

# Iridia

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

## On Point

Back again for a second installment! I'm working on ways to keep the zine coming out quickly and easily by learning time-saving tricks. This week I figured out that I can create a .pdf of Iridia online at adobe.com, then e-mail the file to the Staples around the corner for printing and easy pick-up. Nice! Space is precious, so enough of my babble. Do be sure to e-mail me with any comments at [Christian@IridiaZine.net](mailto:Christian@IridiaZine.net).

Until next time, Christian

## Iron Rations

basic d&d

I bought the Basic D&D rules on EBay so that I could re-create some of the NPCs, characters and adventures that filled my afternoons in 1985. Yes, the rules are a bit simplistic by today's standards, but that's actually a good thing. It amazes me that new players make their way into the hobby these days when to do so requires the reading of a 250+ page rulebook. No wonder why so many young people instead opt for WoW. Eh, enough of my old man ranting and raving. Instead, I want to bore you with Aithne of Far Isle and Abel Artone, two adventuring companions from twenty years back.

I don't recall the name of my own character, nor his race. I believe he was an elf, though, because back then every 12 year old boy played one. Allow me to take a bit of creative license as I seek to fill in the gaps in my memory. Perhaps all the vodka I drank in college (or the shame of my pimply adolescence) obscured those particular memories. I'll call him Devon Ashwood, which seems like a pretty decent name for a Basic D&D elf.

Devon was brash, inexperienced and cocky. How efficient for Devon to pack so many undesirable personality traits into one character! Hungry for adventure, Devon traveled to the Shady Dragon Inn, which was a large, fortified hostel near the Borderlands. At the inn he met an intriguing elf woman named Aithne of Far Isle. She was a bit older than Devon and far more experienced. Of course, Aithne found Devon to be rather irritating. I believe that Aithne only agreed to explore some nearby ruins with Devon in the hopes of seeing him savaged by a beastie. Aithne and I soon met a young human fighter named Abel Artone, who struck me as a rather surly fellow. Our group was complete!

Our first adventure together involved a solitary ogre. The ogre had been spotted near the Southern Way, a frequently traveled road. The presence of the ogre alarmed local traders, who feared that the creature was a scout for a war party. Therefore, our trio was hired to investigate. Next week, I'll share more about our group.



## I dream in 25mm.

miniatures and terrain

Last week I sketched a floor plan for a ruined cottage I wanted to build. Let's take it from blueprint to battle-ready model!

I used foam board for the walls of the cottage. The foam board is light, yet durable, with an outer skin that is easy to cut. I purchased a 20" x 30" sheet for \$0.87, then cut it with a hobby knife I bought for \$4.99. I used a nifty cutting board that cost \$18.00 to help me keep the lines straight. The model rests upon a 6" square base. The long sections are 5" long and 2.5" high. The shorter wall sections are 3" long and 4" high.

Next, I put the pieces together with a hot glue gun. I like using a hot glue gun because the glue dries quickly, I can control the stream of adhesive and the glue can fill in any spaces between the pieces of foam. The glue gun cost \$15.00 and like all of the materials used so far, it can be purchased at a craft store like Michaels or Aaron Brothers.

After the cottage was mounted to the base, I used thin strips of balsa to edge the door and windows. The balsa cost \$0.89 and came in a 3' x 1/4" x 3/32" strip. This is a simple way to add detail to the model. When that was finished, I added texture to the walls and base using \$2.29 wood glue and floral sand. I spread wood glue onto the model, then sprinkled the sand, which cost \$3.29, onto it. Be careful not to let the sand clump, or miniatures will not stay balanced.

When the glue dried, it was time for a basecoat. Using a cheap, flat black spray paint from Home Depot (use the "American Accents" brand), I coated the model. The model looks a little glossy in this photo, but it hasn't dried yet. The spray paint was cheap at \$2.00. It acted as both a primer and a base coat. I have used Games Workshop's flat black primer in the past, but the \$9 really wasn't buying me any extra quality.

For the rest of the painting I used Games Workshop paints. I am most familiar with how those paints work together when trying to obtain a specific look, so that's why I pay the \$3/bottle price tag. I used Codex Gray for a heavy dry brush, followed by Fortress Grey, then Space Wolves Gray. For brushes, I used an eight piece craft assortment that cost \$5. At this point, the model is finished!

Tools for this job cost \$43 and the consumable materials cost \$17.34. With the foam board you can build four or five models and the paint, glue and sand will easily last for twice as many.

While this is a nice, simple model, there are a few ways to improve upon it. Construction-wise, you might use 1/4" wood instead of foam board for the 6" x 6" base. You can buy wood in a 24" x 24" x 1/4" square at Home Depot. A clerk can cut the piece down to 6" squares for a nominal cutting fee. The 1/4" wood is nice because it won't warp when the base coat dries. Also, you might try a heavier coat of Codex Gray because all the dry brushing leaves the model looking just a bit splotchy. You can also experiment with balsa to create a roof that has collapsed or even a door that is hanging by its hinges. Finally, try building two and three story ruins using these construction techniques.

If you have any comments or questions, e-mail me. Next week I'll share a method of building boulders for outdoor battles.



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