

Iridia

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

On Point

Hello, all. I've got another random table from the old Scrollworks zine to share this week. I ran back to back random tables in Iridia 6 and 7, so thought I'd continue with an established pattern. I also have a new entry for my GURPS bestiary. Since I wrote about a treant the week before last, I figured I'd revisit that territory while it was still on my mind. In other news, I'm trying to increase the circulation of this rag beyond the five or six close friends and relatives who read each week's issue. If you have some suggestions on how to increase the readership, hit me up with your ideas at Christian@IridiaZine.net.

Until next time, Christian

This, That and the Other Thing: A Horse is a Horse...

random tables for your game

Horses don't get a lot of attention in role-playing games. They're big, characters ride them around and they often get devoured by beasties. Nevertheless, I think that defining a horse's personality can add a bit of flavor to a campaign. If your game features exotic mounts, like griffons, the entries can still be applied.

If you are writing stat blocks for mounts, the descriptions below might hint at skills, feats, advantages or disadvantages that can be assigned.

1) Amber: People wearing cloaks, capes and other loose clothing should not stand too close. This horse has developed a taste for cloth and will begin munching on any clothing it can reach. Attempting to pull a garment from the horse's mouth results in a humorous tug of war. Characters with magical cloaks should be careful around Amber...

2) Zeus: This stallion is fearless in battle. He will charge into a line of pikes and trample foes with zeal. However, children annoy him to no end. Whenever children (or halfings) come near, the stallion grows agitated and requires a great deal of soothing to calm down. If a child persists in its efforts to pet Zeus, he will bare his teeth in a menacing fashion.

3) Ruth: This mare spent the early part of her life pulling wagons for a cruel master. She still recalls the painful whip and back-breaking loads. Whenever a wagon or cart comes near, the mare will kick and rear. She will bite anyone who attempts to harness her to a wagon.

4) Myst: This mare is very affectionate. She is a terrible flirt and tends to prance and strut whenever males are around. Men who ignore her attention-getting behavior are shunned and will not be allowed to mount unless they pat her on the neck or give her a carrot. Myst does not perform as well for female riders, resulting in penalties to riding skill checks.

5) Delilah: This mare requires a great deal of attention. After being brushed, she will roll in the dirt (or her own filth) so that her owner will have to groom her again. Sometimes she even pretends to be lame in order to have her leg massaged. If this behavior is indulged, then her owner will enjoy a faithful, loyal friend.

6) Sampson: This stallion does not get along with other horses. He bites and kicks at any horse that is placed in the same stable. Moreover, very few stable hands will work with him due to his aggressive nature. This behavior is also carried onto the battlefield, where he is especially adept at trample attacks.

Treant

gurps 4e

"I'll never go into the Westwood again. The trees are bewitched!"
Gabriel, woodcutter

Treants are sentient trees that act as jealous defenders of the forest. Treants adopt a section of a woodland as their own, then devote their lives to nurturing the vegetation within. A treant will allow passage through its woods, so long as the visitors do not start fires, or lay axe to wood. Those who do so are attacked, or at the very least, threatened. Treants care little for the affairs of men, but find their destructiveness disconcerting. Treants are natural allies with elves and other woodland races. Under no circumstance will a treant venture outside its forest.

Treants are solitary creatures. Enchanted forests will have no more than one treant for every 10 square miles of woodland. Once every five years, all of the treants within a forest will meet to share news and renew friendships. These meetings tend to last a few weeks and are exclusive. Treants will not tolerate visitors during this time. Treants are asexual and reproduce only once during their lifetime. This process involves the production of a special seed that is planted in rich soil, then carefully tended. This usually occurs near the end of a treant's life. The young treant, often called a "sprout," is cared for by its parent for at least 10 years.

A treant's leaves are deep green in the spring and summer. During the fall and winter the leaves change to yellow, orange or red, but they rarely fall out. A treant's legs fit together when closed to look like the trunk of a tree. A motionless treant is nearly indistinguishable from a tree. A treant is about 30 feet tall, with a trunk nearly 3' in diameter. It weighs about 4,500 pounds. Due to its wide stance and sweeping branches, a treant occupies a space 3 hexes in diameter.

Treants have a reach of 3 hexes and receive a +4 bonus to grapple man-sized (SM 0) creatures. Their favored tactic is to either slam foes with their branches or trample them.

Evil wizards prize the trunks of treants, which they use to craft wands and staves of fell power.

Treant (395 points)

SM +4 (30' tall, 4,500 lbs.);
ST 35 (size, -40%) [150], DX 10, IQ 10, HT 14 [40];
HP 35, Will 15 [25], Per 15 [25], FP 14;
Basic Lift 245, Damage: Thr 4d-1/Sw 6d+1;
Basic Speed 6, Basic Move 6;
Dodge 9, Parry (see attacks), Block -;
DR 1.

Advantages and Perks

Damage Resistance 1 [5], Doesn't Breathe (oxygen and CO2 absorption) [15], Doesn't Sleep [20], Extended Lifespan 2 [4], Immunity (metabolic hazards) [30], Injury Tolerance (homogenous) [40], Plant Empathy [5], Speak with Plants [15], Temperature Tolerance 3 (7°-104°) [3].

Disadvantages and Quirks

Dependency (sunlight, very common, daily) [-15], Dependency (water soluble nutrients found in soil, very common, weekly) [-10], Disturbing Voice (-2 to reaction rolls) [-10], Fragile (combustible) [-5], Sense of Duty (forest inhabitants) [-10].

Skills

Brawling-14 [12], Camouflage-15 [2], Farming-13 [12], Gardening-12 [12], Herb Lore-11 [12], Naturalist-13 [16], Observation-15 [2], Tracking-15 [2].

Attacks

Punch-14, 4d+3 cr, reach 3, parry-10.



Iridia copyright Christian Walker, 2006. All Rights Reserved. ISSN 1930-0891. GURPS is a trademark of Steve Jackson Games. To obtain a free copy of Iridia, send a SASE to Christian Walker 9903 Santa Monica Blvd. #245 Beverly Hills, CA 90212. Please visit Iridia online at www.IridiaZine.net.