

DARING TALES OF CHIVALRY

DEATH AT THE JOUST



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DEATH AT THE JOUST

If you intend to play in this adventure, you should **stop reading now**. Advanced knowledge of the scenario will only spoil your enjoyment of the game. The GM should read the **entire** adventure twice before play begins. Knowing the basic flow and details in advance will greatly speed up play and make the game run smoother.

This adventure consists of two separate events—a tournament with numerous events and a mystery that needs solving. Both are designed to work together, but GMs could separate the two into different tales, thus doubling the use. The rules for the tournament can be reused over and over in future adventures of the GM's devising.

GM ADVICE

There are over 50 important guests at the tournament, only the barest handful of which have stats and are important to the plot. After reading the adventure, the GM is encouraged to create a few random personalities and use these to create further adventure hooks. For example, a casual chat with a priest over a drink may reveal he has come into information regarding a lost Christian relic. Look beyond the two main plots, and enjoy the many and varied roleplaying opportunities this social event presents.

Finally, don't forget to reward good roleplaying with a benny during the adventure. This adventure revolves around social interaction and exciting combat descriptions, and players should be encouraged to really get into character.

THE CHARACTERS

This Savage Adventure contains a pulp tale based around the exploits of four to six pre-generated characters. The full character sheets are available for free at www.triplecegames.com. One player must always

play the knight, as he is the reason for the group being together.

The heroes have all their leveling opportunities from 10 XPs (at which they begin) into Legendary mapped out in advance. Each published adventure in this line earns the heroes a fixed 5 Experience Points, guaranteeing them an advance every mission. All the players need do is tick the appropriate box and start making use of the new upgrade.

Characters: 10 XP

INTRODUCTION

Word has reached Sir David of a major tournament taking place in the Somerset cathedral-city of Wells. Although the field will not include the most famous knights of the realm, the prize is generous, and the lack of famed opponents stands Sir David in good stead. Other tournaments, such as archery and a melee, have been arranged for each knight's entourage. So it is the illustrious band enters the city to the rapturous applause and adulation of the local peasants.

The heroes have never attended a joust as participants before, but they've watched the spectacle as fans. Only knights with a proven, written family tree, going back at least two generations of nobility, may enter the joust. Knights may enter other events, though entering any except the sword fighting is generally considered unbecoming a nobleman.

The joust carries a prize of £50 for the winner. The melee prize is £20 for knights and £10 for men-at-arms, the throwing events are £7 each, archery £10 each, and horsemanship is £5. Knights entering the joust risk losing their horse, but they also have a chance of winning one or more mounts, which they can sell back to their owner.

As well as the events, there is a full market for the five

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days. All manner of goods, from armor, weapons, and horses, to souvenirs, pottery, and furs, can be purchased. Those who like female company (the sort for which you have to pay) find a ready supply of ladies happy to entertain a gentleman.

KEY EVENTS

The timetable below lists several events either important to the plot or to help set the mood of the adventure. These are detailed here for the GM.

TIMETABLE OF EVENTS

The adventure runs to the following timetable. Entries in parentheses (such as E1) refer to key events. These are detailed numerically in the rest of this chapter.

DAY ZERO

- 1200: The heroes arrive in Wells and are met by Gerard, the count's major domo (E1).
- 1600: The shield parade and introduction of knights (E2).
- 1900: Welcome banquet (E3).
- 2030: Argument between Baron Villers le Lac and Sir Richard (E4).

DAY ONE

- 1200: Start of the first round of the joust and melee, plus the knife throwing (E5).
- 1400: Scuffle between Baron Villers le Lac and Carswell Muxlow (E6).
- 1600: End of the day's dueling.

DAY TWO

- 1200: Start of the second round of the joust and melee, plus the axe throwing (E5).
- 1600: End of the day's dueling.
- 1700: Hear loud voices from the gardens. Discover argument between Baron Villers le Lac and Sir Callion Hebet (E6).

DAY THREE

- 1200: Start of the third round of the joust and melee, plus the short bow archery (E5).
- 1600: End of the day's dueling.
- 2100: Characters invited to game of cards by Baron Villers le Lac (E8). Interrupted by Lady Roxanne du Blanc-Coeur, who rows with the Baron.

DAY FOUR

- 1200: Start of the semi-final of the joust and melee, plus the long bow archery and horsemanship (E5).

THWARTING PLANS

The heroes are, until his murder, spectators in the Baron's affairs. No amount of dirt-digging can reveal more facts than are revealed to the characters through the text, nor can they avert his death, or find any of the items referred to by his adversaries. Players who begin trying to interfere, such as becoming bodyguards for the Baron or searching his pavilion, should be warned off. The Baron has enough clout to inflict permanent Charisma penalties by bad mouthing them on the social scene, and would-be thieves can run into some of the Earl's men.

- 1600: End of the day's dueling.
- 2000: Grand ball (E9) held in honor of the finalists.
- 2030: Argument between Albert Tanner and Baron Villers le Lac (E10).
- 0000: Baron Villers le Lac murdered by unknown assailant and his pavilion ransacked (E11).

DAY FIVE

- 1200: The final of the joust and melee (E5).
- 2000: Farewell feast.

DAY SIX

- 1000: Depart Wells. Adventure ends.

E1. ARRIVAL

On reaching the tournament field, the heroes are greeted by a man in fine livery. He asks them whether they have come to attend the grand tournament. Those who respond positively are asked for their names. The man is Gerard, the Earl of Somerset's major domo.

He fawns over any knights, consistently calling them "lord" and commenting on how majestic they look. Those of non-noble status are rudely ignored in favor of their, "more esteemed colleagues."

Once inside, Gerard leads the heroes to the registration tent. Here they must choose the events in which they will participate. The events are the joust (knights only), the melee, archery, knife and axe throwing, and horsemanship. Don't worry if a character doesn't enter a competition—the players get to take on the rolls of NPCs during the adventure.

Afterward, he takes them to the area set aside for lodging—a field dotted with a few pavilions and tents. The pre-generated characters don't own any pavilions or tents, so they'll have to hire some. Renting a pavilion costs £1 for the duration of the tournament, while a tent is a mere £0.25.

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Along the way, Gerard informs the characters that all their food is being provided by the earl. He explains there is an outdoor welcome banquet tonight, which all knights and their entourages may attend, as well as a dance on the fourth night and a farewell banquet on the night the tournament ends. Finally, Gerard reminds knights and heralds not to miss the shield presentation, which takes place at 4 o'clock.

E2. SHIELD PRESENTATION

The shield presentation gives the audience a chance to see the knights, the real stars of the show. Flags and banners are dyed to match each knight's colors during the evening, thus giving the fans a chance to show their support come the start of the joust.

The knights array themselves in a line facing the earl's seat in the stadium, holding their shields aloft for all to see. Each herald then has as much time as he wishes to introduce his liege. While this is being done, the knight turns on the spot, allowing all the spectators to see his colors and his face.

More importantly, this is the herald's chance to play up his master to the crowd and earn their support. Statements of lineage are all well and good, but the general public doesn't give a hoot about ancestry—they're here for the pageantry and glamour! A herald, or someone appointed to the roll, must make a Persuasion roll. Because Sir David is new to the tourney circuit, his herald has a -2 penalty. The herald's player can either roll the dice straight away, or he can roleplay his character's performance. A poor performance should never be penalized (after all, the herald knows his job, even if the player doesn't), but a good, rousing speech should be rewarded with a small bonus.

With success, the crowd gets behind Sir David and cheers enthusiastically. He earns a special benny. This benny may only be used during jousting matches (no other events or situations) and represents the crowd's appreciation spurring on the hero to great deeds. A raise results in rapturous applause and the creation of a chant in honor of the knight (yes, this really did happen). The hero earns two bennies. A failure results in a mixed reaction. On a critical failure, the herald has managed to turn the crowd *against* his liege. The GM receives one special benny, which he may use in the joust to either reroll a NPC's dice or force the knight to reroll one of his successes. The latter is great for when a knight Soaks a huge damage roll because the odds of him succeeding twice are probably quite low.

E3. THE WELCOME BANQUET

The Earl of Somerset is hosting a banquet for all the

contestants and guests of noble status, prominent merchants, priests, and the like. His largesse extends across his entire estate, with each village he controls being donated a pig and keg of fine wine. The earl is generally frugal, living a simple life. This allows him to throw extravagant parties for nobles and commoners alike once or twice a year.

Knights are seated on the top table, along with the Earl and his family. As the tables stretch back down the field, one finds the nobles and very rich merchants seated nearest the earl, and the lesser officers, nobles, and merchants dining further back. Non-knight heroes are seated according to status, which may result in some of them being situated right at the back.

In general terms, the breakdown is knights, important dignitaries, and others. GMs can create a few quick NPCs by using the Random Guest Table below and rolling for a personality.

The banquet is extravagant, comprising seven courses in total. Fine wines are available on demand for all guests to enjoy. Any character making a Common Knowledge roll can calculate the cost of the banquet, which alone runs into many hundreds of pounds.

At some point during the banquet, guests seated around the dispersed characters engage in discussions about various topics. The heroes may partake in these discussions if they so wish by making an appropriate skill roll. Roll on the table below once for each adventurer.

GMs should add in some flavor for each discussion. Rather than simply rolling the dice and asking the character if he wants to make a Fighting roll, describe instead how one diner praises the use of the long sword, while another guest favors the morning star. The hero is asked for his opinion on which weapon he considers the best and why.

To engage in the discussion, the character need simply make the indicated skill roll and add any Charisma modifiers (this is a social event, not an actual use of the skill, so personality counts for a lot). A +1 bonus can be awarded to players who roleplay their answer rather than reaching straight for the dice. The player doesn't have to be accurate with his reply—he merely has to sound convincing. "Well, the morning star is certainly a weapon of note, but the sword has always been the sign of nobility." Hindrances should also be taken into consideration (a Stubborn hero isn't likely to let his point of view be dismissed easily).

If the player is willing, engage in friendly banter for a few minutes before rolling the dice. Don't turn it into an epic debate, or the other players may grow bored.

A success means he handles himself well, though he hasn't shown any great knowledge or insight. On a raise, he enlightens the other guests with his knowledge and wit, earning him +1 Charisma for the duration of the tournament. Failure means the character's comments are dismissed as irrelevant or superseded by better arguments. A critical failure results in an embarrassing gaff and a loss of -1 Charisma until the adventure ends.

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RANDOM GUEST TABLE

Characters seated on the top table only engage in conversation with other knights. For the other heroes, secretly draw 3 cards to generate the guests to the left, right, and directly opposite the hero during the banquet. Shuffle after each set is dealt. The value indicates the type of guests and the suit their nationality. Details, such as a noble's actual status, should be determined by the GM, based on among which group of guests a hero is sitting and any future plot hooks he may want to develop at this time.

Value	Guest
2-3	Squire
4-6	Herald
7-8	Warrior, archer, or other combat type (not competing)
9-10	Clergyman (low ranking ones would be priests, while higher ones the Bishop of Wells or his dean)
Jack-Queen	Merchant (wealth depends on where he is sitting)
King-Ace	Nobleman (King) or woman (Ace)
Joker	Draw again. The guest is actually a spy posing as one of the other types. If a second Joker is drawn, the guest is an assassin (who may be used in a cameo event of the GM's devising to form a third part to the story).

DISCUSSION TABLE

d10	Topic of Conversation
1	An argument breaks out over a trivial matter (roll Intimidation or Persuasion)
2	Fencing (roll Fighting)
3	Cards or games of chance (roll Gambling)
4	Military matters (roll Knowledge (Battle))
5	Detailed area of knowledge (roll either Knowledge (History, Law, or Medicine—GM's call)
6	The medical arts, such as treatment of battlefield wounds or how to balance the humors (roll Healing)
7	Horsemanship (roll Riding)
8	Religious debate (roll Knowledge (Religion))
9	General gossip (roll Streetwise)
10	Hunting (roll Survival)

E4. A MATTER OF HONOR

During the banquet an argument erupts between a knight and a higher status nobleman.

The noise of conversation suddenly drops to silence as everyone turns to watch a disagreement between two men. One is seated and, judging by his clothing, is a nobleman of some status. The other, a knight by his attire, leans over him, his face flush.

"I want it back! Now!" shouts the knight, stabbing a finger toward the seated nobleman.

"Or what?" smirks the noble. "Are you prepared to meet me in the list to settle this?"

The knight seems about to reply, but pauses before responding. "I will end this," he seethes. "I will retain my honor. I will recover the letter, and you



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will rot in hell." He then turns and marches away at a brisk pace, leaving the banquet hall.

"You always were a coward, and you always will be! I shall save you a seat in hell!" the noble shouts. "I apologize, your Lordship," he says, rising and bowing toward the head table, "for the interruption. A dispute between old friends over a matter of honor. Consider it settled."

Characters may ask guests seated nearby about the identity of the gentlemen. With a success on a Streetwise roll, they learn the knight is Captain Sir Richard of Flanders, recently arrived from France, while the other is Baron Villers le Lac, who owns land in both France and England. On a raise, they discover the knight is considered a war hero, having served his king for many years.

Sir Richard is nowhere to be found, though any of the Earl's staff can escort them to his pavilion. Sir Richard is in his tent, frantically pacing the floor. He shouts, "Enter!" in response to any request to enter, but is unwilling to discuss the matter to the heroes. Sir Richard claims the argument was a personal one and one which will be resolved soon. No more on the matter can be gained from him at this stage.

Baron Villers le Lac is even more dismissive of the incident, laughing it up as a young knight whose sword is better tuned than his bravery. He says no more on the subject, either, claiming prior engagements if the swash-bucklers become persistent. Attempts to delay him or pressure him into revealing more, result in a loss of 1 Charisma for the remainder of the adventure.

LEARNING MORE: SIR RICHARD OF FLANDERS

To discover more, the characters must ask questions of the wider audience. Again, this requires a Streetwise roll. Each roll takes two hours and cannot be attempted Cooperatively. A character who states he is concentrating on questioning knights and nobles has a +2 bonus, so long as he has the social status to gossip with such folk.

With a success, they learn that Sir Richard rose to fame about a decade ago. During a border dispute with Burgundy, Sir Richard's Free Company (mercenaries) was wiped out to the last man. Only Sir Richard, then having just earned his spurs, survived. He spoke about the bravery of his men and how they fought on regardless of their mortal wounds. He only managed to escape by the skin of his teeth. His tale earned him a captaincy. Since then, he has secured many victories. After a decade, no one is exactly sure of the details of Sir Richard's story.

A raise indicates there is more to this tale than meets the eye. Vague rumors have been circulating noble circles in France. No one is sure of the facts, but indications are there was another survivor of Sir Richard's heroic action who tells of the young knight abandoning his men in combat.

LEARNING MORE: BARON VILLERS LE LAC

Learning more about the Baron also requires a Streetwise roll. Again, asking among the noble guests earns a +2 bonus to the roll.

With a success, they are told the Baron is a notorious rake. He spends more each year on women, wine, and gambling than most men earn in a lifetime. On a raise, they learn that although he has incurred huge debts, his lavish gifts to the King of England ensure the debtors are kept at bay.

E5. RUNNING THE TOURNAMENT

This section covers all the notes the GM needs to run the actual tournament side of the adventure. Read the section carefully before play, as this will speed things up greatly during the session.

THE EVENTS

There are several events of note. Each is broken down into a series of bouts, contested over the length of the tournament. If no heroes enter a given competition, you can ignore it—there's little point in rolling dice, just for NPCs. Overall victory for a player character in any event is *not* assured—if they want to win, they have to earn the rewards.

Rather than running through an individual hero's events while the other players get to do nothing but watch (and hopefully cheer), the GM should have them roll dice for the NPCs.

THE JOUST

The joust is fought over five days, culminating in the Grand Final. The rules for jousting are covered on page 19.

We haven't listed the opponents a hero could meet, but rather have left that to chance. This way, whether a hero gets knocked out on the first day or wins outright is down to the luck of the draw, rather than us stacking the odds either way. On each day a hero jousts, just draw a single card from the action deck and use the **NPC Knights** rules on page 21.

In the event your party contains two knights, they are destined never to meet until the final. Obviously, this only occurs if both progress that far. For three knights, one pair, chosen at random, meet in the semi-finals. The remaining knight faces a random NPC. Remember as well not to leave the other players sitting idly. Although each joust match takes only a few minutes, let them participate by handling the NPCs in turn.

THE MELEE (MAN-AT-ARMS)

The melee is fought in a square arena measuring 24" to a side. In each bout there are two contestants. Like

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the joust, it follows an elimination system. A hero's foe should be played by another player.

In order to win, the character must defeat five opponents over five days. His first is a typical man-at-arms (page 15). His second and third are Seasoned men-at-arms, then a Veteran one, and finally a Heroic warrior.

The contests begin spaced as evenly as possible around the edge of the arena. When a flag is dropped, a huge fight breaks out. Run this as you would a regular fight. Because this is sport not war, all contestants are heavily padded—all damage counts as nonlethal. The winner is the last man standing.

THE MELEE (KNIGHTS)

This works just as above, except only knights and nobles may enter. The hero's rivals are, in order, a Poor knight, a Competent knight, another Competent knight, an Elite knight, and, should he make the final, a Wild Card Elite knight.

ARCHERY AND THROWING

All four competitions (short bow archery, long bow archery, knife throwing, and axe throwing) use the same simple rules.

In addition to any heroes, there are a number of non-noble entrants. Every player whose character is not competing should pick up a d4, d6, d8, d10, and d12 to represent other contestants. Players are free to create names for some of the NPCs and add in a little roleplaying as they wish.

Some of the contestants have bonuses or penalties to hit, or may even be a Wild Card. To determine which entrant has what modifiers, deal each player throwing dice for the NPCs a single card and check the table below. The "Die" entry determines which dice stands out from the crowd, while "Modifier" lists the bonus. For instance, if a player is dealt the 9 of Hearts, when he rolled his d8, he'd add +2 because the shooter has the Marksman Edge.

Value	Die	Suit	Modifier
2-3	d4	Club	Bad Eyes Hindrance
4-8	d6	Diamond	Trademark Weapon Edge
9-Queen	d8	Heart	Marksman Edge
King-Ace	d10	Spade	Wild Card
Joker	d12	Joker	Trademark Weapon, Marksman, and Wild Die

Each contestant gets to launch one missile at a target placed at Short Range. Each character taking part makes a Shooting or Throwing roll as normal. The others roll all the dice, and discard any which score less than 4—that participant misses and is out of the competition. Remaining contestants then fire once at medium range (-2). Again, those who fail to hit are kicked out. Finally, missiles are fired and thrown at long range (-4). Keep making attacks at long range until there is only one contestant left—the winner. Should *all* the contestants in a round fail their roll, they *all* receive another go.

Example: Dave is running some NPCs. His card is the 9 of Hearts, so he adds +2 to his d8. On the first round he picks up his five dice and rolls them together. The d4, d6, and, to the crowd's shock, d10 all roll below 4. When it comes to the medium range target, Dave rolls only his d8+2 and d12.

HORSEMANSHIP

The horsemanship event works in a similar manner to the archery above, but also makes use of the Chase rules.

Every player controlling NPCs picks two dice. If he takes a d12, the other must be a d4. If he goes for a d10, the second die must be a d6. He may take two d8s if he wishes. All participants should have a distinct counter to place on the tabletop. Each round, the riders make Riding rolls, and advance along the track (see below) as normal. Action cards are dealt for each individual entrant.

Lay out 20 markers on the tabletop to represent the course. Use different colored markers for the 5th, 10th, and 15th positions. These are obstacles the horses must jump. When a rider gets to one of these positions, he must make an immediate Riding roll at -2 or tumble from his mount. Player characters suffer 2d6 damage for falling.

Whoever moves beyond the 20th marker first is the winner.

RANDOM EVENTS

These events can be used in any event involving a character to add a little excitement. Roll on the table below once for each character. The GM determines when the random event occurs during the tournament. GMs are free to invent their own events or alter the ones provided.

- | d6 | Event |
|----|---|
| 1 | Trash Talk: As the contestants enter the arena, the NPC attempts an Intimidation or Taunt roll (GM's choice) at d8. This is an acceptable tactic. A hero who is affected cannot attempt his own retaliatory Test of Will before the fight begins and cards are dealt. Otherwise, he may respond with his own Test of Will in an attempt to rattle his opponent. |
| 2 | I Love You!: A spectator of the opposite sex to the hero declares their undying affection. They keep calling out to the hero during the duel, distracting him at inopportune moments. The GM receives a special benny during the event. He can use this to force a hero to reroll <i>any</i> one die roll made during the combat. Obviously, it's wise to save these for when the character rolls big. If it isn't used, it's lost when the event ends. Note that for the joust, the effects last for one match. A victorious hero is presented with the opportunity to engage in romantic activities with their |

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- admirer after the fight. This may be a one-night stand, lead to a long love affair, or possibly annoy the NPC's husband, brother, guardian, or bodyguard.
- 3 **Take a Dive:** An NPC of means and influence approaches the character just before he enters the arena with an offer. If the character takes a dive and loses the duel, he will earn £5. Should he refuse or fail to achieve this, perhaps downing his opponent with a lucky hit, he gains the Minor Enemy Hindrance.
- 4 **Betting Heavy:** Someone of note has a lot of money resting on the character winning the duel and mentions this to them as they approach the arena. He offers the hero an incentive to win—20% of his winnings (equates to £2). A victorious character is duly rewarded and may have acquired a new friend.
- 5 **Sudden Squall:** The weather turns foul and the heavens open, albeit briefly. During this event treat the lighting conditions as Dim (-1).
- 6 **A Smile and a Wink:** The hero has an admirer who shows his or her affection with a smile and a wink. The character receives a boost to his confidence. He gains one benny, which can only be used during the forthcoming event. Whether the admirer wants a romantic liaison or perhaps has some other motive for supporting the hero is left to the GM to determine.

E6. BAD DEBTS

Shortly before the second round of the joust is due to commence, a ruckus occurs among the crowd. From their vantage point, the characters can see a portly man accosting Baron Villers le Lac. Raised voices drift over the jousting field.

"The matter is in the hands of our lawyers now," smiles the Baron. "Do not add to your troubles by daring to strike a nobleman." He prods the other man in the belly with his finger. "Men have died in that arena. Do not make me challenge you over a matter of what you think is honor."

The other gentleman looks flustered. "Don't think you can continue to cheat me!" he says loudly. "You may have fancy legal advisers, but they can't protect you forever!" With that he storms off and is quickly lost in the crowd.

The Earl claps his hands twice to restore order and summons the next pair of knights.

The heroes already know the identity of the Baron and, hopefully, some information about him. If they failed to score a raise on Streetwise rolls concerning him, they receive another chance after this event.

Carswell Muxlow, the other man, is a minor merchant and largely unknown in Somerset. Streetwise rolls to learn more about him have a -2 penalty. On a success, the characters learn his name and profession. With a raise, they discover he is engaged in legal action with the Baron. No one knows the details, though.

Searching for Muxlow, the characters discover him skulking around the market stalls, rapidly downing beer like it is going out of fashion. He is already in a state of inebriation. Unlike Sir Richard, Muxlow is only too happy to discuss his feud with the Baron.

"Swindled me, he did," Muxlow slurs, waving his tankard around wildly. "I bought back a shipment of grain from that cur and he sold me moldy grain! No one would buy it! Oh, I sought recompense from him, but he laughed at me and said if I wanted recompense I had to go through the courts and prove he owed me."

"Damn cur has fancy lawyers and has kept the case going for years through legal loopholes. Every month I'm losing money hand over fist to my bloodsucking lawyers. Damn swine owes me £50. If I don't get it soon I'm going to be bankrupt." With that, he slumps into a chair and promptly falls asleep.

Baron Villers le Lac is again dismissive to the heroes if they question him over the matter. His story is slightly different, claiming he offered a fair shipment and it was the merchant's fault it went off because he delayed collecting it. As far as he is concerned, his lawyers are now handling the matter. Again, no further information can be gained through pressuring the baron, and Charisma penalties should be incurred if the adventurers try.

E7. INHERITANCE

An hour after the final duel of the day has ended, the heroes hear raised voices outside their tents. Peeking out reveals Baron Villers le Lac and a young nobleman they have seen around the tournament but not yet spoken with.

"It will be worth nothing! Nothing! How can you do this to me?" rages the younger nobleman.

"Dear Callion," smiles the Baron, "you will receive whatever I choose to leave you. I am under no obligation to provide for you financially."

"All I'll have is your debts! It will bankrupt my family paying them back!"

"Bah, your mother never did have good sense when it came to men. She should have married someone richer, not that wastrel you call your father."

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The young noble slaps the Baron hard across the face and marches away. The Baron simply laughs as the youth departs. "A real man would have added a challenge!" he shouts. "You're too much like your father!"

The youth is Lord Callion Hebet, Baron de Honfleur, and is Baron Villers le Lac's nephew through his mother (the Baron's sister). The heroes can discover this either by locating the youth and questioning him or with a successful Streetwise roll (+2 if they specify they focus on French guests).

Callion is in a fury, swiping at hedges in the garden with his rapier, when the characters track him down (assuming they do so relatively quickly). Although reluctant to discuss private matters at first, he opens up if the adventurers are persistent but polite.

"My name is Callion Hebet, Baron de Honfleur. My father is the Comte de Honfleur and that man you heard me talking with is my uncle. My mother is his sister. My uncle has no wife, no children. He made me his sole heir.

"Recently he has begun to spend excessive amount of money on women, wine, and gambling. His debts are enormous, and only his ties with the English court keep him safe. At the rate he is spending money, all I will inherit is a huge debt. I may be of noble birth, but my father is not wealthy enough to cover my uncle's debts. The devil will bankrupt us with his foolish pleasures."

Callion has nothing more to say on the matter and politely excuses himself. He goes back to his pavilion and remains there, missing the evening meal.

As usual, Baron Villers le Lac rebuffs any attempts to gather more information from him, claiming the incident was a family matter and nothing to do with the heroes. Charisma penalties await those who offend the nobleman.

E8. A GAME OF CARDS INTERRUPTED

After the day's events end, Baron Villers le Lac invites the characters to join him in a game of cards, along with a few other minor nobles and dignitaries.

He waves his hand at any hero who wishes to discuss his growing list of enemies, claiming tonight is a night for cards and pleasure, not trivial matters.

A total cad, the Baron sets the initial stake at £5. He doesn't expect the heroes to be able to meet this stake. All he wants is to watch them squirm and ask him, publicly, to lower the stake to a more manageable level. A character asking for a stake below £.50 suffers a -1 Charisma penalty for the remainder of the tourney due to the Baron's mockery (it's overheard by several prominent nobles and merchants).

Use the normal Gambling rules to run the game. The Baron has Gambling d10 and rolls a Wild Die. He cheats only if the stakes are £2 or higher.

GMs should not feel they have to roll a few dice and end the scene—several guests are open to conversation during the evening's play and could be used as hooks for future adventures. Let the roleplaying continue as long as the players wish.

After the game is concluded, a lady of great beauty and obvious wealth walks across the room and slaps the Baron hard across the face.

"My son," she snarls, "may not be the most intelligent of men, but at least he is honest!"

"Ah," smirks the Baron, "Lady Roxanne du Blanc-Coeur, I wondered when you would join the growing army of my admirers. Won't you join us? Your son surely would."

The lady's face glows red with held back anger. "You bluffed my son into raising the stakes beyond any reasonable amount and then you cheated. Oh I know I can't prove it, but everyone knows what a cur you are! I want that promissory note back before the end of the tournament or there will be hell to pay."

Baron Villers le Lac casually leans back in his chair. "My lady, if your son runs up debts your family cannot meet, that is your problem. Perhaps you should have raised him better, taught him the value of money and responsibility. No wonder your lands are in the state they are."

Lady Roxanne clenches her fist, turns, and strides from the room. "Another relationship I do not wish to discuss," the Baron says to you, smiling. "Shall we play another round?"

Lady Roxanne is in no mood to speak to the characters unless they are nobles. Even then, it is the rules of etiquette which compel her to speak, not any desire to converse with strangers about her family problems. She merely repeats what she said before about her son being swindled by Baron Villers le Lac before storming off to her pavilion.

Questioning other guests requires a Streetwise roll, again with a +2 bonus if they can corner a noble guest. Success reveals that although the Lord and Lady du Blanc-Coeur hold huge tracts of land, their ancestors squandered a great deal of their fortune on failed business ventures.

E9. THE GRAND BALL

Like the welcome banquet, the grand ball is a chance for the players to roleplay their characters. There are

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men and women to engage in conversation and ladies aplenty to dance with (and men for female characters). Random guests can be determined by using the tables on page 5.

The roleplaying side of the ball lasts as long as the players want. If they don't enjoy social roleplaying, have them each invited to dance once and move on to Event E10. Otherwise, take the time to pander to their desire to play their characters and forget about the plot for a while.

At some point during the ball thunder echoes through the sky, though it only begins to rain a little later. The characters should be informed of this occurrence.

Dancing: Check the Reaction Table if a hero asks a lady to dance to determine her initial reaction. Her Charisma is 3 minus the roll of 1d4 (giving a range of +2 to -1).

Assuming she responds with at least a Neutral reaction, the hero then makes an Agility roll to determine how well he dances. His partner has a d6 Agility and grants bonuses as per a Cooperative roll.

With success, the pair enjoys themselves without making any major mistakes, and may even turn a few heads. A raise wows the crowd, giving the hero +1 Charisma until the adventure ends. A failure means the hero or his partner embarrasses himself somehow, such as bumping into other couples or stepping on toes, but not enough to cause lasting problems. A critical failure leads to a major social faux pas (such as performing the wrong dance or falling over), costing the hero (and his partner) -1 Charisma for the remainder of the story.

Female characters should be asked to dance at least once by a male guest. Roll Charisma as above, but do not roll on the Reaction Table—how the hero reacts to the gesture is down to her.

E10. TALK OF TREASURE

While waiting for a dance partner to become available, loading plates at the buffet table, or otherwise on the periphery of the dance, one or more characters finds Baron Villers le Lac engaged in yet another argument with a guest.

A portly man is waving his arms in the air as he hisses at the Baron. "Fifty percent we agreed, you thieving cur! I should have known better than to trust you. Even the Spaniards have some honor, but no, not you."

"Tut tut," replies the Baron, wagging a finger. "I took one little item and left you three chests of gold. Surely that should have satisfied your greed?"

"We agreed a fair divide. That "one item" was worth more than those three chests of gold, and you know it! I want my fair share of the treasure."

"You received fair recompense. If you have a

problem, take it up with my lawyers. They really are very good. Now, if you'll excuse me, I feel the need to dance." With that the Baron walks over to a noblewoman and leads her to the dance floor. The portly man seethes and storms off toward the arena.

The rotund gentleman is Albert Tanner, a "fortune-hunter." He only arrived today, so Streetwise rolls to learn more about him suffer a -4 penalty. Success reveals his name and occupation, but little else. With a raise, the characters learn he and Baron Villers le Lac were once partners in some sort of endeavor, but something went wrong.

If stopped and questioned, Tanner doesn't so much talk to the characters but rather at them. He seems more to be talking to himself.

"That thieving rascal," he snarls through gritted teeth. "Spanish gold split fifty-fifty, he says. Bah! A pox on him and all nobles! What did he do? Well, I'll tell you what he did; he left camp in the night with a priceless treasure, priceless, and left me with boxes of gold. Oh gold, very valuable. Bah! That gem was worth more than twenty boxes of gold and he knew it. A pox on him!" With that, he walks off, seemingly oblivious to your presence.

E11. MURDER MOST FOUL

The ball ends at half past eleven due to the heavy rain. Most guests go straight to their pavilions and tents (some with company of the opposite sex), but a few decide to take the air before bed or retire for a last drink. None of the Baron's adversaries can be found toward the latter stages of the ball and, if being followed, manage to lose any heroes tailing them. Baron Villers le Lac cannot be found, either.

At exactly midnight, the still night is shattered by a cry of agony. A short while later, screams and shouts echo through the accommodation field. By the time the characters reach the scene of the incident a small crowd has gathered. From somewhere ahead of the heroes someone cries out, "It is Baron Villers le Lac! He has been stabbed! The Baron is dead!"

Order is quickly restored by the Earl's guards and the guests are herded down to the ballroom. Through the throng of half asleep and shocked guests, the characters can see each of the Baron's five main enemies—none have tried to flee the field. The Earl arrives a few minutes later and asks for volunteers to help him. No one steps forward (the Baron wasn't popular with anyone at the tournament and the mystery is for the characters to solve, not an NPC).

Assuming the heroes volunteer, the earl privately speaks to the gathered heroes.

"Baron Villers le Lac has been stabbed and mur-

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dered by an unknown assailant. The city watch in Wells is too lazy to stir from their beds at this late hour and is generally incompetent. They will come in here and begin treating my guests like common criminals. This matter requires subtlety and decorum, not an iron fist. I can secure the grounds and prevent the guests from leaving, but only for two days. My authority does not reach far.

"I would like you to investigate this matter and find the murderer before the joust final begins tomorrow."

THE GAME IS AFOOT!

To solve the murder, the heroes need to locate all the clues and use them to eliminate all suspects except the murderer. Don't rush the investigation, and don't just reveal clues as dry facts, especially when talking to suspects. Roleplay their answers, being evasive at first (they all have secrets), but slowly revealing more as the characters apply pressure.

CLUES IN THE PAVILION

THE BARON'S BODY

The baron lies face up on the bed, a stab wound to his chest. If he was stabbed by an intruder, the assailant was either an expert fighter or caught him by surprise. A close examination of the wound reveals the dagger blade was triangular.

Baron Villers la Lac was stabbed, which logically means the killer had access to a knife. Of the main suspects, only Albert Tanner carries this peculiar dagger. However, Lady Roxanne owns one as well, though she is not carrying it after the murder and it is not in her pavilion.

RANSACKED

The pavilion has been turned upside down—clothes and papers are strewn everywhere, tables overturned, books ripped apart, and so on. Obviously the killer was looking for something important.

Checking the papers requires a Notice roll at -2 (there are a lot of them). One of them, near a small wood burning stove, is a badly scorched letter. Although burnt in places, enough remains to show it was written by a Free Company sergeant and details how Sir Richard deserted his men and left them to die. Since the letter is still here, it is a red herring. Sir Richard may be guilty of cowardice, but he isn't the murderer.

Of all the suspects, just one was after something unlikely to be carried by a noble visiting a social event. Muxlow was after money, and any noble knows that money is never brought to such events. If a noble has to

buy something, he can use promissory notes or letters of credit. The others were after a letter (Sir Richard), a gem (Tanner), a promissory note (Lady Roxanne), and a will (Lord Callion). This effectively rules Muxlow out as a suspect.

TWO GLASSES

On a small table are two glasses (made of actual glass) and a bottle of expensive wine. One glass has been recently drained, but the other still contains a full measure. This is long before the days of fingerprinting, so that avenue of investigation won't work. However, the glass and bottle contain clues.

Smelling the wine from either container or swilling it around the mouth reveals a strange odor. Characters with Healing d6+ recognize the odor as that of a popular sleeping draught.

Part of the clue here is that the Baron or his guest obviously poured the drinks. Given the nature of the baron, he would be likely only to invite in someone he trusted. In this case (don't tell the heroes), the obvious choices are young Callion (his nephew) or Lady Roxanne (a "mere woman"). Should the characters really struggle over this clue, allow them a Common Knowledge roll, but only after they have been given plenty of time to think the solution through for themselves.

OTHER CLUES

DIRTY CLOTHES

When Carswell Muxlow, Lady Roxanne, or Lord Callion is questioned, they spot fresh mud on the bottom of their clothes, more than would be present just by running to investigate the scream. All claim they took a walk earlier in the evening.

SIR RICHARD'S LETTER

If presented with the letter found in the Baron's pavilion, Sir Richard tries to snatch it away and throw it onto a nearby fire. Treat this as a Disarm attempt against the hero. With success, Sir Richard destroys the evidence, claiming, "The past is the past. Let us forget it and move forward." On a failure, the knight admits his sin of cowardice, but claims he has made amends many times since.

Unscrupulous characters may try to blackmail Sir Richard. Unfortunately, the plan doesn't work. He has had enough of living in fear and is prepared, once the letter is securely out of his grasp, to face whatever punishment awaits him. He won't pay a blackmailer a single coin.

SLEEPING DRAUGHT

A search of the pavilions of Lady Roxanne, Tanner, and Muxlow reveals bottles of laudanum. All three are miss-

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ing several doses worth of the drug. When questioned, each suspect has a seemingly good reason to possess the drug (which isn't illegal).

Lady Roxanne claims she took the drug on the journey over from France, for it calmed her seasickness and allowed her to sleep on the rolling ship. Tanner admits he is an addict, having "acquired the taste" in Venice. Muxlow denies being an addict, and states he is only using small doses to calm his nerves because of the strain of his financial difficulties.

QUESTIONING OTHER GUESTS

By working together and making a Cooperative Streetwise roll, the characters can question the guests in four hours (there are a lot of them).

Success reveals that Sir Richard, Lady Roxanne, and Lord Callion were seen arguing with the Baron shortly before the end of the ball. Witnesses also come forward who spotted Lord Callion, Lady Roxanne, and Muxlow in the field between 11 o'clock and just before midnight.

A raise reveals another clue—several witnesses heard footsteps outside their pavilions shortly after the scream was heard, passing by their pavilion in a direction leading away from the Baron's tent. Of the suspects, only Lady Roxanne, Muxlow, and Lord Callion have pavilions in that direction.

Should the hero's be stuck for clues still, a successful Streetwise roll reveals one other piece of information—Lady Roxanne is an excellent knife woman. This should only be revealed when the players are truly stuck.

SEARCHING OTHER PAVILIONS

Searching the suspects' pavilions reveals the sleeping draught (see above), but nothing else of relevance to the investigation.

DAGGER

A search of the field requires a Notice roll at -4. With success, the characters find a triangular-bladed dagger in a water trough. It has a heraldic design on the hilt. A Knowledge (heraldry) roll reveals it is the emblem of the Blanc-Coeur family. Comparing it to Lady Roxanne's standard outside her pavilion reveals this automatically. If questioned about the dagger, the noblewoman claims it was stolen from her pavilion two days ago.

Should the characters be stuck and have missed this clue, someone finds it while watering their horse and brings the blade to the heroes' attention.

SO WHO DID IT?

Only one person matches all the clues—Lady Roxanne.

Toward the end of the ball she approached the Baron with an offer—her body in return for the promissory note. Demands for the note to be returned before the

act failed (and the Baron hinted the note would never be returned anyway), so she poured two drinks in the room, spiking the wine bottle with sleeping draught at the same time. The Baron drank his wine in one gulp but the drug has limited effect. She then used her knife to kill her nemesis, but he managed to let out a scream. A search of the pavilion found no sign of the promissory note (which the Baron did not bring with him).

Realizing the murder would be detected in the morning and unable to leave during the middle of the night without arousing suspicion, she set fire to the letter implicating Sir Richard in an act of cowardice (though if the knight had done it he would have made sure it burnt to a crisp), before running to her pavilion.

CONFRONTATION

Lady Roxanne naturally denies any involvement in the murder. She questions every piece of evidence, trying to point the finger of blame at other suspects. The heroes can only force her hand by proving beyond reasonable doubt that all the evidence points to her as the killer. Even the evidence referring to her knife skill is damning without positive proof she owns a dagger. When this occurs, she flies into a rage and attacks.

Lady Roxanne should be taken alive. The characters have no legal rights to kill her, especially given her noble status and the fact she's a woman. Once captured, she confesses everything, telling how she only did it to ensure her family was not bankrupted by the dastardly Baron. It's time for the characters to congratulate each other while the Earl sends Gerard to fetch the town guard.

CONDONING MURDER

There is a chance the heroes will condone the murder of the Baron and offer Lady Roxanne a deal to ensure her guilt is never exposed. Lady Roxanne accepts the offer but works behind the scenes to remove the heroes later, fearing they will try to blackmail her. If it ever becomes public knowledge they aided a murderer and covered up the crime, they gain the Minor Enemy Hindrance.

REWARDS

In addition to any prize money, Sir David receives a gift of £20 if the murderer is apprehended. The other heroes receive nothing—Sir David is expected to show his largesse by divvying up the reward among his followers.

THE CAST

GERARD MEUNIER

Gerard has served the count for his entire adult life, having worked his way up through the household. He's

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fawning and sycophantic over important guests and couldn't keep a secret if his life depended on it. For all his faults, Gerard is attentive to his master's needs and would gladly die to protect him.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Nobility) d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: -1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Big Mouth, Code of Honor, Habit (Minor: sycophantic), Loyal (the Count)

Edges: Connections (Nobles)

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4).

THE SUSPECTS

There are five key suspects in the death of Baron Villers le Lac. Each is detailed below. GMs will note these are not high-powered combat thugs, despite their Wild Card status. This isn't a heavy-combat adventure.

SIR RICHARD OF FLANDERS

Sir Richard is a notable knight. Ten years ago, he was a lowly unit commander in a Free Company, but following an incident during one of England's frequent skirmishes with Burgundy, he was awarded a captaincy for his reported bravery during a raid. Sir Richard's bravery, however, was a sham. Overcome with fear, Richard panicked and left his men to die. Convinced none survived, he concocted a tale of heroic deeds against overwhelming odds.

Unfortunately, there was a survivor. A young corporal was captured by the Spanish and has only recently been freed. By a quirk of fate, Baron Villers le Lac ran across the corporal and learned his story. The Baron has seen been blackmailing Lannion, claiming to have a letter in which the corporal reveals the true tale of the then-lieutenant's cowardice.

Sir Richard has made amends for his previous error in judgment. His recent career has seen him lead men successfully into battle, and he has won several citations, but he fears a revelation over his "glorious" past and rise to fame would mean total disgrace. Desperate to save his career and reputation, Richard has tracked the Baron down and plans to confront him and demand the letter be handed to him in return for one final payment.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d8, Stealth d6



Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (3)

Hindrances: Enemy (Minor: Baron Villers le Lac), Heroic, Loyal, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Attractive, Block, Command, Connections (Free Companies), Dodge

Gear: Plate armor (+3), full helm (+3), long sword (Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4)

ALBERT TANNER

Albert Tanner is a tomb raider. Several years ago, Baron Villers le Lac hired Tanner to guide an expedition in search of an ancient gold hoard. The expedition was successful, and a vast treasure was recovered, among which was a fabulous gem the size of a man's fist. The total amount of gold and lesser gems paled next to that one, exquisite item.

According to their deal, when the party returned to France, the Baron and Tanner would divide the treasure, all of it, equally. On a stormy night, the Baron and his men silently departed. By the time Tanner discovered their disappearance the next morning, the dogs were

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already far away. Tanner had been double-crossed in a carefully laid plan.

Tanner made several attempts to contact the Baron, but all were curtly rebuffed. More by luck than judgment, Tanner learned of the Baron's attendance at the tournament and set sail to reclaim either the gem or, in the event it has been sold, half its value.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Enemy (Minor: Baron Villers le Lac), Greedy, Stubborn, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Command, Connections (Criminal)

Gear: Short sword (Str+d6), triangular-bladed dagger (Str+d4+1)



CARSWELL MUXLOW

Carswell Muxlow is an English merchant of little renown. One of his suppliers was a certain Baron Villers le Lac, who arranged for Muxlow to receive a consignment of grain. The Baron switched the consignment after it was inspected and sold grain infected with ergot, a fungus known to produce hallucinations.

Attempts to reclaim the money through legal processes have stalled thanks to the Baron's expert lawyers, and Muxlow is running out of money pursuing the case. If he can't convince the Baron to pay his debt, he intends to gain recompense through fair means or foul.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Enemy (Minor: Baron Villers le Lac), Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Connections (Merchants)

Gear: Dagger (Str+d4)



LADY ROXANNE DU BLANC-COEUR

Like many nobles, the lady's son is bored. He has no ambition to join the army, little skill at estate management, and certainly has no desire to soil his hands by actually working for a living. To help pass the time he gambles—heavily.

While on a jaunt in Calais a few weeks ago, he entered a high-stakes card game. Also partaking in that game was the Baron Villers le Lac. The betting grew steadily heavier and heavier, until a vast fortune was wagered. The Baron won, though not through fair means. Unable to prove the Baron cheated or meet his debts, the young nobleman had little choice but to write a promissory note.

On learning of the looming financial disaster, Lady Roxanne wrote to the Baron, only to discover he had set sail for England. Unwilling to reveal the

existence of the promissory note, she promptly set sail after him, intent on ensuring the note is destroyed, believing the Baron carried it among his personal papers.

Lady Roxanne acts just like a noblewoman. She never reveals her skills (claiming, if questioned after hearing rumors, that the stories are greatly exaggerated) or acts in a manly or heroic fashion.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Nobility) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d10, Streetwise d8

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Enemy (Minor: Baron Villers le Lac), Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Attractive, Connections (Nobles), Improved First Strike, Improved Frenzy, Improved Level Headed, Improved Sweep, Noble, Quick Draw

Gear: Short sword (Str+d6)



LORD CALLION HEBET, BARON DE HONFLEUR

Baron de Honfleur is the nephew of Baron Villers le Lac on his mother's side. With no children of his own, Baron Villers le Lac adopted young Callion as his sole heir several years ago.

However, Baron Villers le Lac has begun to spend money on women, wine, and gambling at an alarming rate. The young nobleman has tried in vain to convince his uncle to give him part of his inheritance now, before it is all spent. His uncle simply responded that Callion would receive whatever was left after life was enjoyed to the full, even if that meant inheriting his uncle's growing debts.

Fury has brewed in Callion for many months. Agents continue to send reports of his uncle's lavish spending, indicating the debts are mounting and will soon force the Baron to sell his land—Callion's inheritance—to meet them. Callion cannot, will not, accept being left with a debt he did not incur and intends to make sure there is something left for him to inherit.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Gambling d6, Knowledge (Battle) d4, Notice d6, Riding d8, Shooting d8

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Enemy (Minor: Baron Villers le Lac), Mean, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Block, Connections (Nobles), First Strike, Frenzy, Noble

Gear: Rapier (Str+d4, +1 Parry)

KNIGHTS

Shields are not carried in the joust. In this event, the first Parry score is used. The second value is for the melee. Jousting plate and helms are discussed on page 17.

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POOR KNIGHT

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5/6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Hindrances: Arrogant or Code of Honor

Edges: Noble

Gear: Chain hauberk (+2), bascinet (+3), small shield (+1 Parry), long sword (Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4), riding horse (+1 Fighting in joust), jousting lance (d8+d6)

Basic Ransom: £17.50

COMPETENT KNIGHT

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d6, Riding d8, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6/7; **Toughness:** 9 (3)

Hindrances: Arrogant or Code of Honor

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Level Headed, Noble

Gear: Plate corselet & arms (+3), full helm (+3), medium shield (+1 Parry), long sword (Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4), riding horse (+1 Fighting in joust), jousting lance (d8+d6)

Basic Ransom: £22.25

ELITE KNIGHT

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Battle) d10, Notice d6, Riding d10, Taunt d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7/9; **Toughness:** 10 (3)

Hindrances: Arrogant or Code of Honor

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Frenzy, Improved Level Headed, Noble

Gear: Plate armor (+3), full helm (+3), large shield (+2 Parry), long sword (Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4), war

horse, jousting lance (d10+d6+2)

Basic Ransom: £65.75

CHAMPION KNIGHT

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d12, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Battle) d12, Notice d6, Riding d12, Taunt d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8/10; **Toughness:** 12 (4)

Hindrances: Arrogant or Code of Honor

Edges: Ace (applies to Riding rolls), Combat Reflexes, Improved Frenzy, Improved Level Headed, Noble

Gear: Jousting plate (+4), plate legs (+3), jousting helm (+3), large shield (+2 Parry), long sword (Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4), war horse, jousting lance (d10+d6)

Basic Ransom: £67.75

TYPICAL MAN-AT-ARMS

These represent the guards serving any nobleman, including those who watch over Sir David's manor. The Rank modifications should be applied to match the average party Rank when fighting against these men.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: —

Gear: Scale hauberk (+2), bascinet (+3), long sword (Str+d8), or halberd (Str+d8, Reach 1, 2 hands), dagger (Str+d4)

Seasoned: Combat Reflexes, Fighting d8 (Parry 6)

Veteran: Block (Parry 7), Frenzy, Spirit d8

Heroic: Fighting d10 (Parry 8)

Legendary: Improved Frenzy, Vigor d10 (Toughness 9 (2))

Basic Ransom: £6.25

APPENDIX: SETTING RULES

This section looks at some setting rules appropriate not just for *Daring Tales of Chivalry*, but also for medieval and fantasy games in general. It's important to note, though, that this does not constitute an in-depth medieval "toolkit," nor is it intended to be a *Pendragon* RPG conversion.

ADVENTURING GEAR

Most of the standard Savage Worlds gear is perfectly usable in *Daring Tales of Chivalry* or another medieval setting. Notable changes, however, are discussed below.

MONEY

The base unit of currency is the English pound (£). Each pound is divided into 20 shillings, and each shilling into 12 pennies (making 240p in a pound). However, for ease of play, we use a decimal system, where each shilling equates to £0.05. Pennies are dropped from the game.

To convert from regular Savage Worlds costs to pounds, divide all costs by 100, retaining fractions. For instance, a long sword is normally \$300, so that's £3. A dagger would go from \$25 to £0.25.

Starting Money: Heroes begin with £5, unless modified by edges. Characters with the Rich Edge begin with £15, and earn £100 per year. Very Rich heroes have £15 initial funds and an annual income of £500. This is after all expenses.

Wages: Other heroes earn regular money, as well. In our pre-generated group, it's assumed these monies come from the knight's annual income and are already subtracted from his annual earnings. All amounts are after basic costs (such as repairing or replacing clothes).

Archer: £3.50; Herald: £10; Man-at-Arms: £5 (mercenaries can earn as much as £36 a year, but must provide all their own equipment and food); Squire: £1.10. Monks and nuns don't get any money—God provides for them (as do peasants who give charitably).

Largesse: As well as paying their wages, a nobleman is expected to share any spoils of war with followers who assisted him. In general, the nobleman retains half the award for himself, and shares the rest out among his men (and women) as he sees fit. Alternately, he can let them decide how to divide their half of the treasure, thus saving him the effort and possible repercussions if someone feels shortchanged.

ARMOR

All medieval armor from Savage Worlds is suitable for *Daring Tales of Chivalry*. In addition, there is a new type of armor for those interested in touring the jousting circuit.

Bascinet: One of the most common helms from the 14th century, the bascinet is a tall, conical helmet which extends from below the chin and rises to a conical point. It leaves only the face open to attack. By adding a visor, the bascinet becomes (in game terms) an enclosed steel helmet.

Jousting Plate: An advancement on regular plate armor, jousting armor brings with it extra plates for the chest, specifically shaped guards to protect the neck, and reinforcement for the jousting arm and shoulder.

Jousting Helm: The visor of a jousting helm is constructed such that a knight can only see his foe clearly when leant forward. When he straightens just before impact, his eyes are fully protected from flying splinters. If a roll on the Injury Table results in a *Blinded* result, the attack instead causes no specific injury.

Scale: Favored by men-at-arms, scale armor comprises a stiff leather coat covered in metal scales. It weighs more than chain mail, but costs considerably less.

WEAPONS

The following melee weapons are not found in the medieval period: katana, rapier, and pike. Medieval warriors or hunters rarely used throwing spears, but there is no preclusion in our setting rules.

APPENDIX: SETTING RULES

MUNDANE

Horses: Riding horses are known as chargers, while warhorses are destriers.

Pavilion: A pavilion is a circular tent with a conical roof. It is designed to sleep two. One, usually a knight, has the larger portion of the interior. A bed, table, chairs, and a chest can all fit inside, and basic furnishings are included in the cost. The smaller section is for a squire, and contains a basic wooden cot. Blankets and bedrolls are not included in the price.

Tent: A simple square tent with a pitched roof designed to sleep four in comfort and six in cramped conditions. At jousts, knights often stable their horse in a tent, out of any inclement weather.

ARMOR

Type	Armor	Weight	Cost	Notes
Jousting plate	+4	40	£7.50	Covers torso and arms
Scale hauberk	+2	30	£2	Covers torso, arms, legs
Helm				
Bascinet	+3	4	£1	75% vs. head shot
Jousting helm	+3	10	£2	Cover heads; see notes

MUNDANE GEAR

This isn't a full shopping list (such things are hard to come by), but instead gives a good overview of prices for gaming purposes. As before, most prices can be acquired by taking the Savage Worlds prices and dividing by 100.

Item	Cost	Weight
Animals		
Cow	£0.50	—
Horse, riding	£10	—
Horse, war	£50	—
Mule or pony	£0.50	—
Ox	£1.10	—
Pig	£0.10	—
Sheep	£0.03	—
Clothing		
Fur additions	+£1	—
Gentry outfit	£1	—
Noble outfit	£10	—
Peasant garb (good)	£0.40	—
Peasant garb (poor)	£0.20	—
Food		
Ale, good, per 3 gallons	£0.10	27
Ale, poor, per 3 gallons	£0.05	27
Cheese, per 4 pounds	£0.01	4
Dried fruit	£0.02	1
Feast, per guest, noble	£0.05	—
Feast, per guest, common	£0.01	—
Saffron	£0.60	1
Spices, per pounds	£0.10	1

Wine, good, per gallon	£0.10	10
Wine, poor, per gallon	£0.10	10
Housing		
Pavilion	£3	50
Tent	£0.50	15
General		
Armorer's tools	£13.80	40
Blanket	£0.25	4
Candles (4)	£0.05	1
Mason's tools	£0.10	5
Spade/shovel	£0.05	5

HERALDRY 101

In the heat of battle, it can be very difficult for knights to distinguish friend from foe. Likewise, when encountering a knight on the open road, it helps if you can tell an ally from an enemy before you get into combat range. To help nobles distinguish each other, heraldry was invented. Heraldry is both an art and a science, and books on the subject run to many hundreds of pages. Presented here is a very basic overview. Players controlling knights are encouraged to simply have a go, and choose something that looks good, not something which would please a modern-day herald of arms.

The image of the knight on page 13 shows a basic heraldic design. The shield design has a *sable chevron* on an *argent field* and an *or* (gold) fleur-de-lys in the upper right corner.

COLORS

Heraldic designs make use of two "metals," *or* (gold) and *argent* (silver), and five base "colors," *azure* (blue), *gules* (red), *sable* (black), *vert* (green), and *purpure* (purple).

BASIC PARTITIONS

Heraldic shields, whether actual shields or banners, are divided by lines to produce a variety of patterns known as fields. The area encompassed by a partition is called the field. Some lines are non-existent, in that the fields meet with no visible defining line. In other cases, the line can be wide enough to count as a separate field (as in the modern flag of Scotland). Partitions don't have to be straight either—they can be wavy, jagged, squared like battlements, saw-toothed, or dovetailed.

Per fess: Divided in half horizontally.

Per pale: Divided in half vertically.

Per cross: Divided into four quarters by horizontal and vertical lines.

Per chevron: A triangle dominates the lower half of the shield.

Per bend: Divided in half by a diagonal line from top left to bottom right (from the viewer's point of view)

Per bend sinister: As above, except the line is from top right to bottom left.

DARING TALES OF CHIVALRY #02

Per saltire: Divided into four by two diagonal lines.

Per pall: Divided into three with a Y-shape. The arms of the "Y" extend from the top corners to the center, whereupon the vertical line runs to the bottom of the shield.

Per pall, reversed: An inverted Y-shape dividing the shield into three fields.

CHARGES

A charge is a heraldic emblem placed on the shield. Such devices can be placed anywhere on the shield, even over partition lines. Virtually any animal, bird, fish, geometric shape, cross, crown, tree, plant, weapon, or castle or tower design can be used. Hands and arms have also been used, though other body parts, such as the feet, are much rarer.

Charges are typically drawn vertical, though animals and fish may be horizontal (a bear on all fours, for instance). Beasts are never shown in the act of dying, nor are towers or trees toppled in a heraldic design.

GAINING AUDIENCES

All men like to feel important, but in the medieval scheme of things, very few are treated that way. When a character wishes to see an important person of higher status, he must request an audience, either in person or through his herald. The petition for audience is made to the lord's chamberlain, not the noble, personally. This requires a Persuasion roll at -4. The following modifiers apply. All modifiers are cumulative.

Bonus Reason

+X	Petitioner's Charisma
-4	Petitioner arrives at night or requests an audience in a strange manner (e.g. in the local cathedral, not the lord's manor)
-2	Someone more important than the petitioner is awaiting an audience
-2	Petitioner is a commoner
-1	The lord's court is crowded with other petitioners
+1	Petitioner is wounded
+1	Petitioner is a Noble, but lower status than the lord
+1	Petitioner was invited to attend the lord
+1	Petitioner is an ambassador from a social inferior
+1	Petitioner's character Rank is Seasoned or Veteran
+2	Petitioner is an ambassador from a social superior
+2	Petitioner is a vassal of the lord
+2	Petitioner's character Rank is Heroic or Legendary
+4	Petitioner outranks the lord socially

Raise: The petitioner jumps the queue and sees the lord immediately.

Success: The petitioner is invited to attend the lord after minimal delay.

Failure: The hero is kept waiting for 1d4 hours.

Critical Failure: The petitioner is forgotten. After four hours he must make another roll from scratch.

Example: *Sir David of Winchester wishes an audience with the Earl of Essex. Sir David's modifiers are +2 (his Charisma) and +1 (a lower-ranked noble). Unfortunately, a baron is also waiting, which gives the knight a -2 penalty. His final roll is made at -3. Sir David is likely to waiting around for some hours, unless his herald works his magic.*

TOURNAMENTS

Tournaments are big business, for both the knights who compete and the market stall holders who see a sudden boom in customer numbers. The tournament circuit runs across England and France (well, the bits the English control, anyway) during the spring and summer, except when there is a war taking place. Following the circuit is a great campaign basis, as it allows the heroes to travel, meaning they can have adventures on the way, earn some money, and keep seeing old friends and foes, thus making the campaign seem more alive.

With that in mind, the GM is likely to want to create tournaments. Here's a fast, furious, and fun system!

SPONSOR

Tournaments are expensive things to run, so only the landed nobles tend to host them. There's nothing to stop a player character holding one on his land, of course. To determine an NPC host's title, roll a d20 and consult the table below. Modifiers are applied in the next section.

d20	Title	Mod
1	Knight or Banneret	-2
2-8	Baron	-1
9-10	Bishop	0
11-16	Count/Earl	+1
17-18	Duke	+2
19	Prince	+4
20	King	+6

EVENTS

A tourney needs a minimum of one event if it is to draw a crowd (and participants). Roll a d20 and apply any modifier from the table above. The type of joust describes its competitive level, and can help the GM determine how far afield knights have traveled from to participate. He is not beholden to the result—if he wants a visiting French knight at a village fair, then one arrives. It is also used in the next section.

The Cost column is for player characters who want to be a tourney host and relates to the equivalent extravagance. The more extravagant the tourney, the more events are held, and the greater the attendance. It does not include the cost of prizes.

APPENDIX: SETTING RULES

BASIC TOURNEY JOUSTING

Tourney jousting is about unhorsing your opponent, not ramming a lance through his body. As such, jousting lances are designed to fragment on impact, dispersing the energy. Accidents do happen, but they are just that—freak, unpredictable events. To run the actual joust combat, a player character must have a horse. Armor is actually optional, but only a fool would joust without it. Most knights wear their heaviest armor to avoid any chance of injury. Jousting lances cost £0.10 each and shatter easily.

The type of joust used in this adventure is a standard elimination. Riders are drawn by random lot to face each other, with the winner going forward to the next round. In the event there are not enough knights to form an equal number of pairs to a power of two, the ones with the highest social rank or who are renowned tournament champions receive a free pass.

For instance, in a joust with 18 riders, there would be nine pairs. However, 18 is not a power of two, but 16 is (2x2x2x2). The two knights of greatest renown or status take a free pass. In this particular example, the 16 knights are whittled down to eight, and then down to four. When these four have jousted, the final pair each faces one of the nobles who received a bye to determine who earns a place in the grand final. No, it isn't a fair system, but the sport was invented by the rich and powerful, and naturally it favors them.

RULES OF THE JOUST

1. Only noblemen or knights may joust. Females are never permitted to joust, regardless of their social status or pedigree.
2. Each participant must own his own horse and equipment, as in some contests the horse or equipment may be lost after battle.
3. The start of each match is signaled by the raising of the host's flag over the center of the barrier. Knights ride on the right-hand side of the barrier.
4. If a knight falls, then only the squire may help him. When the lance is broken, only the squire may hand the lance to the knight. And only the squire may talk to the knight when preparing the horse for the next charge.

MATCHES

Each match consists of three runs. Between each run there is a 10-minute delay. This allows time for armor dents to be straightened out, and, more importantly, a single Healing roll.

SCORING

A successful hit to the torso in which the lance shatters earns one point. A head shot (–4 penalty) and a broken lance earns two points. Unseating a rider, no matter where he is struck gives the attacker 3 points.

d20	Type	Typical Events*	Cost
1 or less	Village fair	Joust only (8 knights)	£10
2–5	Local town	Joust (16 knights), melee**	£15
6–9	Local city	Joust (32 knights), melee, grand melee	£25
10–15	Countywide	Joust (32 knights), melee, grand melee, axe/knife throwing	£50
16–17	Regional	Joust (32 knights), melee, grand melee, axe/knife throwing, archery (short bow only)	£100
18–19	Countrywide	Joust (32 knights), melee, grand melee, axe/knife throwing, archery, horsemanship	£200
20+	International	Joust (64 knights), melee, grand melee, axe/knife throwing, archery, horsemanship	£500

* These are the minimum number of events which must take place. For each extra event a player character host wishes to sponsor, he must pay +£10.

** Two events are run—one for knights and one for men-at-arms.

PRIZES

Knights don't take part in tournaments just for the adoration of the peasants, chance to hobnob with equals or betters, and maybe attract the eye of a beautiful (and rich) young lady. No, they attend for the prize money. Prizes vary in value depending on the size of the tournament. Heroes wishing to sponsor a tourney must be able to provide the prizes below.

Type	Joust	Melee*	Throwing**	Archery***	Horse
Village	£5	—	—	—	—
Town	£10	£1	—	—	—
City	£20	£3	—	—	—
County	£25	£5	£1	—	—
Regional	£30	£10	£2	£1	—
Country	£40	£15	£4	£5	£2
International	£50	£20	£7	£10	£5

* The prize is halved for the men-at-arms melee

** Two events—short and long bow—each with a separate prize.

*** Two events—knife and axe—each with a separate prize.

JOUSTING RULES

As well as being a public display of wealth by the hosting noble, a tournament is a chance for knights to knock each other off their horses, gain fame and wealth (and sometimes ladies), and, in times of peace, to maintain their skill at arms. These displays of horsemanship are known as jousts, and are governed by strict rules. Knights are valuable assets, and although death is always a risk, the rules exist to ensure most suffer only broken bones and wounded pride. Jousts can also be used by knights to settle disputes, though battering each other into submission was usually the standard way of sorting out problems.

DARING TALES OF CHIVALRY #02

The match winner is the knight who scores the most points. In the event of a tie, a knight who has unseated his opponent more times than he has been unseated wins. Should they still tie, then the knight with the most head shots wins. In the event they are still equal, both knights face a sudden-death decider. A further tie results in *both* knights being eliminated from the competition.

At the end of a match, a knight who has unseated his opponent more times than he has been unseated may claim his rival's horse as a prize. It is traditional to allow the rival to buy back his mount at the full market price.

INITIATIVE

Jousts are deliberately set up so both knights strike within a fraction of a second. As such, you don't use action cards to determine initiative. You still need to deal them, however, as Jokers carry their usual benefits. Both participants roll to hit *simultaneously*.

ATTACKS

Although the attacks are simultaneous, a knight has a variety of options at his disposal. Each participant should secretly select one of the options below by placing a d6 face up to match the option number behind a cupped hand. When both are ready, reveal the dice simultaneously.

1. *Braced*: The knight braces himself for a hit, but in doing so loses accuracy for his own attack. He gains +2 to Riding rolls to remain mounted, but suffers a -2 penalty on his attack.
2. *Aggressive*: This is essentially a Wild Attack. The knight has +2 to Fighting rolls and damage, but suffers a -2 penalty to his Parry.
3. *Standard*: No modifiers apply.
4. *Head Shot*: The knight is trying to earn more points. His attack roll is made at -4, but he inflicts +4 damage (and thus also has a greater chance of unseating his opponent). If his opponent has his eyes fixed (see below), he also risks killing him.
5. *Eyes Fixed*: Just before impact, knights tend to look away from their opponent. This lessens the chance of a wooden splinter piercing the helmet's visor and causing lethal injury. Many knights, including King Henry II of France (1519–1559), died from a result of such injuries. A knight who keeps his eyes fixed on his target gains +1 to his Fighting roll, but if he takes a head shot the damage is considered lethal.
6. *Deflective*: The knight turns his body at the last second, hoping his opponent's lance will glance off his shoulder. He has +1 Parry but -1 to Fighting.

Horse Type: Two types of horses are permitted in jousts—warmblood chargers and coldblood destriers. In game terms, these are riding and warhorses, respectively. Using a riding horse grants +1 Fighting, as the beast is more agile. A warhorse gives the rider +2 damage due to its massive strength.

Fighting Roll: Both attackers then roll their Fighting or

Riding die (plus Wild Die if applicable) as appropriate, applying all modifiers.

DAMAGE

Damage for a jousting lance is the rider's Str+d6 with no AP. Damage is treated as nonlethal, but the dice can still Ace (remember those accidents we mentioned?). Results from the Injury Table still apply, but are only temporary until all the wounds are healed. Unless you take a Called Shot, you automatically hit the knight's torso.

If the victim is at least Shaken, the attacker's lance shatters. This is important, as a broken lance earns points. Otherwise, the hit is a glancing blow and no points are tallied *unless* the target falls from his horse.

Knights do *not* get the Charging bonus of +4 damage. Even though their horses are galloping, the lists are too short to allow them to reach top speed. Again, this is another safety consideration.

FALLING OFF

When a jousting lance strikes, he must make a Riding roll or fall from his mount. This replaces the usual rule that he must be Shaken or wounded first. Falling from a horse causes 2d6 damage. If both opponents fall in the same round, both may remount, and each scores 3 points.

FORFEITING THE MATCH

A knight may elect to withdraw from the match at any time. Typically this is done when facing an important nobleman, as causing him injury, or killing him, limits one's social aspirations. Some nobles disguise their identity under a pseudonym or lesser title in order they may joust and actually face opponents.

Any knight who takes more than 10 minutes between runs is automatically disqualified.

Striking a horse, deliberately or by accident, results in instant disqualification.

CHALLENGES

Jousts also serve as a way of airing grievances, seeking satisfaction of honor, or even gaining a small favor. A noble may challenge any other noble. However, a social superior does not have to accept a challenge, and his reputation is not tarnished for refusing—one cannot expect the king to joust with a knight, for instance. Likewise, asking for something the challenged knight cannot give (the throne of England, for example), results in the challenger becoming a laughing stock. The challenger must publicly state the reason for the challenge.

Typical challenges are grudge matches, to win back a lost possession, or even the seemingly trivial request of a kiss from a noble's daughter (or wife, if the hero has the nerve to ask). Challenges are not the same as duels in later periods—they are never fought to the death. Instead, the challenged knight sets the terms. At minimum,

APPENDIX: SETTING RULES

this is a one run match on the lists. However, he may take it a step further.

In a challenge, match, there is an option to continue “until submission.” Jousts are fought until one person falls off his horse. The unseated hero must then fight on foot using his melee weapons. He may not remount. The winner is prohibited from using a lance against a dismounted opponent, so he too must switch to a melee weapon. The victor of the jousting segment is allowed to use his horse as a weapon, if he so wishes. Again, striking the horse forfeits the challenge immediately. Should both knights be unhorsed, melee combat determines the winner.

Note that once the melee begins, all damage is lethal. A knight who fails to submit when unseated risks death.

ALTERNATE JOUST TYPES

These two options require more work from the GM, but the systems can be more rewarding, especially for player knights. To ensure no players are left idle, those with non-knights take control of the NPCs.

FULL ELIMINATION

The contest we’ve described doesn’t take into account how NPCs perform. A character simply faces a fixed level of foe in each round he progresses. Rather than assume this, the GM has the option of creating a full list of knights (with names and titles if he so chooses). It’s a lot more work, but more rewarding. The GM will also have a good list of knights he can keep reusing in other tourneys, giving the heroes a chance to make friends and enemies.

Assume a joust has 32 knights, including any player characters, unless the GM wants to create a larger event. Note down the numbers 1 to 32 and add in any player knights next to whatever number you want. The further they are apart, the less chance two characters will meet in the early stages (assuming both win their matches, of course).

NPC KNIGHTS

Next, grab the action deck and start dealing cards face up for each NPC position. The table below shows the NPCs quality, and is based on the highest character Rank of a player knight in the joust. Cross-reference the card’s value against the Rank to get each NPC’s type and note the entry by the number. A (WC) entry means the knight is a Wild Card. Stats for these knights can be found on page 15.

Remember, this is a purely random system. A GM designing a tournament from scratch may always seed the field with whatever quality of knights and social titles he wishes. If he wants to have a prince in disguise as a lowly baron so he can joust without folk withdrawing automatically when drawn to face him, then that’s cool.

Note: This system can also be used even if you’re not planning to detail every single knight. When a hero gets to joust, draw one card to determine his opponent.

Value	Novice	Seasoned
Deuce	Poor	Poor
3–10	Poor	Poor
Jack–Queen	Competent	Competent
King	Competent	Elite
Ace	Elite	Elite
Joker	Competent (WC)	Competent (WC)

Value	Veteran	Heroic	Legendary
Deuce	Poor	Poor	Poor
3–10	Competent	Competent	Competent
Jack–Queen	Competent	Elite	Elite
King	Elite	Elite	Champion
Ace	Champion	Champion	Champion (WC)
Joker	Elite (WC)	Elite (WC)	Champion (WC)

Since all joust participants are noblemen, they all wield titles. The card’s suit determines the NPC’s social rank, as shown below.

Suit	Title	Royalty
Club/Diamond	Knight	Count or Earl†
Heart	Banneret	Duke
Spade	Baron	Prince or King
Joker	Special‡	

†The English have earls.

‡Draw a second card and use that suit. If a second Joker is drawn, the “knight” is actually a very senior nobleman in disguise! Draw a third card to determine the title he is masquerading under and check the Royalty column.

RUNNING A MATCH

When two NPCs face each other, pick two players to control them. One takes the roll of Knight A and the other Knight B. The match takes the form of a mini card game. Deal each player 3 cards. Extra cards are dealt depending on the NPC’s skill level.

Skill Level	Bonus Cards
Poor	—
Competent	1
Elite	2
Champion	3
Wild Card	+1

During each of the three runs, each player gets to play one of his cards. Poor knights have no real options open to them, while Champion Wild Cards have far more options at their disposal. Still, any knight can have a bad day in the lists. Both cards should be placed face down on the table, and turned simultaneously. The cards’ value determines how many points are scored, as shown below. Whoever has the most points at the end of the match, wins as normal.

CARD B

Card A	Deuce	3–10	Jack–Queen
Deuce	0A/0B	0A/1B	0A/2B
3–10	1A/0B	1A/1B	0A/1B
Jack–Ace	2A/0B	1A/0B	1A/1B

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King-Ace	2A/0B	2A/0B	2A/1B
Joker	3A/0B	3A/1B	3A/2B
Card A	King-Ace	Joker	
Deuce	0A/2B	0A/3B	
3-10	1A/2B	2A/2B	
Jack-Ace	1A/2B	2A/2B	
King-Ace	2A/2B	2A/3B	
Joker	3A/2B	3A/3B	

LEAGUE MATCHES

Rather than fighting an elimination contest, the field may engage in a points scoring joust. In this event, the knights are divided into leagues. For the purposes of gaming, assume there are always eight leagues containing four knights (a total of 32 combatants). Every knight then faces each other knight in his league in a single-run.

Rather than the highest scorer simply winning the match, he simply records his points. All points a knight earns in his matches are tallied together to give a grand score.

Once each knight has faced all rivals in his league, the top two scorers from each league progress to the next round—a total of 16 knights. The others are eliminated from the competition. The winners are randomly divided into new leagues of four knights apiece and their points reduced to zero. They face each other in a two-run match.

The top two scorers again advance, this time forming two leagues of four knights, and again all points are stripped. This time they make three runs at each other.

However, after this stage, only the top *two* knights advance. They fight in the grand final and face each other five times, with the highest scorer being declared champion.

This system requires a lot more bookkeeping from the GM—every single match in a character's league must be fought, as total points are important. Since rolling so many dice is going to be extremely dull, use the card system above. The base number of cards drawn, however, is the number of runs in each match.

THE GRAND MELEE

Another option for tournaments is to run a grand melee. Knights and their entourages are pitted against each other on a huge field. Rather than fighting in paired teams, every knight takes the field simultaneously. Often, nobles make agreements, form teams, and agree to divide any winnings. This gives them not only a greater chance of victory, but less chance of becoming a captive.

To ensure fairness (and because this is a game), all teams must comprise at least four men (a "typical" gaming group), but are limited in size to double that of the smallest team. So, if the smallest team has 4 men, the largest may contain no more than 8.

No jousting is permitted during a grand melee, but knights may carry shields. Note as well that all damage is considered nonlethal unless a character states openly that he wishes to use lethal force—the aim of the grand melee is to take prisoners and ransom them back, not slaughter them wholesale (that's what war is for). For ease, the usual penalty for using a lethal weapon to deliver nonlethal damage is waived—everyone has the penalty, and it'll only slow down the combat.

CAPTIVES

A defeated foe, unless slain, is considered a captive. Squires rush onto the field to haul captives back to their camp. After the battle, captives are ransomed back. The value of a captive is equal to whatever horse, armor, shield, and weapons he carried into battle. Because NPC men-at-arms all share the same value, they are simply traded for each other and no money changes hands. The same applies to NPC knights of exact equal ability.

Certain characters carry with them a bonus prize. This is detailed below.

Title/Ability	Ransom
Banneret	+£4
Baron	+£8
Count/Earl	+£32
Duke	+£64
Prince	+£128
King	+£256
Wild Card	+£32

These aren't real world historical values, but are instead used to prevent the heroes from becoming very rich very quickly. It also means they can afford to lose a few grand melee contests and not be forced to sell their estates to pay their ransom.

RUNNING THE MELEE

There are two ways of running a grand melee. Traditionally there is a major event, so the rules use the tabletop system, not an abstract one. In both cases, any casualties should be placed by the controlling player so ransom values can be easily calculated afterward.

Teamwork: The first is for the various factions to form teams. This way, the players get to run their own characters *and* a share of the NPCs. Each character plays a knight and a number of men-at-arms equal to one less than the number of player characters. Since the pre-generated heroes include a knight, that player takes one more man-at-arms. Determine the NPC knights' quality by using the card draw method on page 21. The GM runs an equal sized force of knights and men-at-arms.

Any ransom value must be divided equally between all the teams on the characters' side. So, if there are four players, there are four teams each side. If the final ransom value was £50, for example, the party receives £12.50 as its share.

Open Field: Option two involves no teams—it's a free for all! All the players without a knight character

APPENDIX: SETTING RULES

relinquish control of their characters for the grand melee. Each player controls one NPC knight (determined as above) and five men-at-arms. The player character knight instead receives five standard men-at-arms for his retinue. Knights and squads of men-at-arms receive separate action cards. Thus, each character receives at least two action cards per round.

In order to ensure players don't favor their player character knight colleague, they get an incentive to fight fairly and as hard as they can. The player's *character* gains 10% of the ransom money raised by the knight he is controlling if he wins the grand melee.

ADVANCED HEROES

As the game progresses, so the characters will grow in power. Eventually, they'll trounce any army designed using the above rules with ease. In order to level the playing field, as the heroes grow in Rank, so the quality of the men-at-arms they face increases. Use the appropriate entry on page 23.

THE TRULY GRAND MELEE

If you want to have a truly huge grand melee to conclude a tournament, then use the Mass Battles rules as the starting point. Because of the way the system works, there should be two sides in the grand melee.

BATTLE SKILL

Unless the GM has already got a complete list of knights drawn up, determine the Knowledge (Battle) skill and Spirit of the highest ranked knight by drawing three cards and comparing the highest to the table below.

Next, draw three more cards to determine the Battle skill and Spirit of the allied commander. If the Battle skill die is equal to or lower than a player character knight, the hero is given the option of commanding the army. He may refuse or accept as he wishes.

Value	Battle Skill/Spirit
Deuce	d6
3–10	d8
Jack–Queen	d10
King–Ace	d12
Joker	d12 & Wild Die

TOKENS

Grand melees are set up so they are roughly equal (no spectators want to see an immediate rout), but there will always be discrepancies in the size of the armies. Draw a single card from the action deck. The suit determines how many tokens each side has.

Suit	Players' Team	Opposition
Club	8	10
Diamond	9	10
Heart	10	9
Spade	10	8

TAKING CAPTIVES

Since the battle is handled abstractly, so is the method by which a hero gains a prisoner to ransom. A character who scores a raise on his Characters in Mass Battles roll gains a man-at-arms captive. With two raises, he captures a knight. If the GM wants more variation in the nobility, and the chance of the adventurers snaring a richer prize, he should draw a single card and check the knight's social rank as per page 22.

If the player's team causes the enemy to rout, each character may make an immediate Fighting roll as if they were fighting a round in the battle. However, in the panicked retreat, there is a greater chance of grabbing a hostage. A success nets the hero one man-at-arms, a raise two men-at-arms, and two raises a knight.

Unlike the regular rules, this prize money is not divided among other teams—the value the characters get to keep depends on how well their side did overall. This is shown below.

Heroes Side	Percentage Kept
Routed	10%
Lost by 3+ tokens	25%
Lost by 1 or 2 tokens	50%
Won by 3 tokens or less	75%
Won by 4 tokens or more	100%

GETTING CAPTURED

Heroes also have a chance of getting captured in the grand melee and being held for ransom. As soon as a hero is Incapacitated, he's captured. Don't bother rolling on the Incapacitation Table. If his side loses the battle because of a rout, he must make an Agility or Riding roll (his choice). Failure means he is captured.

ON TOURNAMENT DAY A MURDER MOST FOUL!

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