

Iridia

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

On Point

I'll be out of town from time to time this summer. There's a trip to San Francisco, lots of concerts at the Hollywood Bowl and a visit to the South. As a result, I need to get ahead in the production schedule. I'll be scribbling away like mad, so if you receive issues early, you'll know why.

I want to return to Greyhawk for this week's Iridia. In issues 4 and 5, I introduced a warehouse in Perrenland's Traft, so I'd like to continue in that region. Since Disney's "Pirates of the Caribbean" is currently in theaters, I'll go with a pirate theme!

Do be sure to visit IridiaZine.net to download back issues in .pdf. You can also view larger versions of the maps presented in each issue, as well as listen to podcast commentary.

Until next time, Christian

The Pirates of Fressa Cove

world of greyhawk

Spring on Lake Quag heralds a flurry of activity. Ports that held their vessels captive in frozen waters all winter now let loose their icy grip. Also unleashed are raiders who are desperate for spoils after months of confinement due to inclement weather. One such group consists of sixteen men who are plundering traffic near Traft. The buccaneers have experience as fishermen and mercenary archers, so they are well-suited for the task.

Their leader is Gabriel Karstula, a vicious criminal with a long, sordid past. He is shrewd enough to realize that it's only a matter of time before they are driven off, killed, or captured. In preparation, he's hidden their spoils within a cave overlooking the cove where their boat is anchored. If they are forced to flee the area, Gabriel plans on coming back to reclaim them at a later date. Moreover, Gabriel has procured a potion of water breathing. He keeps the existence of the potion a secret. If necessary, he will use it to fake his own death by pretending to drown.

Tactics

The pirates' vessel is manned by 15 buccaneers. Gabriel controls the rudder in the stern of the ship, while six men handle rigging. This leaves nine pirates free to employ missile weapons. On a day with no wind, all 15 crewmen must work the oars.

The pirates' preferred tactic is to close within 200 feet, then begin firing volleys of arrows. Keel boats have a very slow movement rate of 1 mile/hour, or 8' per round. As a result, quite a few arrows can be loosed before the distance between vessels is closed. Once alongside another boat, the pirates will perform boarding actions.

Because their boat is rather small and they only have 16 members, the pirates only attack vessels their size or smaller. This has resulted in meager gains because the smaller craft cannot carry large, valuable cargoes. After securing a prize's cargo and killing its crew, the pirates use axes to hack through the hull of the vessel (hardness 5, 20 hit points) in order to sink it.

Using the Pirates in Play

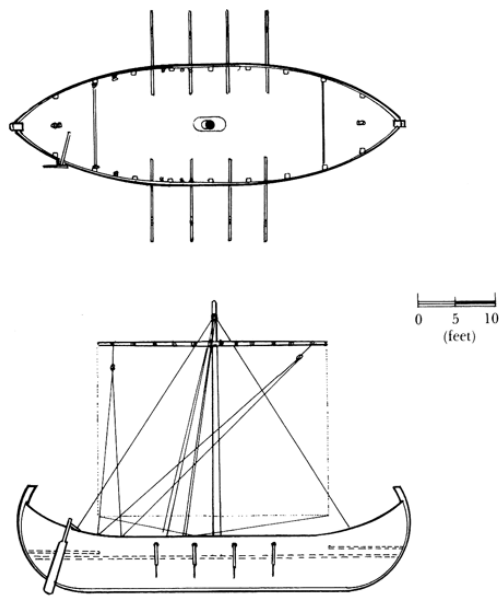
Matthias Vinder (the warehouse guard from Iridia 4) will inform the party that a small pirate vessel is active in the area. A reward of 100 marks is being offered to anyone who kills or captures the raiders. Either the PCs can hire a boat to go searching for the raiders, or they can ride up and down the coast on horseback to look

for the pirates' anchorage. This last option is a suggestion from Matthias. He knows that a small craft like the one being used by the raiders will most likely be anchored nearby, since it lacks the ability to make a long range voyage.

If the party hires a boat to search for the pirates, they will need to sail in the vicinity of Traft for 1d4 days before encountering the pirates. The party will be able to hire a keelboat like the one used by the pirates for 3 gp/day. The captain (Exp5) and eight crew (Exp1) of the keelboat will not fight the pirates unless it looks as if their vessel will be overrun.

If the party travels by land to find the pirates' anchorage, they will need to head south along the shore for 10 miles. The pirates are using a small cove to stow their goods and to rest between raids. The DM should decide if he wants the party to encounter the pirates during the day or night. During the day, the pirates will be absent, allowing the party to set up an ambush. At night, the pirates will be found sitting around a fire ring, eating, drinking or prepping their boat for the next raid. They have accumulated trade goods that can be sold for 300 marks.

It's important to note that the pirates' keelboat is a prize in itself. A group of characters should be able to sell the vessel for 1,500 in coins and bartered goods, provided the ship was not damaged too seriously when it was seized. Enterprising characters might decide to lease the boat to an aspiring merchant. Doing so might earn them a monthly income of 10 marks/month. Then again, the players could keep the boat and start their own merchant (or pirate) careers.



Page 132 of the PHB includes more details about keelboats.

Gabriel Karstula, male human Ftr4; Medium humanoid (5' 9", 165 lbs); CR 4; HD 4d10+8; hp 33; Init +6; Spd 30 ft; AL NE;

Armor: AC 14 (+2 leather, +2 dex), touch 12, flat-footed 12.

Attacks: Base Atk +4, Grp +6;

Melee: Longsword +8 (+4 BAB, +2 str, +1 weapon focus, +1 masterwork longsword) (d8+4, 19-20/x2).

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1.

Abilities: Str 15 (+2), Dex 15 (+2), Con 14 (+2), Int 12 (+1), Wis 11, Cha 11.

Languages: Common.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +2, Climb +3, Intimidate +4, Jump +3, Knowledge (geography, Lake Quag) +4, Profession (sailor) +4, Swim +4; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: Leather armor, longsword, potion of water breathing.

Pirate, male human War2; Medium humanoid (5' 8", 160 lbs); CR 1; HD 2d8+2; hp 12; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AL NE;

Armor: AC 13 (+2 leather, +1 dex), touch 11, flat-footed 12.

Attacks: Base Atk +2, Grp +3;

Melee: Longsword +3 (+2 BAB, +1 str) (d8+1, 19-20/x2);

Ranged: Longbow +4 (+2 BAB, +1 weapon focus, +1 dex) (d8, x3).

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0.

Abilities: Str 13 (+1), Dex 13 (+1), Con 12 (+1), Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Languages: Common.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +1, Jump +2, Knowledge (geography, Lake Quag) +2, Profession (sailor) +6, Swim +3; Skill Focus (profession, sailor), Weapon Focus (longbow).

Possessions: Leather armor, longsword, longbow, 20 arrows.



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