

Iridia

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

On Point

I received an inspiring e-mail from an artist named John Bingham. John does illustrations for the Old School Reference & Index Compilation (OSRIC). I'd like to share with you something he wrote. "I just wanted to tell you that I checked out your zine for the first time today and am hooked. This kind of grass roots gaming support has always impressed me. I think because of zines like yours, the whole doom and gloom about the demise of table top gaming is a total fallacy."

I was so stoked to read this. I'm glad that Iridia is finding an audience! To the right is a description of the OSRIC project. Check it out at www.knights-n-knaves.com/osric/

Until next time, Christian

OSRIC™ represents a compilation of rules for old school-style fantasy gaming. The book is intended to reproduce underlying rules used in the late 1970s to early 1980s, which being rules are not subject to copyright, without using any of the copyrighted "artistic presentation" originally used to convey those rules. In creating this new "artistic presentation," we have made use of the System Reference Document produced by Wizards of the Coast.

Letters Home

d&d

In an old campaign I suggested to my players that they might earn bonus experience awards if they wrote letters to their characters' families. While the extra XP bonus was the selling point, I was working a hidden agenda. My plan was three-fold:

- 1) Create a means by which the PCs might connect with the campaign setting via relatives.
- 2) Build an "authentic" history of the campaign. By authentic, I mean player-created material inspired by actual play, rather than me doing all of the work.
- 3) Use the letters to develop scenario seeds.

I decided that characters would earn bonus experience equal to 5% of the total award. The letters need not be long, but they should sum up the adventure, while providing some insight into a character's personality. A copy of the letter could be sent to the GM via e-mail to expedite the process. With the players' consent, the letters might be posted to a campaign website. Doing so would lend itself to a unique campaign history that the players would - no doubt - visit frequently.

Dear Father,

Things are so very hard. We were exploring some dwarven ruins in the Dragon Run mountains when we were attacked by a massive wyvern. It mauled Timothy from Camber Mill, tearing his throat out. I've never seen so much blood before. There was nothing we could do for him. I'm not sure that I'm cut out for this life.

*Your son,
Grant*

Letters can travel both ways. If the GM has the time, perhaps a letter from a relative would be in order. Occasionally, letters from a character's family might contain a compelling scenario seed.

Dear Son,

I think you may finally understand why I was so tough on you as a boy. I had to be hard because, well, life is hard. I wouldn't have been doing my job as father had I gone easy on you.

I look forward to your safe return. You know how I feel about your choice in "careers." I'd rather you return home to work as a road warden or constable. Brigands sponsored by Venable are attacking merchants from Holsinger on a daily basis. Brave, capable warriors are needed. Perhaps you and your comrades would be better off serving your community instead of hunting for lost treasure in abandoned mines.

*All my love,
Father*

The sending and receiving of letters may be a bit tricky. When sending letters to their family, the GM should provide the PCs with merchants who happen to be headed through their home village. Letters from family members might be sent to an inn the characters are known to frequent. Or, the PCs might have a base of operations, such as a keep or even a modest cottage.

However the writing and archival of letters is handled, they should add an interesting dimension to any campaign.

Faces in the Crowd

exploring the freelands of mirrym
concept by ian thompson
illustration by ed bourelle

"No one - and I mean no one - takes anything from me or from one of my clients. I've got three feet of steel and a bad temper that say so."

Samuel Keller

Samuel Keller is a veteran adventurer who appreciates honest, open dealings in all aspects of his life. Samuel is even-tempered and a very good judge of character. He will, under no circumstances, store goods that he believes may have been stolen or otherwise ill-gotten. A fighter by training, he carries himself with confidence and works hard.

Although he looks back fondly on his adventuring, he is very proud of the business he has founded and the service he

provides. Characters looking for safe storage may find an eager listener in Keller. Mind you, the players should be ready to listen to a few of Keller's own stories!



Samuel Keller's warehouse was presented in the previous issue of Iridia. (#43)

Samuel Keller, male human Ftr5; Medium humanoid (5' 10", 170 lbs); CR 5; HD 5d10+10; hp 40; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AL LG; *Armor:* AC 15 (+1 dex, +4 mithril shirt), touch 11, flat-footed 14. *Attacks:* Base Atk +5, Grp +6; *Melee:* Longsword +10 (+5 BAB, +3 str, +1 weapon focus, +1 mw longsword) (d8+5, 19-20/x2).

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2.

Abilities: Str 16 (+3), Dex 13 (+1), Con 14 (+2), Int 13 (+1), Wis 12 (+1), Cha 13 (+1).

Languages: Common.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +5, Listen +3, Profession (warehouse owner) +6, Ride +5, Spot +3, Swim +6; Cleave, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: Mithril shirt, masterwork longsword, keys to warehouse, 3 x 50 gp gems, 25 gp gem, 10 gp.



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