page 20). Band Edges aren't exclusive to bandit bands and mercenary companies and can also be used by armies, navies and other similar fighting groups.

BAND HINDRANCES

BREAKING POINT (MINOR)

Any army has a breaking point, a moment when the men, even the toughest ones, can suddenly decide to throw away their weapons and flee. This Band has an even lower threshold than most: any time it is reduced to half or less of its starting number of Battle Tokens, the Commander must make an immediate Morale roll; on a failure, the Band routs.

COSTLY (MAJOR)

The soldiers of the Band are real vultures and they consume loot with the voracity of a pack of wolves. The Support Token requirement of the Band is raised by one.

COURAGE IN NUMBERS (MINOR)

The Band fights well when the odds are on their side, but when they are outnumbered (start the battle with less Battle Tokens than the opponent) they suffer an additional -1 to Morale rolls. This works only when they start the battle outnumbered – not when they are outnumbered during it.



CUMBERSOME (MAJOR)

Maybe these troops wear very heavy armor which hinders their mobility in combat, or maybe they fight in very rigid formations making them slow to move. Whatever the reason, they cannot fully exploit the advantage of numbers. The Band reduces the Battle bonus derived from having more Battle Tokens than its opponents by one (modifier cannot drop below zero).

***Example:** The Defenders of Kenaton (10 Tokens) attack a savage Pict war-party (7 Tokens). Normally, the mercenaries will have +3 to Battle rolls due the difference in Token numbers. Since they are wearing very heavy armor they cannot take full advantage of their mobility (they have the Cumbersome Hindrance) so their bonus is only +2.*

EXCLUSIVE (MINOR)

Joining the Band isn't easy; maybe a particular joining ritual is required, or the Band only accepts a specific type of individual(s) (for example, only women or only former gladiators). For this reason, the Band suffers -2 to any Recruitment roll.

**FACELESS GRUNTS
(MINOR OR MAJOR)**

The Band is composed of common soldiers for the most part, thus it doesn't attract outstanding individuals. With the Minor version of the Hindrance, halve (rounding down) the maximum number of Personalities a Band can have. With the Major version, only a single Personality can be part of the Band.

FREE LOOTERS (MINOR)

The Band is more interested in free looting than in receiving the standard pay. Any time there is a chance to pillage, if they aren't allowed a "free loot" day (meaning that any soldier can keep for himself what he finds without sharing it with comrades) the Commander must make a Persuasion roll, with a penalty ranging from -1 to -6 depending from the size of the settlement to be raided (-1: Small Village, -6: Metropolis). On a failure, the Band loses a Discipline level.

If the "free loot" day is granted, no Persuasion roll is necessary.

HONORABLE (MINOR)

Mercenaries and bandits usually fight only for money, but these men are different. The Band fights only for honorable causes or for a particular faith or political faction.

**INDIVIDUALISTIC
(MINOR OR MAJOR)**

The Band is composed of single-minded individuals who fight without maintaining battle formation and with little respect for orders, making it very difficult to actually direct them on the battlefield. It is a behavior particularly common among barbarians. With the Minor version of this Hindrance, a Commander must make a Smarts roll to use a specific Personality in the current battle round; on a failure, the Personality cannot be used (but the "use" isn't wasted and he can try to use a different Personality if he so chooses; this requires a separate check). With the Major version, the Smarts roll suffers -2; on a failure, no Personality can be used in the current round.

INFERIOR EQUIPMENT (MAJOR)

The average armies of the Dominions are equipped with bronze weapons and armor and soldiers are taught to keep them in good shape. Primitive cultures, such as Cairnlanders, Nandals, Caledmen, Pygmies and certain Ivory Savannah tribes instead employ weaker or more primitive weapons made of stone, wood or bone. Or perhaps the troops are issued good equipment but they lack the knowledge or discipline to keep it in good shape, so good armor rusts and bowstrings weaken after a few engagements.

When a Band with Inferior Equipment fights against one with average or better equipment, the Battle die of the Commander of the Inferior Equipment force is reduced by one step (minimum d4-2).

RELUCTANT FIGHTERS (MAJOR)

The soldiers in the Band don't have much motivation to fight. Perhaps they are slave

troops who fight only because they fear their Commander more than the enemy, or maybe they are braggarts who piss their pants when the boasting ends and swords are drawn. Reluctant fighters suffer -1 to any Morale roll and the army routs with a result of 1-2 on the Morale roll, not only on a 1.

SLOW MARCHERS (MINOR)

The Band takes a long time to move from a location to another. Maybe there are a great number of camp followers slowing them, or the troops insist on doing particular religious rituals before any long march and so on. Whenever reaching a particular place in a short time becomes vital, the Commander must make a Spirit (-2) roll. On a failure, the Band arrives late; if a battle is involved, this can have very dire consequences and the Band suffers a penalty of up to -4 on Battle rolls (GM discretion). In addition, if you are using the Forced March rules (see page 75), the Commander rolls suffer a -2 penalty.

SLOW REACTIONS (MAJOR)

The Band's chain of command is somewhat ineffective, so orders are often confused or executed late, or the Band consists of mindless drones or very dumb soldiers. Whatever the reason, during the Battle Initiative phase, the Commander draws two cards from the Action Deck and uses the worse of the two (GM discretion).

SUPERSTITIOUS (MAJOR)

The Band members have great fear of the supernatural. Whenever they have to fight against a supernatural opponent they must pass a Morale roll before the battle starts. On a failure, they suffer -2 to all Battle and Morale rolls during the battle. If a 1 is rolled on the Spirit die for the Morale

roll, regardless of the Wild Die, the army retreats from battle.

TRAITOR (MINOR)

A rotten apple, someone who holds a grudge against the Commander, the Personalities, or even against the whole Band, hides himself among the men. He is only waiting for the right moment to seize command or secretly wants to sell his comrades out to their enemies. Traitors are masters of dissimulation and are very patient. At the beginning of every session the Game Master draws a card from the Action Deck and secretly looks at it: if it is a Club, the Traitor will strike during this session if he spots an opening. Traitors can be found and rooted out; in this case, either a new Hindrance may be selected to replace this one, the Commander may spend an Advance to buy off the Hindrance, or another sneaky Traitor will soon appear...

UNDISCIPLINED (MAJOR)

The Band is made up of undisciplined individuals who aren't able to fight as a cohesive unit. Their Discipline level is lowered by one step.

WANTED (MINOR OR MAJOR)

The Band's members are considered outlaws and criminals and likely stay together only for self-protection. With the Minor version of the Hindrance, all Band members suffer -2 to Charisma; with the Major version, the penalty increases to -4.

BAND EDGES

What follows is a list of available Edges for a Band. Some require a certain Discipline level or a Commander with a cer-

tain skill level. If the requirements are no longer met (for example, Discipline loss resulting in a value below the required level or removal of the Commander), the Band retains the Edge but cannot use it until the requirements are met again.

Like character Edges, Band Edges also have a Rank requirement (see **Band Advancement** on page 38).

ANIMOSITY

Requirements: Novice

The Band has a deep hatred for a race, a group or a culture (which must be chosen when this Edge is acquired). When fighting against that type of opponent, Battle and Morale rolls are made with a +1 bonus.

HATE

Requirements: Seasoned, Animosity

As Animosity above, but the bonus to Battle and Morale rolls is +2.

ARTILLERY

Requirements: Novice

Although not a unit widely employed, artillery is used in the Dominions and many armies, including the Iron Phalanxes, use them in sieges and even in open-field battles. Artillery weapons consist mainly of catapults, ballistae and rams (the latter are used only in sieges). A Band with this Edge employs such weapons and gains +1 to Battle rolls. Still utilizing primitive machines, artillery is quite slow and requires some time to be reloaded; the bonus can only be applied once every other round (so usually on the first, third, fifth and so on).

Artillery also takes time to be properly positioned and prepared; it cannot be used if the Band is surprised or in similar conditions (GM discretion).

IMPROVED ARTILLERY

Requirements: Seasoned

The Band has one or more powerful siege engines, such as a trebuchet or the deadly Hulian's Scorpions, the infamous ballistae of the Iron Phalanxes, loaded with dozens of vicious darts. The Battle bonus derived from the Artillery Edge is doubled (so becomes +2).

Given the great amount of effort required to move, supply and man these powerful siege machines, this Edge increases the Support Token requirement of the Band by one.

BANE

Requirements: Novice, Average Discipline

This Band is specialized in fighting against a certain type of opponent, usually Infantry, Cavalry or Missile troops. This can be due to special equipment (for example, pikes against Cavalry or rain of arrows against Infantry) or tactics (forming a tortoise against Missiles with their shields). When this Edge is taken a particular type of troop must be chosen. Whenever the Band faces an opponent composed of that type of troop it can decide, at the beginning of each round, if it is using this Edge defensively or offensively. In the first case the opponent suffers -2 to any Battle roll; in the second, the Band receives +2 to Battle rolls.

BASE

Requirements: Novice, None

The Band has a refuge of some sort: a fortress, a hideout, or a permanent camp where they can lick their wounds and train new recruits. A Band with a Base can automatically raise its Battle Value by 5% each month, and due to the Base's healing facilities, can reroll one die for free in the Aftermath sequence to recover a lost Battle Token. In addition, if attacked while in their Base, they receive +1 to Morale rolls, while the opponents suffer -1 to Battle rolls due to the fortifications. Note that a Base is a stationary structure, so wandering Bands cannot benefit from its bonus.

IMPROVED BASE

Requirements: Base

The Band's Base is something stronger and more elaborate: a castle, a complex of caverns, even an entire village. A Band with an Improved Base can automatically raise its Battle Value by 10% each month *or* acquire a new Personality (up to the maximum allowed) and can reroll twice (or once per two different tokens) during the Aftermath sequence to recover a lost Battle Token. The defenses of an Improved Base are improved and they grant +2 to the Band's Morale rolls and enemies suffer -2 to Battle rolls. A structure of this size has its costs, raising the Support Token requirement of the Band by one.

MOBILE BASE

Requirements: Base

The Band's Base isn't a stationary structure, like a castle, but instead can be moved. For example, it can be a ship, a caravan, or even an excellent encampment, like those the Iron Phalanx utilize and whose soldiers

are trained to quickly deploy and stow. A Band with a Mobile Base can bring it with them as they wander.

BATTLE HARDENED

Requirements: Novice, Commander's Knowledge (Battle) d6+, Commander's Spirit d6+

The Band has fought in many dire situations under their Commander and always survived. A Commander with a Battle Hardened Band receives +2 to Battle Token Soak rolls.

IMPROVED BATTLE HARDENED

Requirements: Veteran, Battle Hardened, Commander's Knowledge (Battle) d8+, Commander's Spirit d8+

As Battle Hardened above, but the bonus is +4.

COURAGEOUS

Requirements: Novice, High Discipline

When normal soldiers tremble, a Courageous Band continues to fight! They gain +2 to Morale rolls.

CREATURE

Requirements: Novice.

The Band hosts one or more terrible Creatures among the ranks. They can be elephants, terrible demons summoned by sorcerers or even worse. If a Band with the Creature Edge receives more than two Battle Tokens at the start of the combat, one of them must be of a different color than the others. This is the Creature Token. It works exactly as other Battle Tokens, but, while the Creature Token is present, the

Band receives +1 to Battle rolls and opponents suffer -1 to Morale rolls.

A Creature Token can be eliminated from the attacker's forces with a Battle Called Shot (see page 44).

Creatures either eat a lot or need special care; for these reasons, a Band with this Edge requires one more Support Tokens than usual. They are also rare and difficult to replace; if, during the Aftermath phase, the Creature Token isn't recovered, it means that the Creature is dead, and this Edge cannot be used until a suitable replacement is found (usually 2d4 weeks).

This Edge can be taken multiple times, but only once per Rank of the Band.

CULT OF PERSONALITY

Requirements: Novice, Commander's Charisma 1+

The Commander of this Band is worshipped by his fellow soldiers, who are ready to follow him anywhere. Once per battle, the Commander can add his Charisma bonus to a Battle *or* Morale roll (not both).

As a drawback, because command is so focused on his person, if the Commander falls, the Band must make an immediate group Spirit (using lowest Spirit value in case of different Spirit values) roll or immediately rout.

EXTRA PERSONALITIES

Requirements: Novice

The Band attracts heroes and famous people. Increase the maximum number of Personalities the Band can have by three.

FAMILIAR TERRAIN

Requirements: Novice

The soldiers of this Band are particularly good when fighting in a particular environment: forests, swamps, urban areas or deserts are the most common ones. When choosing this Edge, choose a particular type of environment. When fighting in this type of terrain they reduce the Terrain penalty by 2 and receive +2 to Morale rolls. In addition, if you are using the Strategic Movement System (see page 74) the Band ignores



penalties caused by their specific terrain. However, such troops may never allow a Band to move in forbidden terrain (for example, artillery in a swamp).

FRIGHTENING

Requirements: Novice, Sorcerer Personality or Creature

The Band has a halo of fear around them, usually linked to either the presence of one or more warlocks in its ranks or to a horrifically mighty creature or monsters (for example, elephants). Before the start of the first battle round the opponents of a Frightening Band must make an immediate Morale roll.

This effect can be used in conjunction with the ability of a Sorcerer Personality. In such a case, a single Morale roll is required, with an additional -2 modifier if the Band has the Frightening Edge for a total Morale penalty of -4.

In addition, any time an opposing Commander scores 1 on his Battle roll, he must immediately make another Morale check.

Fear isn't long-lasting on the battlefield, however. If a Band scores a raise on the Morale roll against a Frightening effect, it is immune from the effect for the rest of the battle.

FRUGAL

Requirements: Novice

Perhaps the soldiers of this Band aren't that attached to loot, or maybe the company is mainly made of hunters and foragers who manage to live off the land. Whatever the reason, reduce the Support Token requirement of the Band by one.

LOCAL AID

Requirements: Novice, Commander's Knowledge (Area) d6+

The Band is well known and respected by the local population, which hides and supports them as best they can, providing information and hints of troop movements in the area. The Band's Commander receives +2 to Streetwise and to any roll to set or avoid ambushes. In addition, the Commander can use the Connections (Local) Edge once per scenario. These bonuses apply only in a Band's home region, and is particularly suitable for a Band of outlaws which enjoys the support of the local population. At the GM's discretion, this Edge is lost if the Band behaves poorly towards the locals (for example, looting a nearby village).

HEROES OF BATTLE

Requirements: Novice, Individualistic Hindrance

The Personalities are the real engine of the Band and their deeds on the battlefield inspire the rest of the men. For every two Personalities in the Band, the Commander is granted +1 to Battle *or* Morale rolls (the choice must be made at the beginning of the battle round, after Action Cards are dealt).

MINDLESS ARMY

Requirements: Novice

The Band is formed mainly of mindless individuals, such as undead, Lotus slaves or similar types. They don't know the meaning of the word retreat, gaining +4 to Morale rolls. On the other hand, they are so dumb as to be impossible to command properly. The Commander of a Mindless Army must spend two Bennies from the Battle Benny Pool each time he wants to reroll dice.



MOBILITY

Requirements: Novice, Commander's Knowledge (Battle) d6+, Commander's Smarts d6+

The Band is trained to respond to orders very quickly, possibly due to having excellent officers, a good battle signals system or even magic. Whatever the reason, during the Battle Initiative phase, the Commander receives two Action Cards and can choose the best one (player's choice).

PHALANX

Requirements: Novice, Commander's Knowledge (Battle) d8+, Specialist Troop (Heavy Infantry), High Discipline

This Band is trained to fight in very close ranks, making them terrible in battle. An excellent example is the Iron Phalanx.

Any time the Commander of the Phalanx spends a Benny from the Battle Benny Pool to reroll, he adds +2 to the total (as per the Elan Edge, the Edges stack).

PILLAGERS

Requirements: Novice

The Band is ruthless when they loot, halving the required time to effectively loot a settlement and adding +2 to the Notice roll to find loot.

POPULAR

Requirements: Novice, Commander's Charisma 2+

The deeds of a Popular Band are told by bards and poets in songs, and every farm-boy dreams of leaving his home behind and joining these glorious warriors. Although this may be only propaganda from some cunning recruiter, the Band receives +1 to any Recruitment roll.

VERY POPULAR

Requirements: Seasoned, Commander's Charisma 4+

As Popular above, but the Recruitment roll bonus is +2.

RESOURCE

Requirements: Novice

The Band has found a permanent source of income: it can be a village which pays a protection tax, a bridge or pass on which they charge a toll or something similar.

The Resource, if accessible, grants an extra Support Token every month. Resources are linked to a particular location; if the Band leaves them for some reason, not only does the Resource not produce Support any more, but every month a card must be drawn from the Action Deck: if it is a Club the Resource has fallen under the control of someone else (the Edge is lost).

SAPPERS

Requirements: Novice

The Band includes several persons expert in stonemasonry, woodworking, sapping and all the other crafts necessary to build fortifications and defenses. If enough resources are available (wood, stone and so on, in the form of Support Tokens), a Band with Sappers can repair a broken fortification; it takes one week for each class of Size of a settlement (see page 60).

In addition, with a successful group Smarts roll (usually they have Smarts d6), if they have at least two days of time they can build an impromptu fortification (moats, chevaux de frise, ramparts or palisades are the most common ones). For each success and raise, they halve the time needed to construct the impromptu fortification (minimum 12 hours). An impromptu fortification lasts for a single battle and gives a defending army one point of Fortification modifier (see page 45).

During sieges they can also dig tunnels under the enemy fortifications to either make them collapse or to open a breach in them. For each week of digging, the Sappers make a group Vigor (-2) roll (they have Vigor d6). With a success, the Fortification modifier of the fortress drops by one point, two with a raise. With two raises, they don't damage the fortification but create an opening through which it

is possible for the attackers to enter the enemy fortress (ignore any Fortification bonus and give +4 to the attacker's next Battle roll).

Sappers work better if led by an Engineer Personality.

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

Requirements: Seasoned, Average Discipline or better

The soldiers of the Band are accustomed to fighting when being outnumbered; they simply raise their shields, close ranks and bite the bullet. The opponent reduces any bonus for having more Battle Tokens than the Band by one (minimum zero).

SKIRMISHERS

Requirements: Novice, Small or Very Small Band Size, Mobility

The Band is especially good at hit-and-run guerrilla tactics. They never engage enemies in direct confrontations and usually move away very quickly before being hit. If the Skirmishers' Commander is dealt an Action Card higher than his opponent, he can decide, after making his Battle roll, to retreat immediately, preventing the adversary from responding and ending the battle; this represents the Skirmishers' ability to launch sudden attacks and then disappear.

In addition, retreat being part of the Skirmisher's tactics, they are quick to reform their ranks; regardless of whether they won or lost the battle, they recover Battle Tokens in the Aftermath phase with a 2-6 on the d6.

Note that the Skirmishers Edge is negated whenever the Band doesn't have space

to retreat (GM discretion). For example, when they are trapped in a fortification or there is terrain of some kind seriously hindering them (such as a rushing river or a crevasse), the Band does not benefit from this Edge.

Only Small or Very Small Band can be Skirmishers. Larger bands simply lose this Edge.

SPECIALIST TROOP

Requirements: Novice

A Specialist Troop is a part of the Band which is highly trained in a particular field. When this Edge is taken the type of Specialist Troop must be chosen; Cavalry, Heavy Infantry, Archers or Siege Engines are the most common ones.

Once per battle, the Commander can decide to utilize a Specialist Troop. First, he must provide a plan in which the Specialist Troop can logically contribute. It can range from simply ordering the Cavalry to charge to a more complex strategy (in this case, the Band also receives the battle's plan bonus as per the *Savage Worlds* core rules). A non-Wild Card Commander using his Specialist Troop may use a Wild Die in the next Battle roll, while a Wild Card has his Wild Die increased by two steps (usually to d10 if an NPC).

This Edge can be used more than once if a Specialist Leader Personality is present (see page 27).

Specialist Troops are costly; a Band with this Edge requires one more Support Tokens than usual.

SUPERIOR EQUIPMENT

Requirements: Novice

The Band has some piece of outstanding equipment; it can be iron weapons and armor, Valk bows and ponies or something similar. When facing another army without the same Edge, the Knowledge (Battle) die of the Commander of an army with this Edge is raised by one die step. Superior equipment is more costly, however, so these units generally are less numerous; reduce by 5% any Battle Value increase due to Reinforcements.

ADVANCEMENT

Player-controlled Bands gain Advances as player characters do, although at a very much slower pace. At the end of any scenario (not session) where the Band played a central role (for example, was engaged in a large battle or similar), the Game Master awards it Experience Points, using the same criteria as for characters.

Unlike characters, Bands can use Advances in the following three ways:

Acquire a new Band Edge

Raise the Discipline level of the Band by one step (only once per Rank).

Raise the Size of the Band by one step, bringing the Battle Value of the Band to the minimum required for the new Size; for example, 400 for a Small Band, 600 for an Average one and so on (limited to once per Rank).

The fact that the Band members aren't always the same (there are deaths, replacements, and desertions) doesn't matter; newcomers are usually taught the "rules of the Band" very quickly by more seasoned veterans.



ADDITIONAL MASS BATTLE RULES

This chapter presents some additions to the standard *Savage Worlds* Mass Battle rules. They are purely optional and you can decide to include some or all of them in your game.

BATTLE VALUE AND BATTLE TOKENS

Battle Value is a new layer of abstraction to estimate the strength of an army. Unlike Battle Tokens, which are relative to the strength ratio of two armies, Battle Value is an absolute value. This is important because it allows tracking the life of an army during a Campaign, giving a more accurate view of their status.

Nothing changes during the actual battle, simply use the Battle Values of the two armies to calculate the number of Battle Tokens the two armies have.

It is easier than it seems, and the whole process can be summarized in the following checklist:

- Compare the Battle Values of the two armies.
- The army with the higher Battle Value receives 10 Battle Tokens
- The army with the lower Battle Value receives Battle Tokens in proportion:
- **10 : Highest Battle Value = x : Lowest Battle Value**
- Where x can be calculated as (10 x Lowest Battle Value)/Highest Battle Value.
- Round the number to the nearest integer.

***Example:** The Battle of Teralia. The Defenders of Kenaton (Battle Value: 650), a mercenary Band led by the burly Zandorian swordsman known as the Golden Bull, is surprised by the Eighteenth Iron Phalanx (Battle Value: 900) while ransacking Teralia, a helpless Faberterranean village. No compromise can be found and the Phalanx General orders his men to wipe the greedy mercenaries out.*

The Eighteenth Iron Phalanx has the highest Battle Value so it receives 10

Battle Tokens, while the Defenders of Kenaton obtain $(10 \times 650)/900 = 7.22$; rounded to the nearest integer this equals 7 Battle Tokens. The Hoplites seem to have a decisive advantage, but the mercenaries could have a couple of tricks up their sleeves to change the tide of battle. The two armies are deployed opposite each other on the dusty plain in front of the village, when suddenly the horn blowers of the Defenders sound the order to charge at the Iron Phalanx's lethal scythed chariots...

GENERIC BATTLE VALUES OF ARMIES AND SHIPS

Since Battle Value is an absolute number, the only tricky thing is how to estimate it; you can then use it for a clash of armies, navies or whatever you want. You can even sum them to have a good idea of the forces on the field during mixed conflicts; for example, you can easily simulate the siege of a coastal city by a combined naval and ground force.

Bands have a starting Battle Value depending on their Size, which grows and shrinks according to the events of the game. For other battle entities common in the Dominions, the table below suggests the Battle Value they should have. These are only average values, and any of them can vary (from -30% to +30%) depending on effective numbers of troops, fatigue and so on.

BATTLE VALUE	EXAMPLE ARMY
50	Small Merchant Ship
100	Merchant Ship
200	Very Small Band, Small Barbarian Tribe, Large Merchant Ship, Pirate Ship
300	Syranthian warship, Tricornian War Galley
400	Small Band, Barbarian Tribe, Large Pirate Ship, Amazon Hawk Ship
500	Small Valk Horde, Tricornian Priest Prince's Army
600	Average Band, Large Barbarian Tribe, Iron Phalanx (modern era, reduced ranks)
700	Syranthian Army
800	Large Band, Kyrosian Nobleman's Army
900	Phoenix Guard (Gis' Defensive Army)
1000	Very Large Band, Iron Phalanx (modern era), Autarch's Army
1200	Valk Horde
1500	Iron Phalanx (late Empire, reduced ranks), Large Valk Horde
1800	Iron Phalanx (height of the Empire)

ACTUAL SIZE OF ARMIES

The system presented in this supplement is intentionally generic and abstract to keep the game Fast, Furious and Fun. If you want to know more accurately how many people are in an army you can estimate the number by dividing the Battle Value by the Individual Battle Value of the men composing it. Add 20% to the number if the Band is mainly composed of cavalry (mounts must eat too).

You can also reverse engineer the Battle Value; if you know the actual composition of an army, you can calculate its Battle Value by summing up the values of the individual soldiers.

TROOP TYPE	INDIVIDUAL BATTLE VALUE
Irregular	0.5
Light Infantry/Short Range Missile Troop	1
Medium Infantry/ Long Range Missile Troop	2
Heavy Infantry	3
Light Cavalry	5
Medium Cavalry	7
Chariot	10
Elephant	50
Monster	50+

Example: The Defenders of Kenaton have a Battle Value of 650. This means the Band could be comprised of the following units: 130 Medium Infantry (260 Battle Value), 50 Long Range Missile Troops (100 Battle Value), 5 Chariots (50 Battle Value) and 80 Heavy Infantry (240 Battle Value).

BATTLE BENNY POOL

During a Mass Battle no character can use his personal Bennies for Battle, Morale or Battle Token Soaking (see below) rolls. Instead, before a battle begins, the Commander and any Wild Card acting as a Personality in the Band can decide to put one or more of his Bennies in a communal pool, called the Battle Benny Pool. The Personalities are limited to contributing a maximum of one Benny each, while the Commander can put in as many as he wants.

Any character leading the army in the current round (i.e. making the Battle roll) can *only* use Bennies from the Battle Benny Pool to reroll Battle or Morale



rolls. This includes Extras, Henchmen and Right Hands.

Low Discipline can reduce the Battle Benny Pool number below zero, meaning that, unless the players put some extra Bennies in the pool, their Commander could not use any Bennies during the battle, while High Discipline grants extra Bennies each battle.

At the end of the battle, unused Bennies in the pool are lost, but, if the characters' side won the confrontation, each contributing hero is automatically awarded a Benny.

BATTLE INITIATIVE AND BATTLE EVENTS

Any battle's outcome is uncertain and many conflicts which seem lost from the beginning turn into unexpected victories for the losing side. The opposite is also true.

Before each battle round, the respective Commanders of the armies each draw a card from the Action Deck. As happens in standard combat, the cards are used for initiative. The Commanders must declare their tactic when their card is dealt (staying on Hold in a Mass Battle isn't possible).

In addition, if a face card or a Joker is dealt, it means something unusual happened, depending on the suit. Red cards usually mean a positive event while black ones represent a sudden worsening of the situation. The exact nature of the event is left to the Game Master.

BATTLE EVENTS TABLE

CARD SUIT	EFFECT
Clubs	<i>Desertion!</i> Part of the army either breaks off or is cut out from the center of the battle. The army immediately loses a Battle Token (this can end the battle). If a King or an Ace is dealt, in addition a random Personality is hit, as per the Battle Called Shot rule (see below).
Diamonds	<i>Opening!</i> A lucky break happens! Perhaps an enemy bannerman is killed by an arrow or a Commander receives sudden insight into an opening in the enemy defenses. During this round the Commander gains +2 to Battle rolls.
Hearts	<i>Reinforcements!</i> Fresh troops arrive on the battlefield or perhaps units that were deployed out of range finally manage to reach the proper position. The army immediately receives one additional Battle Token.
Spades	<i>Complication!</i> Something hinders the army's effectiveness, such as a weather effect, like rain hindering the archers, a misunderstood order or whatever the Game Master decides. During this round the Commander suffers -2 to Battle rolls. If a King or an Ace is dealt, in addition a random Personality is hit, as per the Battle Called Shot rule.

CARD SUIT	EFFECT
Red Joker	<i>Impetus!</i> The army's Morale is surges and increases the desire to win! In the current round the Commander receives +2 to any roll, Battle and Morale roll included.
Black Joker	<i>Doom and Gloom!</i> A bad omen, a unique event or maybe an inexplicable loss of Morale strikes the army. During the current round the Commander receives -2 to any roll, Battle and Morale rolls included.

BATTLE CALLED SHOTS

Veteran generals know that killing the opposing's army Commander or Personalities can quickly turn the tide of battle. This can be done with a Called Shot (-4), where the penalty is applied to the Battle roll. The penalty increases to -6 if the attack is made against the Commander.

On a success, normal casualties are inflicted *and* the target Personality is hit.

If he is an NPC no further roll is necessary; the Personality is killed or captured (attacker's choice). If the Personality is a player character, they instead suffer 3d6 damage.

Soaking the damage (see Battle Token Soaking below) negates the effect of a Battle Called Shot.

BATTLE TOKEN SOAKING

Sword and Sorcery fiction often tells stories where small, outnumbered armies, led by naked barbarian heroes, defeat greater forces through the strength of their swords and determination.

The following rule allows you to add a similar flavor to your battles.

Whenever an army suffers the loss of one or more Battle Tokens, the Commander can make a Spirit (-2) roll to Soak them. It works exactly like Soaking character wounds, with two important differences:

No more than two Battle Tokens can be used per Soak Roll.

Only Bennies from the Battle Benny Pool can be used.

MANY-SIDED BATTLES

It can happen (for example, due the effects of Outmaneuvering, see page 64) that in a battle more than two sides are present. In this case calculate the Battle Tokens of any side relative to the highest Battle Value and deal Action Cards to Commanders as normal.

Each Commander when making his Battle roll can decide which opponent he attacks.

FORTIFICATIONS

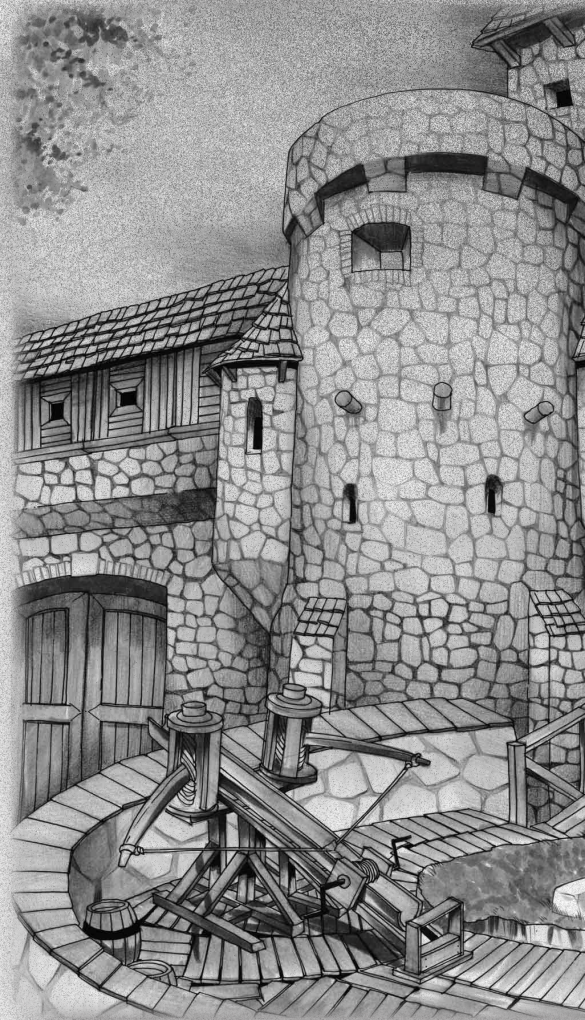
Guard towers, walls and similar defenses can greatly change the outcome of a battle. Fortifications are considered Terrain, inflicting penalties to the attacker's Battle rolls, as shown in the table below.

APPLYING CASUALTIES

Casualties are handled as per the standard *Savage Worlds* rules: the army which started with 10 Tokens loses 10% of his force for each Token lost, while the other army loses a proportionate percentage depending on how many Tokens it had at the beginning of the battle.

To know how much the casualties inflicted in the battle weakened the Band, after the Battle Aftermath phase (see SWD page 93) simply apply the percentage of casualties to the Battle Value. If the new Battle Value isn't enough for the Band to maintain its current Size, reduce it accordingly.

Example: In the Battle of Teralia, the Defenders of Kenaton started the battle with the Eighteenth Phalanx with Battle Value 650. Surprisingly they manage to win the day, despite the serious starting disadvantage, ending the battle with 5 Tokens. This means that 35% of the Band's



troops are lost. So the new Battle Value of the Band is $(650 - 228 = 422)$. It also means that the Band is now reduced to Small Size. The Golden Bull must quickly find replacements otherwise another battle could be the end of the Defenders...

FORTIFICATION LEVEL	EXAMPLE	BATTLE ROLL MODIFIER
Light	Wooden Wall, Sentry Tower, Moat	-1
Medium	Stone Wall, Stone Guard Tower	-2
Heavy	Fortress or Castle	-3

MANAGING BANDS

A compelling dimension of a game where a Band is involved consists of managing it. Seeing your own army grow and become more powerful every day can be as exciting for the players as the personal growth of their characters. But the wise Commander must also know that the mercenary and bandit life could mean being ready to face sudden annihilation, because even the most powerful mercenary company can be wiped out by a strong enemy or undermined from within by pretenders and envious interlopers...

DAY TO DAY MANAGEMENT: THE LAW OF LOOT

Bands fight and stay together not for love or dedication, but for money and loot. If their leader gives them enough food, gold and women to keep them happy, a Band will follow him to Hell and back; if he keeps them poor and with empty bellies, they will likely rebel or desert.

So, the first thought of any Commander when he wakes up should be to find enough loot for his men.

Loot is handled in an abstract way, via Support Tokens, and the Game Master's Guide in this sourcebook contains guidelines for assigning it.

A Band requires a minimum number of Support Tokens each month, depending on its Size, as detailed in the Bands Stats Table (see page 21). Support Tokens include the maintenance costs of mounts, war machines and support personnel (such as cooks, servants, harlots and so on).

At the end of the month, if the minimum number of Support Tokens is met the men are satisfied and nothing happens.

If the number of Support Tokens isn't met, the Band loses a Discipline level, because the men grumble.

If the number of Support Tokens received by the Band exceeds the minimum required, the Discipline of the Band increases by one level per Token exceeding the minimum (the maximum level is Very High). Bands are spendthrifts, so Support Tokens cannot be stashed for the next month.

***Example:** The Defenders of Kenaton are a Medium Size mercenary company with Average Discipline. They require three Support Tokens each month to be kept well fed and happy. During the Campaign against the rebels of Azagara and Sulapul, the first month the Defenders only manage to pillage a small village and to steal a herd of sheep (2 Support Tokens). This is one less than their requirement, so their Discipline drops to Low; during these harsh days they become discontented and difficult to command, so the Golden Bull must order a few floggings to maintain discipline.*

During the second month, with a stroke of luck, the Defenders discover a hidden temple of Etu filled with offerings and capture twenty gorgeous priestesses to enliven their nights (5 Support Tokens). In this case, the number of Tokens exceeds the requirement by two, so the Band gains two levels of Discipline, which increases from Low to High. During the following nights of feasting, the mercenaries raise cups full of wine in honor of their commander, the Golden Bull, past grudges forgotten.

RECRUITMENT AND REPLACEMENT

Battles are hard, bloody affairs, easily decimating a Band if they are not lucky or prepared. So what can a Commander do to replenish his ranks? Do some recruiting, of course!

If a Band is in a non-hostile territory (GM discretion) and if in the current month it received the minimum Support Tokens to avoid loss of Discipline, its Commander can look for some new recruits.

To recruit, the Commander makes a Persuasion (-2) roll; on a success, the Band is reinforced for 20% of the *current* Battle Value of the Band, 40% on a raise.

The presence of a Recruiter Personality either grants a bonus of +2 to the Commander's Persuasion roll or the Commander can choose to use the Recruiter's Persuasion die instead of his own to make the roll.

The Game Master can apply a modifier ranging from -4 to +4 depending on the Band's exploits and reputation in the past six months (a Band which was repeatedly

HOW MUCH IS A SUPPORT TOKEN WORTH?

It isn't easy to answer this question, and it isn't necessary, either. The system detailed in this book isn't very precise, because accurate accounting isn't part of the Sword and Sorcery genre, and it is better to leave these types of details blurred. It is sufficient to state that the heroes find "large coffins of gold" or "raid an entire village". In addition there is another complication in that "loot" doesn't automatically mean "money". It includes food, beverages, women, tools, weapons and so on. However, if you want a more definitive reference for more detailed accounting, consider each Support Token as worth 2000 Moons.



OPTIONAL RULE: INDIVIDUAL LOOT

Usually the heroes should receive rewards independently from the Support Tokens found by their Band, but, if the GM wants to tie their rewards to the exploits of the Band, he can decide that their share is 50 Moons/Support Token found by the Band. Personalities, unless stated otherwise in their descriptions, receive double shares, and the Commander receives five shares.

defeated and found no loot suffers a penalty, while a powerful and rich one receives a bonus).

When the Band's Battle Value reaches the threshold for a larger Size, it is promoted, accruing all the benefits and costs.

SETTING RULES

AFTER THE ADVENTURE BAND EVENTS

Like player characters, Bands in the Sword and Sorcery genre suffer the effects of fate during downtime.

In a Band-focused Campaign, the Band is treated as if it was a character, so a card is dealt to it and the effects are checked on the After The Adventure Band Events Table detailed below.

Many things, both positive and negative, can happen during these intervals and they can furnish the Game Master with great hooks for future adventures.

AFTER THE ADVENTURE BAND EVENTS TABLE

CARD	EFFECT
2	Pestilence. Pox hits the Band! This causes an immediate loss of 10% of Battle Value. At the beginning of each week, draw a card from the Action Deck. If a face card is drawn, the pestilence ends; otherwise, it continues and another 10% is lost. If the Band contains Healer Personalities, they can be helpful and may make a co-operative Healing (-4) roll. For each success and raise, an additional card is drawn and only the best one is considered. There is also a slim chance that the pestilence hits the player characters. They must make a Vigor (+2) roll each week or be affected by an illness (a Long Term Chronic, Major Debilitating malady as per the <i>Savage Worlds</i> core rules).
3	Discontent/Happiness. If the card drawn is black, part of the Band is unhappy for some reason, be it bad food, unfair loot distribution, unpopular decisions or even a rabble-rouser of some type. The Discipline level of the Band goes down a level until the problem is solved in some manner. If the card drawn is red, the Band is happy for some reason; maybe they found good loot or something similar. The Discipline level of the Band immediately goes up by one level.

CARD	EFFECT
4-6	Nothing in Particular. Life in the Band is normal, without anything worthy of notice apart from the usual fist-fights among the men and other assorted things.
7	Idle Period. The Band finds itself without anything to do for a while. If the card drawn is black, it means that the men become fat and lazy and the Band acquires a Minor Hindrance for the next month (GM discretion). If a red card is drawn, the Band is undergoes intense training exercises by the officers. For the next month they gain an extra Band Edge (Commander's choice).
8	Patron/Enemy. Bands can also be very popular or extremely despised. If the card drawn is red, it means that the Band gained an influential friend. This works exactly like the Connections Edge, but is limited to three uses. If the card drawn is black, the Band instead gains a new temporary Enemy, who can show his malevolence at any time in the next year.
9	Reinforcements/Desertions. Mercenaries are fickle people. If the card drawn is black, it means that some soldiers leave the Band (20% Battle Value is lost). Conversely, if the card drawn is red, some extra manpower reinforces the ranks of the Band (20% Battle Value is gained). A Recruiter Personality is of great help in avoiding desertions. If one is present, the Band loses only 10% Battle Value for a black card and gains 30% Battle Value for a red one.
10	Songs and Mockery. Soldiers are noisy people. They love to quarrel, complain and, during long marches, to sing. Their ballads usually aren't very polite and the subjects of their tales revolve around their own Commanders and their deeds. When this card is drawn it means that the Commander or one of the Personalities of the Band is the subject of a song. If the subject takes it with good spirit, his reputation in the Band is increased; if he gets angry the soldiers will react accordingly. The chosen character must make a Spirit roll, at -4 if he has the Mean or Bloodthirsty Hindrance. On a success, he reacts well and permanently gains +2 Charisma towards the Band's members; on a failure, he suffers a permanent -2 Charisma towards his comrades.

CARD	EFFECT
J	New Man in the Band. A new Personality asks to join the Band, up to the maximum number. The exact nature of the character and his stats are decided by the Game Master. The Commander must decide admission and can choose to demote an existing Personality to make space for the new one. Then, the Game Master secretly draws another card. If it is red, the Personality is a worthwhile and faithful addition to the Band; if it is black, something bad comes with her (perhaps she has a powerful enemy, an unknown Major Hindrance or even is a traitor!).
Q	Bless/Curse. The Band has in some manner pleased or displeased supernatural forces in the recent past. If the card drawn is red, the Band received a blessing of some type, and the Battle Benny Pool of the Band receives an extra Benny at the beginning of each battle. If the card drawn is black, a curse was placed on the army and the Battle Benny Pool is reduced by one. Both effects last for the entire next scenario or until a proper act of atonement is done (GM discretion).
K	Safe Haven/Theft. Pillaging is good, but finding a more stable source of income is appealing. If the card drawn is red, it means the Band found a Resource (as per the Band Edge on page 36). If the card drawn is black, instead it means bad news; if the Band had a Resource, for some reason it is exhausted (a village refuses to pay any more, a new bridge or pass is opened elsewhere and so on). If no Resource is present, the situation is even worse as someone steals part of the current month's Support and escapes! If the card drawn is a Spade, the thief managed to steal half of the Support Tokens gained this month (rounded down); if the card drawn is a Club, the sly devil stole all of it! Recovering it before the Band rebels can develop into an interesting adventure.
A	Refuge/Escape. Even restless men such as mercenaries and bandits dream of a calm place where they can rest their tired bones. If the card drawn is red, it means that the Band has discovered a suitable refuge which becomes its base or hideout; it gains the Base Edge or, if the Band meets the requirements, the Improved Base or Mobile Base Edge.
	If the card drawn is black, and the Band already has the Base Edge, it means that for some reason the refuge is lost; perhaps the bandits' hideout is discovered, a fortress is captured by enemies, the Refuge is destroyed by an earthquake or other similar disastrous event. The Band loses the Base, Improved Base or Mobile Base Edges (players' choice). If no Refuge is present, the situation is even worse as the Band is forced to quickly move away from its current position. During the current month, no Recruitment can be done.

CARD

EFFECT

Joker

Relic. The Band has somehow managed to acquire a powerful Relic! If the card drawn is red, it is an item useful for the entire Band, not only a single character. The exact nature of the Relic is decided by the Game Master but as a rule of thumb it grants +1 to Battle, Morale or Recruitment rolls or bestows a useful Band Edge. If the card drawn is black, the Relic is cursed and inflicts a Major Hindrance on the whole Band until they get rid of it.



GAME MASTER'S GUIDE





RUNNING THE GAME

This chapter gives some useful hints and insights on how to introduce Bands to your *Beasts and Barbarians* game and how to manage them during a campaign.

A CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE

The most important fact a GM must be aware of when introducing a Band into his game is that this will change the nature of the play greatly. The characters, which before were probably independent adventurers and scoundrels ready to embark on great adventures and to squander their enormous riches on women and wine, must change their attitude upon joining the Band.

If they are simple soldiers (a rarity, but possible), they now they have captains to obey and respond to; if they are Personalities, or even Commanders, they have a responsibility to look after their men, which can rob even the most diehard barbarian of sleep.

Yes, in taking the path of the Band, the characters must learn the meaning of the word "responsibility".

On the other hand, by joining a Band they acquire the capacity to really make a difference in the Dominions! Will they be freedom-bringers to oppressed people, ruthless pillagers or merciless conquerors? This is a question only they (and you, the GM) can answer.

INVOLVE ALL THE PARTY

The most important preparation you must make before introducing a Band to the game is to accurately plan how to involve all the players in it.

Consider the Band an additional shared character in the party; the players should think of themselves as an important part of the Band and each must have reasonable control over it.

Ideally, one of the heroes should take the role of the Commander, while the others should be Personalities. Even if a character doesn't perfectly fit in one of the Personality roles, try to find a place for her. For example, a Damsel in Distress heroine could be the general's woman or a poet could be the company's chronicler and so on.

Whatever accommodation you reach, each player character should have a motivation to stay in the Band and to care about it;

otherwise, sooner or later someone will become dissatisfied and leave the game.

This doesn't mean the *characters* must be forced to cooperate; a certain internal friction, such as characters competing for a certain position or even the command, can result in excellent role-play.

INTRODUCING A BAND

Having decided to involve a Band in the Campaign, a way to introduce it must be found. It is a trickier thing than adding a new hero to the party. Several suggestions on how to do it are listed below.

THE MECHANICAL WAY

The most straightforward approach consists of one of the heroes taking the Band Commander Edge. In role-playing terms it means the character actively looks for men to recruit, so he likely has a plan of some type on how to use them. Ask him to elaborate a bit, telling you (and the rest of the players) what the goals of the Band are and what he says to persuade soldiers to join him (usually promises of loot and similar). In this case the task of involving all the party must fall partially on him; if he wants the help of his comrades, he must persuade them, by offering positions as Personalities and similar things.

When the entire group is involved in the Band, the creation process for the Band must be done following the rules found in the Player's Guide in this book. This should be a collective process, with all the players throwing in their ideas; the role of the GM is simply that of moderator. If

the group doesn't reach an agreement on some point (such as army composition or the Edges and Hindrances of the Band), the Commander has the last word; after all, he is the man in charge.

This process can be a lot of fun, and watching it may give the GM insight into the dynamics of the group during future adventures.



THE NARRATIVE WAY

As opposed to the Mechanical Way, the Narrative Way presumes you, the Game Master, involve the party in a Band in some manner. Before explaining precisely *how* it happens, discussion is needed as to the role of the heroes in the Band. Unlike the Mechanical Way, where one of the characters spends an Advance and earns the Commander position, in the Narrative Way the players should not begin as leaders. Bands are ruthless places to live in, and respect must be won through deeds. The heroes will probably begin as common grunts and only after showing some skill will they be awarded Personality positions, and possibly even become Commanders themselves.

The following are some ideas on how to involve the players in a Band using the Narrative Way.

VOLUNTEERS

The simplest way is that the heroes decide to join the Band. The pay is so good or the promise of loot so appealing that they renounce some personal freedom in order to achieve it. In *Beasts and Barbarians* #2: *Citadel of the Winged Gods*, the heroes joined the army of general Tunamos for a similar reason. Heroes that join a Band in this manner usually have good motivation to show their value and to rise through the ranks, achieving Personality positions (and better pay).

CONSCRIPTS

Not all Bands are composed of willing soldiers. In certain cases, ruthless recruiters force a man to join the ranks in order to have extra bodies to throw into a battle; in others, the bulk of the army is made up of slaves who had no other choice than to

fight for their oppressors. Conscripted heroes usually want to escape from a Band of this type, but ambitious ones could try to overthrow the actual leaders, free their fellow soldiers and then march toward glory and fame at the head of their new army...

NO OTHER CHOICE

In the middle ground between Volunteers and Conscripts, sometimes the heroes are forced by circumstances to join the Band. Maybe they started the adventure as slaves imprisoned by a cruel lord then, freed by partisans, banded together for revenge and survival. Or maybe, as happens in the *Eyes of the Night* scenario (contained in the *Beasts of the Dominions* supplement), the party is forced to join pirates to avoid being butchered by them. In this case, the starting condition of the heroes will be slightly better than in the Conscripts situation, but advancement within the Band is usually tougher than if they were simply Volunteers.

ADVENTURE THEMES

So you have the heroes involved in some way with a Band; what to do now?

Adventures with a Band involved usually have a different scope and theme than standard party-based stories. You could try sending them to explore forgotten temples full of monsters, but while this can be challenging with a party of four heroes, it can be very boring (or weird) with an army of three hundred cutthroats...

On the other hand, Band adventures can be lot of fun and extremely varied. Below you'll find some ideas and themes to facilitate the creation of adventures for a Band.

In addition, in the next chapter a brand new type of Campaign is detailed: Conquest Points Campaigns.

MILITARY ADVENTURES

The most straightforward way to use a Band is to have it engage in battle. Military adventures move the focus from simple monster-bashing to the clash of armies!

Transforming a standard adventure into a military adventure is quite easy. Imagine a fairly common party-based plot where the heroes are hired to wipe out a band of bandits terrorizing a village. Usually they'll have to track down the bandits, sneak inside the lair and dispose of them.

Now, with some slight modifications, you can transform the party-based plot into a military-based Band adventure. The heroes' mercenary Band is hired by the same village to repel a bandit baron who, with his men, pillages the fields of the village. The plot is basically the same, but the scope is much greater. The problems the heroes will have to face will be different; they'll likely know where the bandit baron stays (he is locked in his castle), but their problem will be moving the Band to it across enemy territory. First they'll have to find the most secure route; this requires the heroes to locate a strange hermit living in the woods who knows the baron's lands perfectly. Second, thanks to the hermit's suggestions, the Band captures a vital ford to enter the baron's territory, surviving an ambush by the baron's troops. Finally, the Band must assault the baron's castle in an epic battle. In this last climactic scene, the mysterious hermit will reveal himself as a powerful wizard and is the only one who can aid them against the dreaded powers of the baron's Lieutenant, an evil warlock.

GM'S TIP: ALWAYS IN THE FRONT RANK!

The greatest problem of military adventures is that they can become rather impersonal, especially if the heroes are the men in charge. Commanders must conceive the plan to capture the enemy's castle, but they rely on their men to actually do the dirty work.

Although realistic, it is often not fun. Bands (and the Sword and Sorcery genre, in general) often work in such a way that the Commanders and Personalities always fight in the front ranks; they must take the same risks, or even greater ones, than the other members of the Band or risk losing the respect of their comrades. Therefore, if reconnaissance of an enemy territory must be done, it is the Scout Personality (a player character) who does it. In the same manner, if a suicide charge to take the drawbridge before it is raised must be made, you can be sure that the Commander of the Band is in the thick of the action.

In Mass Battles, you can make good use of Battle Scenes (see below) to keep things personal.

Leading from the front is true for the player characters, but obviously not for many NPCs; the bad guys' leaders often will stay in the rear, well protected by their men.

POLITICAL ADVENTURES

Heroes with a Band at their disposal are a force to be reckoned with and usually the simple threat of using force is a menace good enough to make negotiations start. Political adventures are built around forces manipulating the Band and us-

ing its strengths for their own ends. They are usually full of intrigue and deceit, and are always very personal because the high ranking Band members (usually the heroes) are involved in politics, not the grunts.

They can also be full of action. For example, imagine two warring rival cities which are both trying to hire the heroes' mercenary Band. The player characters must move from one city to the other as they try to obtain the best price. Then, when one of the two cities understands the other has made a deal, they'll try to capture the party, in a desperate attempt to weaken or blackmail their Band.

In the same way, the heroes could be the envoys from a Band of raiders to a Merchant House of Jalizar, extorting a huge sum as "protection money" to spare the House's caravans. Are the Merchants sincere or will they try to discover the secret hideout of the Band and send an army to wipe them out?

GM's Tip: USURPERS AND TRAITORS

One of the clichés of a certain type of fiction is that, wherever there is a great leader, an envious, traitorous man is ready to backstab him and seize power.

In an organization like a Band there are lots of ways for the heroes to gain an enemy: they can overshadow a former lieutenant, rob a Personality of his place, or be forced to take an unpopular decision that sly demagogues can use to make the Band rebel against their former leader.

MANAGEMENT ADVENTURES

Bands are made of men, and usually mercenaries and bandits aren't saints. They not only need to be kept happy but also disciplined enough to fight effectively. In addition, there are many things that can go astray if they are not watched; provisions can "mysteriously" disappear, priests can try to convert the men and make them leave the Band and desertions, especially when a tough battle is incoming, can decimate your army more than a horde or raging barbarians.

These types of problems can seem quite mundane and small with respect to battles and political intrigues but can be a good way to make the party gain the trust of their Commander and increase the ranks of the Band.

In addition, never forget the greatest trope of a management adventure: usurpers and traitors (see sidebar).

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

The three types of scenarios described above aren't mutually exclusive. Mixing the various ingredients, military action, politics and management you can create a truly great and varied adventure where characters of different types can shine.

For example, imagine a plot where the heroes are given command of a riotous Band of mercenaries hired by a lord to root out mysterious rebels in an uprising against his fiefdom. First, they have to gain the trust of the soldiers so they accept their leadership and increase their numbers (a management step where a Recruiter can be very useful). Second, they'll have to fight the enemies (excellent for battle-ori-

ented heroes). At this point, they discover that the rebels are secretly paid by a jealous neighboring noble, who offers them his help to overthrow the current patron of the party and put one of the heroes in charge of the country (the political part). What will heroes' choice be?

SUPPORT TOKEN MANAGEMENT

Bands can put real power in the hands of the player characters, who can become the movers and shakers of the setting, but the GM has a powerful way to control them: through the Support Tokens! If a small Band has enough of them, in a short time they can become big and powerful, allowing the heroes a wild charge towards glory. In dire times, when money is lacking and bellies are empty, the same Band can become riotous and disgruntled men can desert or even rebel which can totally change the mood of the Campaign. Support Tokens also have a particular importance if you are playing a Conquest Points Campaign.

Support Tokens usually come from two sources: patrons and loot.

PATRONS

Patrons are the "customers" of a Band: they are the ones paying for its services. They can be princes, kings, villages and cities and even cults or temples. Generally only mercenary Bands have Patrons; since bandits aren't usually hired by anyone, they usually rely on loot. Patrons usually hire mercenaries for two reasons: preventive self-defense or because they plan to attack someone.

GM's TIP: IN AND OUT OF A BAND (GM'S PERSPECTIVE)

Getting the party involved in a Band can be really entertaining, but some players can envy the freedom they had when they were simple adventurers looting palaces and getting drunk in sordid taverns. For this reason, the GM should find a suitable plot device to allow the characters to "take a break" from command; maybe there is a trusted Lieutenant who can be put in charge while they go away adventuring again, or maybe the troops get so angry with the characters that going away for a bit is the only way to stay safe!

In the same manner, especially if the party has invested many resources in the Band, returning to command should be possible (even if not necessarily easy).

Typically a Patron hiring mercenaries for self-defense (for example, a caravan master hiring men to protect his cargo) will give mercenaries the minimum to keep them satisfied (in gaming terms, to avoid Discipline loss). This pay is usually called "the coin of the mercenary".

If the Patron hires them to attack someone, they can offer only part (in certain cases even none) of the standard pay (less than the minimum number of Support Tokens to avoid Discipline loss), luring the troops with the promise of good loot. This can be a dangerous game, because if the promises of loot aren't kept, the hired swords will likely rebel and plunder their former Patron's possessions or they'll possibly leave without warning.

Mercenaries are costly and the costs of maintaining a Band can quickly exhaust the resources of villages and cities. The table below gives you an estimate of how many Support Tokens Patrons can spend yearly to acquire Bands. When the Support furnished ends, the Patron will send the sell-swords away; having a group of angry warriors on his lands can turn ugly very quickly...

SETTLEMENT SIZE	EXAMPLE	SUPPORT TOKENS/ YEAR
Small Village	-	4
Village	-	12
Town	Nal Sagath	25
City	Felantium	50
Large City	Kenaton, Syranthia	100
Metropolis	Faberterra, Jalizar	200

LOOTING

No sell-swords become rich with the coin of the mercenary. What they really look for is a rich city or other wealthy area to ransack. This can give them money enough to be happy for some months, or possibly to retire, find a wife and buy a scrap of land somewhere (a rarity for most).

Because it is difficult sometimes to define exactly what a group of bandits may find during their raids, the following steps can be used to assist in this determination.

Have the Band make a group Notice roll (usually Bands have Notice d6); this rep-

resents their skill in finding riches, questioning and intimidating people to reveal where they hid their treasures and so on.

Draw a card from the Action Deck, plus one for each success and raise scored on the Notice roll, and check the table below; sum up the numbers generated by the Action Cards and the total equates to the number of Support Tokens found.

Time Needed. Looting requires half a day for each size of the settlement the Band is raiding; if the time required is greater than the time allotment the Band has, then the row with the time actually spent is used. For example, if the Defenders of Kenaton are raiding a City (time required: 2 days) but they have only one day to loot, they would use the Village row for their calculations.

During looting, the Battle Value of the Band is reduced by 25% because the men are dispersed and concentrating on things other than fighting.

Free Looting. The Commander can, at his discretion, declare a free loot day. This means that every soldier can keep for himself what he finds, without the need to put everything in common and share it. Draw an additional card for loot, but, while looting, the army is largely dispersed so their Battle Value is reduced by 50%. In addition, if a Club card is dealt, it means that a furious fight erupted among the men, causing a permanent loss of 10% of the Battle Value of the Band.

Example: The Defenders of Kenaton manage to loot the Town of Nal Sagath. They'll need a day and half to do a complete job, but they have only a day, so they check for loot on the Village line. Their leader, the Golden Bull, pushed by his lieutenants, declares free loot! The Defenders at this point make a

SETTLEMENT SIZE/CARD	TIME REQUIRED (DAYS)	2	3-5	6-10	J-Q	K-A	JOKER
Small Village/ Small Farm fields	0.5	0	0	1	2	3	Special
Village/Farm fields	1.0	0	1	2	3	4	Special
Town	1.5	1	2	3	4	5	Special
City	2.0	2	3	4	5	6	Special
Large City	2.5	3	4	5	6	7	Special
Metropolis	3.0	4	5	6	7	8	Special

Special: This means the Band found something very unusual. It can be a Relic, an important prisoner, control of a key location (the Band gains the Resource Band Edge) or anything else the Game Master's decides is appropriate.

group Notice roll and generate one success. This means they draw three cards (one for the base draw plus one for the success and a third one for the free loot). The cards drawn are: Jack of Hearts (3 Tokens), Seven of Clubs (2 Tokens) and Four of Diamonds (1 Token), for a total of 6 Support Tokens. Not bad for a day's work! Unfortunately, as the Golden Bull declared free loot and a Club was dealt, some of the men quarreled and bloody fight erupted, causing losses of 10% of the Band's Battle Value.

BLOOD AND FIRE!

If you are using Bands, probably sooner or later you'll introduce a Mass Battle into your adventures, pitting the Band under the heroes' control against some opposing army. The Mass Battle rules in the *Savage Worlds* core rules, plus the optional rules presented earlier in this book, should be enough to handle them in an entertaining manner, but if you want to introduce some particular battle scenes, you'll find some examples on the following pages.

ROLE-PLAY LOW DISCIPLINE

Discipline is the key of any Band. While the soldiers are disciplined, you can be sure all is well, but when discontent starts to manifest itself the wise Commander must be alert.

Discipline influences the Band negatively only during battles, limiting the number of Bennies in the Battle Benny Pool. In truth, an undisciplined Band is far worse, and the Game Master should role-play this factor; men complain, orders are executed slowly or in a bad way, and discipline is generally lax.

Heroes in charge of a Band should pay attention to such events; if they don't, the Game Master should feel free to let the soldiers rebel and overthrow them.

Bands are like wild horses and require a firm hand to be controlled.

Each scene described consists of a **description** and the **effects** that the resolution of the scene has on the Mass Battle. Ideally these Battle Scenes should be an alternative to the standard Character in Mass Battle rules. In a battle round where a Battle Scene is used, no roll to influence battle is made; instead, the results of the scene are applied.

Some of these scenes also are well suited for use as small adventures. In this case, only a general outline of the possible development of the adventure is given, plus the eventual impact on the battle.



AMBUSHES

Description: Surprising your opponents or being surprised by them can change the outcome of a battle drastically.

Setting an ambush requires good knowledge of the terrain and a certain grasp of battle techniques. The heroes must first find a good ambush site by making either a cooperative Knowledge (Battle), Survival (-2) or Stealth (-4) roll (player's choice); each attempt requires at least one hour. On a success, a suitable place is found and the Game Master should describe it (for example, a wood, a hidden valley, some ruins). At this point, the heroes must conceal part of their Band in the ambush site. Prior to the start of the battle, the players must make an opposed group roll between the Band ambushers' Stealth (usually Bands have Stealth d6), and the opponents' Notice. For each raise the ambushers achieved on the roll to find the location they receive +2 to this opposed roll.

The presence of a Scout Personality is vital for ambushes. If a Scout is present in a Band or army, it can roll using the Scout's skills (Notice, Stealth or Survival) instead of resorting to its soldiers' group rolls. The Woodsman Edge skill bonuses apply to all Ambush rolls.

Effect: If the ambushers score a success in the opposed Stealth roll, they receive +1 to Battle rolls during the first round of battle, plus one for every raise (maximum +4); this counts as a tactics bonus.

ASSASSINATIONS

Description: Even the strongest army can tear itself apart if its leader is removed. For this reason an assassination attempt is al-

ways a very good way to get an edge before a confrontation. However, this doesn't mean it is an easy job to accomplish.

Assassinations are an excellent opportunities for creating a small adventure or side plot. The most difficult thing in an assassination attempt is reaching the victim (usually the opponent's Commander). There are basically two ways to achieve this goal: deception and stealth.

Deception means that the party must find a way to fool the security of the opposing army, using disguises, lies or a similar stratagem. Stealth means the use of covert actions to accomplish the mission, often best suited to killers, thieves and other shady individuals.

Once they have located and reached the target, the target should be eliminated in the quietest way possible (the combat itself could be easy or difficult, but, if the characters did their job well, they should have the advantage of surprise on their side).

After dispatching the target, their mission isn't over; unless it was a suicide mission (which is best suited to NPCs), the heroes must get away safely, which can turn out to be an even harder task than gaining entry.

Note that an assassination scene could also be played from the perspective of the party preventing someone on the heroes' side (usually the Band's Commander) being the target of a murder attempt.

Effect: An army which loses its Commander, apart from the necessity of finding a replacement, suffers -4 to any Morale rolls (the penalty decreases by one point each day), and any opponent knowing of the successful assassination receives +2 to

Morale rolls. In certain cases the death of a Commander can be kept secret (after all a man in full armor and a helm can be easily impersonated); if the deception is successful the army suffers no penalty, but if it is discovered the troops are even more shaken, suffering -6 to Morale rolls.

CHAMPIONS' DUELS

Description: A habit of many armies is that before the real battle begins a couple of champions fight in single combat in front of both armies. The outcome of the fight can seriously influence the Morale of the troops involved.

The two champions (ideally a PC and an NPC) engage in standard combat, usually either on foot, mounted or in chariots; there are even stories of terrible duels of wizardry between dreaded sorcerers of the past.

To keep the duel fair, both opponents must be of the same type (i.e., Extras, Henchmen, Right Hands, or Wild Cards). Simply promote the weaker opponent to the stronger opponent's type; for example, if an Extra duels against a Wild Card, he is promoted to Wild Card status until the end of the duel.

Usually champions are Personalities but it is very rare that the Commander fills this role, although not unheard of; it is too risky and no true leader will generally put his life at stake in this way.

Champions' duels are fought to the death.

Effect: The loser's side must immediately give one of the Bennies from his Battle Benny Pool to the opponent. In addition, during the first round of battle only, the

winning side gains +2 to Battle and Morale rolls.

DESTROYING SUPPLIES

Description: Take away a man's food and he will lose any bellicosity. Destroying the supplies of an army can be a winning move in any long term campaign. Usually supplies are kept on carts or beasts of burden, and being the slowest part of the army, they travel at the end of the column. In certain cases, supplies travel days behind the army, especially if they are invading enemy territory or if the army must move quickly to reach a location.

As a general rule, a supply wagon has Toughness 10 and is pulled by four mules; a Band needs one of them for each Size category (so a Band of Medium Size requires three wagons).

If you want to run an attack on the supply train with the Mass Battle rules, consider that a wise Commander usually protects them with a third of his army (so 30% of the Battle Value), which is commanded by a Lieutenant Personality. Run the battle as normal; the supply wagons are destroyed when all the opposition is defeated or with a Battle Called Shot (-2). On a success, instead of inflicting the loss of a Battle Token, a wagon can be destroyed.

Effect: A Band with reduced supplies immediately loses one Support Token for each cart destroyed (minimum zero). In addition, if the number of wagons remaining is less than half the starting number, the Band loses a Discipline level. In addition, for each full week passed in this condition, the Band loses 1d4x5% of its Battle Value due to food shortages and desertions by soldiers. Both these conditions last until the supplies are restored.

OUTMANEUVERING

Description: Battles are won by strength and blades, but also by cunning and wit; even a small army, if it manages to split and attack the enemy from two sides, can destroy a stronger opponent. In these cases, a capable officer leading the secondary force is vital to the positive outcome of this tactic.

Outmaneuvering is done in three steps.

First, the players must describe in narrative terms what they plan to do. For example, moving the cavalry around a hill and then attacking the enemy on the flank is a perfect case of outmaneuvering.

Second, they must decide what part of the army will maneuver, estimate the time to complete the maneuver, and determine what part of the army will stay in its current position to keep the enemy engaged. Effectively, this means they decide how many Battle Tokens of their army are temporarily "removed" from the battlefield (they are moving) and for how many battle rounds. Removed Battle Tokens don't influence the battle in any manner. The more time spent maneuvering, the more effective the maneuver.

Up to three Battle Tokens can be removed for a maximum of up to three rounds. At least one Battle Token must stay on the battlefield to keep the opponent engaged.

Finally, the secondary force must be assigned a leader, usually a Personality.

The leader of the secondary force must make a Knowledge (Battle) (+2) roll each round. On a failure, the maneuver is spotted and neutralized; the secondary force immediately rejoins the main army and the battle proceeds on normally.

Effect: If the secondary force's leader manages to succeed in all Battle rolls for the duration of the maneuver, then he can catch his opponent off-guard, gaining a great advantage. The battle becomes a many-sided battle (see page 44) with the secondary force entering the battlefield as a new, separate army. The Commander of the secondary force gains a bonus to his Battle rolls equal to the numbers of Battle Tokens *multiplied* by the number of rounds he stayed out of the battle. The bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to the duration of the maneuver, after which the two armies rejoin again.

Example: During the Battle of Teralia, the Golden Bull decides that the only way to survive the day is to disengage part of the Defenders of Kenaton's infantry, move them through the nearby woods, and then attack the Eighteenth Phalanx on the flank. He assigns the command of the force to his best man, a one-eyed Cairnlander veteran called Gruss Two Axes (Knowledge (Battle) d6). The outmaneuvering attempt uses two Battle Tokens and requires three rounds.

The Defenders' Battle Tokens are reduced by two for three rounds (from seven to five) while Gruss deftly moves his men. The grizzled Cairnlander manages to successfully pass all his Battle rolls for three rounds; at the beginning of the fourth round, he attacks the Phalanx from the flank! He leads a separate attack with three Battle Tokens and Knowledge (Battle) d6, but with a mighty +6 bonus! His attack continues for three rounds before the two chunks of the Defenders of Kenaton rejoin,

and when that happens the Eighteenth's Insignia isn't waving anymore...

HOLD UNTIL BELIEVED

Description: In certain cases, an army doesn't have to win; they must only endure, waiting for reinforcements to arrive.

Effect: A Commander giving this order to his army makes Battle rolls as normal, but instead of causing damage to the opposition, any damage inflicted on his Band by the opponent is reduced by one Battle Token for each success and raise on the roll.

RELICS

Beasts and Barbarians is a setting where magic is dark and rare, but is immensely powerful. For this reason, some Relics are strong enough to change the outcome of a doomed battle. A list of pre-made Relics suitable for Mass Battles is listed below. Some of them are real magical items, others beasts or tools, and finally even some very strange troops that a Band could have among its ranks.

If the GM desires to randomly determine the Relic, he can simply roll a d10 and check the table on next page.



DIO	RELIC
1	Horn of Khetull
2	Karovan Diggers
3	The White Death
4	The Manticore
5	Gis Fire
6	Cairnlander Spirit
7	Tricornian Leeches
8	Syranthian Spyglass
9	Lhoban Shadow-Walker
10	Eye of Battles

Horn of Khetull. This massive war horn was carved from the tusk of the forgotten demon Khetull which was summoned into the Dominions by ancient Keronian sorcerers. It can be sounded safely only by a sorcerer (i.e. someone with the Arcane Background (Sorcery) Edge); if the user isn't a sorcerer, he must immediately make a Vigor (-4) roll or suffer a level of Fatigue, which is recovered after one full lunar cycle. If properly sounded on a graveyard or a battlefield, the Horn raises 5d4 undead soldiers (use Zombie stats from the *Savage Worlds* core rules; this roll can Ace), increasing the Battle Value of the Band by 3 points for each undead raised. The use of the Horn is very taxing for the user and costs 1 Power Point per Zombie (up to his maximum number of Power Points), which are recovered as usual. If the Horn consumes all the remaining Power Points of the arcane user, he must make a Vigor (-2) roll. On a failure, he permanently gains the Elderly Hindrance as the magics unleashed prematurely age him. If a character already has the Elderly Hindrance, failing the roll means dying and coming back to life as a powerful NPC undead sorcerer (use the Lich stats from the *Savage Worlds* core rules). Zombies created by the Horn are permanent.

Karovan Diggers. The Zandorian city of Karova doesn't exist any more; a massive earthquake destroyed it in 2430 AF. The Karovans, a stubborn people, have continued for years to tirelessly dig through the ruins, trying to recover what they can of their past lives. Today only a few of them haunt these ruins; the greater majority of them are often hired by mercenary companies to do what they can do better than anyone: digging. The Karovan Diggers grant the Band the Sappers Edge; they have Vigor d8 and gain +2 to any Vigor or Smarts rolls relating to fortifications.

The White Death. This mighty beast is one of the few War Elephants of Kyros still alive. Totally white, his skin is scarred by countless blows and his tusks are permanently stained with the blood of fallen enemies. His Mahut (rider) is a skinny, gaunt man with dead eyes called Juzar; he is the sole person the White Death obeys. A Band with the White Death acquires the Creature and Frightening Band Edges, plus 100 extra Battle Value. The White Death and his Mahut are said to have been killed dozens of times in the past, but they always reappear. Soldiers say they are servants of Death itself.

The Manticore. The Manticore is the emblem of Jalizar and this massive ballista, shooting hundreds of tiny sharp darts, resembles the mythical monster from which the City of Thieves takes her symbol. The body is made of black polished wood, and the bow of a strange reddish metal which howls when the Manticore shoots. The Manticore grants the Artillery Edge to the Band which owns it and its metal bow can be reloaded very quickly; it can be used every round. As a drawback, the Manticore is known to be a vicious, almost living thing, which enjoys killing its users. The first time the Commander of the Band rolls 1 on a Battle roll it means

that the Manticore caused an accident of some sort, potentially wounding its users; they must make an Agility roll or suffer 3d6 damage and it cannot be used again for the remainder of the battle.

Gis Fire. This exotic Lotus concoction is exclusively made by the Alchemists of Gis and is in the form of a viscous rock oil which is ignited and launched by catapults or fired as incendiary arrows. Unlike normal oil, Gis Fire is almost extinguishable and burns even in water. On the battlefield it has devastating effects. In tactical combat, any target hit by Gis Fire rolls a d8 instead of a d6 to check if it catches on fire. The Gis Fire is volatile and the target catches fire on any roll other than a 1. On subsequent rounds, the fire is extinguished only on a roll of 1; any other number results in the fire growing in intensity. During Mass Battles, Gis Fire is even more vicious. On the round it is used, attackers gain +1 to their Battle roll and, in addition, they roll a d6 at the beginning of each subsequent battle round; on a result of 1 the fire ends, with a 5-6 it spreads among the enemy causing the loss of a Battle Token, and with a 2-4 the terrible effects of the Lotus concoction are contained by the defenders' efforts. Gis Fire is terrifying and, until it is extinguished, the army suffering its effects receives -2 to Morale rolls. Usually Gis Fire is stored in sealed earthenware pots and must be kept away from fire.

Cairnlander Spirit. Armies of all the Dominions distribute free booze to their soldiers before attacks, because only a madman or a drunk will willingly assault a castle or face a cavalry charge. The infamous wine known as Cairnlander Spirit is far worse than average ale. Distilled from the acrid grapes growing over the Cairns, its recipe is a secret known only by shamans and includes many strange compo-

nents, among them the pureed brains of past enemies. A soldier drinking Cairnlander Spirit is affected by the Liquid Courage and Berserk Edges for the duration of the battle, but must make a successful Vigor roll at the end of the fight or pass out for 1d6 hours. During Mass Battles, soldiers intoxicated with Cairnlander Spirit are considered immune to Fear and receive +2 to Battle and Morale rolls. On the negative side, at the end of the battle, during the Aftermath phase, they receive -1 to any roll to check for Battle Token recovery.

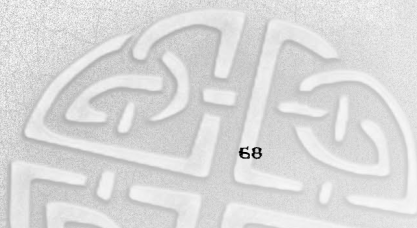
Tricarnian Leeches. A barrel full of these disgusting, hand sized, greyish leeches can be invaluable after any battle. Applied to any wound, even the most serious, they suck away the bad blood and pus of infected wounds, saving the lives of many soldiers. A wounded character to whom one is applied receives +4 to natural healing rolls for a week, while if they are used en masse after a battle, they grant +2 to Aftermath rolls to recover Battle Tokens. These leeches have a short life span and usually die after one use. Each barrel contains enough of these creatures to be used for one battle.

Syranthian Spyglass. This strange device made by a Syranthian Sage allows a man to see far away. It gives +2 to Notice rolls to spot distant details (the bonus also applies to detecting ambushes by the enemy's armies) and it is invaluable in battle. A Commander standing on the top of a hill with it can instantly see what his men are doing on the battlefield and counter the opposing general's maneuvers; he increases any positive Battle roll modifiers he receives due to battle plans by one and his enemy reduces his own Battle roll modifier by one.

Lhoban Shadow-Walker. A member of an elusive sect of black-clad monk-assassins from the far mountains of Lhoban, the Shadow-Walker will occasionally put himself at the service of a general. He has the same stats as a Wild Card Master Assassin (see *Beasts and Barbarians Golden Edition*) and counts as a Spy Personality, too. In addition, before a battle, the Commander can ask the Shadow-Walker to assassinate the enemy general, which is a task that, for religious reasons, the Shadow-Walker cannot refuse and must do alone. If the victim is an Extra, a simple success on the Stealth roll is enough to check the result of the mission; the roll is made at -2 if he is a Henchman or Right Hand, and at -4 if he is Wild Card. On a success, the assassin kills the general. On a failure, he dies in the attempt. At GM discretion, the assassin may only manage to severely wound a Wild Card general (who suffers three wounds); in this case, he must compensate the character using the Shadow-Walker with a Benny. A Shadow-Walker always asks for a payment after accomplishing his mission. This can be

in the form of simple wealth (comparable in value to a Support Token) or something strange and wicked. If he is paid, he goes away, never to be seen again; if he isn't, the party gains a powerful Enemy.

Eye of Battles. A black, charred brazier of unknown manufacture and decorated with strange engravings resembling lizards' heads, this is an artifact of great power. By burning special incense (costing 100 Moons) and reciting a particular formula inscribed on it (a successful Knowledge (Arcana) roll), the user can ask the Eye to show him a battle in which he will be involved within the next lunar cycle. Draw a card from the Action Deck. If a red card is drawn, the omen is positive and once during that battle the user can decide to add +4 to any Battle and Morale rolls made during that round. If the card drawn is black, the omen is negative and his opponent gains the same advantage. The bonus increases to +6 if a Joker is drawn. It is said that the Eye never lies, and it seems that there is no way, magical or mundane, to cancel the effect of the Eye's omen.





CONQUEST POINTS CAMPAIGNS

Conquest Points Campaigns represents an evolution of the concept of Plot Point Campaigns and are focused on military themes. They allow you to create and manage a whole set of adventures all centered around a Band (or an army) and its deeds, precisely aimed at a greater objective. Usually in this type of Campaign the heroes and their Band are going to conquer, raze or defend a particular territory or to kill, capture or protect a specific NPC.

The Campaign is built as a series of Savage Tales, connected to each other by a particular location and a particular timeline. Winning or losing within each of these Savage Tales has an impact on the Campaign's outcome and can result in definitive victory or defeat.

The following chapter explains how to design this type of Campaign.

SCALE AND SCOPE

A Conquest Points Campaign can have a huge scope, such as overthrowing the Autarch of Kyros, or be very modest, such as concentrating on the struggle between two villages for the control of grazing

lands. Both can be satisfying. When you decide the scope of a Conquest Points Campaign, choose a size you feel comfortable with and that you are sure you can manage without being overwhelmed.

Keep in mind one fundamental thing: the greater the scale, the smaller will be the level of detail that you must provide the players. Less detail isn't automatically a bad thing; it is simply a matter of the relative importance of things. If you are playing the conquest of Kyros, the battle to take a single bridge will only be a small footnote in the report of a minor officer, while if you are playing on a smaller scale it could be the focal point of your Campaign.

Large and small scale and scope are both good.

DESIGN AND PREPARATION

A Conquest Points Campaign requires a certain amount of preparation. In particular, you should decide the Idea, the

Location, the Factions, the Goals, the Roadmap, the Timeline, the Hook and the Ending, all described below. This can require some preparatory work, but after this initial effort very little must be done and you can freely improvise, following the decisions of the heroes (or whoever is in charge of the Band).

THE IDEA

The first point from which every Campaign starts is obviously the Idea, the main theme underlying the Campaign. If you have absolutely no Ideas, the Adventure Generator you find in *Beasts and Barbarians Golden Edition* can give you some hints.

Keep It Simple. In a Conquest Points Campaign it is usually good to stick to a simple, linear base idea. For example, using the heroes and their Band of bandits in aiding a princess to recover her throne from an evil usurper is a very good idea for such a Campaign.

Don't be worried if the base idea seems *too* simple. A straightforward theme can be easily be understood and followed by the players and you can add complexity in the various Savage Tales of which the Campaign is composed.

THE LOCATION

Pulp narrative is greatly based on locations, and the Sword and Sorcery genre is no exception. Thus, you must decide on the area where the Conquest Points Campaign occurs. Try to be as precise as you can and choose a Location for its political, geographical and economic value. Take some general notes on the various settle-

ments, forts and other important places of the Location. You'll need them later.

THE FACTIONS

What part will the heroes and their Band play in the region? Are they marauders seeking to carve out a personal dominion? Mercenaries under the orders of some noble? This is a very important decision and the Hook (see below) could help you a lot in defining their role.

Identify the major Factions and forces of the region which will be the opponents, friends and allies of the Band in the Campaign. We aren't speaking of individuals, but of Factions and groups of powers, such as villages, towns, guilds, cults and so on. If possible, also define their strength (with a Battle Value), their weaknesses and their leader. You don't need to fully detail all the Commanders at this stage; you only need a general idea of them.

THE GOALS

Conflicting Goals between the Factions are what start and drive the Campaign. Identifying the Goal of the player characters should be quite easy (for example, carving out a new realm or defeating a particular Faction). Examining the Points of Conquest (see below) can give you extra ideas of what the goals of the heroes could be.

Among the other Factions, at least one of them must have a goal opposing the heroes, while the others can have various agendas, some of them in accord with the heroes (in this case they can become useful allies) and others in opposition (where they can become an extra nuisance).

THE ROADMAP

There are moments when maps and graphical representations are absolutely necessary, and this is one of them! You need at least a simple map of the region where the Campaign will take place. The Roadmap should include the Locations of the main Factions, cities and villages, the general geographical environment and it must have a scale; it isn't necessary to use kilometers or miles on it, the average daily march for a Band is enough.

CONQUESTS AND CONQUEST POINTS

Apart from the above, the Roadmap must include Conquests. They are specific locations (but they can also be events or people) that the heroes can “conquer” or with which they can interact in some manner.

Remember that when the stakes are high, failure is also possible. For this reason, Conquest Points can also be negative, taking the form of a penalty if the heroes drastically fail a Savage Tale.

Conquests are divided into three general classes of importance: Minor, Normal and Major. Conquest Points (CP) designate the degree of the player characters' victory in the Campaign and can be used in the Timeline (see below) to trigger specific events.

Conquest Points are awarded according to the table below.

Conquest Points Table

CONQUEST CLASS	CONQUEST POINTS (CP)
Minor	1
Normal	2
Major	4

When you design your Campaign, you should choose a maximum amount of Conquest Points depending on the size and the complexity of events you want to depict and the length of your Campaign. For longer duration Campaigns, simply increase the Maximum Conquest Points and split the total as you see fit between Minor, Normal, and Major Conquests.

See the table below for examples.

Conquest Points per Campaign

CAMPAIGN SCALE	EXAMPLES OF SCOPE	MAX CONQUEST POINTS
Local	A couple of villages	10
Focused	Part of a region	20
Major	A whole state!	40

***Example:** A Local Campaign, such as that detailed above, is usually made with 10 Maximum Conquest Points. This means that, when you design the Campaign, you could define a Major (4 CP), two Normal (2 CP x 2 = 4 CP) and two Minor (1 CP x 2 = 2 CP) Conquests, or some other combination adding up to 10 Conquest Points.*

DEFINING CONQUESTS AND REWARDS

Conquests should be the object of specific Savage Tales in your Campaign whose difficulty increases in line with their importance. In practical terms consider them the “scenes” of your stories. Conquests are the most likely events your players will

deal with, so devote some attention to designing them.

Note that not all Conquests are made by combat; they can require political acumen, stealth, diplomacy or even magic. Try to have a good mix of traditional tales where the heroes are on their own and Mass Battles where they lead their men. In this manner, all types of heroes will have their chance to shine in the Campaign.

Another important factor to define when designing Conquests is the rewards they give when successfully completed. As happens in real life, events have consequences, and conquering a particular scrap of land or bringing an influential NPC to their side should bring advantages of some type to the heroes' Band. In the same manner, failing to make a Conquest should have some consequences.

Conquest Points Examples Table

TYPE	EXAMPLE	REWARD
<i>Military</i>		
Minor	Conquering a small village	+1 Support Token <i>or</i> +25 Battle Value (conscripts)
Normal	Conquering a fortress	Free Base <i>or</i> Artillery Edge
Major	Conquering a coastal town	Free Resource Edge <i>or</i> +100 Battle Value
<i>Economic</i>		
Minor	Taking an inn, a mill or a bridge	+1 Support Token <i>or</i> +2d6 Battle Value/Campaign Turn
Normal	Taking a commercial road	+1 Free Resource Edge
Major	Taking a mine	Free Resource Edge, Superior Equipment Edge
<i>Political</i>		
Minor	Freeing a rural area from bandits	Free Local Aid Edge
Normal	Favoring a particular cult	Additional Priest Personality for free
Major	Marrying a noble's daughter	+75 Battle Value, Noble Edge, additional Specialist Leader Personality

The best thing would be to custom-design each Conquest Point according to your Campaign's needs, but if you are in hurry, you can use the following examples or take them as guidelines. They are loosely divided into three types: Military, Economic and Political.

TIMELINE

A Conquest Points Campaign is very free-form and is primarily driven by the heroes' actions. However, you don't have a fixed plot to railroad them, this can cause two problems.

STRATEGIC MOVEMENT SYSTEM

Although we don't want to transform a RPG into a wargame, in a Conquest Points Campaign keeping track of troop movements is very important. For this, you can use the following quick-and-dirty system.

First, trace a grid of squares over the map of the region. The scale of the map isn't really important: the only thing you must consider is that each square represents the average distance an infantry battalion can march in a day.

At this point, you can move the troops each game day, using the distances in the following table.

TROOP TYPE / TERRAIN TYPE	MOVEMENT
Wagon or Artillery	½ Square
Infantry	1 Square
Cavalry	2 Squares
Flying monster (e.g. Shadow Bat)	5 Squares, ignores all terrain modifiers
On a road	+50%
Very small group (ten or fewer units)	+50%
Difficult terrain (mountains, woods, etc...)	-50% (forbidden for cavalry and carriages)
Familiar Terrain Band Edge	Ignore difficult ground in the specialty terrain
Scout Personality	Ignore difficult ground with a Survival (-2) roll.

Remember that each army moves at the rate of the slowest member (unless the Commander wants to separate the troops), and modifiers are cumulative; for example, a very small group (+50%) of Cavalry (2 Squares) on a road (+50%) can move up to $2 \times 100\% = 4$ Squares a day.

First, if your group doesn't have enough personal initiative (or they are used to playing plot-driven adventures), they'll stay idle and simply wait for events to occur, resulting in a dull gaming experience.

Second, a totally reactive world isn't realistic. The other Factions of the setting have their own agenda and goals, and they should take action on their own, regardless of the presence of the party. In the same manner, the world is full of unpredictable events which are out of man's control, such as climatic accidents, pestilences and so on.

To help mitigate these issues, prepare a brief timeline with events scheduled for the time you plan your Campaign to last. It isn't necessary to schedule with complete accuracy; indication of the Campaign Turn (see below) when it happens is usually enough.

PACING THE EVENTS: CAMPAIGN TURNS

A Conquest Points Campaign has a different pace compared to standard adventures. In certain cases, weeks and even months can pass between one event and another (for example, if you are playing a large-scale war); in other cases, every single day has tremendous importance (for example, if you are playing the blitzkrieg invasion of a country). When designing the Campaign, decide the temporal scale of Campaign Turns, which represents how often events happen. Choose a value from daily, weekly, bi-weekly or monthly.

On your Timeline you can simply indicate events as follows: "Campaign Turn 4: volcano erupts" and knowing the Turn's length you understand when this will happen.

Note that Campaign Turns are only a useful Game Master abstraction; players should not know of their existence or they may feel they are playing a war game instead of a RPG. If you want to add another layer of obfuscation, don't limit yourself to a single event per Campaign Turn; in some Turns, let two or more of them happen (see May You Live in Interesting Times in the Joker Entry below).

RANDOM TIMELINE

If you want you can also go with a different approach: instead of a "scripted" timeline, you can use the random table below. At the beginning of each Campaign Turn, draw a card from the Action Deck; if it is a Club or a Heart, apply the results of the table below. The results are intentionally generic so that you can customize them to your needs.

Random Timeline Events

Deuce – Natural Disaster. An unexpected natural event happens in the area; it can be an earthquake, a tornado, a flood, a pestilence or whatever. Roll a d6 for each Resource or Base Edge the heroes' side has; if a 1-2 is rolled it means that the Resource or Base is damaged and cannot be used again until the heroes spend 1d4 Support Tokens to repair it. Also, during this Campaign Turn, any extra Support Tokens granted by Conquests are negated.

Natural disasters are usually fair, and they strike all the region indiscriminately; the other Factions suffer a 15% reduction of their Battle Values. Natural Disasters are an excellent background for highly dramatic adventures.

Three – Accident. Accidents are treated exactly like a Natural Disaster, but are focused on a narrower scale. If the card

FORCED MARCHES

In dire straits, a Commander can order his troops to conduct a forced march. He must make a Spirit (-2) roll. On a success, the Band receives +25% to movement each day for each success and raise. Regardless of success or failure of the Commander's Spirit roll, the Band members must make a group Vigor roll, at -1 per previous day of forced marching. On a failure, the troops suffer a level of Fatigue. Exhausted troops cannot move any further. Fatigue from a forced march is recovered automatically after three days of rest, as long as proper food and shelter from the weather are given to the troops.

drawn is black, it targets the heroes' side; otherwise, the Accident happens in some other Faction's area.

Four – Trade/Embargo. There is an economic issue on the heroes' side. If the card drawn is red, they experience a positive outcome, such as confiscating a lucrative cargo, making a good deal with some merchants or finding a way to impose a tax on someone. If the heroes' role-play the situation well, for the current Campaign Round, each Conquest granting a bonus Support Token grants an additional +1 Token. If the card drawn is black, instead a negative outcome is experienced, such as the merchants creating an embargo, taxes are avoided and similar things. Conquests normally granting bonus Support Tokens give no bonus. This state of things continues until the heroes find a way to end it.

Five – Truce. For some reason, perhaps due to a religious festivity or some Factions asking for a truce of some type, battles and open confrontations are discouraged and not sanctioned during this

Campaign Round. If the heroes accept the truce and then break it, they lose a Benny and suffer -1 Charisma, as they are considered untrustworthy.

Six – Fog of War. Often in war, the movements of the troops aren't immediately visible. If the card drawn is black, it means that one of the other Factions managed to redeploy some of its troops in another place, unbeknownst to the heroes. If the card drawn is red, it means that the heroes' side managed to achieve the effect instead. The Commander must make a Knowledge (Battle) roll; for each success and raise, he can redeploy 20% of his troops Battle Value in another position on the map, assuming there is a suitable explanation given as to how this occurs (for example he moves them by night, finds some barges and so on). Note that this event doesn't allow breaking into clearly unreachable places (see Weakness Revealed for this).

Seven – Weakness

Revealed. There is an unknown weakness in the defenses of one of the Factions and this is going to be exploited very soon. Note that the concept of weakness is very loose and can be interpreted in various ways; it can be a secret road leading past some enemy fortifications, the presence of a traitor among the ranks or even a dangerous secret that, if discovered, can be used to blackmail

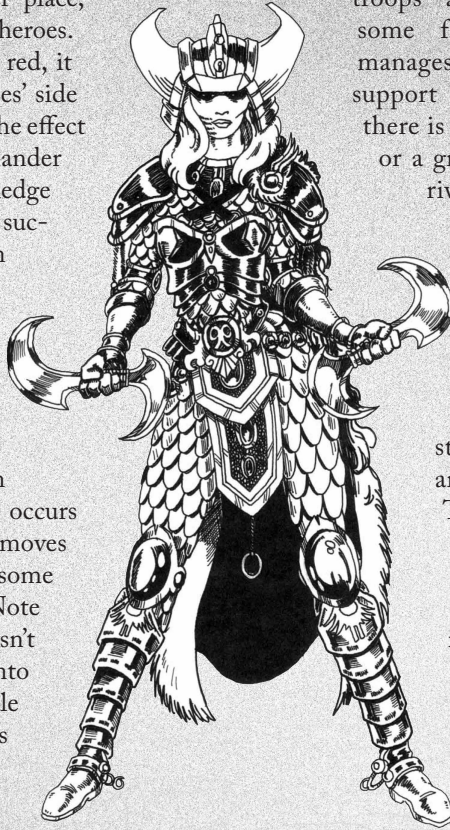
one of the Factions. If the card drawn is black, it means that one of the Factions opposing the heroes' side has discovered this weakness and will soon try to exploit it. If the card drawn is red, the heroes have the opportunity to discover the other Faction's weakness and can make use of the knowledge.

Eight – Reinforcements. Fresh troops are arriving! Maybe some far-away ally finally manages to enter the fray to support one of the Factions, there is a massive recruitment or a group of volunteers arrives. If the card drawn

is black, it means the reinforcements are for one of the Factions opposing the heroes. If the card drawn is red, instead the new soldiers are on the heroes' side. The exact quantity of the reinforcements is left to the Game Master to decide; as a rule of thumb, consider the percentage of Conquest Points the heroes have managed to accrue out of a total possible so

far in the Campaign and apply the same percentage to the battle value of the reinforcements.

Example: If a Band has 300 Battle Value and managed to score 10 Conquest Points out of a possible to date 20 (50%), they receive 50% of their Battle Value of reinforcements (150 Battle Value).



Nine – Alliance. There is the chance for the heroes to ally with another Faction. They can be the promoters of the alliance or perhaps it proposed by the other side. When this Event happens, the Game Master must draw a card and secretly check it. If the card drawn is red, the alliance proposal is sincere. If the card drawn is black, there is treachery afoot, possibly even a trap.

Ten – Power Vacuum. There is a sudden power vacuum in the area where the Campaign takes place. It could be caused by an accident, such as the unexpected death of a noble, or by the clash of two forces within the same power, such as two factions of a senate unable to reach any decision. Whatever the reason, there is an opportunity, if the heroes are bold enough to exploit it.

Jack – Foreign Interference. A new Faction joins the Campaign! It could be a foreign power on the border of the Campaign area that is troubled by the turmoil happening, or perhaps simply a force that until now has been sitting idle watching the events and suddenly decides to join the game. If the card drawn is red, the new Faction is favorable to the heroes' side. If

the card drawn is black, the new Faction is opposed to the heroes' goals.

Queen – Embassy. The heroes' side receives an ambassador from another Faction. They bring a proposal such as a dynastic marriage, a truce, an exchange of favors or of hostages, a non-aggression pact or perhaps it is simply a courtesy call between good neighbors. If the card drawn is black, it means that perhaps the proposal is not all it seems and may be an insidious trap or even that the ambassador is only a way to introduce a spy or assassin into the heroes' confidence. If the card drawn is red, the ambassador has no ulterior motive.

King – The Game of Crowns. There is a very delicate moment in every political struggle where old alliances break down and new ones are created. Check the actual number of Conquest Points the heroes have. If they have more than 50% of the Maximum Conquest Points, they are winning; if they have less than 50%, they are losing. After determining the heroes' status, check the table below. Note that the following are only general indications of what could happen. Last but not the least, the Game of Crowns is a dangerous one and not all the offerings are what they seem. If the Game Master wants to

	BLACK CARD	RED CARD
HEROES WINNING	Two Factions gang up against the heroes	The least powerful Faction among the opponents surrenders to the heroes.
HEROES LOSING	A Faction allied to the heroes joins the opposition	If the heroes are in league with a Faction, one opposing Faction offers to betray their allies and change sides

SUPPORT TOKENS IN A CONQUEST POINTS CAMPAIGN

Support Tokens can be employed in various additional ways in a Conquest Points Campaign.

Apart from being used monthly to maintain the Band and check for Morale, they can be used as "currency" to trigger various effects during the Campaign.

Here are some examples:

- *Mustering new Troops/ improving the equipment of a Band. One Support Token can be spent to add +5 to Battle Value.*
- *Bribing important NPCs. Remember, a Support Token is worth approximately 2000 Moons, so it can be used to buy someone's favor. A secondary character (for example, a bannerman of a small noble house) can be bribed for one Token, an important NPC (for example, a merchant lord or the commander of a garrison) can be bought for two Tokens, while the general of the opposing Faction requires three or even four Tokens.*
- *Building. Fortifications must be rebuilt after being stormed, farm fields razed by an enemy must be plowed and sown again if you don't want to starve the next winter, and ships must be bought or rented if you want to move troops over the sea.*
- *Rebuild a fortification: 2 Support Tokens per Fortification Level (Engineer Personality or Sappers Band Edge required)*
- *Sow and plow the farm fields of a community (2 Tokens per Size class of the settlement)*

decide this randomly, draw another card and secretly check it. If the card drawn is black there is a trap hidden in the intent of the proposal.

Ace – Hero. An important figure of some type suddenly appears in the Campaign; perhaps it is an old wizard who decides to emerge from his century-long seclusion or maybe a folk hero at the head of a liberation movement. The folk hero (probably a Wild Card) is quite powerful and his favor can change the balance of the Factions. If the card drawn is black, the folk hero opposes the heroes' goals. If the card drawn is red, he could reveal himself as a worthy ally, assuming his loyalty is won.

Joker – May You Live in Interesting Times. Things tend to come thrice at a time. Draw another three cards (ignoring Jokers) and apply all the events determined by the draws in the current round.

THE HOOK

While this type of game is very open and requires some improvisation, it is always a good idea to carefully plot the first tale of the Campaign and the story leading the party into the thick of the things. If possible, start with a blast, so that they understand they are in charge of events. The Hook adventure is also very important because it defines the role of the heroes in the Campaign, and should introduce them to the main Factions and opponents. On the other hand, it must not reveal too much, but must work as an appetizer to grab the attention of the players. Think of it as the pilot episode of your favorite TV series.

THE END

Compared to a standard Plot Point Campaign, a Conquest Points Campaign is trickier to end.

The reason is that, as it is based on politics and battles, it is more difficult to find point of closure; even if the heroes conquer all the land, there can always be a new opponent, and this can lead to an almost endless series of stories.

Even if this might appear nice, avoid the trap. Stories and RPG Campaigns should have an end; otherwise, sooner or later, they collapse under their own weight and die, leaving everybody, GM and players, discontent.

You should define the Campaign endpoint when you are defining the Goals of the various Factions at the start of the design process described above.

The Campaign ends easily when the heroes' forces are clearly annihilated (perhaps an opposing Faction achieves its Goal in such a definitive way that it cannot be averted anymore) or when the heroes' side achieves its own Goal.

You can use the Conquest Points as a Campaign meter. Decide two thresholds (one upper and one lower) at which the party wins or loses, respectively. For ex-

ample, you could decide that the heroes lose when they drop below zero Conquest Points or win when they accumulate fifteen Conquest Points.

When this happens, the Campaign ends with a climactic event. For example, if the party loses, their own army and the land they control rebel against them and they are forced to abandon the area.

On the other hand, if they reach the winning threshold, the King leading the opposition commits suicide or he is overthrown by his own hirelings who then offer the power to the heroes.

Whatever you decide, you should end the story with a dramatic scene.

Ending a Conquest Points Campaign doesn't automatically mean the end of the adventurers. Even if the heroes are defeated and must escape, this can be the start of a new, very different story, with a different scope and goal.

In the same manner, if they are victorious, they now have to rule their land and a crown can be a very heavy burden.

APPENDIX: BANDS OF THE DOMINIONS

This chapter introduces some ready-to-use bands for your Campaign.

BLACK ARMY

Experience: 10 XP (Novice)

Commander: Priest Prince Sulkar (Knowledge (Battle) d8, Sorcery d10, Spirit d8, Charisma +4)

Size: Average

Discipline: Average

Battle Value: 660

Support Tokens: 3

Personalities: Priest Princess Salkaria (Lotusmaster)

Hindrances: Faceless Grunts (slave soldiers)

Edges: Creature (Royal Shadow Bat), Drones, Frightening.

Description: Nobody in Tricarnia speaks the name of House Sulkar aloud. One of the most influential families of the last two centuries, they tried to win the throne of the City of Princes by removing the true rulers, but they failed. A week later, a combined army comprised of their enemies attacked Nar Sulkar, with the blessing of the High Princes, totally destroying the ancient citadel.

Only Prince Sulkar, the family heir, and his twin sister, Salkaria, managed to escape and start a life of exile, first as adventurers and then as leaders of one of the most dreaded Bands of the Dominions: the Black Army. The Black Army is made entirely of war slaves, kept under control by the Lotus concoctions of Salkaria. The Black Army, named thus for the color of their banner, is totally ruthless and employs dark Tricarnian sorcery and wicked Lotusmastery to win battles. In particular, Prince Sulkar brings terror to his enemies by swooping over the battlefield with his impressive flying mount, a Shadow Bat as large as a house.

The Black Army is infamous for the extent of their pillaging and for reinforcing their ranks with captured prisoners which are enslaved by the evil Lotus of Salkaria.

The twins are labeled as bandits in Tricarnia. The Black Army never enters the boundaries of its old country, but secretly hopes to gather enough troops and power to be able to one day return and take revenge on the destroyers of their House.

Banner: A bloody fist on black background.

Band Composition: Monster (Royal Shadow Bat), 200 Ragged Swordsmen (Light Infantry), 100 Spike-Collared Macemen (Medium Infantry), 50 Black-Hooded Archers (Long Range Missile), 30 Eunuch Axemen (Heavy Infantry).

FOREST BROTHERHOOD

Experience: 5 XP (Novice)

Commander: Belaxo of Xorala (Knowledge (Battle) d6, Spirit d6, Luck Woodsmen)

Size: Very Small

Discipline: Average

Battle Value: 100

Support Tokens: 1

Personalities: Brother Taverios of the Divine Couple (Priest), Dexter (Scout), Wild-Eyed Rikon (Champion).

Hindrances: Traitor, Wanted (Minor)

Edges: Local Aid, Skirmishers, Terrain Familiarity (Forest).

Description: The first time the Forest Brotherhood struck was a year ago in a sudden hail of arrows coming from the thick of the woods, killing all the guards of a small caravan headed to Jalizar. A group of black-cloaked ghosts emerged from the trees, quickly emptied the wagons of all their goods, and disappeared into the wild again.

Since then, no caravan going to or from the City of Thieves is safe. The Forest Brotherhood preys on merchants along the Iron Route with the greed of falcons, and it grows bolder each day. Its attacks seem to target the caravans of House Talum of Jalizar, and there are whispers of an old grudge between the leader of the Forest Brotherhood, the highwayman Belaxo of Xorala, and the Jalizaran Merchant House. Lord Talum isn't a man to take these robberies lying down; military escorts were augmented and parties of soldiers were sent to hunt down the bandits. However, the Forest Brotherhood is extremely cunning and after any incursion they retreat into the Forest of Xorala, a labyrinth of vines, trees and even worse things where no civilized men dare to enter.

Deep inside the forest its members wait patiently in a secret hideout, while their spies - farmers, woodcutters and assorted yokels living in the surrounding areas - keep an eye on the road, ready to signal them about good prey or patrol parties in exchange for a share of the loot, which Belaxo, being a generous man, never fails to give them.

The leader of the Forest Brotherhood is also known for his courage. Often he wanders on the road, disguised as a farmer, a minstrel or even stranger disguises, looking for a good opportunity and occasionally giving a hand to the locals or

recruiting some promising young men to the ranks of the Forest Brotherhood. So far he has always chosen reliable people, but there are whispers that Lord Talum promised five thousand Moons for the location of the secret hideout of the Brotherhood, and that is a sum that will move even the most loyal man...

Banner/Battle Cry: They wear brown cloaks.

Band Composition: 50 Bandits (Medium Infantry/Longbowmen).

MOUTHS OF ETU

Experience: 15 XP (Novice)

Commander: The Voice of Etu (Knowledge (Battle) d4, Spirit d10, Charisma +3)

Size: Large

Discipline: Low

Battle Value: 800

Support Tokens: 4

Personalities: Voice of Etu (Priest), Jarimas the Fagiri (Priest), Xalanda the Meek (Priest/Recruiter), Captain Gurtaso, Guardian of the Voice (Knowledge (Battle) d6, Lieutenant).

Hindrances: Breaking Point, Inferior Equipment, Strength in Numbers

Edges: Cult of Personality, Looters, Very Popular.

Description: The Fagiri are a sort of agrarian wandering monk typical of Kyros, responsible for deciding when it is time to plow, harvest and so on. They are

pacifists, even if some of them are famous for their invectives against the Ivory Savannah Tribes, which have resulted in bloody wars.

Fagiri Ramath was one of them, a peaceful and pleasant man, before being bitten by a poisonous tarantula and experiencing a religious vision. After a miraculously recovery from the poison, he was a different man. The kind Goddess Etu, Mother of Everyone, had spoken him, announcing that she was displeased that so many of her sons were starving while the lords and rich merchants grew fat in their palaces. She exhorted him to gather an army among the poorest people and to drive them wherever there was food, because food is their right as sons of Etu.

And so he did. Ramath began preaching and his words were flames on the savannah. First dozens, then hundreds, of poor homeless people joined him, enchanted by the eloquence of the Voice of Etu, as he was called. In the end, even other Fagiri, despite the firm opposition of the official cult of Etu and of the Autarch himself, joined the ranks of the Mouths of Etu, as the rabble following Ramath is called.

It is a true army now, kept together by the rebellious Fagiri and some chosen men, both mounted and infantry, acting as a police force. Wherever they march, lords must open their granaries and feed the masses and towns and villages must empty their markets to satiate the countless mouths of the horde. If they don't, they are stormed, pillaged and destroyed, because no one can keep a Hungry One away from food.

Until now, the Autarch has more or less tolerated the Mouths of Etu as he is busy with other internal problems, but sooner or later the problem must be addressed

because any village, hamlet or town visited by the Mouths of Etu grants Ramath new recruits and if they deny the horde is left destroyed and razed.

Banner/Battle Cry: "Food! Food!"

Band Composition: 1000 Mouths of Etu (Irregular), 40 Heralds of the Voice (Light Cavalry), 100 Chosen of the Voice (Medium Infantry).

SILVER PHALANX

Experience: 25 XP (Seasoned)

Commander: Lord Commander Gregorius (Knowledge (Battle) d10, Spirit d8)

Size: Large

Discipline: High

Battle Value: 900

Support Tokens: 6

Personalities: Captain Publius (Lieutenant), Row Leader Corr (Specialist Leader (Heavy Infantry)), Insignia Bringer Learco (Standard Bearer).

Hindrances: Costly, Exclusive, Honorable.

Edges: Battle Hardened, Phalanx, Shoulder to Shoulder, Specialist Troops (Infantry), Superior Equipment.

Description: The Silver Phalanx is one of the more famous mercenary companies of the Dominions. Their base is in the Free City of Hiliar, where they have a permanent encampment outside the city walls, but they are always ready to move anywhere in the Dominions. The legend says

that the Silver Phalanx is one of the famous Lost Phalanxes, which travelled to a remote place during the first Faberterranean-Kyrosian war and never came back. This may be a true story even if, after almost a thousand years, it cannot be confirmed. What is certain is that the Silver Phalanx fights and behaves exactly like one of the Phalanxes of the old times, employing the same tactics and even boasting an Insignia, the Silver Eagle, which is said to be the original one.

The Silver Phalanx is a very rigid organization; discipline is very harsh and soldiers must endure terrible trials before being admitted into its ranks. Their ranks are always composed of exactly three hundred men, not one more, not one less, and they are an impressive sight, covered completely in their iron armor, so polished that look as if made of silver (hence their name).

A particular training technique of the Silver Phalanx teaches the men to work in couples called Wife and Husband. During battle, but also in day-to-day life, the Husband is responsible for the Wife's safety, and vice versa. These pairings are made for life and it isn't strange to see a battle-hardened veteran weep like a child after the death of his companion. In the past it was the custom for these "widows" to commit suicide, but luckily this tradition is very rarely observed today.

This behavior, combined with the very low number of women in the Silver Phalanx's camp, causes some rumors about their sexual orientation, but this is gossip that no sane man dares to repeat in front of a Silver Hoplite.

The Phalanx has a surprisingly low number of officers, and, unlike regular Phalanxes, they are elected directly from

the troops and they are in charge for life. The Hoplites usually choose a battle-hardened veteran for this role, ensuring that the man in charge is always capable.

Given their standards, the Silver Phalanx can be picky when choosing their patrons and they are very costly too, however, their loyalty is beyond reproach and if hired, they'll fight to the last man for their employer.

Banner/Battle Cry: A Phalanx Insignia representing an eagle and made of silver. Their battle cry is "Never retreat!"

Band Composition: 300 Silver Hoplites (Heavy Infantry).

NAME OF THE BAND _____

COMMANDER _____

RANK _____ XP _____

SIZE _____

DISCIPLINE _____

BATTLE VALUE _____

SUPPORT _____

DESCRIPTION _____

HISTORY _____

BANNER WAR CRY MOTTO _____

PERSONALITIES: _____

EDGES _____

HINDRANCES _____

NAME OF THE BAND _____

COMMANDER _____

RANK _____ XP _____

SIZE _____

DISCIPLINE _____

BATTLE VALUE _____

SUPPORT _____

DESCRIPTION _____

HISTORY _____

BANNER WAR CRY MOTTO _____

PERSONALITIES: _____

EDGES _____

HINDRANCES _____

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