

Iridia

role-playing games and miniatures, old and new
by Christian Walker

On Point

I am proud of the Iridia zine, so I want to share it with as many people as possible. However, I understand that print distribution will only reach a limited audience. The retro-grouch in me realizes that I have to evolve. As a result, I'm making older issues available in .pdf. Furthermore, I'm working on a weekly podcast to accompany each issue. The podcast will be a combination of "live reading" as well as commentary. I hope these steps have a positive impact on the zine's viability. Do be sure to check the Iridia homepage at www.IridiaZine.net for developments.

For this issue, I wanted to add a bit of background material to the Iron Rations installment from Iridia 12, which detailed a small goblin lair. Specifically, I wanted to present a map detailing the outside of the lair, another of the village nearby and finally, a regional view. As with all of the other Iron Rations articles, this one can be easily tailored to fit your own setting. I was also inspired to write another Iron Rations column after I ran a solo "playtest" of the encounter presented in Iridia 12. The heroes did quite well, slicing and dicing their way through the goblins in seven rounds.

Until next time, Christian

Iron Rations

basic d&d

To Devon Ashwood, the only thing more fascinating than watching Abel and Apris devour one another's faces was seeing them argue.

After hacking through the goblins with ease, Apris was rather upset. The final goblin they faced was a pregnant female. When confronted by the party, she backed into a corner, hissing and brandishing a knife. Abel did not hesitate to kill her. He had sustained a rather nasty wound earlier and was in a foul mood as a result. A quick sword blow to her throat ended it quickly.

Apris was shocked. "By the gods, Abel! How could you do such a thing!?"

"Do what?" Abel asked.

"You killed her when she was pregnant! Why? You should've just let her go!"

"Pregnant? I just thought it was fat. Besides, I didn't even know it was female. How can you tell, anyway?"

"Fat? Did you say fat?! What, are you going to stab me next?!" (Apris was terribly self-conscious about her weight, something that Aithne loved to bother her about.) With that final outburst, Apris stormed away in tears.

Devon stepped forward to console his friend. "It's not your fault, Abel. Apris is pretty sensitive and all the violence upsets her. How about we wait until the rain ends, then we'll leave? Our map says there's supposed to be a village nearby. We'll tell the locals that we killed some goblins and maybe they'll buy us a few pints to say thanks. By then, Apris should be feeling better."

Abel smiled at the suggestion. "Yeah, Devon, that sounds good. I think the sign we saw on our way here said something about a place called Combe. It sounds nice, real nice...."

The Hill

The cave within the hill has been a den for many creatures in the past. When the region was first settled, some 75 years ago, basilisks used the cave as a nesting area. The map of the hill indicates a number of paths leading to and from the entrance. The paths to the south of the entrance lead to two latrines, one for the goblin leader and the other for the rest of the band. The paths leading north head to the road. Just outside the

cave is a fire ring used for roasting stolen livestock.

Regional Map

The regional map shows the area around the village of Combe, as well as the goblins' hill. The scale is not indicated on the map, but each settlement, represented by a dot, is separated from the others by either a full day's walk, or a half-day's ride. The terrain consists of rolling hills, dense woodlands and open grasslands.

The Village of Combe

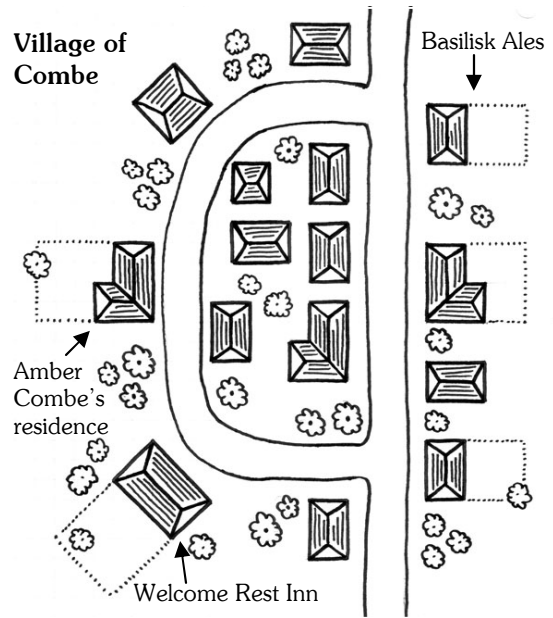
Grason Combe was a skilled warrior who built a reputation battling the basilisks that once roamed the area. The village, which lays along a busy trade route, was named after him.

The village's only inn - The Welcome Rest - is known for its stuffed grouse. A delicious meal and a night's stay (two guests to a room) can be had for 1 gp. The inn is a great place to learn about road conditions from the merchants who are passing through. It's also possible to secure work as a caravan guard from these same individuals.

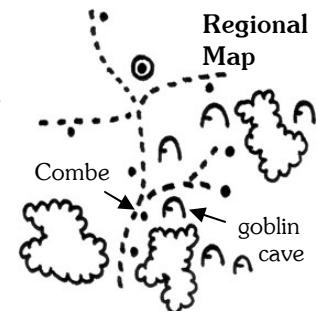
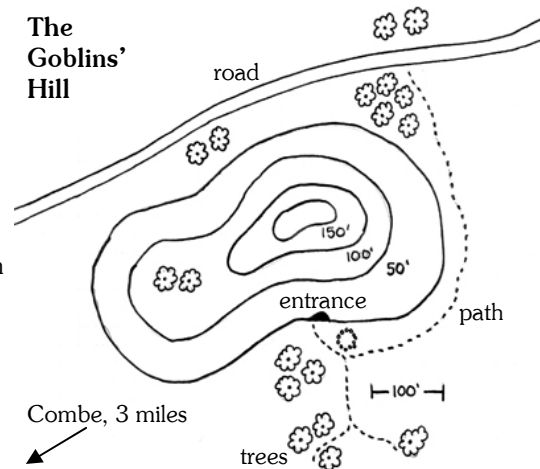
Amber Combe, a descendent of Grason, lives in the village. She makes a comfortable living collecting rent from the tracts of land she owns. Sadly, the family fortune has dwindled considerably due to mismanagement by several relatives. Always looking for a way to improve her finances, Amber is willing to underwrite any trade venture or expedition that will turn a profit. For example, Amber would like to fund a foray to investigate some ruins, which lay deep within a nearby forest. Her ancestor, Grason, never explored them, but he believed that the basilisks gathered all manner of treasure there. He speculated that the woods held some kind of great nest that spawned all the basilisks that terrorized the region. Grason wanted to mount an expedition himself, but he was unable to do so. His retainers were simply too afraid to go. In exchange for a portion of the treasure, Amber would provide gold to hire mercenaries and purchase supplies.

Visitors to Combe might also stop by Basilisk Ales, a small brewery run by Gimble Burrowell. Gimble, a halfling who exhibits the mirth and charm typical of his race, runs the operation with the help of his two nephews, Jenner and Tanner. Gimble has a rather irregular production schedule, so he often requires transportation services at the last minute. Therefore, he might be willing to hire the party to haul several kegs of ale to nearby towns and villages, provided the party has a wagon of its own and an honest disposition.

In the future I might detail the ruins, in addition to the other communities surrounding Combe. As always, there are just so many things I want to write about. Please see Iridia 2, 3, 6, 7, 9 and 12 for other Iron Rations installments.



A larger version of this map is available at www.IridiaZine.net.



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