

THE TOURNAMENT AT SCORNUBEL

An Event-based Adventure in the Forgotten Realms

The lords of Scornubel, the City of Caravans, are hosting a great tournament to celebrate the wedding of a legendary but aging human knight. Events include a joust, a grand melee, and contests of archery, spellcasting, horse racing, poetry, and pie eating. The tournament's wealthy sponsors have offered unique magic items as prizes. Rumors abound that the bridegroom will retire from the prestigious order of the Companions, and many are the knights and sellswords who covet his position. Some of them are likely to resort to underhanded tactics to set themselves above the competition. And in the middle of it all, mysterious conspirators plan a strange murder...

A 6-hour adventure for 1st-10th level characters

BY BILL VOLK



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1Scornubel, the City of Caravans. Art by Jasper Francis Cropsey, courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington.

INTRODUCTION

After a month walking the orc-infested hills all along the Trade Way, I was desperate to get back to the comforts of civilization. An hour in Scornubel had me wanting to run for the hills again. At least the orcs didn't have tax collectors.

—Alton Longfellow, caravan guard

Murder at the Tournament is an event-based adventure for **3-6 characters of level 1-10**. The focus of the event is more on intrigue and roleplaying than combat, and much of the combat that does occur is in the form of nonlethal combat sports. This accounts for the wide range of levels that can participate in the adventure. The tournament can be used as a downtime activity between campaign arcs, as it is possible to participate in the tournament without ever delving into the mystery and corruption beneath the bright banners and feasts. The events take place in a specific order, but the investigation leading from the adventure hook is nonlinear.

To save time, most events are divided into two segments: a qualifying round to eliminate large numbers of the less-qualified contestants, then a series of elimination rounds to pit the best

contestants against each other until only one remains. The description of each of these events includes descriptions of those NPCs who make it through the qualifying round, along with any relevant skill bonuses. The final event, the melee, is intended to be a grand finale that the entire party can participate in, and so it is structured as a single enormous brawl that lasts until only one contestant remains. Rules are provided in that section to help the DM abstract combat among such a large number of characters, so that the game does not slow down to a crawl.

Scaling the Adventure

The adventure is optimized for characters of level 1-4. The NPCs given only partial statistics can be quickly scaled up for higher-level PCs by increasing all of their relevant attack rolls and skill bonuses, as follows:

- Level 5-7: +2
- Level 8: +3
- Level 9-10: +4

When the NPCs have full stat blocks, this adventure includes more detailed information on adjusting the adventure.

Events are listed in the order in which they are held. The first five events are held on the first day of the tournament, and the joust and the grand melee are held on the second day of the tournament.

Each event has a unique magic item as a prize for each winner. These items are described in full after their respective events and also in the back of this adventure.

The DM should attempt to keep every player equally involved. To help with this, parties following the suggested adventure hook should alternate between events and investigation sessions (as described in "Investigating the Adventure" starting on page 6). The PCs who were not competing in the most recent event should be in charge of investigating until the next event begins.

Scornubel is a major trade hub in the young nation of Elturgard, due east of Baldur's Gate. The location of the tournament can be changed to any relatively civilized area near the PCs. If the event is outside of Elturgard, remove any references to the celestial object known as the Companion and change the names of the Companions and Hellriders to a more appropriate order of chivalry and local armed forces, respectively. The Order of the Golden Lion and the Red Shields are mobile and widespread enough to serve as substitutes in most parts of Faerun.

Adventure Background

Elturgard is a new nation, dating back only about 50 years. When the people of the city of Elturel revolted against the vampire ruling over them and its undead minions, they were aided by a divine miracle. A small second sun, later to be called the Companion, appeared miles above Elturel and cast it into perpetual daylight, eradicating the vampires infesting its streets. The knightly Order of the Companions and the church of Torm assumed control over Elturel and the surrounding cities, and the region became a shining example of chivalry and human potential.

The Companions are a small, elite organization, far too few to keep order in Elturgard by themselves and frequently distracted by quests in foreign lands. The armed forces who actually protect Elturgard are called the Hellriders, who have a legendary history

of their own but are rightly seen as a less prestigious and less selective organization than the Companions. A great many Hellriders aspire to one day become Companions, and fewer than ten have ever succeeded.

One knight who desperately wants to become a Companion is Sir Egan Rambouillet, a landed knight called the Golden Ram for his horned helmet. What he lacks in divine power or exceptional fighting ability, he hopes to make up for with sheer wealth and ruthlessness. He has hired a reclusive clan of dwarf mages, the Hexhamer clan, to help him stage an attack on the Grand Melee that he can single-handedly stop. This, he hopes, will cause him to be lauded as a hero far and wide, if not secure his immediate admission to the Companions.

Adventure Hooks

The most direct way to get the PCs involved in the mystery of the tournament is to have them contacted by Simon Sack-of-Potatoes, a halfling porter who has chanced across an incriminating note. Simon may be found at The Goat and Compass, a tavern in Bereghost, or at a different alehouse in whatever town the PCs are currently visiting. In any case, read the following text:

As you wait for the overworked young barmaid to bring you your drinks, you see a remarkably obese halfling survey the common room and finally decide to approach you. "Beg yer pardon? I don't mean to intrude. It's just that, well, I've found something and I'm not sure what to do with it. My name's Simon. Simon Sack-of-Potatoes, if ye please. I'm a porter. Ye look like the sort who know how to take care of trouble. Maybe ye can help. The other night I was out drinking, celebrating the brewer's guild releasing the year's first strong beer, and I suppose it were a touch stronger than last year's, because next thing I knew it was morning and I woke up in a heap, half-naked on the floor in the stables on the other side of town. I was lookin' for the rest of me clothes, an' I found this crumpled up near the farrier's hearth." He pulls out a small mud-stained note that was tucked into his thick belt.



Simon Sack-of-Potatoes. Art by Bill Volk.

Simon unrolls the note. It reads as follows:

My Good Sir,

I've made all the arrangements. You may ride for Scornubel at your earliest convenience. Devon will be waiting for you at a gambling hall called the Sleepless Night. He will have the equipment you need. In the grand melee, Felix will die. Burn this letter. It's been a pleasure doing business with you.

-K.

A PC with proficiency in forgery tools can make a **DC 13 Intelligence check (proficiency bonus applies)** to analyze the handwriting. The writing is angular and scratched hard on the paper, indicating that the author was probably more accustomed to writing in Dwarven. However, the letters are very uniform and the ink is of very high quality, indicating that the writer may be a scribe or a wizard.

Simon Sack-of-Potatoes wrings his hands on the hem of his muddy tunic. "I was thinking of taking it to the town guards, but all the town guard's horses are kept in those stables. What if it was meant for one of them? I can't just do nothing, though. I couldn't live with meself if this Felix fellow were murdered an' I could've stopped it. I haven't much coin to give ye, but I'd help carry yer goods there an' back. I was thinking of going there anyway an' entering the pie-eating contest. I bet nobody from Luskan to Calimport knows their way around a pie better than me. If I win the prize and ye help save Felix, I'll give ye that magic knife they're giving as a prize. I've no need for such a thing. And ye might could win a lit more if ye enter the other games. Sounds good?"

If the party agrees, Simon will go with the party to Scornubel and serve as an unskilled hireling for nothing more than the costs of feeding and sheltering him during the round trip (2GP in total.) If they advise him to stay away from the tournament, he will do so - remove his listing from **Event 5: The Pie-eating Contest**.

Alternative Hooks

Even if the PCs are not willing or able to hear Simon's offer, there are many ways to introduce the tournament as a stand-alone adventure or as an interlude between campaign arcs. The PCs could find the tournament about to begin as they enter a town after an adventure, or they may be lured to the tournament by the promise of fame and the magic items that the lords of Scornubel have put forth as prizes.

The sponsors of the tournament have been sending heralds and passing out handbills throughout Elturgard and Baldur's Gate advertising the prizes to be awarded for each contest. The following information is commonly available.

- The winner of **Event 1: The Archery Contest** receives 500 GP and *Ubar the Smith*, a magical quiver.

- The winner of **Event 2: The Clash of Poets** receives 250 GP and *The Hurdy-Gurdy of Exquisite Doggerel*, a magical instrument.
- The winner of **Event 3: The Horse Race** receives 250 GP and *Cla's Deliverance*, a magical saddle.
- The winner of **Event 4: The Spellcasting Contest** receives 250 GP and *Wizard's Winch*, a magical staff.
- The winner of **Event 5: The Pie-Eating Contest** receives 100 GP and *Table Manners*, a magical dagger.
- The winner of **Event 6: The Joust** receives a champion's purse of 1,000 GP and *Lady Constance*, a magical weapon with the ability to change from a lance to a longsword and back again.
- The winner of **Event 7: The Grand Melee** receives 500 GP and *The Inspector-General*, a magical suit of studded leather armor.

The exact properties of each magic item are listed at the end of this adventure, but they are not widely known to characters at the tournament. A PC may attempt a **DC 20 Intelligence (History or Arcana)** check to recall information about the properties of one particular magic item.

Arriving at the Tournament

Scornubel sits at the northern bank of the river Chionthar, where it meets the Trade Way. It is early morning, and the rising sun in the East has a smaller twin in the West: just above the horizon over the river, The Companion burns over the nearby city of Elturel like a second sun. This far away it seems little more than a very bright star, but it is still a bizarre sight to those not raised in the nation of Elturgard,

This morning the road is thick with wagons and the river is choked with boats as people flock to the city for tomorrow's tournament. Laborers build temporary structures and cordoned fences in the hills to the east and the fields to the north of the city. Brightly-colored pavilions stand where wealthy travelers have decided to bring shelter with them rather than risk the city's overcrowded inns.

Shopping in Scornubel: The crowds are causing local prices to rise dramatically. Food, drink, lodging, and most items are available for twice the price listed in the *PHB*. *Potions of Healing* are completely sold out of public markets, and clubs, quarterstaves, and blunted tourney swords are sold for triple the normal price, since they are the weapons legal in **Event 7: The Grand Melee**. Treat tourney swords the same as their sharp-edged counterparts except that they deal bludgeoning damage and deal 1 less damage on a hit. A player can also spend an hour of work and make a **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival)** check to search the nearby hills for an appropriate length of wood and fashion it into a club. Failure results in an improvised weapon that is nonetheless legal in the tournament.

The PCs can find lodging at an inn called the Western Glow. The rooms are all full, but space on the floor of the common room is available for 2 SP per person per night

PCs who wish to participate in any of the games at the tournament will be directed to the Temple of Torm, where scribes in the employ of the High Overseer are signing up latecomers for the games. Here they will be informed in full of the rules of each game they enter, and participants in the melee will be advised to provide their own clubs, staves, or tourney weapons, since there is likely to be a shortage.

Rumors in Scornubel: PCs who spend time gathering local news and rumors can make an **Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Charisma (Persuasion)** check. The table below indicates the rumors that they might find.

Rumors in Scornubel

DC	Rumor
0	Sir Turston is not just getting married; He is past his prime and means to retire from the Companions. The tournament is intended to be a search for is replacement. (False)
5	Some strange folk have shown up for the tournament. Guests at the Western Glow have spotted a goliath, a bugbear, several tieflings, and even a drow. The presence of such monstrous company will likely lead to some tension. (True)
7	High Overseer Aelfred has been passing laws to harm the trade cabals of the Zhentarim. The Zhentarim are likely to attack the tournament and assassinate Aelfred. (False. Open violence would make them look bad.)
10	Some very rich visitors are avoiding the crowds at Scornubel's inns by staying in some kind of magically hidden space. Finely-dressed dwarves have been seen walking toward the shrine to Moradin behind the town livery stables and disappearing entirely. (True)
13	A human in green leather armor has been buying large wicker cages from every basket-weaver and dry goods merchant in Scornubel. He refuses to buy any steel or wooden cages. (True.)
15	Scornubel's ancient thieves' guild, The River Wraiths, is running a betting racket during the tournament. Men dressed as moneychangers are taking bets on the games and planning to disappear with all the money. (True, though other folk are making more legitimate wagers.)
20	Dwarves of Clan Hexhammer have been advising their closest friends in the adventuring business to avoid participating in the grand melee. They claim that an "invincible champion" will make the melee a losing proposition for everyone else. (True)

Investigating the Mystery

This section describes the various ways in which the PCs can investigate the mystery of Simon's note. The different subtitles in bold below represent different possible avenues of investigation. The PCs may come up with more ways in which they wish to investigate - try to improvise the results based on the rest of the information in the adventure rather than flatly refusing them. After the PCs explore one avenue of investigation, or if they seem to be stuck, announce that trumpets are blowing fanfares that signal the beginning of the next event, and PCs participating in that event should present themselves. After that event is over, give the PCs another chance to investigate, and continue alternating between events and investigation until the climax of the adventure at the Grand Melee.



Thrupp "Poison-Talker" Gelan-Goleon. Art by Bill Volk.

The Gambling Hall: If the PCs go to the gambling hall mentioned in Simon's note, read the following text:

The Sleepless Night gambling hall is marked by a painting of a weary Elturelish merchant running toward the moon and away from the sun and the Companion pursuing him. The establishment offers strong drink and various games of chance, but no rooms for the night. Business is busy, with folk playing at cards and dice at every table. The largest table has gnomes and halflings playing under it as well as on top of it. A human in a golden-horned helmet plays at cards against a massive shirtless goliath. The bouncer, a swarthy black-bearded dwarf, greets you. "Welcome, travelers. Ale's back this way. If it's gambling you're after, a gold piece to the house lets you gamble against the other guests all night."

Most of the guests do not have any helpful information to offer about Simon's note. PCs who interview them may learn rumors from the **Rumors in Scornubel** table on Page 5.

If the gnomes and halflings under the table are questioned whether they saw any suspicious meetings at this gambling hall, a **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check** will cause them to recall that yesterday they saw the knight with the golden horns take a wooden sword wrapped in a leather bundle from a human in green leather armor. They figure that the man in green must have been some kind of errand-boy, because the man with the horned helm must be rich, based on the amount of coin he's been spending, and would not need to borrow a weapon for the melee.

Any dwarf accused of writing Simon's note will demand an apology and then storm off in a huff.

PCs who wish to gamble against the other guests first choose how much coin they wish to wager and then roll a **DC 17 Intelligence check (proficiency in the appropriate gaming set applies.)** Success means the PC wins the wager back plus an amount equal to the wager. Failure means the PC loses the entire wager. A PC who earns 200 GP or more in this way will gain the attention of the guests, who will refuse to gamble any more against such a skilled player.

The goliath is **Thrupp "Poison-Talker" Gelan-Goleon**, a foul-mouthed and fiercely competitive

woodsman who plans to compete in the archery contest. He has no useful information to offer but will dare any PC wearing a ranged weapon to compete in the archery contest so he can prove his superiority.



Sir Egan the Golden Ram. Art by Bill Volk.

The human in the horned helm is **Sir Egan Rambouillet, the Golden Ram**. Simon's note was addressed to him. He meant to burn the note in the farrier's hearth in Baldur's Gate but was so intoxicated that he missed his mark. Of course, he will deny all of this, but a **DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check** will reveal that he's hiding something and has a strong interest in not continuing this line of questioning. He will give his name if asked and attempt to cow the PCs into ending their line of questioning by flaunting his status as an important landed knight of the region. If that fails, he will excuse himself from the gambling hall and return to his guest room at the temple of Torm. If the PCs make it too obvious that they suspect him of wrongdoing, he will be alerted to danger unless the PCs succeed at a **DC 13 Charisma (Deception) check** to assure him that they are not accusing him of anything. If they fail this check, he will be alerted to danger and attempt to take action against the PCs during and immediately after **Event 5: The Pie-Eating Contest**.



High Overseer Aelfre, acting lord of Scornubeld. Art by Bill Volk.

Alerting the Authorities: PCs may try to alert the authorities about the murder mentioned in Simon's note. Any Hellrider they speak to will promise to carry the message along to their superiors, but nothing will come of it in time. PCs who insist on speaking to someone more senior can eventually reach the ear of High Overseer Aelfred himself, the lord of the city, busy with mountains of paperwork and a long line of visitors in his solar at the top floor of the Temple of Torm. He will decide that the note is too vague to warrant cancelling the tournament, but if the PCs can bring him proof of who is planning the murder, he will gather a force of Hellriders to arrest the culprit. He will also offer sanctuary in the temple to Felix if the PCs can find him.

On their way out of the temple of Torm, the PCs may pass by Sir Egan, who stays as a guest in the upper floors of the temple of Torm and can often be found in the lower chapel or in the hallways, praying loudly and often as he holds his golden-horned helm at his side. If the PCs comment within earshot of him by commenting that they recently saw him in a gambling hall, he will attempt to save face by explaining that he is praying for Torm to free him from his gambling habit so that he can aspire to the ideals of a true knight. No check is required to detect that he is being less than sincere. In fact he is trying to make a show of his piety to the High Overseer and his cronies because he thinks it will improve his chance of being appointed to the Order of the Companions.

Searching for Felix: PCs randomly searching Scornubel for someone named Felix can make a **DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) or Charisma (Persuasion) check**. Success introduces the PC to a local farmhand called Felix Nash who has come to watch the tournament but does not plan to participate and has no clue why anyone would want to murder him. Felix Nash is in fact not the Felix mentioned in Simon's note, and the shared name is purely a coincidence.

Searching for Devon: The PCs' success in finding the "Devon" mentioned in Simon's note depends on where they go looking. Asking townsfolk at random will not produce any useful information. If the PCs question local shopkeepers, they can make a **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) or Charisma (Persuasion) check** to find Patricia Crackpebble, an apothecary who remembers a ranger named Devon of the Split Shield who spends most of his time wandering in the nearby Reaching Woods and sometimes comes into town to sell her exotic ingredients harvested from monsters he has captured. She describes Devon as a tall human male with black hair and green leather armor. He has a white horse that he enjoys boasting about. As someone who spends most of his time in the Reaching Woods, she figures that he's likely to be there living off the land at a time like this when every inn and stable is full.

Sir Egan in the Sleepless Night gambling hall knows about Devon, of course, but will deny it along with everything else asked of him. The DC to realize this is the same as the DC to see through Sir Egan's other lies, as listed above.



Devon of the Split Shield. Art by Bill Volk.

Confronting Devon: PCs who have already learned about Devon as described above can go searching for him. This counts as a separate avenue of investigation, so an event will happen after they learn about him but before they have time to find him.

Devon has a camp relatively deep into the Reaching Wood, half an hour's ride from Scornubel. To find it requires a **DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check**. Once the PCs are within 100 feet of it, they can hear the chittering of many beasts' mandibles. When the PCs get close enough to see the camp, describe it as follows:

As you draw closer, you see the source of the chittering. Five insectoid creatures the size of large dogs mill around in wicker cages, their tails and bristled antennae swishing between the bars. One of them has a piece missing from one antenna. The cages stand near a small campsite where a white horse is tied to a tree and a human woodsman in green leather armor waits by a campfire, "Welcome, travelers. Are you lost? I can show you to a trail leading back to Scornubel."

The beasts are five **rust monsters** (*MM* p. 262) and can be identified as such with a **DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check**. Devon has the fighting stats of a **gladiator** (*MM* p. 346.)

If Devon is accused of wrongdoing, he will initially attempt to deny everything, pointing out that there are probably a lot of people named Devon in a town the size of Scornubel. If the PCs offer more compelling evidence and mention the eyewitnesses to his deal with Sir Devon, or if they clearly outmatch him or make a **DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check**, he will offer more information:

Devon backs away from you defensively and lifts his hands. "Hold on, now, hold on. I can explain. I'm no murderer. The deal I made with Kyman was perfectly legal. He just wanted me to make a wooden sword laced with fibers taken from fresh rust monster antennae, then deliver it to this knight friend of his, Sir Egan, the one with the horned helm. It'll corrode metal while the fibers are still potent, but it's no more deadly than any other wooden sword. What that knight does with it is his own business. You know what I think? I think he knows he can't win the melee fair and square, so he's going to use that sword to cheat, destroy folks' armor with it or something. You have a problem with that, take it up with him. I'm just a procurer." Those words seem to give Devon an idea even as he speaks them. He smiles wryly. "Matter of fact, what if I helped you stop him?"

Devon will offer to testify against Sir Egan's corruption in exchange for his safety and freedom. He will sell his caged rust monsters for 500 GP each, or make them another wooden sword laced with rust monster fibers for 250 GP. The sword will lose its potency after three hours, becoming a normal wooden sword. If cornered or restrained, he will surrender them all free of charge. If the PCs turn violent, Devon will release two rust monsters to create a diversion and then try to flee if it is clear he cannot defeat them all.



Kyman Hexhammer. Art by Bill Volk.

The Shrine to Moradin: Players may investigate the rumor of dwarves disappearing into a magical secret door near the shrine to Moradin behind the livery stables. The door leads to a *Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion* and is completely invisible and intangible until a creature stands before its precise location and whispers the password, "Emet." A dwarven noble or errand-boy will enter or leave the door roughly once every hour. A PC spying on this area can roll a **DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check** to remain close to the door without looking suspicious and a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** to overhear the whispered password from a distance. Kyman Hexhammer, the "K." who wrote Simon's note, is competing in **Event 4: The Spellcasting Contest** and will emerge from the hidden door shortly before that event begins.

If the PCs request entry to the mansion or are caught while sneaking inside it, the Hexhammers will be unfriendly and deny them entry. A PC with the Noble background or an appropriate **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check** can convince the Hexhammers to grant the PCs an audience in their banquet hall, though they will not willingly allow the PCs to tour any other part of the mansion. Blueprints for various magical constructs, including a shield guardian, have been left on the table. If questioned about them, the Hexhammers will explain that they are interested in selling some works of artifice to the Overseer to aid in the defense of Scornubel.

The mansion contains seven **nobles** (*MM* p. 348,) ten **guards** (*MM* p. 347,) five **magics** (*MM* p. 347,) and Felix, a **shield guardian** (*MM* p. 271.) Bloodshed inside the mansion will cause the guards and servants to alert the Hellriders, and one of the magics can cast *sending* to alert the Overseer directly.

Felix is kept hidden in a small workshop in the rear of the mansion, behind a locked door (**DC 20** to break or unlock.) The magical amulet that controls Felix is usually worn around the neck of Kyman Hexhammer, and a **DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check** can reveal the amulet's significance. Since magic items are not allowed at **Event 4: The Spellcasting Contest**, Kyman leaves the amulet in his room while he is competing in this contest. PCs who can navigate the mansion with sufficient stealth (defeating the active Perception checks of the guards present) can steal the amulet. If Kyman realizes that the amulet has been stolen, he will order the immediate disassembly of Felix before he can be used against the clan. In this case Felix will not be present at **Event 7: The Grand Melee**. Kyman will replace him with a *major image* to try to preserve the deal he has struck with Sir Egan.

Confronting Sir Egan: Sir Egan is a guest of High Overseer Aelfred in the guest quarters on the upper floors of the temple of Torm. A character who knows Sir Egan's name can make a **DC 15 Intelligence (History) check** to learn that he is a knight with lands near Beregost, a man of noble pedigree who has repeatedly been rejected for membership in the Order of the Companions.

If High Overseer Aelfred can be given convincing evidence of Sir Egan's guilt, particularly the testimony of Devon, he will call for the knight's arrest and trial immediately, and so the PCs will have the assistance of dozens of guards, clerics, and paladins. If given evidence of Kyman Hexhammer's role in the scheme, he will also call for Kyman to be brought in and questioned, though the dwarf will manage to escape unless the PCs catch him personally.

Treat Sir Egan as a **knight** (*MM* p. 347.) He will fight if cornered but is more interested in preserving his own hide and whatever is left of his reputation. Kyman's statistics are on page 14. If he is confronted on the second day of the tournament or before the spellcasting contest, he will have all his spell slots ready.

1. The Archery Contest

A line has been whitewashed into the grass, with targets made of painted bundles of straw set at regular intervals 50, 100, 150, and 200 feet in front of the line. A moderate crowd has gathered against the cordon behind the line as Hellriders stand guard to keep passers-by out of the potential line of fire.

Contestants in the archery contest must provide their own ranged weapons, and any ranged weapon is permitted for use, though the vast majority of contestants use longbows. Ranged spell attacks are not allowed, but magical weapons and ammunition are.

Qualifying Round: To demonstrate their basic competence at archery, each contestant is asked to strike three particular targets at 50, 100, and 150 feet, respectively. Each of the targets has an **AC of 13**, and long range penalties may apply depending on the weapon being used. Each contestant has only one shot to hit each target. Degree of accuracy is not important in this round - each contestant who hits all three targets moves on to the elimination rounds. Those who do not are eliminated from the tournament.

Elimination Rounds: After the qualifying round, the remaining contestants take turns shooting at targets 200 feet away, in a random order determined by drawing lots before the first elimination round. As before, the target has an **AC of 13**. In this segment, degree of accuracy is crucial, so the DM should record the ranged attack roll of each contestant in each round. A round is over when each contestant has taken one shot. All contestants whose shots miss are eliminated (unless every contestant misses in the same round.) If all contestants hit the target, the contestant whose ranged attack roll was lowest is eliminated for shooting furthest from the center of the target (if the event judge decides that multiple shots are tied for the furthest position from the bull's eye, they are all eliminated.) Then the arrows are removed from the target and the remaining contestants have another round of shooting, repeating this process until only one contestant remains at the end of a round.

If a contestant makes a ranged attack roll of 20 or higher that is exactly equal to the attack roll of a previous shot in the same round, the new arrow pierces the shaft of the previous arrow. This is seen as extremely impressive by the crowd and the judge alike, and the contestant whose arrow was pierced will be eliminated if there are no other arrows further from the bull's eye, even though both shots were technically in the same place.

A character can make a **DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check** to cheat at drawing lots and take any place he or she chooses in the shooting order. There is a slight advantage in going later, due to the opportunity to show off by piercing the opponents' arrow shafts.

The NPCs who pass the elimination round are listed below:

- **Aelis Featherer**, A female human with blond hair, white fox pelts over her armor, an antler bow on her back, and a thick Uthgardt accent.
Weapon: Longbow (150/600 ft.)
Attack bonus: +5
- **Mats of Elturel**, A gray-bearded human man wearing the faded uniform of a Hellrider crossbowman. He proudly carries a pavise shield on his back with the double-sun crest of Elturgard, even though it is of no use at this event.
Weapon: Heavy Crossbow (100/400 ft.)
Attack Bonus: +7
- **Clarín Barrows**, a slender halfling lady in bright orange silks and gold chains. She carries a shortbow of osage orange wood. Her arrows are fletched in the same bright orange color of her clothes and have heads that glow white with magic.
Weapon: Shortbow and +1 arrows (80/320 ft.)
Attack bonus: +8
- **Thrupp "Poison-Talker" Gelan-Goleon**, a male goliath wearing only leather breeches and a baldric holding a quiver and enormous yew bow. The brindled pattern of his skin is crisscrossed by old scars.
Weapon: Longbow (150-600 ft.)
Attack bonus: +6
Sharpshooter: long range does not impose disadvantage on Thrupp's shots.

The winner of this event receives 500 GP and *Ubar the Smith*, a magical quiver.

Ubar the Smith

Wondrous item, uncommon

This magical quiver bears a stylized face of a scowling dwarf wrought in bronze on its rim. In addition to functioning as a normal quiver, Ubar the Smith always holds one arrow, one bolt, and one javelin made of semitransparent blue magical force. These force objects deal force damage instead of piercing damage and count as magic weapons, though they deal the normal amount of damage. When a force object drawn from the quiver hits or misses a target, or when it spends a full round outside of the quiver, it disappears and the quiver creates a replacement with a sound of ringing hammers audible out to 300 feet.

2. The Clash of Poets

A small group of bards and minstrels works its way past the colorful pavilions and market stalls to the temple of Torm. High Overseer Aelfred, Sir Turston of the Companions, and his new wife Lady Eleanor of Berdusk are gathered with their squires and attendants at a long table in front of the altar. Curious spectators crowd behind cordons to the left and right. The high stone walls catch and amplify the din of the crowd, but soon the High Overseer raises a hand and the echoes of the last footsteps and whispers fall silent.

The Clash of Poets is a test of singing aptitude and the ability to quickly improvise on a theme. Contestants may accompany themselves with their own musical instruments, but no outside accompaniment is allowed. Obvious displays of magic are frowned upon, and any attempt to charm or otherwise ensorcell the judges is grounds for elimination.

Qualifying Round: Aelfred asks the contestants to begin by singing the national anthem of Elturgard in unison as a gesture of respect to the guests of honor. A PC who is from Elturgard automatically knows the anthem, and a PC who passes a **DC 13 Intelligence (History) or Wisdom (Insight) check** has had the presence of mind to study the anthem in advance, having known that it was likely to be a part of this competition. A PC who does not know the anthem has to imitate the other contestants as they go and

has disadvantage on the **DC 10 Charisma (Performance) check** to sing the anthem passably well. Those who fail the check to sing the anthem have produced an obvious sour note or false lyric and are eliminated from the competition.

Elimination Rounds: The remaining contestants are placed in a random order determined by drawing straws. In each elimination round, the High Overseer or one of the guests of honor chooses a theme, and the contestants take turns singing six improvised lines fitting the theme and then passing to the contestant to his or her right. The rightmost contestant passes to the leftmost one, proceeding in a loop until someone is eliminated. The judges choose relatively inoffensive themes, as befits a competition held in a temple (mountains, the first snow of winter, nightingales, the beauty of the Companion, the heroic exploits of the Order of the Companions, the goodness of Torm, etc.) If a judge determines that the performance is too inept, too insulting, or too derivative of what came before it in that round, that judge calls for the singer to be eliminated. The next round begins with a new theme and starts with the contestant immediately to the right of the one who was eliminated. Rounds proceed until only one contestant remains.

The contestant who sings first in a round has it the easiest; the first check is a **DC 8 Charisma (Performance) check**. On each subsequent check made that round, the DC increases by 2 (The second check is DC 10, the third is DC 12, etc.) When a contestant finally fails a check and is eliminated, a new theme is determined and the DC resets to 8.

A PC may attempt a **DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check** to cheat at drawing straws and go first in the first elimination round, a significant advantage. Characters caught cheating are eliminated.

NPCs who pass the elimination round are listed below:

- **Brickers Plaingraver**, a grey-bearded dwarf with a set of polished steel drums strapped to his gut.
Performance check: +5
- **Elistan the Eloquent**, a male sun elf with long golden hair and a high harp in the shape of an elven maiden extending a sceptre.
Performance check: +6
- **Paula the Poetaster**, a human woman in dusty traveling garb, playing a small viol.

Performance check: +7.

Ribald Reputation: A character with the Entertainer background, or one who passes a **DC 15 Intelligence (History) check**, knows that Paula has a history of performing cruel satire and vulgar humor even if it means her hosts will throw her out. Between rounds, a character can attempt one **DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check** to convince Paula to sing something so obscene that the judges will eliminate her immediately.

- **Xilmarax of Ched Nasad**, a male drow with an unusually slight build and delicate features, except for the jagged scar extending from the edges of a purple eye patch.

Performance check: +9

Suspicious: The judges mistrust Xilmarax and are looking for an excuse to eliminate him. He has disadvantage on his Performance checks.

The winner of this event receives 250 GP and *The Hurdy-Gurdy of Exquisite Doggerel*, a magical instrument.

The Hurdy-Gurdy of Exquisite Doggerel

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

This magical stringed instrument is played using a series of keys on one end and a small hand crank on the other. The crank produces a tinny droning sound modulated by the keys. Folk in Faerun associate the hurdy-gurdy with light verse and mockery.

If you are attuned the hurdy-gurdy, you can use an action to play it and cast one of the following spells without using a spell slot: *Thunderwave*, *Tasha's Hideous Laughter*, *Compelled Duel*, *Blindness/Deafness* (deafness option only), *Gust of Wind*, *Fear*.

Once you use the hurdy-gurdy to cast a spell, you can't use it to cast the same spell until the next dawn. Your spellcasting ability for these spells is Charisma, and you treat the hurdy-gurdy as a spellcasting focus when casting these spells.

3. The Horse Race

Hellriders have marked off a path in blue flags, winding in a loop through the hills due east of Scornubel. About 100 riders have walked their mounts to the starting area, waiting to be sorted out into groups by a beleaguered team of armored Hellriders. Spectators look on from behind a cordon, many of them exchanging bets among themselves or with a couple of moneychangers in the crowd.

Despite its name, any non-flying creature of Large size or smaller is legal for use as a mount in the race, though any creature with a speed of less than 60 feet will be at a significant disadvantage. Riders of mounts with a speed of 50-55 feet will have disadvantage on all checks during the race, and riders of mounts with a speed of less than 50 feet will not be able to win the race under any circumstances. Conversely, riders of mounts with a speed of 65 feet or greater will have advantage on all checks during the race. Creatures summoned with spells such as *find steed* are allowed, but speed-enhancing spells such as *haste* are not.

Many contestants have shown up for the races, more than the course can safely bear, so the races have been broken up into brackets. The winner of each bracket proceeds to the final race that determines the winner.

Qualifying Round: A PC participating in the race will start off in a bracket with about nine other undistinguished racers. Contestants run one lap around the track. The PC can cut ahead of the competition and win the bracket by making a **DC 13 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** and having the PC's mount make a **DC 10 Constitution check**. If either check fails, the PC loses that bracket and is eliminated. If multiple PCs are competing, place them in different brackets.

Final Race: The winners of the ten brackets are placed together in one final race to determine the overall winner. This race is longer, consisting of multiple laps around the same track.

First, have the mounts each make **three DC 10 Constitution checks**. Mounts who fail a check will start to fall behind from exhaustion, and they will

not win the race unless all other mounts have failed an equal or greater number of Constitution checks.

Then, have all the remaining riders make an **opposed Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** against each other. This represents the riders' ability to jockey for position and take the most advantageous position on the track while avoiding obstacles. The rider whose check is the highest wins the race. If multiple riders are tied for the highest check, let them continue rolling opposed checks until one rider's roll is higher than all others.

NPCs who might win the final race are listed below. You may roll checks for each of them or assume that Amnon-Hesh leads the other NPCs with three successful Constitution saves and an Animal Handling check of 16.

- **Ellison Ellison**, a human boy dressed like a squire on a muscular gray courser.
Animal Handling: +3
Mount: Speed 60 ft., Constitution +4
- **Amnon-Hesh**, a tiefling man in Zakharan silks and a turban with his horns protruding from its sides, riding a slender chestnut mare.
Animal Handling: +6
Mount: Speed 60 ft., Constitution +2
- **Myra Howdahcobbler**, a gnomish woman who sits cross-legged in an elaborate saddle with railings, a canopy, and human-sized mechanical legs hanging from its sides, the better to spur her enormous black destrier.
Animal Handling: +5,
Mount: Speed 60 ft., Constitution +3.
Mechanical Legs: Roll 1d10 during the race. On a 1, her saddle's mechanical legs fall to pieces and her mount veers out of control, losing the race.
- **Devon of the Split Shield**, a human man dressed in green leather armor and riding a shaggy white rouncey speckled with mud.
Animal Handling: +4,
Mount: Speed 60 ft., Constitution +2.

The winner of this event receives 250 GP and *Clia's Deliverance*, a magical saddle.

Clia's Deliverance

Wondrous item, uncommon

This magic saddle changes size to fit any horse, riding dog, or similar mount. While you are riding a mount in this saddle, both you and the mount receive a +1 bonus to AC. In addition, while you are

riding a mount in this saddle you can use an action to cast *Enlarge/Reduce*, affecting both you and the mount. Once the saddle is used to cast this spell, it can't be used to cast it again until the next dawn.

4. The Spellcasting Contest

A section of the Northern field has been cordoned off and outfitted with a row of straw training dummies wearing whitewashed padded armor. The crowd keeps a wary distance. Mages have come from across the Heartlands and the Sword Coast to demonstrate their mastery of the Art.

A moon elf judge in a tabard bearing the arms of the Hellriders explains the rules. The spellcasting contest is divided into two sections: a qualifying round where contestants use magic against the training dummies, and a set of elimination rounds where they turn their magic against each other instead. The judge advises the contestants to think carefully about how they expend their spells - contestants will have no chance to rest or prepare spells in between rounds.

Qualifying Round: Each contestant has 18 seconds (three combat rounds) to do as much damage as possible to one of the training dummies using spellcasting alone. Melee spell attacks are allowed, but spells that include weapon attacks as part of the spell, such as *Green-Flame Blade* and *Conjure Volley*, are not allowed. Contestants are also not allowed to activate magic items. The dummies are objects, not creatures, so spells that only affect creatures cannot affect them. The dummies have an **AC of 11**. The judge assesses the damage, and the eight contestants who did the most damage proceed to the elimination rounds. All other contestants are eliminated.

To avoid elimination here, PCs must deal a certain amount of damage, based on the party's average level.

- Level 1-4: 18 or more damage
- Level 5-7: 32 or more damage
- Level 8-10: 49 or more damage

Elimination Rounds: The eight remaining spellcasters face each other in single-elimination rounds until only one remains. Two competing

spellcasters begin in the center of a cordoned-off square 50 feet on each side. Spellcasters are eliminated if they move out of bounds, if they concede the match (even if they concede while charmed,) or if they end their own turn while incapacitated. (Characters who succeed on a saving throw to end an incapacitating effect at the end of their turns are not eliminated. They have broken the spell just before the judge would have counted them out.) Entering another plane, such as with the *blink* spell, counts as going out of bounds. Spellcasters are not allowed to have spell effects active on themselves before the match begins or use magic items. As before, weapon attacks and unarmed strikes are not allowed, but melee spell attacks are. Contestants may damage each other, but any spells that the judge deems too likely to cause death from massive damage (especially *disintegrate*) are grounds for elimination.

The spellcasters that the PCs may face in single elimination are listed below. A character who wins three duels in a row wins the contest. The spell slots that they have already expended earlier in the day are already deducted from their available spell slots.

- Level 5-7: add an additional highest-level spell slot to their spell slots available.
- Level 8-10: add two additional highest-level spell slots to their spell slots available.

Malavok of Triel: a plainly-dressed elf with blond hair and a peg leg.

Malavok of Triel

Medium humanoid (elf,) neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 17 (5d6-5)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Elven

Fey Ancestry. Malavok has advantage on saving throws to avoid being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Actions

Spellcasting. Malavok is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence(spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks.) He can cast the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, minor illusion, friends, shocking grasp, prestidigitation*

1st level (4/4 slots): *magic missile, fog cloud, sleep*

2nd level (3/3 slots): *hold person, gust of wind*

3rd level (0/2 slots): *dispel magic, counterspell, lightning bolt*

Myra Howdahcobbler: a gnomish woman in a green-and-yellow dress who also competed in the horse race. If her mechanical saddle collapsed, she is covered in dirt and has one fewer first-level spell slot available.



Myra Howdahcobbler. Art by Bill Volk.

Myra Howdahcobbler

Small humanoid (gnome,) chaotic good

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 25 (5d6+5)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)

Skills Persuasion +5

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Gnomish

Gnome Cunning: Myra has advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against magic.

Actions

Spellcasting. Myra is a 5th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence(spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks.) She can cast the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *ray of frost, minor illusion, friends, mending*

1st level (3/4 slots): *mage armor, feather fall, charm person*

2nd level (2/3 slots): *hold person, invisibility, see invisibility*

3rd level (0/2 slots): *hypnotic pattern, gaseous form, sleet storm*

Kyman Hexhammer: a dwarf in blue velvet robes and heavy gold jewelry. Kyman was the one who wrote Simon's note, and he is the center of the conspiracy involving Felix. If Sir Egan ahs alerted him to danger, he will attempt to throw any PCs he faces off his trail using *modify memory*, if he can cast it. If not, he may attempt to corner

Kyman Hexhammer

Medium humanoid (dwarf,) neutral evil

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 47 (7d6+21)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Dwarven, Draconic

Actions

Spellcasting. Kyman is a 9th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence(spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks.) He can cast the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, mending, message, shocking grasp*

1st level (3/4 slots): *magic missile, sleep, color spray, shield*

2nd level (2/3 slots): *hold person, darkness*

3rd level (2/3 slots): *fear, fireball, counterspell*

4th level (2/3 slots): *greater invisibility, stoneskin*

5th level (0/1 slots): *modify memory, dominate person*

The winner of **Event 4: The Spellcasting Contest** receives 250 GP and *Wizard's Winch*, a magical staff.

Wizard's Winch

Staff, uncommon

This staff can be wielded as a magic quarterstaff that grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it.

The staff has 3 charges and regains 1d3 expended charges at dawn. When you hit with a melee attack using it, you can expend a charge to cast *Levitate* (DC 13) on the target as part of the attack. You can also use an action and expend a charge to cast *Levitate* on yourself or a willing creature you touch.

5. The Pie-Eating Contest

The town square of Scornubel has been converted into a massive outdoor dining area, with long tables and benches laid out in rows. Armored Hellriders show contestants to their seats. One table is set apart from the others, the only one with a tablecloth, located closest to the buildings where the mountains of pies are prepared. The pies themselves are savory, semi-circular halfling-style hand pies. The prevailing joke among many of the guests is the question of whether the halfling hand pies are made with real halfling hand.

The pie-eating contest attracts more contestants than any other event, as it is part contest and part feast to conclude the first day of events. The Hellriders organizing the contest know that most of the folk gathered for the contest are only here for one or two free pies, and they try their best to sort out the serious contestants from the dabblers and seat only the serious contestants at the champions' table nearest the kitchens. Each pie is served on a wooden plate marked with a number and the double-sun emblem of Elturgard - these plates will be counted for scoring purposes.

Seating Arrangements: To have the best chance of winning the contest, a contestant must be seated at the champions' table, where the pies will come much

more quickly and freely. A PC can convince the Hellriders to offer a seat at the champions' table by making a **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. A PC can be seated at the champions' table without a check if that PC has the Noble background, if that PC won a contest earlier in the tournament, or if that PC is unusually large. Those not seated at the champions' table will not be able to receive more than four pies without cheating.

The Pies are Served: The High Overseer's poison-taster takes a bit out of the first pie of the evening and then blows a trumpet to signal for everyone to begin. Pies are served, plates are emptied and stacked for scoring, and Hellriders oversee the contest to prevent cheating.

All characters can eat two pies without making an ability check. After that, the third pie requires a **DC 10 Constitution saving throw**, and each subsequent pie increases the DC by 2. Characters who fail a save are poisoned until they finish a long rest and cannot continue eating. Magic to prematurely remove the poisoned condition or otherwise enhance a contestant's appetite is forbidden.

A PC can attempt a **DC 17 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check** to steal a plate and unfairly increase his or her score, or to cleverly dispose of a pie without eating them. A PC may attempt this multiple times, but the DC increases by 2 each time as nearby plates and hiding places become scarce. A PC caught cheating is ejected from the contest.

Once all contestants have finished eating, the plates are counted. If two contestants are tied, the Hellriders roll dice to determine a winner randomly.

The NPCs at the champion's table who stand a chance of winning the contest are listed below. The DM can either roll their respective Constitution saves until each of them fails or assume that Simon ate 6 pies, Sir Turston ate 5 pies unless convinced to stop eating, Thrump ate 4 pies, and Faralda ate 7 pies, winning the contest unless a PC defeats her.

- **Simon Sack-of-Potatoes**, the stout halfling porter who first approached the PCs in Bereghost with the mysterious note.
Constitution save: +3
Stout Fortitude: Simon has advantage on saves to avoid becoming poisoned.

- **Sir Turston of the Companions**, the guest of honor. A graying but heavily muscled human paladin in fine black velvet. His new bride, Lady Eleanor, is seated at the table but not participating in the contest, which she clearly sees as disgusting.
Constitution save: +6
Considerate Bridegroom: Sir Turston can be convinced to stop eating pies by a PC who points out his wife's displeasure and succeeds on a **DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check**.
- **Thrump "Poison-Talker" Gelan-Goleon**, a shirtless goliath who also participated in the archery contest.
Constitution save: +4
- **Faralda Blackbanner**, a golden-haired dwarf woman wearing a sash covered in prize ribbons from previous eating contests.
Constitution save: +5
Dwarven Resilience: Faralda has advantage on saves to avoid becoming poisoned.

The Conspirators Strike Back: If the PCs have alerted Sir Egan or the Hexhammer clan to danger, they will try to use the pie-eating contest to poison all the PCs whose faces they have seen. PCs who have been inside the Hexhammers' mansion and have a **passive Perception of 13 or greater** notice that the servant bringing them their first pie is the page of one of the Hexhammers. PCs with a passive Perception of 17 or greater can taste that something is odd about the first bite of pie and have advantage on their saves to resist the poison. The poison used depends on the party's average level:

- Level 1-5: Pale Tincture (*DMG* p. 258)
- Level 6-10: Midnight Tears (*DMG* p. 258)

The winner of this event receives 100 GP and *Table Manners*, a magical dagger. If Simon wins, he keeps his word and gives *Table Manners* to the PCs.

Table Manners

Dagger, uncommon

This gilt-handled magic dagger looks more like a large eating utensil than a weapon. When the silvery blade gets too close to living flesh, it turns completely limp and soft. The weapon cannot deal damage to living creatures, even if the wielder attempts to use its hilt as an improvised weapon. However, against nonliving targets such as undead, constructs, and inanimate objects, the dagger grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it.

The Night Before the Joust

After the pie-eating contest, events are concluded for the evening. The PCs have a chance to take a long rest before the final two events.

If the PCs have alerted Sir Egan or the Hexhammers to danger and are still in Scornubel, a band of River Wraiths will attempt to assassinate the PCs in their sleep just after the stroke of midnight. Roll the Dexterity (Stealth) checks of each enemy to see if any PCs on watch notice them.

- Level 1-4: Four **bandits** (*MM* p. 343) and one **bandit captain** (*MM* p. 344)
- Level 5-8: Four **bandits** (*MM* p. 343) and one **assassin** (*MM* p. 343)
- Level 9-10: two **bandit captains** (*MM* p. 343) and one **assassin** (*MM* p. 343)

Any PCs with the Criminal background will be recognized by the assassins and will not be targeted first. Once combat begins, they will be told to leave town while they can. Such a character can make a **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation)** check or offer them at least 500 GP to convince them to call off the attack.

6. The Joust



Sir Horace of Cormyr. Art by Bill Volk.

More crowds than you have yet seen at this tournament flock to the North field. The High Overseer and the guests of honor sit in a high box with a blue canopy. Spectators exchange wagers and crane their necks to see the approaching riders, gleaming in their heavy armor and letting banners fly from the tips of their upraised lances. A platoon of Hellriders forces the crowd to clear an approach to the outer fence. The riders are going to make a spectacular entrance by leaping over the fence!

Only riders with Large sized mounts are allowed to participate in the joust, though riders of any size are allowed. Combatants must charge at each other with lances until one manages to knock the other from their mount. Magic lances and other magic equipment are allowed, but spellcasting is not allowed during the joust. Jousters may receive magical healing between rounds, but they may not have spell effects on them during a joust. Tourney lances are provided, but each joust is expected to have a squire to bring a fresh lance each time a lance breaks. Simon is willing to do this duty for PCs.

Qualifying Round: Before the joust begins, contestants are instructed to jump their mounts over a fence and salute the High Overseer one by one as the audience applauds them each in turn. Contestants who fail a **DC 10 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** knock over the top rail of the fence as they jump and are eliminated from the event.

Elimination Rounds: Afterward, contestants are paired against each other until only one remains. A character must win four jousts in a row to be named champion. Two jousts roll initiative and then take turns making a single lance attack against each other in initiative order. Even if a joust would be able to attack more than once in a turn, only one attack can be made each turn as the riders charge past each other. Each time a joust is hit, that joust must make a **Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** equal to 10 plus half the damage taken, rounded down. Failure means the joust has fallen and is eliminated. A joust is also eliminated upon reaching 0 HP.

The jousts that the PCs may face are listed below:

- **Amnon-Hesh**, a tiefling man in Zakharan silks and a turban with his horns protruding from its sides, riding a slender chestnut mare.
Initiative: +3
Armor Class: 17
Hit Points: 22
Animal Handling: +6
Lance: +5 to hit, 1d12+2 damage.
- **Sir Nergal Kimbatuul**, a dragonborn in piecemeal armor of bronze and black steel, serviced by a kobold squire who can barely drag a spare tourney lance behind him.
Initiative: +0
Armor Class: 19
Hit Points: 30
Animal Handling: +1
Lance: +7 to hit, 1d12+4 damage.
- **Sir Horace of Cormyr**, a young Purple Dragon Knight in polished silver armor and purple wings decorating his great helm.
Initiative: +1
Armor Class: 30
Hit Points: 30
Animal Handling: +4
Lance: +6 to hit, 1d12+3 damage.
- **Eberk who Laughs at Devils**, a silver-bearded dwarf mounted on a giant boar. He is the only

living Hellrider to have actually ridden into Hell on an adventure long ago.

Initiative: +0

Armor Class: 20

Hit Points: 52

Animal Handling: +2

Lance: +6 to hit, 1d12+3 damage.

The winner receives 1,000 GP and *Lady Constance*, a magic weapon.

Lady Constance

Longsword/lance, rare

This magic weapon has two forms: a longsword and a lance. In both forms it grants a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. While you are wielding Lady Constance you can use a bonus action to command it to change between its two forms.

7. The Grand Melee

The jousting field has been converted into a single open fighting arena. Adventurers, militiamen, off-duty Hellriders, and daring commoners brandish blunt wooden weapons and wear everything from rags to heavy steel plate.

The melee has no rounds, just one large free-for-all that lasts until only one contestant remains. A contestant is eliminated by being knocked unconscious, by yielding, or by being forced out of bounds. Attackers must choose to knock out their opponents rather than kill them. Hellriders will run into the ring to carry away the wounded, and interfering with them is grounds for elimination. Spells that kill or deal damage are not allowed, but other spells are. Flying or ethereal characters will be considered out of bounds. The only weapons allowed in the melee are clubs, quarterstaves, and blunted tourney swords. (A tourney sword is similar to its sharp equivalent, except that it deals 1 less damage on a hit and deals bludgeoning damage.) A player can spend an hour of work and make a **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check** to search the nearby hills for an appropriate length of wood and fashion it into a club. Failure results in an improvised weapon that is nonetheless legal in the tournament.

Combatants in the melee include Sir Egan and four other **knights** (*MM* p. 347,) each with blunted

greatswords that deal 1 less damage than normal on a hit. Sir Egan's sword is laced with rust monster fibers - if it strikes an opponent wearing metal armor, that armor's AC value decreases by 1 until it breaks altogether upon reaching an AC value of 10. However, Sir Egan will avoid attacking opponents in metal armor until his scheme is ready to come to fruition.

There are also five large mobs of twenty **commoners** each (*MM* p. 345.) For the sake of simplicity, use the rules for mob attacks (*DMG* p. 250.) The table below is based on the commoners' attack bonus of +2.

Mob Attacks

Defender's AC	Attackers Needed for One to Hit
0-7	1
8-14	2
15-16	3
17-18	4
19-20	5
21	10
22 or more	20

If there is no nearby threat for a mob to focus on, a mob knocks out 1d6 of its own members on its turn. A mob of 5 or fewer will absorb its remaining members into an adjacent mob.

- Level 5-8: add a band of three **gladiators** (*MM* p. 346)
- Level 9-10: add a band of three **assassins** (*MM* p. 343)

Unless the PCs already foiled the plot between Kyman Hexhammer and Sir Egan, read the following text after two rounds have passed:

The shouts of the club-swinging contestants all around you make it hard to notice at first that the cheers of the crowd are becoming screams. As the crowd parts and flees from the eastern end of the ring, you can see why. A towering giant made of wood and metal rampages toward the center of the ring, sweeping aside unfortunate bystanders who could not flee quickly enough. Even the bravest fighters in the melee flee in search of real weapons with which to defend themselves. The mechanical horror raises its head and opens its jagged jaws, and the scream that issues from its steel innards is like a hundred knives scraping on granite.

PCs who can read the dwarven language will recognize the runes graven on the marauding construct's brow: they spell "FELIX."

Felix is a **shield guardian** (*MM* p. 271) being controlled by Kyman Hexhammer (p. 16 of this adventure,) who is hiding in the audience. His goal is to cause as much terror as possible until Sir Egan can heroically defeat him with his special wooden sword, thereby proving his heroism. Felix will intentionally miss his attacks against Sir Egan, and he will avoid killing innocent bystanders, but he will not extend these mercies toward others who attack him.

Each strike from Sir Egan's sword (or from the antenna attack of a rust monster) reduces Felix's AC by 1 until he collapses into a pile of inert limbs upon losing four points of AC.



Felix. Art by Bill Volk

If no innocent characters died during the melee, the authorities will restart the melee after an hour to clean up and rebuild the ring. PCs will have a chance to alert the authorities and explain the situation. The winner of the melee receives 500 GP and *The Inspector-General*, a magic suit of studded leather armor.

The Inspector-General

studded leather armor, rare

You have a +1 bonus to AC while wearing this armor. While wearing the armor you can use your action to cast the spell *Alter Self* on yourself. You can only use the spell's Change Appearance option, and you can only use it to assume the form of a hobgoblin - always the same particular hobgoblin, a government official from the hobgoblin empire where this armor was forged. The spell does not change your size category, so you appear to be an oddly-sized hobgoblin if you are not Medium size. Once the armor is used to change its wearer's appearance, it can't be used in this way again until the next dawn.

Concluding the Adventure and Continuing the Campaign

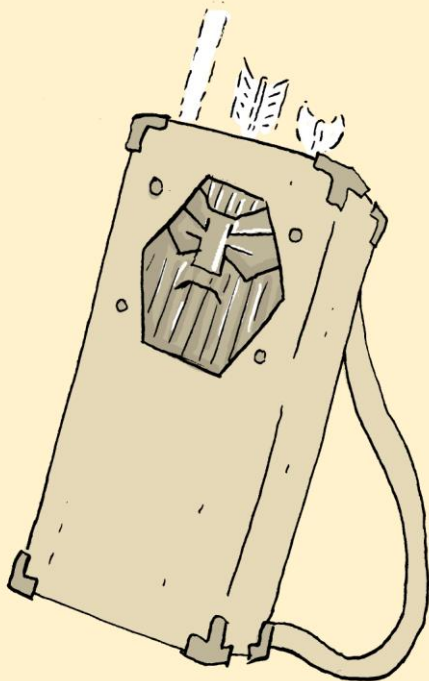
If the PCs successfully foiled Sir Egan's plot and saved the tournament from Felix, word will reach Sir Turston of the Companions and his new bride Lady Eleanor. This is true even if they prevented Felix's attack on the Grand Melee in the first place. They will reward the PCs personally for their valor and service to the common people. Lady Eleanor will give the party a garland made of golden leaves worth 500 GP, plus 200 GP per party member. Sir Turston will give the party a scroll of *Magic Circle* written in his own hand.

If the PCs succeeded in helping Simon Sack-of-Potatoes uncover the mystery of the letter, he will stay true to his word and give the PCs the coin and magic dagger if he won them in the pie-eating contest. At the DM's discretion, he may be interested in serving the PCs as a porter and hireling.

If Kyman Hexhammer escaped the PCs' attempts to turn him in, he and his clan will bear a grudge against the party. He may attempt to lure them into a particularly dangerous dungeon or support the party's enemies by lending them more magical killing machines.

If any PCs are paladins who distinguished themselves in the joust or the melee, Sir Turston may send them with letters of recommendation to the chapterhouse of the Companions in Elturel. If they are interested in joining that prestigious order, they will likely be given a quest to further prove their worth.

The Magic Items

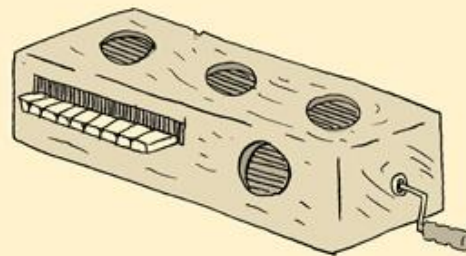


Ubar the Smith. Art by Bill Volk.

Ubar the Smith

Wondrous item, uncommon

This magical quiver bears a stylized face of a scowling dwarf wrought in bronze on its rim. In addition to functioning as a normal quiver, Ubar the Smith always holds one arrow, one bolt, and one javelin made of semitransparent blue magical force. These force objects deal force damage instead of piercing damage and count as magic weapons, though they deal the normal amount of damage. When a force object drawn from the quiver hits or misses a target, or when it spends a full round outside of the quiver, it disappears and the quiver creates a replacement with a sound of ringing hammers audible out to 100 feet.



The Hurdy-Gurdy of Exquisite Doggerel. Art by Bill Volk.

The Hurdy-Gurdy of Exquisite Doggerel

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

This magical stringed instrument is played using a series of keys on one end and a small hand crank on the other. The crank produces a tinny droning sound modulated by the keys. Folk in Faerun associate the hurdy-gurdy with light verse, satire, and songs of ribaldry.

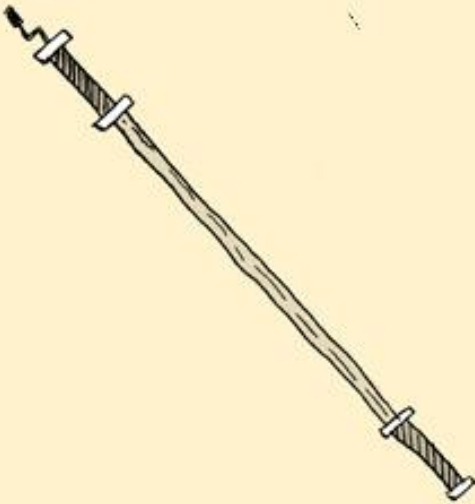
If you are attuned the hurdy-gurdy, you can use an action to play it and cast one of the following spells without using a spell slot: *Thunderwave*, *Tasha's Hideous Laughter*, *Compelled Duel*, *Blindness/Deafness* (deafness option only), *Gust of Wind*, *Fear*.

Once you use the hurdy-gurdy to cast a spell, you can't use it to cast the same spell until the next dawn. Your spellcasting ability for these spells is Charisma, and you treat the hurdy-gurdy as a spellcasting focus when casting these spells.

Clia's Deliverance

Wondrous item, uncommon

This magic saddle changes size to fit any horse, riding dog, or similar mount. While you are riding a mount in this saddle, both you and the mount receive a +1 bonus to AC. In addition, while you are riding a mount in this saddle you can use an action to cast *Enlarge/Reduce*, affecting both you and the mount. Once the saddle is used to cast this spell, it can't be used to cast it again until the next dawn.



Wizard's Winch. Art by Bill Volk.

Wizard's Winch

Staff, uncommon

This staff can be wielded as a magic quarterstaff that grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it.

The staff has 3 charges and regains 1d3 expended charges at dawn. When you hit with a melee attack using it, you can expend a charge to cast *Levitate* (DC 13) on the target as part of the attack. You can also use an action and expend a charge to cast *Levitate* on yourself or a willing creature you touch.

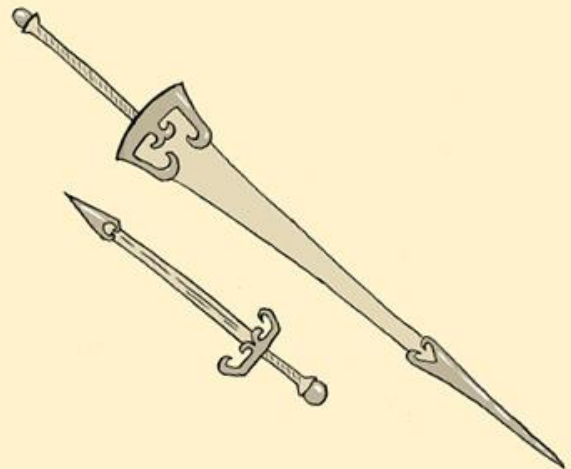


Table Manners. Art by Bill Volk.

Table Manners

Dagger, uncommon

This gilt-handled magic dagger looks more like a large eating utensil than a weapon. When the silvery blade gets too close to living flesh, it turns completely limp and soft. The weapon cannot deal damage to living creatures, even if the wielder attempts to use its hilt as an improvised weapon. However, against nonliving targets such as undead, constructs, and inanimate objects, the dagger grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it.



The two forms of Lady Constance. Art by Bill Volk.

Lady Constance

Longsword/lance, rare

This magic weapon has two forms: a longsword and a lance. In both forms it grants a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. While you are wielding Lady Constance you can use a bonus action to command it to change between its two forms.

The Inspector-General

Studded leather armor, rare

You have a +1 bonus to AC while wearing this armor. While wearing the armor, you can use your action to cast the spell *Alter Self* on yourself. You can only use the spell's Change Appearance option, and you can only use it to assume the form of a hobgoblin - always the same particular hobgoblin, a government official from the hobgoblin empire where this armor was forged. The spell does not change your size category, so you appear to be an oddly-sized hobgoblin if you are not Medium size. Once the armor is used to change its wearer's appearance, it can't be used in this way again until the next dawn.

THE GRAND MELEE

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

